



2022-23

# Kids' Reading Guide

Handpicked and reviewed by  
Australia's leading booksellers

# Kids' Reading Guide

Welcome everyone to this special shining selection of children's books, handpicked and reviewed with care by leading booksellers across Australia.

My name is Gabrielle Wang and I am the Australian Children's Laureate for 2022 and 2023. I am also a children's author and illustrator and passionate about inspiring everyone to use their imagination especially by reading lots of books.

Books are magical, providing children with a window through which they can learn about different people and experiences. Growing up as a Chinese–Australian girl, I longed to see myself in books. Now there are so many diverse stories for kids to choose from if we just give them the chance.

Inside this guide you'll find all kinds of books for children of all ages and stages of reading — fiction, non-fiction and illustrated books. They're all available in Australian bookshops.

So turn the pages, and help children discover not only books and stories, but new experiences that will inspire and excite their imaginations for many years to come.

**Gabrielle Wang**  
*Australian Children's Laureate 2022-2023*



## Zadie Ma and the Dog who Chased the Moon

**Gabrielle Wang | Puffin | PB \$16.99**



A very special book from the 2022/23 Australian Children's Laureate all about creativity and imagination. Set in post-war Melbourne, Zadie has a secret, special power where sometimes the stories she writes and draws come to life. She has no control over which stories work but she desperately wants a dog of her own, can she write a furry friend into her life for real? A wonderful story within a story and a perfect read aloud for the whole family.



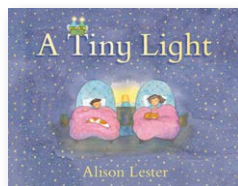
# Baby & Toddler

## A Tiny Light

Alison Lester | UQP | HB \$19.99



Alison Lester once again delivers everything we've come to expect from the former Children's Laureate. Wonderful rhyming text accompanies her trademark illustrations, as she takes us on an adventure through the night sky. At once hopeful and comforting, it is perfect for any child aged from 0-6.

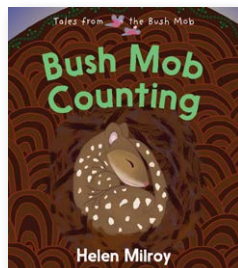


## Bush Mob Counting

Helen Milroy | Magabala Books | BB \$16.99



A fun and colourful counting book of all our Australian animal friends from Helen Milroy's, *Tales from the Bush Mob* series. Counting to 10 is a hoot with so much to look for and point out as we turn the pages together. We particularly love this book in Story Time with everyone getting into the action. Can you join me to sing like a magpie?

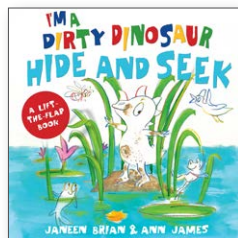


## I'm A Dirty Dinosaur Hide and Seek

Janeen Brian and Ann James (illus) | Puffin | BB \$16.99



The much-loved Dirty Dinosaur is now available in board book. Featuring rhyming text and charmingly illustrated with sturdy lift-the-flaps, this is perfect for any toddler who will enjoy looking for all the different pond creatures. But will they find out where the Dirty Dinosaur is hiding?



## All the Ways to Be Smart (Board Book Edition)

Davina Bell and Alison Colpoys (illus) | Scribble | BB \$17.99



A new format for this gem of a book that celebrates the unique talents of every child. The vibrant illustrations pop with energy and joy, and the words gently encourage children to be happy with who they are. Be smart and add this beautiful book to your collection.



## Floof

Heidi McKinnon | Albert Street Books | HB \$19.99



Heidi McKinnon is back with another irresistible picture book especially for cat lovers. Floof the cat is VERY floofy and he is having a VERY busy day. Great fun to read aloud while kids will delight in noticing all the things that the mischievous Floof gets up to throughout the day.





# Baby & Toddler

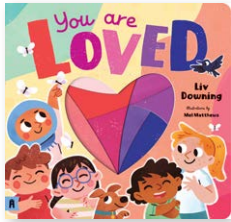


## Welcome, Little One

**Sophie Beer | Little Hare | HB \$24.99**



Welcome, little one, to our little world. We've been waiting a whole lifetime to meet you. Featuring Sophie Beer's distinctly bright and beautiful illustrations this is the ideal gift for the new parent. Weaving in the hopes and dreams of all parents this is a book to read aloud and treasure.

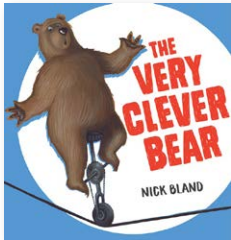


## You Are Loved

**Liv Downing and Mel Matthews (illus) | Albert Street Books | BB \$24.99**



A fun brightly illustrated board book that lets children know they are loved unconditionally no matter the situation — when they brush their teeth or don't brush their teeth, have lots of friends or prefer being alone. Cut outs on each page create a beautiful heart to make this book a very special object to treasure and share.



## The Very Clever Bear

**Nick Bland | Scholastic Australia | HB \$17.99**



The circus has arrived in the Jingle Jangle Jungle and all of Bear's friends have the perfect circus acts so they can join the performance. But Bear can't juggle or belly dance or do magical tricks. Will he be able to come up with a very clever trick of his own? Lots of rhyming fun makes this a fabulous read aloud and kids will love the antics of Bear and his friends.



## Look, It's Woof Woof Dog Look, It's Twit Twoo Owl

**Camilla Reid and Clare Youngs (illus)  
Nosy Crow | BB \$14.99**

These books introduced me to so many animals and all the sounds they make! There's Munch Munch Rabbit, Squeak Squeak Mouse, Quack Quack Duck, Glub Glub Fish, and Woof Woof Dog and Twit Twoo Owl, of course! And along the way there are lots of flaps to pull, and little creatures to find!



**Ada,  
8 months**



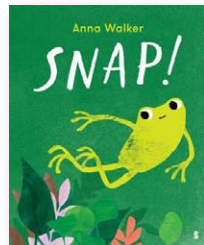


## Snap!

Anna Walker | Scribble | HB \$24.99



This beautiful picture book will delight little readers. With its bright illustrations, minimal text and adorable green frog, *Snap!* will have pre-schoolers acting out the words and giggling at the animal antics. Perfect for sharing with the youngest of children, this is sure to become a firm favourite with children and parents alike.

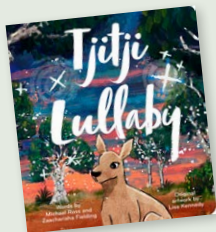
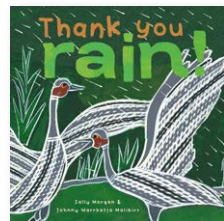


## Thank You Rain!

Sally Morgan and Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr (illus)  
Magabala | HB \$24.99



*Thank You Rain!* is a beautiful collaboration between Sally Morgan and Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr. Experience the joy and celebration as the rain arrives and brings the countryside to life. *Thank You Rain!* shows how the birds, animals and landscape are all transformed by the big wet.



## Tjitji Lullaby

Zaachariah Fielding, Michael Ross  
and Lisa Kennedy (illus)  
ABC Kids | BB \$19.99

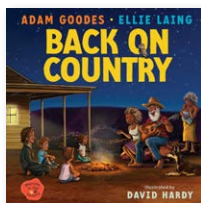


The 'Tjitji lullaby' is a special lullaby about singing baby animals to sleep. I love my Mum and Dad reading this to me, but it makes me very sleepy too! I am learning all about Australian animals and love looking at the bright pictures.



Theodore,  
2 months

# Picture Books



## Back On Country: Welcome to Our Country

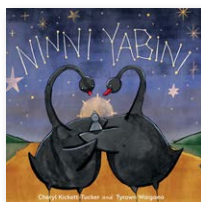
Adam Goodes, Ellie Laing and David Hardy (illus)  
A&U Children's | HB \$24.99



A beautiful story of children going back on Country for the first time. Told using some indigenous language and using a simple illustrated glossary, lessons about indigenous culture are woven through the story — a beautiful book about reconnecting with family, culture and Country.

## Ninni Yabini

Cheryl Kickett-Tucker and Tyrown Waigana (illus)  
Fremantle Press | HB \$24.99



This is a heart-warming story of a little swan, Yabini, finding her way home, guided by her name-sake star when she strays from her parents. Written in the First Nations language, Noongar from the South West of Australia, with English translation, this is a story passed down through the ages warning of the djidi-djidi, willy-wagtail, leading children playfully astray. Illustrated in watercolour and ink, this delightful picture book wraps gently around big feelings all families endure and draw strength from together.

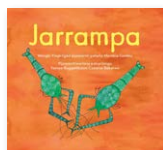


## Owl and Star

Helen Milroy | Fremantle Press | HB \$24.99



Sometimes, even stars need help, and who better to help a lost evening star than the owl who flies through the night sky. This enchanting First Nations story is a perfect night-time read, gazing up at the starry sky and listening out for the hoot of an owl. Friendship and bravery are resounding forces in this book that is strikingly illustrated with rich overlaying patterns.



## Jarrampa

Marshia Cook,  
Tamua Nuggett and  
Cazarus Baker (illus)



## Purlka ngamaji Kakaji (Big Fat Mummy Goanna)

Emma Bearwu

Indigenous Literacy Foundation | HB \$24.99



These bilingual books — in Walmajarri and English — were produced in workshops with Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF) ambassador Alison Lester as part of the ILF's community publishing program. A great way to introduce children to First Nations languages and storytelling.





## Swoop

**Nicole Godwin and Susannah Crispe (illus)**  
CSIRO | HB \$24.99



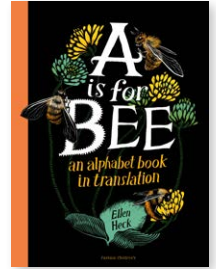
In this delightful book we follow a magpie who is determined to always keep his eggs safe, especially from rock-throwing intruders! Yes, magpies are birds that evoke strong passions but through this story we can learn to understand and live with this beautiful, iconic songbird.



## A is for Bee

**Ellen Heck | Pushkin Children's | HB \$24.99**

A beautifully illustrated, unconventional alphabet book that is great for all ages. Turning the alphabet on its head by looking at animals in translation (69 different languages in fact). Each letter represents an animal and the different ways it is pronounced around the world. A complete celebration of language and a super fun book to share with the whole family.

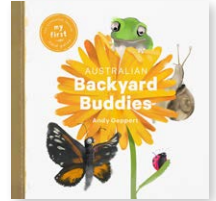


## Backyard Buddies

**Andy Geppart | Lothian Children's Books | HB \$19.99**



*Backyard Buddies* is a playful and informative introduction for the very young to many insects and reptiles found in our backyards. There is lots of useful information for identifying these friends and explanations of the work that they do, along with advice on who to touch and who to leave alone.



## The Best Hiding Place

**Jane Godwin and Sylvia Morris (illus) | Affirm Press | HB \$24.99**



Such a gloriously fun picture book that captures the highs and lows of a game of hide and seek. The relief of finding a good spot, the thrill of the chase and the slight terror when you wonder if you will ever be found in that dark, dusty hiding spot in the cupboard... Just like a good game of hide and seek, you will want to shout 'let's go again' as soon as you finish reading it! An absolutely delightful read.





# Picture Books

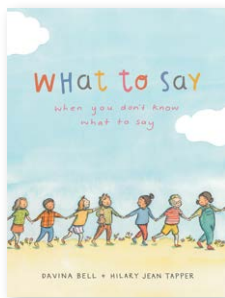


## Violin and Cello

**Catherine Greer, Joanna Bartel (illus) and Alexander Lau (music)**  
**EK Kids | HB \$24.99**



Two children develop a friendship through their love of playing music. This is a sweet and uplifting simple story. With beautiful illustrations, the book also has a bonus QR link to The Mystery Friends duet music. This is a perfect gift for anyone discovering the joy of music through learning an instrument.



## What to Say When We Don't Know What to Say

**Davina Bell and Hilary Jean Tapper (illus)**  
**Lothian Children's Books | HB \$24.99**



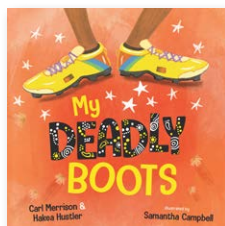
Have you ever wondered what to say in a tricky situation? Have you ever worried about something and not known what to do? Using beautiful, simple illustrations this book talks about the difficult moments in your life—those moments when you just don't know what to say. Using empathy and kindness it helps you to make friends, move house and compromise. It says it's ok to feel shy, miss someone and ask for help. It's all about those BIG emotions.



## Farmhouse

**Sophie Blackall | Lothian Children's Books | HB \$24.99**

This extraordinary picture book by two-time Caldecott winner Sophie Blackall is an instant classic. Telling the story of an old, dilapidated farmhouse and the family who used to live there, Sophie has used scrumptious layers of collage salvaged from the actual house to create a dollhouse-like interior and a snapshot into a long past time and place. It is one of those special books that can be enjoyed by young and old and definitely one to spend hours appreciating the love and detail in each gorgeous page. A divine gift for every member of the family!



## My Deadly Boots

**Carl Merrison, Hakea Hustler and Samantha Campbell (illus)**  
**Lothian Children's Books | HB \$24.99**



A young boy saves up all his money to buy his very own, special footy boots. More than just for running and kicking, they give him courage and confidence. But what happens when the boots go missing? With romping text and bright illustrations, this is a story of identity and knowing your place in the world.

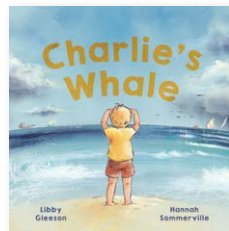


## Charlie's Whale

**Libby Gleeson and Hannah Sommerville (illus)**  
**Lothian Children's Books | HB \$24.99**



Charlie is obsessed with whales of all shapes and sizes and is determined to catch a glimpse of one in its natural habitat. Perfectly capturing the iconic Australian coastal experience, it will appeal to kids around the globe with a love for nature and the ocean. A classic and beautifully told tale with stunning illustrations that will no doubt feature in the awards season next year. Perfect for Alison Lester fans, just divine!



## Be Careful, Xiao Xin!

**Alice Pung and Sher Rill Ng (illus) | Working Title | HB \$24.99**



This powerfully written and beautifully drawn, bilingual picture book shows us how hard it can be for our young ones to find independent space in our modern, fast and sometimes dangerous world. A story about facing fears, not only as a child, but as an adult. We can all learn to conquer our fears at any age.

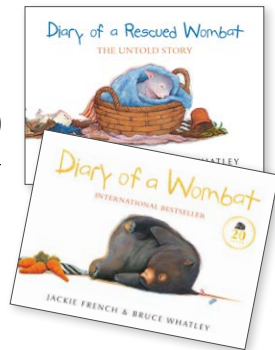


## Diary of a Rescued Wombat: The Untold Story

**Jackie French and Bruce Whatley (illus)**  
**HarperCollins Australia | HB \$24.99**



20 years ago, readers met and fell in love with the ever-endearing wombat Mothball. Now we learn about her early days — small, lost and in need of a home. And of course, how she learnt to train her humans and find an endless supply of carrots. A charming way to introduce new generations of readers to Mothball. A special 20th anniversary edition of the much-loved *Diary of a Wombat* is also available.



## Meanwhile Back on Earth

**Oliver Jeffers | HarperCollins | HB \$27.99**

A father takes his two children on an adventure into space and asks them to check in the 'rear view mirror' so they can look back at Earth and see all the conflicts that have taken place since the beginning of time. The enduring message from these conflicts is that what binds us together matters more than what sets us apart.



# Picture Books



## Colours, Colours Everywhere

**Julia Donaldson and Sharon King-Chai (illus) | Two Hoots | HB \$26.99**

This is the third book in the collaboration between Julia Donaldson and Sharon King-Chai. Like the previous two, this one has beautiful, rhyming text and brightly coloured landscapes. It is the story of a little girl painting her own adventure with her blue tree frog as her companion. Filled with colourful trees, gardens, balloons, and birds it is the perfect book to teach children all about colours.

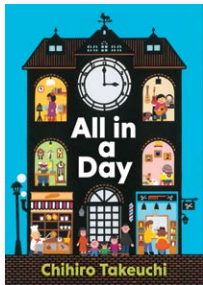


## The Tree at Number 43

**Jess McGeachin | Puffin | HB \$24.99**



A delightfully whimsical story about the love of nature. Sam and his Grandpa live in a big city and dream of faraway wild places. When a magical tree starts to grow in their house, their dreams of living in a beautiful wilderness come true. A book about conservation and a hopeful look at the future of our environment. Another delightful and inspirational story from Jess McGeachin.



## All in A Day

**Chihiro Takeuchi | Berbay | HB \$26.99**

With the most exquisitely detailed paper cut images, this picture book is a feast for your eyes! Follow the families and businesses in the clocktower building as they move through their day. There are simple things to find on every page, but it is the intricacies that will add layers to the story with each reading. Wonderful!



**Charlie, 4**

## Dirt By Sea

**Michael Wagner and Tom Jellett (illus) | Puffin | HB \$24.99**



Daisy and her dad go on an EPIC adventure all around Australia in their Kombi van! One day I want to go on a trip just like them. My big brother liked this book too, and how it was told like a comic.







## The Grizzled Grist Does Not Exist!

Juliette MacIver and Sarah Davis (illus) | Gecko Press | HB \$26.99

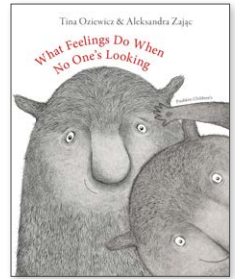
An exuberant rhyming tale of daring and survival. When Ms Whisk and her class head into the Dismal Hills to test their survival skills only Liam sees the dangerous Grizzled Grist. Liam is a hider — a quiet child who uses his super hiding skills to save the day.



## What Feelings Do When No One's Looking

Tina Oziewicz and Aleksandra Zajac (illus)  
Pushkin Children's | HB \$24.99

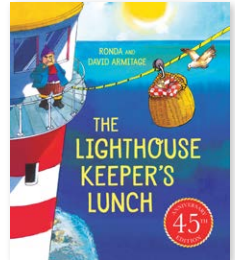
*What Feelings Do When No One's Looking* explores all the different kinds of feelings that we can experience — ones that are pleasant like joy and some that are not so comfortable like envy. Each feeling is represented as a fun little creature using beautiful subtle illustrations. A great way to start a conversation with younger readers about feelings.



## The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch (45th Anniversary Edition)

Ronda Armitage and David Armitage (illus) | Scholastic | HB \$19.99

In this much-loved classic, Mr Grinling the lighthouse keeper gets a delicious lunch from his wife every day, delivered to the lighthouse in a basket on a wire. When a group of seagulls begin to hijack Mr Grinling's lunches, the Grinlings must come up with a plan to thwart the clever lunch thieves.



## Frank's Red Hat

Sean A. Avery  
Walker Books Australia | HB \$25.99



Frank made a red hat, but the other penguins thought it was scary. It was a bit sad because the other penguins didn't like Frank's hat, but the seals loved it and wanted Frank to make more things. I loved this book because it was super funny.



# Picture Books for Older Readers



## The Zebra's Great Escape

Katherine Rundell and Sara Ogilvie (illus) | Bloomsbury | HB \$29.99

When a baby zebra appears and begs Mink to help find his missing parents, Mink discovers that someone has stolen an alphabet's worth of animals! Together with a brave band of urban animals, she makes a mad dash to free the captives, but will she get there in time?



## My Strange Shrinking Parents

Zeno Sworder | Thames & Hudson Australia | HB \$25.99



Award-winning author/illustrator Zeno Sworder has created a masterpiece, an immigrant story that explores the nature and sacrifice of parental love. Reminiscent of Shaun Tan's *The Arrival*, and with a haunting, fable-like quality and absolutely exquisite illustrations, this extraordinary picture book is sure to become a modern classic.



## The Happiest Boy on Earth: The incredible story of The Happiest Man on Earth

Eddie Jaku | PanMacmillan | HB \$26.99



Adapted from the bestselling *The Happiest Man on Earth*, this picture book for older children tells the story of Eddie Jaku and how his world was turned upside down when Hitler came to power. Told in the form of the 101-year-old Eddie answering questions from his curious great grandchildren, this is a sensitive way to introduce big themes with Eddie's trademark positivity shining through.



# Junior Fiction

## The Trouble with the Two-Headed Hydra: Miss Mary-Kate Martin's Guide to Monsters 2



**Karen Foxlee and Freda Chu (illus) | A&U Children's | PB \$14.99**

Miss Mary-Kate Martin might be anxious, but she's not scared of monsters especially when she is armed with her glitter pens and strawberry scented notebooks. Travelling the globe with her famous archaeologist mother, Mary-Kate helps solve legendary problems in this fun, informative, adventure series which began with the *Wrath of the Woolington Wyrms*.

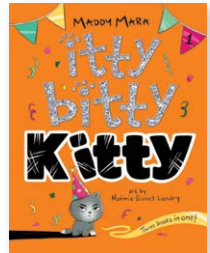


## Itty Bitty Kitty #1

**Maddy Mara and Noémie Geonet Landry (illus)  
Affirm Press | PB \$14.99**



In these three epic adventures Itty Bitty Kitty teaches us all the 'Cat Laws' we (us humans) must learn to adopt to create a happy family with our new adopted family member. Rules such as, a Kitty should always be allowed to sleep on clean washing and the biggest rule, that an Itty Bitty Kitty will always pick their own family. A delightfully cute beginner reader series to start you and your young one on their reading journey.



## Willa and Woof #1 Mimi is Missing Willa and Woof #2 Birthday Business

**Jacqueline Harvey | Puffin | PB \$12.99**



Eight-year-old Willa has three best friends, Woof, her four-legged friend; Tae, her same age friend; and Frank, her slightly grumpy old age friend. She also has a knack for getting into trouble. Join Willa in her quest to find Mimi the missing pigeon or in planning a Birthday surprise for Frank. A gentle and delightful new series from the wonderful Jacqueline Harvey.



## A Line in the Sand (The Wildlife. #2) A Berry Long Walk (The Wildlife. #1)



**Laura and Phillip Bunting (illus) | Scholastic Australia | PB \$15.99**

Wombat and his friend Roo need to find water to cool down and soothe their sizzled paws on a very hot day. They find a beautiful beach where they encounter a cranky Quokka who isn't in the mood to share. A story about generosity, kindness and community. This is a very funny and cute read for that animal loving junior reader.







Henry, 8

## Astonishingly Good Stories

R.A. Spratt | Puffin | PB \$19.99



The stories in this book made me laugh so hard! They are really silly. Would you believe a lot of them are told by a pig? Well, they are, and she is funny.



## Football Fever 1: The Kick-off Football Fever 2: Half-time Heroes

Kristin Darell | Puffin | PB \$14.99



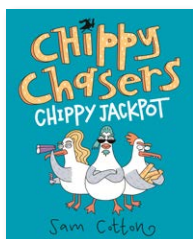
This is a fun new series with each book featuring two kids from the under 11 Merridale team. Written by sports journalist Kristin Darrel and in collaboration with the Matildas and Socceroos, it is jam-packed full of football mischief and a few bits of awesome advice from some of the superstars of football too. Great for sports fans but also for kids who just like a great story!

## Chippy Chasers: Chippy Jackpot

Sam Cotton | PB \$14.99



Everyone knows that seagulls love to steal hot chips and Stacey and Stanley are no exception. Fed up with losing out to all the other seagulls they enlist the help of legendary chippy thief Steve-O to pull off the biggest heist of all on Brocks Hot Chip van. A cast of crazy characters abounds in this madcap graphic novel for younger readers.



# Middle Fiction



## Solve Your Own Mystery: The Monster Maker

Gareth P. Jones | Walker Books | PB \$16.99

When I first picked up this book, I thought — how am I going to solve my own mystery? As I read the book, I realised that I could not only choose the storyline, but I would also have to think about the evidence I had gathered and choose who is the most likely thief. This is a great interactive detective book and I strongly recommend it.



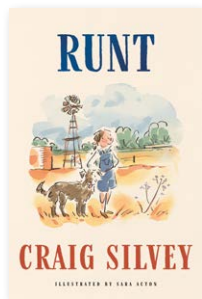
Daniel, 11

## Runt

Craig Silvey and Sara Acton (illus) | A&U Children's | HB \$22.99



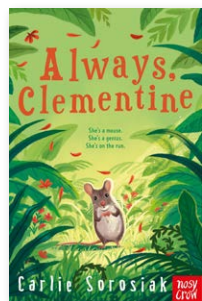
*Runt* is the heartwarming story of Annie Shearer and her adopted best friend Runt. Runt is a fast and agile dog who after years of evading capture has found companionship with Annie. This is one of those classic stories in which you are rooting for the underdog to win against all odds. You will laugh and cry and be moved by this tale of kindness and friendship. A classic in the making.



## Always, Clementine

Carlie Sorosiak | Nosy Crow | PB \$14.99

The thrilling adventures of Clementine the wonder mouse who is set free from a research lab. Whilst on the run she writes fond letters to her lab companion, Rosie, the chimpanzee. *Always, Clementine* is a heartwarming story about standing up for what you believe in and following your own path. For lovers of smart animals, kindness and chess.



## Honour Among Ghosts

Sean Williams | A&U Children's | PB \$16.99



Set in a small Irish village this historical mystery is a charming story of sorcerers, ghosts, and scribe's apprentices. Penny is convinced her father has been framed for a burglary that he didn't commit, and she joins forces with the magistrate's son, a young traveller, and a magical scribe's apprentices to solve the crime. Meanwhile, more and more crimes are taking place. With plenty of action and twists and turns it will appeal to readers of Victorian mysteries. 9+



# Middle Fiction



## Berani

Michelle Kadarusman | A&U Children's | PB \$16.99

*Berani* is an inspiring tale about the plight of Orangutans in Indonesia, and of one in particular, Ginger Juice, who lives in a cage outside Ari's uncle's restaurant. It is a heartwarming story about activism, courage, and empathy, about challenging norms and realising the consequences of your actions — and inactions.

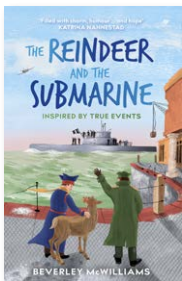


## The Bookseller's Apprentice

Amelia Mellor | Affirm Press | HB \$19.99



It's 1871 and Melbourne's Paddy's Market is a noisy, bustling, magical place. Twelve-year-old Billy Pyke loves his job working as an apprentice bookseller at Cole's Book Stall. When a sinister magician known as the Obscurosmith starts tricking people into making dangerous deals, brave young Billy tries to stop him. This highly anticipated prequel to *The Grandest Bookshop in the World* doesn't disappoint. Riddles and magic and a tense race against time make for an exciting read.



## The Reindeer and the Submarine

Beverley McWilliams | Pantera Press | PB \$16.99



Based on the true story of Pollyanna, an orphaned reindeer with no antlers who was raised by a Sami herder called Igor. When Igor heads off to fight during World War II Pollyanna follows but she is captured and gifted to the crew of a British submarine where she becomes part of the crew and makes new friends. A story of bravery and hope that shows that heroes can come in all shapes and sizes.



Angus, 10

## The Book of Wondrous Possibilities

Deborah Abela | Puffin | PB \$16.99



A boy who lives in a bookshop with his uncle has his life changed forever when a girl bursts through the door. She is hiding from a murderer and asks him for help. I liked it because there was lots of magic and a little bit of mystery and after every chapter I wanted to keep reading. Read if you enjoyed *The Grandest Bookshop in the World*.

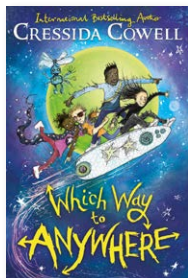




## Which Way to Anywhere

Cressida Cowell | Hodder Children's Books | PB \$22.99

The amazing Cressida Cowell has a new magical adventure series, and it is filled with an exciting and fast-paced plot. Cressida brings us top secret potions, super powerful magic gifts, a kidnapped babysitter, a bounty hunter, and step-siblings, all of which make this a story that literally takes us out of this world.



## Dusty in the Outwilds

Rhiannon Williams  
Hardie Grant Children's Publishing | HB \$22.99



In the bush behind her gran's house, Dusty and her friends discover a secret world filled with strange creatures. When they are separated, Dusty must cross the Outwilds to find her friends and bring them home. This wonderfully engaging adventure is perfect for fans of *Land of Stories* and *Nevermoor*.



## Waiting for the Storks

Katrina Nannestad | ABC Kids Books | HB \$19.99



In Katrina Nannestad's new novel set during the Second World War we meet Zofia, a young Polish girl who is taken from her home and adopted by a wealthy German family giving her a comfortable and loving home, but in this process, she loses her Polish heritage. One day a Polish boy arrives, and her past is back to haunt her. Told with Katrina's amazingly tender style this book is powerful and heart-wrenching.



## A Girl Called Corpse: An Elston-Fright Tale

Reece Carter | A&U Children's | PB \$16.99

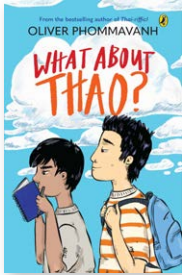


Corpse is a ghost who is on a mission to find out who she was. Read this book if you like spooky and funny stories. Simon the spider is my favourite character, and I am glad Corpse chose him as a best friend. There are witches, ghosts, sea monsters, zombie skeletons, and lots of adventure. I loved it and can't wait for more.



Lucy, 11

# Middle Fiction

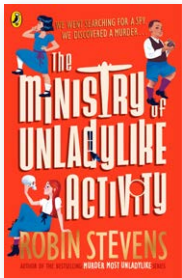


## What About Thao?

**Oliver Phommavanh | Puffin | PB \$16.99**



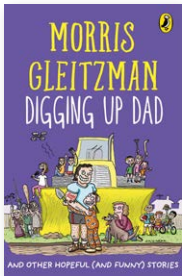
As the only Asian kid in a small town, Thao is used to standing out and quite enjoys the attention. But when Kadir arrives from Syria, suddenly Thao is no longer all that interesting. Can Thao put his feelings aside and help Kadir fit in? Filled with humour and warmth, this is pitch-perfect for fans of Morris Gleitzman and Nat Amooore.



## The Ministry of Unladylike Activity

**Robin Stevens | Puffin | PB \$16.99**

*The Ministry of Unladylike Activity* is a spy training institute in WWII Britain. This is the first book in a new series featuring friends May Wong and Eric who are determined to contribute to the war efforts. Everyone knows that children make the best spies and can go places and see things in a way that an adult never can.

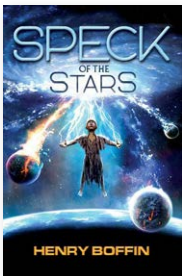


## Digging Up Dad

**Morris Gleitzman | Puffin | PB \$16.99**



Here we have a fantastically funny collection of stories. Once again Morris has given us some hilarious and delightfully silly short stories for any kid (or adult) with a love of the absurd. From retired teachers taking on Parliament House to talking speed bumps, these stories are fun, hopeful and uplifting.



## Speck of the Stars

**Henry Boffin | Ford Street | PB \$18.99**



In a futuristic world Speck is a human orphan who has been raised by utility robots on board the Grand Orbital Library. When a mysterious creature known as the Starchild appears and threatens the future of the Universe Speck, in believing in the good that is in all beings, believes that he can influence Starchild and thus change the future. This is a fabulous fantasy science fiction action novel for middle grade readers.

## The Little Match Girl Strikes Back

Emma Carroll and Lauren Child (illus)  
Simon & Schuster UK | HB \$19.99

Emma Carroll takes the grit and magic from Andersen's classic fairy tale, with inspiration from true events in a Victorian match factory, to create the hopeful story the Little Match Girl deserves. This is a wonderful feminist retelling with striking illustrations from Lauren Child, and fascinating historical photos and notes that really shine a light on the times.

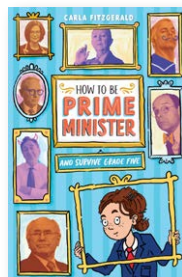


## How to Be Prime Minister and Survive Grade Five

Carla Fitzgerald | UQP | PB \$16.99



Can two sisters run the country when their dad goes AWOL from his Prime Ministerial duties? Harper's sincerity and earnestness in the face of a daunting task gives this book real heart, while her sister Lottie is an environmental champion and a firecracker. Together they will make you wonder why we haven't always put the kids in charge.



## Spark

M. G. Leonard | Walker Books | PB \$18.99

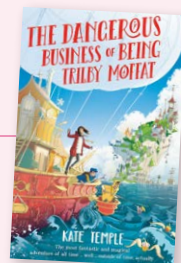
Someone in Briddvale is attacking cats, and Jack is determined to bring the villain to justice. He's helped solve a mystery before, how hard can it be to do it again? This is a gorgeous romp of a mystery novel, filled with friendship and a love for the natural world.



## The Dangerous Business of Being Trilby Moffat

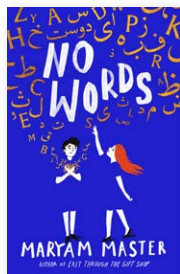
Kate Temple | Lothian Children's Books | PB \$16.99

I wish all books could be narrated by a thylacine who studies law. This book is really crazy, there is a strange sleeping disease sweeping the world, there is a lot of eating cakes for breakfast, time bending and parallel universes and I really loved the clever crossword clues at the beginning of every chapter. It was so funny I kept reading lines out loud so then my whole family ended up reading the book too! If you love hilarious adventures with a little bit of mystery and lots of kind characters then you need some serious Trilby action!



Rose, 9

# Almost Young Adult



## No Words

Maryam Master | Pan Australia | PB \$16.99



Aria is a newly arrived refugee who never EVER speaks. Hero wants to stand up to the school bullies when they keep picking on Aria but she's just too chicken. Instead, Hero and her best friend Jaz befriend Aria so they can uncover what has led to him being silent. This is a moving story about the power of friendship and how sharing your story can help you heal.



## The Jammer

Nova Weetman | UQP | PB \$16.99



Roller derby means everything to Fred, but when she loses her mum, she can't face playing anymore. However, newfound family and friends might just help her on the track to healing. This is a beautiful story about loss, family and roller derby, deftly and sensitively crafted, creating an uplifting tale full of warmth.



## Evie and Rhino

Neridah McMullin | Walker Books Australia | PB \$18.99



It's 1891 and a ship carrying a cargo of exotic animals crashes in a storm. When Rhino washes up on the shore near the home that Evie, a young girl who does not speak, lives in with her grandfather, he knows instinctively that Evie will help him. Evie and her grandfather know very well the tragedy of a shipwreck. Together, Evie and Rhino experience the healing power of friendship and protection. This is a moving and uplifting story that will appeal to those who love animal stories.



Freya, 12

## The Raven's Song

Bren MacDibble and Zana Fraillon  
A&U Children's | PB \$16.99



*The Raven's Song* kept me captivated from start to end! It is told in two perspectives — from two characters one hundred years apart. One character is in the distant future, the other in the near future. The novel had intricate, vivid characters and an exceptional plot.

I loved how we got two perspectives so we could really understand what happened and feel like we were in both times. The concept was well thought out and fascinating. I loved the book and would recommend it to anyone who loves post-apocalyptic genres.







## A Little Spark

Barry Jonsberg | A&U Children's | PB \$16.99



Cate has been coping pretty well with her parent's divorce, until an unexpected announcement from her mum and step-dad. Forced to choose between her parents, Cate's life will never be the same again. This is a whimsical, touching story that pays tribute to the enormous powers of imagination and love.

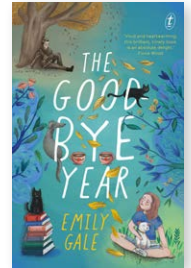


## The Goodbye Year

Emily Gale | Text Publishing | PB \$16.99



Harper is excited for her last year of primary school, but once it starts nothing goes to plan. Her best friends are too busy, her parents have gone to Yemen to help as nurses, she has to live with a grandmother she hardly knows and then a pandemic hits. On top of all of that, she has started to see and experience strange things. Is she being haunted by the ghost of a young soldier that attended her school in 1913? This is a deeply relatable story, with a hint of the supernatural, and a lot of heart.

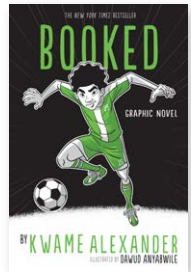


## Booked

Kwame Alexander and Dawud Anyabwile (illus)

Walker Books | PB \$19.99

Twelve-year-old Nick is mad about soccer but not so keen on books and while everything is fine on the soccer field the rest of his life is not going so well. His parents are divorcing, he has schoolwork to deal with, there are bullies to stand up to and a girl to impress. A fabulous graphic novel that shows just how powerful books and words can be when facing challenges that seem way too big.



## A Walk in the Dark

Jane Godwin | Lothian Children's Books | PB \$16.99



Five Year Nines set out on an unsupervised overnight hike in the forest. What could possibly go wrong? With a storm bearing down on them, just about everything! To make it out of the forest alive each teen will have to draw on their own particular strengths and rely on each other. Mistakes are made and personalities clash in this suspense-filled adventure that will hook you in from the first page.

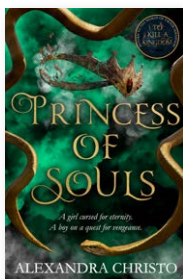




## The Last Cuentista

**Donna Barba Higuera | Piccadilly Books | PB \$16.99**

In this compelling sci-fi story that starts in Mexico in 2060, Petra and her family find themselves aboard a ship travelling to a new planet called Sagan. During the 380 years it takes to get there they are put to sleep, and their memories are erased in order for them to be controlled by The Collective. Petra has managed to avoid the forced sleep so she is the only one that can save humanity and its stories from being lost forever. This book is rooted in hope and the importance of storytelling to connect us all through space and time.



## Princess of Souls

**Alexandra Christo | Hotkey | PB \$19.99**

Selestra is a witch, desperate to escape a lifetime of stealing souls for the king. Nox is a soldier bent on revenge. When their fates intertwine, Selestra and Nox form a shaky alliance and unite against their common enemy. With a richly imagined fantasy world, swashbuckling adventure, and a swoony slow burn romance, this is the perfect gift for readers aged 13+.

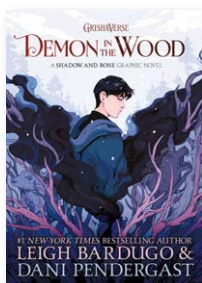


## The Upwelling

**Lystra Rose | Lothian Children's Books | PB \$19.99**



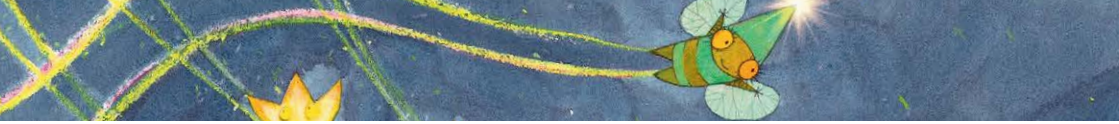
*The Upwelling* is a time-slip surfing fantasy about bloodlines, culture, and connection to Country. Knowing where you're from is a part of knowing who you are, and for Kirra, Tarni and Narn, to be able to harness their special powers they must understand this: "The more you know yourself, the more you'll understand your purpose".



## Demon in the Wood

**Leigh Bardugo and Dani Pendergast (illus)  
Orion Children's Books | HB \$34.99**

*Demon in the Wood* is a graphic novel prequel that will take readers back to events before the bestselling *Shadow and Bone* series. We are transported back to war-torn Ravka, where we meet the young boy Eryke, who will become the Darkling, and his mother who have spent their lives on the run and follow the choices he makes that will shape his grand and sinister future.



## As Long As the Lemon Trees Grow

Zoulfa Katouh | Bloomsbury | PB \$16.99

Salama is trying to find a way to escape war-torn Homs, hoping and dreaming of a better future, when love and destiny find her. A love story for the ages, this book is beautiful and heart-wrenching and wonderful, a story of life and love in modern-day Syria.

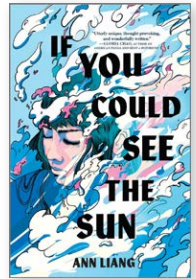


## If You Could See the Sun

Ann Liang | HQ Young Adult | PB \$19.99



Chinese-American scholarship student Alice Sun has two problems. First, she finds out her parents can no longer afford the balance of fees for the elite Beijing international boarding school she attends and then she starts to turn invisible but maybe this new 'skill' can be her ticket to stay. Part fantasy, part romance and a wholly entertaining debut from Melbourne author Ann Liang.

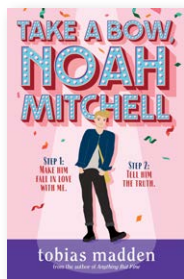


## A Magic Steeped in Poison

Judy I. Lin | Titan | PB \$22.99

Be swept up by this evocative and highly original tale of magic, subterfuge... and tea. To save her sister, Ning enters a competition to become the emperor's new tea-master. When a chance encounter with a mysterious boy sees her embroiled in deadly court politics, Ning must decide how far she is willing to go to survive. Intoxicating and compelling, readers aged 14 and up will love it!





## Take A Bow, Noah Mitchell

Tobias Madden | Penguin | PB \$19.99



Noah is a bit of a loner who escapes into the world of online gaming where he has a really big crush on his online best friend even though they've never met in person. When an opportunity arises for Noah to finally meet his crush, he decides to take the chance even though it means trying out for a musical. Singing and dancing in front of other people and not telling your crush who you are. What could possibly go wrong? A swoon-worthy YA rom-com that will have you grinning from ear to ear.



## Dancing Barefoot

Alice Boyle | Text Publishing | PB \$24.99



Patti 'Patch' Smith is a music-loving queer kid with a secret long-term crush on basketball star Evie Vanhoutte. An unexpected encounter with Evie sparks a friendship that is as terrifying as it is exciting. Add in supporting a friend who is transitioning, dealing with the school bully, and worrying about a potential stepmother—Patch is dealing with some complex feelings. Full of pop-culture references, this feminist, queer feel-good romance will have you cheering for Patch as she navigates first love.



Gemma, 16

## The Killing Code

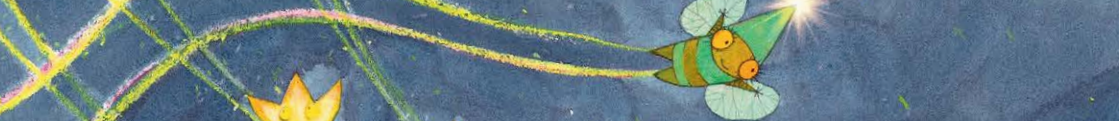
Ellie Marney  
A&U Children's | PB \$22.99



In 1943, Virginia USA, 18-year-old former maid, Kit is working as a codebreaker as the war rages in Europe. When other girls are murdered, Kit and her new friends must work together to find out who the killer is and bring them to justice. This is a fantastic thriller that looks at class, race, sexuality and empowering friendships.







## Unnecessary Drama

**Nina Kenwood | Text Publishing | PB \$24.99**



Brooke has always been the sensible one. She prides herself on her exceptional life admin and she's got every detail organised for the start of her uni degree and re-location to Melbourne. Imagine her surprise when Jesse, her nemesis from high school, shows up as her new house mate. They both swear to follow one of the only rules in the house and keep things DRAMA FREE, but that is easier said than done. This is a funny and utterly charming story about finding love with the person you least expect and navigating life on your own for the first time.



## Where You Left Us

**Rhiannon Wilde | UQP | PB \$19.99**



The second YA novel from Rhiannon Wilde is a Gothic coming-of-age tale of sisters, inter-generational secrets, love and sexuality. Told in dual perspective we see the conflict between sisters, Cinnamon and Scarlett, escalate as they deal with their father's mental illness, endeavour to solve a family mystery and deal with new and fragile romantic relationships. This is YA mystery and romance at its best.



## Something About Alaska

**J.A. Cooper  
Midnight Sun Publishing | PB \$19.99**

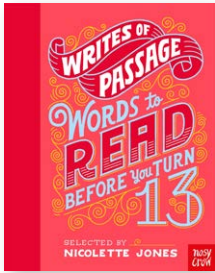


I loved this book, especially the elements of folklore. The story follows 14-year-old Isaac who is visiting his dad in Alaska. When he ends up on his own in the wilderness, he realises just how dangerous the Alaskan weather can be, and how a lack of experience can be just as perilous.



**Peter, 14**

# Things to know and do



## Writes of Passage: Words to Read Before You Turn 13

Nicolette Jones | Nosy Crow | HB \$24.99

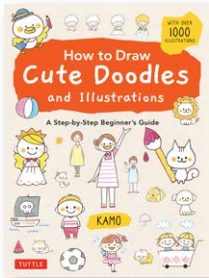
This is the perfect gift book for any occasion featuring quotes and snippets from classics and favourites of literature, poems, letters, speeches, and song lyrics. It is funny, moving and very inspiring and will be one of those that just keeps on giving throughout the teen years and beyond. A truly wonderful selection that you can dip in and out of that will spark ideas, kindness, empathy, and lots of great conversation.



## The ME Book

Marion Deuchars | Laurence King Publishing | PB \$22.99

Kids of all ages will love this fill-in activity book that is all about them! Following the easy and engaging prompts, kids will write, draw, and colour facts and snippets about themselves. Once finished, it will make a wonderful keepsake to be revisited as the child grows older.



## How to Draw Cute Doodles and Illustrations

Kamo | Tuttle | PB \$22.99

Hours of fun to be had learning how to turn your doodles into cute illustrations with this easy-to-follow step-by-step guide. There are examples to trace and plenty of fun prompts so everyone can have a go even if they think they can't draw.



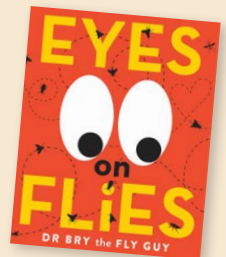
Teddy, 8

## Eyes on Flies

Dr Bryan Lessard  
Macmillan Australia | PB \$26.99



This book had amazing facts about flies that I did not know before. I now see flies totally differently thanks to this book. I used to think flies were annoying, disgusting creatures but now I think that flies are fascinating. This book is good for people who enjoy reading facts about insects.

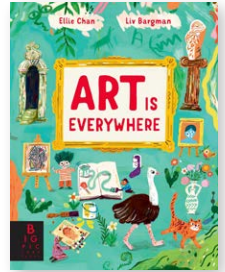




## Art is Everywhere

Eleanor Chan and Olivia Bargman (illus) | Big Picture | HB \$24.99

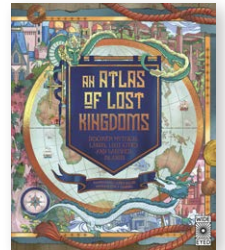
Join renowned art historian, Keith, an ostrich, and his assistant Marmaduke in this fun exploration of art. This art loving pair takes us out of the galleries and explores the magic of art in everyday life. They demonstrate key art concepts by looking at many well-known works throughout history. Great fun and informative.



## An Atlas of Lost Kingdoms

Emily Hawkins and Lauren Mark Baldo (illus)  
Wide Eyed Editions | HB \$35.00

Embark on a fantastical voyage in search of mystery and adventure by travelling through the pages of this beautifully illustrated book to lost worlds shrouded in mystery. Explore cities like Atlantis and El Dorado, read about ancient folklore and search the maps and ancient manuscripts for facts and stories that might unravel these mysteries.



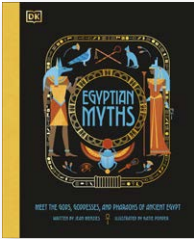
## The Big Book of Mysteries

Tom Adams and Yas Imamura (illus) | Nosy Crow | HB \$29.99

Have you ever heard of the Bermuda Triangle? Or wondered if the Loch Ness Monster is real? Then *The Big Book of Mysteries* is for you! Ranging from UFOs and disappearing people to hoaxes and bizarre natural phenomena, there is a mystery for everyone in this bumper collection for the curious child.



# Things to know and do

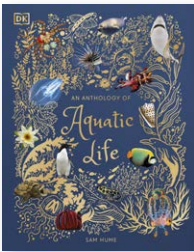


## Egyptian Myths

Jean Menzies and Katie Ponder (illus) | DK | HB \$35.00

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Over 30 retellings of favourite Egyptian myths told alongside fascinating historical information. Young readers will love these stories full of monstrous creatures, magical spells, and warring gods.

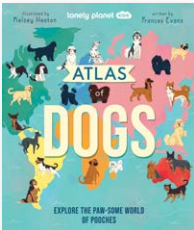


## An Anthology of Aquatic Life

Sam Hume | DK | HB \$42.99

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From the deepest, widest ocean to the tiniest puddle, this beautiful book takes young readers on an enthralling journey through the aquatic world, meeting amazing animals, ingenious plants, and much more along the way.

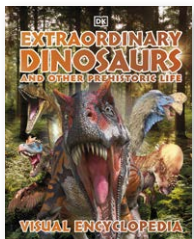


## Atlas of Dogs

Lonely Planet | HB \$24.99

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Over 150 different dog breeds from all around the world are listed in this atlas, detailing the history, physical characteristics, and personality traits of each breed. It also contains special features on dogs with jobs, how dogs communicate and doggy heroes.

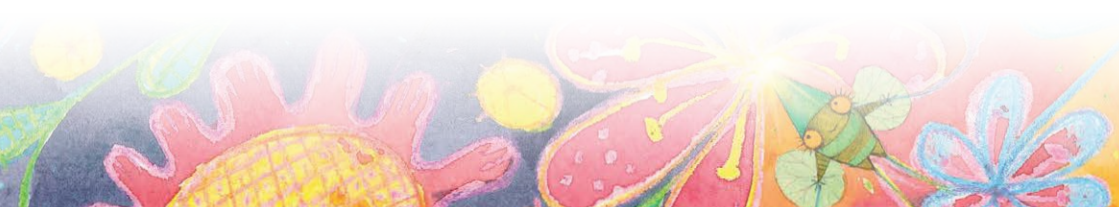


## Extraordinary Dinosaurs and Other Prehistoric Life Visual Encyclopedia

DK | HB \$29.99

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Dinosaur books are always in demand and this one is spectacular. Learn all about the latest dinosaur discoveries and how scientists use fossils to reveal their secret lives. Compare at a glance the fiercest, fastest, scariest creatures by checking the data boxes on every page. The ultimate dinosaur book, perfect for 7–11 year olds.





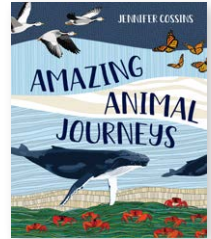


## Amazing Animal Journeys

Jennifer Cossins | Lothian Children's Books | HB \$26.99



A stunningly illustrated book about 25 animal species from Australia and around the world all with fascinating stories about their migration journeys. Perfect for children who love learning all about animals and all the amazing things they do.

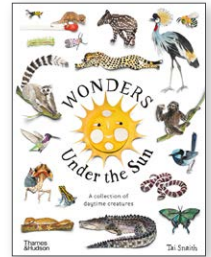


## Wonders Under the Sun

Tai Snaith | Thames & Hudson Australia | HB \$29.99



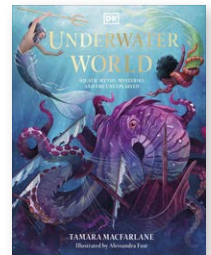
What a truly original and interesting way to classify diurnal animals! From Legless Legends to Spiky Spunks, with body-size comparisons for scale and a key to their vulnerability, this stunning animal book is sure to foster curiosity and creativity. Tai Snaith's exquisite illustrations make this an art book as much as a great reference for young naturalists.



## Underwater World

Tamara Macfarlane | DK | HB \$19.99

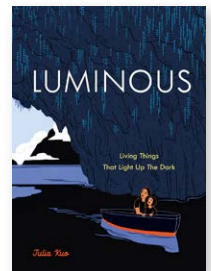
From myths and legends, folklore and fables, to amazing discoveries, and undiscovered depths — explore the amazing world of water in this beautifully illustrated book for young readers. You'll find water gods and goddesses, stories of Selkies and wonderful monsters alongside migrating whales.



## Luminous

Julia Kuo | Little Hare | HB \$24.99

A book about the natural phenomenon called bioluminescence. As well as a simple story it is filled with amazing facts about the completely diverse creatures that can make their own light! Including fungi, glow worms, deep sea fish and the Vampire Squid which releases a glowing blue cloud from its arms when it is being chased!



# Things to know and do

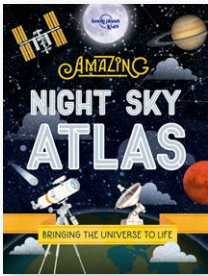


## How We Came to Be: Surprising Sea Creatures

Sami Bayly | Lothian Children's Books | HB \$19.99



We all love Sami Bayly for showcasing all those unusual animals that don't get much attention and this time she takes us deep sea diving, looking for the extra scaly, super slimy creatures from under the sea. This book is extra special because Sami features as a deep-sea diver tour guide throughout the book. It is as fun and informative as her previous award-winning series... but with extra Sami, we love it!



## The Amazing Night Sky Atlas

Lonely Planet | HB \$29.99

Using both photography and illustration this guide provides the scientific and practical advice to examine the world above. *The Amazing Night Sky Atlas* includes the different stories cultures have told about the night sky and the influence the Moon, the stars and the movement of the planets have had on their people.



## The Moon

Sanlyn Buxner | DK | HB \$27.99

This incredible guide to the moon takes children through its past, present and future through amazing photographs, illustrations and fascinating information. For space lovers, it is filled with facts about the space missions, lunar phases, the moon's geography and its effect on our nocturnal animals and tides.

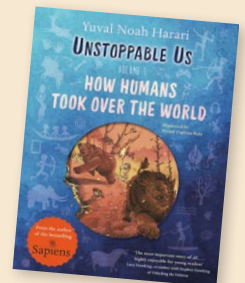


Patrick, 11

## Unstoppable Us

Yuval Noah Harari | Puffin | HB \$39.99

This is a really awesome book for other curious kids (like me) who like reading about history, science and philosophy. It has loads of maps, timelines and cool illustrations, it asks lots of questions but best of all it is full of mind blowing facts about the history of humans on earth. It is a book I like to dip in and out of and to read again and again.





## Off to the Market

Alice Oehr | Scribble | HB \$24.99



Prepare your shopping list and take a wander through the Sunday fresh food market! Alice Oehr's vibrant illustrations perfectly capture the lively atmosphere, introducing the community of growers and their produce. From different types of tomatoes, to herbs and their flavour profiles, this is packed with fun information, encouraging readers on the food journey.



## Transported: 50 Vehicles That Changed the World

Matt Ralphs and Rui Ricardo (illus) | Nosy Crow | HB \$35.00

A book that charts the way our world has been changed by the pioneering developments of incredible vehicles from Polynesian canoes, ancient chariots and hot air balloons to racing cars, rockets and solar-powered aeroplanes. Each of the 50 vehicles is featured on a double page spread with lots of facts and stats to pore over.



## Come Together

Isaiah Firebrace and Jaelyn Biunaiwai (illus)  
Hardie Grant Explore | HB \$24.99



A heart-warming book from pop artist and Yorta Yorta and Gunditjmarra man Isaiah Firebrace, inspired by his petition to the Australian Government calling for Aboriginal history to be taught in every classroom. Using his own story, Isaiah looks at 20 key topics that every Aussie kid should know about First Nations people.



## The Three Billy Goats Gruff

Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen (illus)

Scholastic | HB \$24.99



No more hapless goats cowering from the troll under the bridge. The picture book powerhouse duo of Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen have again combined their talents to create a hilarious twist on a classic tale.

## And Everything Will Be Glad to See You

Ella Risbriger and Anna Shepeta (illus)

Nosy Crow | HB \$39.99



Absolutely stunning full-colour illustrations accompany the poems in this collection, which brings together well-known and emerging poets from around the world. Not just for children, this lyrical and hopeful compendium is sure to become a keepsake to which readers young and old will return for years to come.

## The Wind in the Willows

Lou Peacock and Kate Hindley (illus)

Nosy Crow | HB \$35.00



A stunning gift book edition of this timeless classic by Kenneth Grahame. The perfect way to introduce the adventures of Ratty, Mole, Toad and Badger to a whole new generation of readers.

## The Magic of Ballet: Seven Classic Stories

Vivian French and Lauren O'Hara (illus)

Walker Books | HB \$39.99



The stories of seven classic ballets retold by Vivian French with lavish colour illustrations throughout. A wonderful treasury bringing alive some of the most magical stories from the world of ballet. Any ballet-loving child will be captivated by the enchanted worlds of their favourite stories from *The Nutcracker* to *Swan Lake*.

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The books in this guide have been chosen and reviewed by members of the Australian Booksellers Association (now BookPeople), who use their expertise to support reading for all ages.

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