

OZ KIDS IN PRINT

Issue 1, 2020

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Emma-Lee Egan
(2019 Newcrest Mining Indigenous Art Award)*

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170 Forest Road, Lara, Victoria 3212
Postal Address:
PO Box 267, Lara, Victoria 3212

The Selection Committee:

Managing Editor:Carol Dick
Publisher:.....Robin Leonard
Finals Judge:Professor Margot Hillel OAM
Australian Catholic University
Sponsorship Manager: ..Ernest Bland
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Gail Woods CPA
Rob Leonard (Executive)
John McGuire
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

This is the first Edition for 2020 and what a tragic few months Australia has seen so far. As people get back on their feet and rebuild, I heard on the radio about a program to help and where to find help.

This volunteer group was set up by just a few people, and now they have over a thousand people volunteering. But they still need more. If you know someone who would like to volunteer or someone who needs a volunteer, then pass this on: <http://tradiesforfireaffectedcommunities.com>

The first few months of the year are always quiet at the Editor's Desk, as schools have just returned and students are just settling in. So, instead of using months on our publications, we will be using issue numbers. That way we can make sure that there are 44–48 pages that go to print each time. The closing date this year is 18th September, but please don't wait until then to send your entries in.

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KEEP ON WRITING (TYPING)!

Carol Dick
Managing Editor

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Urid and the Voice

THE GREY mist hung over the forest, covering the blue sky from view. Urid carried herself on even as her fur dragged along the ground. It had been weeks since Urid last felt the cool, soft touch of the ocean. She longed for it. The once beautiful sky-blue swirls on Urid's fur were now a fading, deep, ocean blue. Her horns no longer glowed, and her fins just drooped down the side of her back. The voice that once called her could no longer be heard.

"Where are you?" Urid yelled to the trees that rustled as they swayed in the wind. "Where is the voice that called me here...? Where...?" Her voice trailed off as she plodded on.

Weeks back at the ocean Urid's sister had disappeared and no one knew how or why... but this voice, it called to Urid as if it knew where her sister was, as if it had all the answers.

Hushed whispers came from the wind as it ruffled Urid's fur making her shiver. Her paws scraped along the earth as she struggled to keep herself standing. "I can do it", Urid said as her paws gave way and she fell to the floor. The damp earth beneath her was cool yet rocky. She tried to pull herself up but failed to and fell back down.

"Don't give up!" her sister's voice called. Urid's ears pricked up and her fur stood on end.

"Azulay?" Urid whispered.

The voice carried in the wind as it echoed through the forest. Urid longed so hard to see her sister that she ran with all her strength, after the wind.

"W-wait!" Urid cried, "Where are you... Azulay?"

Her paws started to ache once more, and she started to weaken again as her hope drained out of her.

Urid collapsed, just as a bright blue shimmer caught her eyes. She turned her head quickly as she hit the ground with a thud.

"A-Azulay...?"

A blue still body lay in a clearing beside Urid, it looked quite like her sister... but no... it could not be her, after all that thing looked... dead!

By **Grace Ferguson**
Year 7, Our Lady's College
HOLLAND PARK – QLD.
Teacher: Ms Angus



The Heroes 2

NEWs flash, News flash, the news came over the television while the Incredible Five were watching their favourite program on the shopping TV channel. The news announcer, EV, reported that the National Bank Company had been robbed of five hundred thousand dollars.

Instantly Freeza froze time and all the heroes started talking.

‘Who could have done such a perplexing crime?’ says Coderman, who is an animal speaking expert.

‘I have no idea,’ said a voice which made everyone jump. It was Inviz, the world famous invisible girl.

Stronga the Strong said, ‘Let’s go down to the bank and investigate.’

Suddenly the phone rang and it was Dash, he was already there.

The Incredible Five hurried to the bank where Freeza paused time again to look at all the suspicious faces in the crowd and the bank employees. This gave the other members of the Incredible Five time to do their own investigations.

Inviz turned invisible and checked out everyone’s backpacks looking for any large parcels.

Meanwhile, Dash decides to run back in time trying to run back before the robbery but he makes a mistake. He runs back while the robbery is taking place and he gets caught. The robber catches him and throws him into the bank vault and slams the door shut so he’s imprisoned in the vault.

Coderman decides to talk to the bank mice and they tell him that Dash is in the vault.

‘What!’ says Coderman. He turned to his friends and said, ‘Dash is in the vault. He must be working with the robber.’

Stronga goes to the vault and using his super strength, he opens the vault.

‘Don’t let Dash out,’ says Coderman. ‘Let the police deal with him.’

Then a little mouse ran up Coderman’s leg onto his shoulder and squeaked a message.

‘It wasn’t Dash,’ squeaked the little mouse in mouseeze, ‘Dash was trying to stop the robber. The robber is...’

Coderman can’t believe what he’s heard.

He turns to his friends. ‘It’s not Dash, it’s EV, the news reader. He’s the real robber. His real name is Evil Villain aka Alex Parcelman.’

Freeza unfreezes time and tells the police who the villain is. The police find the money in the television news van and return it to the appreciative bank manager. EV goes to jail.

Stonga releases Dash from the vault and by now, Dash feels very hungry as he missed his lunch being stuck in the vault. He notices one of the bank employees about to eat a delicious burrito. He whispers to Freeza who freezes time for him and he dashes over and grabs the burrito.

When Freeza unfreezes time, the poor bank employee is confused. Where did his lunch go? To this very day it remains a mystery to him.

By **Andy Johnson**

Year 4, Greensborough Primary School
GREENSBOROUGH – VIC.

Teacher: Miss Smith



The Cane Cutter's Wife

THE WIND was howling like the wolves of her homeland, and the rain was pelting down on the tin roof. The corrugated iron shack rattled and clattered under the heavy tropical storm; the hessian sugar-bag doors and windows were drenched already. As the storm rampaged on, the sugar cane around the shack bent and broke – becoming a worthless crop.

Inside the shack, the furniture was sparse and basic; a candle on an upturned packing crate spilled its beacon of light out into the darkroom. The cane cutter's wife and her children huddled in closer around the box and prayed as the storm outside battled to burst into this small oasis of comfort.

In her husband's enforced absence, the young wife and her little ones have been left here alone to fight the imminent danger. This young woman is not used to being left alone to carry the family burden; however, recent events have brought about this kind of isolation. The cane cutter, along with many other Italian men, has been arrested and imprisoned in the Innisfail detention centre where they are held as 'enemy aliens'.

"Mama, everything gonna be oright?" whispered the youngest.

The girl is not even five, yet there was something about her which drew people to her. Her eyes spoke of a beautiful soul and her movements told of a nurturing being.

Mother: "Everything's going to be fine, sweetheart. It's just a storm – we've been through worse".

In some ways, that was true. The war had been worse. It had terrorised and ripped apart their homelands; still, this was more challenging somehow. At least during the war, there had not been the isolation that she felt here. In those war years, there had been the

comfort of her family and the neighbours she had known all her life. Times had been tough but they had all been in it together.

When they had first arrived in Innisfail, everything had appeared strange and exotic – the heavily jungled land, the fast-flowing green rivers, the lizard-like crocodiles basking in the mud, the roughly dressed migrant workers from all nations and the dark native people of this land. To these immigrants, Australia was a harsh land of opportunity where one could work hard, save and acquire land; this was an achievement that was almost impossible in feudal Italy. She and her husband were poor and illiterate, from a rural area where money and work were scant. She felt that her surroundings were not favourable to the development of the 'womanly' or sentimental side of nature. She would have to grow tough and strong to survive; returning to their hometown was certainly not an option.

In the beginning, living with the isolation of her existence in this land seemed almost impossible. She thanked God for their skills in farming, perhaps the only thing keeping them alive, but she couldn't keep the loneliness from creeping into her heart. Her nearest neighbours, half a day's trek through jungle paths and tumbling waterways, were not a source of comfort. Although she would be willing to trek the distance, neither of them could understand each other; they didn't speak Italian and she didn't speak Chinese. The cane cutter's hard work and determination to improve his family's standard of living had brought him to Mellick's farm, a hundred acres between Innisfail Estate and the Coconuts.

The storm outside maintained its roaring rage and the rain continued battering the roof.

"Mama, the storm's getting louder!" yelled the middle child – a ragged but cheeky faced little boy.

Although he was too young to fully understand what was happening, he could sense his mother's distress as she wiped away the despair on her face and whispered soothingly to her children. Her words were lost in the terrible noises of the storm's fury. With an ugly sound of scraping metal, followed by ominous clashes and bangs, the roof ripped off. As the candle guttered, overwhelming darkness and terror enveloped the room like a blanket.

The winds swirled around them in wild wet torrents, whipping their hair and stinging their eyes. A jagged piece of metal tore into the mother's side puncturing her flesh and leaving a gruesome gash. Tears, mourns and screams joined the sound of the pounding rain and the wailing wind.

As the young mother murmured her Ave Marias, imploring the Blessed Virgin Mary to watch over her and her children, she began to feel a glimmer of hope. Was that a light she saw flicking through the blinding rain? Was someone coming to help her? She hardly dared to hope. Her nearest neighbours were some miles away. Would they even know she was here on her own?

Clinging desperately to the children, she peered into the intense darkness. There was light. There was hope. Someone was coming to her rescue. She was not totally alone in her time of desperate need in this alien environment. A voice called from the darkness: "You oright Santina! We comin."

Years later, she remembered that night, their kindness as vividly as ever. She thought about the years gone by: how Zhang Wei and his wife took her and her children in, how they helped her slowly rebuild her cottage and how they supported her through those tough years of her husband's internment. She remembered how her sense of isolation

slowly left her and how they became part of the local community, a community which flourished because it realised the importance of supporting the newcomers.

By **Sharol Antony**

Year 12, Good Counsel College
INNISFAIL – QLD.

PROCRASTINATION



Ah, Procrastination
He's a good friend of mine
I hang with him for most subjects
And I just don't know why.

I call him up for Maths
For English and for Science
It's kinda hard not to
When we do homework on these devices.

He's a good mate I suppose
He is a lot of fun you see
But my mum keeps telling me
He is quite a bad influence and your only getting Bs!

Sometimes I may be working on long division, the elements or how to advertise
I may be getting bored and without a second to realise
I'm looking at the most recent trailer for a blockbuster movie with the genre of Sci-Fi

I wake up Sunday morning and I've got that productive spirit
I say "Yes! Time to get that textbook analysed!" as I go to my desk to clear it
But before I know it I'm looking at a Buzzfeed article
Telling me the top ten celebrity controversies of all time.

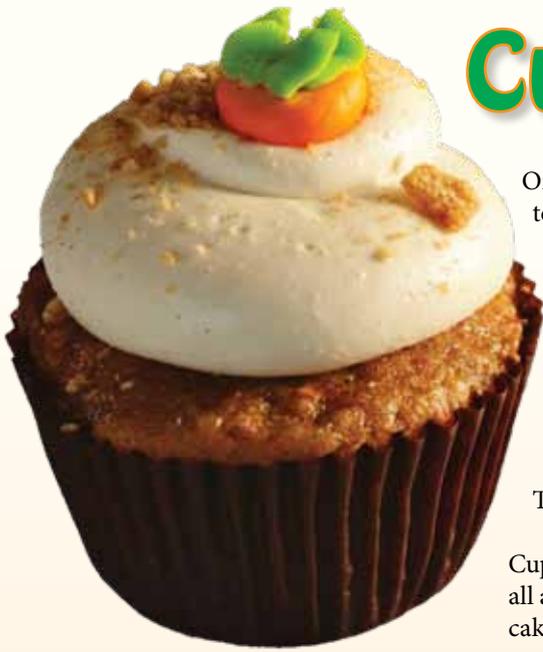
Procrastination, he's a good friend I guess
However, he gets me into trouble when I know I'm not my best
"Close that tab, Benjamin!" Mum would say in English.
What do you think you're doing?" Mrs Roberts would say and I know I'm in big trouble.

Though recently I have realised Procrastination isn't the best
He distracts me from the things that matter
Prevents me from focusing on that test.

It's funny you see, my mum always said,
Procrastination, he's not the best influence on me
So maybe in the future when we want to catch up
I should listen to my mum, she knows what's best for me.

By **Ben Springhall**

Year 9, St John's Lutheran School Kingaroy
KINGAROY – QLD.
Teacher: Jodie Springhall



Cupcake Gets Rescued

One day the baking woman comes over to her shelf. The five crumbs jump on to Cupcake, afraid that their mother would have to go without them.

Cupcake was worried. This was so unusual. The baking woman begins to talk. She says, "Someone is coming to order you tomorrow".

Then she left the room.

Cupcake was now too worried. She looked all around the bakery. There was only one cake, the magic cake.

That night, Cupcake couldn't sleep. The thought of soon being eaten was too bad. She held the five crumbs tightly so they wouldn't get left behind.

At midnight, a glow came from the shelf where Magic Cake sat. The glow became brighter and closer to Cupcake. She wondered if help was here.

When the light was very bright, it switched off and voice came. Nothing or nobody had this voice. It was Magic Cake!

Every night Magic Cake rescued bakery food and released them into the garden. Today, it was Cupcake and the five crumbs!

"Hop on", Magic Cake instructed. "I'm rescuing my own self too!"

Cupcake held the five crumbs carefully and hopped onto Magic Cake. They drifted through the window into the garden. Finally they were free from danger.

THE END

By **Nethya Wijsekera**

Year 2, Highfields Prep. & Kindergarten School
LINDFIELD – NSW

Teacher: Fiona Dundas-Smith

CUPCAKE is a small brownie white cupcake. She sits on a high wooden shelf. She lives in a humongous bakery.

Cupcake is a mother to five small cake crumbs.

Cupcake is lonely on this high shelf. She hopes somebody will come rescue her before she gets eaten.

The Preserver of Time

Glancing at the unfamiliar scene, she became anxious
She sensed the smell of chimneys, infusing smoke into the air.

Carriages and horses trotted past like royalty,

Whilst toothless workers and buck-toothed children flashed a grin.

Women were shouting through the street's narrow bend,

And children were sprinting as fast as windy flames devour.

The warm azure of the sky, contrasted with the dull grey of the town
Appearing as though a border was placed between the Earth and Heaven

Still, the world felt foreign, the lively sight made her feel disconnected

But during it all, the vast rippled sea welcomed her into the world,

The waves were rumbling, folding into one another

Each swell of the sea was enough to rock the fishing boats.

The ebbing tide, crawling onto the sandy shore

Although the world was unlike hers,

The sea was emitting a sense of power and connection,

The sea formed the relationship between both worlds,

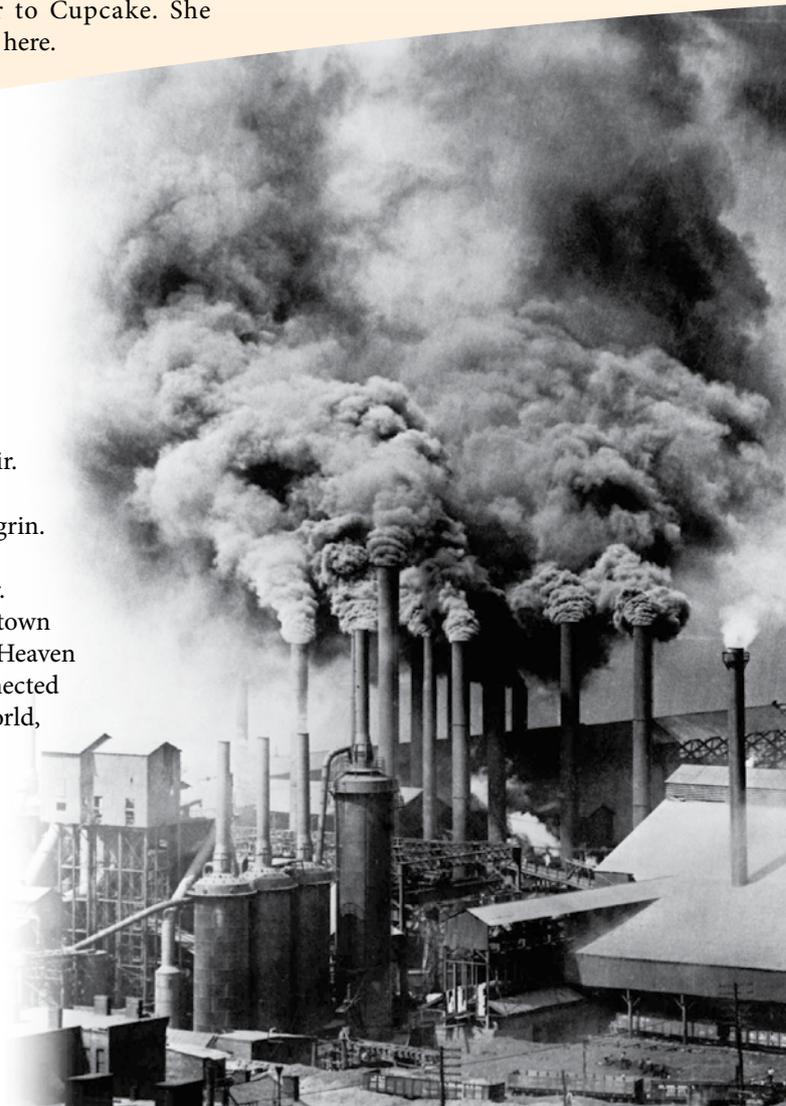
The sea remains the preserver of time.

By **Sophie Luo**

Year 6, Ravenswood School for Girls

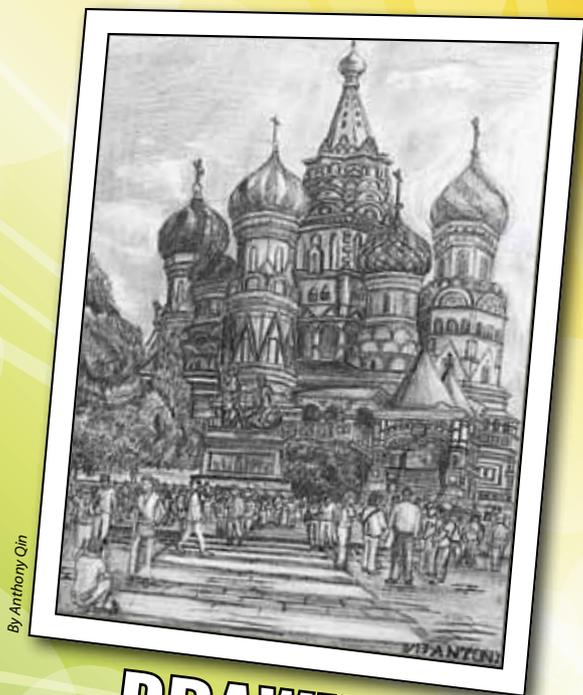
GORDON – NSW

Teacher: Sharon Shapiro



2020

YOUNG AUSTRALIAN ART AWARDS



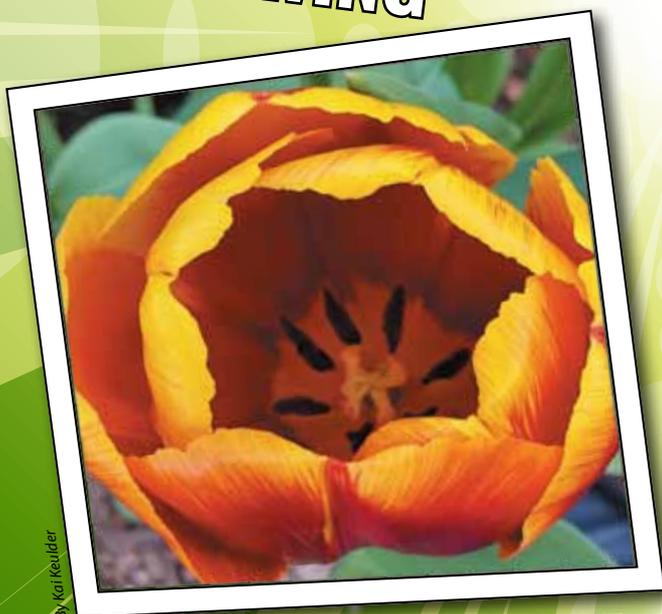
By Anthony Qin

DRAWING



By Manna Tsuchiya

COMPUTER ART



By Kai Keulder

PHOTOGRAPHY



By Matthew Ropesam

PAINTING

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The YoungAtArt website and the Young Australian Art Awards are an initiative of the Children's Charity Network. All entrants must be no older than 18 years of age or attending either a primary or secondary college. There are 4 categories: Painting, Drawing, Photography, Computer Art. There are three age groups: Junior (Prep to Grade 4), Middle (Grade 5 to Year 8), Senior (Year 9 to Year 12).

To enter your Artwork you will need to obtain a digital image of your piece of work and submit this image on-line through our website at www.ozkids.com.au.

To do this you will be required to sign up in order for you to have the access to submit artwork. If you or your school do not have access to digital imaging, you may send a copy of your artwork to Young at Art, PO Box 267, Lara, Victoria 3212. Further information is available online.

Meow Land

THE pain was still there.

“I am not dreaming” – thought crocodile Valdemar and tried to look at his tail. No luck. He couldn’t move. Is it possible that he was tied up?

What happened?

It was another stormy day in Fruity forest. All animals were hiding except for one, the one and only vegetarian crocodile Valdemar. He has recently moved away from other crocodiles and started a new life. He was thinking about having a pet and doing an online course. He was enjoying himself and was planning to get to know his neighbours.

For some reason, after a month in the Fruity forest, he still has not met many animals, they all seemed to avoid him.

He shooed this thought away and went for a swim to a nearby lake, he was a crocodile after all. The water always felt right to him. He wanted to learn different swimming styles, he wanted to float on his back and to watch clouds, he wanted.... “Wait a minute” – thought crocodile – “what is this???”

He clearly saw a small, miserable, soaking wet creature right next to the water lilies. A kitten. Valdemar loved cats, he was a cat crocodile. He saw many similarities between cats and crocodiles. He admired their free spirit and respected them. Especially one. Kappa. His life saver.

Crocodile Valdemar swam to the kitten and gently pushed him with his nose to the shore. “Where’s your mum?” – asked crocodile. “Meow” – said the kitten and that was as far as Valdemar could remember. Thousands of thin needles entered his fit green body and the pain became unbearable.

Now crocodile was lying on a dusty ground, unable to move and surrounded by strong metal net. Why? He was a good crocodile. Never harmed anyone, listened to his mum, loved cats... Cats! He

could hear meowing on the background. He was captured by the cats!

“Hey, anybody there?” – shouted crocodile.

“Meow, what do you want?” – said a high voice.

“Where am I and what’s going on?” – asked Valdemar.

“You are in Meow Land, the land of unwanted cats. Our Queen loves crocodiles and has a perfect recipe” – said the same voice and a dark skinny cat with split ear stepped out from the bushes.

“But why, I’m harmless, I love cats, I’m a good crocodile!”

“Only cooked crocodiles are good. The dinner will be at 8pm, our crocodile-friendly fry pan is already polished. Sorry.”

The cat lazily started walking away.

“Wait a minute!” – said crocodile Valdemar. “What if I can prove that I’m no threat to cats community?”

“Ha. Typical crocodile. Do you even know how cats look like? Have you ever had a conversation with a cat? Do you happen to have a cat friend?”

“Yes” – whispered crocodile Valdemar. “I have a cat friend.”

“An uneaten cat friend? The one who will meow in your defence?” – asked the skinny cat.

“Yes, her name is Kappa, she looks after a few humans and a cow in a nearby village. She saved me once, she’ll meow for me!”

“Very well. I’ll let Her Majesty know. Kappa will have to convince the entire Meow Land. And she has to do so before the fry pan gets hot. You better get on to it, croc” – meowed the cat and disappeared.

“Fantastic” – thought crocodile Valdemar. “How can I possibly let Kappa know?”

Kappa was a tiny, white creature with grey spots on her head, her tail was also grey and very long and her brain, also grey, definitely occupied half of her body. She could save him again, but she was a cat. Cats sleep a lot and do not care much about the others. Besides, they usually sleep on book shelves, so they can’t feel vibration...

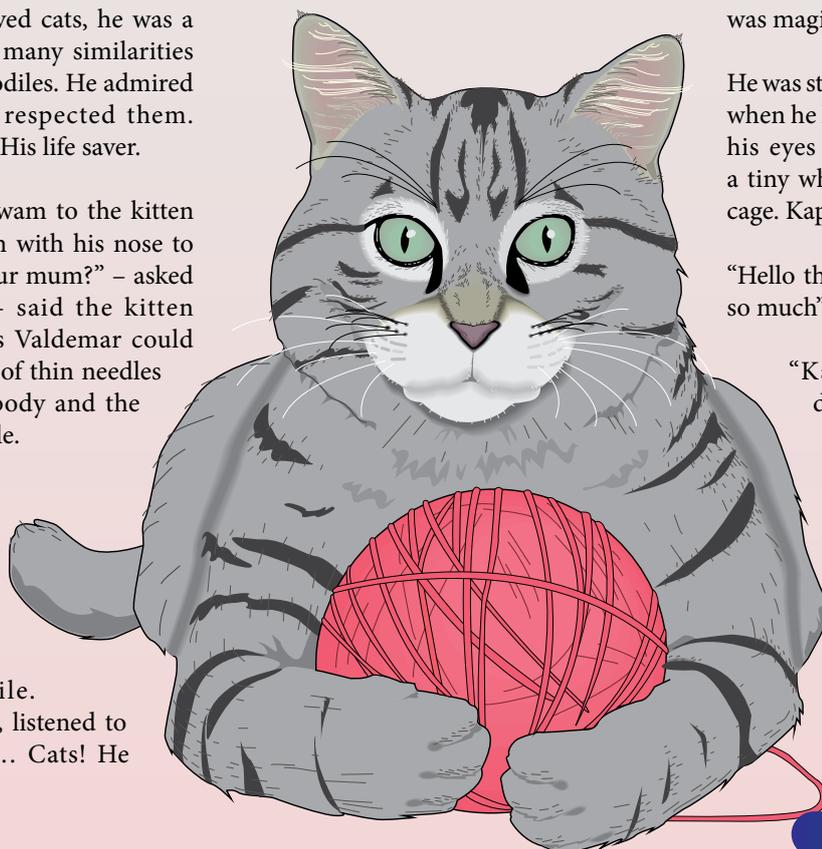
Crocodile Valdemar couldn’t get up, but he could wiggle. And he could shout. So he wiggled and shouted, wiggled and shouted. Persistence usually pays, but what crocodile needed at the moment was magic.

He was starting to get numb from wiggling when he heard another meow. He opened his eyes and much to his surprise saw a tiny white cat sitting on the top of his cage. Kappa!

“Hello there. I didn’t know you love cats so much” – said Kappa.

“Kappa, help me please. They don’t believe me that I’m a good crocodile, they want to eat me! If they see that I have a cat friend, they will let me go!” – explained crocodile.

“I see” – said Kappa. “So you think they want to eat you because you’re bad? I thought cats eat because they are hungry...” – said Kappa and jumped into the cage. “If you



are still here when the fry pan is hot, they will eat you regardless of what I say. They are hungry and they have kittens.”

“This is not fair! I don’t want to be cooked and I don’t want them to starve!” – said Valdemar. “Surely they do not plan to eat me!”

“Of course not, my darling. They heat that enormous fry pan every day just to stay warm” – said Kappa.

Valdemar noticed that he can now move. Kappa somehow untied his ropes. “Cats are amazing” – thought crocodile.

“What do we do now?” – asked crocodile stretching his aching body.

“There is no WE here. I’ll go to the cats and check out the dinner recipe and you better run!” – said Kappa and left.

“But how...”

“Run! Now! I’ll distract them.”

Crocodile Valdemar trusted this little cat. She was his only friend outside his species. Besides, Kappa had very good instincts.

He ran as fast as he could and did not stop till he reached the lake. He lay down by the

water and waited for Kappa. She appeared only in the evening, very tired and all covered in dust.

“Cats are amazing” – thought crocodile Valdemar.

“Yes, we are” – meowed Kappa and let him take her home. She had a few humans to look after. And a cow.

Everybody needs a cat in their life.

By **Melanie Korolev**
Year 3, Redlands School
CREMORNE – NSW
Teacher: Ms More Patel

We’re in the car and on the road,
Off to hunt some deer.
It’s a two hour trip to Glen Coe,
My favourite time of year.

I can already imagine the deafening roars,
Made by the beautiful stags.
We arrive at the site, just after lunch,
And quickly set up our swags.

Everyone’s eager to get out the guns,
And to start stalking our prey.
So we set off into the forest,
And we stay there all day.

We have to be as quiet as mice,
And be careful where we tread.
Because if we make any noise,
The deer will have already fled.

We roar into a homemade pipe,
Trying to imitate their sound.
And when the deer hear our call,
They decide to come ‘round.

When the stag comes into range,
Dad blasts its hairy head.
We sprint over to the bloody corpse,
Yes! The deer is dead!

Off comes the head,
With the serrated hunting knife.
And with it a strip of venison,
The best meat you’ll taste in your life.

We carry it back to camp,
And cut out all of the meat.
So that all is left are the antlers,
A 6x6 treat!

By **Lily Knight**
Year 7, St John’s Lutheran School, KINGAROY – QLD.
Teacher: Jodie Springhall



GLEN COE HUNTING

BOOK REVIEWS

Meet our book reviewers Lucie, Zoe and Danielle from Flinders Christian Community College and Leila, Bianca and Liam from Tucker Road, Bentleigh Primary School.

Reviews Coordinators: Karyn Bishop, Robyn Donoghue and Meredith Costain



Mindcull

K H Canobi (Ford Street Publishing)

Mindcull is a thrilling read, set in a world where VR headsets, skinsuits and wrist gems are a necessity, enforced by the government. Eila, the protagonist of the story, enjoys spending her spare time with her best friend Mei, creating public skits and videos known as 'vclips' to entertain others around the world.

Little does she know, however, that this will lead her to being shortlisted in a highly regarded competition that could change her life forever. But there's a twist. When rumours of whispered secrets, poisoned

drinks and malfunctioning skinsuits are floating around the mansion, and the stakes are as high as life or death, Eila must make a crucial decision... Who can she actually trust?

I strongly recommend *Mindcull* to anyone looking to be thrown into this immersive, incredibly detailed world.

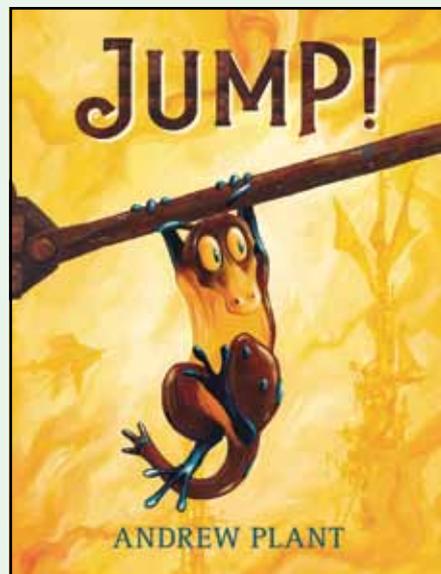
Rating: ★★★★★★★★ [9/10]

— Zoe Male, Year 9, Flinders CCC

Jump!

written and illustrated by Andrew Plant (Ford Street Publishing)

Jump! is an amazing book about fitting in. I personally think fitting in is BORRRING.



Imagine if every single person looked exactly the same and did exactly the same things? Sound interesting to you?

This story follows the smallest Quig, aptly named Stumpy (a sentient species that gets around by jumping) who has a genetic mutation, a fear of heights and refuses to jump around the city like the other Quigs do. But it turns out he has a special talent as well.

It is a science fiction picture book with illustrations matching this genre. Andrew Plant is an extremely talented artist.

This book is great to lift your spirits.

I would recommend it for ages 5–12.

Rating: ★★★★★★★★ [9/10]

— Liam, Year 6, Tucker Road PS

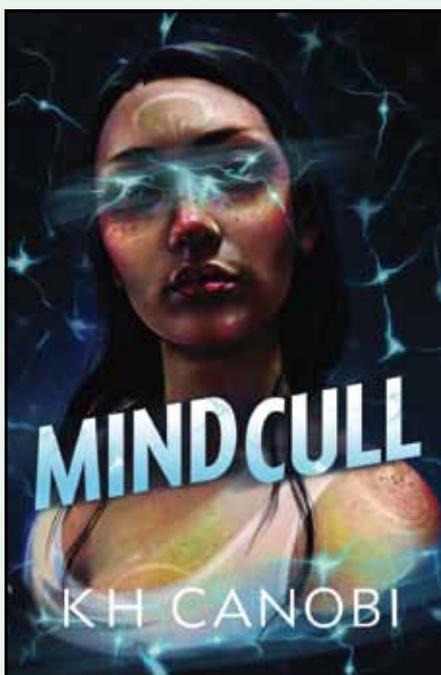
Emergency Rescue Angel

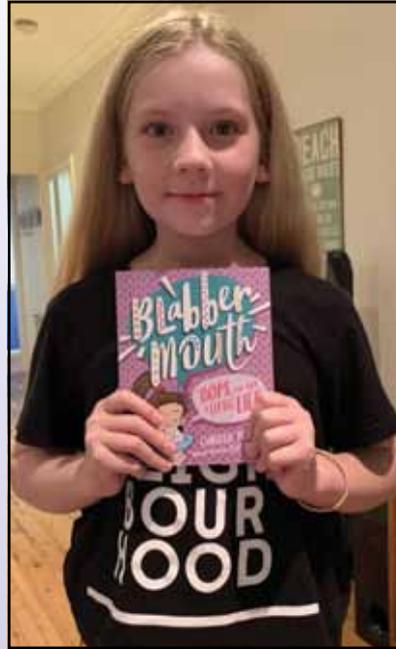
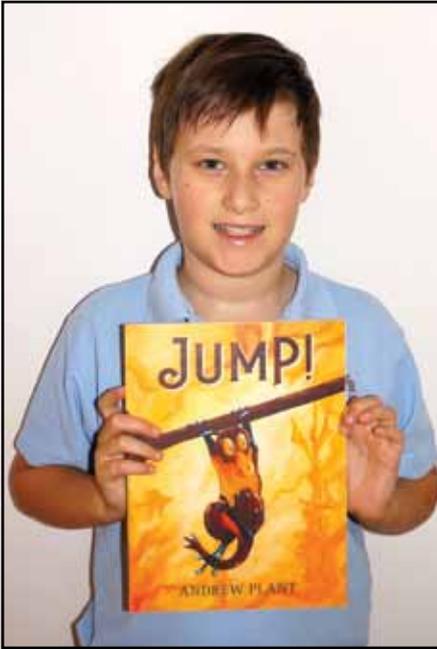
by Kate Whittle (Omnibus Books)

Emergency Rescue Angel is about a boy called Mitch, who's been having difficulties since his father drowned saving another kid. His grades have been slipping and he's quit surfing.

In other words, Mitch has stopped doing all the things his father would have wanted him to do.

But now, there's a new girl in Mitch's class who's everything Mitch doesn't want her





to be. Her name is Max, she dresses like a goth and seemingly, no one can see her.

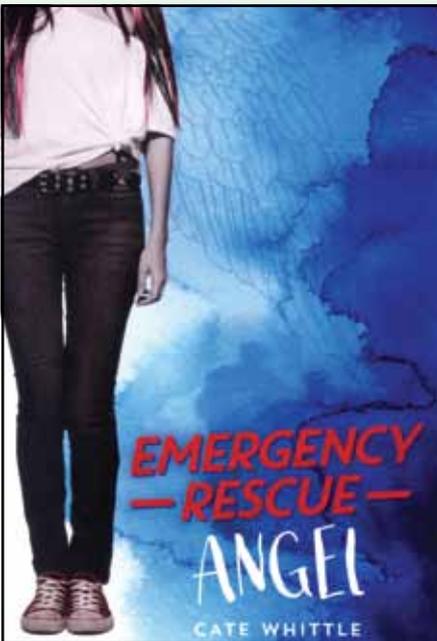
One night Mitch sees Max in a different way and it's not something trivial...

Read all about the troubles Mitch goes through in his efforts to change and Max's sudden impact on his life.

The entire story is amazing and I would recommend it to readers aged 10–14 because there are some things that you have to be a little bit older to understand.

Rating: ★★★★★★★ [9/10]

— Leila, Year 6, Tucker Road PS



War and Resistance

Sophie Masson (Scholastic Australia)

War and Resistance is a novel about a young French girl who flees Paris with her family during World War 2. She eventually meets and befriends a boy named Dieter, a member of the Nazi Youth.

The novel would be enjoyable for younger readers who are interested in history and offers a fairly historically accurate and simple narrative that readers of any age can enjoy.

Some scenes that seem important or should have more focus are rushed, and too many



characters are introduced at one time, making it sometimes difficult to keep up with the characters and properly develop a connection with them. Nonetheless, a good story for young history buffs and an interesting story about friendship during war times.

Rating: ★★★★★★★ [7/10]

— Danielle Hunter, Year 10, Flinders CCC

Girls Change the Game

By Gabrielle Gloury and Michael Hyde (Ford Street Publishing)

Girls Change the Game is a choose-your-own-adventure book about a girls' footy team called the Scorpions, playing against a team called the Ravens.

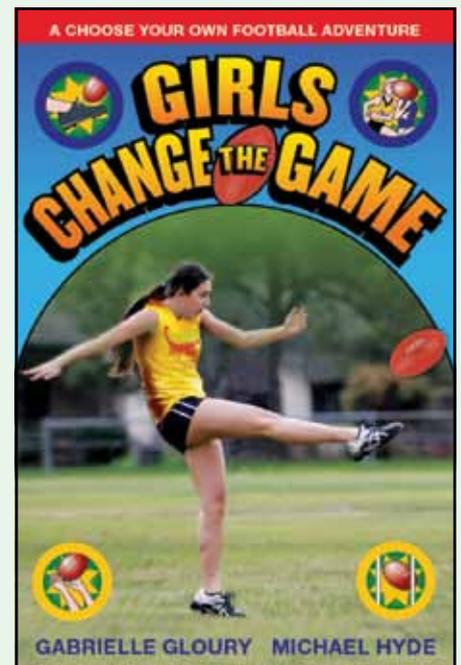
The main characters are Hannah, Zoe (the captain), Heidi, Bec and Ivy. *Girls Change the Game* is a great book because it tells the reader a lot about footy and it has lots of twists and turns.

It is a brilliant and exciting story with lots of big marks, long kicks, lightning fast handballs and surprising goals and behinds.

The book is suitable for readers 7 years and older. I really enjoyed it and I am not even that into footy!

Rating: ★★★★★★★ [8/10]

— Bianca, Year 6, Tucker Road PS



Continued on page 14

BOOK REVIEWS

Continued from page 13

Blabber Mouth #2: Oops, I've Told a Little Lie

by Chrissie Perry (Scholastic Australia)

Amelia is a blabbermouth and sometimes that gets her into trouble. But she has a secret she cannot tell anyone – she writes

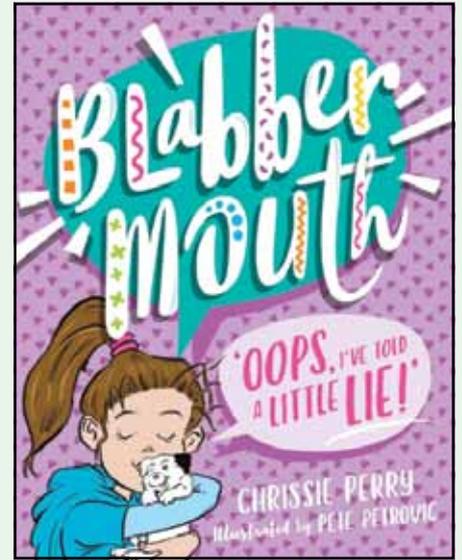
a column in her school newspaper under a pen name. But when she decides to bring in her uncle's puppies for show and tell, it creates another secret she doesn't want to tell Paris, her snarky frenemy.

I found the book funny but also nerve wracking as I didn't know what was going to happen in the end!

It would be particularly suitable for girls aged 7–12 who enjoy a bit of school yard drama.

Rating: ★★★★★★★ [8/10]

— Lucie Swanton, Year 6, Flinders CCC



INFERNO

Burning, The trees all around me
 The place I once called my home
 Engulfed in flames
 No longer my own
 The sky above is orange ablaze
 I'm surrounded by walls of flames
 There's no escape
 I look around for help
 I can't see anything, no way out
 Trying to find my mother
 She hasn't come for me yet
 Did she leave without me?
 I'm stumbling around
 I find my mother, her lungs inflamed
 I breathe in my last breath of toxic smoke
 And fall upon the fallen Oak
 I'm with my mother now
 We've escaped
 I lay with her
 In our final resting place

By **Gabi Voges**
 Year 11, Glen Eira College
 GLEN HUNTLY – VIC.

AFLAME

The smell of smoke crept through the door,
 "Run!" yelled Mum, "to the car!"
 We sped off fast, and were on our way,
 Mum again had saved the day.
 "We're not safe yet", Dad said
 Just then we saw flames ahead.
 They were flickering orange, red and black,
 The firefighters were holding them back.
 As the wind picked up, the fire grew,
 You couldn't tell the sky was blue.
 The car was filling up with smoke,
 Covering us in its dark grey cloak.
 The firemen said to get out of the way,
 And that everything would be OK.
 Tears rolled down Dad's face, Mum's too,
 They were watching the firefighters walk straight through.
 "Will they ever come out?" I asked my Mum,
 As she watched the fire, glum.
 Then three firefighters came out, and three had gone in,
 They saved our lives, with the air so thin!
 They got the fire contained,
 Until only one flame remained.
 Then the last flame was put out,
 On the land still in drought.
 But not aflame.

By **Cate Gust**
 Year 5, Ivahoe East Primary School
 IVANHOE EAST – VIC.
 Teacher: Miss Silvestro

The Home of the Seasons



THE HOME of the Seasons was a colossal building full of things that represented the family who lived there, good or bad. Divided into quarters that met in the middle. Depending on the season, the house changed colour, from baby blue to pale orange to yellow to pink.

The aroma of flowers and rain went through the house. The sound of birds tweeting, the pitter-patter of rain, waves crashing against the rocks and the sound of orange leaves hitting the ground could be heard.

In the front yard, there was a special enchanted oak tree that changed in each season. In winter, there was no leaves, in summer, there were fruit hanging from the brown oak branches, in autumn, the leaves were orange and in spring, the leaves were green and the baby birds hatched. There was a path that led to the door and on the doormat it says 'Season's Greeting!'.

By **Teresa Luu**
Grade 5, St Luke's Primary School
LALOR – VIC.
Teacher: Miss Angelucci

The Power of Words

Strapped to a cold, fierce metal chair,
Grappling, fighting and thrusting.
Mother caresses my stiff, wet hand,
Weeping, praying and comforting.

My body is restricted; incomplete.
Walking, talking and eating
Are simply too difficult for a person like me.
A person who doesn't 'fit in.'

If I am to be granted one wish,
Money, fame and fortune
Are at the bottom of the list.
Instead, it would be to talk.

My brain is like a fish net.
Words, images and emotions
Are stuck inside the net.
If only I could speak. Just once...

By **Yimeng (Fiona) Pan**
Year 6, Ravenswood School for Girls
GORDON – NSW
Teacher: Sharon Shapiro

The Poem of the King of Winter

The King of Winter had a heart of ice.
He was never good, he was never nice.
Through his hate a blizzard was born.
Everyone in hiding, every human, animal and faun.
It demolished the flowers and it destroyed all the crops.
Somebody had to stop the King of Winter but alas, he couldn't be stopped.
The Queen of Summer needed to stop his rage!
The King of Winter could end this age.
The humans were sick and plants didn't grow.
Every house, every plant, everywhere was covered in snow.
So she set off.

The Queen of Summer had had enough.
She defeated henchmen and monster in a slice.
She finally reached the King of Winter's room of ice.
The Queen was exhausted and she fell on the king.
The Queen wasn't going to make it, the poor thing.
But then something happened, you wouldn't know.
The Queen of Summer began to glow.
The king's heart began to melt.
The King of Winter felt something he never felt.
The king wept over to his newly found love.
That is when Mother Nature, herself appeared above.
She said, "You have had a change in heart and because of that the one you love, I will revive".
The Queen of Summer's eyes popped open, she was alive!
When the king turned to Mother Nature to thank her gratefully.
She wasn't there but in her place was an ice lily.
The king and queen were married and they had children, their names might give a ring.
The king and queen had twins, a boy and a girl named Autumn and Spring.

By **Teresa Luu**
Year 5, St Luke's Primary School
LALOR – VIC.
Teacher: Miss Angelucci



My Home

Where the sea licks the sand,
Where the trees wisp a cold air on my face,
Where the salty air fills your senses,
Where the sky goes millions of colours,
Where you wander down the street,
And see so many familiar faces,
The butcher, the baker, the best cooks in town,
The artist, the florist, or the grocer are always around.

You see buildings that hide great history,
And trees that hide their age,
You see places and think,
Of the spirits from the lost age.

So many questions,
Is there a trail in every path?
Is there a seed in every heart?
Questions that will be answered in time
And questions that have already been answered long ago.
Such a small town can hide thousands of secrets.

The lady next door who is sweet as sugar,
Or the singer and the writer who live happily together,
The fisherman who walks down the street bare foot,
Pushing his boat to shore.
The lady who hides in her house
And never wants to open the door.

The ghost of the little girl
Who hides in the streets,
She died of a mystery,
What no one can meet.
If you're lucky, you'll see her
Down in the shadows
Playing with toys
Like rag dolls and marbles.

I love the beach,
I love sand between my toes,
I love the ocean water,
That is crystal clear.
I love the giant waves that roll over you,
I love sea weed,
That you can wear as hair,
Or the sandcastles,
That are so many shapes everywhere.

All these things make home to me,
The people,
The places,
The smells,
The beach and memories.

It's almost an island,
But it's named Queenscliff.
It is my home
Where I'm never alone.
My house on a hill,
With a beautiful view.

My room is cluttered
With toys and books,
Memories, photos, and clothes on hooks.
Treasures from my adventures
And pillows stacked high.
It's my little cave when I need alone time.

The best days of all
Are the cold winter ones.
It may sound strange,
But having a hot chocolate by the fire,
Is absolutely fun.
You can play board games,
Or do a puzzle, or leave it undone.

It's the simple things at home
That mean the most.
Like learning to cook brownies,
Or cuddling your cat
To show him your care.
To collect eggs from the chickens,
Or feeding the fish.
Or just say I love you,
Occasionally to your loved ones,
While they are still there.

Midnight black swans,
Glide over the bay.
Always with a friend,
No matter what they say.
We watch their routines
Every year.
Flying in and out,
Without any fear.

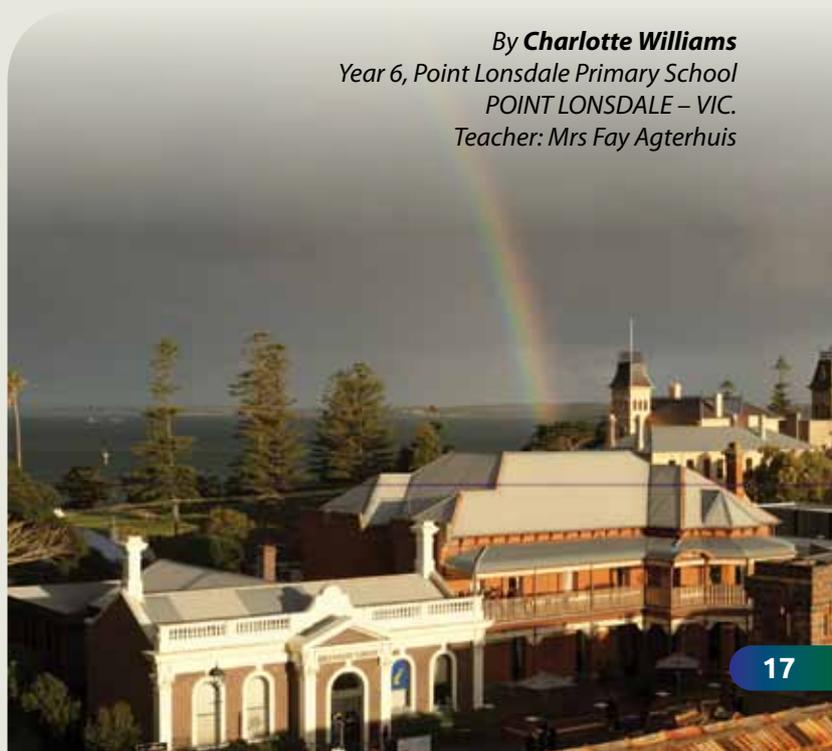
It's not just my house
That I call home.
It's the people, the town,
And all the places I roam.
It's my family, and pets, neighbours, and open spaces.
It's in every tree,
And in every grain of sand,
It's in the salt air and
My love of the land.

By Charlotte Williams

Year 6, Point Lonsdale Primary School

POINT LONSDALE – VIC.

Teacher: Mrs Fay Agterhuis



The Shed

ALICE stood in the doorway, in her ragged brown coat, eyes like a sorrowful cat. Her hair was a spider's web, knotty and tangled. She peered into the crooked house. It was full of old books, piled messily on wooden desks. Quietly, Alice tiptoed towards the books.

Suddenly, a voice sounded in front of her. Alice froze with fear, not a muscle daring to move.

An elderly man appeared out of the darkness. He had thin, pursed lips and wrinkled skin. His hands were old and shabby but what melancholy was in his gaze. He was holding a scruffy bag in his right hand. Alice wondered what was inside. Jewels, an ancient instrument?

"Who are you and why are you in here?" squeaked the aged man, softly.

Alice made her way forward, confused and silent. Goosebumps appeared along her

arm and legs. A shiver traced down her spine. Her throat was a waterless desert.

The man mumbled muffled comments again. His words were glued together with no sense of pause nor punctuation. His voice was rusty. No feeling was expressed through his speech.

Alice could see the desperation in the man's mind and soul. What could he possibly have wanted? This wasn't even her dwelling.

"Maybe I could offer him a book", she pondered in silence.

That would look like stealing though. This was hopeless. Alice's mind was racing with negative thoughts. The man was carefully examining her while Alice was buzzing with judgements.

"It's okay. What do you think I am doing?" questioned the man.

Alice thought about his question for a while. In her heart, she wanted to say that he was looking curiously at her, probably wanting something from her.

"You do know that I don't own this place. I just came upon it and found you", explained Alice.

The man tried to make sense of this. His nose twitched like a witch's nose. His ears clicked as if he had a lightbulb moment. Suddenly, out of the blue, a smile formed on his face.

Alice considered, could this mean a sign of danger or a mark of the future? Crazy beliefs came to attention. What could have possibly happened to her life at this moment?

By **Allyson Wu**

Year 6, Ravenswood School for Girls
GORDON – NSW

Teacher: Sharon Shapiro



Happiness Is

Happiness is
Snuggling up with friends and
watching your favourite movie

Happiness is
Playing fetch with your
precious doggy

Happiness is
sitting by a nice warm
fire, drinking a
wonderful hot chocolate

Happiness is
having an all you can
eat donut contest

By **Alicia Johnston**

Year 5, Port Hedland Primary School
PORT HEDLAND – WA
Teacher: Ms Kiara Power



BOOK REVIEWS

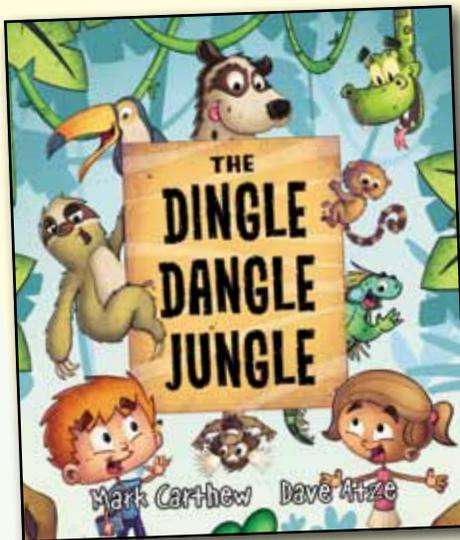
NEW RELEASES from Ford Street Publishing

The Dingle Dangle Jungle

By Mark Carthew & Dave Atze
(Illustrator)
Published: 1st February 2020
ISBN: 9781925804416

This is a great book to read to young children, and to teach them to read. Rhyming poetry describes the jungle creatures in a beautiful way. Children will love to read this book as much as the parents will enjoy reading it to them.

Suitable for ages 3 to 6.



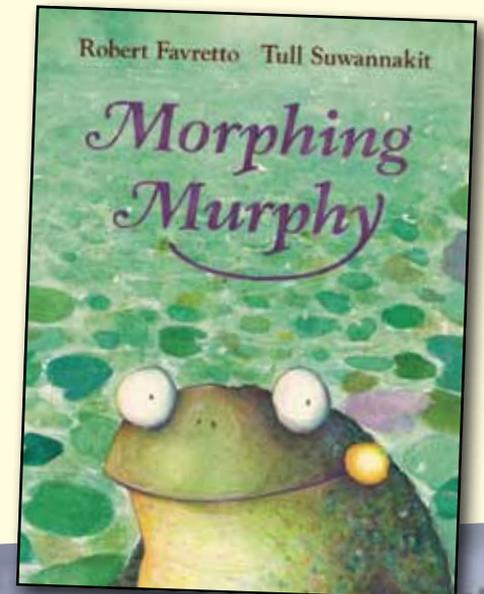
Morphing Murphy

By Robert Favretto & Tull Suwannakit
(Illustrator)
Published: 1st February 2020
ISBN: 9781925804324

Murphy is happy as a tadpole, but then things begin to change... and he's not the only one caught by surprise!

This is a lovely book about the journey of a frog. Children will enjoy reading this book, and so will adults reading to them.

Suitable for ages 3 to 6.



BUSHFIRES

Great big red patches are smoking in the hills
The destruction they have is sure to send a chill

The lives that they have taken, the animals which have passed,
The giant burning flames' power, has truly made me aghast

One day, soon in time, the rain's army will prevail,
And all the sadness in Australia will shed off like a scale

All the fires will be drenched among the heavy rain,
And we can all help to take away the pain.

We can restore Australia to what it used to be,
Penniless will get money, happiness will spread, you'll see

By **Vivaan Llyer**

Year 6, Livingstone Primary School
VERMONT SOUTH – VIC.
Teacher: Mr Matt Dwyer

THE HUT

THE HUT was small, made of loose and rotten planks, with a simple piece of wood as a vague excuse for a door. It was in a narrow valley, surrounded by huge mountains. The mountains in question were velvety with a carpet of bright green and silky grass. The hut was not alone in the valley but sharing space with a tiny river, more of a mix between a river and a stream. The water in the river was not completely transparent, it was mixed with mud that had unwittingly wandered from the muddy banks to the river. The posh and fancy folk (with their beautiful clothing and jewellery) from the big cities down south, Alysaa'Maq and Sahafara-Karimuo would never have dreamed of setting foot here, no matter how wonderful the sights were. But for a girl and her father, this was their perfect home.

"Father, Father, look what I found!" A girl, her wild, curly and very dark brown hair streaming behind her, her brilliant blue eyes squinting in the sunlight as she shouted at the top of her lungs and ran through the murky knee-deep water to the small fishing hole she had helped dig. Upon seeing her Father there she stopped running and started gasping for breath.

"What is it now, eh Hanna?", the dad replied in a cheerful manner. "See, I found this!" Hanna replied. "I'm sorry to disappoint you, but I'd be blasted if that isn't just a common muddenowl", her father, Baduk, replied. It did look almost certainly like one of those small sausage like animals found throughout the valley. "Yes, but look at its belly", Hanna said, very determined. Its belly was a brilliant blue, the twin colour of Hanna's own eyes. "Why you're right, must be some sort of mutation or something", Baduk said, now quite amazed by the colour. "You'll have to let it back in the wild by tomorrow." "Okay, but can I please draw it? You know how much I like drawing",

Hanna eagerly said, her astonishing blue eyes looking up at Baduk. "Okay, you can. But can you please hurry back in the hut now, I still have some fishing to do. You must want dinner", Baduk said, looking at his fishing rod. Hanna hurried back to the hut, carefully caressing the muddenowl.

Hanna opened the door. It was, as usual, very dim, as the one lantern and tiny slit of a window did not give off a lot of light, and even then only when they had matches to light the lantern. Hanna loved it, though. She couldn't remember a time when she hadn't lived there. To her understanding, it had always been her mother's dream to move to this valley, away from the hustle and bustle. When her mother died in childbirth her father, grief-stricken, could think of only one path in his life: to fulfil his dead wife's dream, even though she was not on the world of Mriankal to see it. Hanna thought that was so courageous of her father, to give up everything to come here. Hanna smelt the familiar damp wood smell that she so loved. She inhaled.



The hut was made up of only two rooms. She walked into the second one. This room was slightly bigger, and it contained both her and her father's sleeping mats. In one corner was her desk, a precious birthday present on the year she had discovered her love of all the visual arts. Nearly five years ago now. Wow... she thought. How time flies. She picked up her only, and very precious, quill and began to draw. She could visualise her portrait of the muddenowl and drew with wide, perfect strokes. An hour later, she was completely satisfied with her picture and hung it up on the wall with her many others. Hanna looked outside. She could see the sun setting and her father trudging back. She looked at the sunset with its dark purples and reds. It was truly beautiful.

The night slowly passed, and tomorrow was now today. She knew that she had to put her creature back. It was still early, and her father was still asleep next to her. She crept out of the hut and spotted a small cuddle of muddenowl (as a group was known as) and gently released hers. She walked back inside, satisfied but sad in the depths of her heart. She did love him. She walked back inside, where her father was now awake and putting his outdoor leather boots on. "There you are. I was thinking, would ya like to go exploring up on the mountains again?", Hanna's father asked

her. "Are you kidding!? I would love to!" Hanna replied.

Later they walked up to the biggest of the two mountains. This was Hanna's favourite, with a sprinkling of trees among the lush grass. They had trekked halfway up when they heard a scuffling in the grass behind them. They heard a peculiar little squeak. Hanna looked around, confused. She had been up the mountains many times and she knew there were no animals there. She saw a furry, muddy animal with a bright blue streak on his tummy. "You followed me! Oh, you little rascal you!" Hanna said, overcome with joy, holding the animal high to her head as he licked her, Hanna's plait flying out around her. "I think I will call you Mri-Mri."

Life continued on as normal for many months, Hanna being accompanied with Mri-Mri all along the way. It all changed when The Wanderer came round, as he was known. He sold rare or vital goods to the inhabitants of very remote places in their country of Allysia A Moore. Hanna and Baduk were both very grateful to him. Hanna also knew this event as a week before her birthday. She simply couldn't believe she was turning twelve soon! This year she had a special favour to ask The

Wanderer. She waited until after her father had done trading, and then walked over to The Wanderer. She gathered up the courage to ask him, and then said, in a loud voice, "I was wondering if you could tell me what this is. My papa says that it is a muddenowl, but I'm not so sure". All while holding Mri-Mri. "I'm afraid you're right. That is no muddenowl. That is a fearsome, though still baby Karlmaerta. You must travel to the untamed lands and release it. You are eleven, twelve in a week. Will you do it, on the day of your birthday?", The Wanderer said, his voice troubled. "Yes", the girl said. Her future was sealed. She would do anything for this dangerous beast, no matter what its species.

She set out, with one horse (that The Wanderer had nicely given her). She had named the white and black spotted horse Albino. She knew they would be companions on this long journey. Strapped to his back was Mri-Mri and enough provisions for one whole year. She was ready to face the ultimate challenge of her life.

TO BE CONTINUED

By **Kaia Shepherd**

Year 4, Mount Samson State School
MOUNT SAMSON – QLD.

Teacher: Mrs Bray

The Big Cheese Mission

CLANG! A hammer fell on an axe as the mice scattered out of the shed. The plan had to work, Master Peach had said so. Master Peach, Spring and Pie climbed up a stack of barrels and in through the rusty window.

"Pie, are you sure we are at the right place?", asked Peach. "Honestly... No", Pie replied. "Boing! Boing!" said Spring, his nose standing on edge.

"He smells yellow thing" said Peach. "It is called Cheese" said Pie. Then they ran to find 'Yellow thing'. "Would you like some of this cuisine?", said Peach holding out a piece of yellow thing. "Boing! Boing!" Spring yelled. Spring could not talk, all he could say was 'Boing' that's why they called him Spring. "Ouch" said Pie in pain. A big block of cheese had fallen on him. Peach picked it up and laid it in front of

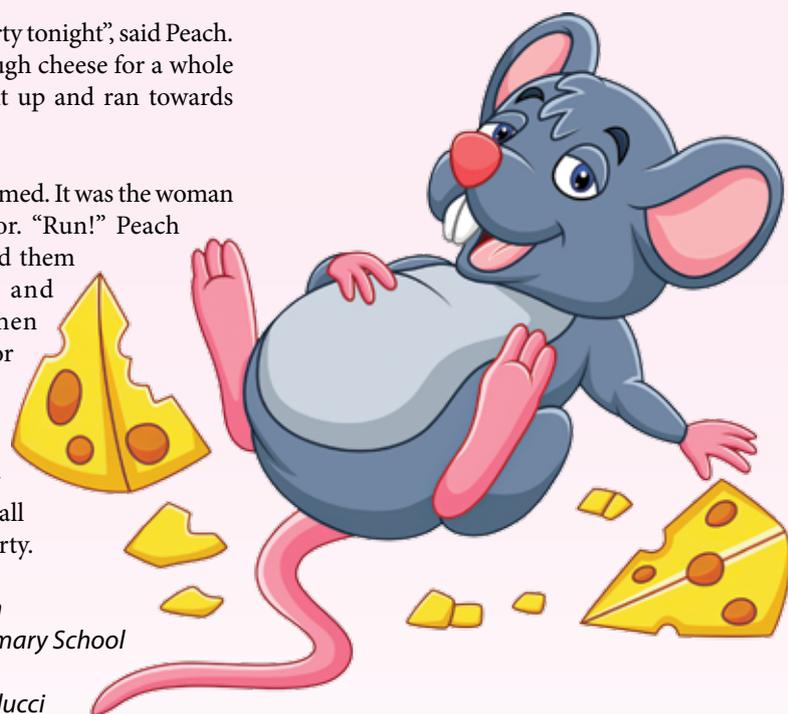
them. "Uh... let's party tonight", said Peach. They now had enough cheese for a whole year. They picked it up and ran towards the window.

"Rats!" a voice screamed. It was the woman that lived next door. "Run!" Peach shouted. She chased them out of the house and into the shed. When she opened the door the hammer that had hit the axe fell on her. "Oh Rat-s!" she screamed (how ironic). After that all night they had a party.

By **Navroz Devgan**

Year 5, St Luke's Primary School
LALOR – VIC.

Teacher: Miss Angelucci



Young Australian
Art & Writers'
Awards
2019

The BIC Young Australian
Writer of the Year Award



HANNAH PARK

St Mary's Catholic College, Woree, Qld.



**Lions Club
Literary Award**

Short Story – Secondary

MACKENZIE SMITH

St Dominic's Priory College, SA



Fortescue
The New Force in Iron Ore

**Fortescue Metals
Literary Award**

Poetry – Secondary

OLIVIA CLINCKERS

All Saints' College, WA

DYMOCKS
FOR BOOKLOVERS

**Dymocks Camberwell
Literary Award**

Short Story – Primary

MATTHEW ASHLEY

Scotch College, Hawthorn, Vic.



CommonwealthBank

**Commonwealth Bank
Literary Award**

Poetry – Primary

JOSEPH SCOTT

John XXIII College, Mt Claremont, WA

**The C.D. Dodd Indigenous Writer Award
Young Indigenous Writer of the Year**



WENDY FEIFAR



◀ **Helen Handbury
Achievement Award**

SOPHIE LI
*Ravenswood School
for Girls, Gordon, NSW*



**Helen Handbury
Literary Award** ▶

MAISIE FULLERTON
Greenslopes State School, Qld.



(Left) Author Phil Kettle giving writing tips.

(Right) Sophia Fan, winner of the Marjory Gardner Art Award, pictured with judge Marjory Gardner.



Photos Carol Dick & Frank Jones



**Commonwealth Bank Art Award
Painting – Senior**
JESSICA ZHANG
Pacific Hills Christian School, NSW



JESSICA THOMPSON
Davidson High School, NSW



**Bic Australia Art Award
Computer Art – Senior**
ANNIE XIONG
Pacific Hills Christian School, NSW



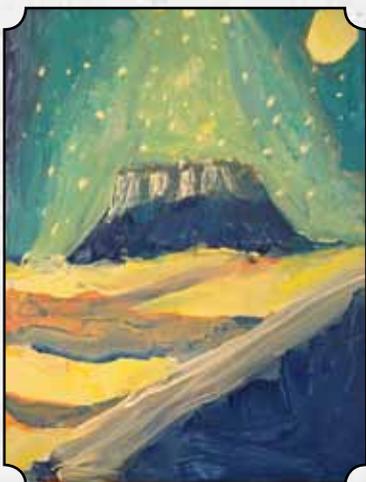
**Commonwealth Bank Art Award
Painting – Middle**
SUHANI PANCHAL
Girraween High School, NSW



**Bic Australia Art Award
Computer Art – Middle**
KAI KEULDER
Peter Carnley Anglican Community School, WA



**Dymocks Camberwell Art Award
Drawing – Senior**
ANNIE XIONG
Pacific Hills Christian School, NSW



**Commonwealth Bank Art Award
Painting – Junior**
MEGAN ONG
Sky Art School, NSW



**Bic Australia Art Award
Computer Art – Junior**
LEAH BURNS
Brisbane School of Distance Education, Qld.



**Dymocks Camberwell Art Award
Drawing – Middle**
SARAH HISCOCKS
NBSC Mackellar Girls' Campus, NSW



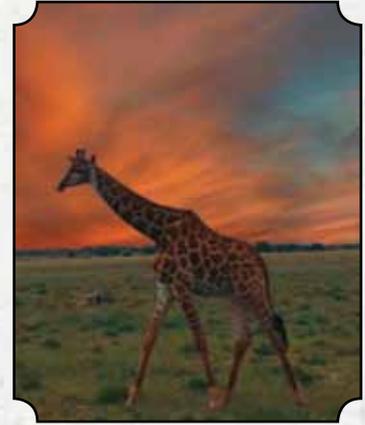
**Judge's Choice Award:
Marc McBride**
CHELSEA WONG
Mercy Catholic College, Chatswood, NSW



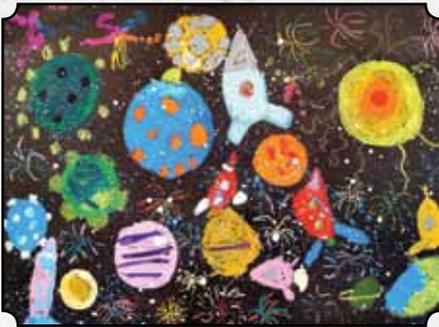
**Lions Club Art Award
Photography – Middle**
GEORGE GRIFFITHS
John XXIII College, WA



**Lions Club Art Award
Photography – Senior**
CECELIA LIU
Lauriston Girls School, Vic.



**Lions Club Art Award
Photography – Junior**
SONYA CLARKE
William Clarke College, NSW



**Judge's Choice Award:
Marjory Gardner**
SOPHIA FAN
Wahroonga Prep, NSW



Judge's Choice Award:
Elise Hurst
TIARN GARLAND
Ravenswood School for Girls, NSW



**Dymocks Camberwell Art Award
Drawing – Junior**
TALIYAH ABEL
Leda Primary School, WA

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Fortescue
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SANDFIRE
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CommonwealthBank

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- Altura Mining
- BCI Minerals Ltd
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- Calidus Resources
- Capricorn Metals
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- The Percy Baxter Trust
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- William Angliss Charitable Fund

Indigenous Art Awards 2019



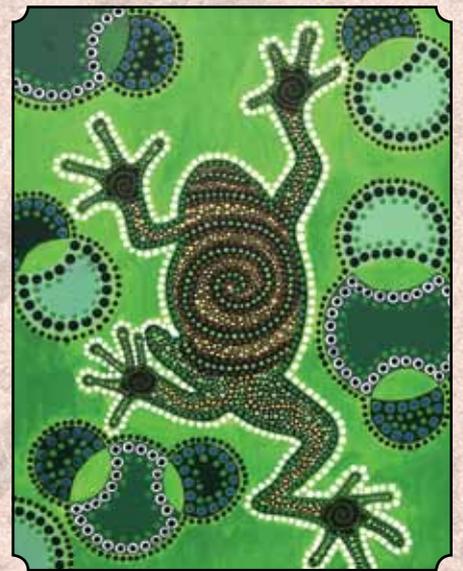
C.D. Dodd Indigenous Art Award
NICOLEE NANNUP



**Sandfire Resources
Indigenous Art Award**
TAYA PARFITT



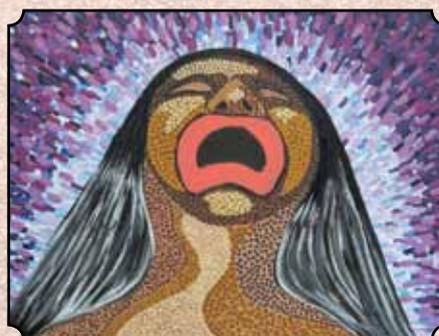
**Capricorn Metals
Indigenous Art Award**
WENDY FEIFAR



**Newcrest Mining
Indigenous Art Award**
EMMA-LEE EGAN



**Calidus Resources
Indigenous Art Award**
MADDISON HIBBITT-MURRAY



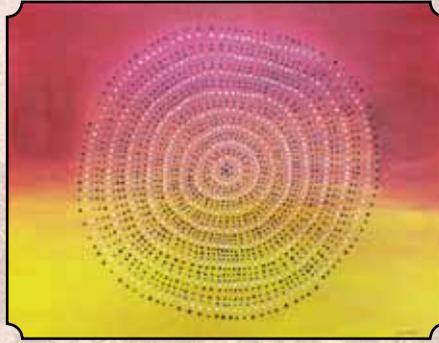
**Echo Resources
Indigenous Art Award**
TAYA PARFITT



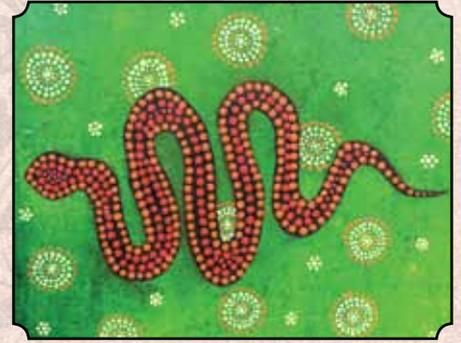
**Oz Minerals Ltd
Indigenous Art Award**
MITCHELL RODNEY



**Saracen Gold
Indigenous Art Award
JOELLA FLANAGAN**



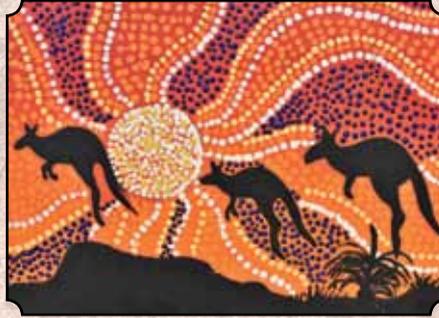
**Peabody Energy
Indigenous Art Award
WENDY FEIFAR**



**Talisman Mining
Indigenous Art Award
JOELLA FLANAGAN**



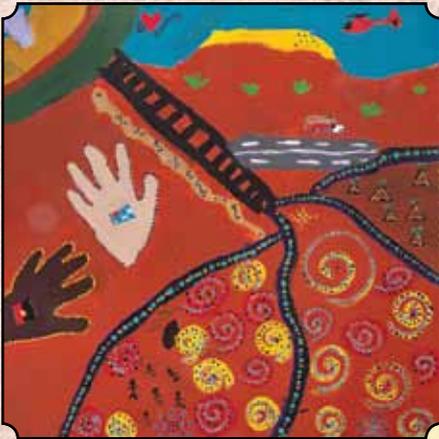
**Great Boulder Resources
Indigenous Art Award
KOBI PHILBIN**



**Whitehaven Coal
Indigenous Art Award
SHALEIGHA WALLAM**



**Central Petroleum
Indigenous Art Award
SHERIDAN CLOSE-CHILLY**



**Fortescue Metals
Indigenous Art Award
SUMMER PARKER**



**Pantoro Ltd
Indigenous Art Award
PHOENIX LORBACH**

*(Right)
Nicolee Nannup,
winner of the C.D. Dodd
Indigenous Art Award.*



*(Left)
Our Indigenous Art
Patron
John McGuire
presents the
Sandfire Resources
Indigenous Art Award
to Taya Parfitt.*



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GROUND SHATTER

"JAMES!" Felix screamed at the top of his voice, "Come, quick!". James ran to Felix's office, wondering what the fuss was about. "What happened?", James said. "There's a massive earthquake right here in California!", he said, pointing at his monitor. "Get help! Call everyone!" "How big?" "Really big, looks like an eight and a half on the Richter scale", he said, with a little panic in his voice. "What do we do?" "Contact the Emergency Services", James decided, "and get them here". Felix runs to find the nearest phone, sliding across the slippery floor.

The Emergency Services arrive, searching the place like it's a crime scene. One talks to me, on his badge it says his name is Marshall. "Show me the earthquake", he said in a voice so deep it sounded fake. James shows him the seismograph, and it didn't change Marshall's soulless expression. More workers crowd around, most of them were calling someone. The crowd disperses, and Marshall comes to talk again. "I'll have to bring you in for questioning." "Why?" James asks, but Marshall was already walking towards the exit. Later, at their headquarters, when held in questioning, James starts paying less and less attention to Marshall's questions and focuses on the faint rumble from underneath his chair. He stands up, and tells Marshall, "Listen, do you hear the rumble of the earthquake?". Everyone in the room, James, Marshall, and a few others stay completely silent. The lights flicker, then everyone ran out of the room except James, in panic. They run for their cars to try and get out of the area. Looking out the window, James sees everyone in their vehicles trying to leave, causing massive traffic jams. He walks out, with his car still

at the office. He runs to the office, as fast as he can, but the office is still kilometres away. As he gets closer, the small rumbles turn into shakes, and when he arrives at his car, the shakes are so bad it's disorienting. All the traffic jams had cleared, and the only sounds were coming from the earthquake.

James starts his car and makes his way out, until a massive ravine splits right in front of him. The ground shudders terribly, causing it to be impossible to see temporarily. Buildings topple, falling like dominoes. It becomes hard to navigate through the horrible debris and hard to see through the dust shot into the air. James found the Golden Gate Bridge, although it was shaking uncontrollably, so much that it was a miracle that it stayed on. It was the only escape from San Francisco, as ravines and gaps had formed around me, and many of the other bridges had fallen already. The safest points on the bridge were the supports, as they were the only part that wasn't swinging. James ventured forward, through a swinging bridge, flooring it to make it as quick as possible. James slid scarily close to the edge of the bridge every time the bridge swayed. James had reached the centre of the bridge in possibly the world's quickest time. He had heard a massive crack ring through the bridge, and he looked back, to see that the first support had fallen, almost pulling the next one with it. He managed to find a way to go faster than he already was. James was ridiculously close, as the next support broke, this time pulling the whole bridge down with it. He had made it, exasperated, but still had to keep going.

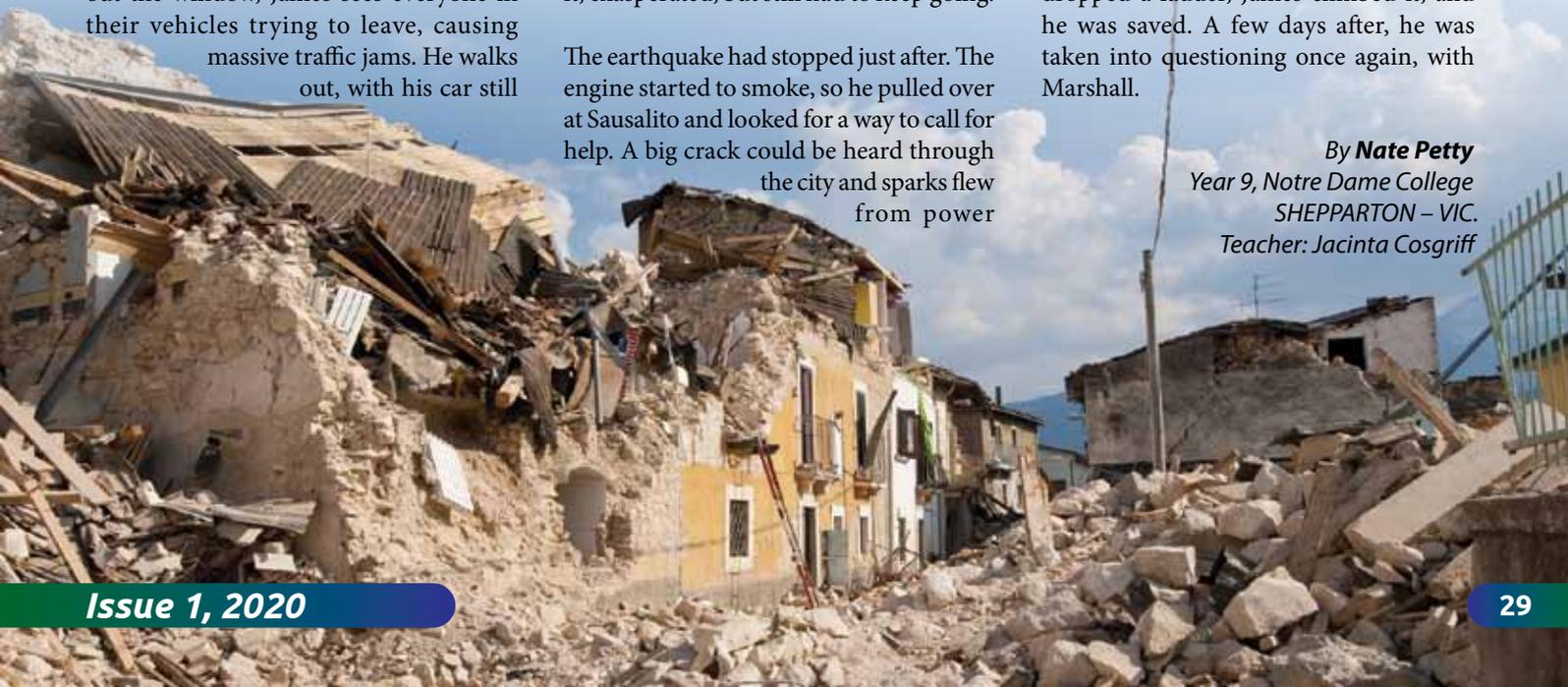
The earthquake had stopped just after. The engine started to smoke, so he pulled over at Sausalito and looked for a way to call for help. A big crack could be heard through the city and sparks flew from power

lines as a whole row fell, causing a power outage. All of the phone boxes had no power, so he had to look for a smartphone. He found a phone store, which had the SOS calling blocked, and he found a phone with a cracked screen, which he started the call, but the call ended because the phone died. It could still prove useful anyway. When the sun started to set, he tried to find a place to sleep, and he chose a relatively intact house, as some of the roof had fallen off, but the bedroom was fine and the door was unlocked. Inside he found a radio, which still had power left. He tuned in to a radio station from very far away, the signal delivered a sound which was mostly static. Some words could be heard, "California... Biggest ever... 9.4... Tsunami going... Australia... The ground moved 8..." Then it just returned to static.

Sleep didn't come easily; he was woken up frequently from an early aftershock that knocked down the house next door, so he decided to get away from the house and started searching for some way to get help. James came across a petrol station that was very far out, so it ran on a diesel generator. He poured diesel into a jerry can, then poured it into the generator, and started it, which generated easily enough power to charge the phone, which he used to call SOS. They said they would help him escape "within one day, make yourself visible". He gathered as many different bright colours as he could, high vis clothing, paint and glow sticks, and formed the letters SOS on a port. He waited until he heard a helicopter, and started flailing his arms around hoping he saw him. The helicopter dropped a ladder, James climbed it, and he was saved. A few days after, he was taken into questioning once again, with Marshall.

By Nate Petty

Year 9, Notre Dame College
SHEPPARTON – VIC.
Teacher: Jacinta Cosgriff



Rain

The rain is a soothing shroud,
Cascading gleefully,
Cradling the earth,
Piercing through pockets of light.

The rain is a cordial stranger,
A stoic wise man, spindly, morose,
Who takes your hand in his and escorts you along the narrow, winding streets,
A road to nowhere.

The rain is an erratic beast,
maleficence, harbouring pure depravity,
Braced,
Defensive,
Destructive.

The rain is the unsteady draught of death,
Unshakeable,
Steadfast,
Unending,
which gripes its bony fingers around your throat,
And stifles your senses and objections.

The rain is a giver,
A mainstay of prosperity,
A mother who feeds her child with her own flesh and blood,
A provider.

Rain is vivacity
Rain is rebirth
Rain is creation amongst the imminence of demise.

*By Molly Waters
Year 11, HOLLAND PARK WEST – QLD.
Teacher: Ms Gleeson*

Yet Again, It Hasn't Rained

Yet again, it hasn't rained
Three months waiting and still no change
The tanks are empty
And the dams are dry
But still there are no clouds in the sky

Yet again, it hasn't rained
The cows are hungry
There is no hay
The grass in the paddock
Has gone away

Yet again it hasn't rained
Dad always says it's on its way
But then he says don't forget to pray
I always say don't worry Dad
Each and every day I pray

*By Katie Ryan
Year 8, St John's Lutheran School Kingaroy
KINGAROY – QLD.
Teacher: Jodie Springhall*

Element Masters

THERE once were element masters on Earth but one couldn't control his powers. It was the Ice Master, wherever he wandered winter followed. He was the only one that couldn't control his powers and he was misunderstood a lot.

One day he wanted to control his powers so that people wouldn't treat him bad. So he set off on a journey to see the elemental master of all elements. He started off slow then he ran as if he was racing a cheetah.

As he ran he noticed people staying inside shivering with fright. He was soon almost

at the top when suddenly a strong wind came flying in at him. He pushed himself harder than he ever had before and got up to the top. Then the Ice Master said, "Can you teach me how to control my powers?" "Yes and I used to have a job and it was a doctor", the master answered. "Show me your ice blast", the master asked.

So the Ice Master shot two snow flakes from his hands out to the sea. "Wow that's cold", the master paused. The Ice Master thought all was lost but then the master said, "I know a solution but it's risky. It could kill you, are you sure you want to

take the risk?". "Yes", the Ice Master replied. So the master cast a spell on him and melted the Ice Master but only to the point that he could control his powers.

So then he wandered off feeling bright and happy to show people that he wasn't a bad person after all.

By **Matthew Schembri**
Year 5, St Luke's Primary School
LALOR – VIC.
Teacher: Miss Angelucci

"YOU ARE THE CHOSEN ONE"

IMAGINE if these are the first words you ever hear, the first words that someone speaks to you and the first words that enter your ears and deep into your brain, like thick, wispy smoke. Imagine if the first thing you ever remember is as an infant, lying in the hospital bed, with a tall, wise and mystical person looming over you, looking deep into your eyes and even further into your soul.

This was me. 4 days old, a baby girl named Phoenix, different from the start. Firstly, I was born with a huge head of fiery red curls.

There wasn't just a little string of hair. It was fully-grown, bright red locks that billowed down to my tiny shoulders. Secondly, my eyes are different. Not a colour with a black centre at all. In fact, it was the opposite. My eye colour was a dark, dark grey, and the specks on my pupils were a burning red.

But the thing that made me different, that made me separated from the other babies, that made my parents leave me running, was the strangest, the most curious of all.

As soon as I was laid in the cot, the sheets burst into flames.



more than harmless baby toys, the fire having no impact on my infant body.

The nurses called paramedics and the fire brigade, but I was completely unharmed. I watched lots and lots of people look over into my bed to take another look at the miracle 'fire baby'. I heard the nurses ring every News station on the platform to come to the hospital to make reports on me. But just as the News cars pulled into the car-park, the mysterious figure came to my bed.

"You are the chosen one."

Okay, maybe it wasn't that dramatic. But I like to picture it that way. My parents cradle me, with my frizzy hair and glistening eyes, and they gently lay me into my soft bed, smiling down at me, and this beautiful – if weird – person that they created, when suddenly the red in my eyes starts flickering and the whole bed turns into a bed of fire. It singes my Mum's hair and my Dad's clothes. They run out of the hospital ward, screaming and yelling that their child was the devil.

All the while I lie in the fire, playing with the flames happily as if they were nothing

That was all he said. Five words that he uttered under his breath, but five words that I heard, and even as a tiny baby, I somehow understood. I understood that I wasn't like the rest, not at all. I was unique. I was different. But most of all...

I was dangerous.

By **Alice Kennedy**
Year 7, The Geelong College
GEELONG – VIC.
Teacher: Mrs Rhonda Browne

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

ONE DARK and stormy night a little girl and a little boy were fast asleep in their cosy, comfy beds. Jess heard a very loud noise in her room. "The window was closed earlier", said Jess. Jess woke Ben up. Ben slowly woke up. "What's up?", he asked as he rubbed his eyes.

"I heard a noise in my room and when I woke up my window was open", Jess said.

"Mmmm... strange", said Ben as he scratched his head.

Ben got out of bed, and he said to Jess, "Go check the front door".

When Jess came back up the stairs she said to Ben, "The front door was wide open too."

Are you thinking what I'm thinking?" said Ben.

"I don't know. What are you thinking?", said Jess.

"I'm thinking that this house is HAUNTED", said Ben.

"AAAAAAAHHHHHHHHH, this house is haunted", screamed Jess.

"RUN", shouted Ben.

Jess was so scared that she was the first one out of the door.

"Nah Nah Nah Nah Nah", teased Jess when Ben finally reached her.

"Run", said Ben again. "Let's get away from the haunted house."

"Oooooowwww", announced the ghost as it chased them across the yard.

Ben and Jess ran as fast as the wind to their next door neighbour's house. Jack had heard the screams and instantly opened the door for them. "What in heaven's name is going on?"

"There's a Ghost", panted Jess.

"All of our windows and doors were wide opened by the scary ghost", said Ben as they ran wildly around Jack's house.

"Hey kids nothing to be afraid of, my house is totally safe for you guys", Jack said kindly. "Do you want to sleep with me tonight?" "I'm pretty sure that you'll feel better in the morning so get some rest because tomorrow is going to be a busy day trying to get rid of all the ghosts".

In the morning they went to Ben and Jess's house to get rid of all the ghosts, but when they went inside there were no ghosts, which they were very relieved about.

They were worried that the ghosts would come back again, so they laid down some rotten bananas in the house to stop the ghosts from coming back.

They never saw the ghosts again.

THE END

By **Isabella Smith**

Year 2, Greenslopes State School

GREENSLOPES – QLD.

Teacher: Ms Wendy Pierce



Ambassadors



☺ **Paul Collins** has written many books for younger readers. He is best known for his fantasy and science fiction titles: **The Jelindel Chronicles** (*Dragonlinks, Dragonfang, Dragonsight* and *Wardragon*), and **The Quentaris Chronicles** – co-edited with Michael Pryor – (*Swords of Quentaris, Slaves of Quentaris, Dragonlords of Quentaris, Princess of Shadows, The Forgotten Prince, Vampires of Quentaris* and *The Spell of Undoing*). His trade books published in America are *The Earthborn, The Skyborn* and *The Hiveborn*.

Paul has edited many anthologies which include *Trust Me!, Rich & Rare* and Australia's first fantasy anthology, *Dream Weavers*. He also edited *The MUP Encyclopaedia of Australian SF&F*.

His recent fantasy series is *The Warlock's Child*, written in collaboration with Sean McMullen. His book, *Slaves of Quentaris*, was listed in *1001 Children's Books You Must Read Before You Die* (UK, 2009). His latest book is *Harry Kruize, Born to Lose*.

Paul has been short-listed for many awards and has won the Inaugural Peter McNamara A Bertram Chandler, Aurealis and William Atheling awards.

Other than his writing, Paul is the publisher at Ford Street Publishing, a children's specialist publishing everything from picture books through to young adult literature. Two books, *Pool*, by Justin D'Ath and *Crossing the Line*, by Dianne Bates, were short-listed for the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards and the NSW Premier's Literary Awards. A third, Shane Thamm's *My Private Pectus*, was short-listed in the Territory Read Award. Paul spends much of his time travelling around Australia giving writing workshops to students from grade four to Year 12.

Paul's websites are: www.paulcollins.com.au; www.fordstreetpublishing.com and www.creativenetspeakers.com.

Anna Ciddor has always been fascinated by the question, 'What if I lived in another time or place?'. She changed career from maths teacher to author so she'd have the excuse to spend lots of time doing research. She has written and illustrated over fifty books, including the highly popular and exciting Viking Magic trilogy: *Runestone, Wolfspell* and *Stormriders*. Bravery, friendship, and a dash of magic are the keys to these adventure stories, which are based on real Viking history. *Runestone* was chosen as a Children's Book Council Notable Book in 2003 and has been shortlisted for many awards. You can find out more about Anna and her books at www.annaciddor.com.

Anna keeps in touch with her readers through school visits and her website, but she is also keen to encourage the writing efforts of budding young authors through the Young Australian Writers' Awards. ☺



☺ **Meredith Costain** is a versatile writer whose work ranges from picture books through to novels, poetry and narrative non-fiction. Her books include CBCA Honour Book *Doodledum Dancing, Disaster Chef!, Daddies Are Great!*, novelisations of ABC TV's *Dance Academy*, and tween series *A Year in Girl Hell*. Her best-selling series, the quirky *Ella Diaries*, was shortlisted for both the REAL and the WAYRBA children's choice awards, and has sold to 24 countries. Her latest series, *Olivia's Secret Scribbles*, features Ella's 'naughty little sister', Olivia.

Meredith lives in inner-city Melbourne with a menagerie of pets, who often wrangle their way into her stories. She regularly presents writing workshops for children and adults around Australia, and enjoys helping writers create stories based on their own experiences. To find out more about her books, pets and early writing years, visit www.meredithcostain.com.

THE CRIMSON END

UPON a crescent moonlit sky, deep within a dark and depressing forest, the wind was howling and the very presence of life faded to a non-existent whisper. The lips of crimson red kisses the bodies of all whose spirits have faded. This is where she sleeps, where the taste of death fills the air and the pain claws from all around; with sound and taste burning the soul and leaving nothing. This is her home now; the crimson void of life.

This girl has seen nothing but pain and sadness, yet is still so strong and caring. As the moon grasps at the girl's crimson hair, the mountains speak her name.

"Sophie!" it booms, for she has been here before. With a blinding flash of a million suns, she awoke. Rising from the crimson darkness around her, she looks around and sees a shadowy figure of intense darkness. She questions, "Why? Why am I here again? Who are you? Why did you bring me to this place?"

The figure roars, "You are the one!"

Sophie, gasping for words, "W-w-what do you mean, I am the one?"

As the mysterious figure dissipates, it lets out one final sentence, "You are the one who knows my name". Sophie was lost, while all the shadows start surrounding her, "I am the one who knows your name?". The figure let out a bellow so loud it left Sophie white with fear. Sophie hit the ground and started to scream, "No! No! Please help, somebody, anybody, help me please!"

Sophie fell into a dark abyss, with dark chasms that never seemed to end and screams of a thousand souls just like hers. They screamed in unison, "Help us! Please help us! The pain it's unbearable!". Sophie, with intense fear striking her soul, bringing her to the edge of insanity, she screams, "Mum! Mum! Where are you mum, I need you! Mum please I need you".

Sophie, now crying her eyes out, heard a voice. "Darling, what's the matter? Why are you crying?" Sophie, with a hint of hope in her voice, replies, "Mother, is that really you?". The voice replies with the soft voice of an angel, "Yes darling it is". As the voice



responded, a glowing body was revealed. It was Sophie's mother, a beautiful young lady with golden hair, wearing a bright violet dress with a blooming smile.

Sophie fell with grace into her mother's arms. Her mother pleaded with her, "Please tell me what's wrong?". Sophie replied while holding back the tears, "The Shadow, that strikes me with fear and makes me feel like my heart is being torn out". The mother responded with a strong calming voice, "Do not fear the shadow, for it fears you".

Sophie asked with an inquisitive look on her face, "Why does the shadow fear me? What have I done to deserve the horrific pain it has caused me?"

The mother, pressing her daughter's head to her chest, with a loving and calming voice, "It fears you, for you know its name. It causes you pain so that its name may stay hidden. So, don't fear the shadow my daughter".

Then shrouded in a dark cloak of mist and fear appeared the shadow. It roared and the ground and sky emerged from the darkness and Sophie's mum vanished in an instant. However, this was not the place Sophie was before. This time, there were long dusty hallways, children laughing, someone calling everyone to attention and the sounds of a little girl crying in the corner.

Sophie was looking around as if her spine had vanished; this place, this place she knew very well – her old school – she remembers it all, the old hag of a teacher, the crush she had on the blue-eyed boy and the horrible girls. Thinking about them made her blood boil. "Those girls!" she said with a blinding rage and a heart of darkness. Those girls always made fun of her, calling her ugly and poor.

"That's it!" Sophie roared, she looked towards the shadow and said, "I know who you are!". The very ground quaked at the sound, and the shadow looked as if it was trembling at the very sight of this fearsome, crimson haired girl.

The shadow's illusions disappeared, as if they turned to ash. Sophie now staring right in the face of the shadow, said with the power of the gods, "I know your name!", and with a mighty roar that made the skies fall and the planets tremble she said, "Your name is Sophie!". Within an instant the shadow disappeared leaving only a body, but this was not the body of Sophie, it was the image painted by all the other girls that bullied and abused her over the years.

Sophie, now staring with cold heartless eyes, "I no longer fear you. I am perfect, I am strong, I am Sophie!". These are her words of power, these words give her strength; the strength that destroys all, this is Sophie for she will not let others say who she is!

"You and everyone else can say I'm not good enough, but you will not hurt me any more" and with those words the distorted Sophie screamed, but was silenced by a hand of pure perfection.

The true Sophie, while bringing her distorted counterpart to her knees, leans in to the point where they stare eye to eye. Sophie whispered, "And with this, I silence you and bring forward your Crimson END".

By **Samuel Thomas**
Year 10, Southern River College
GOSNELLS – WA
Teacher: Erin Smith (Librarian)



DARKNESS

THE LIGHTS flickered and suddenly went out. Lyra was in the middle of doing her homework so she dropped the pen and groaned. She reached out for the light switch, but the light didn't flick back on. "I better go check the fuse box", she said to herself. As soon as she stepped out of her room she realised how quiet and dark the house was. Lyra felt an eerie mood floating around the house. A shiver crept up her spine.

Lyra was one of those people who didn't adore the darkness. She'd always found the darkness like an enemy who was stalking her. It was as if a snake had coiled around her and had blocked the light of the Sun. Whenever she was in the darkness, a thick blanket of fear would surround her.

Lyra walked down the hallway towards the front door. She opened the lock and stepped outside. Lyra glanced up and down the sixth floor of the apartment building. It was too quiet. She opened the fuse box to see that someone had flicked off the lights. She confidently flicked them back on and shut the fuse box.

Lyra sighed with relief when the lights blinked back on. She strode up the hallway and into her bedroom. Just as she stepped in she heard a loud clatter coming from the kitchen. Lyra trembled all over. She began to wonder if her house was haunted! The lights flicked off again. Lyra screamed.

She was home alone and her parents had gone to her younger brother's school

concert. Her family had moved into this apartment a year ago and she had missed her fancy, old country home. Where she was now, was the big, noisy city with luminous street lights dotting the streets. But today it felt quiet and the street lights had been turned off. The only light came from the full moon and the tiny windows of the neighbouring apartments.

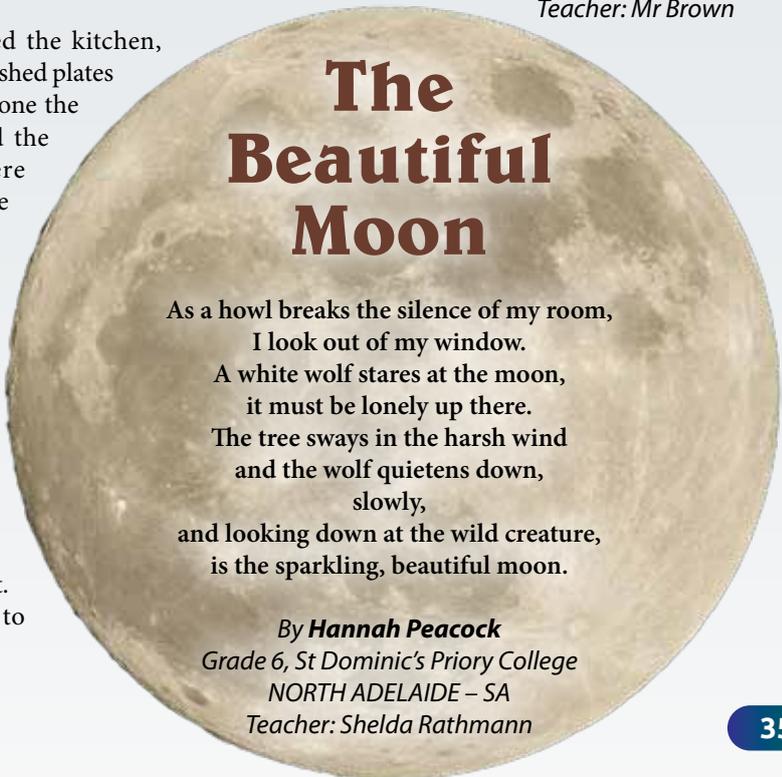
Lyra's heart pounded and blood rushed through her ears. She was petrified with fear. Just then she remembered a famous quote. "The best way out is always through." So the only way to get to the bottom of this was to solve this mystery. She bravely stood up, grabbed a flashlight and headed to the kitchen.

When she entered the kitchen, before her lay smashed plates and cups. Lyra shone the flashlight around the kitchen, but there were no more clues to be found. The house was suddenly quiet again. This all seemed a strange coincidence. The lights going out, the street lamps being turned off, the streets being quiet. So Lyra decided to call her parents.

She sprinted back into her room, grabbed her phone to talk to her mum. When her mum answered the call, Lyra whispered in a panicked voice, "Mum, I think the apartment is haunted!". Just as she said that she heard light footsteps making their way into her bedroom.

Her mum replied, "Seriously Lyra, our apartment is safe and is not haunted. It's just your imagination. That's why I asked you if you wanted to come to the concert!" There was no reply. "Lyra? Lyra are you there?"

*By Farha Mohamed Fahim
Year 8, Werribee Secondary College
WERRIBEE – VIC.
Teacher: Mr Brown*



The Beautiful Moon

As a howl breaks the silence of my room,
I look out of my window.
A white wolf stares at the moon,
it must be lonely up there.
The tree sways in the harsh wind
and the wolf quietsens down,
slowly,
and looking down at the wild creature,
is the sparkling, beautiful moon.

*By Hannah Peacock
Grade 6, St Dominic's Priory College
NORTH ADELAIDE – SA
Teacher: Shelda Rathmann*

Taming the Night

Prologue

Dear Jess,

This was my favored Night Teddy when I was young – the bear that I truly believed tamed the night just to protect me. Since we moved, he's just been sitting in a box, not seeing much of night or day, so I thought you might like him. There's a story behind it; I hope the meaning might make you smile.

*Your friend always,
Miranda*

The reason I thought my night teddy came alive at night was the reason I needed one, I had a vivid, and sometimes overactive, wonderful imagination. At four, I was the type of kid who could come up with a story in a second but alone in the dark; every creak became a terrible monster and each shadow a threat. Mum was out of ideas, telling me these things weren't real but it didn't make me feel any better, so she had to beat my brain at its own game!

Along came night teddy: a rare creature who woke at night to watch over a chosen child. All Night Teddies got their power from the star on their foot, which they could use not only to keep their kid safe, but also to talk to their child's imagination and help them think of happier things. When darkness hit and my brain started to slink away from me, conjuring beasts and worries, night teddy told me not to be scared or sad, instead just talk to him. By telling him my fears and squeezing his stomach (which he assured me didn't hurt, he worked out at the gym and was quite ripped), he could tame my imagination.

By 5 he was also my day teddy – he went everywhere with me, to school, the park and to my friends. He especially liked riding in my

bike basket, being the helmsman and navigating the treacherous route to the shops, and then protecting our bike while I was with mum. All was well, until some no-good walker-by plucked him from my basket and stole him away from me. I was devastated, tears rolled down my cheeks (with the sense of grief felt by all family members). Despite looking everywhere, under my bike, down the street and in the shop, we couldn't find him, and I started to panic. Great efforts were made to find him as everyone understood his importance to me. Mum knew what to do, she discreetly called Dad and told him to pick up another Cancer Council Bear on his way home from work, turns out the star is also a daffodil.

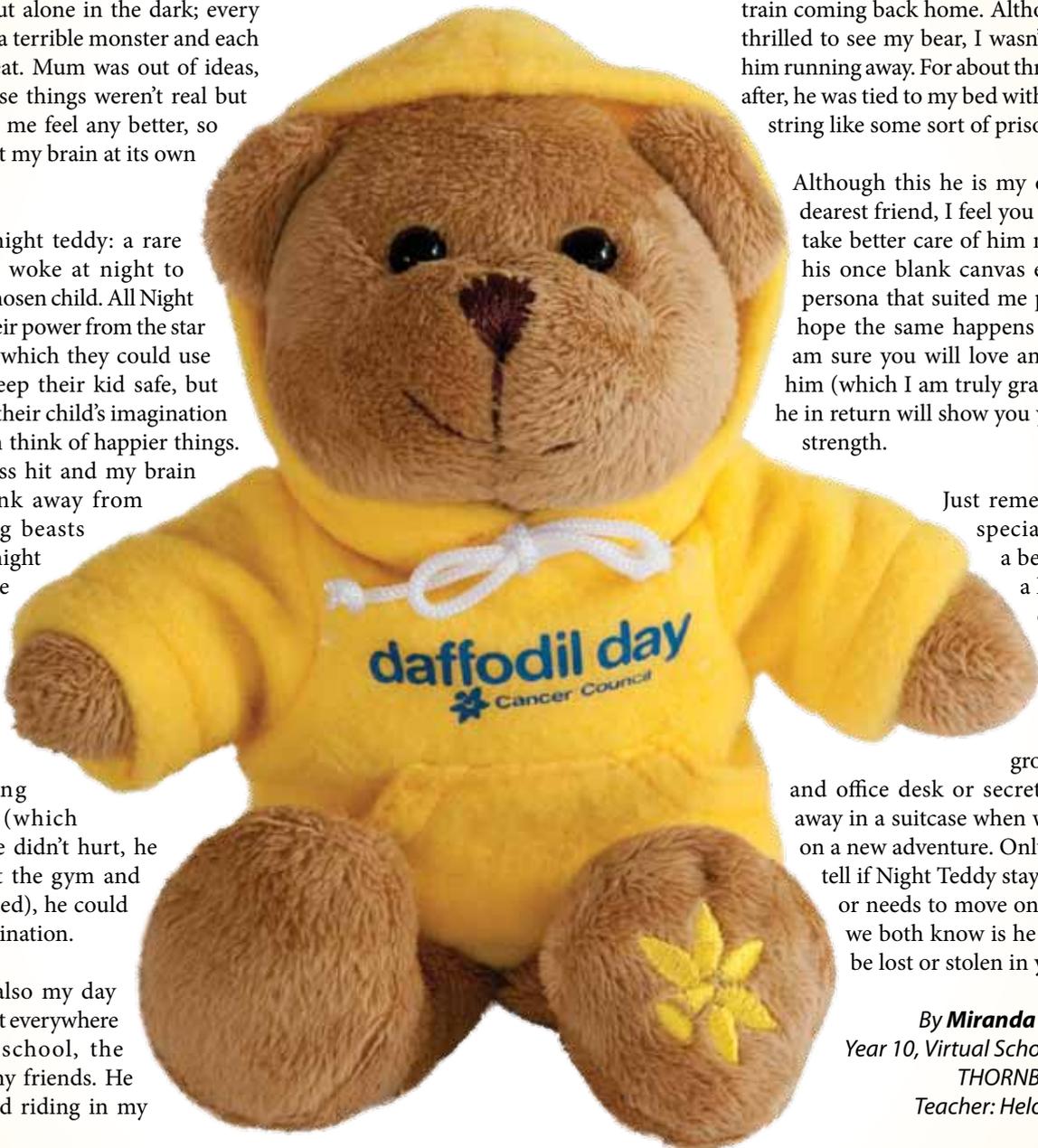
The only problem? It was last year's bear and they were out completely out of stock. Dad pleaded with a staff member on the cancer helpline and she, understanding the severity of the situation, went around the whole office and found one on someone's desk. One generous donation later, dad was off from work and picking up the bear from their head office.

Of course, my parents couldn't tell me this. No, Night Teddy had simply gone to visit his brother who had just got his credentials to become a Night Bear himself. His changed clothes into 'Sunday best' because of his brother's graduation ceremony (so no alarm bells went off for me). My teddy just wanted to see his older sibling graduate and Dad had found him on the train coming back home. Although I was thrilled to see my bear, I wasn't happy at him running away. For about three months after, he was tied to my bed with a piece of string like some sort of prisoner.

Although this he is my oldest and dearest friend, I feel you Jess might take better care of him now. From his once blank canvas emerged a persona that suited me perfectly, I hope the same happens for you. I am sure you will love and care for him (which I am truly grateful), and he in return will show you your inner strength.

Just remember: the special bond of a bear can last a lifetime. A childhood bear can sit proudly on a very grown up bed and office desk or secretly hidden away in a suitcase when we embark on a new adventure. Only time will tell if Night Teddy stays with you or needs to move on. But what we both know is he will never be lost or stolen in your care.

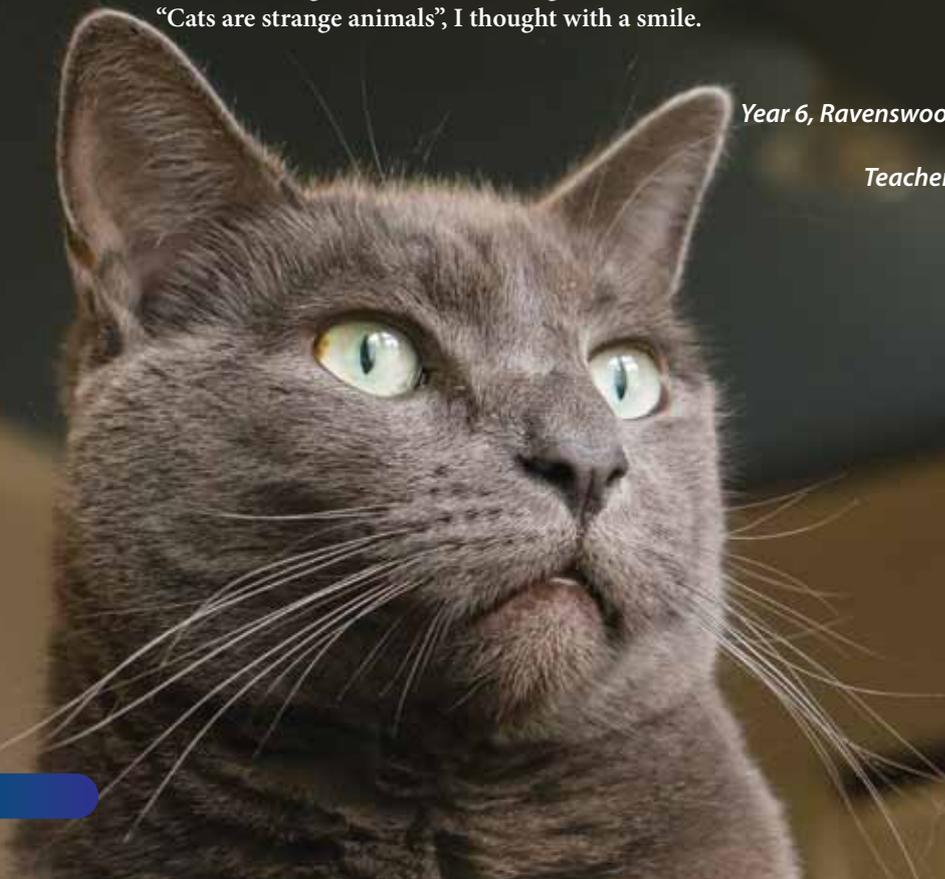
*By Miranda Plowman
Year 10, Virtual School Victoria
THORBURY – VIC.
Teacher: Heloise Bamks*



A Day In the Life of a Cat Owner

As I opened my eyes,
Sunshine was cast upon my face.
I absorbed the morning warmth,
Suddenly, a large black face popped into view,
Blocking the sunlight, forcing me to look away.
Staring at me with its curious green eyes.
The creature leaned in, rubbing its furry face against mine.
Whiskers brushed past my ear,
As the menacing, yet innocent face focused on me yet again.
A low hum came from somewhere deep in its throat.
My hand reached up to touch this mysterious creature.
My fingers caressed its fur,
Sending tingles through my body.
Its head rubbed against me again,
This time more forcefully.
The humming intensified.
The pupils in the centre of the creature's big green eyes narrowed.
An ear-splitting meow echoed through the room.
A black paw slashed at my face,
Shiny claws sparkling, preparing to pierce skin.
I rolled to the other side of the bed just in time,
The claws swiping nothing but air.
My heart was pounding a million times a minute.
The creature let out an innocent meow.
How could I not forgive?
I rolled over to the other side of the bed, patting the animal again.
Feeling the furry sensation once more.
As quick as a flash, the creature turned its head,
Baring its teeth, it bit into my skin.
I let out a cry of shock and pain.
Drops of blood soaked into my bed covers.
I was about to kick the cat off my bed and out of the house,
When I felt a different sensation.
The creature started to lick my wound,
Stopping the blood and pain.
I gave the creature a hug.
"Cats are strange animals", I thought with a smile.

By **Georgia Gray**
Year 6, Ravenswood School for Girls
GORDON – NSW
Teacher: Sharon Shapiro



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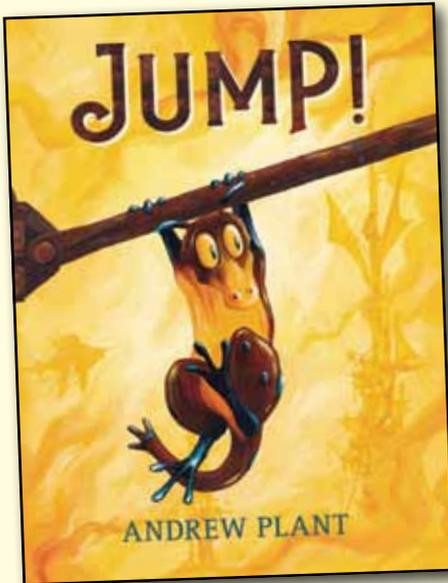
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JUMP!

By Andrew Plant
Available: 1st March 2020
ISBN: 9781925804454

Stumpy is a Quig, a remarkable little creature living in the soaring towers of an alien city. But Stumpy is different to



his family and friends. He gets bullied for being different. But even Stumpy has a talent to be proud of.

Age range 5 to 9.

Scribbly Gum Secrets

By: Dannika Patterson, Megan Forward (Illustrator)
Available: 1st April 2020
ISBN: 9781925804485

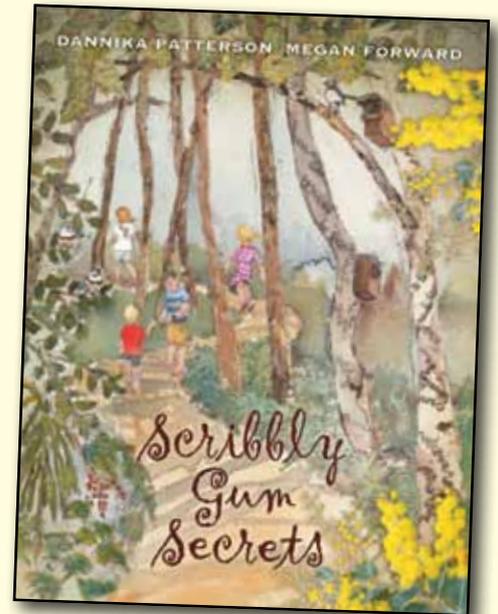
'Who drew on these tree trunks?' Charlie asked Max. 'They'll be in big trouble if Mum sees that!'

This is a lovely book describing the many creatures who live in the bush. Tiny creatures we don't usually see, unless we get up close and look for them. Getting kids out of the house is a challenge, but take them to the bush to explore, and they will have lots of fun.

What is written on the trees? Can you find the words and explain it to me? Find the words and tell me what they mean.

NOTE: The scribbly gum tree is a eucalyptus tree with a very smooth, pale trunk. The distinctive brownish 'scribbles' are made by the larvae of the tiny scribbly moth.

Age range 6+.



AN ANZAC soldier falls down again and blood is pouring everywhere. It smells like smoke from the fire and as soldiers fall into the dirt. A gun has just shot and no one moves as they hear the sound of foot steps and explosions of bombs. It feels like suffering, bravery and doom.

The doom has gone into my body and stays there until the taste of the Anzac cookies go down and stay. When I feel the pain once again it stays inside until I fall for the last time.

I feel the dirt rubbing under my body and the blood was coming out and out, so then I shut my eyes and they never opened again.

By **Zoe Powney**
Year 3, Our Lady Queen of Peace
GREYSTANES – NSW
Teacher: Mrs Lorena Pessotto

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Pictured: Marjory Gardner, Meredith Costain, Phil Kettle, Marc McBride, Paul Collins and George Ivanoff.

Sky Rocket

AS HANS Christian Anderson once said, “to travel is to live”. As a child, I was fascinated by the idea of exploring different continents and their cultures. It was always a passion of mine to one day visit Asia, seeing as my parents would frequently tell me stories about the breathtaking landscapes and amazing street foods they would indulge in. At the age of eight, I was given the opportunity to experience this firsthand.

One of the countries I vividly remember going to is Thailand. Once I boarded the plane with my family, I sat anxiously as the plane was preparing to take off. However, I started to relax, despite the subtle vibration of the plane’s wheels as it began to speed up on the runway. I spent the time watching the wings slice through the white velvet clouds and before I knew it, I was stepping out of the airport. I was immediately greeted by the illuminating sun which shone brighter than a beacon. Sweat instantly began to drip from my head to my toes. The sweltering heat of the summer was so powerful that even the trees looked overwhelmed – the leaves which should have been green and bright were instead a crunchy brown. I looked around at the landscape and was astounded. The country looked as if there had been a massive collision of ancient and modern worlds, two distinctly different landscapes meshed into a natural wonderland. I was still shaking from the built-up nervousness that bottled up in me from the flight, as if I was ready to burst like a champagne cork.

On our first night, we all decided to visit the indoor amusement park located close to the hotel where we were staying. Walking into the building, we were instantly welcomed with chaotic children running around, holding their ice cream cones that melted and dripped down their small hands, and their parents frantically chasing after them. The smells of greasy mini donuts and cotton candy lingered in the air making my stomach growl despite just eating. The run-down building seemed as though it had slowly collapsed into itself, and the roof sagged as if a giant had sat on it. Despite the horrendous state of the amusement park, all of my previous feelings of anxiety and fear

quickly disappeared, being replaced with uncontrollable feelings of excitement.

Hours quickly passed and we became more and more tired, growing desperate to retreat back into the comfort of our hotel rooms. It was until I saw something that captivated me. In big and bright neon letters, the words ‘Sky Rocket’ shone luminously over a nearby ticket booth. I felt as though it was calling me and I had a strong urge to walk towards it. When we purchased our tickets, we did not specifically know what it was for, however, we assumed that it was a rollercoaster. We were quickly led to a nearby elevator when I suddenly felt my stomach twist into a tight knot. I thought to myself, ‘this is odd’ and ‘why is the rollercoaster starting from the top of the building?’. We shot each other looks of concern as the elevator kept going higher and higher until we inevitably reached the rooftop.

That’s when we saw it. This wasn’t a rollercoaster but instead, it was an enormous hot air balloon. Our eyes widened as a jab of fear and adrenaline rushed through our bloodstreams. The idea of being in a hot air balloon sparked intense trepidation. My heart was about to explode. My hands trembled and my eyes began to water as I stepped into the unstable basket, preparing to plummet to my death. The others were not completely thrilled about this either as I saw them shivering with terror. I tried to distract myself by making conversation with the others in the basket, asking

them about their favourite place to eat, but it was impossible as they were also consumed with fear. Though, I envied the locals because they seemed relaxed and completely at ease. My breathing became harsh and ragged as the roaring flame rose into the balloon. I couldn’t hear my rapid breathing but I could definitely feel the oxygen that quickly entered and left my lungs. My hands gripped onto the woven basket, feeling the rough Dacron scrape against my delicate fingertips. I closed my eyes and whispered a prayer as we ascended. The balloon went higher and higher with no promise of meeting the ground again.

Aside from the sounds of the burner, it was completely silent. I felt the cool wind blow through my hair as if it was daring me to open my eyes. The first thing I saw in front of me were thousands of bright twinkling stars, all of different sizes and shapes, in the pure black of the sky which made them stand out. High in the sky was the silver moon that illuminated the city below. I gained the courage to look down from the basket and saw a different perspective of the country, something that I wouldn’t have seen any other way. The view was enchanting. The tall contemporary buildings elegantly contrasted the smaller, more dilapidated homes. The country was equally bustling in the night as it were during the day. From above, I could see the ant-like pedestrians that roamed the streets. Their joyous laughter filled my ears, encapsulating Thailand’s magical essence. I remember feeling at peace as we slowly floated through the air. However, the serenity was quickly interrupted by the aggressive burner as we began to descend.

The landing was smoother than I had expected. I jumped out of the basket and kissed the ground due to my new-found appreciation for the land. I felt a sense of accomplishment as I had finally slayed the dragon that once had a powerful hold on me. That day I learned that fear was the greatest illusion, an illusion that can hold you back from life’s best adventures.

By Joanna Tang

*Year 12, St Dominic’s Priory College
NORTH ADELAIDE – SA
Teacher: Shelda Rathmann*



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Winning the Oz Kids in Print, *Young Australian Writer of the Year Award* back in 1999 was such a huge honour and 20 years on it is still one of my proudest moments and something that I will never forget.

I'm very disappointed not to be able to attend the awards anniversary. I'm sure it will be a wonderful night and I hope it all goes well!

Thank you,
Rachael



Ode to Trees

I wish people could understand trees,
Understand the passion they have
for their marvellous planet
Understand the sorrow they feel
when merely seen as objects.
Understand the agony they feel
when brutally slain
Because they are more than that.
They are loving homes.
They are living beings with soul.
They are the lungs of our earth
We say they make our world beautiful.
Yet we cut them down

By **Ayo Adejoro**
Year 8, St. Dominic's Priory College
NORTH ADELAIDE – SA
Teacher: Ms. Shelda Rathmann

THE WILLOW TREE

As her last breath slips away
under the willow her corpse shall lay
She may be gone and she is free
under this weeping willow tree
Many years have come to pass
and the willows field has even greener grass
The girl's corpse still lay under the tree
and her ghost from above smiles with glee
She gone and she is free
but she sill misses that old willow tree

By **Akshaya Gounder**
Year 7, MacArthur Girls High School
WESTMEAD – NSW
Teacher: Ms G Cluff

Puppet



A puppet with no strings,
Left hanging limp,
All senses cut off,
Out of control.

No longer can it dance,
Nor sing, speak or laugh,
But now a victim of its mind,
To wander the halls of mem'ry.

Able to hear but not reply,
Able to question but not ask why,
And now forevermore will be,
A puppet of its mind.

By **Imogen Taylor-Thorne**
Year 7, Ravenswood School for Girls
GORDON – NSW

The Unforgiving Season

Scorching, burning rays
Crackling flora beneath me
Sweltering, sweating

By **Allegra Clarke**
Year 3, Trinity Anglican School
KEWARRA BEACH – QLD.
Teacher: Kellie Clarke

Mother, Please Don't Cry

Can we hear Mother Earth
crying for help?
We know she's our only home,
yet we foolishly continue
to damage her heart.
Do we know how much she cares?
How much she loves her planet?
How much she loves us?
Can we hear her crying?
Can't we see she's dying?

Every time we cut down a tree
it's like killing a child.
How can we be so cruel, so heartless?
How can we not understand
all her sorrow, all her pain?
Can't we just love our divine world?

I wish she could forgive us
for all the misery we've brought,
but more than that,
I wish we could change,
for ourselves,
for our children
and keep her beautiful
for the next generation.

I promise, someday, soon
we will change,
so Mother, please don't cry.

By **Kha Doanh Phung**
Year 8, St Dominic's Priory College
NORTH ADELAIDE – SA
Teacher: Shelda Rathmann



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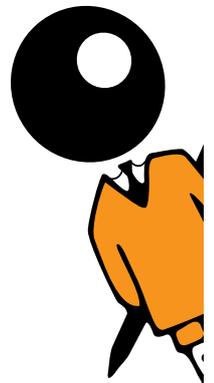
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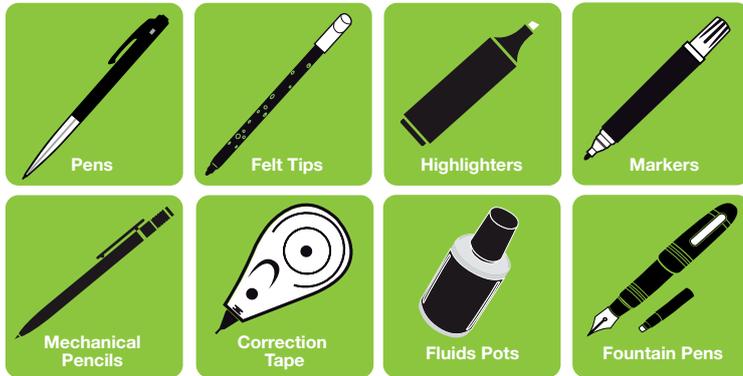
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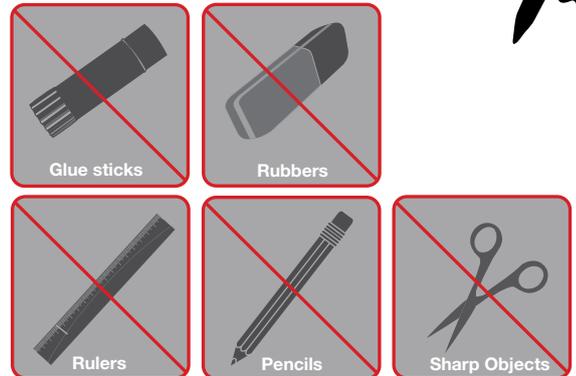
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