 Craig Silvey: Author context

What is Author context?

The important events surrounding an author that have helped to shape the decisions that are made in the text.

Craig Silvey

Craig Silvey was born in 1982. He grew up on an orchard in Dwellingup in the south-west of Western Australia. Before his family moved to Dwellingup, they lived in Armadale, on the outskirts of south-east Perth, where Silvey attended primary school built within the grounds of a replica of an early-settler’s gold mining town called Pioneer Village.

In early 2008, Silvey completed the novel Jasper Jones and it has since been sold in 13 countries around the world. He is also known for other titles such as The Amber Amulet and Rhubarb, which he wrote at the age of 19. Jasper Jones has gained awards such as ABIA 2010 and Book of the year and Indie book of the year award, 2009

Silvey was influenced as to where to set the novel as he grew up in a small town similar to Corrigan. This is part of the reason that Craig Silvey set Jasper Jones in Corrigan because he can relate to it and knows what it's like. This is part of the author’s context and gives reason as to why he set it in Corrigan. He will no doubt have taken some of his descriptions of setting and character from Dwellingup.

Silvey tells his readers that the character of Jasper Jones came to him one night. Once he had worked out the character, his era, where he was from and so on, he then referenced (in his mind) some of the books he read when he was young. He named “to kill a mockingbird” and “the adventures of huckleberry finn” amongst them. He also said he loved to read other gothic fiction (gothic fiction refers to novels that tend to mix horror with romance) particularly those set in America where it was hot and there was pressure. He said they reminded him of Australian conditions and he was drawn to them. This puts into context where some of Silvey’s ideas came from for the novel. He has been influenced by these texts.

Inquiry question: (using this information and the Booktopia interview answer the following questions)

1. What aspect of Silvey’s personal background influenced his choices in writing Jasper Jones?
2. How can the author’s personal context change/challenge the way the story is perceived?

[Author interviews and background information](https://lesmurdie-wa.libguides.com/english12jasperjones/themes): https://lesmurdie-wa.libguides.com/english12jasperjones/themes