

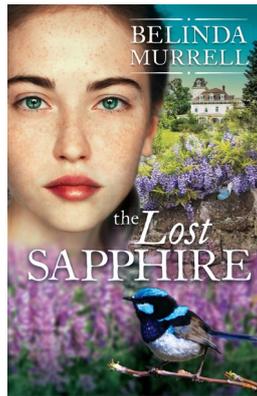
The Lost Sapphire

By Belinda Murrell
Publisher: Random House
ISBN 9781925324112
\$17.99

PRIMARY FICTION
BOOK OF THE
MONTH

Blurb:

Marli is staying with her dad in Melbourne, and missing her friends. Then she discovers a mystery - a crumbling, abandoned mansion is to be returned to her family after ninety years. Marli sneaks into the locked garden to explore, and meets Luca, a boy who has his own connection to Riversleigh. A peacock hatbox, a box camera and a key on a velvet ribbon provide clues to what happened long ago... In 1922, Violet is fifteen. Her life is one of privilege, with boating parties, picnics and extravagant balls. An army of servants looks after the family, including new chauffeur Nikolai Petrovich, a young Russian émigré. Over one summer, Violet must decide what is important to her. Who will her sister choose to marry? What will Violet learn about Melbourne's slums as she defies her father's orders to help a friend? And what breathtaking secret is Nikolai hiding? Violet is determined to control her future. But what will be the price of her rebellion?



Lamont Review:

This is a fascinating and wonderful historical book that is really two stories in one.

Set in modern day Melbourne, we meet Marli who finds herself visiting from Brisbane to spend the holidays with her Dad, whilst her Mum travels to England for work. She isn't happy about leaving her friends or about her Dad working so much, as she spends many hours on her own. But the mysterious old house Riversleigh that her family is about to inherit gives her something to focus on and when she meets Luca, who lives next door to Riversleigh, together they become engrossed in the history of the house.

We are taken back to 1922 and Riversleigh in its hey day, where we meet the determined and extremely likeable Violet Hamilton. Her privileged life is full of picnics, extravagant balls and servants. But Violet is unconventional for her time. Will her wild thoughts and ideas ultimately end up causing major trouble for all?

The intertwining of the lives of the characters in this story is fabulous and when you eventually find out the full family history, you will start to think of your own family and how our lives are sculpted by decisions made by those before us.

Girls in Year 5 and up will thoroughly enjoy this.

Reviewed by Sam

Captain Jimmy Cook Discovers Third Grade

By Kate & Jol Temple and Illustrated by Jon Foye

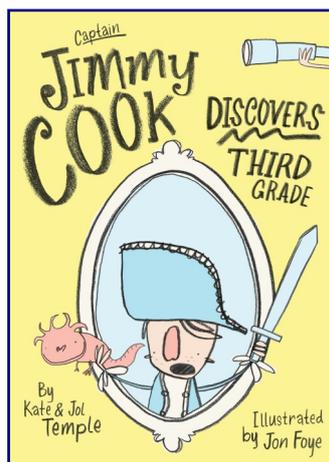
Publisher: Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781760291938

\$12.99

Blurb:

Jimmy Cook has discovered that he has quite a lot in common with the explorer Captain James Cook. No doubt they were related. So when he finds out that Captain Cook met with a sticky end in Hawaii, he's determined to travel to the island to finish what he started. His parents aren't so interested but luckily Jimmy's favourite brand of cereal is running a competition. First prize: an Hawaiian Holiday... Jimmy is going to have to eat a lot of full-fibre Wheetblocks to enter, but big dreams come with a big price. And no price is too big when it comes to Captain James Cook especially if it means beating the world's most annoying person, Alice Toolie.



Lamont Review:

Set in a log book format like Jimmy's namesake James Cook would have used, this book will be an instant hit with those that love the Wimpy Kid and Timmy Failure books..

Jimmy Cook dreams big and is sure he is achieving greatness, determined not to be thwarted by the always over-achieving Alice Toolie.

Filled with amusing illustrations and genuinely good younger reader humour, I am not surprised to read the rave reviews it is already receiving from the young and not so young (like me!).

It gives the reader a bit of a history lesson but this is well hidden by the laugh a minute humour.

It is appealing, well written and will best suit readers aged 7—10.

Reviewed by Rob

Disastrously Daring!

By Adam Wallace & Illustrated by James Hart

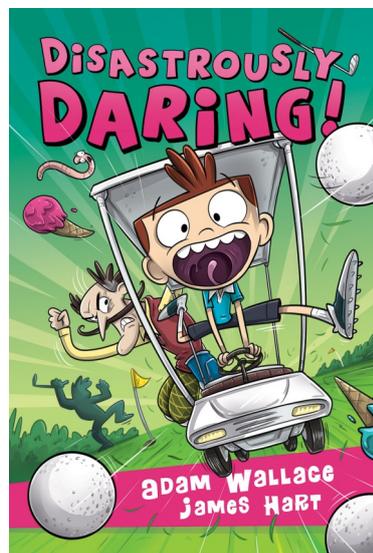
Publisher: Kruger Wallace Press

ISBN 9780994469304

\$12.00

Blurb:

Jackson Payne is back, and the golf course is NOT happy! Jackson's dad is keen for him to take up golf, but Jackson thinks that is only going to lead to disaster ... and he's right!



Lamont Review:

Poor Jackson! His Dad is trying to once again get him to play sport. And this time the sport is golf.

Jackson has great difficulty following the rules of the sophisticated golf club. How can he get through this without causing a disaster along the way? And when Jackson finds out that the stuffy Englishman, Darnell, who he accidentally knocked out in the clubrooms is their host around the golf course, his day only gets worse...

But there is something about Darnell that doesn't quite sit right with Jackson. Can he discover what Darnell is really up to without causing a disaster first?

Emerging boy readers who love silly humour will thoroughly enjoy this one.

Reviewed by Sam

Stuff Happens: Luke

By James Valentine
Publisher: Puffin/Penguin
ISBN 9780143308973
\$9.99

Blurb:

Stuff Happens is an important series for boys about everyday challenges. Created by Susannah McFarlane, the series editor, the series includes stories by authors Tony Wilson, Andrew Daddo, Philip Gwynne, Will Kostakis, Oliver Phommavanh, Scot Gardner, Pat Flynn, Alex McDiarmid, Justin D'Ath, Adrian Beck, James Valentine and James Roy. Each book features a different character and follows them as they overcome a particular everyday challenge. Aimed at boys aged between 7 and 11, the Stuff Happens series explores those everyday struggles in life that boys can sometimes be reluctant to express: quarrels with mates, a bad day at school, fear of disappointing mum and dad, rejection and not fitting in. Stuff happens sometimes. Everyday stuff. At school, at home, with sport, with mates. For Luke it happened on public speaking day. Stuff Happens. Real-life stories for boys. Suitable for beginner and newly confident readers.



Lamont Review:

We all know 'stuff happens'. This series really highlights that happens to everyone and it is how we deal with things that matter.

At the end of Year 4, Luke is dreading who is teacher will be in Year 5. He worries about it the whole summer holidays. He doesn't know what he will do if he gets Miss Hobbie. Not because he doesn't like her, but because in Term 2 her class has Speech Week! And speaking in front of the class is just something that Luke cannot do.

When his worst fears are realised on the first day of Year 5, Luke is terrified and not sure how he will cope. With a little help, understanding, perseverance and thinking outside the square, can Luke pull off his biggest achievement?

This is a fabulous story that shows us all that there are many ways to overcome our fears and the challenges that we face in life.

Reviewed by Sam

Sporty Kids: Basketball

By Felice Arena and Illustrated by Tom Jellett

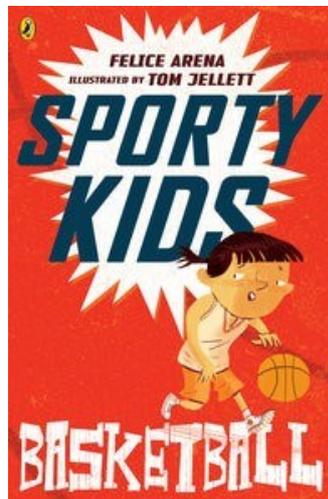
Publisher: Puffin/Penguin

ISBN 9780143308898

\$9.99

Blurb:

Time was running out. Jessica looked up at the ring. With an almighty toss, she took a shot at the basket. Everyone held their breath . . . Jessica is a basketball all-star. So why does she need lucky shoes?



Lamont Review:

Jessica is the smallest kid in her class, so she shouldn't be any good at basketball. Wrong answer! Jess is super quick and a great shot so she is the star of her team.

When her dog Buster eats her lucky shoes, Jess thinks she will never play well again. Can her team help her to get her confidence back?

An entertaining book about basketball, team sport and how sometimes we don't believe in our own ability.

Perfect for any sport loving student. It will suit sports loving emerging readers.

Reviewed by Michelle

Chook Doolan: The Newest Pet

By James Roy & Illustrated by Lucinda Gifford

Publisher: Walker Books

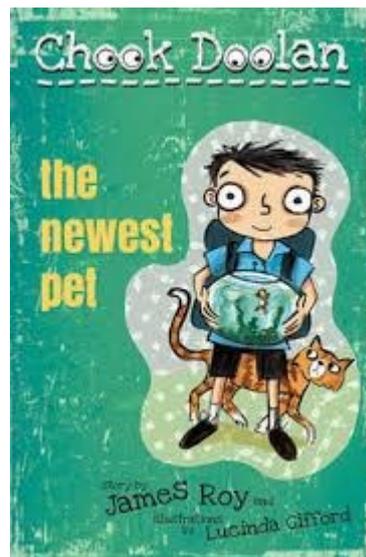
ISBN 9781922244949

\$7.99

Blurb:

It's Pet Day at school but Joe doesn't have a pet. Can Chook come up with a plan to help his friend?

Chook's friend Joe doesn't have a pet to bring to Pet Day. To cheer him up, Chook decides they should try to find him a pet for just a day. But Joe is so sad he can't even come up with a plan. (And that's his best thing.) Can Chook think of a plan to help his friend? And will he be brave enough to carry it out?



Lamont Review:

This is a great new series about Simon Doolan, or Chook as he is always called, because he is not a very brave boy. It is perfect for younger readers that picks up on the areas of their lives that matter to them and that they are concerned about. The books are easy to read and humorous and, whilst our main character is a boy, girls will relate to his stories too.

In *The Newest Pet*, we see Chook try to help his friend Joe find a pet for their 'Bring a Pet to School Day'. But for all his effort and bravery, it appears that his plan to help Joe hasn't worked at all.

Joe will just have to not have a pet. Or will he?

Reviewed by Sam

Chook Doolan: Rules Are Rules

By James Roy & Illustrated by Lucinda Gifford

Publisher: Walker Books

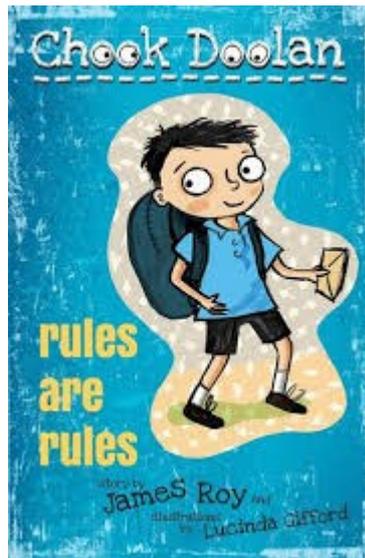
ISBN 9781922244932

\$7.99

Blurb:

Chook Doolan is too much of a chicken to walk to school by himself! But then Dad tells him the special 'Walking to School' rule. And RULES ARE RULES.

Walking to school is too scary for Chook - until Dad tells him the special rule for walking to school safely: no talking to anyone until you are inside the school gates. Too easy! But not talking means that he must ignore Mrs Pho from the bakery, Eddie Two-Hats the busker and Mrs Holston the lollipop lady. Chook knows he has hurt their feelings. But what can he do? RULES ARE RULES!



Lamont Review:

This is a great new series about Simon Doolan, or Chook as he is always called, because he is not a very brave boy. It is perfect for your younger readers that picks up on the areas of their lives that matter to them and that they are concerned about. The books are easy to read and humorous and whilst our main character is a boy, girls will relate to them too.

Chook finds himself in dilemma. He must walk to school by himself! This is something he has never done before and he is scared. His Dad assures him it will be alright, as long as he doesn't talk to anyone. But this rule is harder to keep than he thought!

Chook sticks to the rules on the way to school, but he knows that on the way home he's going to have to find a way to apologise to everyone he upset that morning.

Reviewed by Sam

Our Home is Dirt by Sea: Australian poems for Australian kids

Selected by Dianne Bates
Published by Walker Books
ISBN 9781925081190
\$16.99

Blurb:

Dianne Bates has compiled a fabulous collection of poetry written by over thirty different Australian poets for Australian children. Topics include school, family, special events like birthdays and Christmas, animals and sports.



Lamont Review:

This is a great new anthology of Australian children's poetry that will be warmly welcomed into Australian primary schools as I am often told that there are so few books put into the market like this.

It is broken into sections: family, animals, school, me, people, and special times and therefore makes it easy to find a poem on the topic you are looking for.

From the opening play on 'Advance Australia Fair' by the brilliant Elizabeth Honey and 'Revenge' by Robin Klein, to the final 'First Lines' that cleverly uses the first lines of each poem in the book, it is filled with great works.

Many modern poets are featured and we also have classic works by the likes of C.J Dennis and Henry Kendall.

Easy and fun to read, I am sure that there will be something in here to inspire many young poets and amuse the average reader.

Reviewed by Rob