



THE CHILDREN'S
BOOK COUNCIL
OF AUSTRALIA
NSW BRANCH

September 2022
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KIDS' CORNER



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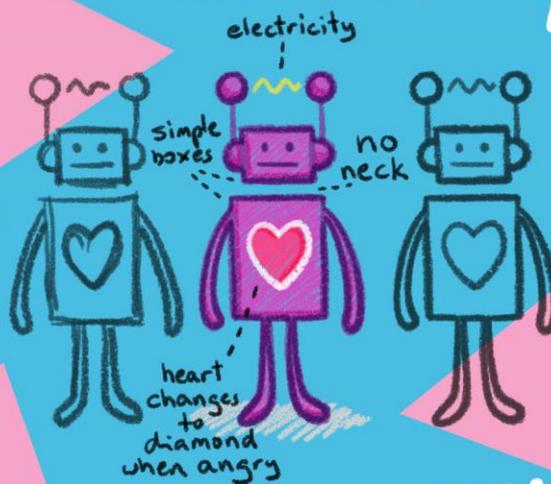
CREATING CHARACTERS

WRAPPING UP CBCA BOOK WEEK



ASKING ABOUT RUOK

READING NEW BOOKS

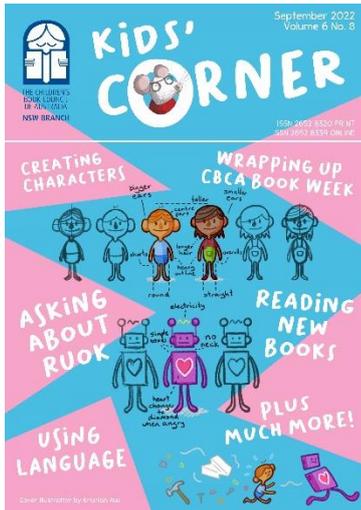


USING LANGUAGE

PLUS MUCH MORE!



Cover Illustration by Kristian Aus



Welcome to

KIDS' CORNER for SEPTEMBER 2022

and **SPECIAL THANKS** to our

GUEST ILLUSTRATOR – KRISTIAN AUS

<https://illustration.kristianaus.com/>

Kristian Aus grew up on a diet of Studio Ghibli films and video games in country NSW, before moving to Sydney's Inner West. He loves bright, bold colours that make your eyes bleed and strange fantastical worlds, with a dash of science fiction. He is now a freelance illustrator and teaches Design at the University of Technology, Sydney.



PROJECTS

Kristian is currently working on two separate graphic novels. The manuscript for one of them recently won a prize with



Larrikin House Publishers and SCBWI, a special organisation that promotes authors and illustrators in sharing their work. He is also busy creating a comic strip with author Abbey Lane about her dog Hercules!

Kristian is the treasurer of the newly formed Canterbury Bankstown Inner West CBCA subbranch and helped to create their logo.

CREATING CHARACTERS with KRISTIAN AUS

Creating characters is always a messy process for me. There is a lot of revision and making mistakes.

Because I'm an illustrator I will often start with a picture, either on paper or in my head. But I find that once I start to put them in different situations or create dialogue for them, things often change. I really like that part of the process as it lets the characters tell me what they want to be.

I can try ideas out, but the characters will always find a way of pushing back. It's sometimes easier to create characters based on other people's writing as they will have already done some of the work. But, at the same time trying to interpret another person's ideas can be really hard!

WELCOME to September 2022 KC

The September 2022 issue of **KC** includes a wrap-up of some of the many amazing happenings that were shared as part of CBCA Book Week 2022.



We also discover how authors and illustrators create the characters that catch our attention and keep us reading on and on.



The cover of **KC** for September as created by **KRISTIAN AUS**, gives just a hint of how characters change from being so much more than just a picture on a page and becoming the REAL people and situations we become part of through books.

We wrap up CBCA Book Week with

- info about the 2022 CBCA BOYA Winners and Honour books,
- results from kids as the SHADOW JUDGES of the winners of the CBCA shortlisted books, and

- videos of the winning entries of the COLLIDE Book Trailers.

There are so many ways that we become caught up in the language, illustrations, and imagination that authors and illustrators use to create the realities of characters, we just HAVE to read on and on to become part of even more stories.

CBCA BOOK WEEK 2022 – DREAMING WITH EYES OPEN



Great fun - with thanks to authors and illustrators everywhere!



CBCA BOOK WEEK 2022

WINNERS' WRAP



CBCA BOYA (Book of the Year Awards) as selected by the CBCA Judges <https://cbc.org.au/winners-2022>
YouTube announcement <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQQjkkxg2bc>

SUN PROJECT WINNERS as selected by teams of young readers who became the **SUN PROJECT Shadow Judges** who each chose a CBCA Book of the Year shortlist category to explore and to shadow judge. Each team also developed their own creative response to a chosen book from the short-listed books. With

thanks to the *Australia Council* for funding to initiate the program in 2022 as part of the federal government *Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand fund*.

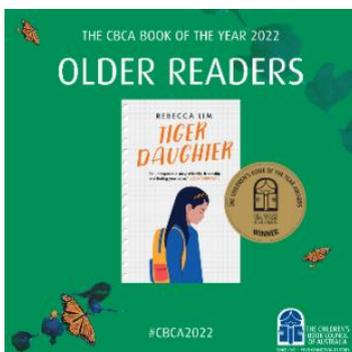
The **SUN PROJECT** website is bursting with ideas from the teams <https://shadowjudging.cbc.org.au/about/>

See **READ** <https://shadowjudging.cbc.org.au/read/> to see what the shadow judges are saying about the books.

See **RESPONSE** <https://shadowjudging.cbc.org.au/creative-responses/> to discover how the groups responded to their books. This includes videos, collages, objects, game shows, posters, discussions and more.

And the winning titles

from the Sun Project and CBCA BOYA are:



CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR: OLDER READERS



-**Tiger Daughter** - Rebecca Lim (A&U)

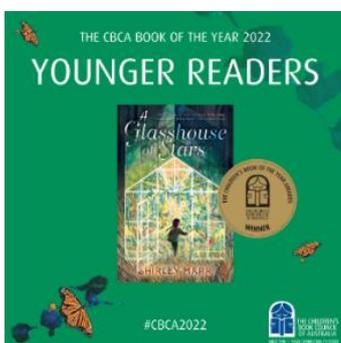
-**Girls in Boys' Cars** - Felicity Castagna (Pan)

-**How to Repaint a Life** - Steven Herrick (UQP)

-**Sugar Town Queens** - Malla Nunn - A&U)

CRITERIA - OLDER READERS - Entries in this category may be fiction, drama or poetry and should be appropriate in style and content for readers in their secondary years of schooling. Ages 13-18 years.

Note: Books in this category are for mature readers and some may deal with particularly challenging themes including violence and suicide. Parental guidance is recommended



CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR: YOUNGER READERS



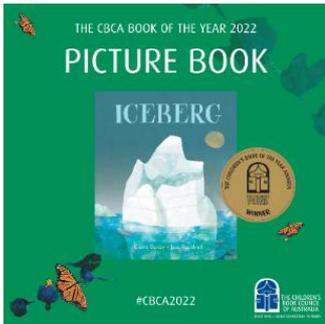
-**A Glasshouse of Stars** - Shirley Marr (Puffin)

-**Dragon Skin** - Karen Foxlee (A&U)

-**Rabbit, Soldier, Angel, Thief** - Katrina Nannestad – (ABC Books)

CRITERIA - YOUNGER READERS - Entries in this category may be fiction, drama or poetry and should be appropriate in style and content for readers from the **middle to upper primary years. 7-12** years.

Note: Some of the titles in this category may only be suitable for readers who are in the upper primary years as they contain mature themes, including violence. Parental guidance is recommended.



CBCA PICTURE BOOK OF THE YEAR

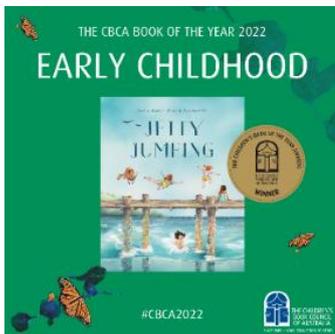


-***Iceberg*** - Claire Saxby, Illustrated by Jess Racklyeft (A&U)

- ***Stellarphant*** - James Foley- (Fremantle Press)

-***Just One Bee*** - Margrete Lamond & Anthony Bertini, Illustrated by Christopher Nielsen (Dirt Lane Press)

CRITERIA PICTURE BOOK - Entries in this category should be outstanding books of the Picture Book genre in which the author and illustrator achieve artistic and literary unity or, in wordless picture books, where the story, theme or concept is unified through illustrations. Ages 0-18 years. (NB. Some of these books may be for mature readers).



CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR: EARLY CHILDHOOD

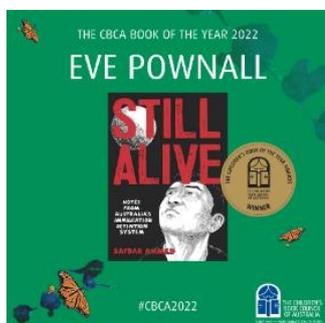


-***Jetty Jumping*** - Andrea Rowe. Illustrated by Hannah Sommerville (HGCP)

-***Walk of the Whales*** - Nick Bland (HGCP)

-***Amira's Suitcase*** - Vikki Conley. Illustrated by Nicky Johnston, (New Frontier)

CRITERIA EARLY CHILDHOOD - Entries in this category may be fiction, drama or poetry and should be appropriate in style and content for children who are at pre-reading or early stages of reading. Ages 0-6 years.



CBCA EVE POWNALL AWARD



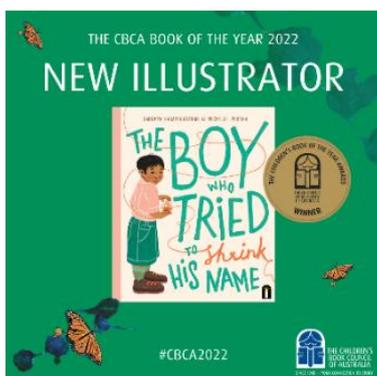
-***Still Alive, Notes from Australia's Immigration Detention System*** - (Safdar Ahmed (Twelve Panels Press)

-***The Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Peculiar Pairs in Nature*** - Sami Bayly, (Hachette)

- ***Heroes, Rebels, and Innovators*** - Karen Wyld. Illustrated by Jaelyn Biumaiwa (Lothian)

EVE POWNALL CRITERIA - Entries in this category should be books which have the prime intention of documenting factual material with consideration given to imaginative presentation, interpretation, and variation of style. Ages 0-18 years.

Note: Books in this category are for mature readers and some may deal with particularly challenging themes including violence and suicide. Parental guidance is recommended.



CBCA AWARD FOR NEW ILLUSTRATOR

The Boy Who Tried to Shrink His Name - Sandhya Parappukaran.
Illustrated by **Michelle Pereira** (HGCP)

CBCA AWARD FOR NEW ILLUSTRATOR CRITERIA - This Award aims to recognise and encourage new talent in the field of Australian children's book illustration. Ages 0-18 years.



COLLIDE with the WINNERS

<https://www.cbcanw.org.au/collide-book-trailers-winners>.

Announcing the 2022 winning book trailers as created by students featuring a book from the 2022 CBCA Notables list. <https://cbca.org.au/notables-2022>

Thank you to the teachers who facilitated the learning by their students in producing the many exciting videos that were so enjoyable to watch.

And the winners ARE:

Years 3 & 4 [21 entries]

Winner: Ella from Uki Public School - *Elsewhere Girls*

Runner up: Amelia & Jazmyn from Uki Public School - *Bear & Rat*

Years 5 & 6 [36 entries]

Winner: Nived, Krish and Darren from Wentworthville Public School - *Rachel's War*

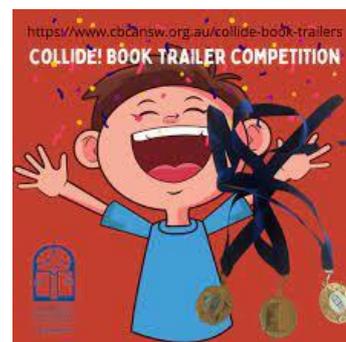
Runner up: Ben from Uki Public School - *Pawcasso*

Years 7-9 [2 entries]

Winner: Inah from Kiama High School - *Stellarphant*

With thanks:

- to our judges: **Deb Abela, Tristan Bancks and Nathan Luff**,
- for special support from **Rotary, North Sydney** for book vouchers for our winning entries, and
- to **Tristan Bancks** for providing access for the winners to a fun online video writing workshop facilitated by him for 9–14-year-olds.



hmmm... THINKING ahead



Announcing CBCA BOOK WEEK 2023

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRWj-sKSxBk>

Each year since 1945 the CBCA has brought children and books together across Australia through CBCA Book Week. Plans for next year are now beginning.

Dates: Saturday, 19 August to Friday, 25 August 2023

Theme: READ, GROW, INSPIRE

Feature Artist: Matt Ottley



CREATING CHARACTERS - beyond the cover

How do authors and illustrators create characters that catch our attention and keep us reading?

It often seems that initially it is the physical aspects of characters that catch our attention. And then, we stay "caught" as the story progresses into the character's personality development and people interactions.

In these **articles**, we asked Superheroes, Vampires, Prime Minister Fill-Ins, Servants, and New Kids.

You may also want to ask yourself- what about characters keeps me reading and getting involved?

Begin with *We Run Tomorrow* (Puffin Books) **MIKE BARRY**, Illustrator mikebarrywashere.com

NAT AMOORE <https://www.natamoore.com/>

CREATING COMPELLING CHARACTERS

-- WITH MIKE BARRY --



HEY THERE! I'M MIKE BARRY, AND OVER THERE IS MY BRILLIANT FRIEND NAT AMOORE.

WE RECENTLY MADE A NEW BOOK TOGETHER, CALLED **WE RUN TOMORROW!**

IT'S THE STORY OF **FOUR BEST FRIENDS** WHO LIVE ON THE SAME STREET. BUT THE ADULTS AROUND THEM ARE MAKING DECISIONS THAT COULD **TEAR THEM APART.**

WHEN THEY DISCOVER THEIR **FAVOURITE COMIC BOOK SERIES** IS BEING MADE INTO A **BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE**, THEY KNOW WHAT THEY HAVE TO DO...

GET TO THE AUDITION.

GET THE PARTS.

STAY TOGETHER.



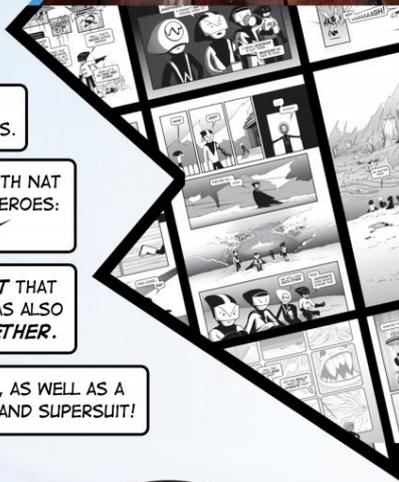
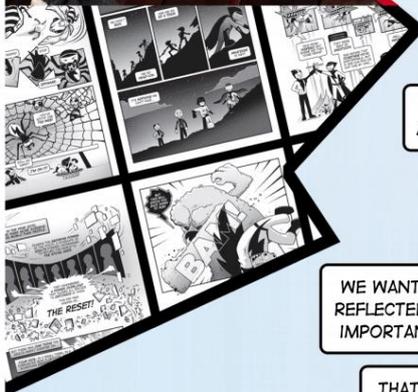
A STORY WITHIN A STORY!

BEYOND THE **INCREDIBLE PROSE**, THE BOOK ALSO FEATURES SEVEN **GRAPHIC NOVEL SEGMENTS.**

FOR THESE SECTIONS I WORKED CLOSELY WITH NAT TO DESIGN A TEAM OF COMIC-BOOK SUPERHEROES: **THE SCREEN SAVERS!**

WE WANTED **EACH SUPERHERO** TO HAVE A **UNIQUE OUTFIT** THAT REFLECTED THEIR POWERS, BUT SINCE THEY'RE A TEAM, IT WAS ALSO IMPORTANT THAT THE CHARACTERS VISUALLY **BELONG TOGETHER.**

THAT'S WHY EACH CHARACTER HAS THEIR OWN **SYMBOL**, AS WELL AS A **PERSONALISED** VERSION OF THE DISTINCTIVE HELMET AND SUPERSUIT!



WIKI!
KNOWS THE ANSWER TO EVERY QUESTION!

FILTER!
CAN SHAPESHIFT INTO ANYTHING!

SKYDROP!
TELEPORTS FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER!

HISPEED!
CAN INSTANTLY DOWNLOAD ANY SKILL! AND HAS A GADGET ARM!





SOLOMON MACARONI

AND THE COUSIN CATASTROPHE (UQP)

ASHLEIGH BARTON

<https://www.ashleighbarton.com/>

Illustrated by **SARAH DAVIS**

Links: *<https://www.uqp.com.au/books/solomon-macaroni-and-the-cousin-catastrophe>

*Teachers notes: https://d3f44jafdqsrtdg.cloudfront.net/teacher-notes/Solomon-Macaroni-and-the-Cousin-Catastrophe_Teachers-notes_FINAL.pdf

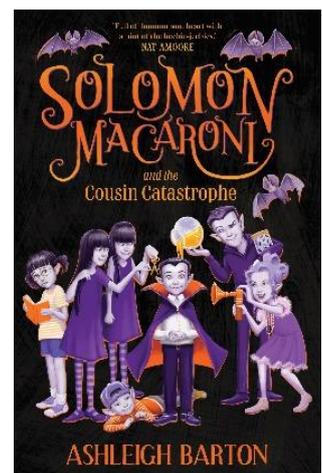
About the Book

Solomon Macaroni is a vampire who lives in a world where magic has almost completely disappeared. This means that, other than living for a really long time (and ageing very slowly), he doesn't have any magical abilities. When his parents go on holidays without him for one hundred years, he has to stay with his uncle, the world-famous Dracula, and his six cousins. This is bad news for Solomon because it means having to stay in spooky Transylvania, and because five of his six cousins love pulling pranks – on Solomon. When these five boisterous cousins venture into a dangerous forest known as the Wildwood, Solomon agrees to help his other cousin, the kind and lovely Lucy, go in after them to bring them home safely. But when they get to the forest, Solomon discovers that's not really the reason they're there...

Creating Characters

Solomon was a character I invented when I was around eight or nine years old. I don't know why I never forgot about him, but I can still clearly remember drawing him in my notebook and the personality he came with - friendly, polite, and slightly anxious. In other words: nothing like a traditional vampire. When it came to writing Solomon's story all these years later, I had so much fun taking what we know about vampires and turning that completely upside-down. Unlike mean, scary, bloodsucking vampires, Solomon is extremely kind with impeccable manners, and he's also a vegetarian with a love of chocolate. For the most part, his cousins are like human children, though their lives are much kookier. Uncle Dracula is bighearted and sweet and spends a lot of time creating wacky inventions to make other people happy.

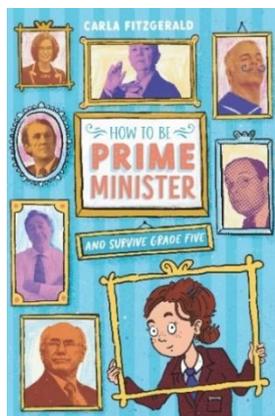
Once I'd established what kind of vampires these characters these were, it was important to establish *who* they were. Having so many main characters was a bit of a challenge. I tried to make it easy to keep track by giving them distinguishing features, traits, and interests. One of the most important parts of any story is the journey of its characters, so I also made sure to give each of them their own motivations, obstacles or secrets that



needed to be resolved by the end of the book, and, of course, their own lessons to learn.

Whatever characters you're creating, have fun. And hang onto them! Because who knows: one day they might end up in a book of their own.

Solomon will be back in another adventure in 2023.



HOW TO BE PRIME MINISTER AND SURVIVE GRADE FIVE (UQP)

CARLA FITZGERALD

Website www.carlafitzgerald.com.au

Instagram @carlafitzgeraldauthor



How to be Prime Minister and Survive Grade Five is the story of eleven-year-old, Harper and her dad, who happens to be the prime minister. Unfortunately, Harper's dad is terrible in the role. Soon their family is a laughingstock, and Dad disappears to a 'conference', leaving his phone behind. With her little sister, Lottie, Harper must secretly take his place and decide on a new policy before it's too late.

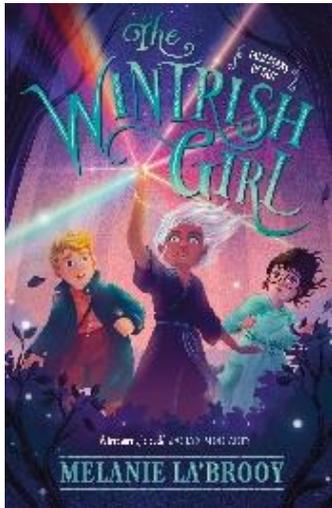
Harper finds herself torn between ideas – should she ban plastic bottles? Or make weekends longer? Can she prove a kid can lead the country better than a grown-up?

I spent a lot of time reading about children of world leaders and watching footage of them during victory speeches. I became fascinated about how they felt in those big moments, when their lives were changing forever.

On the one hand, Harper could have been one of those kids who loves being the boss. But I thought it would be more interesting if Harper was reluctant to be in the spotlight and didn't really want to take on her Dad's role. There was a natural tension and conflict in that.

I also wanted to ensure that Harper was relatable to readers and wasn't just a privileged white girl, complaining about her life at Kirribilli House. That's why I wrote it in 'first person' and tried to provide a lot of 'fish-out-of-water' experiences for Harper. The new school, the paparazzi, the public speaking, for example. I think kids can relate to the feeling of not having control over their lives, even if they can't relate to being the daughter of the prime minister. It's so important to make your reader care about your characters.

Finally, I wanted to make sure she sounded like a real kid. Fortunately, I'm around children a lot so I think I've picked up a few things. Hopefully, this comes through in the dialogue, the text messages, and the constant quest for junk food.



THE WINTRISH GIRL: TALIMANS OF FATE (UQP) MELANIE LA'BROOY

<https://www.uqp.com.au/books/the-wintrish-girl-talismans-of-fate-book-one>



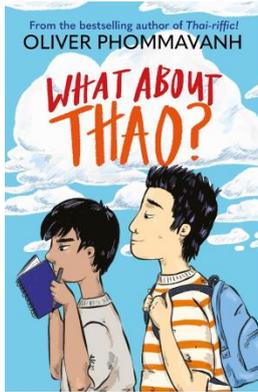
The story of *The Wintrish Girl* begins on Talisman Day, in the rich and powerful province of Arylia. During the Talisman Ceremony, every child receives an object that gives them special powers and reveals

their destiny. But Penn, the servant girl from the poor province of Midwinter, won't be getting a Talisman. She's doomed to a miserable, lonely life as a servant and outcast.

When mysterious and sinister events start to occur, the blame falls on Penn and she's forced to run for her life. Facing dangerous enemies with terrifying powers, Penn is going to have to take her fate into her own hands, with or without a Talisman...

The Wintrish Girl is Book One in my new *Talismans of Fate* series for middle-grade readers. It's a funny, action-packed fantasy adventure, set in a magical world. My hero, Penn, is eleven years old but her hair is grey. Giving your hero an unusual physical attribute is quite common in fantasy (think Harry Potter's lightning scar) because it's a shorthand way of demonstrating that this character is quite literally marked as different. The unusual physical feature can also be used to hint at a mysterious past.

Placing your characters in exciting or dangerous situations is a great way of working out who they are. In one scene in *The Wintrish Girl*, Penn's friend Arthur falls underground. Without hesitating, Penn rushes to his rescue, which shows her to be brave and loyal – but also a bit reckless as she doesn't stop to consider how they're going to get out again! In contrast, Penn's friend Juniper, hesitates and tries to think the situation through. Having characters with very different personalities, who react in different ways to the same situations, can be a really useful technique to show (not tell!) who your characters are.



WHAT ABOUT THAO? (Penguin)

OLIVER PHOMMAVANH

<https://www.oliverwriter.com/my-books/what-about-thao/>

You tube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/c/VirtualOliverP>

CREATING CHARACTERS - BE YOURSELF

My new book is about a new kid named Thao, who moves to a tiny country town called Megulla. The town is a character in itself, and I based it on all the country towns I've visited from West Wyalong to Mildura.

The kids were wonderful in these small country towns, and it made me want to write a book about it.

A lot of my characters in my books are based on me as a 12-year-old kid. What would 12-year-old Oliver think or do?

This is what I did when I created Thao for **What About Thao**. I wondered how I would feel being the only Asian kid in a country school AND how to be the only Asian kid in a country town. Would I like the attention? Or would I be sick of it? I answered these questions in my own shoes before I transferred them into Thao's thoughts.

Now, you may be a kid yourself reading this. So, then put yourself into the scenarios that you want to write. How would you feel being the new kid and having to start over? How would you survive in a small town with only ONE SUPERMARKET and NO McDONALD'S?



Record your feelings and then place them in a new character, with another name so people don't know that it's really you (he-he.)

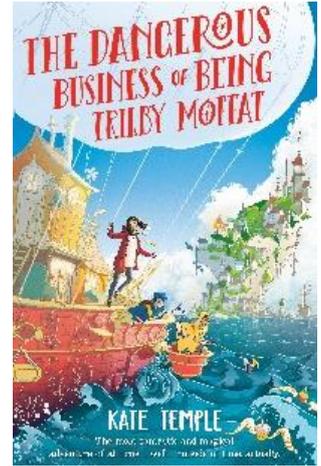
So, keep a diary, jot down your thoughts in a notebook or even vlog what you did during the week. Take photos and record sounds and videos. They will all help to write about characters that readers care about, because the readers are kids just like you!
Happy creating! – Oliver



THE DANGEROUS BUSINESS of BEING TRILBY MOFFAT (Hachette)

KATE TEMPLE

<http://katejoltemple.com/>



What's it about?

The Dangerous Business of Being Trilby Moffat is about a girl who must flee her home because of a weird pandemic that's making people speak dead languages.

She ends up running away to an antique shop (that's only open for 1 minute on a Thursday and 2 minutes on a Friday) That's when a terrible accident occurs, and she is suddenly promoted to the most important person in time... The TIME KEEPER.



World Health Organization

DREAM SICKNESS

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Is it contagious?

No. People develop symptoms for no reason.

Will I begin baking ancient cakes immediately?

Yeah, pretty much straight away.

Do the cakes taste any good?

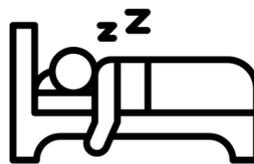
Oh no! These ancient cakes made from rotting fish guts.

That sounds gross.

Totally.

Can my doctor help?

Ha! As if.



EXCESSIVE SLEEPINESS



ANCIENT CAKE BAKING



THE SUDDEN ONSET OF A DEAD LANGUAGE



ABILITY TO PERFORM FORGOTTEN DANCE STEPS

A secret island with NO TIME!

Most of the action is set on a fabulous island that exists just outside of time. That means there's LITERALLY no time on the island and that makes island life pretty interesting.

All anyone ever eats on the island is cake... all sorts of fantastic cakes. And do anyone's teeth ever rot? NO. Why? Because you need time to rot? a tooth. Also, their bubble baths never get cold and the bubbles never pop.

The other great thing about this island are the mysterious children who live there. These kids actually come from disasters in history, some of the WORST disasters of all time. There's a boy from Hiroshima in 1945, a girl from Pompei and another girl from the Titanic...

It was great fun coming up with these characters because these ancient children all get along well, even though they come from such different time periods. I had to do a lot of research into those terrible events to build my characters. I looked at what these kids would wear and what life would have been like for them. They come from pretty dangerous times and that's a good thing, because when they meet Trilby they have to help her find a time treasure that will cure this pandemic.



This is a reference picture I used to imagine my character of the Japanese school boy. I really like looking at the clothing and thinking about what this person would have been like. I have a whole notebook of pictures like this.

The BEST EVER narrator...



I basically have the best narrator ever in this book. That's not my opinion, it's the narrator's, he told me to say that. The narrator is the last living thylacine. His name is Benjamin and that's also the name of the last Tasmanian Tiger to be alive in captivity. He died in 1936 in Hobart Zoo. I did a lot of

research into Thylacine and decided one would be the perfect narrator, mine is a pretty fantastic character, he actually has a few law degrees from different time periods! And did I mention he is a bit pompous?

Move over diamonds! Time Treasure is the most valuable treasure of all.

Forget gold and jewels... I've come up with the most precious treasure in the world, Time Treasure. And it's the one thing that's going to help Trilby and these ancient kids fix broken time. I got the idea for time treasure from the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. <https://ich.unesco.org/>

You should really check this list out! It's full of amazing treasures that don't physically exist. It's a great resource for getting ideas for your own stories...

LUNCH WITH THE STARS - WENDY FITZGERALD



As a CBCA Book Week activity CBCA NSW Branch Inc Northern Sydney Sub-branch run a special 'Lunch with the Stars'. This year it was held at St Paul's Catholic College in Manly. There were 18 tables of 10 people. On each table were 8 kids, a teacher and an author. Each author had a chance to introduce themselves and then there were 2 authors as guest speakers - Oliver Phommavanh and Louise Park. Lunch was wraps, party pies, sausage rolls and spinach triangles. Paul MacDonald ran a book shop.

Some kids came in school uniform. Others came dressed to suit the theme of their author or the CBCA Book Week theme of

'Dreaming with Eyes Open.'

The schools were encouraged to decorate their tables in the theme of the author. This was St Mary's School – set up for wildlife photographer Jan Latta.



At the end, the kids were able to collect autographs in their booklets. The kids now have the opportunity to enter a writing competition. The prize for winners is a free writing workshop with one of these authors for their whole class. A fun time was had by all.

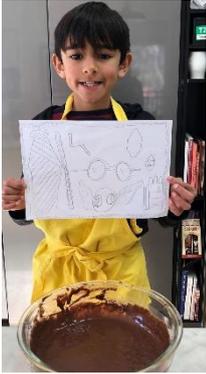


AUTHORS-JUST FOR FUN!

Back row. Felicity Pulman, Kristin Darell, Belinda Murrell, Kiah Thomas, Debra Tidball, Liz Ledden, Sonia Bestulic, Louise Park, Lesley Gibbs, Lisa Nicol, Mike Barry, and Beth MacDonald.

Front row- Dani Vee, Carla Fitzgerald, Wendy Blaxland, Oliver Phommavanh, Amelia McInerney, Wendy Fitzgerald, Jean Saxby, and Alexa Moses.

CHARACTERS AND CAKE



All good cakes (and books) begin with a plan...

-What did you like best about CBCA Book Week? **Dressing up as my favourite character from a book I enjoy reading**

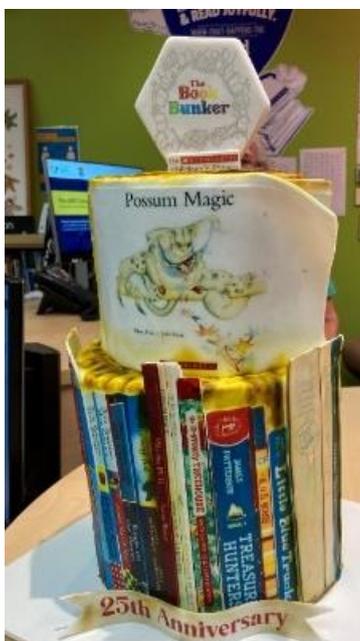
-What is the best thing about your cake? **The decorations- shaping and painting it.**

-Why do you like to read? **I like how books are descriptive it's almost like watching a movie**

-How did you plan your cake? **I did some research on the internet and then I drew up my ideas, I talked it through with my mum, so we had a plan.**

-Why did you choose to do a Harry Potter cake? **I really love reading Harry Potter as I like magical books.**

-And so, Harry Potter, which is better: the Cake? or the Book? **Ohh, that's a hard one I have a sweet tooth so it will have to be the cake in this case!**



The BOOK BUNKER, BIRTHDAY CAKE AND BOOKS

-BRONWYN JACKSON

Retired TL and Coordinator Book Bunker,
Children's Hospital at Westmead

Yes, this is a real cake!

The design is various pages of Mem Fox's book, **Possum Magic**. Mem was part of the original group that founded the idea of the *Book Bunker*.

For more than two decades, *the Book Bunker* at **The Children's Hospital at Westmead** has been a place where patients can escape the reality of being in hospital, entering another world through the power of literature.

The unique space was opened on August 14, 1997, by Australia's favourite children's author Mem Fox, and was the first of its kind in Australia, offering a warm, inviting and vibrant place where children and their families could come to read and let their imaginations flourish while in hospital.

Today, the *Book Bunker* is turning the page on their next big chapter – their 25th year anniversary.

“The Book Bunker has always been an oasis for children and their parents alike, providing books to fuel their imagination,” Eva Blaik, Co-ordinator of the Book Bunker, said.

“Looking back now on the number of families who have sought comfort in the *Book Bunker* over the last 25 years is quite remarkable. I'm so proud of what we have been able to achieve and how we've been able to help support kids in hospital.”

The *Book Bunker* is an initiative of Scholastic Australia and was specially designed to allow accessibility for children in wheelchairs, children with IV drips and children confined to bed.

The children's library stocks 10,000 books for all ages, from babies to adolescents to ensure readers have a wide range to pick from. The books are regularly restocked and updated with the latest in children's publishing from Scholastic Australia and other publishers as well as with books donated by the community.

Working like a library, patients can either visit the Book Bunker to borrow a book, or if they are too unwell, volunteers will take books around to the wards for patients to choose from.

“A book provides comfort, escape and an opportunity for parent and child to snuggle up together,” says Bronwyn Jackson, the coordinator.

“I remember one mother telling me that the first time her daughter sat up in bed was when she was reaching for a book from the Book Bunker. It was amazing to hear about the difference it makes.”

The success of the *Book Bunker* isn't just attributed to the wide range reading material, or the cosy reading nook, it is also largely due to the passion and dedication of the librarians and volunteers.

"Every volunteer has a passion for reading, but even greater than that is their passion for sharing this with others. They are all so grateful to have the opportunity to do this through the Book Bunker for patients and their families," Bronwyn said.

The *Book Bunker* is now one of four Scholastic Children's Libraries around the country, with Book Bunkers also set up in The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, Queensland Children's Hospital in Brisbane and Perth Children's Hospital.



Can words "make my day?" Every day is a good day to ask yourself and others "RUOK?" A little caring in anyone's day can make a difference - sometimes more than we know.

Ask and care - RUOK?

<https://www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask>



1. Ask



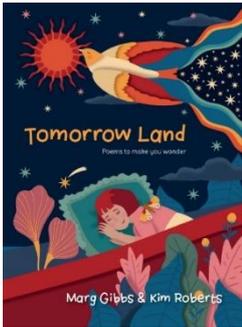
2. Listen



3. Encourage action



4. Check in



The new book, **Tomorrow Land**, by sisters Marg Gibbs www.mjgibbs.com.au and Kim Roberts <https://fourlines.carrd.co/>, features poetry that captures the wonder and joy of imagination in the "what if?"

Their inspiration comes from visits to the library at midnight, a house bursting with words, a magic finger, Egyptian mummies, a mermaid who casts a spell, a curious boy with a curious mind and a wormy wedding.



Check out some of their individual poems. Marg's **TAKE OFF** rhyming poem takes us along for the ride with the newbie, the rider, the pro, and the winner, while Kim packages up some ideas about poetry and includes a surprise ending in her poem - **RATS**

TAKE OFF by Marg Gibbs

*I'm a dirt bike newbie
around and around all-day
a few false starts
and tumbles on my way.*

*I'm a dirt bike rider
hurtling over hills
I'm a BMX flyer
steady bumps and spills.*

*I'm a dirt bike pro
up the walls and back
twisting and turning
steep drops along the track.*

*I'm a dirt bike winner
landing jumps on a high
faster than a roller coaster
pumped to the sky.*

*The ramp can be epic
thrilling and fast
practice a flying motion
without coming last.*

[As self-published in **Backpacks & Paper Planes** and available for purchase from Marg's website - www.mjgibbs.com.au/publications/

RATS by Kim Roberts

*The rat has a reputation
Of that you can be sure
He's often referred to as dirty
And believe me, there's more.*

*Sneaky, smelly, double crossing
Spineless, stale and wet
Ravenous, rotten, rodent
Can I have one as a pet?*



The
POWER of POETRY
with **MARG GIBBS** and
KIM ROBERTS



A POETRY PACKAGE - KIM ROBERTS

'Rats' took me about 20 minutes to write. My sister had written a poem about rats and wanted it to be more humorous. When I first looked at the poem, it was hard to change to make it funny. I classify this one as funny due to the unexpected last line. The poem works because of its short length and simplicity. The alliteration helps with flow.

My initial excitement about writing poetry began at age 14 when my teacher gave me an "A" for a poem I wrote. It was published in the newspaper, and I have continued to keep writing – diaries, poems, stories about everyday happenings, small books, songs and more.

Last year I had a stroke just before my 60th birthday. My sister suggested I write poems for a book she was writing called **Tomorrow Land**. While recovering, it gave me the purpose I needed. It brought me hope. I was doing something that I loved and not dwelling on my setbacks.

Having an audience to read to - primary school children - is enough incentive to continue writing. It was exciting when our book was published. This latest journey has also opened up other creative pursuits using poetry. It has been fun and has taught me a lot about my spark and what motivates me. We all need to find that, the sooner in life the better.

I encourage you to **start now**. Write about the things you know about - everyday things, like your favourite handbag or the coolest running shoes and the magic they bring. Believe in yourself. Learn some techniques. Share with others. Poems are for reading out loud. Start a podcast of poetry!

Language is surprising. Choosing the right word or a phrase can be challenging and fun. Using literary devices such as onomatopoeia, repetition, personification, and alliteration – they all help to bring the poem to life. I also think about the 5 senses. The audience has to visualise and even smell and feel your words.

The mood is important. I try to write upbeat poems with a touch of humour. We all need to smile sometimes and feel good about ourselves. We also need to know we are normal, just like other people. Writing more serious content is important too. Decide what type of poem suits your personality.

You may have a message to tell. A poem is a great way to do that. People remember poems or lines in poems.

My poems have taken me to lots of creative spaces which you can explore

<https://fourlines.carrd.co/>

Four Lines came to me as a verse in a poem is usually 4 lines. You can say a lot in 4 lines whether it rhymes or not.

A poem is a little package. You unwrap it and discover something magical, something fresh.

Happy writing - Kim

