Kids’ Reading Guide 2021-22

Handpicked and reviewed by Australia’s leading booksellers
Welcome everyone to this special shining selection of children’s books, handpicked and reviewed with care by leading booksellers across Australia.

My name’s Ursula Dubosarsky and I’m a writer for children. I’m also the Australian Children’s Laureate for 2020-2021 and it’s my job as Laureate to celebrate the enduring wonder of books and reading—for all of us—but most especially for children.

We live in a wild world (technology! coronavirus!) but nothing can replace the unique magic of the written word on the page, making a story, following the deep traditions of storytelling of thousands and thousands of years. All children love books, that I can promise you. It’s just a matter of finding the books they will love from the dazzling variety on offer.

Inside this guide you’ll find all kinds of books specially chosen for all kinds of readers and all kinds of children. Fiction, non-fiction, illustrated books, books for any age or stage, all available in our cherished Australian bookshops.

So turn the pages, make discoveries, be surprised, be delighted. And give your children the most enchanting gift of all—books!

Ursula Dubosarsky
Australian Children’s Laureate 2020-2021

**Tomorrow is a Brand-New Day**
Davina Bell and Allison Colpoys (illus) | Scribble | HB $24.99

This wonderful picture book is a fabulous read-aloud, with great rhyme, hilarious illustrations and a theme that is perfectly relatable. We all get cranky sometimes, feel rotten, make mistakes, but that’s okay—it doesn’t change how much you’re loved. Pick yourself up, make amends and wake up to a brand-new day!
Baby & Toddler

My Body/Karrkin
La Grange Kindilink | Indigenous Literacy Foundation | BB $16.99

Two new board books for the very young from the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. The children from the remote La Grange community teach you the parts of the body in a fun, simple and bright book with photos and line drawings. Available in English and a bi-lingual edition with Mangala and English.

Today’s Sun
Gregg Dreise | Picture Puffin | BB $14.99

With gorgeous high contrast illustrations, this is a wonderful gift for a new baby. Full of Australian animals and the wonders of a new day, it is beautifully illustrated by Kamilaroi author and illustrator Gregg Dreise and an absolute joy to read.

Bluey: Sleepytime
Joe Brumm | Puffin | HB $24.99

It’s sleepytime in the Heeler house. Bingo has decided that she is a big girl now and wants to sleep in her own bed—but will she stay there? Dream along with Bingo and Floppy and enjoy the night time antics of your favourite family in this super deluxe Bluey edition complete with two giant fold out spreads.

Hop Aboard! Baby’s First Vehicles
Wiggle, Walk, Wash! Baby’s First Animals
Elliot Kruszynski | Walker Books | BB $14.99

Elliot Kruszynski’s bright and bold colourful illustrations will fascinate any toddler. In Hop Aboard! we see cute animals travelling on cars, trains, busses, boats, planes and rockets while a host of animals do what they all do best in Wiggle, Walk, Wash! A perfect gift for every inquisitive little person.

Peekaboo Moon
Camilla Reid and Ingela P Arrenhuis (illus) | Nosy Crow | BB $14.99

Babies love to play peekaboo and this is the perfect bedtime book. On every page there is a surprise to push, pull or turn and a mirror surprise at the end of the book. The bright, colourful illustrations will help make any baby’s bedtime routine a breeze.
Let’s Look at Colours / Let’s Look at Animals
Marion Deuchars | Laurence King Publishing | BB $14.99

Two bright and beautiful board books from award winning illustrator Marion Deuchars. *Let’s Look at Colours* playfully introduces babies to the concept of colours using fruit and vibrant illustrations. *Let’s Look at Animals* is a fun guessing game that toddlers will love to play, and learn about animals along the way.

Rhyme Hungry
Antonia Pesenti | Scribble | BB $19.99

Following on from the hugely popular *Rhyme Cordial*, *Rhyme Hungry* will delight with fun lift-the-flap elements and funny word play. *Rhyme Hungry* has bold illustrations and a sturdy design for babies and toddlers, and clever rhymes for older children and adults. A fun way to learn about language. Cheese Toastie or Cheese Ghostie?

Maisy’s Garage: Pull, Slide and Play!
Lucy Cousins | Walker Books | BB $14.99

When Cyril’s car breaks down Maisy and her friends work together to fix it. In this fun, interactive book even the littlest readers will love using the push and slide tabs to help with the job, including putting in a new engine and checking its lights and windscreen wipers.

Jumping Joeys
Sarah Allen
Affirm Press | HB $19.99

I like jumping around like a kangaroo when my mum reads me this book. It is so much fun! The pictures are nice and colourful. I’ve learned about so many new Aussie animals.

Charlie, age 3
**Cat Dog**

Mem Fox and Mark Teague (illus) | Puffin | HB $19.99

Much loved Mem Fox delivers another fun filled story perfect for reading to the little humans and animals in your world. However not everything is as it seems in this story…. Or is it? There’s a cat–we can see it on the cover, and a dog right? But apparently there’s a mouse too. The cat said he saw a mouse, but that was before we had to have a nap, so maybe you can help?

**Tiptoe Tiger**

Jane Clarke and Britta Teckentrup (illus) | Nosy Crow | HB $24.99

The sun is setting in the jungle, and the animals are getting ready to sleep, all except Tara the Tiger who is bursting with energy as she bounces and pounces, looking for someone to play with. A delightful picture book, filled with vibrant neon artwork by award-winning Britta Teckentrup. Perfect for soothing little ones off to sleep.

**Noni The PonyCounts To A Million**

Alison Lester | Allen & Unwin Children’s | HB $24.99

The wonderful Noni is back on an exciting adventure, exploring the countryside with her friends. This gorgeous rhyming tale also doubles as a counting story, and with Alison Lester’s beautiful illustrations, makes it an absolute reading delight for both children and adult readers alike.

**Where Are You, Magoo?**

Briony Stewart | Puffin | HB $19.99

Mischievous Magoo is back, in a bright and funny book which is perfect for those little hands transitioning from board books to big books! In Where Are You, Magoo?, Briony Stewart has created a warm rhyming story which combines both gentle repetition and hilarious surprises. Follow the glimpse of his tail to see what trouble Magoo has managed to get into on the following page, whilst still managing to remain loveable!
Big Love
Megan Jacobson and Beck Feiner (illus)
Walker Books Australia | HB $25.99

How big is your love for your family? As big as a house, a town, a city, as big as the world — the answer is, it’s bigger. The vibrant illustrations make the story come alive and children will love reading this book over and over again.

Fire Truck Santa
Nic McPickle and Nathaniel Eckstrom (illus)
Allen & Unwin Children’s | HB $17.99

In this delightful Christmas story about the joy of giving and lending a hand, Santa delivers presents in a country town from his dilapidated fire truck. With a very familiar rhythm, fabulous rhyme and lively illustrations, this is a wonderfully Australian Christmas tale.

Who’s A Goose?
Scott Stuart | Scholastic | HB $17.99

Bruce the Goose is trying to teach, unfortunately Bill keeps interrupting. A band of gorillas, an army of frogs, a waddle of penguins and some cheeky foxes all join in to make it very hard for Bruce to teach us all about collective nouns. This is a charming and funny story starring Bruce and Bill, two very sweet geese.

Big Dog, Little Dog
Sally Rippin and Lucinda Gifford (illus)
Little Hare | HB $24.99

I thought the story was cute and funny. It was funny when Big Dog pooed in the house. Little Dog is very cute and I like her little red suit. It was nice that Big Dog and Little Dog became friends. I give Big Dog, Little Dog ten stars! 

Lola, age 4
**Frankie and the Fossil**

*Jess McGeachin | Puffin | HB $24.99*

Frankie feels sorry for a lonely dinosaur skeleton she encounters in a museum, so she shares her sandwich with him—and he follows her home! The illustrations in this book are delightful, and the friendship between Frankie and the dinosaur makes for a really beautiful story.

**Cricket, I Just Love It!**

*Alister Nicholson and Tom Jellet (illus) | Allen & Unwin Children’s | HB $19.99*

This bright and boldly illustrated rhyming story is a celebration of all there is to love about cricket! It’s the perfect inspiration to jump up and head out doors to hit a six or bowl your mate out because cricket is our ‘favourite part of every single day.’ Howzat!

**Maxine**

*Bob Graham | Walker | HB $27.99*

A companion title to Bob Graham’s celebrated picture book *Max*. Our family of superheroes are adding to their numbers with the birth of baby Maxine, a sister for Max. Despite her exceptional abilities, once Maxine starts school, she is not convinced that she wants to follow the family tradition of being a superhero. A story about being yourself, no matter where you come from.

**We Found a Cat**

*Heidi McKinnon | Scholastic | HB $17.99*

Did we find a cat? Did it just spit out the parents in a hairball? And why is it orange with tiger-stripes? We read this book at home and had lots of fun. We enjoyed making tiger sounds and turning pages to see what mischief the big cat was up to. What will we find next?

*Amarlia, age 2*
All Through the Night
Polly Faber and Harriet Hobday | Nosy Crow | HB $24.99

Follow the orange bus through the night-time streets and discover what happens in a city after dark. Can you spot the big orange bus on every page? This beautifully illustrated book has a very sweet story, as well as being gently educational. It’s charming; a future classic in the making!

Winston and the Indoor Cat
Leila Rudge | Walker Books Australia | HB $25.99

Meet Winston. Winston is an outdoor cat and very happy to be that way even when he meets the indoor cat and is tempted by a life of luxury. This is a story of friendship and differences. Leila Rudge’s gorgeous illustrations and simply told story will appeal to young children and cat lovers of all ages.

There is No Big Bad Wolf in This Story
Lou Carter | Bloomsbury | PB $14.99

The Big Bad Wolf is late AGAIN. He’s late for Little Red Riding Hood’s grandma’s house which makes him late for the three little pigs and they are getting seriously grumpy. But how’s a wolf to be in two places at once? Wolf decides they will just have to make do without him. Absolutely hilarious. You’ll never read fairy tales in the same way again.

A Stick and a Stone
Sarina Dickson and Hilary Jean Tapper (illus) | Hachette | HB $24.99

A lovely bush walk turns into an adventure when one of the children’s hats is stolen by a playful bird. The simple rhyming text pairs brilliantly with the delightful illustrations to create a new family favourite. Perfect for toddlers who love exploring outdoors.

I’m Sticking With You Too
Smriti Halls and Steve Small (illus) | Simon & Schuster | HB $19.99

Squirrel and Bear are a perfect pair who sing the same song and make merry music. But when Chicken wants to join them they worry if she has the rhythm and beat to join the band. If two is good, can three be better? An endearing story of friendship and inclusion.
**Norton and the Borrowing Bear**  
**Gabriel Evans  |  Berbay Publishing  |  HB $25.99**

Norton is very pleased when his friend Bear moves in next door so invites him over for dinner. When it is time to leave Bear borrows Norton’s slippers to walk home in. Bear keeps on borrowing Norton’s things, even the chair he is sitting on. How will Norton get back his possessions and keep his friend?

**Change Sings**  
**Amanda Gorman and Loren Long  |  Puffin UK  |  HB $24.99**

Activist and presidential inaugural poet Amanda Gorman leads the song for change. A young girl takes a group of people on a musical journey and shows them that change can be made, both big and little but with meaningful results. *Change Sings* is an inspiring anthem of inclusion and hope.

**The Boy and the Elephant**  
**Freya Blackwood  |  HarperCollins Australia  |  HB $24.99**

This absolutely incredible wordless picture book is perfect for kids aged 0-99. We follow a lonely young boy whose only friends are the marvellous old trees that grow in a thicket beside his house. When the land is sold and the trees are destined for removal, something magical happens.

**The Spectacular Suit**  
**Kat Patrick and Hayley Wells (Illus)  |  Scribble  |  HB $24.99**

Frankie is having a party for the very first time. She does not want to wear any of the dresses that Mum has picked out. She wants to wear a suit! But is she brave enough to tell anyone, and is there enough time to find one? This bright and cheerful picture book celebrates the joy of individuality.
**Coco and the Bee**  
*Coco the kitten is back in her third charming adventure. This is a story about the magic of growing things, the importance of bees and the joy of making a new friend – even if he is a boy! Adorable illustrations and positive messages make this one a true delight.*

**The Tiny Explorers**  
*The Tiny Explorers, each no bigger than a little beetle, are out in the garden looking for treasures. The things they find—a feather, a blueberry, an acorn—are collected to decorate their home. This is a simple and sweet story that brings into the spotlight the beauty of tiny everyday objects.*

**Aaron Slater, Illustrator**  
*Aaron Slater has been surrounded by stories all his life, dreaming of the day when he will write his own. Despite his best efforts, Aaron can’t make the squiggly lines turn into words and his secret is about to be revealed. This fifth story by Andrea Beaty is a touching story of dyslexia in which Aaron’s exuberant imagination gives him the strength to reach his goal in his own way.*

**Stellarphant**  
*James Foley’s new picture book is jam packed with inspiration and is an absolute delight. We follow Stella the Elephant’s quiet determination to overcome, one by one, all of Space Command’s objections to becoming an astronaut. Stella’s story is as touching as it is funny, and makes a gently effective argument for inclusion and diversity. With wonderful humorous details in the illustrations and a truly inspiring heroine, Stellarphant is a must read!*
There’s A Ghost in This House
Oliver Jeffers | HarperCollins | HB $29.99

A young girl in a haunted house takes us on a tour to find the elusive ghosts, checking everywhere – behind the sofa, under the stairs, all the way to the attic. Jeffers mixed media illustrations are enhanced with transparent overlays, providing an interactive experience for the reader and revealing what is not obvious to all.

The Story Orchestra (The Magic Flute)
Katy Flint and Jessica Courtney-Tickle (illus) | Quarto | HB $27.99

The new book in the wonderful Story Orchestra series. The Magic Flute by Mozart is the story of a prince, princess, magic flute, dragons and the Sun King. When following the beautifully retold story, you will find ten buttons to press and hear musical excerpts from the famous opera. You will also learn about the instruments and musical terms. A great book to enjoy reading with any child.
This is a silly story. The characters all have funny names like, Queen Fluffyknickers. My favourite part is when they get lost in the woods, and they have to work together to find their way out.

Horrible Harriet and the Terrible Tantrum  
Leigh Hobbs  |  Allen & Unwin Children’s  |  HB $24.99

Harriet is trying ever so hard to be good, she has even been practising her good girl smile. But what happens when the green, three-eyed tantrum that lives in a cage beside her bed breaks free to disrupt her angelic plan? More mischief and mayhem from one of our oldest and wildest friends.

William is a Star/ Luna Boo has Feelings Too  
Sally Rippin and Chris Kennett (illus)  
Hardie Grant Children’s Publishing  |  PB $8.99

Two new titles in the wonderfully silly School of Monsters series, perfect for first time readers. Children will love the madcap monsters, the bright colourful illustrations and the simple drawing activity at the end of each book. Parents will love the tips to help their children become confident readers. Lots of fun!
A Whole Lot of Lemonade Jones
Davina Bell and Karen Blair (illus) | Allen & Unwin Children’s | PB $14.99

Lemonade Jones is a feisty girl with a lot of fizz. She is as refreshing as a bubbly glass of lemonade. She loves to ask questions, and has trouble following the rules. The three stories in this collection will keep newly independent readers entertained with Lemonade’s antics at school and with her family.

Egg Marks the Spot; Skunk and Badger 2
Amy Timberlake and Jon Klassen (illus) | Allen & Unwin Children’s | HB $22.99

Roommates Skunk and Badger head out on a rock-finding expedition to Badger’s favourite spot on Endless Lake. But their adventure doesn’t go to plan when Badger’s crafty cousin Fisher steals their rocks and a chicken called Augusta needs their help with a dinosaur egg. Full of whimsy and friendship that is bound to put a smile on your face. Perfect as a read-aloud or for newly independent readers.

Squirrel Do Bad; Trubble Town #1
Stephan Pastis | Hardie Grant Children’s Publishing | HB $19.99

The start of a new graphic novel series about Wendy the Wanderer and her adventures in Trubble Town. A hilarious and uplifting tale, full of bright and fun illustrations. From the creator of the successful Timmy Failure books, this is perfect for younger readers embarking on longer stories.

Cranky Chicken
Katherine Battersby | Lothian Children’s Publishing | PB $14.99

I think this graphic novel was funny because there are a lot of jokes. I think Cranky Chicken is the funniest character because of her funny facial expressions. It was easy to read.

Teddy, age 7
Mim and the Baffling Bully
(The Travelling Bookshop, #1)
Katrina Nannestad and Cheryl Orsini (illus)
ABC Books  |  PB $14.99

Mim Cohen roams the world in a travelling bookshop with her dad, her brother and a horse called Flossy. Flossy leads them to places where they are needed most, the place where the perfect book will find its way home. An enchanting new series for younger readers that reminds us all that books are magic!

Marcie Gill and The Caravan Park Cat
Monica McInerney and Danny Snell (illus)  |  Puffin  |  HB $19.99

This engaging story follows ten year-old Marcie and her Gran’s cat, George, during her summer holidays in her family’s seaside caravan park. Junior readers will enjoy being with Marcie as she navigates changes within family and friendships in the first children’s book from this much loved Australian author.

Wandi
Favel Parrett  |  Lothian Children’s Books  |  HB $19.99

Wandi is based on the true story of a cheeky baby dingo who is snatched from his family by a wedge-tailed eagle and dropped in a suburban backyard. Favel volunteers at a dingo sanctuary where she met little Wandi. Her love for dingoes and her fears for their future shine through in this heartfelt story.

Grimwood
Nadja Shireen  |  Simon & Schuster  |  PB $14.99

My mum read this book to me and it made us laugh so much! It is about two foxes who go to Grimwood to hide from a mean cat. They make lots of new friends and play a silly game called Treebank. If you like funny books then you should read this book!
**First Nations Stories**

**The River**
Sally Morgan and Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr (illus)  
Magabala Books  |  HB $24.99

Who lives near the river? If you look with your eyes and listen with your ears you’re sure to find out! With fun, rhythmic text and vibrant, striking artwork producing so much energy and movement, this fabulous indigenous author and illustrator team have created a gorgeous exploration of river life.

**Sharing**
Aunty Fay Muir, Sue Lawson and Leanne Mulgo Watson (illus)  
Magabala Books  |  HB $24.99

In this gentle book, Aunty Fay guides us through elements of Country, sharing them with care and responsibility. With a beautiful soft palette and well-chosen words, children can grasp the concept of taking what we need and no more, sharing with each other and nature.

**Awesome Emu**
Gregg Dreise  |  Magabala Books  |  HB $24.99

Can you be too awesome? Greg Dreise’s new book follows the story of Dinewah who thinks he is better than everyone and is not shy about saying so. In this gentle, archetypal story, set during the Dreamtime, about the perils of showing off, Gregg Dreise effortlessly gives voice to the wisdom and beauty of his culture.

**Born to Run (picture book edition)**
Cathy Freeman and Charmaine Ledden-Lewis (illus)  |  Puffin  |  HB $24.99

Cathy tells us the story of her one dream, to win gold at the Olympics. But it’s also the story of the importance of self belief and the power of a loving family. A gorgeous picture book to inspire children everywhere to work hard for their dreams.
**Treasure in the Lake**  
*Jason Pamment | Allen & Unwin Children’s | PB $16.99*

A magical, fantasy adventure about two best friends who discover a mysterious village. This gorgeously illustrated graphic novel has a cinematic feel and is inspired by towns that were flooded to make way for dams, but have since appeared after years of drought. It is a visual masterpiece that will appeal to both young and old, and is definitely one of those books that will be read over and over again.

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**Click/Camp**  
*Kayla Miller | Walker Books Australia | PB $17.99*

Middle-schooler Olive navigates the intricacies of tween friendships whilst preparing for the school talent show, and at summer camp. In both cases, Olive’s creative thinking comes in handy when things start to go wrong! Fans of Raina Telgemeier will adore these graphic novels. *Camp* out now and *Click* available January 2022.

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**The Song of Lewis Carmichael**  
*Sofie Laguna and Marc McBride (illus) | Allen & Unwin Children’s | PB $16.99*

Matthew spends most of his time reading and his best friends are books, but that all changes when Lewis Carmichael, a talking crow, convinces him he needs to fly a hot air balloon to the North Pole. Like walking through the wardrobe, or even climbing the tree into topsy turvy land, this is a story that begs to be read by your children and their children too!
**Bailey Finch Takes a Stand**  
**Ingrid Laguna | Text Publishing | PB $14.99**

Bailey’s best friend is his dog Sheba. Sheba has kept Bailey company after the loss of his mother and lack of attention from his grieving father. When Sheba gets very sick after a swim in the local creek, Bailey and his new friend Israel are forced to take a stand and find a way to stop the pollution damaging his environment. 7+

**Seven Wherewithal Way**  
**Samantha Ellen-Bound | Affirm Press | PB $17.99**

Celeste and Esme are stuck at home for the summer and bored to tears, until their eccentric cousin Ferd drops out of the sky—literally!—and carries them off for a fairytale adventure. This is a really fun, first instalment of a new fantasy series featuring characters from European Folklore.

**The Amazing Edie Eckhart**  
**Rosie Jones | Hodder Children’s Books | PB $15.99**

The hilarious Edie Eckhart is 11, has cerebral palsy and excited for high school, but she’s not so excited when her best friend Oscar is put into a different class. Getting the lead in the school play and facing different challenges just might open her mind to new passions, talents and new friends. 10+

**Dragon Skin**  
**Karen Foxlee | Allen & Unwin Children’s | HB $19.99**

Pip finds a very unwell dragon by the waterhole and sneaks it home in her backpack. But home is not a safe place to be either. So many interesting threads weave through this beautifully written tale full of grief, hope, survival and courage. Karen Foxlee is the queen of magic realism and this wonderful book, just like her *Lenny’s Book Of Everything*, will stay with you long after you have read it. Tremendous!

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**The Flip Out: Sam Kerr: Kicking Goals #1**  
**A New Knight: Sam Kerr: Kicking Goals #2**  
**Sam Kerr | Simon & Schuster | PB $14.99**

These are great books if you love soccer or footy, but even if you don’t it is a great book about being brave. Sam also shows how girls can be strong like boys and awesome at sports. Sam is really cool and I like how she doesn’t like to wear dresses.
Fireborn: Twelve and the Frozen Forest
Aisling Fowler | HarperCollins | PB $17.99

Twelve is orphaned when her village is destroyed. She seeks refuge in the Hunters Lodge, becoming a huntling. When Goblins invade, taking one of her peers, Twelve and some unexpected companions set out on a mission to save the stolen girl. Delving deep into the Frozen Forest, battling evil creatures and haunted by the past, Twelve uses her courage, resilience and resourcefulness to discover what happened to the girl.

The Astonishing Chronicles of Oscar from Elsewhere
Jaclyn Moriarty and Kelly Canby (illus)
Allen & Unwin Children’s | HB $22.99

Oscar is a normal boy who just wants to skip school and skateboard. However, Oscar finds himself on a whimsical quest to find nine separate pieces of a key, held by nine separate people, in order to unlock a gluggy silver spell that has trapped the Elven city of Dun-sorey-lo-vay-lo-hey. An enchanting novel full of adventure and magic.

Mel and Shell
Julia Lawinson
Fremantle Press | PB $16.99

It’s 1979 and best friends Mel and Shell spend their time dancing to ABBA, avoiding bullies and riding their bikes, but a new school year reveals cracks in their friendship. Through letters from Shell to an imaginary pen pal living in 1829, this is a story of growing up, growing apart and finding your way back together.

Peter, age 12
Rabbit, Soldier, Angel, Thief
Katrina Nannestad | ABC Books | PB $19.99

In the spring of 1942, Sasha, a young Russian boy, is found by comrades in the Red Army after his village has been destroyed. He quickly finds his place with the soldiers, telling them funny stories and fetching their water, and they become his family. He fights the war with the only thing he can — love. Katrina Nannestad proves once again that she is an exceptional storyteller in this heartbreaking, yet beautifully hopeful story.

The What on Earth Institute of Wonder
Lisa Nicol | Puffin | PB $16.99

Sal is a girl with a smart heart and a special gift who lives in an unhappy town. But the arrival of a rare Kakapo parrot and an African Forest Elephant could change all of their fortunes. This is a hilarious, magical, quirky and just-a-little-bit serious tale about friends, family and the wonders of nature.

Julia and the Shark
Kiran Millwood Hargrave | Orion Children’s Books | HB $19.99

Set in a lighthouse at the top of the world, Julia’s scientist mother embarks on a mission to find the elusive Greenland shark. A beautiful hardback with black, white and yellow illustrations, this is a lyrical story of love, family, friendship, adventure and mental illness. A gorgeous gift for readers aged 9+.

Poison for Breakfast
Lemony Snicket | Oneworld | HB $17.99

Any new book from Mr Snicket is cause for much delight, a word here which means “great happiness and pleasure”! The wordplay is wonderful and the poisoned breakfast mystery is told with equal amounts dread, hilarity and philosophical inquiry. But don’t let the kids have all the fun—there’s plenty here for grown-ups too!

Daughter of the Deep
Rick Riordan | Puffin | PB $22.99

Rick Riordan is one of the best, as well as most prolific, kids’ authors in recent years. Daughter of the Deep is his homage to Jules Verne’s 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, an epic underwater adventure that combines fantasy and mythology into modern life. Readers are introduced to a new female hero, 14-year-old Ana Dakka, a descendant of Captain Nemo, who must protect her ancestor’s legacy before it falls into the wrong hands.
Middle Fiction

**Kaleidoscope**  
Brian Selznick | Scholastic | HB $29.99

A new story from the author of the *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* and *Wonderstruck*, told through a combination of stunning illustrations and text. The story of two people who are connected through space and over time, this is an exciting keepsake that readers will treasure.

**Exit Through The Gift Shop**  
Maryam Master | Pan Australia | PB $16.99

Ana is 12.5 years old, has a best mate who is always there for her, a bully who won’t leave her alone, and a year left to live (because she also has terminal cancer). A surprisingly uplifting contemplation on life that will make you laugh, cry, think, and laugh again. A truly exceptional, life-affirming read.

**My Brother Ben**  
Peter Carnavas | UQP | PB $14.99

Luke enjoys spending time with his big brother Ben. Their days are filled with skylarking and bird-watching at Cabbage Tree Creek and daydreaming about owning a boat. When their Dad suddenly moves away and Ben starts high school, Luke worries that his brother will grow distant too. A heartwarming and honest story about the wonders of nature and brotherly love.

**The Chime Seekers**  
Ross Montgomery | Walker Books | PB $18.99

Yanni’s family has moved into an eerie house near a creepy village. Just when he thinks things couldn’t get any worse an evil faerie tricks Yanni into swapping his baby sister for a changeling. This thrilling race against time adventure has sinister sprites, mystical mayhem, and the world’s most difficult escape room: the faery realm!

**Always**  
Morris Gleitzman | Viking | PB $19.99

The long awaited final book in this hugely popular series follows on from *Once, Then, After, Soon, Maybe, Now, Always*. New and ongoing readers will be eager to learn more about Felix’s moving and astonishing story.
**Pony**  
R.J. Palacio | Puffin | HB $26.99

Part western and part ghost story, *Pony* is the tale of one boy’s mission to find his kidnapped father, a dangerous and difficult journey, requiring great courage. The best-selling author of *Wonder* once again channels that emotional power through her phenomenal storytelling ability in this unique and heart-warming adventure.

**The Beatryce Prophecy**  
Kate DiCamillo and Sophie Blackall (illus) | Walker Books | HB $24.99

Set in medieval times, Beatryce and her companions – a Monk, a boy, a former king and the wonderful goat Answelica – embark on a journey to restore peace to their kingdom. A heartwarming story of courage and the power of language and love, this will captivate readers 8 and up.
**Defy the Night**  
*Brigid Kemmerer* | *Bloomsbury* | *PB $16.99*

A raging sickness ravages Kandala, and the Royal family rule with brutality, crushing any sign of rebellion. Apothecary apprentice Tessa Cade and her friend Wes risk their lives to steal the only cure and distribute it to the needy. In desperation, Tessa breaks into the palace only to find that nothing is as it seems. An exciting political fantasy novel set in a world with parallels to our own. 13+

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**It’s Not You, It’s Me**  
*Gabrielle Williams* | *Allen & Unwin Children’s* | *PB $19.99*

When Holly receives a vintage typewriter for her 40th birthday, she finds herself mysteriously transported into the body of an L.A. teenager, Trinity, in 1980. Holly must find a way to navigate Trinity’s family and friends, all while trying to figure out why she has been sent back in time. The more she learns, the more she realises that their connections run deeper than expected. This is a fun time-slip/body-swap story with a little bit of mystery thrown in. 14+

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**Terciel and Elinor**  
*Garth Nix* | *Allen & Unwin Children’s* | *PB $24.99*

Garth Nix returns us to the world of Sabriel in this delightful prequel in the Old Kingdom series. We follow Sabriel’s parents, Terciel and Elinor, as they grow up, meet, and inevitably encounter more Dead Hands than you can poke a stick at. Fans of the original series will absolutely love this book.

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**Medusa**  
*Jessie Burton* | *Bloomsbury* | *PB $22.99*

This sharp and thoughtful, feminist retelling of the Medusa myth sees her evolve from a teen victim, exiled at the whims of the Gods, to a young woman in control of her story and destiny. Stunningly illustrated, this beautiful and empowering book brings a new perspective and modern relevance to the classical story.

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**A Universe of Wishes: An Anthology**  
*Dhonielle Clayton (Ed.)* | *Titan Publishing Group* | *PB $19.99*

This is a beautiful collection of short stories from a really great diverse range of authors. Each story gives a glimpse into a magical world, from a future in space to a city where wishes come true. It features protagonists from every imaginable background in touching, beautiful stories.
**self/less**

AViVA | Macmillan Australia | PB $29.99

Welcome to Metropolis, where self-expression is banned and the citizens’ lives are carefully planned and controlled by the City Council. A compelling new YA post-apocalyptic thriller set in a complex world of elites and outsiders. The first in a series, this is a gripping read, guaranteed to keep you engrossed until the end.

**Anything But Fine**

Tobias Madden | Penguin | PB $19.99

It takes just a small lapse in concentration for Luca’s world, and his hopes for the future, to be destroyed. But with a little help from some new friends, he might just salvage something great. This is a warm, moving and truly delightful rom-com from a fabulous new voice in Australian YA. #LoveOzYA

**Take Me With You When You Go**

David Levithan and Jennifer Niven | Penguin | PB $17.99

From two YA author superstars comes this powerful and ultimately uplifting story of sibling love, domestic violence and the power of family, whatever form it takes. Told convincingly through emails, the separated siblings share their truths. This is a thoughtful, skilfully rendered story about hope, healing and self-worth.

**Mixed Feelings**

Declan Miller

**Storm Warning Book 1**

Lauren Boyle and Alyssa Mason (Illus)

**EXO Dimensions**

Seraphina Newberry

Indigenous Literacy Foundation | PB $11.95

I am a Wiradjuri girl, who loves graphic novels and art, so I was very excited to hear about three new graphic novels authored and illustrated by Indigenous Artists. **Storm Warning** is an adventurous tale set amongst human and manmade disasters of current times. **Mixed Feelings** is a story set in Alice Springs about dramas of fitting in and the exciting **EXO Dimensions** is a modern Indigenous creation story. All are fantastic reads and I can’t wait for more.
If Not Us
Mark Smith | Text Publishing | PB $19.99

Hesse lives in a small coastal town, where a coal mine and power station are a part of the scenery, and a part of the ever-growing problem of climate change. What will happen when he decides to speak up at a protest meeting that has the community divided? Even though he’d rather be surfing. Hesse realizes that things are far more complex than he ever thought, but he knows he can make a difference. A story about growing up and standing up for what you believe is right. 14+

Vespertine
Margaret Rogerson | Simon & Schuster | PB $19.99

Evil spirits, zombie armies and ghost-fighting nuns in a world loosely based on Napoleonic France? Yes, please! This novel has everything. It’s fast-paced and action-packed, with characters you will come to love (even if you don’t want to!). Plus, it’s really, really funny! Garth Nix fans, this one’s for you.

The Break
Phillip Gwynne | Penguin | PB $19.99

This is a good book and aimed at early-mid teenagers, 12–16. I found the main character to be relatable, as a mid-teen myself. He has an interesting personality and backstory with his father being an ex-drug dealer in prison. As he is in Bali, his father faces the death penalty. This book explores the social issue of the death penalty which makes the reader think about how life is valued in different countries.

Stars in Their Eyes
Jessica Walton & Aška | Fremantle Press | PB $19.99

Maisie is finally going to her first-ever fan convention alongside her embarrassing mum, hoping to meet her hero. There she finds her crowd–specifically Ollie, and there’s an instant connection. I really enjoyed reading Stars In Their Eyes. I found it really sweet, fun, and relatable, especially as a queer and neurodivergent con-goer and nerd (with an embarrassing mum!), and I think others will too.
Social Queue
Kay Kerr  |  Text Publishing  |  PB $19.99

Zoe Kelly has left the bullying years of high school behind and works as a part time intern for a media company. When the opinion piece she writes about her non-existent dating life goes viral she is unprepared for the public response. Warm, funny, and enlightening this coming-of-age narrative about an autistic young woman navigating through post school life is delightful. 14+

How to Repaint a Life
Steven Herrick  |  UQP  |  PB $19.99

Steven Herrick has returned to the themes of youth homelessness and domestic violence in this novel. Isaac leaves his abusive home and moves to a country town, determined to make a new future for himself. Through the kindness of his employer Joan and in meeting Sophie, a budding artist, and her Dad, Gerry, Isaac dares to hope for a future. A positive story of love and courage triumphing over abuse and despair. 14+
**Things To Know & Do**

**Let’s Eat Weeds!**  
Annie Raser-Rowland, Adam Grubb, Evie Barrow (illus)  
Scribble | HB $24.99  
This fantastic and highly accessible book is quite brilliant. With wonderful illustrations alongside clear and thorough instructions on the safe identification and use of everyday weeds, this is the perfect book to encourage young ones to engage with the natural world. Who knew you could eat so many weeds?

**A Year in Fleurville**  
Felicita Sala | Scribble | HB $27.99  
Take a walk down Pomegranate Street and discover the gardens, balconies and kitchens. There are simple instructions on how to grow fruit and vegetables in your garden and easy recipes to cook seasonally in this beautiful celebration of food and community. Suitable for those from 3 to 103.

**Unleash Your Creative Monster: A Children’s Guide to Writing**  
Andy Jones and Olaf Falafel (illus) | Walker | PB $24.99  
Are you an aspiring writer, or do you know someone who loves making up stories? This is the book for them! There are loads of tips and hints for creating engaging and entertaining stories. Plus, there are plenty of exercises to unleash your creative monster, and become a better writer.

**Alice’s Food A-Z**  
Alice Zaslavsky  
Walker Books Australia | PB $24.99  
I really loved that Alice teaches us not just about the recipes but what all the ingredients are like and what they mix well with. It has even made me want to try new things, even gross things like asparagus. The recipes are easy but interesting and she is also funny and cool too.

*Rose, age 8*
The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Peculiar Pairs in Nature

Sami Bayly | Lothian Children’s Books | HB $32.99

Award winning Sami Bayly has yet again managed to craft another beautiful encyclopedia, this time of animals in peculiar pairs, featuring over 60 of the most unlikely partners that just couldn’t live without each other. A must have for any little nature lover.

Book of Curious Birds

Jennifer Cossins | Lothian Children’s Books | HB $26.99

A beautifully illustrated guide to some of the world’s most curious birds. There’s dangerous birds, clever birds, fast birds and silly birds. Birds with odd hairdos, amazing hunting skills or those who are masters of disguise like the Tawny Frogmouth that can make themselves look like a broken tree branch when a predator is nearby. For bird lovers big and small.

Oceanarium

Loveday Trinick and Teaghan White (illus) | Bonnier | HB $45.00

Welcome to the Oceanarium where you will learn all about the fascinating life forms that call our oceans home. Explore different ocean habitats from deep sea to rock pools and travel from the frozen Arctic to tropical coral reefs. Stunning illustrations and expert text bring the underwater world to life in this beautiful volume.

Dinosaurs and other Prehistoric Life

Professor Anusuya Chinsamy-Turan
DK | HB $39.99

Have you ever wondered how Paleontologists learn about the lives of extinct plants and dinosaurs? Then this is the book for you! It has photographs of over 90 fossils and an explanation of what they tell us about prehistoric life. Anyone who likes fascinating facts and fantastic fossils will enjoy this book.
How Was That Built?
Roma Agrawal | Bloomsbury | HB $29.99

See the world through the eyes of an engineer and read about how different buildings and structures have been designed and constructed over the years. Discover the surprising and inventive ways engineers tackle big challenges, including building underground and underwater, and their radical ideas for building in space.

No Way!
Dan Marshall | Pantera Press | HB $29.99

I hope you are ready to have your mind blown with this book full of amazing facts about space, humans, Earth, science, animals and maths. You won’t be able to help yourself exclaiming, ‘no way!’ when you find out how many trees there are on earth or how long the average yawn goes for. A fun way to learn all the wildest and weirdest things about the world around you!

Spacewarp: Colliding Comets and Other Cosmic Catastrophes
Fred Watson | NewSouth | PB $27.99

Australia’s Astronomer-at-large, Fred Watson takes children on a grand tour of the universe. Full of mind-boggling facts – did you know that there’s about 7500 tonnes of human-made space junk in orbit around Earth – this book will answer all the questions that kids (and plenty of adults) have about space. Fred has drawn lots of pictures to make this book even more fun.

Explore Your World; Weirdest Creatures in Time #3
Tim Flannery, Emma Flannery and Maude Guesne (illus)
Hardie Grant Children’s Publishing | HB $34.99

This is a book about ancient creatures, fossilisation and evolution. This non-fiction book has lots of colourful illustrations and fun facts. I especially like the Flannery Files because they tell you about Tim’s own experiences in the lab and in the field. I recommend this book for anyone who likes discovering about our world. I rate this book 5 out of 5 stars!
The Supernatural Survival Guide
George Ivanoff | Puffin | PB $24.99

There is so much weird and wonderful stuff out there that boggles the mind. What on earth is cryptozoology, UFOlogy, what does a ghost hunter actually do? This is the third instalment in the Survival Guide series, and is the most intriguing, as we get to the bottom of all things spooky, weird and unexplained. Hold on to your underpants, you are in for a wild ride!

Lore of the Wild: Folklore and Wisdom from Nature
Claire Cock-Starkey and Aitch (illus) | Quarto | HB $27.99

Lucky charms and bad omens, plants with magical qualities and crafty animals that trick their enemies. This exquisitely illustrated compendium of folklore is interspersed with folktales, mythology and legends from China to Estonia; it is a lovely way to explore other cultures and beliefs.

A Natural History of Magick
Poppy David, illustrated by Jessica Roux | Quarto | HB $35.00

Beautifully illustrated with gold edging and a gold embossed cover, this is a really special gift for any child fascinated with magic and myth. This book covers all aspects of the history of magic from astrology, herbology and numerology to secret languages and alchemy. A perfect handbook for any child who loves getting lost in magical stories.

The Secret Lives of Dragons
Professor Zoya Agnis | Flying Eye Books | HB $34.99

This is a beautiful look at dragons of the world, their environment, size, colour and anatomy. We also meet some famous Dragon families like the Yukuyuktakas Dragon of central Australia who spend their days buried in the desert sand and hunt at night. The perfect guide for any little dragon fan.
**What Do You Do To Celebrate?**
Ashleigh Barton and Martina Heiduczek (illus)
ABC Books | HB $19.99

This is a beautiful introduction to how different cultures around the world do—or don’t!—celebrate Christmas and New Years. Join Mae as she walks the streets of Sydney looking at Christmas decorations, Yonatan as he celebrates Hanukkah in Jerusalem, and many more children around the world enjoying special times with family.

**We Have A Dream**
Dr Mya-Rose Craig | Magic Cat Publishing | HB $29.99

Profiling thirty young racially diverse climate activists and campaigners, this book will motivate others to make changes and join the fight for our changing planet. This book gives you the story of each of these people of colour and first nations young people, from their campaigns for cleaner water and climate justice to their climate strikes and protests. A thoroughly inspirational read.

**Sister Secrets**
Cate Campbell and Bronte Campbell | Allen & Unwin Children’s | PB $24.99

Swimming superstars Cate and Bronte Campbell have an incredible shared history. From learning to swim together as children in Malawi to their 2021 gold medal winning relay at the Tokyo Olympics. *Sister Secrets* is the first time we gain insight into the lives and motivations of these two incredible athletes in their own words.
## First Nations Stories

### Somebody’s Land: Welcome to Our Country

*Adam Goodes and Ellie Laing and David Hardy (illus)*  
*Allen & Unwin Children’s | HB $24.99*

This is a gentle story of First Nations history and the arrival of the British in Australia. With bright illustrations and repetitive text, this simple but poignant book builds on the Welcome to Country that most preschool aged children are familiar with and introduces them to the term “terra nullius”. A must-have for all families.

### Albert Namatjira

*Vincent Namatjira | Magabala Books | HB $24.99*

Vincent Namatjira, himself an artist, writes about his great-grandfather Albert who is probably the first aboriginal artist many Australians become aware of. Albert’s many ‘firsts’ include winning the Coronation medal and being granted Australian citizenship. A lovely tribute to the trail blazing Western Australian.

### Freedom Day:

*Vincent Lingiari and the Story of the Wave Hill Walk-Off*

*Thomas Mayor, Rosie Smiler and Samantha Campbell (illus)*  
*Hardie Grant Children’s Publishing | HB $29.99*

Vincent Lingiari and the story of the Wave Hill walk-off is an essential part of our history and it’s been lovingly and beautifully brought to life for a younger audience in this timely and important picture book. It’s also a rallying cry for the things that still need to change.

### The First Scientists: Deadly Inventions and Innovations From Australia’s First Peoples

*Corey Tutt and Blak Douglas (illus) | Hardie Grant Explore | HB $29.99*

This unique book details the astounding scientific knowledge of First Nations cultures, including astronomy, engineering, ecology and chemistry. With bold, colourful illustrations from Blak Douglas, this wonderful book encourages young readers’ interest in science and their deeper appreciation and understanding of Indigenous knowledge.

### Heroes, Rebels and Innovators

*Karen Wyld | Lothian Children’s Books | HB $26.99*

These stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women from the past are an inspiration to read. Highlighting their enterprise and courage as they faced invasion and settlement, these real-life heroes are depicted with beautiful accompanying artwork, making this a book to both treasure and learn from.
299 Dogs (and a cat): A Canine Cluster Puzzle
Laurence King  |  Box Set  |  $29.99
A jigsaw with a twist: no two shapes are the same, and each piece is a dog (except for one that’s a cat). Hours of maddening fun. Have you got what it takes to assemble all 299 dogs into a perfect puzzle?

Aussie Animal Match: A Memory Game
Laurence King  |  Box Set  |  $24.99
Reunite the Aussie animals with their babies in this new memory game for all the family. Once you’ve put together all the pairs, learn about all the fascinating creatures you’ve collected in the accompanying booklet.

Endangered Animals Bingo
Laurence King  |  Box Set  |  $35.00
Everyone will love this traditional game featuring 64 of the world’s best loved at-risk creatures to learn about and get inspired to save. Learn while you play, this board game comes with a leaflet with interesting information and quirky facts for all the endangered animals featured.

The A to Z of Dogs: A Very Looooong Jigsaw Puzzle
Laurence King  |  Box Set  |  $29.99
A puzzle the shape of a dog and as long as a dog! Piece together 26 different breeds to get one big sausage dog and learn about different dog breeds and identify your favourites. Chunky pieces perfect for small hands.