

Pearly & Pig and the Great Hairy Beast

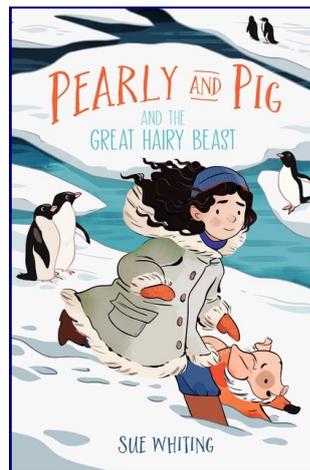
By Sue Whiting & Illustrated by Rebecca Crane
Publisher: Walker Books
ISBN 9781760653590 SCIS: 5387208
\$15.99

**Primary Fiction
Book of the Month**

Blurb:

A fast-paced junior fiction adventure starring a plucky new heroine that has to face her fears to save her parents, her friend and the day!

Pearly Woe is a worrier. She worries about everything, especially that she'll never be brave enough to become a member of the top-secret group of stealth adventurers – The Adventurologists' Guild. Pearly also has a special talent – she can talk to animals. Her favourite animal to talk to is her pet pig, called Pig. But with her parents missing, Pig pig-napped and Pearly a stowaway on an icebreaker heading for Antarctica, Pearly's worries just got REAL.



Lamont Review:

Pearly Woe is a junior adventurologist. She comes from a long line of adventurologists.

But suddenly her parents have gone missing and she has received a strange message for help from them. To add to her woes her pet Pig has been pig-napped too. Pearly must act fast to save them all!

She finds herself a stowaway on an icebreaking ship headed for Antarctica, only to find out that the horrible Ms Woods, a big game hunter, is in charge of the expedition and she has evil intentions!

Pearly will need all of her cunning and intelligence as a junior adventurologist to save the day... but will that be enough?

This is a terrific junior novel, suitable to any reader aged 8-12. I hope that it is the first in a series!

Reviewed by Rob

What Snail Knows

By Kathryn Apel & Illustrated by Mandy Foot
Publisher: University of Queensland Press
ISBN 9780702265464 SCIS: 5387200
\$14.99

Blurb:

Lucy and her dad move a lot. Lucy doesn't know why, but she thinks they might be hiding. Dad doesn't like it when people know too much.

It's easy to keep a secret if you keep to yourself. Lucy doesn't have friends – except for Snail, her pet snail.

When Lucy's Year 2 class focuses on helping others, Lucy slowly comes out of her shell. She likes this school, and her teacher, Miss Darling. She likes her classmates, especially Tahnee. She even likes Mei-hui's van park, where she lives with Dad – and Snail. Snail knows that Lucy doesn't want to run anymore.

But who can she turn to, when she's watching, waiting, worrying... and Dad doesn't come?



Lamont Review:

This is a beautifully told story about a delightful little girl named Lucy and her Dad, who is just trying to do the right thing in difficult circumstances.

It has always been only Lucy and her Dad. Her only friend is her pet snail. Lucy slowly learns the truth about what happened to her Mum, and why her Dad always wants it to be just the two of them.

But with their latest move, Lucy finds herself in a school where she loves her teacher and her class, and starts to feel comfortable enough to make friends. And Mei-hui, who runs the van park where they are staying, is also a welcome support to Lucy and her Dad. Can she convince her Dad that letting people into their life can help them, not hurt them?

When something happens and Lucy's Dad is not there to pick her up from school, her new friendship network highlights that we all need some help from time to time. Could this be the catalyst for change?

Lucy is a character that you will fall in love with from the start. She is a little girl wanting to fit in and enjoy that all life has to offer. There are strong themes of community and practical ways to help the environment. This story will be thoroughly enjoyed by junior to middle primary level readers.

Reviewed by Sam

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

Amanda Commander and the Purple Invitation

By Coral Vass & Illustrated by Heidi Cooper Smith

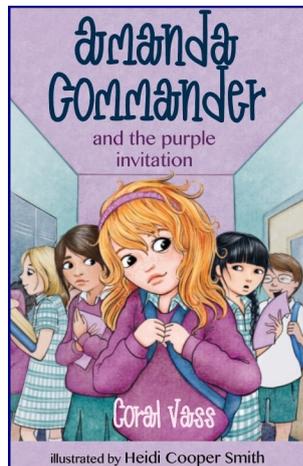
Publisher: Wombat Books

ISBN 9781761110771 SCIS: 5394644

\$12.99

Blurb:

When every girl in Year Three gets an invitation to Eve's birthday party except Amanda, Amanda makes a plan, with the help of the Dolphin Squad, to win herself an invitation before the week is through. Its OPERATION INVITATION! Amanda tries everything to make Eve like her and get an invitation to the party, until she finally learns its more important to be kind, not for what you can get but because of who you are.



Lamont Review:

This is the first title in a great new series for junior to middle primary school students.

Amanda is so disappointed when she is the only girl in Year Three who doesn't get an invitation to Eve's party. Her best friends, Lu and Mai, have been invited - and even offer not to go if Amanda can't.

Even the purple invitations look spectacular, so Amanda sets out to try and get an invitation from Eve. She does everything she can to get to close to Eve and be nice to her, but nothing seems to work. She is all out of options.

The party comes and goes, and Amanda missed going. Can she forgive Eve for not inviting her, or is there more to this situation?

With themes of friendship, problem solving, creativity, kindness and forgiveness, readers are sure to be looking forward to the next titles in this series, which will be part of our Standing Order selections later in the year.

Reviewed by Sam

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

Tyenna: Through My Eyes - Australian Disaster Zones

By Julie Hunt and Terry Whitebeach

Publisher: Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781760877019 SCIS: 5387308

\$16.99

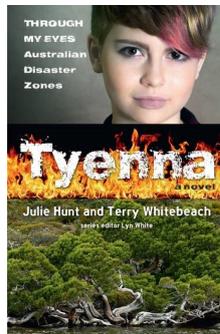
Blurb:

An engaging and suspenseful novel about one girl's experience of the terrifying Tasmanian bushfires.

They huddle low, nostrils burning from the smoke. A wave of despair flows over Tye. Nothing will survive this firestorm. The bush and everything she loves will be lost.

It's the summer holidays, and Tye is staying at her grandparents' lodge at Chancy's Point in Tasmania's beautiful Central Highlands. But her plans for fun with best friend Lily and working on her pencil pine conservation project are thwarted as fire threatens the community and the bush she loves - and when Tye discovers Bailey, a runaway boy hiding out, she is torn between secretly helping him and her loyalty to her grandparents.

As the fire comes closer and evacuation warnings abound, Tye is caught up in the battle of her life. Will she and Bailey survive? What will happen to her beloved pencil pines and the wildlife at risk? Can she and the close-knit Tasmanian community make a difference in a world threatened by climate change?



Lamont Review:

Tye loves spending the holidays with her grandparents, in the beautiful wilderness of Chancy's Point in Tasmania. She has a somewhat strained relationship with her Mum, and loves the lifestyle that bushland Tasmania offers, compared to her hometown of Melbourne.

She feels connected to the land and her surroundings, her Nan and Pop, the community and friends she has there, particularly her best friend Lily, and she takes a strong interest in the conservation projects that are all around them.

All of this is suddenly under threat though, as Tye finds herself in the midst of the worst fire season the area has ever seen. But Tye and Lily have also been keeping a secret from her Nan and Pop, who are now caught up in the battle to contain the fire that threatens them all. They have been helping a runaway boy, and now his life, and theirs, are in danger and they don't know what to do.

It is going to take all their courage, resilience and determination for them all to survive.

This is a wonderful story of friendship, family, and community coming together during a bushfire emergency. It raises discussion topics around bush conservation and climate change, and will be thoroughly enjoyed by all students in Years 5—8.

Reviewed by Sam

The First Tackle

By Rikki-Lee Arnold

Publisher: Wombat Books

ISBN 9781761110818 SCIS: 5394648

\$14.99

Blurb:

Daniella Murphy is on a mission. All she has ever wanted to do is play rugby league, just like her three brothers. However, her grandma says no, her dad stays silent and the school bully just laughs in her face. Their message is clear - girls don't play footy. With the help of an old ally and a newfound hero, she tries to show everybody that they're wrong, but when a scary accident threatens to derail her dreams altogether, even Dani is ready to admit defeat. Will she ever be able to prove that she can do exactly what the boys can do?



Lamont Review:

This is an empowering story of Dani's quest to be treated the same as her brothers.

Dani lives with her Dad, her twin younger brothers Sammy and Tommy, her older brother Jimmy, and her Grandma. Her Mum passed away when she was young, so her Grandma moved in and took over this role in their lives. And Grandma is the boss!

The boys love Rugby League, and they all play the game. The problem is Dani loves it too, and she dreams of playing just like they do. But that's not what girls do - at least according to her Grandma!

So Dani embarks on a campaign, with the help of her older brother Jimmy to make her Grandma, her Dad, and the boys at school see that she should be treated the same. The campaign certainly does not go to plan, and Dani and Jimmy both find themselves in trouble.

But Dani and Jimmy are both determined characters, and give it one last shot to make her dream come true.

This is a great story of family, friendship, following your dreams and highlights the discrepancy in attitudes towards boys and girls sport, both in the media coverage of it and in the attitudes towards girls playing.

This is an ideal story for all students, particularly sports loving ones, in middle to upper primary.

Reviewed by Sam

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

Augustin and the Hot Air Balloon

By David Metzenthen

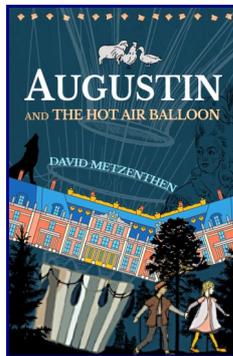
Publisher: Ford Street Publishing

ISBN 9781925804966 SCIS: 5394637

\$17.95

Blurb:

Augustin is a poor boy who lives in a barn. Celine is a rich girl who lives in a mighty palace. Together they escape into the sky... Only to land in a world of terrible trouble and dangerous secrets! During the most turbulent times of the French Revolution, two young heroes risk everything for each other, their Queen, and countries... a richly-imagined novel for younger readers based around twenty-four fascinating facts!



Lamont Review:

David Metzenthen brings us a fabulous, historical story. With facts at the start of each chapter, it gives a true insight to life during this time.

Set just before the French Revolution, when the people of France were in crisis, and had no money to feed or house themselves, we follow the story of two children from very different worlds.

Augustin is a quiet, poor boy who tends to goats to help keep him alive. Celine is a talkative and confident girl from a world of privilege, and lives in The Royal Palace with Queen Marie-Antoinette. But these unlikely pairing find themselves on an adventure of a lifetime when they both stow away on the first hot air balloon that has just taken off.

They were both looking for adventure, but neither of them really factored in what they would do when the hot air balloon landed. And when it does, they find themselves in the lawless and dangerous countryside. They embark on a journey to try and make it to the palace, and Celine promises Augustin that if they make it back she will look after him forever, and will always be his friend. But Augustin is wary. Why would anyone like Celine want to help a poor boy like him?

Augustin and Celine know that the people are restless, and the Queen's life of luxury might soon be under attack. Celine has a plan, but she needs the loyalty and help of Augustin to make it happen. But does Augustin really have it in him to carry out Celine's wishes?

This is a wonderful novel about finding friendship and loyalty in the most unusual places. It is at times humorous and suspenseful, and both characters show ingenuity, intelligence, and empathy. It is a great read for all upper primary and junior secondary students.

Reviewed by Sam

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

Moth in a Fancy Cardigan

By Charlotte Lance

Publisher: Berbay Publishing

ISBN 9780645069624 SCIS: 5387204

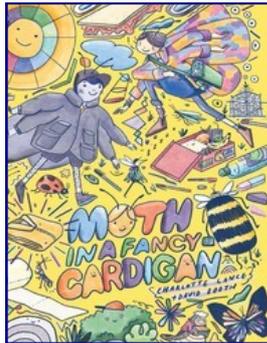
\$19.99

Blurb:

If a butterfly is just a moth in a fancy cardigan, then perhaps we should always expect more than what we see.

This is the story of Gary Grey Moth who desperately wants to be seen and Florence Butterfly who has had enough of being noticed. What would happen if they swapped cardigans and could be the bug they each always wanted to be?

A humorous, insightful story of identity and coming-of-age, told from the unlikely but utterly relatable perspectives of a moth and a butterfly.



Lamont Review:

Gary is a grey moth who nobody sees. He just blends into the background at home and at school. What Gary really wants is to be colourful and bright!

Florence is a colourful butterfly who wants to stop standing out in a crowd and to just blend in.

When Florence throws off her colourful cardigan one day, and Gary finds it, does he dare to try it on?

This is a delightful story, told in equal parts by Gary and Florence, as they negotiate growing up and finding out who they really are, as they realise that what's inside you is far more important than the colour of your cardigan. After all, as Florence says, a grey lollipop is not grey - it's just a lollipop that can be any flavour that you want!

Perfect for all readers in middle primary and above. Readers will love Gary and Florence, and I'm sure that they will relate to their struggles as they work out who they really are.

Reviewed by Michelle

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

Dear Greta

By Yvette Poshoglian

Publisher: Puffin / Penguin

ISBN 9781761043789 SCIS: 5387297

\$16.99

Blurb:

When everything seems to be going wrong, sometimes you just have to stand up for what you believe in, even if it's just in your own little corner of the world...

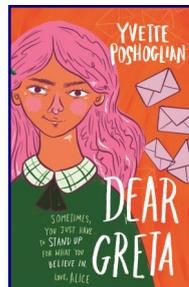
This was meant to be Alice's year to shine, but things are already going wrong.

At school, she's given young environmental activist Greta Thunberg as her pen pal for a fictional writing assignment. Why couldn't Alice get someone easy to write to, like a pop star?

Then she's put in charge of taking the Harmony Day Food Fair online, which seems impossible, especially when she is teamed up with the most annoying boy in her school.

As if she didn't have enough on her plate, Alice gets kicked out of her bedroom by her grandmother coming to stay. And no matter what Alice does, she'll never be able to live up to her infuriating big sister's achievements, right?

Through her letters to Greta, Alice finds herself opening up about her life. And as Alice approaches the hard questions by wondering, 'What would Greta do?', she starts to believe that she can make a difference - a big one.



Lamont Review:

Alice is in Year 6 at Melwood Public School and she hopes it's going to be a wonderful year. But it's not really going to plan. Her Grandmother has moved into her bedroom, as she needs to recover from a heart episode, and Alice is stuck in the sunroom.

Her class project for the term is to be a pen pal to someone famous. Alice wants Beyonce or Ash Barty, but she gets Greta Thunberg - how hard is that going to be?! And to top it all off, Alice and her friend Sami are paired with Jayden and Lance, her sworn enemies, to run the Year 6 Harmony Day Food Fair, the most important event in the whole year.

This story is written entirely in emails to Greta, as Alice works her way through all the things happening in her life. It's a story of friendship and growing up, but more importantly, it's about Alice learning that one person can make a difference - you just have to decide to do something, rather than nothing.

A thoroughly enjoyable novel that will make readers consider what they might be capable of. It would make a great class novel for Year 6.

Reviewed by Michelle

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

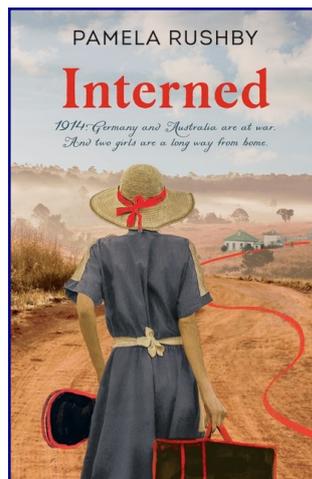
Interned

By Pamela Rushby
Publisher: Walker Books
ISBN 9781760653019 SCIS: 5387412
\$17.99

Blurb:

Based on true events, *Interned* is a moving, well-researched and evocative historical fiction novel that highlights an often forgotten moment in Australian history.

It's 1914. Gretta lives a privileged life in Singapore, the daughter of a businessman; Tilly lives a modest life in Brisbane, the daughter of a baker. When war breaks out and both countries turn on their families for being German, the two girls find themselves taken from their homes, interned at a camp in rural New South Wales. Far away from everything they have ever known, Gretta and Tilly are forced to face prejudice, overcome adversity and to make their own community.



Lamont Review:

Set during WWI, when war broke out with Germany, we look at the impact on two very different girls, Gretta and Tilly.

They come from completely different backgrounds - Gretta is from a wealthy merchant family who live with their servants in Singapore, and Tilly is the daughter of a baker and comes from Brisbane. They have one thing in common though, German fathers.

And so they both find themselves in the remote NSW town of Barnabba, where their fathers must spend each night imprisoned. I learnt so much about life at this time through these girl's experiences. Life was very tough, and they faced too many hardships.

With themes of Australian history, war, discrimination, unjust laws, but also family, strength and hope, this is a great middle grade novel for those aged 10 - 14.

Reviewed by Rob

Ming and Flo Fight for the Future (The Girls Who Changed the World)

By Jackie French

Publisher: Harper Collins

ISBN 9781460760208 SCIS: 5394653

\$16.99

Blurb:

An empowering and exhilarating look at the girls who went before us, and the way they shaped the world.

Twelve-year-old Ming Qong is convinced that girls must have changed the world, even if they are rarely mentioned in history books.

So when Ming gets the chance to go back in time, she imagines herself changing destinies from a glittering palace or an explorer's ship. Instead, she ends up in Australia in 1898, living a tough life as Flo Watson on a drought-stricken farm.

Luckily, Ming is rescued by Flo's Aunt McTavish. Wealthy Aunt McTavish belongs to Louisa Lawson's Suffragist Society, who are desperately and courageously fighting for women's rights. And Ming is determined to get involved, to make a difference.

But change is never easy, so how can one girl change the world?



Lamont Review:

This the first title in a great new series, *The Girls Who Changed the World*, by Jackie French.

Ming is determined to prove that girls must have played a much bigger role in changing the world and shaping our future, even though she struggles to find much evidence of it.

She finds herself transported back in time and lives the harsh life of Flo Watson, until she is rescued by Flo's very wealthy Aunt and taken to live with her in Sydney. Ming struggles to understand how girls and women survived living during these times, given the clothes they had to wear and the expectations on their behaviour.

Luckily for Ming, Flo's Aunt is a woman who is determined to make a difference in the lives of the girls and women who will come after her. Together with her friend Louisa Lawson, they are part of the Suffragist Society, and they are trying to bring about change and get women the right to vote. But not everybody is happy about this, and their fight for progress and equal rights is not an easy one!

This book not only highlights the struggles of the past, but also shows how important strong women were, and still are, in making lives better, even when the odds were stacked against them.

This book is sure to be enjoyed by readers aged 10 and above, and they will be looking forward to the next book in the series.

Reviewed by Sam