

## The Unstoppable Flying Flanagan

By Felice Arena

Publisher: Puffin / Penguin

ISBN 9781761044366 SCIS: 5398472

\$16.99

### Blurb:

The war seems a long way away to Maggie Flanagan. Her brother is somewhere across the sea, flying to protect England from the Germans and the Italians. But Maggie is more interested in kicking the footy and finding out who's going to play for St Kilda this season.

But when the war comes to Australia and Maggie sees what she's sure is a Japanese spy plan in the skies of Melbourne, it all gets very real. The Japanese attack Australia up north, raining bombs on Darwin and Broome, and American soldiers start appearing on the streets. Worst of all, it looks like the football season will be cancelled!

When Maggie decides to stage an all-girl football game to raise money for the troops, she's breaking all the rules. Everyone knows that girls can't play footy! But the rules aren't going to stop the unstoppable Flying Flanagan...



### Lamont Review:

Maggie loves kicking the footy with her older brother, Patrick. But Patrick is now away defending his country, and the war is getting closer to home.

Maggie dreams of actually playing a match herself. So an idea to raise money for the troops by staging an all women's game evolves, and Maggie is surprised by how many girls and women are eager to participate.

Set in the time of the Second World War, when women had to take on many chores and jobs that used to be solely men's work. The women's movement was well underway, and this terrific story gives us a picture of a changing Australia at an important time in our history.

Always well-researched and wonderfully written, this is another fantastic historical fiction book from Felice Arena, aimed squarely at middle grade readers in upper primary and lower secondary.

*Reviewed by Rob*

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

## **The Homecoming Horse**

By Jackie Merchant

Publisher: Walker Books

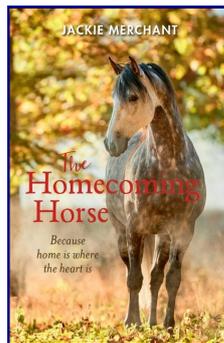
ISBN 9781760653569 SCIS: 5398467

\$16.99

### *Blurb:*

A touching novel about finding your home, even if it doesn't look the way you expected.

Kennedy and Dad have been on the move since Mum left and their farm had to be sold. When Dad takes on a horse called Ugly, the plan for the horse is clear from the start – train him up, sell him off and put the money toward their new farm deposit. Despite knowing the clock is ticking, the bond between Kennedy and Ugly (or Douglas, as she calls him) becomes unbreakable. In the face of all uncertainty, Douglas has become her home and her haven, but will they have to sell him to have a home of their own?



### *Lamont Review:*

Kennedy and her Dad have been working the stock route and living in their truck after their farm was sold.

When her Dad gets a horse called Ugly, who Kennedy renames Douglas, as payment for a debt, they decide to train him up and sell him. But when they stop for a visit at Aunty O's place, Kennedy rapidly falls in love with the new horse.

When she hears about a camp drafting show, where the prize money is \$150,000, she dreams about winning it so she can keep Douglas and help her Dad buy a home. Can her dream come true?

This is a wonderful story about family, and the unbreakable bond between a horse and rider. It is a story of hard work, determination, and the love and care between Kennedy, her Dad and Aunty O.

Full of wonderful characters and beautifully written, it's sure to be a favourite with your students who love a good horse story.

A perfect middle grade read.

*Reviewed by Michelle*

## Hedgewitch

By Skye McKenna

Publisher: Welbeck

ISBN 9781801300087 SCIS: 5398469

\$22.99

### Blurb:

First in a magical five-book series for readers of *Nevermoor*, *The Worst Witch* and *The Dark Is Rising*.

It has been seven years since Cassie Morgan last saw her mother. Left at a dreary boarding school, she spends her days hiding from the school bully and reading forbidden story books about the world of Faerie.

Certain that her mother is still alive, Cassie is determined to find her, whatever the dangers, and runs away from school. Lost and alone, she is chased by a pack of goblins but, to her surprise, escapes with the help of a flying broom and a talking cat named Montague, who takes her to the cosy village of Hedgely.

Here she discovers that she comes from a family of witches, women who protect Britain from the denizens of Faerie, who are all too real and far more frightening than her story books suggest.



### Lamont Review:

This is the first book in a new five-part magical book series.

Cassie was left in a dreary boarding school by her mother seven years ago. At boarding school she is bullied and tries to be invisible, escaping into books.

Deciding she needs to try and find her mother, Cassie escapes boarding school and discovers that the key that her Mother gave her can open anything. Soon a magical cat whisks her away to the quaint town of Hedgely, where Aunt Miranda is the Hedgewitch - the witch in charge.

Cassie is soon in training to become a witch, but her constant attempts to find her mother keep getting her into trouble.

But with the help of her friends Rue and Tabitha, and her emerging powers, she always manages to escape serious trouble!

Filled with magic, goblins, faeries and all things witches, this series will be loved by readers aged 9 - 14 years.

*Reviewed by Rob*

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

## The Wearing of The Green

By Claire Saxby

Publisher: Walker Books

ISBN 9781760653583 SCIS: 5397392

\$18.99

### Blurb:

A powerful historical novel exploring themes of racism, classism and gender expectations present in a growing nation.

When Bidy arrives in Melbourne from Ireland in 1850, she knows exactly what she's going to do – find her rebellious big brother, Ewen. Her plans are derailed when he's not there to meet her and she's forced into a situation that is nothing like she expected. Faced with challenges and chased by luck, bad and good, Bidy must find a strength within herself to build a new life – and to find her missing brother.



### Lamont Review:

Bidy is sent from Ireland to Australia in 1850, after the death of her parents and siblings in Ireland at the hands of the potato famine. She is happy in that she is following her older brother, Ewan, who came to Melbourne five years earlier.

But the reunion she was expecting doesn't eventuate, and she is sent to a farm outside of Melbourne to work for a mean Englishman, and his equally nasty wife. She endures a lot of hardship and only continues because she wants to help their young daughter, Annie.

Bidy eventually manages to return to Melbourne. Can Bidy build a better life for herself in Australia? And will she ever find her brother?

*The Wearing of the Green* is set in a time of rapid change in Melbourne, due to the discovery of gold.

This is a wonderful novel, covering themes of migration, racism, gender stereotypes, change and hope that is ideal for upper primary and lower secondary readers, particularly those who love historical fiction.

Reviewed by Rob