

SCON

- Paul Jennings
- Poetry K-12
- School archives
- Teaching information skills

contents

currents ≈

- 2 Niki Kallenberger

features ☆

- 4 Real! Bearable! And believable!
Paul Jennings talks to Fay Gardiner
- 9 School archives: a personal
lament
Jim Fletcher
- 13 The pursuit of excellence and
effectiveness: a matter of vision
Ross J. Todd
- 16 Treat Yourself : Professionally
- 17 New directions and a new book
for Libby Gleeson
Graham Spindler
- 20 Nutcote now
Graham Spindler

teaching learning ∞

- 22 You should see us now!
The school library program
at Mittagong Public School
Robyn Karakasch
- 27 Celebrating
information skills
Doreen Teasdale

search <

- 32 Online services for schools
Vicki Lowery
- 34 Meeting the NCIN challenge
in Met South West
Virginia Elliott
- 35 ASCIS curriculum information
services
Ann Parry and Nigel Paull

management △

- 37 Of camels and horses: collection
development in school libraries
Liz Bowring
- 39 ASCIS cataloguing services
Ann Parry
- 40 OASIS Library prep

resources ■■

- 41 Poetry K-12
- 49 Fiction
- 55 Picture books
- 61 Presenting information 7-12

columns ▮

- 72 1991 Shortlist,
Award winners and more

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Who speaks for teacher-librarians?

A new publication from Ken Haycock will be of interest to all who believe teacher-librarians play a central role in the educational process. **Program advocacy: power, publicity and the teacher-librarian** was published in 1990 by Libraries Unlimited of Englewood, Colorado and is based on a selection of articles which originally appeared in *Emergency librarian*. One article in particular, 'Who speaks for us? Power, advocacy and the teacher-librarian' by Gene Burdenuk has given me food for thought, and I'd like to share some of Burdenuk's ideas with you.

Writing in 1984 in Ontario, Canada, Burdenuk begins by saying 'teacher-librarians . . . had power but no longer do'. What follows is based on his view that no one speaks for teacher-librarians — we must speak for ourselves. Advocacy, or the active espousal of a cause, is a role teacher-librarians must take on in a markedly increased way, Burdenuk suggests.

If there is a failure in school librarianship over the last 20 years it has been the lack of effort, emphasis and focus placed on the role of the teacher-librarian as advocate. What is needed now is an advocacy campaign to bring attention to the importance of school libraries to the education of the child. (p 33)

While I know that it's now 1991 and that we're working in New South Wales, not Ontario, I also know that much of what Burdenuk describes is appropriate to our situation. Take a moment to reflect on the status of school libraries and teacher-librarianship, both on a statewide basis and at the local level.

The good news is that many of us are terrific advocates who work tirelessly and effectively for the cause of excellence in school library programs. In every issue of *scan* we try to provide some evidence of this and it's not difficult. This issue is no exception — look at the articles by Robyn Karakasch, Doreen Teasdale and Ross Todd for a start.

But on a wider front, school libraries and teacher-librarianship are perhaps not as healthy as we'd like

them to be. Is it that some of us have become, in the words of Ken Haycock, 'too complacent, too conservative, too timid . . . and even too uncommitted'? Worse still, have some of us relinquished whatever power we had, blaming others for the decline in our standing in the educational community and becoming stuck in ruts of our own making?

Do each of us have a clear vision of the role 'our' library plays in the education of all students in the school? If you look again at the articles mentioned above, as well as at previous *scan* articles profiling school library programs, you'll see one thing they all have in common is a clear vision of the library's role. That role varies from school to school, as it must, but in each instance the clarity of vision provides a firm foundation for program development, and for advocacy.

Advocacy and power are closely related. If advocacy is the 'active espousal of a cause', power is the ability to 'influence other decisions'. One need not be in authority to have power. Authority may give us the right to act on behalf of the organisation; power can influence that authority. As teacher-librarians we may not have the authority in the school organisation we could wish to have, but we can have power.

Burdenuk suggests five steps for becoming influential with those in authority:

- **Develop a clearer role definition**
Be sure you know what the system's expectations are, as specified in policy and support documents. Then ask not only how do others see me, but how do I see myself? How much time do I spend on the teaching and management aspects of my role? How hard have I tried to develop cooperative resource-based programs? What are the strengths and weakness of our school library program? Of our school information skills program? How can I do better? What are my long rangeplans?

Remember that there is not much value in defining your role unless you communicate it clearly to members of staff.

- **Work with your feet — not your seat**
Research shows teacher-librarians are dedicated, hard-working and creative, but we're also cautious. Burdenuk advises us to attend meetings and speak up, write letters and speak out, volunteer for responsibilities across the school, run for union or professional association offices and become a spokesperson on important issues.
- **Establish a community power base**
People in authority listen and respond to community pressure. Proactive teacher-librarians can develop community support for school library programs. Burdenuk suggests establishing a community school library advisory council, organising public forums, becoming actively involved in community service groups, sending a regular newsletter home to parents and establishing links with other information agencies in the community.

In NSW many of the strategies of Schools Renewal provide us with exciting opportunities to implement many of Burdenuk's suggestions, especially through school councils.

- **Develop a professional power base**
Professional contact brings you in touch with new people who have new ideas; increased confidence and renewed strength are likely outcomes for you. Burdenuk's advice here is to 'just get involved' with professional associations of any and all varieties.

There is plenty of scope for this kind of involvement in NSW. How many teacher-librarians do you know who are office bearers at any level of the NSW Teachers Federation? Every year both the School Libraries Section of the Australian Library and Information Association and the School Library Association embark on 'arm-twisting' exercises to ensure their offices are filled — school-based teacher-librarians are not always well represented on the executives of these influential groups. Cluster and regional professional groups are another avenue for involvement.

- **Develop an expertise power base**
Burdenuk explains that because research has shown that expert power is an important source of power in schools, developing expertise is another way to gain access to power. Completing courses in areas such as computer education, reading, the education of talented children, etc is one way to do this; updating or strengthening your teacher-librarianship qualifications is another. In the latter instance, look for teacher-

librarianship qualifications that are recognised by the Australian Library and Information Association.

The needs are clear. So too, in my opinion, are our strengths as teacher-librarians. The challenge for us is to harness our strengths and work, individually and together, as advocates for the very best school library programs our students need — and deserve — as they face the challenges of the next century. As professionals, this is a challenge we dare not fail to meet.

Distribution of scan

Recipients of *scan* in secondary, first class primary and central schools will have noticed two copies of *scan* are now arriving. This isn't a mistake; it's quite intentional. Our expectation is that an extra copy will assist you to circulate *scan* to all members of staff, as well as retain a copy in the library. If two copies aren't enough (or for those of you in smaller schools for whom our budget won't stretch far enough to send a second copy), remember subscriptions to *scan* are available through the Marketing Unit (Private Bag 3 Ryde 2112 Tel: (02) 808 9471) — the back of your address flier has a publications order form.

Contributions to scan

What would you like to see in *scan*? Please let us know! The *scan* team is always on the lookout for ideas for articles, interviews, bibliographies — indeed for anything that is appropriate to *scan*'s purpose of supporting the effective use of resources across the school curriculum.

Perhaps you'd like to write about your school programs and activities. Don't be modest! What seems simple and logical to you may be a brand-new, great idea to someone else. If you have an idea, or even a fragment of one, please get in touch with the *scan* team and tell us about it. Often we can help make the writing as painless as possible.

If you're not keen to write, perhaps you can suggest someone else who would like to or who would be appropriate for an interview. Again, if you have any good ideas along these lines, please let us know.

You can find the *scan* team at 3A Smalls Rd (Postal address: Private Bag 3) Ryde 2112 Tel: (02) 808 9456. We look forward to hearing from you! ♦

☆ **Real! Bearable! And believable!**

Fay Gardiner talked with Paul Jennings at his home outside Melbourne at the end of 1990.



During an interview last year Maurice Saxby remarked that Paul Jennings not only has a direct line to children but is also a very nice man. His direct line was exemplified in the overwhelming vote from the children in the 1990 KOALA awards, when Paul Jennings' volumes accounted for 4 of the top 10 secondary books including the winner.

His good nature was evident when this non-Melbournian, having been lost along the Victorian freeway system for an hour, arrived 15 minutes late for our interview, minus the tape recorder, forgotten in the last minute throes of packing for a holiday of which this interview was to be a major highlight. Although not all of the 6 children of Paul and Clare Jennings still live at home, that ubiquitous and ageless toy, the cassette player, is still a feature of the household and Paul without complaint provided the means of recording the interview.

The hallmark of a Paul Jennings story may be bizarre good humour, but its birthplace is a small timber-lined study secreted at the top of a short flight of stairs and perched among trees which are part of an extensive and idyllic garden. Don't tell your Paul Jennings fans, who think he's a tattooed biker, but gardening is one of Paul's interests.

I read all the time and I guess that's probably my main relaxation. I'm interested in cars; I've got a little sports car which is my missed youth coming out. We go skiing every year, that's something I like doing. And the garden; I love the garden And just doing things with the family.

Actually, Clare thinks I should do more because gardening is very solitary, and writing's a very solitary thing too, although writing for television is much more gregarious;

you've got other people all the time. I'd like to get involved with Amnesty International but I just can't stand committee meetings. Anything where you're sitting around making decisions, I hate. When you write a book you do it all your own way: you develop the characters so you make it go your way. If it's a flop it's your fault and if it's a success you get the reward. So I don't do a lot of things that involve clubs and that sort of thing.

The writer reads . . .

A great variety of things. I just finished reading the latest Rumpole book which I really like, it's a bit of light reading for the holiday. I consume an enormous amount of short stories, [including those of] Ray Bradbury, John Wyndham, Somerset Maugham, O. Henry, Edgar Allen Poe, John Collier. Except for Ray Bradbury who's still writing, they're all authors from another era. But they're ones who know how to tell a tale, and I don't really have much time for the slice of life type of short story that's very fashionable at the moment. I like a plot and a good ending. That probably shows in my writing.

I read the classics. I was thinking the other day I might start reading Dickens again; I haven't read Dickens for a long time. I keep my eye out for anything new. This year I read a story called Perfume by Susskind which was an adult fantasy which I really enjoyed, and I've just finished a book called Churchill's Black Dog which is a wonderful book written by Anthony Storr, a psychiatrist, about depression in creative people especially writers, and I found that quite fascinating.

As a child, Paul's reading included Richard Crompton's William books . . .

. . . I still like them. They were a big influence on me, and unlike most humour, they've lasted really well. Humour doesn't travel very well over the generations because it becomes adapted into the folklore of the country or the culture and the jokes get known and they're not funny anymore. So you don't expect humour to last more than 20 or 30 years and if you read anything funny from the last century, it's invariably not funny, and you wonder why they thought it was funny.

I also read all the Enid Blyton books; I tended to go in series: I read all the Sapper Bulldog Drummonds, all the Scarlet Pimpernels, and then later all the John Wyndham short stories. And now I know a lot of kids are reading mine. It doesn't worry me, that kids get stuck into a series. My daughter's reading The babysitters at the moment, which I

don't like, but it's just a stage; she'll get off it, like other people get off Paul Jennings's books.

Children may move on from Paul Jennings books, but they are the entry point for so many children, essentially because of their humour, which Paul believes is a genre not really appreciated by the literati.

The importance of story

Whilst Paul agrees that another doorway to reading is the much neglected area of non-fiction, he believes it is vital that children have access to story.

I feel very strongly about that. Children should be exposed to stories because stories have a humanising effect on the child. It's through the story that you really become a member of the culture, because all our beliefs and myths and values are laid down in stories and also because that's how people learn what's inside of other people's heads. I've often said that you can't kick an old lady to death on a train if you can be her inside your head which is what happens in the story: the reader becomes the main character; it's all happening to them. This is why I don't spend a lot of time describing what the character is like unless there's something in the story which is relevant to it. The reader knows what that person looks like: he or she looks like them, even if it's a person of the opposite sex.

This is why I'm so annoyed about what television is doing: kids who don't read turn to television for the story and they don't get it. Soapies are not really proper stories; they're little incidents. You have 5 or 6 threads running through them and because they're not able to sustain a proper plot, with a beginning, middle, climax and end, they have these mini peaks and they keep cutting off. As well they are often very adult orientated and I feel very strongly that children should get proper stories with heroes and heroines and problems and laughter and they don't.

I got a letter which made me smile, from a little girl who had seen The Copy on television as part of Round the Twist. In it the children open the cupboard and there's a copying machine. They copy lollipops and money and all sorts of things and in the end Linda copies herself so another girl appears who's exactly the same as her. This little girl who wrote to me said 'After we saw that, we went round the house and opened every cupboard, but there was nothing.' This had hit the spot for her. That's what children are entitled to: a proper story written for them.

The genesis of a Jennings story

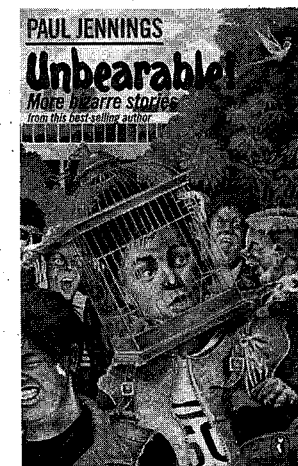
Paul's stories are often bizarre and usually humorous. Are they the product of a fertile imagination or does real life play its part?

Quite clearly most of the fantastic things couldn't have happened to me: I never had a copying machine, or lost my false teeth down the toilet or saw a ghost, or had a flock of birds attack me, dropping dung on me. I didn't have a machine that could make people older or younger so those things are purely imaginative but they only work if I put them in a real setting.

Right from the start I decided against the fantasy of knights and pumpkin coaches and so on. I like that sort of fantasy, there's a place for it, but I decided my type of fantasy would be today's world so I keep a very close eye on what today's world is like and then I make the fantastic happen inside it and that gives the fantasy a lot more power: the kids do really want it to happen to them. It would be wonderful if there was more to the world than what you saw.

If I'm going to have a dragon, it's going to be down the drain outside their school. In fact this picture-book that I've done, called Teacher Eater is exactly that: the dragons live just like dogs in an everyday world and that gives it a lot more power because the kids would like it to happen to them. My ideas come from a mixture of real life incidents that happened to me, imposed upon and interwoven with the fantasy, which gives it a certain reality.

My publishers have told me that there are lots of people trying to copy my books, but it never worries me because it's my world in there, how I felt and laughed and cried, and saw things. Nobody else can ever see it that way.

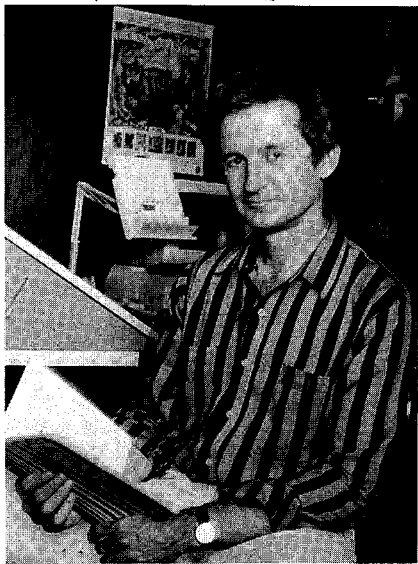


I work very, very hard to get to the ideas. In fact I said at the talk I gave at the International Reading Association 3 years ago, that I had an idea about a boy walking to school with his head in a bird cage, and I didn't know what to do with it. All I knew was that he was walking to school with his head in the bird cage. I worked and sweated on that for ages and that book's just been published with that picture on the cover of the book.

At the moment I've got the image of a boy or a girl who licks a big iceblock and their tongue sticks to it. I don't know what

to do, I'll have to work really hard to get something out of that. I've got a few of those ideas floating around in my mind at the moment. When I get back from my holidays I'll just sit down and work and work and work, and eventually I'll get a plot.

Paul's study has a computer in one corner and whilst he finds it invaluable for the later stages of his writing and especially for the formatting of writing for television, his stories begin in a trusty old exercise book.



I'll get out my old exercise book, and I'll start writing to myself. Here's an example, the story's called *Ten yukky fried chickens* which was the original title for *The paw thing*. My original idea for that story was: 'the boy looks after chooks; he meets this little guy with a white suit and a white beard and a cane' and that of course was Colonel Sanders. I was working on a boy who knew another boy at school who looked like that.

That was no good.

Then I had a dog in it, and a girl with her own special chooks. None of this worked.

For some reason I've got a green grandfather on the next page and I left that, I couldn't think of anything about it. In the meantime I wrote another story.

I came back to *Ten yukky fried chickens* again. There is this poor old maggoty cat which can round up mice and it has to be put down. There is a mouse plague. In the end I made it about a cat that couldn't catch mice, and it's still going, page after page, and still called *Ten yukky fried chickens* and then finally down here, finished at last! I've got a little note to myself: 'Julie, my editor, rang and said she likes it, but put in the girl as the shop would have more staff.'

Childhood

As one would expect from an author who appeals so strongly to children, Paul is very interested in the topic of childhood.

Gillian Rubinstein once wrote that she thinks most children's writers had an unhappy childhood. I've had quite a few talks to her about it. First I didn't agree. When I reflected on my own childhood, it seemed to be a very happy one: my parents were very caring parents; they didn't have a lot of arguments; there were no divorces. But one of the overriding emotions I felt continually was guilt. My father had very high expectations; he was a very ambitious man. Although he was a very generous father in terms of his time and his money, he had enormous expectations and I never ever felt I lived up to them. I remember feelings of guilt that I didn't do this well enough or that well enough.

When my best friend failed his HSC, or matriculation as it was in those days, my father said to me, 'If he failed, you wouldn't pass.' So he took me out of school and I went to teacher's college. In those days you didn't need matriculation because there was a shortage of teachers. Many years later I had the pleasure of inviting my father to come to my graduation when I took my university degree and even then I felt that he felt I should have got the honours that were the reward for the top student.

But I also had enormous latitude because the world was different then. So I was always off on my bike. I'd just go in the morning with my friends and come back in the evening. Our parents would never know where we'd been: down drains, making rafts, catching frogs, exploring the forest. I grew up in Moorabbin but I used to come up here [Dandenongs] a lot on my bike. There was a lot of adventure, everything was an adventure. I have fond memories of getting out with my mates and just having lots of fun.

Sometimes I think that what I'm doing in my books is partly giving kids of today the sorts of adventures that were available then but not now. It's sort of vicarious now, because the kids can't just get on a bike and disappear; parents have to take them everywhere, take them to tennis, take them to cubs, take them to this and pick them up, always worrying that they'll be abducted so the entertainment's all in the home or on television. It's strictly supervised.

So many writers and other creative people speak similarly about the freedom of their childhood. What are the ramifications going to be for the next generation? Will the next generation produce a Paul Jennings?

It is sad because the kids really haven't got what you could call 'safe dangers'. When I went off on my bike, I could have always been hit by a car or got lost, but the chances that I would have been abducted were fairly small. But of course now those sorts of things are real dangers. You can't let your kids go on the train in case they get beaten up. And so I think that's a worry.

Your own experiences are very, very important, although it's important to read, and you hope that you will bring things out in your own mind. I think the biggest worry of all is that the television becomes the role model. We let the kids see so much rubbish, and what I think is dangerous material, and they model on that. Some of the language is really bad, particularly in videos.

There's a lot of phoney treatment of life. And a lot of it is not aimed at children... the soapies particularly are really bad because the concerns are not the concerns of the children. So even in programs like *Neighbours*, which you couldn't say was really violent and you wouldn't say is sexually exploitative, you've got things like so and so's having an abortion, so and so's being unfaithful. And you've got little kids at school talking about whether she did or she didn't.

That's why I feel very strongly that we need material that's written for children and if it's good enough it will be interesting for adults as well. In the early days Disney [produced such material] but Disney doesn't do it any more; we need a new Disney.

I do tend to agree with Gillian now; most children's writers I've spoken to did feel that they didn't have a happy childhood in terms of their family relationships. I think that that does help you to know the way children feel. I also don't think you can write for children unless you remember your childhood and I remember mine very vividly and I can still blush at the things I did when I was 6.

And I think you need to be able to be in touch with your own childhood to write for children because although the world has changed, the way you feel doesn't change; children still feel the same, they just feel it about different things.

I used to be embarrassed by my father's funny fishing hat so when I walked down the street I trailed behind him and pretended I wasn't with him. My kids do the same with me about something different. My 12-year-old daughter told me when we were on holiday in Perth recently that I shouldn't go to the pool in speedos. That night, having gone to the pool, she said 'Oh you're allowed to wear your speedos to the pool because everyone else's dad's got them on too.' Children are still embarrassed by their parents.

I guess basically what I do is I observe very closely the world children live in now and I put the feelings I had as a child on top of it.

Embarrassment

Certainly embarrassment is a theme that constantly appears in Paul's stories...

... there is an element in laughing, that something's happening to this poor person and you as the reader are sort of superior. Embarrassment is such a big part of the child's

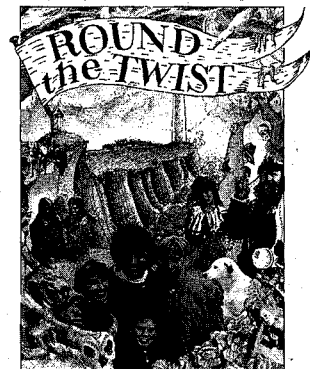
world. It's part of everybody's world but especially [that of] children because they're trying to work out all the rules. They don't know them.

I can remember thinking once that secretly everyone could read my mind, and they all knew what a fool I was and all the silly things I was thinking. That was a really awful thing to be thinking at that particular time, and children are always trying to make sense of the adult world that's around them: it's got all these rules and they don't know the rules of the game so they're constantly getting it wrong. I do like to show that.

When my kids went to high school you couldn't wear white socks under jeans for some reason, that was absolutely taboo, and if you didn't know that rule everybody pointed. About 4 years later you had to wear white socks under jeans; it had completely changed about. Of course it makes no sense, fashion is completely illogical, but you've got to be perceptive to know, and the kids who are not perceptive enough end up being called 'dags'.

I've watched little kids watching the episode of *Around the Twist* called *Without my pants*, when the boy can't stop saying 'without my pants' on the end of every sentence, and the little kids just find it so funny. They just laugh and laugh, the poor kid is so embarrassed. He asks this girl, 'Will you come out with me, without my pants.' They think it's so funny because it's so embarrassing for the poor kid.

Share experiences of fun, fantasy and excitement with the remarkable Twist family, who try to get away from it all by leaving the city to make their new home in a lighthouse.



VOLUME 1



G FOR GENERAL EXHIBITION

Embarrassment is a feature of nearly all the funny stories but not the serious ones, I always put in a number of serious stories which do have a little message of some sort in there, not didactic, not hit-over-the-head, but with just a little something to say. There'll be other emotions involved too, like fear or apprehension or wonder or amazement, and tension, there'll always be tension and the bizarre.

Father-son relationships

Many of Paul Jennings stories are about father-son relationships. Paul agrees that they stem from his own relationships, both as son and father.

I was just looking at one of those Far Side cartoons, an autobiographical thing actually, and he was saying his father used to send him off for a spanner and his father always knew the sizes of them. My father was like that. He'd say, 'Go and get me a 5/16th Whitworth,' and I wouldn't have the foggiest. I'd bring spanner after spanner. He'd never go and get it, he'd always keep sending me back. He was an engineer so he'd know them all.

But when I write I never make it that the children don't like their father or their mother, because we know from research that most children love their parents no matter what, even those who abuse them. And most parents love their children, so I don't set parents up to be cruel or nards.

Some people have said my work's like Roald Dahl's. Well, I don't ever have cruel parents because I'm not writing social realism, I'm writing fantasy and I don't need to. In some genres you would have a cruel parent and it'd be OK, but not the sort of thing that I'm writing. I always have parents that children like, and I suppose it is based on my relationship with my own kids; I hope they like me.

In my stories children do send their parents up a lot: they play tricks on their parents and the parents aren't in the know. And that is true, you just don't know what's going on. You think you do, but you don't know half of it or even close to that.

The Jennings audience

This is Paul's second year of writing full time. He was previously a teacher and lecturer in the field of special education. It was during his period of special education teaching that he became interested in the teaching of reading. Paul's 'direct line' to children makes him an ideal choice for engaging the previously unenthusiastic reader. Do teachers in secondary schools use his books for this purpose?

Yes, a lot of schools set them in class sets which I don't really agree with, because not everybody likes Paul Jennings the same as everybody doesn't like someone else. I don't mind them having half a dozen in the grade and half a dozen of something else so students can choose which one they're going to read or work with.

I do get lots and lots of letters from teachers saying, 'He never read anything until I gave him Unreal' and I'm really delighted with that. My books, particularly Quirky Tales which I wrote deliberately for older kids, are read by secondary

kids. Quirky Tales is conceptually much harder, although the little kids read it too which I was really surprised about.

I've even had year 11s and parents write to me and say they like them. But I usually consider my target years 5, 6, 7 and 8 for my collections. After year 8 they're starting to want books which explore other issues in more depth. They like to read books which explore violence or death or loneliness, and are starting to open up the adult world for them. I usually feel that mine are starting to run out then. I never accept invitations to speak above year 8 because though there are kids who like my books above year 8, they're starting to move on to something else.

Jennings in translation

Paul's books now appear in many other languages. Are there major changes made to suit the particular culture?

*No, I'm happy to say, I don't think I've ever changed anything. We have had to make some changes in my next book that I'm doing with Ted Greenwood and Terry Denton but that's because it's a games book based on words and it would be unfair to use colloquialisms in England and America as the answer to the puzzles. We had a wonderful title which was *The Battery Chook*, [in spoonerism *The Chatterry Book*]. It just had a nice image but we had to change that because they don't know what a chook is in England and America.*

*But I've never done that in any of my short stories and as far as I know the ones that have gone to England have remained with all their colloquialisms. *The Cabbage Patch Kid*, is called *The Baby from the Red Cabbage*, in Dutch because when you ask 'Where does a baby come from?' they say, 'The red cabbage', so that makes sense.*

Advice for the next generation

And all those kids out there who want to be the next Paul Jennings? What is the master's advice?

I always say to them when I go into schools that they should value their own experiences and look into their own lives. I usually say to kids, 'If I could know everything that had happened to the 4 kids in the front here, I could probably write books for another 200 years because all the little funny things, if they'll make you laugh, they'll make someone else laugh; and the sad things, if they'll make you cry, they'll make someone else cry, if you tell it the right way.'

Children tend to think that authors are special because we write. We're not special in that more interesting things happen to us as writers, we're just special in that we are in touch with them, and you know, my life's been no more interesting than any other person's really. It's just that I'm in touch with my own feelings. ❖

☆ School archives: a personal lament

Jim Fletcher is an historian with the Department of School Education's History Unit.

'History is the story of what happened, and unless you can find someone reliable to tell you that story, you will have to discover it from the records, in whatever form those records might exist.'

I was teaching at Boggabri as assistant principal when I saw an advertisement in the Education gazette for a job in the History Unit of the Department of Education. Having taught for 11 years, I was looking at another 30 years in the classroom; a 2-year secondment out of that was a trifle. Now, 22 years later, no longer on secondment, I am still in the History Unit. In that time I have written the histories of nearly 300 schools celebrating centenaries and dozens of smaller histories. With Jan Burnswoods I have written a pictorial history of education in New South Wales called *Sydney and the bush*, and another book, *Government schools of New South Wales since 1848*, which gives the starting dates and other basic operational details of the 7,300 government schools since 1848. I have also been involved in reorganising 100 years of government school records from 1876 to 1976, written a couple of books on the history of Aboriginal education in New South Wales, and examined the way geography teaching was Australianised in our schools last century. In all of this I have probably looked at more school records from 1848 to the present than anyone else in New South Wales. I get no prize for this: I mention it to establish my credentials to talk about school records.

The History Unit is part of Management Information Services Directorate and dates from the late 1950s, when an education officer began to write histories of schools celebrating centenaries. Although the government school system had begun in the late 1840s, it did not begin to expand significantly until the late 1850s, hence the boom a century later. Even as early as the 1890s, some histories of schools were written by Departmental officers briefing the Minister for Education prior to his officiating at openings of new accommodation. Since the early 1960s the History Unit has had a staff of two historians with clerical help. Because the Department's records are its bread and butter, the Unit has naturally kept an eye on what the Department was doing with its records, old and new.

This apparent fetish with records is based on a misunderstood aspect of history. There are some souls—those who have never tried to write a history of anything, not necessarily schools—who mistakenly believe that history is what happens. Family-tree researchers will tell you that while lots of begatting begot a lot of their ancestors stretching back to Adam, they can't tell you who begot whom, when or why because they can't find the records or the records never existed. If you doubt that history is what we can find out from the records, try writing a history of the millions of events which must have happened to Aborigines in Australia in the last 50,000 years. History comes from the Greek word 'istoria', which simply means story. History is the *story* of what happened, and unless you can find someone reliable to tell you that story, you will have to discover it from the records, in whatever form those records might exist. This hard fact will come home to one particular centenary school next year, when we break the news that the records for its first 60 years have inexplicably disappeared.

Letter-books and boxes

Every time I write a school history I read the original records of the school. This has sometimes meant going back to the beginning of the government school system in the late 1840s. The Board of National Education, which controlled government schools until 1866, had the quaint habit of pasting all the correspondence it received—from teachers, parents, inspectors, architects, contractors, the public and other government agencies—into large letter-books, the size of a Globite school case.

In records branch room at head office was a wall of pigeon-holes, arranged alphabetically, where every effort was made to put each piece of paper under a particular school's name. If white ants were eating the school building at Kempsey, then reports on that were filed with other papers for Kempsey school. Likewise, there were files dealing with teachers' leave, salaries, examinations and forage allowance; accidents to pupils in the playground; epidemics of sickness; the need for more accommodation or extensions to sites; complaints from parents and teachers; repairs and renovations; the condition of teacher residences, the non-payment of school fees; excursions; swimming classes—and so on almost without end. These all found themselves in pigeon-holes under their appropriate school name. At the end of the year the bundle for each school was pasted into a letter-book.

Sometimes it was not possible to file a paper under an individual school: some were 'system' files, which related to the running of the education system. For example, there were files dealing with school architecture, the teaching of Latin, school cadets, inspection procedures, teachers' salaries, changes to education legislation, the enforcement of compulsory education or applications for employment by prospective teachers, none of which could be placed with an individual school's records. These 'subject files', as they became known, were housed in a separate set of pigeon-holes.

At first, when there were few schools, the Board fitted its annual correspondence into four of these large books. It ensured that correspondence could not get lost or out of order. As the school system grew, so did the annual creation rate of letter-books: by the mid-1870s as many as 30 letter-books were being created each year, just for school correspondence alone.

Then the paste ran out. From 1876, while the pigeon-hole system continued unchanged, the annual festival of pasting ceased. The bundles of records were stored in boxes in the same order as they would have been had they been pasted into the letter-books. Schools such as Abbotsford were in the first box and poor Zig Zag was always, always in the last box. Subject files, too, found themselves in a set of storage boxes. When the Department of Education was established in 1880, it continued the dual system of school files and subject files for the next 60 years, making only one change: instead of bundling up records for storage after one year, it did so after two years.

It was fortunate that the nature of the central bureaucracy—the Department's head office—attracted so much of the records of schools. Almost all decisions about significant (and often insignificant) things in schools had to be made at head office. This meant writing lots of letters, reports and submissions, and

that meant paper, lots of files, no doubt bad for forests but the lifeblood of historians.

It was also fortunate that the Department decided to keep these records because, with a few notable exceptions among the older high schools, the schools themselves were not keeping copies of correspondence, reports, plans, photographs or interesting educational memorabilia. No great value was placed on keeping historical records. From earliest days all schools were supposed to maintain and never destroy their important registers, such as admission register, punishment books and the record of inspectors' comments on the school. Perhaps one school in 50 has retained these records going back to its commencement or sent them to State Archives for safe-keeping. The other 49 have lost them, some to fire, flood, silverfish or white ants, but most, unfortunately, to carelessness or the 'throw-out-all-this-old-rubbish' mentality only now being replaced by a more selective conservatism. What the throwers-out failed to realise was that school records are unique, original documents: once gone they are gone forever. They are not like a book which, if lost, can be replaced by another identical one.

A watershed year

The year 1939 was a watershed year for Departmental records. This is also where Hitler came in, as no article on historical records would be complete without some reference to him. At the outbreak of the Second World War, the military authorities in Sydney, fearing that Hitler might get his hands on some of the Department's vital records and thus take over the world, destroyed a large number of subject files stored in boxes in a cell at Darlinghurst goal. The space was really wanted for air raid precautions and was an indication of the value placed on historical records. (Don't punish yourself in vain by asking why these records were in a cell at Darlinghurst in the first place or why they couldn't have been moved to a safer storage location.)

More importantly, in 1939 the Department of Education decided to change the record system which it had used since 1880 and which its predecessors had also used. What of the 4,000 boxes of individual school records, and the thousand or so boxes of subject files, left after the Darlinghurst fiasco. There were three options:

- dump the lot, (and therefore have lots more room for more air-raid shelters). Dumping is an option often resorted to by people of tidy (or perhaps tiny) minds,
- cull the records, keeping only those of historical importance, a much more difficult option because it required considerable judgment and lots of money,

- or keep the lot. Clearly this amount of records was historically important and could not be summarily destroyed; yet to cull them would cost an arm and a leg.

So all the pre-1940 boxes were kept and transferred to the State Library of New South Wales. When I first encountered these records they were housed in the basement of the State Library building in Macquarie Street. They now live in the State Archives building in The Rocks. They were (and still are) fascinating records, so much so that in the early days I would be so engrossed in them that I, a public servant, would sometimes work through morning tea and occasionally lunch.

'The key to success is to mark the box in large letters: 'School Archives—Never to be destroyed...'

The effects of change

Had the central bureaucracy remained unchanged and had it continued to keep every piece of paper coming within its grasp, then schools could have continued to neglect their records in the knowledge that everything would be kept at the centre. But a number of changes, some technological, some organisational, and some already underway by 1939, would significantly alter the school record situation.

- One of these changes was the new records system introduced by the Department in 1940. It made it easy to cull many of the records which until 1939 had been kept; yet some of that pre-1940 material, trivial in itself, often helped build up a picture of what was happening in a school. Certainly the new system greatly reduced the mass of records kept and the school records since 1940 are, contrary to common expectations, year for year much less than the pre-1940 records.
- There was a growth of printed forms, as the Department regulated the way schools communicated with it. Printed forms can contain an enormous amount of information. One of the most useful forms I know is the application for a school, which was used for a century after 1850. It provides an indispensable picture of a community seeking a school. Yet the printed form had two serious effects: it *depersonalised* information, which was an immediate historical loss, and it conveyed an impression of a record whose information was temporary, trivial, ephemeral. As a result many forms were disposed of when action on them was completed. To some extent it typified the way records seemed to be going: more of them, less interesting and happily trashable.

- The growth in the use of the telephone made its impact, one difficult to estimate, on the amount of records kept and the sort of things put in writing. Teachers and others have often used the telephone to get explanations and advice which in the past was asked for and given in writing.

- Similarly the development of the **Teachers handbook** meant that teachers had guidance readily at hand, making it unnecessary to seek solutions to problems they previously put in writing. Starting with improvements in the training of teachers in the first decade of this century, the gradual improvement in the quality of teachers reaching executive positions has usually meant fewer problems in the schools, a greater ability to handle problems on the spot if they did arise and a corresponding reduction in the amount of paperwork flowing between schools and the Department of Education.

- Who knows what impact the greater use of computers will have on school records? Already in our office I can see problems arising from the ease with which both useful and useless material can be deleted from disks wanted for other things, and difficulty in the future of reading material off in obsolete programs off obsolete disks. While I am not anti-computer—I have been writing my histories straight onto computer for years—I am certain that computerisation, while it need not be the case, will have adverse effects on school records. The development of fax machines will also 'cheapen' the significance of records and have other unpredictable consequences.
- Beginning with the establishment of Riverina regional office in 1948, regional offices have taken over the role of managing the schools on a daily basis. By the 1970s the flow of paperwork between schools and head office had ceased. From this time onwards it is useless to look in head office for school records: there aren't any. Because the regions had closer links with the schools, they tended to create less records than head office had done.
- Perhaps the biggest single factor in changing the record situation has been the growing delegation of authority to regions and schools. Last century if the lock on the schoolroom door was busted, the teacher informed the local inspector, who annotated the letter and sent it up the hierarchy, through the district inspector, the chief inspector, the under-secretary and

finally the Minister for Education, the only one able to authorise expenditure to have the door lock repaired or replaced. As regions and schools have been given more responsibility for their own affairs, a process which is currently accelerating, the sorts of records from last century and the first half of this one are not being created. These days the doorlock gets repaired on the spot, with perhaps a receipt the only piece of writing created. While the doorlock example is trivial, it typifies the process happening throughout a whole range of school activities. As schools become increasingly responsible for their own operations, the amount of paperwork flowing between schools and regional offices will correspondingly decline, as it did between schools and head office.

School archives

This brings me to some points I want to make. First, we must assume that people will still want to write histories of their schools when they reach landmarks such as a 150th anniversary or a bicentenary. Indeed, many schools have already celebrated their 125th anniversaries. Unless there are records for them to draw on, there will be no future histories to describe what was happening from the second half of the 20th century onwards. *Schools must assume that what is supposed to be kept by other parts of the Department is not being kept, and that they must therefore keep as much as they can.* For some schools this is too late and they have lost the last few decades, but they should not throw away the 1990s and beyond as well.

'Schools must assume that what is supposed to be kept by other parts of the Department is not being kept, and that they must therefore keep as much as they can.'

The simplest archives collection, one which works surprisingly well for smallish schools, is a large cardboard box the size of a tea-chest into which is placed everything you want to keep. The key to success is to mark the box in large letters: 'School Archives—Never to be destroyed', and then to put it somewhere out of the way, out of the damp, so that no one will be tempted to get rid of it because it is a nuisance.

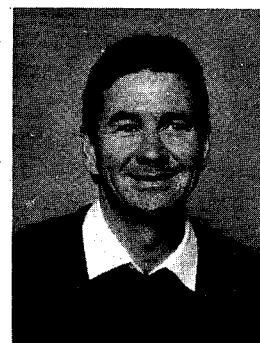
Some schools, hopefully the majority, will want something more structured than a large box, but the sort of things they keep will be the same:

- Keep the formal registers such as the admission register; there is no other way of knowing who was a pupil at the school without this. Some schools keep class rolls but their usefulness is small if the admission register is available.

- Keep copies of official correspondence dealing with all aspects of the school's life, operation, assessment and organisation. Include building plans, copies of the school site showing the location of buildings, as well as records of liaison with P&Cs or school councils, local organisations and authorities. You may decide to transfer such records to your archives collection when they are, say, 5 years old.
- Keep copies of all official forms sent in each year for such things as the census of schools, distribution of studies, students of non-English speaking background, and the like. Don't forget staff returns: they are often the only way to establish who was teaching at the school and when. Don't ask the History Unit to tell you who was at a school because we only keep a list of principals.
- Keep photographs of staff and pupils at play and at work in their classrooms; educational activities and events; building additions—before, during and when completed; displays, sporting activities, fires, floods and any other changes that occur in the school. Don't just collect the photos that *happen* to get taken: charge someone interested in photography in the school with the responsibility of actively keeping a photographic record. Don't forget to caption and date photographs—otherwise you might as well not take them—and to store away from light, heat and damp. Video coverage of school activities could be useful if we could guarantee that the tapes will last and that in 50 years we will still have video-players which can play them.
- Keep programs and other written records of speech days, concerts, celebrations, festivals, educational experiments or innovations, fires, floods and official openings.
- Keep copies of school publications and press cuttings from local newspapers or other printed material related to the school.
- Keep samples of work done by teachers and pupils; try to cover a range of subjects, teachers and pupils, and a range of quality from excellent to average or worse.

If you keep all these things, and if you keep them away from the light, in a cool place that is as dry as possible, secure from moth, silverfish, mice and mould, those who sit down to write the school's history, sometime in the 21st century, will probably not rise up and bless you, but they will have something to write about. ❖

☆ The pursuit of excellence and effectiveness: a matter of vision



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A 'greenie' at heart, albeit passive, I find environmentalists a fascinating group of people. Motivated by a vision of grand, if not global proportions, and well beyond the power of the individual, they seem unthwarted by the daily obstacles, struggles and prejudices in the pursuit of their dream. I would like to think similarly of teacher-librarians.

What follows is a somewhat personal, subjective and hopefully provocative reflection of where we're at and where we're going as teacher-librarians, from a slightly-removed-from-professional-practice situation in which I now find myself. The empirical base for my comments is not entirely elusive, being based on cumulative observations and impressions over a number of years of professional practice rather than on a formal, systematic collection of evidence. If they provoke, challenge, anger, or enable, so be it, for reaction is the substance of action, and if action is focused by and on the vision, then the pursuit of excellence and effectiveness is well within the grasp of teacher-librarians.

I firmly believe that teacher-librarians must be visionary in their professional pursuits, for it is the essence of action and forward movement. And while the vision may be ideal, to be visionary is to be able to conceive what might be realised or achieved day by day within the context of that ideal. It is a matter of where the focus is placed. The importance of vision is now being recognised by educational systems across Australia and internationally, and is appearing as a range of corporate vision statements encompassing the aims and objectives of education within the Australian social and cultural milieu. It is vision that gives meaning to the dramatic events that make up school life; it is vision that inspires leadership and directs the process of leading; and it is vision that enhances capacity to reflect, to value and to critique.

The vision statement for teacher-librarians is clearly articulated in *Libraries in New South Wales government schools: policy statement 1987* and in a range of recent Department of School Education documents and supporting literature. Essentially it focuses on enhancing teaching and students' learning through resources within the total program of the school. I see it as a dynamic and purposeful vision, for the development of individuals and groups in the context of societal needs and aspirations through the provision of resources and personnel in a cooperative and consultative context is a matter of some urgency. What concerns me is the number of teacher-librarians seemingly wandering an aimless path into the future, overwhelmed and consumed by daily local struggles and issues and having lost sight of the ideal. Please don't get me wrong, I have the greatest respect for teacher-librarians, and have seen excellence, value-added performance and enormous personal commitment in the face of financial restraint and administrative short-sightedness. How can teacher-librarians bridge the gap between reality and vision, and yet keep focused on the vision?

Be goal oriented and challenge oriented, rather than obstacle oriented

Effective teacher-librarians are likely to be goal oriented. They are people who take an active part in the school's decision-making process, and because of their involvement, are motivated to achieve goals formulated by the school and use these goals as the basis for their own library-centred action. They are people who have a clear informed vision of what they want their school library to become, and are willing to test the limits. They are initiators, confronters, provokers, and challengers with a sense of the possible, capable of making goals operational in the long and the short term.

Be confident and flexible

We can hardly expect any one to listen to us, let alone follow us, or to institutionalise our vision if we have difficulty or reluctance in communicating confidence about our purpose and role as teacher-librarians. This time of economic restraint, limited library budgets, staffing restrictions and expanding job descriptions can quickly lead to an image of defeat and a sense of helplessness and failure. But this is also a time of unprecedented explosion of information and demand for information literacy. Our future is bright.

We need to take time to reflect on our vision, believe in our role, and articulate it confidently. Innovation and the realisation of a dream are usually blocked not by

one person, but by a forest of fixed attitudes, perceptions, assumptions and unwritten rules. Freeing ourselves from the constraints of our own restricting expectations is a good starting point, and this begins when we confidently articulate our role at the school level — both in communicating it and through action. We have to show our school community that risks are OK by taking them ourselves. Take risks with cooperative curriculum endeavours; take risks in providing opportunities for students to develop their information skills; take risks in providing experiences to stimulate reading; take risks with resources to extend and enliven students' learning; and take risks in ensuring that the library is a vibrant, vital teaching and learning centre. Remember that the teacher-librarian is the only one in the school with the professional expertise to facilitate these opportunities. And do so with confidence.

Be organised

Time management is of critical importance for teacher-librarians, particularly in terms of the constraints identified above. Time management is about working smarter, not harder or longer, to accomplish goals and achieve some professional satisfaction.

Time has no substitute; it cannot be created, only used. A recent study of managers by Smith and Mackenzie (1987) identified the top 10 time wasters as:

- lack of objectives, priorities and planning both on a long term and daily basis
- crisis management, shifting priorities
- telephone interruptions
- trying to do too much at once
- personal disorganisation
- drop-in visitors
- ineffective discipline
- lack of self discipline
- inability to say no
- indecision and procrastination.

I suspect that these time wasters are all too familiar to teacher-librarians; I also suspect that they contribute to blurred focus — a focus on the daily obstacles without the perspective of the vision. Some practical strategies for dealing with these time wasters include:

- schedule your time — be realistic and flexible, leaving space for the unpredictable, and use your time for making progress, not simply responding to problems
- avoid procrastination — set deadlines, assign priorities, and deal with difficult problems promptly

- avoid the paper shuffle — deal with correspondence immediately, and deal with paper only once by taking some action on it as it comes across your desk
- combine tasks to avoid duplication of effort; delegate responsibility
- communicate effectively — listen to others, speak clearly, clarify tasks, and learn to say no with explanations not excuses
- know yourself — identify your most productive hours and schedule activities for those times; organise your environment with provision for 'closing off' your space for periods to minimise phone calls and visitors
- consider yourself — learn skills of relaxation, stress management, and reward yourself! Most of all, keep the vision in perspective.

Be cheerful

From my observations, school executives and teacher-librarians take themselves very seriously, while the kids seem totally committed to enjoying themselves! Humour is indeed a very serious organisational construct, and if used appropriately, knowing the sensitivities

and tastes of groups and individuals, it can work to minimise the barriers between you and your goals. Humour and laughter give space from difficult and stressful situations; help to develop loyalty, especially in fostering cooperative teaching relationships; develop a climate for creativity; develop cohesion, morale, and identity within groups; help to communicate our feelings, values and ideas more effectively; and help to keep the vision in focus by easing the pain of unwelcome daily encounters.

Be sensitive to 'the powers that be'

Effective teacher-librarians are sensitive to the dynamics of power both in their own school and in the bureaucracy to which it belongs. They are not afraid of the 'powers that be'; they understand the importance of collective decision making; make a contribution to this decision making process, and thus are able to work within the constraints of the system rather than being destroyed by it. A teacher-librarian colleague recently said to me 'the charisma of teacher-librarians will take the administration with them'. I agree. Confidence, flexibility, organisation and sensitivity are all part of this charisma, as well as taking a committed role in the school's decision-making process.

'... teacher-librarians must be visionary in their professional pursuits, for it is the essence of action and forward movement...'

Be able to stand back

Part of the process of making a vision reality is being able to stand back from a situation and analyse it, rather than being so consumed by the situation or a particular problem. I have seen teacher-librarians overwhelmed and frustrated by daily irritations of the system, the complexity, and at times, ambiguity of their role, but they do not take the time to figure out what is happening, and to place it into a larger perspective. We need to learn to regard failures as mere intermediate setbacks that are teaching us something. Then we begin materialising the vision.

'... teacher-librarians are a symbol of the dynamic link between learning and information, both to be prized within our schools...'

Be committed to long term planning

The information age is a technological renaissance. I am encouraged to see teacher-librarians making a committed response to the application of technology in the management of systems for information collection, control and retrieval. I am concerned at times that the recent technological drive has encouraged a somewhat inward-looking preoccupation with technology as an end, rather than as a means to an end. The issue of technology is not just one of management, but more importantly, a matter of providing the best educational opportunities for students. Information technology is supremely valuable if it is seen in the light of improving students' information skills, and is actively utilised in cooperative ventures across curriculums to foster these skills. I am encouraged to hear of teacher-librarians capitalising on the educational function of this technology. At present I am involved in documenting one school's creative cooperative venture between a team of science teachers and a visionary teacher-librarian who are using OASIS Library for teaching information skills, and hope in the future to share this with you.

While the focus of the technology at the moment seems to be getting it up and running, I believe that for the visionary teacher-librarians, it will be a sense of having just begun rather than having just arrived. And undaunted by the financial struggles wrought in installing such technology, they are already making forays into CD-ROM technology, optical disks, hypertext, videotext, expert systems, and modem linkup to databases. And around the corner are a new breed of computer technologies and computer products — voice recognition, speech synthesis, handwriting recognition, and interactive multimedia systems with not only text, graphics, sound, still and moving images all on the same medium, but also enabling users to

actively participate in the material being viewed. Dreaming? Maybe. A growing number of studies are showing that while Australian librarians think it is important to keep up with new developments in information technology, they do not make much effort to do so because they feel they have no need for it. I would suggest that the educational role of the teacher-librarian in planning and implementing information skills programs in the context of library and classroom cooperation makes it imperative to address not only today's technologies but also to plan for the future, and to maintain concerted lobbying for the same.

As teacher-librarians we do have a vision. We are a symbol of the dynamic link between learning and information, both to be prized within our schools. Where we are and where we are going is a matter of vision. My short life has taught me that we can do anything we choose. Dare to dream. Dare to succeed by focusing on the vision, working smarter, learning from mistakes and allowing the imagination the freedom to dance. The return on this kind of investment is best described in Hooker's translation of Cyrano de Bergerac (quoted in Kiam 1986). In it, the Comte de Guiche reminds Cyrano that 'windmills, if you fight with them, may swing around their huge arms and cast you down into the mire'. A defiant Cyrano, perhaps speaking for all teacher-librarians, replies, 'or up among the stars!'

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- Smith, N. I. and MacKenzie, R. A. 1987 'Time management: reported timewasters of 1385 Australian managers' in *Human resources management Australia* Winter pp 20-22. ♦

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☆ *Treat yourself : Professionally*

The 12th Biennial Conference of the Australian School Library Association (ASLA XII) will be held from 29th September to 3rd October at the Fairmont Conference Centre, Leura.

Treat yourself : Professionally is the overall theme of the conference. The sub-themes, *The Future; Technology; Literature; and Education*, will each occupy 1 day, following the same format: keynote address; discussion workshop; concurrent sessions with extra activities such as special interest sessions.

Time will be available throughout the conference to explore the Trade and Technology Fairs to be held in conjunction with conference. Literature activities on Wednesday will utilise venues of historical and environmental interest, including Jenolan Caves, Norman Lindsay's home and The Zig Zag Railway.

At the time of going to press, participation in the conference has been confirmed by Dr Peter Ellyard, Director, Commission for The Future; Donna Rawlins, illustrator; and Allan Baillie, author.

Registration fees

Full conference registration includes:

- registration and name tag
- attendance at all keynote addresses and plenaries
- attendance at discussion workshops
- attendance concurrent sessions
- attendance at special interest groups on site
- attendance at trade and technology fairs
- morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea
- conference papers and participation certificate

	state assoc members	non members
before 31/7/91	\$350	\$400
after 31/7/91	\$400	\$450

Day registration (inclusions as above on a daily basis)

	state assoc members	non members
before 31/7/91		
Mon, Tues, Thurs	\$100	\$120
Wed	\$120	\$140
after 31/7/91		
Mon, Tues, Thurs	\$120	\$140
Wed	\$140	\$160

Accommodation

Twin share (\$85 per person per night), single rooms (\$170 per person per night), suites and family rooms are available at the Fairmont. Transfers from Sydney Airport and Central Station to the Fairmont and back are available. All Fairmont accommodation should be booked through the Secretariat. All other accommodation arrangements, and costs, will be the responsibility of the delegate.

Enquiries and Fairmont bookings should be directed to the Secretariat:

ASLA
PO Box 89
Winmalee 2777
Phone (047) 51 5137
Fax (047) 54 3562 (attn June Wall) ♦

☆ *New directions and a new book for Libby Gleeson*



In December 1990, Libby Gleeson's third book, *Dodger* made its appearance as the sixth – and first Australian – title of the new Anglo-Australian publishing firm Turton and Chambers. *Scan 9/3* carried an interview with Aidan Chambers when the new venture was launched with high ideals of producing books of quality and literary merit for young people in a company co-equal between Australia and Britain. As Graham Spindler discovered, while talking with Libby for *Scan*, the release of *Dodger* demonstrates that the high hopes of T&C are still flying at full mast as well as highlighting Libby's own development as a writer.

Libby Gleeson and her home in the Victorian terrace/villa inner suburb of Petersham would fit comfortably into the Newtown setting of her *I am Susannah*. Certainly she, and it, are in every sense a long way from the newly emerging suburbs of Campbelltown on the outer fringe of Sydney, yet it is in those raw suburbs, still not quite part of anywhere, that her newest book, *Dodger*, finds its home.

It is, as Libby explains, a deliberate choice, just as much of *Dodger* is a deliberate attempt to extend her range. 'I don't want to be typecast as always writing 12-year-old pre-pubescent girl angst . . . I'm not saying that there is no challenge in going back to this, and I probably will, but at the moment I did need to push a bit further.'

Dodger has two central characters: Penny, a first-year out teacher appointed to a secondary school near Campbelltown, and Mick, a year 8 student largely written off by his teachers. Following the death of his

mother, Mick is brought here by his father to live with his grandmother. Mick clearly has unresolved grief and confusion about his mother's death and idolises his truck-driving and mostly absent father.

Penny, her idealism riding the highs and lows of her first year of teaching, becomes involved in the production of the school musical, *Oliver*. The unpromising Mick reveals some singing and acting talent and is selected to play the Artful Dodger, a role not completely removed from his real life image. The action and interaction which result pull both Penny and Mick into and through the crises they have to face to be able to deal with their situations. Mick is the main focus and voice of the narrative but through letters interspersed through the book from Penny to a friend we gain insights into her changing reactions to teaching and her involvement with Mick.

The setting of *Dodger* was chosen early in the book's development. Mick is someone who is on the margins of the school and very much on the margins of acceptable behaviour and family relationships, and it seemed to Libby that the appropriate metaphor was to place the school on the margins of the city. 'There's that kind of feeling that where they live is on the edge of where things happen and the kind of kid he is is at the edge of where life happens for other people.'

Another major departure for Libby is, after Eleanor Elizabeth and *I am Susannah*, to make her main central character a boy. And Mick is a perfectly convincing character – anyone who has ever been in a school will recognise the kind of encounter which follows, between Mick and the macho P.E. teacher (not too subtly called Mr Masterman) who has a particular dislike for Mick:

'Jamieson!
Mick stumbled.
'Jamieson! Come here, boy!
Mick stopped and turned slowly to face Masterman.
'And where are you off to in such a hurry?'
'The canteen.'
'Is that the way to address a teacher?'
'No, sir.'
'Well, boy, answer my question. And look at me while you're talking.'
'I was going to the canteen,' he paused slightly, 'sir.'
'Right. And is there any need to charge for it like a bull at a gate?'
'The pies get cold . . . sir.'
'That's no reason to leap over the verandah and land in the garden.' . . .
'I didn't land on the garden . . . sir. I missed . . .'

As a young teacher, Libby taught in not dissimilar locations and even produced *Oliver* which became the striking point for the characters in *Dodger*. 'I had this story in the back of my head which had been gnawing away at me for a long time - not the full story because I had to find the whole story - but the image of the teacher, the isolated, marginalised kid and whatever it is that will find the striking point. It seemed that the character of Mick and the character of the Dodger could nicely interweave. The Dodger is artful, crafty, but in my mind he's a little character in a world full of bigger, tougher characters, and he has to be cunning to survive. And that's the kind of kid Mick is, he's not the tough kid in school, he's the loser who wants to be the tough kid and isn't going to ever make it.'

New approaches

Another aspect of *Dodger* which resulted from a deliberate development of her writing craft, is the complexity of voice and storyline. 'I wanted to write with multiple voices. The first two novels came through very much as a sort of third person narrative but very firmly in the voice of the female lead character. So I wanted these multiple voices. I experimented for about a year with the three voices of Mick, Penny and of one other child character, and I thought of Margie, the girl who plays the lead. I wanted to bring her right up front and give you another kid's view of what was happening.' However, this proved unworkable and a more specific stylistic device was found in the letters of Penny. These provide a much more informal way of finding out what Penny is really thinking and feeling than, say, professional mail or formal documentation discussing Mick. The letters also allow a neat and realistic turn of the device to reinforce the satisfying but not pat ending. 'I'm fascinated by the extent to which you can push literary form and still be accessible to younger readers and I'm certainly keen to keep doing that.'

Dodger, while realistic, is also optimistic about the effect of caring for another person, and about the school environment which for all its frequent inabilities to cope with the whole needs of the people within it, can still be the setting for activities and relationships which sustain and support real growth and understanding. But Libby also voices her concern that 'in a very competitive and technologically obsessed world, often the three Rs become so paramount that those activities which are sustaining of our lives are pushed aside. Most of us who have taught know that

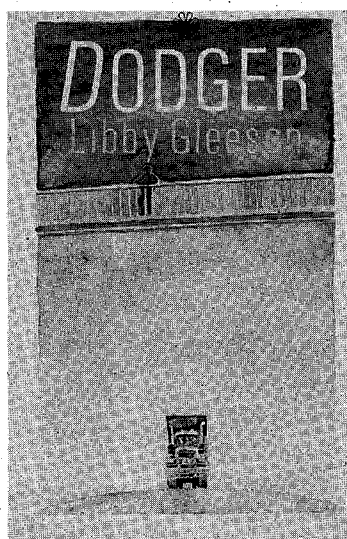
the things that really affect people's lives are in the hidden curriculum. In *Dodger*, what happens in the play and the conversations around the play are far more important than what happens in the classroom.'

And a new publisher

One more obvious new direction in which *Dodger* has taken Libby is the publishing association with Turton and Chambers. Her two previous novels were published by Angus and Robertson but in recent times A&R was submerged in one of the corporate takeovers which have come to characterise the publishing industry. The old identity of the company, and many of its key personnel, including the editors Libby had worked with, were gone. For Libby it seemed that the slate had been wiped clean and she was open to offers, including any from the new-look A&R. In fact, there was a timely and careful approach from Aidan Chambers. 'He made it perfectly clear that he wasn't trying to poach me but explained what he had to offer and for quite a few reasons I decided to give it a try. It's quite prestigious to be their first Australian title and he's somebody I have quite a lot of respect for as a critic and now as an editor. They convinced me that they were going to make a real effort to produce a quality children's list with a lot of translated material in it and with a genuine joint British and Australian emphasis. So I was persuaded.'

Working with Aidan as editor proved to be a reassuring experience and she enjoyed the close editing relationship. Aidan's being based in England did not create any sense of remote anonymity in the editing process. Initially, the manuscript was commented on by mail but in September 1990 Libby was in England as part of a European trip. 'We sat down together and went through the text very thoroughly - which is something I've never done with an editor in Australia.' The book had been three and a half years in the writing and fairly polished, and a mere two days were needed for this cooperative editing stage.

The Anglo-Australian coequality that T&C have sought, has been fully demonstrated for the first time in this book: Australian writing, English editing, English book design and printing, Australian cover design and financing, and simultaneous release in both countries. Libby feels quite satisfied with what has been done so far and particularly likes the cover with its simple, isolating feel. So far paperback release has not really been discussed and while she belongs to the 'hardback first' school, Libby feels that a reasonably prompt



paperback release is essential to move the book away from adult-only purchasing.

What's next?

A writer who combines painstaking work at her craft with the demands of being the mother of three young children, Libby's output is characterised both by its quality and by the long gaps between publication. However 1991 will see two or three picture book projects come to fruition, two of them with Ashton Scholastic. The first, to be released in June, will be *Big dog*, illustrated by Queensland artist Armin Greder. It concerns some children, one of whom is extremely afraid of a big dog who lives next door. The other children decide to scare the dog by dancing down the street in their Chinese New Year lion costume, but things don't quite work out as planned.

The second book is *Mum goes to work*, which balances the activity of Mum in her workplace on one side of the page with the activity of the child in long day care on the other side. The text sets out to link the situations and create for the young reader (or listener) reassurance about day care and some understanding of what Mum's doing when she's not there. The third picture book, probably not to be published until next

year, is called *Where's Mum* and takes up a similar concern in a children's fantasy of where mother is when she's not at home. Not surprisingly, these last two arise very much from Libby's personal experiences with her own young children.

The T&C connection is renewed in a collection of Australian short stories, being edited by Nadia Wheatley, to be brought out at the end of this year. One of Libby's stories has been accepted for that, and in fact, it is in the short story field that much of the next phase of her efforts will be concentrated. She is currently writing a story for a new collection being done by Penguin on the theme of leaving, and structured, interestingly, around 8 Australian writers and 8 Irish writers.

Beyond that, the next major project may be a collection of her own short stories. She hopes to create a structure that will hang together so that the whole will be greater than the sum of the parts - separate short stories but linked in some way through character or events or setting into almost novel form.

But whatever way it goes, it will be new. 'I have to push myself into other areas. There's nothing worse than getting bored with what drives you passionately and I'm quite passionately driven to be a writer.' ❖

PUBLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Handbook for school libraries (Contains procedures for operating a school library)	\$30 (Complete set)(PN 5189) \$15 (1989 Update) (PN 5647)
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Items can be obtained from the Marketing Unit 3A Smalls Road Ryde over the counter (8.00 am - 5.00 pm),
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☆ Nutcote now

Graham Spindler is a Senior Education Officer with the NSW Department of School Education's Marketing Unit.

The battle continues to save May Gibbs' home, *Nutcote*, and the critical moment draws near. Many people seem to believe that the house has been saved or that sufficient funds have been raised to ensure its protection. Unfortunately, as yet, this is far from the case and the help of every concerned reader is still needed.

May Gibbs' home

May Gibbs, the creator of Snugglypot and Cuddlepie, Bib and Bub, the Banksia Men and legions of bush babies who peopled the growing up of three generations of Australians, lived and worked at Neutral Bay in Sydney from 1913 until her death in 1969. From 1925 her home was the yellow-walled and blue-shuttered Mediterranean style cottage of *Nutcote*, at 5 Wallaringa Avenue. It was designed for her and her husband, James Ossoli Kelly, by architect B.J. Waterhouse, who also suggested the name. The house was tailor-made for her needs and with its garden became the place of and inspiration for May's work. Few houses could, after so much time, reflect the taste, personality and life-style of their owner as much as this one does but *Nutcote*, today, remains largely unaltered from its time of first occupation in 1925.

May, childless, died in 1969, but left everything to children. The royalties on her work went to the Spastic Centre of NSW and the NSW Society for Crippled Children, and the house and its contents went to UNICEF. The house was purchased at auction by a developer whose intention was to demolish *Nutcote* and build a huge waterfront tower-block. No money was wasted 'improving' the house and the effect was to freeze *Nutcote* in a time warp for two decades. Planning regulations changed, owners changed, development plans changed and *Nutcote*, the house, came to be protected under a permanent conservation order. But the garden, or for that matter the house interior, were not as protected and the last development proposals had town-houses stepping down the former garden behind the house, with a radical reconstruction of the interior into a two-story townhouse.

Let's hope that at the end of 1991 we can all still say:



The fight to save *Nutcote* began with Dr Neil Shand and his wife, Marion, a cousin to May Gibbs. As an outcome of their friendship with May in the 1950s and 60s, they held a considerable collection of her artworks and hand-drawn postcards, some of her furniture such as the easel she used, and other items such as her books and notebooks. By 1980 they had begun to think of a permanent home for the objects in a May Gibbs museum or centre for children's literature. *Nutcote* was the obvious choice. The May Gibbs Foundation was established.

The achievement so far

The greatest successes of the *Nutcote for the Nation* campaign to date have been the intervention of North Sydney Council to save *Nutcote* from immediate redevelopment by purchasing it, and the massive growth in grass-roots awareness and support for the project.

Both great successes, though, need great qualification. The purchase of *Nutcote* from the developers by North Sydney Council in March, 1990 for \$2.86 million was a brave and generous step by Council. However, while allocating \$600,000 permanently towards the cost of the home, Council has in effect put forward the rest as an interest-free loan until September, 1991. By that date, the remaining \$2.26 million must be raised by supporters or *Nutcote* is to go back onto the market.

May Gibbs Week, 1990, with massive media publicity, involvement and read-ins, was a remarkable achievement and demonstrated clearly the depth of feeling across the nation for *Nutcote's* preservation. From Darwin to the Derwent, Australians read-in, donated, spoke to the media about and gathered support for *Nutcote for the Nation*, but the sad reality is that little impact was made on the debt to North Sydney Council. Final success will only come from big donations – corporations and government – and to date they have not been much moved. Almost \$2 million remains to be found and September, 1991, is less than half a year away.

There are in fact two separate, although interlinked, bodies in the fight to save *Nutcote*. The May Gibbs Foundation, of which Dr Neil Shand is president, is the voluntary body which first proposed *Nutcote for the Nation*, and whose tireless efforts have largely been responsible for the now widespread level of awareness. When North Sydney Council purchased *Nutcote* it set up the Nutcote Trust, with an office and staff, to coordinate the fundraising campaign and to plan for the house's establishment as a gallery/museum for May Gibbs' work and centre for contemporary Australian children's literature. A Trustees Group has been appointed, including officers from the Foundation, and their most immediate aim is to attract some of the 'big money' still missing from the project. The two groups are working co-operatively towards the same goal but the Foundation, while obviously utterly committed to *Nutcote*, is determined that a May Gibbs centre will be set up in Sydney even if the unthinkable occurs and *Nutcote* is lost.

Why save Nutcote?

There are many compelling reasons for making *Nutcote* a national treasure. They include the architectural and landscape conservation significance of the house and its grounds, the overdue recognition of our historically most important children's writer-illustrator, the opportunity to provide a unique centre for children's literature, and the commercial/tourism potential of the project.

The most inevitable comparison for the *Nutcote* proposal must be with Britain's Beatrix Potter, born 11 years before May Gibbs, and by cultural association also one of the treasured images of childhood for many Australians. Just as Prince Dandelion and Scotty (of *Scotty in Gumnut Land*) lived out their imaginary adventures in the very real garden of *Nutcote*, Jemima Puddle-duck and Tom Kitten came to life in the grounds of *Hill Top Farm* on the edge of the little village of Sawrey near Lake Windemere. The tales and illustrations of Beatrix Potter are as distinctively English as their setting, and yet as absolutely universal as childhood itself. Today *Hill Top* is a major English literary shrine amidst a landscape partially preserved by the tales which it evokes.

Beatrix Potter used her royalties to purchase over 4,000 acres of properties throughout the Lake District, leaving them all to the National Trust on her death in 1943. As a result, large and worthwhile samples of an otherwise almost vanished world survive around the Lakes. Amongst the properties she left was the little *Hill Top* farmhouse where she had most often lived. Built in 1906, it was a good specimen of a Lakeland stone farmhouse but she had no intention of it becoming a

museum. Fortunately, the National Trust saw the chance to create a simple museum where generations of those who grew up with Peter Rabbit or Mrs Tiggy-Winkle could find a touching-point with the creator of something of their own heritage and experience of childhood. *Hill Top* and the Lakeland, today, are amongst the great treasures of the British national estate.

The parallels are there. Like Beatrix Potter, May Gibbs had no intention – or any understanding of the possibility – of her house one day becoming a literary shrine. She made no provision for this in her will, seeking instead only to allow what she left behind to continue to benefit children. In a small way, and partly by accident, her small estate has preserved a piece of a harbourside Sydney otherwise almost lost to history. It only dawned on us later that we had a need for recognition of her and for the preservation of this touching-point with our own experience of childhood.

Everyone will have their own reasons for saving *Nutcote*, but for many of us it will be a deep-seated and admittedly sentimental attachment to images recalling the emotions and wonder in our own past. But the recognition of May Gibbs, image-maker to our childhood, is just as much part of the growth and recognition of our individuality as a nation as it is an effort to retain the images and icons of our childhood. The saving of *Nutcote* is part of the saving of an Australian identity, the retention of a shared experience which helps unite us. As with *Hill Top*, Australians have a need to keep in touch with their image-makers of childhood – and there are no more distinctively or widely-shared Australian images of childhood than those created by May Gibbs.

Helping out

You have probably already helped but the need is for continued effort in raising awareness and money. Money and other forms of assistance can go to either the Foundation or the Trust at the addresses below:

The May Gibbs Foundation
P.O. Box 500,
Drummoyne NSW 2047

The Nutcote Trust
Shop 7
The Colonnade, The Oval,
283a Miller St,
North Sydney NSW 2060. ❖

Illustrations:
May Gibbs Copyright
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NSW Society for Crippled Children

 You should see us now!**The school library program at Mittagong Public School**

There is an old saying — 'You can't judge a book by its cover' — that certainly rings true for Mittagong Public School Library. Our 'cover' is a 17 year old demountable building that leaks badly when it rains and is much too small for our 510 pupils. Nevertheless, what happens inside our library is something very valuable indeed. A visitor to our school needs to come past the walls of our library building to judge that here is a very important place — even though its outside appearance does not suggest it.

This importance was not created overnight. It was 1986 when the direction of Mittagong Public School Library started to change course. Now, five years on, the changes still continue. They are not as major as our initial ones, but they are still there and are more of a refining and strengthening nature. When the early changes were proposed I was fortunate enough to have a principal and staff innovative enough to rethink what had been the traditional role of the library and, with their support, the potential of our library's effectiveness has been increased dramatically.

Independence in the library

One of the most noticeable changes at our school is the number of students independently visiting the library and the frequency of their visits. This development seems so perfectly logical that it should not really be considered surprising. It came about by the merging of two very non-traditional beliefs. First, that students should develop confidence in the library by independently handling their own borrowing requirements, and, second, that what students choose to read should be of paramount importance to a class teacher and incorporated into the class reading program. Once class teachers started being interested in the personal choice of their students and talking to them about that choice, a huge demand for regular borrowing access from the library rippled throughout the school. Borrowing library books became so important to class teachers that they were prepared to allow it to happen in class time instead of just at lunch time or before school. Therefore, throughout the day, small groups of students from classrooms all over the school can be seen visiting the library to borrow books without interrupting any class already in the library for a teaching session.

Some management changes had to be made to accommodate these new demands. The circulation



Robyn Karakasch is teacher-librarian at Mittagong Public School. In 1990 South Coast Region acknowledged the excellence of Mittagong's library program with a Special Recognition Award.

system needed to be simplified so that all students could operate the procedure successfully. But because they are just children in a children's library, problems do arise, with cards and books not matching, shelves getting untidy, books in the wrong place, and many other mysteries arising from nowhere! But these problems are minimal compared to the enthusiasm that exists around the school for students to visit the library as many times as needed within any one week.

Mittagong Public School students walk confidently to our library during class time, select books with great purpose, borrow or return books independently, read their choice at home or in 'DEAR time', talk to their teachers about their books and generally make our library collection a much used one! This is a far cry from the regular once a week teacher directed borrowing session that existed in the olden days! We encourage even our kindergarten students to borrow and return a book when it is finished without having to wait for the timetabled lesson that is their library day. We also allow all students to borrow with or

without library bags. In effect, we have tried to remove every barrier which restricts pupil borrowing and replace them with encouragement and enthusiasm. The result is that we have an enormous movement of books in and out of the library daily, plus students who are reading regularly — a result of which we are very proud.

Developing the best collection

Our pride in the support and services the library can now provide is complemented by our pride in the collection itself. Because demands for a wide variety of library books by both students and staff are so strong; we have a very high library budget for a primary school our size, and, consequently, an excellent collection of children's literature. This collection has developed carefully over the years to reflect the demands of its users.

'A quality collection of children's literature is my ultimate goal...'

Our selection policy, which is updated annually, is an important document. It is formulated from many cooperative discussions with class teachers. Those discussions happen at both formal meetings and informal chats with teachers about whether the collection is providing the necessary resources to meet the needs and interests of their students. For instance, our kindergarten students need the best picture books for their parents to read to them; our grades 1 and 2, in the emergent reader stage, need interesting books with clear text they can attempt to read themselves; our more independent readers starting to develop stamina when reading need books with chapters or bridging novels, while our senior grades need the best children's fiction as well as books from all different genres.

In the specific area of non-fiction, we need as many books as possible where the reading age for the text is below 10 years, and a clear index and contents page is essential. In the area of Visual arts, we need the finest picture books that will offer examples of the huge variety of illustrative styles and a mixture of the media used, e.g. water colours, pen and ink, collage. Books which have won awards for excellence both in Australia and overseas are also a must for our library, as we attempt to provide what experts consider the best examples of quality literature for children. We firmly believe that it is our role to display and read to students the best in children's literature, so that students are aware that such excellent standards exist. There may be no other person who, in these days of ever increasing book prices, is in a position to offer such treats! So we do. Often!

At the end of each year, the teachers complete a Library Needs Survey Form for me, which also helps me to

locate any patches in the collection which will need further development for the following year. It requires that they suggest areas they have found that have, or have not, supported their classroom programs; and also encourages the recommendation of any specific titles that we might need. These suggestions form the basis for my priorities in the oncoming year.

A quality collection of children's literature is my ultimate goal rather than a quantitative collection. So, weeding damaged, out of date, poor quality books becomes a priority throughout the year. Hoarding resources for the sake of filling the shelves, in the hope that someday someone might read them, is something

I have finally stopped doing. Instead, I continually monitor usage patterns and, if resources are not being used frequently enough, the decision to discard is made. Non-usage patterns are just as important as high usage patterns and when I take both into account, the resulting

collection should be a well balanced one, relevant to our school.

Taking such care and concern with the improvement of the various sections of the library collection places me in the position of knowing, better than anyone else on the staff, what resources the library can offer. But this means so much more than just knowing what is or is not on the shelf. I believe I am of most value to everyone when I can recommend which resource out of many similar ones that will best suit the particular needs of the students and teachers. To be able to do this I need to really know about authors and their styles, illustrators and their styles, book formats, new books, etc., and so consequently I do as much reading of books and about books as possible. I suppose it is really a matter of being in the book business and knowing your stock!

Information skills and literature-based programs

Mittagong Public School is very special because all of its staff are committed to a literature-based approach to the teaching of reading. Each teacher translates this approach into different methods that suit their individual styles, but the underlying concept of incorporating literature into their daily classroom program flourishes throughout the school. Literature-based reading has certainly snowballed over the last 4 years, as it just seems to get bigger and better! I must admit to enjoying the pressure such an approach exudes from the enthusiastic readers in the school and their constant demands to recommend them worthwhile books.

Literature, then, becomes the incorporating link between the classroom programs and the library program. We treat information skills through as many of the different genres of literature as possible. For instance, some of the Term 1 units this year deal with historical fiction, poetry, short stories, myths and legends, picture books, fairy tales, folk tales, drama and, of course, information books. We attempt to increase students' appreciation of literature through the understanding of the many structures, different styles and varied formats.

For instance, a five week unit of work will aim at developing pupils' understanding of an aspect within a specific genre. It will be my role to select the best books where this aspect is best exemplified and easily identified by students. Each weekly session will follow a similar lesson procedure, but will be based on a different book. Each week we will have progressively higher expectations of the students' understanding of that particular aspect. Our questioning technique becomes more complex each session as we try and extend students' thinking beyond a simple recall stage.

Within the structure of the unit, I try to make each session complete in itself. By this I mean the session has a beginning and an ending on the same day, and then the procedure is repeated in the next visit. I have been satisfied with this strategy of 'wholeness' more than any other I have tried. I just was not comfortable with the experience of having students commence an activity one week, only to return to it a week later to supposedly continue on. What has evolved is a session with as much teacher modelling and demonstration in it as possible and a related discussion or activity that is completed in that session. After a 5 or 6 week unit has been completed and is cooperatively evaluated between the class teacher and the teacher-librarian, another unit is then planned if needed.

Demise of 'the project'

The traditional approach of offering projects for students to complete both at home and at school has, happily, disappeared at our school. We believe that information skills are as important as any other skills and need to be developed accordingly by professionals. The parents of Mittagong pupils are not able to teach the complexities involved in the information skills process, so independent research activities that require students to work through the whole research process

are never set as a homework task. In fact, our primary aged students are not even required to attempt to complete the full research process independently until Grades 5 and 6, and only then when we're sure that many contributing factors to the success of the investigation have been met. Our main approach is that we focus on the required stages in the information process and offer teacher-modelled learning experiences which will develop these skills. These learning experiences provide for individual differences in skill development on a class basis and help to integrate information skills into all different curriculum areas.

Teaching information skills

Here are some examples of how we use the literature-based approach to incorporate the development of information skills.

Defining

Every session in the library has been booked for a specific purpose and is based on resources carefully chosen to suit the purpose. Each session commences with input from the teacher or teachers, such as reading a whole picture book, reading an extract from a book, showing a large picture, sharing a big book, screening a video, listening to an audio cassette. After discussion and/or questions relating to the input are completed, a student activity usually follows. It is at this point when the whole class is given a task and different students are requested to tell the teacher, in their own words, what that task is. This simple but important strategy is how we approach the development of the defining stage at our primary level.

It is an unwritten law when a task is requested of students that to monitor their understanding we ask them to repeat or even rephrase it. This is a sound strategy for any teacher in any lesson area and we don't need to specifically design a library activity that develops this skill when it happens regularly as part of our other curriculum programs. But, it is necessary that we remind students to do this step whenever a task or an investigation is asked of them.

Locating

Much of the development of this skill and the knowledge of where resources are found in the library happens through practice, and is another result of

'... we focus on the required stages in the information process and offer teacher-modelled learning experiences which will develop these skills ...'

teachers being interested in what their students choose to borrow. Students select books with care because they know their class teachers will incorporate this choice into classroom activities. Therefore, their desire to find books and subjects that suit their needs and interests creates a personal interest to locate different resources. We have scheduled daily time on our library timetable labelled 'Borrowing' when I am available to help students both locate and select appropriate books. Small groups of students from each class can visit the library during this time slot for the specific purpose of receiving assistance. At other times students locate what they need by themselves, but with the help of well-labelled shelves!

The skill of locating information within a book or other resource in response to a task is treated within structured teaching sessions. When students in our junior classes are requested to answer the question 'Which character is the most important in the story?' and 'What does he/she look like?' they are locating pictorial information within the book to answer a specific task. When senior grade students are requested to read or listen to an extract from a novel and locate which words the author has used to describe how a character feels, then they are locating keywords for a specific purpose.

Selecting

This complex stage of the information process receives the most attention in varied ways at our school. We work a lot in the area of self-selecting skills. We provide as many opportunities as possible to develop students' ability to select reading material that suits them, as we believe it to be of paramount importance in helping students become life-long readers. This strong belief in the importance of mastering this skill is a direct result of conferencing students about what they choose to read. It is during this conference that we discover whether students can select reading material suitable to their own abilities and understanding.

We frequently have teaching sessions where we demonstrate to students the types of strategies they need to select competently and confidently, and we provide daily opportunities for them to do this. When students are requested to engage in the print they are determining whether it suits their reading level. To successfully choose one book from hundreds on the library shelves to suit a particular person is a complicated skill. We are aiming at teaching students the skill of rejecting books that are too difficult for them to read. This rejection is not envisaged as a mistake — it is part of the learning process of selection,

'Students select books with care because they know their class teachers will incorporate this choice into classroom activities ...'

so that when they read they are understanding what they read and not just pretending!

We also have teaching sessions where the skill of selecting specific information within a book is focused on and modelled by the teacher each time. For example, note-taking skills may be a focus of a unit's work, with resources, either fiction or non-fiction, specially selected for the purpose. Taking key words from text or specific pictorial clues from a picture and recording them differently is a strategy we use from K to Year 6.

All teachers try to accompany the development of the skill with the development of pupil confidence that their own attempts can satisfy the requirements of the task and that copying of someone else's information is not acceptable. We hope that by repeating the modelling of the note-taking skill based on a controlled resource we can monitor

students' success rates. In later years, when they undertake independent research and teachers cannot control the resource being used, we can only hope that the belief has been instilled enough to prevent the copying syndrome existing.

Other skills like skimming, scanning, summarizing, predicting, comparing, contrasting, recognising fact/opinion are treated in a similar way. Each skill is a focus for a unit of work; resources are selected for the modelling stage; the teacher models the skill; pupils engage in an activity to develop the skill. Resources can be fiction or non-fiction.

Organising

This is the stage where students need to check what they are doing against the purpose of the task. During a session this may mean a simple stop work instruction followed by a 3 minute thinking time where students look at their attempts so far and ask themselves 'How am I going? Am I answering the question? Am I on the right track?' These sorts of questions are simple enough to ask kindergarten classes, yet broad enough for grade 6 students as well.

The organising stage suits a pupil/teacher individual conference strategy too, where teachers can offer students advice to suit their task. The process writing sessions we have in the library always include conferencing with teachers after the drafting and peer conferencing phases have been completed.

The organising step of the information skills process also incorporates the development of comparing and contrasting skills. We use picture books to assist us. We

will read 2 to 3 books by the same author or illustrator and ask students 'How are these books the same?' or 'How are these books different?' Students can select specific information from the books on which to base their comparative statements. They are also combining information from a number of sources to formulate their answer. We have great success using this simple procedure to develop a complex skill and it can be employed with students who cannot actually read text themselves.

Presenting

We believe that primary students need many demonstrations, displays and examples of quality work shown to them. The care taken to develop the items in the library collection relates to this strategy. Resources like our collection of Art Gallery prints can be shown to students to focus on colour, texture, spatial relationships etc., while other resources are shown to display text arrangements and illustrative ideas. We continually show these to students and discuss the details and techniques involved, and have them incorporate the ideas into their own presentations.

Visual art sessions often happen in the library as so many of the picture books are excellent examples of artistic merit. Many of our drawing sessions in the library follow the treatment of a certain book or books and can be labelled either 'Information skills' or 'Visual arts'. The overlap is marvellous!

Assessing

This stage is an important one and we encourage every student to assess his or her own work. After a task has been completed we remind students to look at their attempts and ask themselves 'How did I go? What was easy? What was hard?' Students are often encouraged to arrange their work for others to see and walk around the room looking at everyone else's attempts while asking themselves 'What could I try to do next time?'

Cooperative discussion with a partner or in a group about the task is another strategy we often employ. We notice that the more assessing the students do the more valuable it is to them, and they begin to value their own opinions of their attempts with less fear of failure. These types of procedures are applied in many varied situations within the classroom, and are not just invented for use in an information skills lesson; in this way maximum transfer of learning can be achieved.

The process in summary

At every step of the information skills process we try to develop learning experiences that focus on one or two skills in particular and provide repeated opportunities for students to practise the skills. The students are carefully supervised in their attempts to apply the skill, so that correct habits are formed from the beginning. On all occasions the skill is modelled by the teacher during an input stage of the lesson.

Promoting the library

We have been promoting the library in lots of ways over the years, but one very special time is during Australian Library Week, which happens early in Term 4 each year. The theme for 1990 was 'Libraries for Life' and we transformed Mittagong Public School Library into a 'living library' with bunches and bunches of lovely fresh flowers! All the students in the school helped decorate the library with flowers in the form of a competition. The categories were: The Most Perfumed Bunch, The Happiest Bunch, The Tallest Bunch, The Most Colourful Bunch, The Best Bunch in School Colours (Green and Gold). The library looked — and smelled — marvellous! We gave out books as prizes for each section at a special Library Week Assembly.

Another feature of the week was the drawing of winners in our Library Lottery competition. Students could enter this competition by borrowing a book during Library Week and receiving a ticket to put in the Lottery Box. Five winners received book prizes for this. Also, at this assembly each class's book donations

were presented. Classes raised money in various ways and selected books they thought should be in the library and presented them during Library Week. We also held a Literature Trivia Quiz for teachers only. The pupils enjoyed

watching their class teachers having to answer questions for a while! Of course, we gave out lots of book marks, free library bags, special library badges, balloons and stickers throughout the week as special treats; and all the students could borrow an extra library book for Library Week.

I know it is not traditionally a custom for schools to support Australian Library Week. However, we're good at challenging traditional beliefs at Mittagong Public School, and this week is a unique opportunity for the library to receive lots of attention and good PR! We hope you will join us! ♦

'... the more assessing the students do the more valuable it is to them, and they begin to value their own opinions of their attempts with less fear of failure ...'

☉ Celebrating information skills



Doreen Teasdale is teacher-librarian at Mount Brown Public School.

At the start of the school year, teacher-librarians are usually inundated with a veritable snowstorm of slips of paper with an all-encompassing *topic* written on each of them, accompanied by the plea, 'I know you're busy, but could I have all the resources you have on ... as soon as possible?' Not so at Mount Brown in 1991.

The beginning of Term 1, 1991, was a milestone in the teaching of information skills at Mount Brown Public School. Not one mention was made of the dreaded *topic*. Instead, everyone was discussing and deciding what *skills* their students would need at this early stage of the year to reinforce those dealt with during the previous years and to build on that base. Perhaps, at this time, I should have retired, as a long-term goal I had set back in 1986 upon returning from Ken and Carol-Ann Haycock's series of workshops had been accomplished. However, after the jubilation had died down and the cries of 'We've done it!' no longer echoed around the library, I realised that, in fact, we could now *begin*.

As described in a previous *scan* article, ('The learner in control' vol 9 no 3 pp 26-29), we had abandoned the flexible scheduling concept as we had so many timetabled periods in the week that classes could really only come at certain times. Another major factor in our decision was that every class now wanted to use the library even more since the introduction of the holistic and genre approach to language. Where better to immerse the students in print and demonstrate the language process than in the library?

The realisation that information skills are essential in all aspects of the curriculum and the need for a planned approach to the daunting task facing young students of gathering, synthesising, internalising and reproducing information meant that people wanted to come to the library more frequently and for a longer period of time. At last the concept of projects being done at home had been abandoned!

In 1990, we extended the cooperative program planning and teaching (CPPT) approach to include the support teacher learning difficulties (STLD) and English as a second language (ESL) teachers as well as the class teachers and the teacher-librarian.

This venture was a great success. How much the students learnt! And, of greater significance was how much we teachers learnt about how very difficult and complex using information is for so many students, especially those with poor literacy and manipulative skills and short concentration spans. When working with groups of approximately 10 students, you also become aware of how adept they are at masking their inadequacies when working in larger groups.

Changes for 1991

At the end of 1990, after meeting with the principal, Eric Draper, to evaluate the program and decide on future directions, we determined to continue with this model and to extend the concept to more grades in 1991.

By now, we all had had considerable practice in the intricacies of making it all work and more people wanted to be involved in the 'whole grade' concept.

All students come to the library in grades rather than classes so that they can benefit from the expertise of the class teachers plus the teacher-librarian plus other specialist teachers where possible. The students are able to be divided into smaller-than-class-size rotating groups, which make use of a variety of media including computers.

Sessions range from one hour for kindergarten to three hours (2 afternoon lessons) for year 6. One of the year 6 sessions is for teacher demonstration and modelling and the teaching of specific skills; the other is for the students to work at their own rate in completing the more complex tasks expected at year 6 level.

Planning and programming

Previously, I had liaised with the staff at any odd moments we had spare as well as in planned sessions. The 'ladies' has been known to be used as a conference room before today. Many a lunch time was started with me sidling up to a colleague, and a very mumbled, 'crumbly' planning session ensued.

This year, however, with 20 teachers working at various times in the library, I felt the need to formalise these planning sessions. The wonderful thing now is that all the enthusiasm I previously had to generate and the 'selling' that I had to do are no longer necessary, as the impetus is coming from the staff. They are very supportive of the program and because they realise its benefits for them and their students they do not resent the time these planning sessions add to their very busy schedules.

We now indicate on the weekly bulletin sheet when we will meet as grades. These sessions do not take long because we have been working together on the process for years now and have all gained expertise. Specially designed planning sheets make the task even less onerous. Evaluation of each unit is built into the planning sheets, and that is always our starting point for the next unit of work.

What other members of the Mount Brown staff say about the school's information skills program

Eric Draper, principal: 'The information skills program, as part of our co-operative planning and teaching strategy, has been fully implemented throughout the school. The utilisation of school support staff was initiated as part of the program in 1990, and this organisation has grown and continued in 1991. The team approach has proved to be successful in ensuring that all students from K-6 gain maximum exposure to a variety of resources and skills. This organisation has my full support.'

Marlene Matthew, support teacher (learning difficulties), says this of the school's approach: 'Our extended team-teaching approach to library lessons is proving an excellent way for me, as the S.T.L.D., to focus on the targeted children within each grade. Classroom and specialist teachers tried two ways of organising the groups: mixed ability and like ability. I prefer the mixed-ability groups so that my targeted children are not isolated or seen to be, in any way, inferior to the others. Their self-esteem needs building up. I find that, in the mixed-ability groups, the positive examples of how to accomplish a task, provided by the majority of the group, encourages my special children and also allows me more time with them. While expectations for my targeted children are not as high as for the rest of the group, in regards to the amount accomplished, I find that they are able to stay on task and complete their activities. This is very satisfying to this group of children who usually find it difficult to complete their tasks.'

Sue Owen, relief from face to face (RFF) teacher, and Doreen worked closely together in 1990 when she was one of the year 3 teachers involved in the trial. Sue expressed this view: 'Working in a collaborative setting in the library enables me, as RFF teacher, to have an overall view of work being done within a grade. It is also beneficial in that the area I undertake is part of a whole range of skills and not an isolated area. I am also learning from the expertise of colleagues with whom I am working.'

(Editor's note: It is planned that a future issue of *scan* will carry an article on these and other examples of planning and programming proformas.)

Group organisation

Student groups are always organised on the basis of needs, and are not static. Assessment is ongoing. The composition of these groups is either random, integrated, free choice/friendship or ability/skill groups. The first two are our preferred options and only rarely do we use the last grouping. These collaborative groups are given a group goal, a group task, group accountability to resolve their own problems and a group reward and recognition (not individuals). The one thing we try to ensure is that there are students from across the grade in each group.

Depending on the skills being developed at the time, we may swap groups at 45 minute intervals during the hour and a half sessions or, if more complex tasks are being undertaken, we may keep the same group for the whole session and they move through the tasks over a period of weeks. Sometimes this involves a readjustment midstream when we find our predictions aren't accurate. With

close liaison between staff, this hasn't posed any problems. The ability of the students, the complexity of the task and the availability of resources all dictate the organisational strategies employed.

Safeguarding the information

In 1990, the major frustration we encountered was that, after working so hard the previous week with some students on notetaking, they would arrive at the library with the plaintive plea that they had lost the pages of their notes, and so the process had to begin again. With so many teachers and students involved in the process, we couldn't have this continual 'paper chase', which was equally soul-destroying for both student and teacher. We decided this year that all students from year 2 to year 6 would have an information skills book where all draft notes, activity sheets, computer printouts not used in published works, etc. are kept. We have set aside shelves in the library where each grade files these books (the whole 350 of them). They are taken back to the classroom temporarily to continue draft copies, or when publishing is in progress, but are always returned to the library.

What a difference this simple change has made! (My blood pressure has shown a marked improvement.) Students are taking much more care with their work, even though they are only draft copies and initial notes. This has been student generated and has not come from the teachers. We are finding conferencing and marking our segments of the work, as well as the assessing of each student's progress, so much easier. The support teachers also find this helps them monitor their targeted students and keep their student-profile sheets up to date.

Streamlining circulation

The only innovation in our circulation system this year is that all the grades from Year 2 to Year 6 are arranged on the mobile display boards in alphabetical order in *grades/years*, not classes. This

grade arrangement is particularly important for the self-esteem of students in the composite classes within our school as, with this system, they feel they belong to the whole grade.

Each student from year 1 to year 6 has two borrowing pockets, one on top of the other, with just the openings staggered. The back pocket is for their two home-borrowing cards, and the front for their literature-borrow cards. (Literature-borrow books remain in the classroom and are to encourage the students to 'read as writers'. They are shared by all and changed on a regular basis.) This step was taken to make the borrowing of books as self-directed as possible and to ease the queuing at the card-file boxes to find their literature-borrow card. At a glance you can see the books the students have out. The only cards filed are the bulk-borrow cards and the day-borrow cards.

Students from year 2 upwards do not change their books during their library session, but come throughout the day using their library passes. Six

passes are given to each class. Over the last five years, this system has been extremely successful, and is so established now that it just 'rolls on'.

This might seem like an inordinate amount of organisation but, if our information skills program is to run smoothly, all these routines need to be established and require no further demands on my time.

Partners in the process

One of the most gratifying results of the team approach is the often heard comment from teachers of how much they have learnt. The class teachers, support teachers and I tackle each of the varied skills involved in the information skills process. We are equal partners, with the class teachers now taking groups for location skills (eg, catalogue use,



shelf labels), while I may be conferencing another group. We are now becoming multi-skilled, not having to each wear our own little hats.

Over the past 12 months, most of our staff have taken advantage of the inservice courses offered on the South Coast. If we teacher-librarians are truly to be partners with the other staff in the learning process, then we must broaden our skill base as far as possible to ensure that the library is the centre of the school and involved with skills right across the curriculum. As teacher-librarians, we must have myriad skills, not just the traditionally perceived ones of cataloguing, shelving books and reading stories. Many of our consultants mention and show **Information skills in the school** as a component of their courses. I always see the work of consultants as a great way to spread the information skills perspective.

At Mount Brown, most of us are now comfortable and confident enough with CPPT to concentrate on refining our strategies. We have all attended worthwhile inservice courses including the CLUMP course (Continuing Literacy in Upper and Middle Primary) which introduced us to Beverly Derewaianka's work at Wollongong University in language learning. We have now adopted this model for the research and report writing aspects of our units. It takes a four phase approach to learning:

Phase 1 involves the teacher demonstrating and modelling to the whole class or, in our library situation, to our group. This involves 'talking our thought processes out loud' so the students can gain an understanding of the how and why. Over the last few years of working with small groups, we have all been astounded by how little some students comprehend of the task given to them. In this phase, the teacher is the expert and the scribe.

Phase 2 involves a joint-construction, where the teacher and the students 'pool' their ideas to write a report, etc. Here again, the teacher is usually the scribe.

Phase 3 is the 'scaffolding' stage, where the students work in groups supporting each other. This situation facilitates peer-tutoring, and must take place in mixed-ability groupings where there will be interaction. Here, the teacher is co-explorer, guide and supporter. The library certainly isn't a silent place, anymore, but a 'hive' of activity resounding with the hum of the 'worker bees'.

Phase 4 is implemented when the students are confident and competent. This is where the student works independently, with the student as the expert and the teacher as the editor and audience.

Reflection

At the conclusion of each unit, we bring all the groups together for a plenary session. This is when group rewards are made and recognition is given by the various teachers to the groups that have cooperated well, achieved high outcomes, etc.

The main thrust of this session, however, involves an oral adaptation of a 'reflection' strategy we were introduced to at CLUMPs: the learning journal. I had tried written journals with selected students in 1990, but found that it became a difficult technique to successfully use when there were so many students moving through the library in a relative short timespan.

During this reflection period, the students are asked to say:

- anything new that has been learnt
- any new understanding that came upon reflection of activities
- the resolutions of concerns and questions

What celebrations we have had! There have been marauding pirates on treasure hunts, teddy bears' picnics, Alison Lester's characters 'sipping spiders', a Knights' Banquet, kite flying, model boat races, seal hunts, gold rushes, etc., etc. How much more memorable and meaningful these activities have been to the students than a sheet of cardboard covered in meaningless, copied text, photocopied pictures and a 'fantastic' but time-consuming heading, all, sadly, often bearing the stamp of approval: '19/20'.

Building the foundations

In our primary grades, now, we are just reaping the rewards of the CPPT program which has been operating at various levels over the last five years. With the students beginning the process from the first term of kindergarten, as each year passes, our primary grades will have a much stronger base of skills on which to build.

At Mount Brown, the end of week 6, 1991, has seen kindergarten students accomplishing the following:

- alphabetising their names (initial letter of given name) and sticking them onto their

- pocket on the borrowing display board
- knowing where to choose a book from and how to handle it
- recognising their own pocket and swapping their cards to borrow independently (with both the teacher and myself encouraging and supervising the procedure)
- being 'immersed' in the language of books and introduced to the concepts of author, illustrator, title page and wrap-around cover (some students are using these terms with understanding)
- mastering the concept of characters.

We read the story **Good morning, Chick** and discussed the characters in the story, identifying the main character. This character was then drawn, showing the detail that enabled us to know that it was, in fact, a chick and not a duckling. Purple, polka-dotted chicks are certainly acceptable in visual arts but, when we want the students to gain factual information from print and illustrations, it should be a true representation of that character.

The next step was to identify the main character plus other characters in **Little koala**. Much discussion ensued after the reading of the story as to the special structures of each animal the koala would have to paint so that we could readily identify which animal it was. The students then were given the task of, firstly, drawing the main character (koala) and then choosing one of the other characters to draw, clearly showing those structures identified during the previous discussion. (We were amazed at the results. This certainly deserved a 'celebration'.)

The next story treated was **The red spot**. The students had to draw the main character, this time with no discussion, so we could assess if they really had grasped the concept. All drew a great red spot. Then the task was to turn the main character (the red spot) into one of the other characters (eg, the red eye of a fish, a red balloon, a flower). Once again, the results were delightful and the students were pleased with their efforts. The basic skills of listening, discussing and observing to gain information are being established.

A final word

I seem to have placed much emphasis on the organisational, teaching and assessing strategies in our 'plan of attack' at Mount Brown, and I'm fearful that, perhaps, you might think we have an assembly-line approach to activities in the library. Far from it!

The philosophy that dictates all our strategies is aptly expressed by Gwen Gawith in **Library alive!**

Any lesson which does not add to the pupils' growing impression that the library is a friendly, interesting place, with ways and means of finding just what she/he wants to read, and people willing to help her/him do this, is better not given, however true and valuable and intrinsic the content. (1983 p 2)

And by Terry Johnson and Daphne Louise Johnson in **Literacy through literature**

If, in the real world, reading, writing, speaking and listening are highly integrated activities, then the literacy activities that take place in our classrooms should be similarly integrated. As teachers, we should ensure that the student's world includes a wealth of the richest and most evocative language. Such language does not come from syllable counts, work books, reading programs and teaching manuals, but from writers, dreamers and poets. (1985 p 176)

Reaching a long-term goal has signalled an exciting beginning at Mount Brown. We're celebrating!

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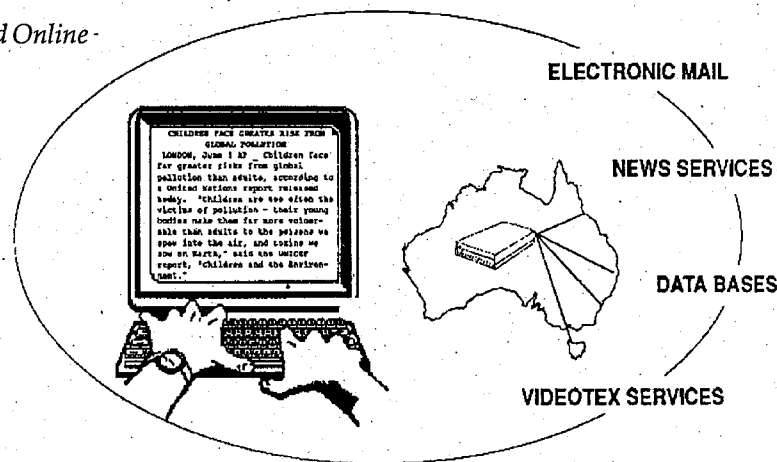
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< **Online services for schools**

Vicki Lowery is a Senior Education Officer, Keylink and Online Information, Management Information Services.

'People who are aware of information sources and services ... have the basis for a better quality of life than those who are unable to pursue their information needs.'

Information skills in the school 1989 Sydney: NSW Department of School Education p 1.



Among teachers there is an increased awareness of the huge amount of information now accessible by using a computer, a modem and a telephone line.

This information is available through a range of online services such as electronic mail, databases on curriculum support materials, news wire services, statistical information services and even access to the Bible (King James version) online.

For many the use of telecommunications technology is still a little bewildering. Let's try to demistify this.

What equipment do you need?**Computer**

Any computer on the School Microcomputer Contract is suitable.

Modem

The modem is a "black box" which is connected by cables to the computer and the telephone network. The modem decodes the signal from the computer to the telephone network and back again. In other words it MODulates and DEModulates the signal — thus giving us the word MODEM.

Communications software

This enables you to communicate with the remote service, (or host, or online service) that you connect to. The manual which comes with your software package will have instructions on how to set up your communications software. However if you need further help, contact your Regional Computer Education Consultant or Vicki Lowery.

Word processing software

This enables you to prepare messages before you go online and to read captured messages after you have completed your online session, saving you online time and therefore money — word processing software is very important.

Telephone line

The line can either be a line through your school switchboard or a direct line.

Printer

This is optional unless you need a printed copy of your messages.

Registration with the online service you wish to use.

Once you have purchased and set up your equipment you can access almost any service you choose.

Advantages of online use

Most online services are aimed at the commercial rather than the educational market. The reasons for this are not difficult to work out. Commercial organisations are better able to afford the cost of such services than are education users. However service providers are slowly beginning to realise that education is also a market to be reckoned with. After all students are the next generation of online users.

The service which the NSW Department of School Education supports and encourages all schools to use is Keylink electronic mail. Electronic mail has many advantages such as being able to:

- Send and receive messages at the time you select (unlike the telephone which, in the school situation, is usually not convenient for the teacher receiving the call).
- Access messages at home, school or anywhere there is the appropriate equipment.
- Offer you a communication network with your colleagues across New South Wales.
- Provide your students with a wide audience for their writing and data gathering.

Another service which is attracting a great deal of interest is the AAP (Australian Associated Press) news wire service. Accessing AAP online means that teachers and students can search Australian and overseas news dating back at least 4 weeks. News reports on AAP are unpublished news which are available for publication in newspapers around the country.

Balgowlah Boys High School makes great use of AAP online. Teacher-librarian Alison Glasscock encourages use of information services in her library program. In year 10, history and geography are targeted to ensure that all students in the year have a good grounding in information skills. As history and geography in year 10 include topics such as the Cold War and international relations, students can be sure to find a great deal of information on AAP which is applicable to their research.

Alison cooperatively teaches with, among others, John Fairburn, head teacher history. They assist the students with their news searches to complement their history research. Both Alison and John have spent time emphasising the importance of information skills and the need to plan a search carefully. Their students enjoy using AAP and have searched topics such as the Gulf War, the Cold War and the current situation in the Baltic States.

The students realise that through the unpublished news on AAP, they have access to a much wider range of information than is generally available in the published media. In addition, the database searching capabilities available to the online user make it quicker and easier to retrieve specific information on a given topic, rather than to search through many issues of printed newspapers.

PressCom offers schools a service which is complementary to AAP as PressCom provides access to the news published in the Adelaide Advertiser, The Melbourne-Sun and the Tasmanian Mercury.

Online Services for Education

These are only a few of the services which you as a teacher may want to access in your school. The Computer Education Unit has recently published a document called **Online services for education** (CEU105) which gives details of 12 online services covering the range of electronic mail, curriculum support, news, online databases, computer conferencing services and videotext services. A sample of the information available, costs and contact addresses are included for each service.

In addition two sample curriculum projects are included as well as a section on database skills. This section includes information on structured field searching, free text searching and searching using Boolean operators.

Online Services for Education (CEU105) is available from Resource Services Private Bag 3 Ryde 2112 for \$8 (\$10 to non-government schools).❖

< Meeting the NCIN challenge in Met South West

Virginia Elliott is the Research and Evaluation Consultant in Metropolitan South West Region. Part of her role is NCIN coordination in the region.

In a period of rapid educational change, how do you convince colleagues that the NSW Curriculum Information Network (NCIN) has value for them? Principals, teachers, schools and regional personnel are all trying to cope with administrative, curriculum and organisational change — a seemingly endless task. The best way to support individuals or organisations undergoing change is to provide them with practical strategies which make tasks easier to handle, save time or provide relevant information. Information and the skills to use it empower people to cope with change.

How does NCIN do this? The database provides two important tools:

- 1) a large collection of curriculum information relevant to educational personnel at school, regional and statewide levels.
- 2) a powerful search mechanism which saves valuable time when and where it is most needed — in the workplace.

As NCIN coordinator in Metropolitan South West Region, I am working to publicise the database and raise awareness of its value both in schools and at the regional level. In meeting this challenge our region has developed a three-pronged plan for promoting NCIN:

- **Staff development for teacher-librarians**
Teacher-librarians are often the first port of call for teachers seeking curriculum information. They need to be familiar with NCIN and skilled in searching the database. We are trying to increase the number of schools who use NCIN either online or via microfiche, and upgrade teacher-librarians' searching capabilities. We are assisted in this by a strong regional network and an excellent newsletter, *Infonet*.
- **Whole school staff development**
At many School Development Days, one or more sessions are being set aside for an introduction to, discussion of and hands on experience with NCIN. At these sessions, learning is facilitated by regional or state coordinators or by members of the regional school library network.

- **General advertising and promotion**
Spreading the word through general staff development activities, consultancy visits, the regional bulletin and journal brings NCIN into the educational workplace, with the aim of making it well known and better understood.

Any new strategy which will impress teachers needs to be **relevant and immediately useful**, not just another good idea. As word about the obvious benefits of NCIN travels through the region, my job is getting easier. Nothing succeeds like immediate solutions to a teacher's planning, resourcing or teaching needs. The staff at one high school in our region will remember the legal studies teacher desperate for a program for the new 2-unit course. At a School Development Day he was sceptical about how a session on NCIN would help him prepare for the more practical tasks he faced daily. His scepticism soon vanished when the State NCIN Coordinator showed him sample programs for legal studies then and there!

Enthusiastic discoveries which result from seeing the NCIN database online frequently lead to great enthusiasm for online access at the school. Some principals, however, need more to convince them that NCIN provides value for money. A cost-benefit study will assist the school to make the best decisions regarding resources which most suit their needs and priorities. Because some schools will need hardware, software and/or a telephone line to the school library, the necessary expenditure may be large enough to require considerable thought and so the advantages of online access must be readily evident. As schools acquire the OASIS Library package, expenditure will be less because online searching is available through this software.

However, one primary principal I know needs no further proof of NCIN's value. Organising committees to write school policies for maths, environmental education and the new visual arts syllabus looked like a daunting task. A simple request to me, as regional NCIN coordinator, resulted in an online search. Twenty minutes later the principal was provided with information about fifteen school-based programs from across the state. Further information on where to obtain these programs meant that six days later he had copies of the programs from the Inservice Education Library to hand out to committee members at their first meeting. Nothing succeeds like success!

Convincing regional personnel about the power of NCIN is a little harder. While we have one online search facility for regional personnel, and many know the term well enough, there is still some confusion about what NCIN can do for them. The database is a lot more than school-based documents. It is a valuable source of policy documents, kits and support materials for all levels of staff development. It facilitates access to otherwise difficult to obtain curriculum documents. One strategy we are trying to implement is the provision of online searching at each Education Resource Centre (ERC) in the region.

A tempting taste of things to come is provided by the *Project in Progress* aspect of NCIN. When I spoke recently to cluster directors you could almost hear them thinking 'Oh no, not NCIN again!' However there was immediate interest when, after a quick search on 'ERC', a fascinating project was discovered in Met East Region giving contacts for setting up shopfronts and the management of ERCs. Suddenly the cluster directors were all ears and

many of them requested details of the project to assist their own planning about the directions ERCs could take. Such ready access to current information sells NCIN effectively.

But the job is far from over. There are still many schools and educators to win around to the notion that NCIN is something they need to use. I know we're succeeding when I find parcels of school developed documents on my desk. These schools know that sharing is a two-way street. The database's strength lies in its shared resources and its currency.

What does the future hold? I plan to keep selling the idea, talking about it to anyone who will listen and exploring every avenue to increase the number of educational personnel who depend on NCIN. Like all things it will take time, but NCIN is one of our most practical support mechanisms for teachers, schools and regions as they prepare the students of NSW for the 21st century. ♦

< ASCIS curriculum information services

Ann Parry is Leader, Curriculum Resources Information. Nigel Paull is State NCIN coordinator.

The ASCIS database is a rich source of information about curriculum resources, especially created for Australian schools. It contains the wealth of the NCIN/ACIN subsets, the Computer Software Review subset, fiction reviews - and much more. It provides access to resources to help in policy development, curriculum implementation and collection development.

Learning to search

Searching the ASCIS database is extremely easy. If you possess some basic computer awareness you can begin to do your own searches and find valuable ideas. If you practise you will discover a host of ingenious ways to refine searches and home in on exactly the materials you need.

ASCIS/NCIN online training sessions

If you have not used the ASCIS database online, or have just started, Curriculum Resources Information will be running training sessions on the last Tuesday of each month. Sessions will be held between 4.00 - 5.30 p.m. at Curriculum Resources Information, Level 2 Block B, Smalls Rd Ryde. Groups will be limited in size so please ring Nigel Paull on (02) 808 9466 to confirm your place.

Want someone else to search?

Riverwood Education Resource Centre (ERC) is now offering online searches of NCIN/ACIN for both state and non state schools for a minimal cost-recovery fee. Contact Jenny Liessmann on 584 1546, fax: 534 6955. Several other ERCs are also planning to offer this service in the near future.

The Inservice Education Library offers online NCIN/ACIN searches for members. NCIN resources are available for borrowing by members also. Contact Greg Deane at the IEL on (02) 808 9503.

Searching strategies

It helps if searchers, especially those seeking to retrieve information through the free text search capability of the 'Abstracts', are aware of the conventions observed by the database makers. The most important convention, observed nationally by ASCIS database builders, is that used to define the level of the materials. The following terms are seen as having general usefulness:

preschool
lower primary
middle primary
upper primary
lower secondary
middle secondary
upper secondary

The level is an important key in limiting searches. For this reason the two words defining a level are linked as one term for storage and retrieval.

The use of linked terms on the database is not as common as it once was. Until 1990, NSW used several linked terms in NCIN abstracts thinking we were helping to facilitate retrieval. (See *scan* vol 9 no 3 June 1990). At the end of 1990 a review of practice alerted us to the fact that we could be creating difficulties for searchers so we determined to stop. From now on NSW entries will limit the linked terms to those defining key search terms such as the levels described above.

NCIN subscriptions

It's not too late to subscribe to NCIN either online or utilising microfiche. If you need a 1991 subscription form please ring NCIN on (02) 808 9466.

NCIN poster

If your 1991 NCIN poster has been souvenired by enthusiastic staff members, additional copies of the poster are available from NCIN.

New NCIN resources

Resources recently added to the database include:

Kindergarten guidelines (Shalvey P.S.)
K-6 music curriculum (Shalvey P.S.)
Student welfare policy (Woy Woy Public School)
Senior curriculum handbook 1991 (Ashcroft H.S.)
Library policy & procedures (Wyrallah Rd P.S.)
School library resource centre policy and procedures (Rockdale P.S.)
Streamwatch (Water Board)
Assessing K-8 maths (Met East Region DSP)
2 Unit legal studies (Mudgee H.S.)
Ideas and lessons for casual teachers (Met East Region DSP)
Research of study method techniques at Staying on schools (Met West Region)
1991 wilderness calendar (Holsworthy H.S.)
Adding a multicultural perspective to social studies (Willoughby P.S.)
Appleworks spreadsheet. Help for teachers (Greenacre P.S.)
Our Environment - Planning for today and tomorrow (Dept of Planning)

If you require more information on these new items please contact NCIN on (02) 808 9466. ♦

management

Of camels and horses: collection development in school libraries

Liz Bowring is teacher-librarian at Kingsgrove North High School. This article is based on a talk she recently gave at the Annual General Meeting of the Children's and Youth Services Section (NSW Group) of the Australian Library and Information Association.

Your school library is one of a kind, tailored to fit your school.

Collection development is the process by which libraries acquire and maintain the best selection of resources to meet their aims. It involves evaluation, selection, acquisition, monitoring and discarding. Most importantly it is purpose driven, that is, collection development is the process librarians use to ensure that the collection fulfils the purpose of the library. As a result a school library is a very different beast to a public or university library.

There is an old adage that a camel is a horse designed by a committee. When I think of collection development in school libraries it occurs to me that if public libraries were horses, school libraries would be camels. You may think this strange, but bear with me in this contemplation on how we develop our collections, as I hope to show you why I think this way. Viewed in this way, your collection development policy may need a re-vamp. Mine did.

One hump or two?

What is the purpose of a school library? Returning to the previous analogy school libraries would be Bactrian camels, possessing 2 'humps', or in other words, 'roles' as defined by *Libraries in New South Wales government schools policy statement 1987* which sets them apart from the other library animals. These roles are to 'assist in the learning process by providing services, personnel, materials and equipment and an information system . . . for the planning and implementing of the teaching program of the school', and to be 'a recreational and reference centre for the students and teachers' (p 1). It is on the materials and equipment, of course, that collection development focuses.

Clearly this means school libraries will have 'bulges' in certain places, with sections of their collections specifically expanded to meet the local curriculum needs of the school. There will also be subject areas somewhat depleted of resources, areas which are not currently taught nor planned to be included in the teaching/learning program of the school and are not of recreational interest to the library's users.

Also apparent is that these animals will not provide a comprehensive collection, such as one would find at one of those horses, the public library. Nor are they archival collections, although they may contain such as a specific purpose collection as fits their school needs. One would not expect to walk into a 100 year old school library and be able to trace the history of curriculum development in that school just by browsing the shelves.

Page 2 of the policy gives clear directions as to the process by which this collection development is to be achieved. The italicised words which follow come from this page. *The purpose of the school library is to enhance teaching and the student's learning within the total program of the school by:*

Negotiation

* *involvement in the selection, acquisition, and organisation of materials to support the school curriculum*

School libraries are often developed by a committee lead by the teacher-librarian. He or she must, at a minimum, involve the class teachers in the selection of resources.

Evaluation

* *ensuring that resources in the library are consistent with Government policies relating to equality of opportunity*

This professional responsibility is aided by the use of selection aids such as *scan*.

Teaching of information skills

* *cooperating with teachers in the planning, implementing and evaluating of teaching/learning program*

This will impact on the resources selected and retained in the collection. They will need to be effective for use by students developing confidence in their information skills. A school library may collect widely on a particular topic to enable all members of a class to have a number of resources to refer to, while other subjects are not addressed.

Stimulation of readers

* *providing experiences to stimulate reading and develop in students a desire to read*

Consider the range of students in the school and the type of resources that will motivate each individual to read. A resource may contain valuable information but is not useful if it does not motivate the students to read it.

Recreational

* *promoting the social and recreational development of students*

The school library will also provide its users with resources in their areas of recreational interest.

Networks

* *extending the resources available to each school through co-operation with other schools, libraries and the community*

Teacher-librarians should be aware of the subject specialisation of their public libraries and any accessible special libraries which can enrich their students learning experiences.

Ships of the desert

Or, how to keep going when conditions are tough. Like camels going without water for an extended period of time, school libraries may exist with limited resources. Often funding is poor or comes infrequently, staffing is sparse, or space for storing resources is limited. This is even more reason for effective collection development. Time, money and effort cannot be wasted on items that will not be used.

As the policy suggests, 'the school's selection and purchasing policy must be developed and implemented co-operatively to ensure the relevance of the materials to the school's educational program.' (p 5) When this is done, best use is made of those scarce resources.

The nature of the beast

Or, identifying the needs of the school. The first step in collection development is knowing the educational program of the school. This is more than the subjects taught, the particular units emphasised and the topics developed in depth. It is also an understanding of the mission statement of the school, its aims, objectives and goals. It is also a knowledge of the cultural identity of the community and its philosophical approach to education. It should also recognise other resource collections to which students and staff have access.

Charting the desert

Or, addressing the issues. A sound collection development policy will provide answers to questions like these.

- Are resources available to ensure effective information skills development and to facilitate co-operative planning and teaching?
- Are the resources of appropriate levels of difficulty, as suited to your primary or secondary school? Are all resources accessible to students with learning difficulties or to the less academic students now staying on in years 11 and 12?
- When do you collect curriculum resources for teachers rather than for students?
- How long do you keep Department of School Education publications?
- Do you collect paperback or hardcover books?
- Are you collecting 'a wide variety of forms suited to learning processes.'?
- Do you acquire text books and study guides?
- In which languages do you collect?

- Should you collect duplicates of popular materials?
- When should you discard a resource?

Taming the beast

Or, suggestions for constructing a collection development policy. A really useful collection development policy should:

- state objectives of the school and how the library fits in.
- set priorities and methods for evaluation, selection and removal of resources, with consideration of content and format
- define the scope of the collection in relation to the school's curriculum and students' recreational interests
- assist with budget allocation especially when priorities are evaluated annually.
- establish a clear position which assists with

negotiations with administration or challenges related to censorship.

- facilitate staff involvement as advised in the Library Policy
- be a professional record of decision making
- indicate available opportunities for inter-library cooperation
- be a basis for future planning.

Meanwhile at the oasis...

With all school libraries facing the mammoth task of converting collections to OASIS Library, there is even greater urgency to establish and activate effective collection development policies and practices. Your school library will be one of a kind, tailored to fit your school. To some people a camel can be funny looking creature, particularly if they were expecting a horse. They are, however, perfectly designed for their environment and they do a job that horses would find quite impossible. ❖

△ ASCIS cataloguing services

Ann Parry is Leader, Curriculum Resources Information.

Classification changeover

Abridged Dewey Decimal Classification and Relative Index 12th ed. Albany, N.Y. : Forest Press, 1990 ISBN 0910608423

Early in Term 2 1991 the ASCIS database will adopt the **Abridged Dewey Decimal Classification and Relative Index 12th ed. (ADDC 12)** as its standard for abridged classification. As I write this notice for *scan* ASCIS cataloguing agencies are studying ADDC 12 preparatory to implementing the change.

The change will manifest itself in two ways: all new records will be assigned ADDC 12 numbers and then, progressively, all old records will have their ADDC 11 numbers converted to ADDC 12 numbers.

There are a number of reasons for welcoming this new abridged edition of Dewey. The most valuable new feature is the Manual which is included to assist users. 'The Manual described policies and practices of the Decimal Classification Division of the Library of Congress, offers advice on classifying in difficult areas, and explains how to choose between related numbers. It should help classifiers resolve problems and apply the DDC with greater consistency.' (ADDC 12 p.1)

Another welcome change is the inclusion of the revised 004-006 schedule for data processing and computer

science to replace the old 001.6 classes. The 780 class has undergone a complete revision and several significant but smaller adjustments have been made at various points in the Tables, Schedules and Index.

For those of us in the ASCIS cataloguing teams the change will be relatively painless because we have been using big brother DDC 20 for over a year now, but NSW teacher-librarians are facing the once-in-a-decade decisions which accompany the adoption of a new edition of Dewey.

In broad terms the Curriculum Resources Information team advice to Departmental schools using ASCIS cataloguing services is unchanged:

1. Primary schools are advised to use abridged classification for all materials.
2. Secondary schools are advised to use abridged classification too but they may need to use DDC 20 classification for literature if the existing collection makes use of period numbers in the 800 classes. If teacher-librarians decide to use DDC 20 for literature they will need to prepare separate ASCIS orders which specify full classification. To balance orders some people include fiction in such literature orders for the obvious reason that F is the same for full and abridged classification.

To this advice we would add one specific note of caution for 1991. If you are using the current microfiche catalogue to search for ASCIS order numbers you will need to proceed cautiously: copy cataloguing could mean copying a now obsolete number. If you have been in the habit of assigning call numbers at the same time as you order catalogue cards (or m.r.r.) you may need to be selective about doing so and avoid the practice with those categories of materials most likely to be affected by change. Once the Curriculum Corporation staff begins the process of retrospective conversion of ADDC 11 numbers to ADDC 12 numbers the main microfiche (January cumulation) will cease to be a completely accurate reflection of the database.

Here are some of the obvious questions being asked about the classification changeover:

- Q:** Should I adopt ADDC 12 in my library?
A: Yes. The only economical approach to cataloguing and classification tasks in school libraries in the 1990s is to use ASCIS cataloguing services. It is not good sense to try to hang on to the old ADDC 11 numbers for new materials. ASCIS will not be supplying ADDC 11 numbers for new materials and will convert old records retrospectively. There is no point in postponing the inevitable.
- Q:** Will the Department be issuing copies of ADDC 12 to schools as it did with ADDC 11 in 1980?
A: No. The Curriculum Resources Information team which manages the Department's cataloguing services has no plan to purchase Dewey on behalf of schools and no region has indicated an interest in doing so.
- Q:** Should I purchase a copy of ADDC 12?
A: Probably. If you are using ASCIS services and have a very high hit rate of 90+% and your marginal materials are not complex you may be able to cope without owning your own ADDC 12. Larger schools where the marginal cataloguing may involve large numbers of items will certainly need to buy a copy. Smaller schools may choose to delay purchase and test the need.
- Q:** Where can I purchase a copy of ADDC 12?
A: The publisher's agent in Australia is DA Books and Journals Pty Ltd 648 Whitehorse Road Mitcham Vic 3132. Your regular bookseller should be able to process an order for you. The current rrp is \$97.50 but price varies with the exchange rate. DA Books and Journals have advised that if schools prepay with an order they will supply single copies for \$95.00 including postage. For orders of 10 or 100 copies modest discounts are available. If you

wish to discuss bulk orders you should speak to the DA Sales Manager, John Vankeulen (toll free tel: 008 338863).

- Q:** Should I reclassify items already in the library so that all materials on the topic will be together?
A: No, no, no! Life is too short and there are more important tasks to do. Do provide your users with signposts to provide the necessary links. 'See also' messages on shelf labels or dummy books are a tried and true method. In time the old materials will be withdrawn or discarded and replacements will join the new group. ❖

△ OASIS Library prep

OASIS Library prep is a document designed to assist schools to prepare for and manage the automation of the school library using OASIS Library. The initial emphasis of this document was to assist schools to prepare for OASIS before receiving the system.

During 1990 OASIS Library prep was revised and extended in concept to become a management issues document which not only assists teacher-librarians in preparing to receive OASIS Library but also in preparing to use each individual module of OASIS Library over the full process of implementation in the school.

The document is now presented in an A4 binder divided into sections. Section 1 deals with preparing for the arrival of the system and entering bibliographic data. Section 2 deals with preparing for circulation. Section 3 deals with the Acquisitions Module of OASIS Library. Sections 4 and 5, Reports and Periodicals, will be added at a later date.

Distribution of the revised OASIS Library prep will occur in two ways. First, each region has been sent sufficient copies to supply their expected number of OASIS Library installations for 1991. Once schools have been informed that they will be installed with OASIS Library during 1991 the teacher-librarian should contact their Regional Computer Officer or their Regional OASIS Library Training and Support Officer to obtain a copy of OASIS Library prep.

Secondly, the School Administration Project, Management Information Services will distribute the new OASIS Library prep by mail to all NSW government schools which have already installed with OASIS Library, beginning with those which installed it in 1990. ❖

resources

■ Poetry K-12

To expedite retrieval of materials listed, this bibliography has been divided into 2 sections, K-6 and 7-12. The bibliography should, however be read as a whole, since there is an overlap of many of the items. All books are listed alphabetically by title.

K-6

BLAKE, Quentin *All join in*. Cape, 1990
 ISBN 0-224-02770-0 [821]

Boisterous, rollicking fun abounds as children all join in - with noise, antics, animals and family merriment. Share aloud and invite young listeners to join in too. The rhyming text is well-organised with capitalised sounds cuing audience participation. Colour illustrations, rendered in identifiable Blake style, teem with interesting detail for independent poring. The result is an exuberant offering which provides enjoyment, humour and fun with sounds. B. Mitchell
 LEV: Preschool Lower primary
 AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 648973

BRADMAN, Tony *All together now!* Penguin, 1990
 ISBN 0140325999 [821]

Although not all of the poems are outstanding, the original metaphors that Bradman uses in some of his poems make this a good starting point for teachers who are trying to elicit some poetic language from their young students. The themes of the poems centre on the experiences that are likely to be common to all children. It is also gratifying to be able to say that the poems are positive in their approach and have warmth and humanity. Julie Park's illustrations complement the text and portray the protagonists as coming from a variety of backgrounds. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 ASCIS 654223

The animal fair / compiled by Jill Bennett. Viking, 1990
 ISBN 067082691X [821.008]

The picture book format, large print and style of illustration all suggest that this is a book for very young children. Young children do, however, deserve better than the bland verse and dull and stale perspectives that constitute most of the offerings in this collection. The illustrations are pleasant but they cannot redeem poems that offer nothing new and that give the impression that the essential ingredient of poetry is the placement of rhyming words at the end of every second line or so. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Lower primary
 AVAIL: \$22.99 ASCIS 655073

DENNIS, C.J. *The ant explorer*. Lothian, 1990
 ISBN 0850913799 [821]

Vaughan Duck has given C.J. Dennis's classic poem an update in this appealing picture book. Gone are the paddocks, rocks and deserts of the country to be replaced with the trials and tribulations of a journey from a pot plant on the verandah to the vast expanse of the tiled kitchen floor. The little sugar ant must face the vagaries of marbles, drainage pipes, steps and doormats on his journey. Small humorous details to be found in the illustrations invite the attention of the reader.

M. Ellis
 LEV: Lower primary
 AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 620462

Cat poems / selected by Myra Cohn Livingston. Oxford University Press, 1989
 ISBN 0192760815 [821.008]

This is a collection of poems for unashamed cat lovers; even when the cat gets his bird, the poet's loyalty is with the hunter. All sorts of cats provide the subject matter, from alley cats to soft and furry house cats to T.S. Eliot's Jellicle cats and the standard of poetry is uniformly commendable. The picture book format and the presentation is most attractive and Trina Schart Hyman's black-and-white illustrations capture the changing mood of each turn of page. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 ASCIS 636287

BEISNER, Monika *Catch that cat: a picture book of rhymes and puzzles*. Faber, 1990
 ISBN 0571141706 [821]

Cat rhymes, cat puzzles and cat illustrations make up this picture book. The rhymes are unexceptional, the puzzles are challenging for the very young child and the illustrations are pleasant. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Pre-school Lower primary
 AVAIL: \$18.00 ASCIS 667468

WELD, Ann *Christmas crackers*. Omnibus, 1990
 ISBN 1-86291-049-9 [821]

All the poems in this anthology relate to Christmas in Australia. The celebrations described are

predominantly bush or beach Christmases interspersed with some cautionary messages for greedy children and some traditional reminders of the meaning of Christmas. Contributors include Max Fatchen, Colin Thiele, Michael Dugan and Sally Farrell Odgers. Poems are listed by title on a contents page and indexes, by author and first lines, are included at the back. Katharine Stafford's drawings convey zest or reverence depending on the mood of the poem. B. Mitchell
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: Paper \$6.99 ASCIS 639745

Dancing teepees: poems of American Indian youth / selected by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve. Oxford University Press, 1989
 ISBN 0192798812 [811.008]

North American Indians relied solely on the sacred spoken word to pass down their literary traditions. The selections in this outstanding book include poetry handed down through the generations as well as that from contemporary poets. The presentation of the book alone would make it worth buying: Stephen Gammell's art which is varied in its media, is exquisite and stands alone. The poetry it complements is, however, worthy of such depiction; it is delicate, beautiful and evocative of a culture which treasures words, and which shows strong identification with the elements and nature. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 665098



SIDNEY, Paul The dinosaur diner and other poems. Piccadilly, 1990
 ISBN 1853400955 [821]

The perennial subject for theme work is dinosaurs and therefore a poetry book centred on a wide variety of real dinosaurs should be a welcome addition to the year 1 teacher's resources. These poems, however, are trammelled by lines which scan badly and rhyme in a very contrived fashion. This is unfortunate because the periphery of the volume is excellent: footnotes to explain pronunciation, a useful glossary as well as interesting perspectives on the theme. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
 AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 655000

BURGESS, Mark Feeling beastly: funny verse to read aloud. Mammoth, 1990
 ISBN 074970277X [821]

Animals from wasps and cows to dinosaurs provide the subject matter for this collection of mildly amusing poems. The short poems, many of which have an unexpected twist, are accompanied by gently humorous black and white illustrations. M. Ellis
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: Paper \$5.95 ASCIS 650306

Fractured fairytales & ruptured rhymes / compiled by Ann Weld. Omnibus, 1990
 ISBN 0140344020 [821.008]

Enjoy the delightful sense of fun permeating this collection of comic, cautionary and macabre parodies of traditional rhymes and tales. Craig Smith's illustrations enhance the appeal of the succinct, witty compositions contributed by well-known writers, including Robin Klein, Colin Thiele, Bill Scott, Michael Dugan and Max Fatchen. The collection is indexed by author and by poem title. Responses will vary from out loud chuckles to "Hey, listen to this one!" Share the pleasure of playing with our language and its heritage. B. Mitchell
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: Paper \$6.99 ASCIS 616133

Headlines from the jungle / edited by Anne Harvey and Virginia McKenna. Viking, 1990
 ISBN 0670829048 [821.008]

There is a pervasive sadness about this book which consists of poems about the impact of humans on other animals, from destruction of habitats to exploitation. Although many well-known and respected poets are represented, the collection is uneven in quality so that the outrage that could and should be felt is dulled. The index is by first lines only; there is of course a table of contents. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
 AVAIL: \$19.99 ASCIS 654221

The Hippo book of hilarious poetry / compiled by Terry Deary. Scholastic, 1989
 ISBN 0590761315 [808.81]

With a distinguished list of contributors that includes Roald Dahl, Pam Ayres, Hilaire Belloc and Max Fatchen and a table of contents showing headings like That's funny, ... horrible, ... incredible, ... silly, ... nasty, ... rude, ... ridiculous, this is a collection that is certain to be a success with children. The poems are eminently

amusing and are enhanced by Stuart Trotter's simple but effective line drawings. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: Paper \$3.95 ASCIS 620901

EDWARDS, Richard If only. Viking Kestrel, 1990
 ISBN 067082550X [821]

The narrator in this collection is daydreaming about the occupations he or she would like to pursue. The 29 individual poems, about being shipwrecked, an astronomer, a castaway, a barber and so on are effectively all 8-line stanzas of one long poem. Alison Claire Darke's illustrations fill the occupations with girls and boys at (apparent) random and there is also a smattering of non-Anglo Saxon architects and acrobats. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 639549

McGOUGH, Roger An imaginary menagerie. Penguin, 1990
 ISBN 0140327908 [821]

Badgers and goodgers live in the forest; alligators will let you ride on their backs, but they eat you at the top: a cat pillow is a useful pet. So says Roger McGough in this collection of poems which use (mostly) real animals as fodder for clever word games and droll verse. Children will undoubtedly enjoy the zany nature of the collection, including a couple with a risqué tinge. Tony Blundell's black-and-white illustrations effectively illuminate the text. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 ASCIS 629448

WILSON, Gina Jim-Jam pyjamas. Cape, 1990
 ISBN 0-224-02676-3 [821.914]

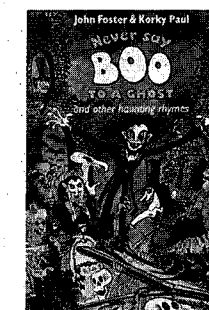
A menagerie awaits within the attractive covers of this appealing anthology by Gina Wilson. Ranging from realistic to fanciful responses, the poet uses a variety of styles to describe the animals. The tone of the poetry is one of admiration and respect for the animal subjects with some delightful description. The play with words in 'Water sport' to describe the antics of a seal is both clever and apt. A reflective tribute to a beloved dog in 'Old pal' is touching and simple. Sally Anne Lambert's soft line drawings suitably partner the poems.

B. Mitchell
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 627627

Let's celebrate / compiled by John Foster. Oxford University Press, 1989
 ISBN 0192760858 [808.81]

This is a valuable little book for teachers in our pluralist culture. It works its way from January to December, providing poems for celebrations or events as diverse as the birthday of Buddha, the city to surf fun run and Palm Sunday. Each poem or collection of poems, is accompanied by a note explaining the theme. It is unfortunate that, although there is Australian representation (notably Max Fatchen and Robin Klein), the orientation of the book is generally northern hemisphere with Christmas coinciding with winter, and midsummer's eve in June. The presentation is very attractive. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: Paper \$13.50 ASCIS 638028

Never say boo to a ghost and other haunting rhymes / chosen by John Foster. Oxford University Press, 1990
 ISBN 0192760890 [821.008]



Don't be under the misapprehension that these poems are confined in theme or in style. They range from zombie horrors to humerus (sic) tales, and from single 4-line traditional stanzas to blank verse. The title and the cover, filled with Draculas, skulls and tombstones will ensure that children take this off the shelf.

The good thing is that beyond the cover the reader will find poems that are not only fun to read but are also worth reading. There is an index of first lines and titles. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: Paper \$10.50 ASCIS 665012

Noisy poems / collected by Jill Bennett. Oxford University Press, 1989
 ISBN 01927821993 [821]

Most children enjoy reciting poetry, especially that which is full of onomatopoeia. This slender collection will provide teachers and students with the material for lots of fun recitation, with poems about musical ensembles, weather, animals, transport, food and machines. Nick Sharratt's illustrations have a noisy resonance of their own, making a pleasant addition to the text. Even the endpapers are covered with 'noisy' words, providing not only some useful vocabulary for creative writing but an idea for publishing it. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: Paper \$8.95 ASCIS 639401

JAKUES, Faith *The Orchard book of nursery rhymes.* Orchard, 1990
ISBN 1852130563 [398]

Faith Jaques' illustrations provide a fascinating focus for this handsome collection of familiar nursery rhymes. The illustrations set in the late 18th century are finely detailed and provide a traditional setting for the accompanying rhymes. M. Ellis
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: \$29.95 ASCIS 650253

People poems / collected by Jill Bennett. Oxford University Press, 1990
ISBN 0192760866 [821]

Extraordinary people and names such as Ella McStumping and Betsy Pud provide the subject matter and titles respectively for the short poems in this collection of humorous poetry. Traditional rhymes such as 'An old woman sat spinning' are interspersed with amusing poems from writers such as Michael Dugan or Jean Kenward. The brightly coloured illustrations add further appeal. M. Ellis
LEV: Lower primary
AVAIL: \$8.95 ASCIS 638228

FISHER, Robert *Pet poems.* Faber, 1989
ISBN 0-571-15248-1 [821.008]

An interesting variety of real, imaginary and fanciful pets provide these 68 poems, fun for pupils to read for themselves, giving many experiences for teachers to utilise and above all providing excellent stimulus for pupils' own writing, especially as Australian representation is minimal. Authors range from a modern 5-year-old to Cowper. Titles are tempting: 'Mum won't let me keep a rabbit', 'Verbal gerbil', 'My newts', 'The butterfly that stamped', 'The python', 'I had a hippopotamus'. Some shape poems are included. Presentation is neat and uncluttered, with occasional humorous illustrations. E. Beckett
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: \$21.99 ASCIS 610154

McGOUGH, Roger *Pillow talk a book of poems.* Viking, 1990
ISBN 0670819921 [821]

Appealingly free from clutter, each poem is given its own space, and many are accompanied by a minimalist, but effective, line drawing. Although there is a slight unevenness in quality, most poems are amusing and say something new about the world we live in or the

human beings who inhabit it. There are also some interesting plays on words and poetic forms. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 660996

WILSON, Raymond *Poems to paddle.* Arrow, 1990 (A red fox book)
ISBN 0-09-967270-7 [808.81]

As indicated by the inviting title and brightly coloured cover pictures, this anthology features poems about the beach, happy memories of summer holidays, the ubiquitous nature of sand, seaside funfairs and an amusing encounter with a mermaid. Work from a diverse range of authors, including children, is companionably illustrated by John Richardson. Poems are separately indexed by both author and first lines. With sea, summer and holiday themes perennially popular, this happy little volume will prove its worth providing entertainment and satisfying a variety of tastes. B. Mitchell
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper \$8.95 ASCIS 640380

KENWARD, Jean *Seasons : a poetry collection.* Blackie, 1989
ISBN 0-216-92756-0 [821.914]

The seasons described are those of the northern hemisphere - Christmas in winter, woodland foxes, conkers and badgers. The poems cover the natural effects and evidence of seasonal change, with some extending to activities associated with a particular season. Pleasant black and white illustrations accompany nearly every poem. The collection of 41 poems is organised by season and there is an index of first lines. B. Mitchell
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 609333

FOX, Mem *Shoes from grandpa.* Ashton Scholastic, 1989
ISBN 0868963720 [821]

A humorous rhyme tells the story of how Jessie accumulates a multi-layered winter outfit which begins with the gift of a pair of shoes from her grandpa. The rollicking rhythm, the use of repetition, and the cumulative rhyme make this an ideal book for shared reading aloud. Mullins' collage illustrations with their use of torn tissue paper combined with occasional use of other materials and textures have created a striking picture book which captures the warmth and humour of the text. M. Ellis
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper \$5.50 ASCIS 620487

Sit on the roof and holler / collected by Adrian Rumble. Penguin, 1991
ISBN 0140343490 [808.81]

Whilst not a set of Mother Goose nursery rhymes, the features and the focus of this collection are along similar lines. The focus is the very young child and the features are the simplicity of either pleasant nonsense or day-to-day life. Mike Gordon's line drawings appear throughout. F. Gardiner
LEV: Pre-school Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 ASCIS 666435

DUGAN, Michael *Ten times funny.* Houghton Mifflin, 1990
ISBN 0867701064 [821]

Michael Dugan explains in the foreword that it was his idea to ask 10 funny poets (Ann Coleridge, Max Fatchen, Barbara Giles, Wilbur G. Howcroft, Robin Klein, Doug MacLeod, Sally Farrell Odgers, Bill Scott, Peter Wesley-Smith and himself) for their best 10 poems. Not only are the 100 resulting poems funny, they are also presented in a most original and interesting format which includes a less-than-postage-stamp size photograph of each poet as we reach his or her section. Robert Roennfeldt's line drawings effectively trim the text. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 624320

BRADMAN, Tony *That spells magic.* Blackie, 1989 (Poems for me)
ISBN 0-216-92739-0 [821.008]

The poetic introduction to this attractive volume in the 'Poems for me' series invites readers to enter a world of magic peopled by witches, wizards, elves, goblins, the tooth fairy and children willing to be deliciously frightened. Easy to read, in bold type and accompanied by Madeleine Baker's drawings, the poems with topics of Halloween, haunting and wishes will find a ready audience. An index of first lines is provided for easy location. B. Mitchell
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$22.95 ASCIS 622287

UMANSKY, Kaye *Tiger and me.* Hutchinson, 1990
ISBN 0091741440 [821.914]

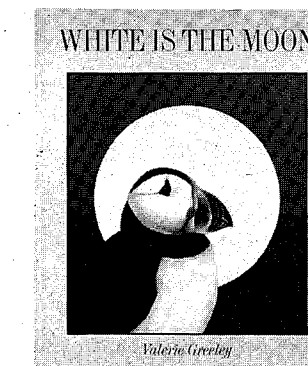
'Wrongs can be righted, if you are determined', so says the very small narrator, who with her dad's help returns the 200 tigers to their rightful home in the jungle. Told in simple verse, and accompanied by Susie Jenkin-Pearce's line and wash illustrations, this

ideologically sound story will appeal to young readers, and, with its rhyming, will also appeal to young listeners. F. Gardiner
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 637155

What a wonderful day! / chosen by Tony Bradman. Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0140329196 [821.008]

The exuberant title sets the tone for the poems of celebration in this little collection. Occasions joyously observed include birthdays, Hallowe'en, Easter, Christmas, a wedding, Mother's Day and Father's Day. Some of the poems have northern hemisphere content, such as a snowy Christmas and fireworks on November 5th, but most have universal appeal and application. Line drawings by Madeleine Baker accompany the poems which are indexed by first lines. B. Mitchell
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper \$6.99 ASCIS 633905

GREELEY, Valerie *White is the moon.* Blackie, 1990
ISBN 021693013 [821]



Consisting of a series of 4-line stanzas, each centred on a colour, this very simple poem spans the night, through the day, to the next evening. The presentation is very attractive, each stanza framed in the appropriate colour and the facing illustration

depicting the animal or object mentioned. F. Gardiner
LEV: Pre-school Lower primary
AVAIL: \$18.95 ASCIS 667441

McNAUGHTON, Colin *Who's been sleeping in my porridge: a book of draft poems and pictures.* Walker, 1990
ISBN 0744507413 [821]

Birds, giraffes, gorillas and giants jostle with aliens, motorbikes and the poet himself in this collection of weird and humorous poems. The wit and unexpectedness of the verse is matched by the brightly coloured humorous illustrations. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$24.95 ASCIS 628850

WILBY, Sorrel **Wombat and emu journey to Japan.** Macmillan, 1990
ISBN 651038 [821]

Sorrel Wilby's story of Wombat and Emu in Japan presents a slight and tired view of the country and some of its principal tourist attractions. The story told in verse form is trite both in content and verse. The occasional attempts at humour are absurd and patronising. The illustrations are somewhat better than the verse but they cannot save this unimaginative picture book. M. Ellis
LEV: Lower primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 651038

You beaut, juicy fruit! / compiled by Peter Durkin and Virginia Ferguson. Oxford University Press, 1990
ISBN 0195532120 [398]

The fifth in the series, this provides more of the same: rhymes which are the domain of childhood. Many of them will be familiar; the rest will be familiar in sentiment. Peter Viska's line drawings add to the zany nature of the volume which will indubitably be as popular as its successors. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper \$12.95 ASCIS 654073

7-12

ZWICKY, Fay **Ask me.** University of Qld. Press, 1990
ISBN 0702222828 [821]

This anthology has a place in the wide reading of Australian poets. Zwicky's subject matter ranges from the Great Wall of China to nursing home patients, from India and America to the addressing of contemporary literary figures; her vision is universal. The mixture of colloquial and sophisticated language with unexpected Australian imagery can be humorous or telling or just sad. The poems reflect her compassion for the individual, and the final section about death and dying is particularly moving. E. Beckett
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$11.99 ASCIS 620225

ASLANIDES, Timoshenko **Australian things.** Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0140128328 [821]

Underlying this collection of 48 poems is an idea readily adaptable for poetry classrooms: 'In a 14-line paragraph write about things ...' Aslanides' titles include *Elegant things*; *Problems I don't mind having*; *People who seem to suffer*; *Things which will always be*; *Things which won't always be*. The theme is

Australia, widely ranging over landscape and culture. The style varies surprisingly: concise, delightful, deep, occasionally too personal or too artificial. This limits the readability of the poems for students, but some will enjoy his perceptions and technique. Presentation is unfortunately unadorned and dull. E. Beckett
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$9.99 ASCIS 620221

HENRI, Adrian **Box and other poems.** Mammoth, 1990
ISBN 0749702605 [821.914]

From the popularity stakes to single motherhood, from fashions to funerals, this slim collection of poems deals with a wide variety of issues that are important to teenagers. Like teenagers, the mood is often sombre, often desperate, often cynical. As well as illustrations that accompany the poems, interspersed throughout is a series of cartoon vignettes. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$6.95 ASCIS 649545

GIZZIE, Michael **Deep Holy Joe and the ballad of the band.** Walker, 1990
ISBN 0744515238 [821]



In 49 small pages of terse and plaintive poetry-of-sorts, this scanty tale traces the development of a blues band as they practise to achieve a name for themselves. Cultural references are unfortunately British. The language is repetitive and fairly simple with occasional humorous or figurative impact; Sam the strummer, Brass-Finger Bob, Itchy Fred and the others seem to be stereotypes of band members. Line illustrations contribute vitality. For older reluctant readers with a passion for bands, the right chord could sound! E. Beckett
LEV: Middle secondary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 622899

Every poem tells a story / chosen by Raymond Wilson. Penguin, 1990
ISBN 645678 [808.81]

The stories told by these poems are not all ballads, although the majority are British and traditional. Interspersed with these is a smattering of 'outsiders' including a translation from Chinese, one from Spanish, and Judith Wright's Legend. There is a range of subject matter from animals to heroic deeds, from love lost to visitors from the grave or outer space. Indexes by first

line and by author are provided. F. Gardiner
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 ASCIS 645678

Form and feeling: poetry for senior students / compiled by Elaine Hamilton. Longman Cheshire, 1990
ISBN 05828689912 [821.008]

As they explain in the preface the compilers have tried to give this 2nd edition a more Australian, and indeed, Australasian flavour than the 1st, Eurocentric, edition. The history and features of each form (ballad, blank verse, dramatic monologue, elegy, epic, free verse, ode, pastoral and nature poetry, prose poetry, short forms and shape poetry, song lyric, and sonnet) are outlined at the beginning of each chapter. There are 3 indexes: by poet, title and first lines; and a glossary. Examples range from Matthew 6:19-24 to Japanese Haikus (in Japanese and English); poets range from John Denver to John Donne. This should provide students and teachers with an excellent resource. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$16.99 ASCIS 657253

SEARS, Peter **Gonna bake me a rainbow poem.** Scholastic, 1990
ISBN 0590430858 [808.1]

Very much an instructional tool, this book comprises the winning poems from the Scholastic Writing Awards Program, which is US based. The poems are used to provide examples of language and punctuation, imagery, irony and satire, fantasy, rhyme, lyric poems, growing old, making a statement, and poetry as an art form. The date and origins of each poem are recorded and in most cases the poet explains his or her motivations and methods. Sears also discusses choosing a subject, writing poetry generally and creative thinking. F. Gardiner
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$5.50 ASCIS 663365

WRIGHT, Judith **A human pattern: selected poems.** Angus and Robertson, 1990
ISBN 0207164843 [821.3]

Wright's preface emphasises the personal nature of her poetry and refers to her historical and conservationist concerns. Nearly 200 poems in this volume, chosen by the poet herself, range equitably over all aspects of her work from 1946 to 1985 and form a fine definitive anthology. Unfortunately, it lacks an index of titles and of first lines, but the

binding seems a marked improvement on its forerunner, *Five senses*. E. Beckett
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$12.95 ASCIS 619699

Peace and war: a collection of poems / chosen by Michael Harrison and Christopher Stuart-Clark. Oxford University Press, 1989
ISBN 0192760718 [808.81]

A truly sensitive and wide-ranging collection of 200 poems spans over 2000 years and countries and cultures as varied as China and Zululand, Korea and Hungary. Some poets, like Owen, Sassoon, Shakespeare, are familiar, many are not. Beginning with images of peace and moving through preparations for war to horrors, dilemmas, tragedies, morals and heroisms, the anthology finally flowers into images of hope for Earth's elusive future. Occasional illustrations by Alan Marks contribute further feeling and interest in tones of blurry black and white. Surprising, moving, admonitory - a powerful collection. E. Beckett
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$12.95
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 609536

The Penguin book of contemporary New Zealand poetry. Penguin Auckland NZ, 1989
ISBN 0140585923 [821.008]

Contemporary by name and contemporary by nature, this anthology includes poetry written almost exclusively in the 1980s. Since the poems fill more than 500 pages, that in itself is a statement about trans-Tasman poetry, although as is pointed out in the introduction, many of the poets are attempting the long poem, a form not usually included in anthologies. There is a strong Maori representation, both as poets and as editor. The only means of retrieval is via the contents page: there are no indexes. Nor are there any biographical notes other than the year of birth of each poet. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$24.95 ASCIS 610408

MORSE, Brian **Picnic on the moon.** Turton & Chambers, 1990
ISBN 187214800X [821.914]

Subtlety, humour and keen insight into the foibles of human nature are reflected in Brian Morse's poems. Their subjects range widely from the absurd aspects of school to reflections on nature and wistful comments on visitors from other planets. These are more than

funny reflections on life, they offer much food for thought. The accompanying line drawings by Joep Bertrams add a great deal to the mood and humour of the collection. J. Buckley

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$17.95 ASCIS 616713

Postcards from planet earth : an anthology of international poetry / edited by Paul Richardson and Ken Watson. Oxford University Press, 1990

ISBN 0195531434 [808.1]

Spanning centuries of human existence, the poems included in this stimulating, provocative anthology communicate with freshness and power. Poetry from many cultures is organised thematically and touches a chord of human understanding with a universal appeal transcending boundaries of time and space. Useful notes on both teaching and reading poetry are supported by readers' notes on many of the poems and poets, supplied at the end of each section. A combined title and first line index and a separate index of poets facilitate location of contents. B. Mitchell

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$14.95

EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 638896

Seven centuries of poetry in English / edited by John Leonard. Oxford University Press, 1991

ISBN 0195531418 [821.008]

This substantial tome is arranged chronologically, but backwards, starting with Seamus Heaney (b 1939) and ending with William Langland (c 1330-1390). There is a wide range of poets, styles, themes and poetic forms. Though heavily weighted with British poets there is a variety of nationalities with a number of Australians including Les Murray, Bruce Dawe, A.D. Hope, Judith Wright, Henry Lawson and A.B. Paterson. Each poet is given 2 or 3 lines of biographical notes, and as well as indexes by first lines, titles and poets, there are short sections on versions and parodies, and rhythm, metre and form. F. Gardiner

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$22.95 ASCIS 661389

NEILSON, John Shaw **The sun is up**. Loch Haven, 1991

ISBN 1875308067 [821.2]

Not well known in this, his own country, John Shaw Neilsen (1872-1942) was a man whose life was overshadowed by poverty, illness and tragedy. Although these problems did not prevent him from composing poetry, illness made reading and writing difficult, so that many of the poems that were in his

head were lost for want of his finding someone literate to write them down. This book of selected poems is, however, introducing him to a new audience and providing his old audience with some more material. His work is described as ranging 'from light humorous and satirical verse to the darkly mystic.' F. Gardiner

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 ASCIS 663509

What on earth - ? poems with a conservation theme / edited by Judith Nichols. Faber, 1989

ISBN 0571152627 [808.81]

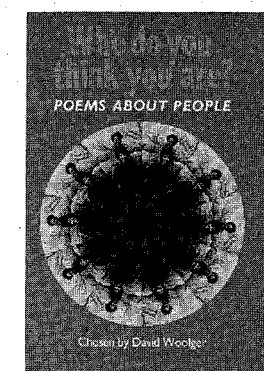
Over 90 poems and fragments contribute to this collection, including 4 from G.M. Hopkins, 2 each from Philip Larkin, D.H. Lawrence and Emily Dickinson, several from American Indians, Pete Seeger's lyric 'Where have all the flowers gone?' and Edwin Brock's 'Five ways to kill a man' and 'Song of the battery hen'. Some of the modern poems carry conservationist impact, especially the editor's own, but read as a whole the collection loses its power. Perhaps protest poems, criticised by the editor as 'more protest than poetry', would have enlivened the anthology more than the many bland nature poems it does include. Illustrations by Alan Baker are helpful, but too few. E. Beckett

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$12.99 ASCIS 488768

Who do you think you are? poems about people / chosen by David Woolger. Oxford University Press, 1990

ISBN 0192760742 [808.81]



The poems in this collection are as diverse as its theme, ie, people. Divided into 10 sections, there is a range of subjects, styles and life views. Though the British poet is predominant there is representation from different cultures and contemporary poets sit very congenially beside those from earlier times. Retrieval is assisted by indexes to poets, titles and first lines. Black-and-white

illustrations by a variety of artists are scattered throughout. Eminently accessible and related to real life, this collection would be a valuable addition to the poetry shelf. F. Gardiner

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$22.50

EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 663681 ❖

■ Fiction

Following is a list of books which have recently been reviewed. The bibliography, which was organised by Jill Buckley, is divided into 2 sections: fiction for young readers and fiction for older readers. The books in both sections are arranged alphabetically by title.

For young readers

ORR, Wendy **Bad Martha**. Angus and Robertson, 1991
ISBN 0207167494

Bad Martha is a constantly screaming baby and a difficult child until she discovers that she is a witch. She then makes spells which don't proceed as she intends, inadvertently shrinking her parents and several visitors. I felt some unease with aspects of this story, which although light-hearted and humorous, could lead young readers to think that ordinary children who behave differently could be witches. Designed for newly independent readers, the story is arranged in short chapters and features line drawings by Carol McLean Carr. J. Buckley

LEV: Middle primary

AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 ASCIS 666484

NILSSON, Eleanor **The black duck**. Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0140341528

When Tom's father starts a job in town the family has to leave their hobby farm. The new landlady's rule forbidding pets applies to Tom's beloved little black duck, Squeak Toy. Superficially, Tom seems to have adjusted, but his parents underestimate the depth of their son's attachment to Squeak Toy. After having his hopes built up, Tom channels his disappointment into action and attempts to return to the farm. Abundant illustrations by Rae Dale and a well-written story of caring and loyalty make this an appealing choice for young readers. B. Mitchell

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary

AVAIL: paper \$7.00 ASCIS 633898

KLEIN, Robin **Boris and Borsch**. Allen & Unwin, 1990
ISBN 0044422660

Two teddy bears of different dispositions are gifts for 2 very different cousins. Boris goes to live with the neat Eugene, Borsch with the dirtier and more reckless Patrick. The bears are happier, however, when they are mixed up and go home with the wrong cousin. Colour illustrations by Cathy Wilcox contribute much to this simple story, which relies on the excessive, stereotypical behaviour of the characters. While this provides humour, it limits the opportunity for reader involvement in the story. J. Buckley

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary

AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 647145

BURTON, Virginia Lee **Calico the wonder horse**. Faber, 1990

ISBN 0571144268

Interested in an old-fashioned Western? This reissue of a 1942 cowboy tale captures the flavour of the Wild West in a format suitable for newly independent readers. Hank the honest cowboy, Calico the intelligent horse, and Stewy Stinker and his gang of Bad Men are involved in cattle rustling, driving the stagecoach down the mountainside, and, surprisingly, organising a Christmas party. Black-and-white woodcuts on every page illustrate the tale with great vitality. They contribute to the different feel of this short, action-packed adventure story. J. Buckley

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary

AVAIL: Paper \$6.99 ASCIS 659897

STEELE, Mary **Citizen Arkwright**. Hyland House, 1990
ISBN 0947062696

Giant anteater, Arkwright, along with his companion, Captain Chilblain (retired), now lives in Candlebark close to, but far enough away from the sea for Arkwright to feel secure after his terrifying journey by ship from South America. Arkwright is the cheerful participator in a series of events that win him affection and esteem in his new environment. Unpretentious but effective language, ingenuous humour, the division of the story into discrete chapters and a rollicking good yarn make this not only a good book to read aloud but also a rare book: a worthwhile bridging novel. F. Gardiner

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary

AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 644733

RODDA, Emily **Crumbs! Omnibus**, 1990
ISBN 1862910596

Watch out for Brown's Bonzer Baby Biscuits. They give babies the power of speech, which 4 month old Ellie models on Kraak, a cartoon program villain. Her subtle timing results in her brother Pete being blamed, sibling rivalry suspected, parents feeling confused and guilty, and a well meaning but unhelpful child psychologist becoming involved. First person narration aligns the reader with Pete as he struggles to deal with this bizarre comic situation. Short chapters with line drawings by Kerry Argent and a funny, fast-moving story make this short novel appealing to newly independent readers. J. Buckley

LEV: Middle primary

AVAIL: Paper \$6.99 ASCIS 650427

McCLELLAND, Julia **First last and other stories.** OUP, 1990
ISBN 0195532139

Five interrelated stories introduce Zachariah, his family and friends. The title story explores his delight when on backwards day at school, he is first instead of last. Others record his desire for a pet and his feelings when he becomes a big brother. The stories build on one another, but are self contained and would be good to read aloud. Their strength lies in their acute observation of childhood and their gentle humour. Illustrations by Ann James exactly capture the feeling of these well-crafted and satisfying stories. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 655204

ROCKWELL, Thomas **How to get fabulously rich.** Watts, 1990
ISBN 0531108775

The title will alert you to the materialism inherent in this novel. It will not, however, alert you to the mishmash of themes, plots and characters that have been thrown with little culinary or literary skill into this insipid bouillabaise. The author appears to have been unable to decide what he wants to say: it may be that money is the root of all evil but the ever-burgeoning extraneous strands leave one unsure. Moreover the characters who proliferate similarly are poorly delineated and are thus very confusing. Just stay fabulously poor. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle primary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 650540

OAKLEY, Graham **More church mice chronicles.** Macmillan Children's Books, 1990
ISBN 0333516451

Three delightful episodes in the life of Sampson and the church mice are well presented in this single volume format. The sophisticated style will appeal to the adult reader but young readers may have some comprehension problems. The detailed illustrations complement the humour of the text. J. Pogson
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 625880

CARPENTER, Humphrey **Mr Majeika and the dinner lady.** Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0140327622

These stories are set in an English school where one of the teachers is a wizard and only his class knows of his ability. In the 3 adventures the children in Class 3, with

the help of the wizard Mr Majeika, deal with a bad-tempered cook, a revengeful Wilhelmina Worlock and a troublesome class member. Easy language and large print ensure the readability of this short work for beginning readers. K. Simpson
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: Paper \$6.99 ASCIS 644368

KING-SMITH, Dick **Paddy's pot of gold.** Penguin, 1990
ISBN 067082903X

On her 8th birthday, Brigid fulfils all the requirements for being able to see a leprechaun, specifically, P.V.W.R.H. O'Reilly who becomes her friend and mentor. Although the materialism at the end is a disappointment this is for the most part a straightforward but poignant story, simply and engagingly told that will appeal to and provide appropriate reading material for the emergent reader. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle primary
AVAIL: \$16.99 ASCIS 654239

STIMSON, Joan **Paws a panda full of surprises.** Scholastic, 1990
ISBN 0590762869

Attempts to create a Chinese Paddington fall short in this contrived tale. The subject of the adventure is Paws, a panda sent from China as a birthday gift. The panda is treated in an objectionable manner by the family - fed unsuitable food, made to conform with table manners and dressed in clothing. As it is repeatedly stressed that the animal is real, the story fails as a fantasy and is unacceptable as realism. It is out of touch with current values to portray an endangered species in such a tawdry fashion. B. Mitchell
LEV: Middle primary
AVAIL: \$3.00 ASCIS 635542

DAHL, Tessa **School can wait.** Hamilton, 1990
ISBN 0241129109

Jack is 8 and very average for his age. His parents are equally unremarkable. All this changes, however, when they find a lost reindeer in the woods and take it upon themselves to return the reindeer to Father Christmas. This mission leads to another, and another, until it becomes obvious that Jack won't be home in time for school. Large, well-designed pages abound with drawings by Korky Paul which increase the fun of this undemanding and episodic story for young readers. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary
AVAIL: \$19.99 ASCIS 663543

SCARBORO, Elizabeth **The secret language of the SB.** Viking Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0670830879

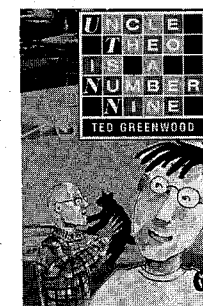
At one stage the family in this novel hike up the Flatirons, so called because the surface of each peak is as flat as the bottom of an iron. It could be a metaphor for the story-line which involves the short stay of a young Taiwanese girl with the family: Adam and his mum and dad. Not only is there a lack of action but the author is also prone to descriptions of banalities in short, uninspired sentences. It is, however, a very gentle book, in which the characters treat each other with respect and tenderness, so perhaps it should not be entirely shunned. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle primary
AVAIL: \$14.99 ASCIS 660815

HATHORN, Libby **So who needs lotto?** Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0140345329

Denise's transfer from the salubrious Fairesy School to the apparently down-at-heel Mimosa, is not an auspicious move for either her or her new classmates. The unpleasant name callings and recriminations eventually disappear as she forms a friendship with Cosmo, not a newcomer, but another outsider. The plot is uninspired and predictable; the characters stereotypical and, except for Cosmo, not likeable. Emergent or reluctant readers may, however, enjoy the book: it is short and has an abundance of well-executed and appropriate black line drawings. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper \$6.99 ASCIS 655430

GREENWOOD, Ted **Uncle Theo is a number nine.** Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0140346066

Life with Uncle Theo is spartan, hard working, full of crazy experiences and dominated by the powers of numerology, as Drew discovers the hard way when he goes to stay with his uncle. As well as bottling his car polish, Drew becomes involved in Operation Cushion, Uncle Theo's planned refuge from the world disaster he predicts. The difficulties faced by Drew, Theo and the neighbouring family as they while away the hours in this converted swimming pool bunker provide much of the humour in this novel. The exaggeration of character and comic situations in the story add to its appeal. J. Buckley
LEV: Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper \$8.99 ASCIS 655433



DIXON, Sarah **The vanishing village.** Usborne, 1990
(Usborne puzzle adventures)

An intriguing concept of reader involvement in solving the mystery of the vanishing village, using text and picture clues, has a novel appeal in this format which combines elements of story, comic-strip and puzzles. Readers of this attractively packaged book are invited to seek answers to questions raised on nearly every page opening with additional clues and answers clearly provided at the end. Reluctant older readers may also be enticed to meet the challenges offered within this slim volume. All the solutions are possible with varying difficulty and obscurity. B. Mitchell
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper \$4.00 ASCIS 648395

KING-SMITH, Dick **The water horse.** Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0670830445

After a storm lashes the Scottish coast Kirstie finds a very large 'mermaid's purse' on the beach. Taking it home and placing it in the bath she is astounded next morning to discover a tiny monster or water horse. So begins a secret adventure as she and her family watch it outgrow their home, fish pond and even their small local loch. Eventually they must move Crusoe to a new location. Dick King-Smith takes the legend of the Loch Ness monster and creates a humorous explanation of its existence in a thoroughly entertaining story. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$16.99 ASCIS 650251

Fiction for older readers

DICKINSON, Peter **AK.** Gollancz, 1990
ISBN 0575048948

Some generations ago R.L. Stevenson was writing adventure novels about orphaned boys caught up with pirates and treasure seekers. In 1990 we have Paul, a seasoned warrior at 12, who, orphaned by the war in a fictional but real enough African state, sets out with another child, Jill, to secure the release of his adopted father, a political prisoner. Although such is the stuff of which adventure yarns are made, some events seem unlikely and the dual choose-your-own appendices are unsatisfying, not only inherently, but also because the scenarios they offer are contrived and extremist. Other reviewers have, however, held the novel in higher regard: it is the winner of the 1990 Whitbread Award. F. Gardiner
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: \$24.95 ASCIS 667344

RUBINSTEIN, Gillian *At Ardilla*. Omnibus, 1991
ISBN 1862910626

Like *Ardilla*, a regularly visited and well loved old holiday house; and Jen, a thoughtful and prickly adolescent; this novel unfolds its layers of meaning slowly. Written with delicacy and precision, this study of adolescence charts changing relationships between families and friends and explores with insight Jen's struggles to understand her mystical experiences in relation to *Ardilla*. Acute observation of character and authentic dialogue contribute to the novel's power. Gillian Rubinstein depicts the inner thoughts and emotions of her characters, developing multiple perspectives on the action in this enigmatic and involving novel. J. Buckley

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$18.95 ASCIS 666547

KELLEHER, Victor *Brother night*. MacRae, 1990
ISBN 0862034787

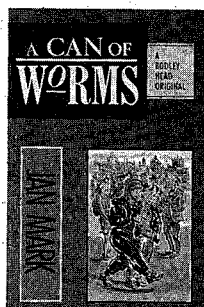
The death of his almost unknown mother is the catalyst for Ramon's twin journeys: one to new lands; and the other an inner journey of self discovery. Neither trip reveals much that is pleasant either for Ramon or for the reader. The novel abounds with blood and gore and cruelty; the symbolism is profuse and heavy handed; and the plot consists of a never ending negotiation of unwelcoming mythical landscapes peopled with one-dimensional, mostly nasty, characters. F. Gardiner

LEV: Lower secondary

AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 654795

MARK, Jan *A can of worms and other stories*. Bodley Head, 1990
ISBN 0370314697

The stories in this uniformly splendid collection are well crafted, exceedingly readable and filled with characters who live. Jan Mark has a rare talent for being able to use the introduction to set the story perfectly and yet retain an obscurity so that the reader has to bring his or her own skills and perceptions to sort out the details: she challenges her reader



exquisitely. Poignancy, humour, social comment, and especially relationships of all varieties, are what lie in store for the fortunate and perceptive person who takes this one off the shelf. F. Gardiner

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$14.95

EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 637862

DICKENS, Charles *Christmas carol*. Cape, 1990
ISBN 0224029002

Outstanding illustrations by Roberto Innocenti capture the power and emotional range of Dickens's classic story in this handsome edition. Large, well-designed pages use soft colour, decorative borders and clear type. The beautifully composed colour illustrations create detailed, atmospheric Victorian scenes. The sensitively evocative illustrations and excellent presentation enhance the text and ensure its wide appeal. J. Buckley

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$29.95 ASCIS 6543235

METZENTHEN, David *Danger wave*. Ashton Scholastic, 1990
ISBN 0868965898

Tommy isn't doing well at school and another failure could mean boarding school. With the arrival of Gerry (Geraldine) Kellerman, he discovers new interests and an artistic talent, but the announcement of a windsurfing competition gives Tom the chance to prove himself. Excitement builds as both teenagers must decide how to help their friend Gumby keep his fishing boat. Set in an Australian seaside town, the story will appeal to teenagers of both sexes. J. Mayne

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$5.95 ASCIS 639388

GLEESON, Libby *Dodger*. Turton & Chambers, 1990
ISBN 1872148506

Mick Jamieson is 13 and characterised as uncooperative and an under achiever. School, especially during PE lessons with the vindictive Mr Masterson, is something to be endured. Change seems possible when he is chosen, by the sympathetic history teacher Penny, to play the Artful Dodger, but his unresolved grief and undeserved guilt at his mother's death combine with his alienation from his truckie father to nibble constantly at his resolve to prove himself. The story is powerfully and sensitively told. The insertion of Penny's letters and Mick's troubled memories within the text provides both a catalyst and a commentary on Mick's actions. M. Ellis

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: \$19.95

EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 661378

SPENCE, Eleanor *The family book of Mary Claire*. Collins Dove, 1990
ISBN 0859248658

Spanning 4 generations, this novel is a romanticised

account of early white settlers in northern NSW. Mary Claire, who features only in a brief epilogue, numbers Aboriginal, free settlers and convicts among her ancestors. Unfortunately the combination of numbers and poor delineation makes identification of the characters very difficult for the reader. The provision of a family tree helps to solve only some of the problems created by this unwieldiness. The few dramatic incidents which occur are depicted with so little intensity that they almost pass unnoticed. F. Gardiner

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: \$29.99 ASCIS 667696

CARMODY, Isobelle *The Farseekers*. Viking, 1990
ISBN 0670837687

This, the second book of the Obernewtyn chronicles, continues the story of the settlement after the Great White Holocaust has destroyed and poisoned much of the world. Feared and persecuted because of their extraordinary mind powers, the Misfits must undertake a dangerous expedition to secure their future. Leading the expedition is Elspeth, a Misfit who possesses truly extraordinary powers, and who it is hinted must be the seeker who alone can prevent a second cataclysmic holocaust. Emotion, fear, high adventure, altruism, greed, savagery, bigotry and the eerie past jostle together to create a truly challenging fantasy. M. Ellis

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$16.99

EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 652748

STEWART, Maureen *Henry goes green*. Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0140345078

Fifteen-year-olds Henry and Voula, smitten with love for each other, have already encountered severe difficulties when, in this 3rd novel in the series, Henry is moved from Melbourne to Mallacoota by his hippy mum and her even hippier new boyfriend. Again the anguish and the humour is expressed via a series of letters between the 2 star-crossed lovers. The subject matter will appeal to adolescent readers; that and the simple and uncluttered writing and the novel's brevity should also make it attractive fare for reluctant readers. F. Gardiner

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$6.99

ASCIS 644674

KIRKBRIDE, John *In reply to your advertisement*. Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0140341285

Kevin's attempts to gain an interview, for any job, provide the context for this light-hearted look at teenage unemployment. His increasing frustration is revealed

through his 285 letters and the employers' replies. Although these are humorous, the style becomes repetitive and loses appeal. J. Mayne

LEV: Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$6.99

ASCIS 641335

WESTALL, Robert *The kingdom by the sea*. Methuen Children's Books, 1990
ISBN 0416156622

Harry runs away after his family home is bombed during World War II. His family is gone and he chooses to survive alone. With a dog as his companion, he journeys around the Northumberland coast, experiencing struggles for food and shelter and growth in his independence and self-worth. He finds his kingdom by the sea in his relationships with the natural world, other people and within himself. The situations he encounters are polished vignettes of the effects of war on people's lives. Unsentimental and with a moving ending, this novel again demonstrates the delicacy of Robert Westall's writing. J. Buckley

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: \$26.95

ASCIS 650104

MAREK, Margot *Matt's crusade*. Hodder & Stoughton, 1990
ISBN 0340513705

Matt has been training with his father so he can be selected for the high school football team. At the same time his political consciousness is aroused when a local army base plans to install nuclear missiles. The issues are presented by the characters - his father, a Vietnam veteran, believes in the deterrent theory; his teacher (and girlfriend's father) is a pacifist and a small group of townspeople is violently anti-pacifist. The conflicts are well presented through realistic characterisation and the developing situations. J. Pogson

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: \$19.95

ASCIS 631584

KAYE, Geraldine *Someone else's baby*. Deutsch, 1990
ISBN 0233985751

Too young even to manage and control her own life, 17-year-old Terry realises that keeping the baby she has accidentally conceived is out of the question. And yet? She is torn heartrendingly between this self-knowledge and not only the yearning to keep the child but the somehow moral rightness of doing so. Written mostly as a journal, this book gently and non-judgmentally examines human relationships and responsibilities and would provide a worthwhile addition to the teenage reading list. F. Gardiner

LEV: Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$12.95

ASCIS 648276

MACDONALD, Caroline *Speaking to Miranda*. Viking, 1990
ISBN 0670834718

When Ruby wears her new black cloak, it triggers off a memory of her mother, who died sixteen years ago when Ruby was 2. Ruby begins a challenging quest to resolve the mystery surrounding her mother and her past. In searching for her mother, Ruby also gathers insight into her own personality and into her relationship with her stepfather, Rob. The development of a well crafted storyline with authentic characters holds interest to the very end. J. Pogson

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$18.99

EVAL: Highly recommended

ASCIS 655425

CONRAD, Pam *Taking the ferry home*. Oxford University Press, 1990
ISBN 0192716328

Human fragility is at the heart of this powerful and impressive novel. Rich, beautiful and apparently confident, Simone suffers the twin deprivations of a workaholic father and a drug addicted mother, neither of whom are able to offer her affection. Spending the summer in the cottage on Simone's family estate is Ali who enjoys a loving relationship with her mother and her reformed alcoholic father. They form a tenuous friendship. Although the technique of alternately written chapters (by Simone and Ali), is becoming cliched, this is forgivable in the light of the dramatic intensity of the plot, the astutely drawn characters and the unpretentious but evocative language. F. Gardiner
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$26.95 ASCIS 663551

GERAS, Adele *The tower room*. Hamilton, 1990
ISBN 0241129567

For Megan, orphaned at the age of 11, Egerton Hall is both school and home. The Tower Room, which she shares with her 2 friends Bella and Alice, serves as her retreat. It is from the window of the Tower Room that Megan first sees Simon, and in this room that they meet secretly. The story is a mix of Megan's reminiscences of her last year at school and her feelings at being thrust into the adult world. This story looks at some of the realities of young love - however the reader is left with a feeling of detachment throughout. C. Gibson
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$19.99 ASCIS 643225

VOIGT, Cynthia *Tree by leaf*. Collins, 1990
ISBN 0006737692

Clothilde's world is first turned upside down when

her father departs for the Great War and she, her mother and siblings must leave the comfortable home of her grandfather for Speers Point, the isolated property she has inherited. Her sense of belonging there soon becomes strong, only to be unsettled by her now disfigured father's return. Voigt's carefully chosen setting and finely drawn characters create a rich story of fathers, families and belonging. N. Kallenberger
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$6.95

ASCIS 647896

SCOBIE, Pamela A *twist of fate*. Oxford University Press, 1990
ISBN 0192716344

The first page contains a reference to Bill Syke's dog. The reader is thereafter taken on the bleakest of journeys through a Dickensian landscape peopled with unremittingly cruel taskmasters and cowed, underfed children who are nonetheless loosely united in diversity. Superimpose a tale of uncertain identity and what do you have? Not *Oliver Twist*. The characterisation is simply awful: inconsistent, stereotypical and quite inconceivable. Perhaps because of the failure of the characters, the writer's voice is often intrusive. The melodramatic plot is convoluted and sometimes preposterous. Not even vaguely comparable with the real thing. F. Gardiner
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: \$26.95

ASCIS 662907

CROSS, Gillian *Wolf*. Oxford University Press, 1990
ISBN 0192716336

This one is hard to put down! It is a suspenseful thriller which uses powerful imagery, and also a delicately written exploration of adolescent independence. Cassy is abruptly sent by her grandmother to live with her unreliable mother. Tension builds as she becomes involved in her mother's life, working on a drama performance about wolves and the myths surrounding their behaviour.

As she learns of her previously unknown father, the causes of her grandmother's behaviour and her father's secret life are gradually revealed. It is a novel to be savoured - gripping, multilayered and challenging the reader's values. J. Buckley

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$26.95

EVAL: Highly recommended

ASCIS 663578 ♦



Picture Books

The following picture books have recently been reviewed. They are listed in alphabetical order by title.

AESOP, *Aesop's fables*. Margaret Hamilton, 1990
ISBN 0947241078

Outstanding and varied illustrations using many media, including watercolour, gouache, ink, collage and computer graphics distinguish this collection. If the purpose of this work is to provide a vehicle for Rodney McRae's skills it is a wonderful success. However, it is less impressive as a cohesive work because the text is secondary to the illustrations, and sources of the fables are unacknowledged. An index which includes notes on illustrative techniques is provided, but there is no contents page and incomplete page numbering. Despite these reservations, this stimulating book will suggest many possibilities for visual arts activities. J. Buckley

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary Lower secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$29.95

ASCIS 650549

WAGNER, Jenny *Amy's monster*. Viking, 1990
ISBN 0670827487

Things start badly for the young reader when Amy's normal childlike behaviour provokes her parents into packing her off to her cousins. They don't improve when the cousins treat her to night-time horrors, though Amy does eventually exact revenge which is exactly what you'd expect from the subject of such treatment. Totally devoid of warmth or compassion, the text is ably abetted by Terry Denton's illustrations. F. Gardiner
LEV: Lower primary

AVAIL: \$16.99

ASCIS 655390

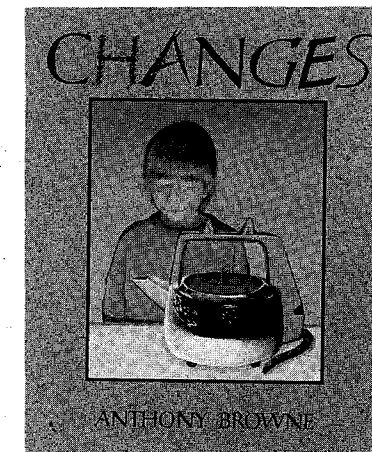
SMITH, Miriam *Annie & Moon*. Penguin, 1990
ISBN 014054206X

Moon the kitten has to adjust constantly as she moves from house to house. So too do Annie and her mother Meg. This understated treatment of changing family and financial circumstances leads the reader gently to an understanding of the difficulties. Colour illustrations by Lesley Moyes provide a wealth of detail and convey emotion with warmth and dignity. J. Buckley

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 ASCIS 639943

BROWNE, Anthony *Changes*. MacRae, 1990
ISBN 0862034353

Joseph Kaye is beset by ever increasing, and ever increasingly bizarre and threatening changes occurring



around him. The rather bland ending is therefore a relief on the one hand, if an anticlimax on the other. Although the story is not satisfying, the surrealistic illustrations, filled with visual tricks and allusion, match Anthony Browne's usual high standard and are given optimum

reproduction in this very large format book. F. Gardiner

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary

AVAIL: \$16.95

ASCIS 648525

CLEMENT, Rod *Counting on Frank*. Collins, 1990
ISBN 0732249341

The un-named narrator is obsessed by bizarre calculations such as how long it would take to fill the entire bathroom with water; how many cans of dog food would fill a shopping trolley; how many copies of his dog Frank could fit into his bedroom and so on. Both the text and the illustrations make it clear that his parents are less than enthralled by their son's mania... until it pays off. This is the antithesis of the cutesy picture book: the text is matter-of-fact and the brilliantly coloured illustrations are slightly surrealist. F. Gardiner
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 626179

BRUMPTON, Keith *A dinosaur's book of dinosaurs*. Orchard, 1990
ISBN 1852132361

Purporting to be a book written by Roger, a 10-year-old dinosaur, this collection of captioned sketches, short comments, jokes, maps, recipes and quiz questions intends to be amusing but overall is unsatisfying. The anthropomorphised dinosaurs watch TV, go to cafes, use roller skates and display stereotypical attitudes, yet some factual information on dinosaurs is included. Readers interested in dinosaurs may find the information inadequate, and lack of a cohesive story further limits the work's appeal. J. Buckley

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary

AVAIL: \$19.95

ASCIS 657022

SHANNON, Margaret Elvira. Omnibus, 1991
ISBN 1862910227

Elvira is a dragon with a purpose. Rather than eat princesses, she wants to be one herself. The princesses teach her a thing or two, and so, resplendent in her finery, she returns to her very impressed dragon family. Brightly coloured funny illustrations depict a slightly crazed dragon family and a wonderful excess of beautiful gowns in this simple and charming picture book. Text and illustrations work well together to demonstrate that individuality has its own rewards.

J. Buckley
LEV: Preschool Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: Paper \$7.95 ASCIS 661485

THIELE, Colin Farmer Pelz's pumpkins. McVitty, 1990
ISBN 0949183350

Farmer Pelz is the champion pumpkin grower in the valley. His talent earns him prizes, admiration and the jealousy of 3 young less successful men. When a trick they play on him seriously misfires, Farmer Pelz is at first blamed but later exonerated by the evidence of his 2 best friends. Colin Thiele tells his story in simple but descriptive language; Lucinda Hunnam's illustrations are similarly evocative as well as rich in texture, colour and detail. F. Gardiner

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: Paper \$7.00 ASCIS 648379

STONE, Kazuko G. Good night Twinklegator. Scholastic, 1990
ISBN 0590431838

A gentle evening mood is captured in this picture book, in which Aligay the alligator creates an imaginary friend, Twinklegator, by connecting the dots in the starry sky. Twinklegator comes to earth and they tiptoe through the quiet jungle and frolic in the moonlight. Vivid artwork in deep blue and green captures the calm night atmosphere, the warm relationship between the friends and the imaginary world they inhabit in this original fantasy. J. Buckley

LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 634205

BUTLER, Dorothy A happy tale. Random Century, 1990
ISBN 1869410688

Each situation is either happy or unhappy as the story of Mabel's travels unfolds. Happily she falls in love with a farmer who rescues her, and her aviator friend also finds a partner. Unhappily, she falls from an aeroplane, is chased by a bull, and lands in a wasp's

nest. The repetitive nature of the text and its lack of depth render this a pleasant but undemanding picture book, which may provide a model for readers to play a similar word game. Colour illustrations by John Hurford contribute fun and life to the story. J. Buckley
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 637782

LEWIS, Rob Henrietta's first winter. Bodley Head, 1990
ISBN 0370314107

Henrietta heeds the other forest animals' advice to stockpile food as she faces her first winter but finds that successive disasters, followed by a tea party, deplete her precious store of nuts and berries. Nature provides a solution to Henrietta's apparent problem, ensuring survival through hibernation. Reader empathy is simply achieved by virtue of the little woodland animal's tenacity, kind heart and philosophical nature. Colour illustrations complement the text in the cohesion so often found in author-illustrated books. B. Mitchell

LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: \$15.95 ASCIS 642057

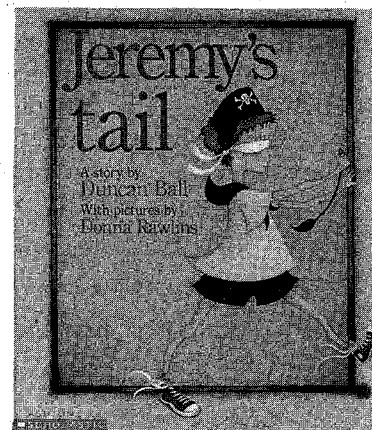
RICH, Penny I don't like new shoes. McGregor, 1990
ISBN 0859211339

Figgy objects to wearing new shoes on the grounds that they are too shiny, black, have ugly long laces and they squeak. Figgy's mother, after initial anger at his response, wisely lets Figgy discover for himself why he needs new shoes. In the ensuing days Figgy learns, through a series of mishaps, that life with new shoes would be much easier. Humour is used to good effect in both the adventures recounted and in Jack Newman's colour illustrations. B. Mitchell

LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper \$6.00 ASCIS 639355

BALL, Duncan Jeremy's tail. Ashton Scholastic, 1990
ISBN 0868965871

Vibrant colour illustrations by Donna Rawlins contribute much to the impact and vitality of the imaginative fantasy in this picture book. Jeremy, blindfolded, sets off to pin the tail on the donkey, a search which leads him on



an international and interplanetary voyage which eventually brings him back to where he started. Looking somewhat abashed when his success is challenged, he begins his quest again. The illustrations provide the links between events in this story, but the fantasy seems disjointed and overstretches credibility.

J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary
AVAIL: \$15.95 ASCIS 647246

SCHULMAN, Dee Jessie's special day. Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0140541691

Using captioned cartoon style illustrations, this small picture book accurately captures the excitement of a 5-year-old's birthday. The reader shares Jessie's feelings as the family day begins and the party preparations gather momentum; tears of excitement and exhaustion are close to the surface. The technique of expressing thought and dialogue in comic format gives lots of clues to assist new readers, allowing them to develop sympathy with Jessie. J. Buckley

LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper \$6.99 ASCIS 652382

IMPEY, Rose Joe's cafe. Orchard, 1990
ISBN 1852132272

Joe's absorption in his imaginative game causes him to forget that he is supposed to be keeping watch over his baby sister, Amy, a responsibility really beyond his tender years, while their mother attends to the baking. Joe leaves the gate open and Amy takes advantage of the opportunity, wandering off on a potentially dangerous adventure. Joe is distraught when he discovers the result of his carelessness and desperately tries to find Amy before their mother is aware of the disappearance. Tension, guilt, fear and relief are convincingly portrayed with Sue Porter's watercolour illustrations enhancing the text. B. Mitchell

LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 633482

DURRELL, Gerald Keeper. O'Mara, 1990
ISBN 1854790625

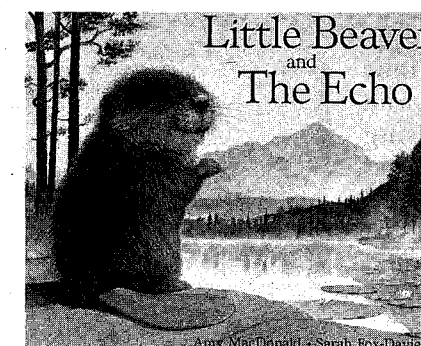
Gerald Durrell narrates this story of Keeper, his boxer dog, and his journey around Durrell's zoo in the Channel Islands. Keeper is indeed a zoo keeper who observes animal behaviour, undertakes discussion with the animals on their diet, features and preferred habitats, and rescues an animal in distress. The device underlying the story lacks subtlety; the anthropomorphism and instructional intent of the book are very obvious. Colour illustrations by Keith West

are biologically accurate and a strong feature of this picture book. J. Buckley
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 656711

McKEE, David King Rollo and Santa's beard. Andersen, 1990
ISBN 0862642868

Wry humour prevails in this picture book as King Rollo, the Magician, Queen Gwen and Cook set off on their quest to solve the problem of Santa's missing beard. The terrible Darl is not the adversary they anticipate, and cooperative action produces happy results. The text is mostly dialogue which closely matches the colourful, cartoon style illustrations. This format will assist newly independent readers. J. Buckley
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 652428

MacDONALD, Amy Little beaver and the echo. Walker, 1990
ISBN 0744504430



Little Beaver's loneliness is dispelled by the chance discovery of an echo. In response to the message echoing across the large pond Little Beaver paddles in his

canoe and meets new friends along the way. Full-page colour illustrations by Sarah Fox-Davies capture the tranquility of the pond and the beauty of the wilderness landscape. The satisfying resolution of a forlorn situation combined with strong visual appeal make sharing this simple story a pleasurable experience. B. Mitchell

LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: \$15.95 ASCIS 637124

LESTER, Alison Magic beach. Allen & Unwin, 1990
ISBN 0044422989

All the activities of a holiday by the beach are described in rhyming text and charmingly illustrated in this picture book. Each activity is illustrated and followed by a demonstration of its imaginative extension. Swimming becomes riding sea horses, building sandcastles leads to heroic rescue and exploring rock pools becomes an underwater trip. Alison Lester's use

of colour, decorative borders and well observed depiction of children characterise the illustrations which link a series of real and fantasy scenes rather than building into a story. J. Buckley
 LEV: Preschool Lower primary Middle primary
 AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 652431

MULLER, Robin *The magic paintbrush*. Ashton Scholastic, 1990
 ISBN 0868966207

This is a reassuring tale in which good overcomes evil. Nib is a poor street urchin who saves an old man. In return he is given a magic paintbox, which turns every picture into real life. In true fairy tale fashion a wicked king seizes him and Nib must use his magic. Although the story is rather predictable, the powerful illustrations in this picture book are a beautiful representation of the period of the story. J. Pogson
 LEV: Upper primary
 AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 652232

BAILEY, Lydia Mei *Ming and the dragon's daughter*. North Winds, 1990
 ISBN 0590733699

Striking colour illustrations by Martin Springett using Chinese symbols and images are well integrated with the text of this traditional Chinese tale. This retelling of Mei Ming's plan to bring water to her village by cooperating with the dragon's daughter is told sparingly and with grace. Well-designed pages, some incorporating decorative borders, increase the impact of this handsome picture book. J. Buckley
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
 AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 663633



HOLLEYMAN, Sonia *Mona the vampire*. Orchard, 1990
 ISBN 185213240X

Inspired by a bedtime story Mona, aided by her cat, Fang, adopts a new persona: Mona the vampire. Before the attraction fades Mona has fun, in character, both at home and at school. Attractive, bright illustrations add to the exuberance of Mona's immersion in her role play. An appealing story, featuring a lovingly tolerant

family, and humour evident on every page make this a popular choice for young readers. B. Mitchell
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
 AVAIL: \$17.95 ASCIS 646427

BAKER, Leslie *Morning beach*. Little, Brown, 1990
 ISBN 0316078352

The narrator (un-named) is filled with joy at the prospect of spending her summer holiday at Grandma's with her 'mom'. The reader shares the excitement of the preparations for and journey to the beach on the first morning. Splendid watercolours which set the mood, complement the simple but charming story. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Preschool Lower primary
 AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 637126

ROSS, Tony *Mrs Goat and her seven little kids*. Andersen, 1990
 ISBN 0862642531

The stranger danger message endures this updating of a traditional tale retold in Tony Ross' inimitable style. The scattered toys include a skateboard, soccer ball and roller skates but the essential elements of the familiar story are retained in this lively retelling. The wolf is devious in his treachery, the kids are not totally gullible and the mother goat is suitably vengeful. Altogether this is a satisfying rendition which will attract a wide audience, including those who may be reluctant to visit the 'fairy tales'. B. Mitchell
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
 AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 622658

ALLEN, Pamela *My cat Maisie*. Viking, 1990
 ISBN 0670832510

Living with pets and respecting their needs are new discoveries for Andrew when a stray cat befriends him. After involving the cat in an array of boisterous games, Andrew is sad to find that the cat has left. His own treatment by the big dog next door allows him to learn that animals need respect. Pamela Allen's bright and charming illustrations complement the positive mood of the story and encourage the reader to sympathise with Andrew's emotions. J. Buckley
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
 AVAIL: \$16.99 ASCIS 648960

FRONT, Sheila *Never say Macbeth*. Deutsch, 1990
 ISBN 0233984542

Jeremy Lamb, aspiring actor, finds a job as a stagehand at the Globe Theatre. Mayhem erupts however, when he forgets Sir Montague Worthington-Browne's warning and transgresses the rules of theatrical superstition. Other theatrical terms are introduced to

the young reader in this book which is 'scripted and stage managed' cleverly and humorously by Mrs Sheila Front, complemented by warmly-toned pictures, costumes and sets by Charles Front. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
 AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 633480

HARRIS, Dorothy Joan *No dinosaurs in the park*. North Winds, 1990
 ISBN 0-590-73210-2

Grandpa makes a visit to the park exciting for his little granddaughter who is fascinated by dinosaurs. Special gifts of love and imagination bond the 2 creating an exclusive experience of enjoyment and satisfaction. Beautifully complementing the text, and illustrations by Sylvie Daigneault bring the reader into the game as common animals take on prehistoric identities. Her mother's practical remark fails to diminish the little girl's faith and pleasure in her outing shared with Grandpa. B. Mitchell
 LEV: Preschool Lower primary
 AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 642700

TREVASKIS, Ian *Quincy*. Ashton Scholastic, 1990
 ISBN 0868965472

Christopher is afraid of dogs, and takes a very wide detour on the way home from school rather than encounter the scariest dog in town. The series of misfortunes he has to face leave him wondering whether avoiding the dog was really the right decision to make. Told in large text, with a simple sentence structure, the humour of the tale is reinforced by the full and double-page watercolour illustrations. The dangers of Christopher's activities - not going straight home, and walking on the railway lines, could best be emphasised if this picture book was used on a 1 to 1 basis. K. Channells
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
 AVAIL: \$14.36 ASCIS 631822

WILD, Margaret *Remember me*. Margaret Hamilton, 1990
 ISBN 0947241221

The hope is that one day Ellie and her grandmother will catch a bus to go and watch the ships come in. The problem is that Grandma is not so good at remembering some things. In a variation on the grandparent theme currently so beloved by authors of picture books, Grandma is the narrator, which intensifies the poignancy of her loss of memory. This is however, a beautiful and invigorating book: the warmth of the relationship between Grandma and Ellie, Grandma's

indomitable zest for life, the kindness of the humour and of course Dee Huxley's glorious and descriptive illustrations combine to yield a treasure. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
 AVAIL: \$16.95
 EVAL: Highly recommended

SHEPPERSON, Rob *The Sandman*. Andersen, 1990
 ISBN 0862642655



For those not familiar with the traditional role of the Sandman an explanation appearing in a prologue is helpful. Pictures and text blend harmoniously to tell a delightful story of Jay, a small boy, waiting up to see the Sandman.

Sparing use of text, elaborated on by full watercolour illustrations, is a judicious choice. The zest and fantasy qualities of Jay's experience are capably depicted as the well-known ploys of getting children to sleep are tried. Reminiscent of *There's a sea in my bedroom* this title is worthy of acclaim. B. Mitchell
 LEV: Preschool Lower primary
 AVAIL: \$16.95
 EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 637771

ROWE, Jeannette *Scallywag*. Ashton Scholastic, 1990
 ISBN 086898591X

Scallywag, a fat and contented cat, has life well organised. He visits several households for his daily needs, enjoying a variety of treats and answering to several names. When one day he cannot be found, the families involved meet one another and make plans for the cat's reduced kilojoule diet. Rowe's bright colour illustrations complement the text in this well designed picture book. J. Buckley
 LEV: Preschool Lower primary Middle primary
 AVAIL: \$15.95 ASCIS 652406

DALGLEISH, Joan *The snail and the cherry tree*. Cambridge University Press, 1990
 ISBN 0521400031

Fresh from its winter sleep, the snail makes a long trek across the farm to capture the biggest, the reddest, the most beautiful cherry on the cherry tree. Joan Dalgleish's text is very metaphorical and partly repetitive; Gillian Campbell's illustrations are vibrant with the colour and life of the farm. F. Gardiner
 LEV: Lower primary
 AVAIL: \$17.95 ASCIS 651040

REYNOLDS, Pat *Tom's friend*. Allen & Unwin, 1990
ISBN 0044422261

When Tom finds a blue-tongue lizard and keeps it as a pet, his mother wisely helps him to discover that the lizard also needs freedom. Realistic black-and-white drawings fill the pages of this picture book and contribute much to the impact of this gentle story which perceptively explores the concepts involved in caring for wild animals. J. Buckley
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper \$7.95 ASCIS 644273

SANDERSON, Ruth *The twelve dancing princesses*. Little, Brown, 1990
ISBN 0316770175

The predominant feature in this retelling of the well-known story from the Brothers Grimm, is the outstanding quality of the illustrations. Backed by research into 15th century costumes and dancing Ruth Sanderson's choice of oil on canvas has authenticity, depth of detail, texture and colour unusual in children's literature. The style aptly depicts the romantic atmosphere of subterfuge and fantasy of the tale. Add this edition to your collection by virtue of its beauty even if duplicating a story. B. Mitchell
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 637896

FOREMAN, Michael *War boy a country childhood*. Pavilion, 1989
ISBN 1851453539

Michael Foreman's personal account of life as a youngster during World War II in Pakefield, an English village only 90 miles from German airfields, makes a visually stunning book. The diversity of media and contrasts in use of colour is used to great effect to illustrate almost every aspect of the text, which, although presented in a picture book or perhaps coffee-table, format, is essentially the length of a short novel. Although the vocabulary is moderately difficult, the simplicity of sentence structure and the appeal of the content make it a treasure for reluctant older readers. F. Gardiner
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: \$24.99 ASCIS 611868

ARMITAGE, Ronda *When Dad did the washing*. Deutsch, 1990
ISBN 0233985344

When Dad did the washing everything came out pink: not because Dad is portrayed as a bumbling housekeeper but because unbeknown to him Joss had put in his red tracksuit. With simple text by Ronda

Armitage and pen and watercolour illustrations by David Armitage, this is a pleasant little vignette of family life. F. Gardiner
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 639363

HUNT, Nan *The whistle stop party*. Angus & Robertson, 1990
ISBN 0207169799

Once again we make a welcome visit to Mrs Millie Mack's lounge where trains rattle through at the behest of a burning half door from a bogey louver. In this 3rd book in the series, all the trains and their crews gather to celebrate the retirement of Mick, the guard on the mixed goods. With lots of spoken word and some clever train noises, the text makes fine read-aloud material, while Craig Smith's illustrations have an old-fashioned quality reminiscent of another age when steam reigned supreme. F. Gardiner
LEV: Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 ASCIS 648382

BAKER, Jeannie *Window*. MacRae, 1991
ISBN 0862034922

Jeannie Baker's belief that by understanding and changing the way we personally affect the environment we can make a difference to world conservation is strongly stated in this wordless picture book. Through a window we view the same scene as time passes and a baby grows and develops. With each passing year more of the natural world is surrendered to urban congestion. Baker's beautifully composed, detailed collages are full of colour and invite close examination. They are directly harnessed to her conservation message in this powerful and thought provoking work. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$17.95 ASCIS 661036

DUNBAR, Fiona *You'll never guess!* Hutchinson, 1990
ISBN 0091742382

Fiona Dunbar has made clever use of silhouettes in this unusual picture book. One child guesses (always incorrectly) what the shape is; the other child comments on the correct image. The result is an original format which will amuse and delight young readers as the improbable solutions are revealed. The twist at the end provides the collection with a memorable conclusion. B. Mitchell
LEV: Preschool Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 637093 ♦

■ Presenting information 7-12

Following is a list of books that will provide useful curriculum material, and/or will be valuable recreational reading. There is a particularly strong section on Home science. In deference to the value of information, we have avoided the negative term, non-fiction, in our bibliography. All titles are listed in Dewey order.

MERRISON, Tim *Teen magazines*. Wayland, 1989
ISBN 185207103 [070.4]

Copiously illustrated with examples from its subject matter, this is an easy and informative entry into careers in magazine publishing. While broadly covering the stages and processes of publishing, it provides useful job and role descriptions and entry needs for jobs within the industry. Unfortunately, its interest to potential readers may wane as the illustrative material dates. G. Spindler
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 631720

RICHARDS, Clare *Issues: what Christians think*. Blackie, 1989
ISBN 0216924219 [261]

A wide range of social issues from family and personal ones (marriage, death, contraception etc) to national and international issues (politics, religion, conservation etc) are raised. After specific and easily understood introductions, a Christian viewpoint, related news stories and questions are raised. In fact there is a Christian viewpoint evident at all stages, including selection of documents and questions, but no-one using the book could fail to be aware of this. Worthwhile questions and issues here but teachers would need to consider issues of balance. G. Spindler
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$18.95 ASCIS 632155

MILLIKEN M.C. *Cities and factories*. Longman Cheshire, 1990 (Explorations in geography book 3)
ISBN 0-582-66281-8 [304.2]

Illustrating the topic with case studies from across the world, this text has been developed for the junior geography syllabus in Queensland schools and is intended to present accessible, current information on a range of cities and industrial locations. Case studies have been chosen from around the world to highlight the distinctive character of each place and tables, maps and photographs facilitate the development of the skills of description, explanation and interpretation. This 2nd edition has been revised and photographs updated, however much statistical data is dated. L. Bowring
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$19.99 ASCIS 627505

WOODHEAD, Judith *All our children: a window on the world of childhood*. ABC Enterprises, 1990 (An ABC book)
ISBN 0-7333-0008-1 [305.2]

Fifty children from around the world were featured in a BBC television series and this book documents something of each child's story of childhood. There is a powerful thread of common humanity which promotes empathy despite the substantial cultural differences. Many photographs from the television series support the text. This book would be particularly valuable for providing case studies for childhood studies, home economics, junior geography or even for sharing with younger readers. L. Bowring
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$24.99 ASCIS 646364

GUNSTONE, Heather *Journey through adolescence*. Longman Cheshire, 1990
ISBN 0582869463 [305.2]



Developed for a section of a Victorian syllabus, this text is most suited to the junior Home science syllabus with a very adequate coverage of the issues of concern to the adolescent. Clear diagrams, and carefully thought out photographs provide a suitable backdrop for the text, highlight content and

maintain student interest. Activities at the end of each of the 3 parts allow for revision of chapters. Language is most suitable for junior secondary. The first part of the book will be of value as an introduction to the child development section of the Year 11 Home science syllabus. H. Cooper
LEV: Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$16.99 ASCIS 660665

ADAMS, Caren *No is not enough: helping teenagers avoid assault*. Collins, 1989
ISBN 0-00673499-5 [306.7]

A well written, clear guide for teachers and parents wishing to discuss sexual harassment and the

prevention of sexual assault with teenagers, this book provides accurate information. Misconceptions are stated and then convincingly refuted. The positive strategies with an emphasis on self esteem can be used with individuals or class groups and can be used as an adjunct to other child protection materials. L. Bowring
AUD: Parents Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$6.95 ASCIS 613294

BROOKS, Brian Working towards 2000: the changing nature of work. CCH Australia, 1990
 ISBN 1862642699 [331.10994]

What does the future hold for the nature of work in Australia? The trends are observable in society and are addressed in this well laid out, authoritative textbook. The pithy text deals with aspects of work, where and how they affect the law. Topics covered include trade unions, employers, governments, relationships between employers and employees, superannuation, and conciliation and arbitration. Exercises are designed to extend the student, and there is an extensive index and bibliography. L. Bowring
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$19.50 ASCIS 637635

SPENCELEY, Geoff A bad smash: Australia in the depression of the 1930s. McPhee Gribble, 1990 (Australian economic and social history)
 ISBN 0-86914-188-0 [338.5]

In presenting a re-evaluation of primary and secondary source reports of the economic and social conditions of the 1930s depression, this authoritative and extensively researched book questions many of the current ideas about this depression in Australia. Scholarly in presentation, it is suited only for more able students or as teacher reference in the areas of economics and history. L. Bowring
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$9.99 ASCIS 622657

BAILEY, Peter H. Human rights Australia in an international context. Butterworths, 1990
 ISBN 0-409-30057-8 [342.94]

Dealing with many of the main issues of human rights this authoritative analysis contains both an Australian and an international perspective and draws many case examples from both areas. Extensively indexed and referenced, it is a comprehensive work designed for both students of the law and legal practitioners. Teachers will find it a useful reference. L. Bowring
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$55.00 ASCIS 620788

Rights and freedoms in Australia/edited by Jude Wallace and Tony Pagone. Federation, 1990
 ISBN 1-86287-026-8 [342.94]

This enlightening, authoritative and up-to-date work which explains the fundamental rights which underline Australian law has been written by a number of well-qualified contributors. It is valuable both for legal studies as well as for general reference. An index would have facilitated access to the succinct explanations which follow the questions posed as sub-headings. This is an excellent companion volume to the law handbooks which contain the state's law without explanation of their *raison d'être*. Parents and teachers will also find it useful. L. Bowring
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$22.95 ASCIS 616575

FAGAN, Margaret The fight against homelessness. Gloucester, 1990 (Understanding social issues)
 ISBN 0-7496-0299-6 [362.5]

The plight of the homeless in predominantly affluent industrialised nations, and particularly the UK and USA is addressed in this accessible, concisely written book. Supported by statistics and illustrated by colour and black-and-white photographs, the text encapsulates many of the issues concerning the homeless and provides a starting point for further research on the Australian scene. A useful index and a short word list assist the researcher. L. Bowring
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: \$18.95 ASCIS 652798

Teaching legal aid. The Commission, 1990
 ISBN 0-947184-24-2 [362.507]

Designed to be used by teachers in secondary schools, this spiral bound book clearly and simply explains the history and role of legal aid and how it can be accessed by young people. The book contains lesson outlines, case studies suitable for role plays, master sheets for overheads which are linked to the lessons, a list of resources available from the Legal Aid Commission and a guide to the location of Legal Aid offices. All of these are able to be photocopied. L. Bowring
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$15.00
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 622431

NOURSE, Alan E. Teen guide to survival. Watts, 1990
 ISBN 0-7496-0345-3 [362.7]

Teenagers face many dangers in their lives. Drinking and driving, violence at school, depression and suicide,

tobacco and other drugs, and sexually transmitted diseases are discussed in this hardcovered, British publication. Anecdotes at the beginnings of chapters attempt to involve the reader but the text presumes set knowledge and attitudes and is on occasions didactic. Most advice is valuable; however, whilst some of the options for avoiding drink driving (such as not drinking) are great, advising driving without a licence is worrying, especially when options of public transport, cabs or walking are not considered.

L. Bowring
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$17.95 ASCIS 653434

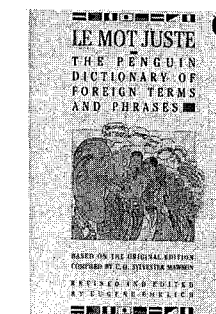
DICKSON, Paul What do you call a person from...? a dictionary of resident names. Facts on File, 1990
 ISBN 0816019835 [422.03]

What do you call a person from Medicine Hat, Canada, or Kent, England? (The first is a 'Hatter' and the second depends on which side of the River Medway they're from.) Where do Monegasques, Tricastinois or Zonians come from? All this and more in this authoritative, light and interesting, and occasionally wry dictionary. A worldwide coverage includes some Australian material (although Northern Territory became Northwest Territory at one point) but is certainly not exhaustive. Could be useful if the need arises - especially for limerick writers. G. Spindler
AUD: Professional
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$29.95 ASCIS 645820

SCHUR, Norman W. 1000 most obscure words. Facts on File, 1990
 ISBN 0816020140 [423]

Has the malversation of hegumen ever reduced you to obmutescence? Obmutescence (remaining wilfully speechless) is not a fault of this often amusing and surprisingly down-to-earth book. The 1000 words are explained in an anecdotal, personal and direct style which is genuinely informative, placing the words in their historical, cultural and etymological settings. The possibilities for obfuscation (a word not sufficiently obscure to appear in this book) are endless - suggesting students depart the library via the vomitorium, for example, ought to provoke some interesting responses. G. Spindler
AUD: Professional
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$39.95 ASCIS 645973

EHRlich, Eugene Le mot juste: the Penguin dictionary of foreign terms and phrases. Penguin, 1990
 ISBN 014051225X [423]



Easy to use explanations of non-English words and phrases likely to be encountered in English and American literature. The main listing is of foreign phrases in alphabetical order but the slightly misleadingly-named index is a listing of English words which provide access back to the non-English entries. Explanations are short and clear. As claimed, it

does offer insight into attitudes and practices by showing how different peoples express themselves and that 'people everywhere have thoughts that are marvellously alike and astonishingly different'. G. Spindler
AUD: Professional
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$16.99 ASCIS 637731

HASSARD, Jack Science experiences: cooperative learning and the teaching of science. Addison-Wesley, 1990
 ISBN 0-201-23134-4 [507]

Teachers wanting to implement cooperative learning strategies will find this an excellent support book. It contains outstanding ideas for teaching strategies, classroom organisation to promote student-centred/cooperative learning strategies, excellent units of work and a range of strategies. Unfortunately it contains American, not Australian, examples and resources. S. Ford
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$37.95
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 643789

BLENSDORF, Peter Scientists at work. Longman Cheshire, 1990
 ISBN 0-582-86795-9 [509.2]

A series of interviews with a cross section of both male and female Australian scientists make this book particularly useful as a library resource. Many issues are covered, such as biotechnology, marine and river studies, managing natural resources, communication and consumer science, thus enlightening and informing students (who would otherwise have no idea) about various things scientists do. The language level is appropriate and simple, making it very readable. A. Nielsen
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$12.99 ASCIS 643122

WALSH, Michael **Maths everywhere. Book 1.** Coghill, 1990
ISBN 0949168808 [510]

This book, although written for use in Victorian schools, provides an excellent resource for those teachers wishing to integrate problem solving contexts into their lessons. Topics covered include: flow charts; the 4 operations with whole numbers; statistics and graphs; early algebra including simple equations and formulae; symmetry and tessellations; decimals; measurement of time and temperature; measurement and use of angles; length area and volume; consumer mathematics and simple graphs and relations. B. Mowbray

LEV: Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$19.95
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 639308

KAHN, E. **Maths for the real world.** Longman Cheshire, 1989
ISBN 0582662699 [510.76]

This book supports several of the courses written for the VCE. It aims to provide teachers with a resource suitable for the students who do not wish to pursue mathematics in future studies. The book emphasises: everyday applications of mathematics; use of calculators and computers where appropriate; the non-dependence upon calculators by providing regular practice in mental arithmetic; and regular review of work. The use of spreadsheets in the classroom as a means of developing algebraic skills is new to New South Wales schools. This approach demonstrates the relevance of algebra to all students. Topics treated in the text are calculations, consumer mathematics, graphs, trigonometry, statistics, probability, business mathematics, measurement and mathematics for living. B. Mowbray

LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$21.99 ASCIS 609967

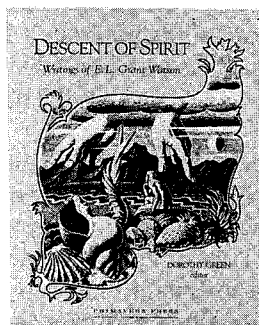
The Geometry of Islamic [kit] Resource Services, 1989
ISBN 07240054839 [516]

This kit consists of a series of work sheets, teachers notes and slides designed to support the geometry strand of the Board of Studies, year 7 and 8 syllabus in Mathematics. The kit provides a multicultural perspective to the section on geometric construction and demonstrates the complexity of Islamic designs. A series of copyright free worksheets are included which can be used to reproduce some of the complex patterns. The exercises are well set out and easily completed in the classroom situation. Although designed to support

the year 7 and 8 course, the kit has application in the design section of the Mathematics in practice syllabus. B. Mowbray

LEV: Lower secondary
AVAIL: Resource Services Distribution Private Bag 3, Ryde 2112 \$24.00 NSW Stateschools; other NSW \$30.00; interstate \$36.00. Product no 05171
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 616475

WATSON, E.L. **Grant Descent of spirit: writings of E.L. Grant Watson.** Primavera, 1990
ISBN 0958949492 [574.909]



Unorthodox shape, soothing cream paper, woodcuts - this is a 1990 paperback but it belongs to another age. Nor is its writing 'ordinary' - wonderfully drawn, intimate pictures of nature which must have influenced Gerald Durrell amongst others. Watson (1885-1970) is an unfairly forgotten 'universal man', but mainly

a biologist and novelist, with an infectious sense of wonder about the natural and human world. The 26 essays range across time, place and subject - Australian Aborigines, death, the love life of slugs, evolution, and more. Although unlikely to appeal to most adolescents, this could be an important book in the lives of a few readers. G. Spindler

AUD: Professional
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$19.95 ASCIS 629697

MACKENZIE, Frances **The Penguin consumer guide to medicines: the complete Australian reference to prescription and non-prescription drugs.** Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0-14-012973-1 [615]

An authoritative guide to medicines by well qualified writers, this book presents information about many drugs in a standardised, 2-page drug chart. Each drug chart provides information on generic and brand names, basic information, uses, dosage and usage, overdoses, side-effects and adverse reactions and interactions with other drugs and substances. There is an index which includes both generic and brand names. Instructions as to the use of the book are given at the beginning, with a detailed explanation of the drug charts and a glossary of medical terms. A useful reference for responsible consumers. L. Bowring
AUD: Parents Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$19.99 ASCIS 634189

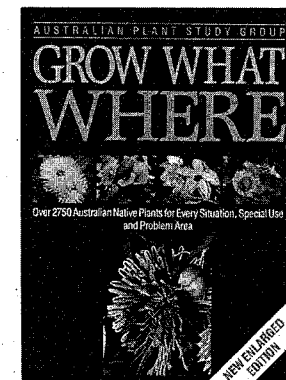
WACHTER, Oralee **Sex, drugs and AIDS.** Penguin, 1990
ISBN 0-14-034191-9 [616.97]

A user-friendly presentation with lots of black-and-white stills from a film makes this an accessible, appealing resource for teenagers. The main risk behaviours of contracting AIDS are identified and appropriate avoidance techniques are suggested. Not sensationalist, the information is presented in a simple, accurate, non-judgemental way, with additional specific details included in question-answer format at the end. Contact addresses are English. L. Bowring
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 ASCIS 642522

Grow what where: over 2750 Australian native plants for every situation, special use and problem area. Viking O'Neil, 1990
ISBN 0-670-90150-4 [635.9]

The avid amateur or professional gardener will treasure this guide to Australian native plants. Plants are grouped by 106 criteria such as suitability to a particular location, their nature, colour of their flowers or prickles. Even the type of bird they attract is used as a category for listing. As this is a comprehensive work, plants are listed only by their botanic names. This may baffle a user familiar with only common names, particularly as only a small number are featured in the colour photographs. L. Bowring
AUD: Parents Professional
AVAIL: \$40.00 ASCIS 618383



BURNETT-FELL, Beverly **The business of living: family studies & food science in the 1990s.** Jacaranda, 1990
ISBN 0701626801 [640]

This text makes a very satisfactory attempt to cover the year 9-10 Home science syllabus content: family life; nutrition and foods; management of resources. Features of each chapter include: keywords; main concepts; activities highlighted with a coloured border; and an end of chapter quiz. The answers to quiz questions are listed at the back of the text, allowing students to test their knowledge. Illustrations and photographs throughout each chapter are clear, relevant and suitable

for class discussion. Often a chapter begins with a cartoon providing a light-hearted discussion to introduce to the topic. H. Cooper

LEV: Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$21.95
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 654025

BUNNEY, Helen **Everyday living: creative design, fabrics and housing.** Brooks Waterloo, 1991
ISBN 0864404204 [640]

An activity based book most suited to years 9 and 10, this work, unusually, combines sections of the textiles and design syllabus and a section on housing from the home science syllabus which may make it difficult to obtain maximum value from the book. There is a useful section on choosing and using commercial patterns with clear, easy to follow illustrations especially of sewing techniques. An interesting feature is the use of student evaluation sheets at the end of some activities. However, general presentation will make it necessary to be selective when planning the use of the text as the theory component is limited.

H. Cooper
LEV: Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$11.95 ASCIS 658141

BUNNEY, Helen **Everyday living: families and foods.** Brooks Waterloo, 1990
ISBN 0864404077 [640]

This workbook provides a range of activities suitable for the food, nutrition, human development, management and consumer components of the home science syllabus. The activities are varied but do not exhibit the creativity evident in other activity workbooks. Illustrations are sparse, being used for labelling or highlighting an activity. The theory content of this workbook is limited and would require the use of support reference material in many instances.

H. Cooper
LEV: Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$11.95 ASCIS 645990

RIDDELL, Ruth **Exploring home economics.** Longman Cheshire, 1990
ISBN 0582868831 [640]

This 2nd edition provides a greater range of practical exercises throughout the book. Family and resource management provides a focal point for the book although the food and nutrition components are also explored. Recipes suited to the classroom are included. Presentation of the content allows for the integration of the syllabus strands. Illustrations have been used sparingly; charts have been used to good effect to

present information succinctly. Colour coding of exercises enables easy distinction between text and activities and will facilitate use. H. Cooper
LEV: Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$17.99
EVAl: Highly recommended ASCIS 647819

SMITH, Keith **Hard times: handbook.** Viking O'Neil, 1990
 ISBN 0670902756 [640]

This is an environmentally aware book which examines closely how to conserve resources, save energy and recycle clothing and encourages people to consider their needs and to balance these needs with available resources. It is a practical handbook for self-reliant and resource-wise living with relevance for aspects of the nutrition and food, and management of resources strands of the home science syllabus. Illustrations are limited and contribute little to the educational nature of the book. As people become more aware of resource management the value of these tried methods will be viewed in a new light. H. Cooper
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$12.99 ASCIS 637468

ASPIN, Lois **Individuals, families and anagement.** Longman Cheshire, 1990
 ISBN 0-582-86835-1 [640]

Comprehensive and easy to understand, this textbook on management in the context of the family is particularly suited to the home economics course. The information is well presented and covers concepts such as needs, wants, goals, priorities, values, standards and the resource and human management required to meet these demands. Communication is also emphasised. Each chapter includes a case study facilitating the exploration of concepts in varied but monocultural family contexts. The text is clearly laid out with technical terms in bold type, plenty of diagrams and illustrations, an index and bibliography and review questions at the end of each chapter. L. Bowring
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$14.99 ASCIS 643086

BARKER, Sue **Your future as a consumer.** Longman Cheshire, 1990
 ISBN 0-582-66250-8 [640]

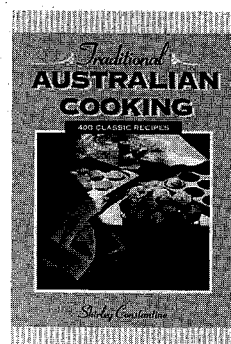
Many humorous illustrations entertain the reader of this introductory consumer textbook. Beginning with the concept of the consumer, the text proceeds to deal with buying, advertising, paying for, use and care of books. The content is sound. Sections are short and

followed by many activities and case studies to stimulate discussion and assist with revision. There is no index for the independent reader. L. Bowring
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$10.99 ASCIS 619987

LARSEN, Jennifer **What's for tea?** Longman Cheshire, 1990
 ISBN 0582663989 [641.1076]

An activities based book suited to the nutrition and meal management components of the home science syllabus. The range of activities and the clarity of their presentation will enable students to proceed through the activities with ease. Clear, relevant pencil diagrams throughout the text enhance its interest and highlight activities. Because the book is activity based, consideration must be given to its most appropriate use in the classroom. With the theory component of the book limited, alternative sources of syllabus content may need to be considered. H. Cooper
LEV: Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$11.99
EVAl: Highly recommended ASCIS 655997

CONSTANTINE, Shirley **Traditional Australian cooking: 400 classic recipes.** McPhee Gribble, 1991
 ISBN 0869142348 [641.5994]



Delights such as Sheepshead Pie (uses 3 heads), Hinkler Sponge ('you can't keep it from rising'), 21 ways of cooking tomatoes and, of course, lamingtons, keep the reader's gastric juices flowing. But this is much more than a recipe book, its introductory passages and the 400 recipes themselves are a rich social document and research source on Australian

domestic life c 1890-1920. Well written and presented, great fun and useful, too. G. Spindler
AUD: Professional
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: \$24.95 ASCIS 663108

GLAISTER, Robyn **Practical activities in catering.** Longman Cheshire, 1990
 ISBN 653233 [642.076]

While this book does not meet the needs of the Home science syllabus, the activities would be suitable to highlight syllabus areas, especially the sections on

safety, hygiene, food purchasing and storage, time management and menu planning. Presentation of activities is clear and concise with language most suited to junior secondary. Illustrations and charts are well presented with their clarity making them suitable for classroom use. This book would be useful if one were introducing a catering component to the curriculum. H. Cooper
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$12.99 ASCIS 653233

CUE, Kerry **Kerry Cue's Worser homes and gardens.** Penguin, 1990
 ISBN 0-14-012726-7 [643]

Anyone considering buying a home needs to read this humorous guide. Packed with helpful hints which range from translating real estate advertisements through practical home hints (or as she puts them 'let's be practical, or safe orbital sanding for nudists') to enjoying the family home. Cue recounts many outrageous tales with wit and exaggeration. A light treat to entertain the most jaded renovator. L. Bowring
AUD: Parents
AVAIL: Paper \$11.99 ASCIS 620508

LARSEN, Jennifer **Gearing up.** Longman Cheshire, 1990
 ISBN 0582664934 [646.076]

This activity based book has activities very suitable to the structures and properties component of the syllabus. A non-sexist approach has been taken in a book that has clear instructions and well-presented illustrations which suit both the topic and the audience. Because it is an activity based book, reference may need to be made to other texts because of the limited theory component. H. Cooper
LEV: Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$11.99
EVAl: Highly recommended ASCIS 655996

LARSEN, Jennifer **Sew simple, so satisfying.** Longman Cheshire, 1990
 ISBN 0582664926 [646.076]

This book has 2 components: textiles and design and home science. Aimed at an introductory level for both syllabuses the language and diagrams are most suitable. Students are taken through activities of increasing complexity: covering fibres, fabrics and sewing; clothing styles and grooming; basic cooking terms and processes; meal planning and serving. Because the book is designed primarily as an individual student's notebook and the theory component is limited more

information from other texts may be required to meet syllabus demands. H. Cooper
LEV: Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$11.99
EVAl: Highly recommended ASCIS 649599

BURGESS, Ann **More than the clothes on your back.** Coghill, 1990
 ISBN 1863600000 [677]

Although a text prepared for Victorian schools, the problem-solving section on gathering information and the textile experiments would be useful for NSW teachers seeking activities to illustrate textile production, finishing and testing. Experiments can be selected as required as there is no need to complete all experiments in each chapter. Very few diagrams have been used except where necessary to illustrate an experimental procedure. Teachers need to be aware of the existence of a few spelling errors in the text. H. Cooper
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$12.95 ASCIS 639527

SPROULE, Anna **Women and the arts.** Wayland, 1989 (Women in history)
 ISBN 1-85210-504-6 [700]

This volume deals with women in the arts particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries and the changes of the 20th century. Acting, dance, fine arts, design, craft and music are the chosen areas of emphasis. As the scope is broad, the selection of individuals as examples can only be limited. Page-length biographies give more details on a few significant women. Many contemporary black-and-white illustrations and photographs, a glossary and index add to this worthy resource. L. Bowring
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$19.95 ASCIS 627128

In the same series:

WILLIAMS, Susan A. **Women and war.** Wayland, 1989
 ISBN 1-85210-503-8 [909.82]
 ASCIS 623093

MOUNTAINFIELD, Anne **Women and education.** Wayland, 1990
 ISBN 1-85210-647-6 [376]
 ASCIS 647052

MOSS, Miriam **Women and business.** Wayland, 1990
 ISBN 1-85210-500-3 [305.4]
 ASCIS 646943

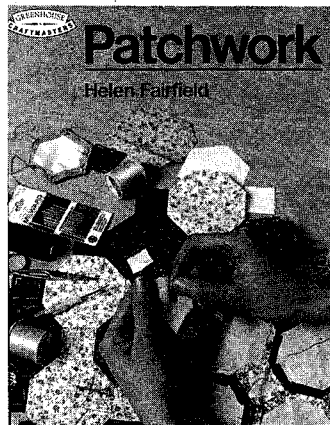
RIVERS, Margaret **Working on canvas**. Viking O'Neil, 1990
ISBN 0864363206 [746.44]

This is not a traditional embroidery text. The feature of this text is its creative approach to textile work which includes the combining of various techniques to produce a visually satisfying embroidery. A chapter on experimental work combines techniques of paint, dye, stitch variations and surface raising - suitable motivation for a design project. The illustrations and photographs are clear and simple yet they tempt readers to the challenge of creating their own canvas work.

H. Cooper
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$29.99 ASCIS 654928

FAIRFIELD, Helen **Patchwork**. Viking O'Neil, 1990
ISBN 0864363192 [746.46]

An attractive presentation with a selection of photographs, diagrams and illustrations that will motivate and instruct the reader. Suitable as a reference text this book would be useful to those who have mastered the basic patchwork steps and are interested in furthering patchwork skills. Techniques such



as quilting, applique, strip and cathedral window patchwork along with techniques of curved join construction will challenge the patchworker. Of particular value to those people relatively new to patchwork will be the glossary which contains terms not usually explained in other books along with basic information on colour, designing and equipment. H. Cooper
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$29.99 ASCIS 654924

LANGFORD, Michael **Michael Langford's 35mm handbook**. Viking O'Neil, 1989
ISBN 067091482 [770.28]

Langford's pocket sized reference book will tell you everything you want to know about taking photos. The author is well respected for other publications which have become standard texts for many photography courses. Unlike these more technical books, this handbook is intended for those wanting to

pick up some quick pointers. In 224 pages it certainly covers all aspects of camera usage, flash photography and film qualities needed by most serious snappers. The book is very accessible in terms of layout and text, crammed with good black-and-white and colour illustrations. A worthwhile book to have alongside his others. T. Hand

LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$19.95 ASCIS 623946

THOMPSON, Wendy **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**. Faber & Faber, 1990 (Composer's world)
ISBN 0571511317 [780.92]

This is an attractive work with imaginative layout and masses of excellent colour and black-and-white illustrations. Particularly interesting is the inclusion of playable piano versions of highlights from significant works. The readable text avoids the 'young lair' image popularised by the film *Amadeus*, offering the more sober, traditional view of a brilliant young musician trying to break from the constraints of patronage in a society not quite ready for him. G. Spindler

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$16.99
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 656528

MOLLOY, Bruce **Before the interval: Australian mythology and feature films, 1930-1960**. University of Qld Press, 1990
ISBN 0702222690 [791.43]

Don't judge a book by its cover. This book explores the relationship between Australian feature films produced between 1930 and 1960 and the society from which they came and were directed. Many writers have attempted to explore this relationship between society and its cultural products, but few have produced such a thorough film-based analysis as Bruce Molloy. Apart from giving a background to the films of this period, the book also analyses the relationship between culture and film from a sociological and semiotic perspective. To achieve this, the book centres on the myths of Australiana; how they are formed, defined, interpreted and changed in terms of the popular culture, particularly its cinema. T. Hand

LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$29.95 ASCIS 616086

FRITH, David **Australia versus England: a pictorial history of every Test match since 1877**. Viking O'Neil, 1990
ISBN 067090323X [796.35]

It is just what the title says, up till 1989 anyway. Brief match descriptions are supported by photographs and line drawings (1165 in all! - statistics being,

inevitably, a feature of the book). A useful reference and a visual social history of the game - changing styles of play, dress, pitches and crowds. The emphasis and selection stresses the Australian viewpoint but it is otherwise not too partisan. G. Spindler

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$29.99 ASCIS 660570

BIRKETT, Bill **Women climbing: 200 years of achievement**. Black, 1989
ISBN 0713657197 [796.5]

The frontispiece sums it up. Mont Blanc summit, 1838. Four male climbers dressed for alpine climbing hold aloft a triumphant Mlle Henriette d'Angeville - fully and voluminously dressed more for the drawing room than the cliff face. The story behind the picture casts even more light, but this book could be an allegory of social change for women and the additional barriers they face. It is a series of accounts of outstanding women climbers over 200 years and while the degree of specialisation might mean only the committed read it in detail, its stories and photos reward even the casual scanner. G. Spindler

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$29.95 ASCIS 632152

COLMAN, Adrian **Shakespeare's Henry IV, part 1**. Sydney University Press, 1990 (Horizon studies in literature)
ISBN 0-424-00150-0 [822.3]

Contemporary Australian academics provide fresh perspectives on some favourite NSW HSC and senior texts. Themes, characterisation, language and a little authorial background information are all presented with readable interest. The staging aspects of the play are not neglected either. Two-unit English students and their teachers will find much of value in these little books. E. Beckett

LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$7.95
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 620942

In the same series:

GAY, PENNY **Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice**. Sydney University Press, 1990 [823]
ISBN 0-424-00148-9 ASCIS 620937

ORANGE, Michael **Joseph Conrad's Heart of darkness**. Sydney University Press, 1990 [823]
ISBN 0-424-00154-3 ASCIS 629197

WEBBY, Elizabeth **Modern Australian plays**. Sydney University Press, 1990 [822.009]
ISBN 0-424-00152-7 ASCIS 629206

MARTIN, Christopher **Charles Dickens**. Wayland, 1989 (Life and works)
ISBN 1-85210-677-8 [823]

In this series, an integrated approach presents British authors by surveying landmarks of their lives and outstanding features of their writing accompanied by many black-and-white illustrations. Featuring photographs and line-drawings, the lives are vivid and closely allied to family background, cultural climate and quotes from relevant letters, documents, journals, etc. Works are summarised with emphasis on their themes and their importance, often illustrated with stills from film productions. Some illustrations are included only to create period, but overall the abundance of them enlivens the subject matter. Each book concludes with an informative glossary, a list of dates, further reading and information lists, and excellent index. E. Beckett

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 622142

In the same series:

FLYNN, Nigel **George Orwell**. Wayland, 1989
ISBN 1-85210-492-9 [823]
ASCIS 622178

COOK, Cornelia **Thomas Hardy**. Wayland, 1989
ISBN 1-85210-420-1 [823]
ASCIS 609267

CHAMPION, Neil D.H. **Lawrence**. Wayland, 1989
ISBN 1-85210-422-8 [823]
ASCIS 622138

ASBEE, Sue **Virginia Woolf**. Wayland, 1989
ISBN 1-85210-676-X [823]
ASCIS 622168

THOMPSON, Wendy **Ludwig van Beethoven**. Faber, 1990 (Composer's world)
ISBN 0571511368 [870.92]

This is an attractive work with imaginative layout and masses of excellent colour and black-and-white illustrations. Particularly interesting is the inclusion of playable easy piano versions of highlights from significant works. An easily read text balances the events of Beethoven's life and brief descriptions of his major works with the dramatic events of his time to which his music so often responded. G. Spindler
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$16.99
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 656531

SHEEDY, Brian **Brian Sheedy's outback: Australia on a budget.** Penguin, 1990 (Viking O'Neil)
ISBN 0-670-90244-6 [919.429]

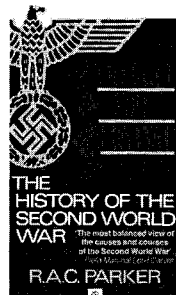
If you're not wanting to be told where to go but how to get there this book is for you. Taking off to the outback is many people's dream but how do you do it on a budget? Sheedy introduces you to a few who have done it, then goes on with a few practical suggestions as to how you can. Vehicles, routes, camping equipment and other preparations are handled in detail. Excellent practical advice is provided for those planning the great around Australia camping trip. L. Bowring
AUD: Parents Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$16.99 ASCIS 634195

SAWYER, Ralph **The ancient world.** Science Press, 1990
ISBN 0855831731 [930]

A textbook with a lively, contemporary approach covering the Stone Ages, Egypt, Israel, Greece, Rome, China and into the 'Dark Ages'. After establishing a somewhat rigid set of 'ages' to force 'world' history into, the book offers useful information in digestible chunks and accessible language. No glossary or index is provided. The many realistic black-and-white pencil illustrations seem to have a particular enthusiasm for violence. Research questions are not always clear or well supported by text or layout. Most chapters creditably attempt to bring the ancient story 'up-to-date', but this can stray into areas of contemporary controversy. G. Spindler
LEV: Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$16.95
EVAL: Consider before buying ASCIS 624115

PARKER, R.A.C. **Struggle for survival: the history of the Second World War.** Oxford University Press, 1990
ISBN 019289112X [940.53]

A very competent overview of the causes, course and outcomes of World War II. The voice and viewpoint are definitely British, but the account is impartial and maintains a well-balanced, worldwide perspective. Emphasis is placed on major political, military and economic issues related to the course of events, and social or biographical material should be looked for elsewhere. This is a very readable account, which easily incorporates factual material and the most current interpretations. G. Spindler
AUD: Professional
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 ASCIS 646571



SMITH, Nigel **Britain since 1945.** Wayland, 1990 (Witness history)
ISBN 1852108304 [941.085]

An informative coverage of major social, political and economic issues in a complex almost-half century in Britain. Chapters are short and well illustrated with photographs and documents. They are supported by biographies, time line and references. Questions are integrated with the text and tend to get lost. The language level is a little above what ought to be expected from the format. A useful overview of a period of enormous change. G. Spindler
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 631987

KRONENWETTER, Michael **Northern Ireland.** Watts, 1990
ISBN 0531109429 [941.6]

Not only Northern Ireland, but the whole 'Irish question' over 800 years of conflict is dealt with in this well-balanced, simply written historical account. Beginning with questions raised by a terrible chain of events set off when the SAS shot 3 IRA members in Gibraltar in 1988, it answers by reviewing the troubled history of Ireland and Northern Ireland to the present. The sound, brief accounts of the major events, organisation and players in this complex tragedy are well supported by graphic news photos. G. Spindler
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$19.95
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 652640

TRIGGS, Tony D. **Norman Britain.** Wayland, 1990 (History in evidence)
ISBN 1-85210-579-8 [942.02]

Emphasising how we use evidence to explain what we know about the past, each book deals succinctly with the period. Topics are primarily drawn from everyday life and are covered within 2 pages. There are many colourful photographs showing the historical features and primary sources referred to in the easy-to-read text. L. Bowring
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 637904

In the same series:

TRIGGS, Tony D. **Victorian Britain.** Wayland, 1990
ISBN 1-85210-582-8 [941.081]
ASCIS 637902

TRIGGS, Tony D. **Tudor Britain.** Wayland, 1989
ISBN 1-85210-581-X [941.05]
ASCIS 621123

O'CONNELL, Martin **Roman Britain.** Wayland, 1989
ISBN 1-85210-574-7 [936.2]
ASCIS 609408

TRIGGS, Tony D. **Saxon Britain.** Wayland, 1989
ISBN 1-85210-575-5 [942.01]
ASCIS 609462

MARSDEN, Barry M. **Prehistoric Britain.** Wayland, 1989
ISBN 1-85210-576-3 [936.1]
ASCIS 622116

MULVIHILL, Margaret **Mussolini and Italian fascism.** Watts, 1990 (World War II biographies)
ISBN 0749602430 [945.091]

It is simplistic to attribute to or blame Mussolini for everything that happened to Italy between 1922 and 1943 but there is no doubt that the vicious, foolish and irrational regime was very much in the image of its leader. Written simply, well-illustrated and supported with a chronology, glossary, index and bibliography, this is a useful, if limited, account of Il Duce, although Italian Fascism and indeed the Italian people and nation remain rather blurry backgrounds. G. Spindler
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$18.95 ASCIS 652718

CROSS, Robin **Roosevelt and the Americans at war.** Watts, 1990 (World War II biographies)
ISBN 0749602449 [973.917092]

A candid, easily read biography covering the life and career of F.D. Roosevelt. The writer remains fair and factual without attempting much evaluation. Emphasis is placed on World War II but more illumination probably comes from the details of his pre-World War II life. Well supported with appropriate photographs, charts, a useful chronology, glossary, bibliography and index. G. Spindler
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$18.95 ASCIS 652794

TRAVERS, John **Facts and figures Australia: a resource book for Australian students.** Longman Cheshire, 1989
ISBN 0582659884 [994]

Facts and statistics relating to Australian demography, history, agriculture, commerce, work, government and environment are presented simply and clearly in this valuable student resource. The data can be used in many subject areas including social studies, geography, history, commerce and home economics. Although

some statistics are getting old (1985), others are more recent and all have their date of collection clearly indicated. There is an index and a list of the main information sources. Exercises are provided in the companion Teachers' guide. L. Bowring
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 ASCIS 487855

TRAVERS, John **Facts and figures Australia: teachers' guide.** Longman Cheshire, 1989
ISBN 0582659892 [994]

A companion to the student source book, this guide presents simple exercises which encourage students to transform the data. These exercises which provide experience in information interpretation are photocopyable for classroom use. There are also teachers' notes which suggest the purpose of the exercise and other associated classroom activities. It cannot be used independently of the students' source book. Answers to all exercises are located in the back of the book. L. Bowring
AUD: Professional
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$17.99 ASCIS 487854

SKELTON, Kathy **Miss Gymkhana, R.G. Menzies and me: small town life in the fifties.** McPhee Gribble, 1990
ISBN 0869141953 [994.5]



In a small town, local happenings take on equal importance with world events in the life of a young girl growing up. With warmth and humour, Kathy Skelton recreates the special feeling of the 1950s, of the 'commos', royalty and Bob Menzies, padded bras, vital statistics and 'Miss' competitions. A highly entertaining

autobiographical account scattered with contemporary photographs with quirky subtitles, this book is a must for baby boomers to read and share. L. Bowring
AUD: Parents Professional
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$14.99
EVAL: Highly recommended ASCIS 642444 ♦

1991 Shortlist

The following books have been shortlisted for the 1991 Children's Book of the Year Awards. They are listed alphabetically by title; reference is made to the *scan* issue in which a review appears.

Picture books

- Counting on Frank** Rod Clement (Collins/Ingram)
scan 10/2/55
- Greetings from Sandy Beach** Bob Graham (Lothian)
scan 10/1/52
- Hector and Maggie** Janet and Andrew McLean (Allen & Unwin) *scan* 10/1/52
- Magic Beach** Alison Lester (Allen & Unwin)
scan 10/2/57
- My cat Maisie** Pamela Allen (Penguin/Viking)
scan 10/2/58
- Sallywag** Jeanette Rowe (Ashton Scholastic)
scan 10/2/59

Younger readers

- The black duck** Eleanor Nilsson/Rae Dale (Penguin) *scan* 10/2/49
- Boris and Borsch** Robin Klein/Cathy Wilcox (Allen & Unwin) *scan* 10/2/49
- Captain Deadlight's treasure** S.A. Wakefield/Julie Mac (Angus & Robertson) *scan* 10/1/54
- Finder's keepers** Emily Rodda (Omnibus)
scan 9/4/43
- First last and other stories** Julia McClelland/Ann James (Oxford University Press) *scan* 10/2/50
- Mervyn's revenge** Leone Peguero/Shirley Peters (Margaret Hamilton) *scan* 10/1/56

Older readers

- Brother Night** Victor Kelleher (Random Century)
scan 10/2/52
- The Devil's own** Deborah Lissen (Walter McVitty)
scan 9/6/32
- The family book of Mary Claire** Eleanor Spence (Collins Dove) *scan* 10/2/52
- The Farseekers** Isobelle Carmody (Penguin)
scan 10/2/53
- Speaking to Miranda** Caroline McDonald (Penguin/Viking) *scan* 10/2/54
- Strange objects** Gary Crew (Heinemann)
scan 9/6/39

Emergency librarian

This popular Canadian journal for teacher-librarians is now available through an Australian agency. New subscriptions are \$40; renewals are \$45. Other publications of interest to teacher-librarians are also available. Contact EL (Australia) PO Box 38 Turvey Park 2650.

Award winners

The Dromkeen Medal

Mem Fox has been awarded the 1990 Dromkeen Medal by the Governors of the Court Oldmeadow Children's Literature Foundation for her 'significant contribution to children's literature'.

Caldecott Medal

Black and white David Macauley (Houghton Mifflin)

Honour books

Puss in boots Charles Perrault (Illustrated by Fred Marcellino)

'More, more, more' said the baby: 3 love stories
Vera B. Williams

Newbery Medal

Maniac Magee Jerry Spinelli (Little, Brown)

Honour book

The true confession of Charlotte Doyle Avi (edited by Richard Jackson)

Smarties Prize

Grand Prix (and winner of the 9 - 11 year old category)

Midnight Blue Pauline Fisk (Lions)

6 - 8 year old category

Esio Trot Roald Dahl (Cape)

0 - 5 year old category

Six dinner Sid Inga Moore (Simon & Schuster)

Emil/Kurt Maschler Award

All join in Quentin Blake (Cape)

An alternative path to teacher-librarianship

Charles Sturt University — Mitchell (Bathurst) is now offering teacher-librarianship in its Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary) program. This initial teacher training course is designed for people who hold a professional qualification in librarianship recognised by the Australian Library and Information Association, and who wish to become secondary teacher-librarians. The course is external; subjects in teacher-librarianship are taught by lecturers in teacher-librarianship at the Riverina (Wagga) campus of Charles Sturt University. The course requires two years part-time study. For further details, contact The Course Coordinator Graduate Diploma in Education School of Teacher Education Charles Sturt University — Mitchell Bathurst 2795. Tel (063) 33 2338 or (063) 33 2413. ♦