

The Orchard Underground

By Mat Larkin
Publisher: Hardie Grant Egmont
ISBN 9781760500856 SCIS: 1859252
\$17.99

PRIMARY FICTION
BOOK OF THE
MONTH

Blurb:

Not-quite twelve year-old Pri Kohli knows the town of Dunn's Orchard better than anyone. After all, he was the first kid ever to live there. He knows its mysteries (none), its secrets (also none) and the best ways to have fun in it (climb a big tree and sit there).

So why can't he answer newcomer Attica Stone's simple question: if the town's called Dunn's Orchard, where's the orchard?

As Pri and Attica go in search of forbidden fruit, they uncover stranger mysteries: a robot caterpillar, a mayor with a murky past, a Possibly Real Actual Boogeyman and a house made of doors in a haunted wood. But what will Pri and Attica do when they discover the biggest secret of all – that something truly magical is about to be destroyed, and the only way to save it could be by destroying the town itself?



Lamont Review:

Pri Kohli knows his hometown of Dunn's Orchard better than anybody - after all, as the first kid to live there, he has spent the last 10 years as the face of the town. He knows all of its mysteries and secrets - basically, none!

So why, when the amazing Attica Stone arrives in town, and start asking questions that Pri can't answer, it turns out that there might be some mysteries in the town after all.

I read this story in one sitting, as I couldn't put it down. We discover a strange world and are left to ponder many of life's big questions— what we should question, and what price should we place on progress?

We meet some amazing young characters in an engrossing story of 'good versus evil', with lots of amusing situations and heroic deeds.

A funny and intriguing mystery story, this will be best loved by keen readers aged 8 - 12 years.

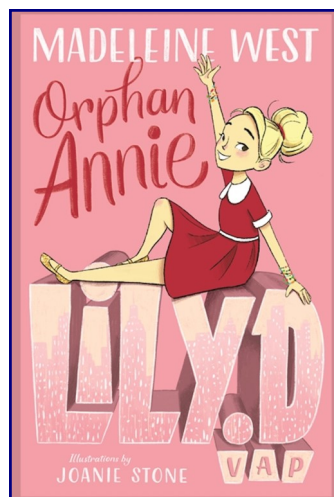
Reviewed by Rob

Lily D V.A.P: Orphan Annie

By Madeleine West & Illustrated by Joanie Stone
Publisher: Five Mile Press/Bonnier Publishing
ISBN 9781760683009 SCIS: 1864470
\$12.99

Blurb:

Fancy Nancy meets Stage School in this adorable illustrated junior fiction series, starring Lily D! Lily D is a jump-off-the-page character who is full of beans, which is good news because she is very busy! She does ballet on Mondays, tap on Tuesdays, acrobatics on Wednesdays, singing on Thursdays, and drama on Fridays. Drama is her favourite! It's Lily's dream is to become a performance artiste when she grows up. Lily D thinks of herself as a VAP (a Very Amazing Performer). But Lily is no child star, she understands that success requires hard work and respect, neither of which can be achieved overnight.



Lamont Review:

Lily just loves performing and is very serious about making sure she really understands the characters she plays. When her teacher tells her she is going to be Annie in the musical called Orphan Annie, she tells her family she is going to be an orphan for a week and they can't help her.

This story is perfect for middle primary girls who just love performing. It is also has a wonderful message about learning how important family is and just how much they can help us be the best person we can be.

Lily D never gives up and always follows her dreams, and she is sure to inspire middle primary readers to do the same.

Reviewed by Michelle

Bab Sharkey and the Animal Mummies: The Weird Beard

By Andrew Hansen & Jessica Roberts

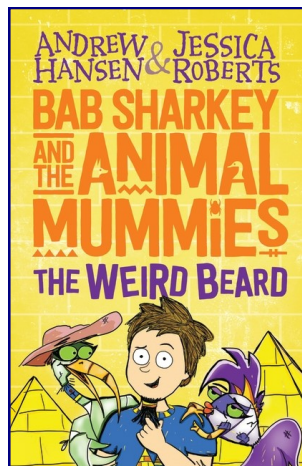
Publisher: Walker Books

ISBN 9781760650001 SCIS: 1859554

\$14.99

Blurb:

When twelve-year-old Bab Sharkey finds a magical beard in the Egyptian desert, it attaches itself to his face, making him the Pharaoh and granting him strange powers. Bab also finds the friends he's always needed: a pair of undead animals wrapped in bandages called Scaler the Fish Mummy and Prong the Ibis Mummy. But the previous owner of the Beard, the ancient and evil sorceress Unpharaoh, is determined to get it back. Can Bab and his new Animal Mummy friends banish the Unpharaoh back to the Afterworld? Award-winning Australian comedian Andrew Hansen, best known for *The Chaser*, has teamed up with his wife, designer Jessica Roberts, to create their very first children's book series. This hilarious illustrated series is perfect for middle-grade readers with a wacky sense of humour.



Lamont Review:

This is the first title in a fabulous new series that mixes Ancient cultures, animals, fantasy and adventure.

Bab Sharkey is a super clever kid who has moved to Egypt with his archaeologist Mum as she hunts for the famous Pharaoh's Beard. Bab misses his old life, and even worse his overprotective Mum wraps Bab in bubble wrap to keep him safe!

But life for Bab takes a sharp turn of events when two ancient mummies, Prong and Scaler, who have found the prized Pharaoh's Beard, find their way into his room in the middle of the night, and the Beard finds its way on to Bab's face.

What ensues from here is a fantastically funny adventure as Bab and his new mummy friends tackle the evil Unpharaoh, who is determined to get the Beard back and once again be the ruler.

This is a great fun read that is full of humour and imagination, that readers 8+ will thoroughly enjoy.

Reviewed by Sam

Bush and Beyond: Stories from Country

By Tjalaminu Mia, Jessica Lister, Jaylon Tucker & Cheryl Kickett-Tucker

Publisher: Fremantle Press

ISBN 9781925591132 SCIS: 1858721

\$14.99

Blurb:

Grandparents are special, and the time you spend with them is special, too. This collection draws together four tales for younger readers from the Waarda series of Indigenous stories. These charming tales share some exciting, happy and even scary times exploring country in bush and beyond.



Lamont Review:

This is a great compilation of four Indigenous short stories rolled into one, all focusing on how special and important grandparents are in our lives, and what we can learn from them.

The first two stories centre around Debbie, her younger brother Billy, and her grandfather Dada Keen. Debbie is particularly interested to learn all that Dada Keen has to teach her about the bush, and how the things that she learns from the bush can flow into her family life.

In the third story, we see Sarah, and her brothers Jay and Rene learn a valuable lesson from their Nan, as she takes them to the Kuljak National Park.

The final story sees Eli spend the holidays with his grandparents in Kalgoorlie. It is the first time that he has stayed with them without his other family members, and it is sure to be a trip to remember!

There are many Indigenous words and phrases used throughout all the stories, and students aged 7+ are sure to enjoy learning and remembering them all.

Reviewed by Sam

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

The Adventures of Jellybean

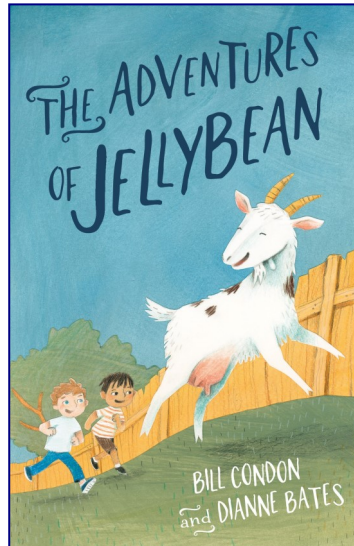
By Bill Condon & Dianne Bates

Publisher: University of Queensland Press

ISBN 9780702260001 SCIS: 1864474

\$14.95

When best friends Rory and Trang become the proud owners of a nanny goat, she turns out to be quite a hoof-ful! Jellybean likes escaping, eating everything under the sun and keeping the neighbours awake at night. Still, the boys think she's the best goat in the world. Especially when she gives them a surprise bigger than they could have ever imagined!



Lamont Review:

When next door neighbours and best friends Rory and Trang convince their parents that they can look after a goat, they are in for some trouble and some fun.

But this is more than just a story about a goat! The boys have a wonderful friendship and their close ties to each other and their families really shines through.

But Jellybean the goat proves to be full of challenges, and this tests their friendship. With some help from their loving and supportive families, they realise the value of the bond that they have.

This is a great read about the responsibilities of owning a pet, learning about compromise and the importance of friends and family.

This is a perfect read for younger to middle primary readers.

Reviewed by Sam

Bob

By Wendy Mass & Rebecca Stead and Illustrated by Nicholas Gannon

Publisher: Text Publishing

ISBN 9781925603590 SCIS: 1864320

\$16.99

Blurb:

Livy can't remember her first visit to her grandmother's house in Australia, but she does seem to recall a 'wrong chicken' and bumping down the stairs.

She definitely doesn't remember the strange little creature she finds in the wardrobe. His name is Bob and he doesn't know what he's doing there, but he's been waiting for Livy to come back for more than five years. That's a very long time to sit in the dark.

Clue by clue, Livy and Bob unravel the mystery of where Bob comes from and what Livy has forgotten in this magical story about friendship and loyalty and the power of imagination.



Lamont Review:

When Livy arrives at her grandmother's house in Australia for the first time in five years, she doesn't remember much.

Slowly memories come back and when she finds a strange creature hiding in her bedroom closet, she is sure she doesn't remember him. But he knows her and has been waiting patiently in the cupboard for her to return and help him find his way home.

This is a beautiful story of friendship, resilience, determination and the power of families. Readers will fall in love with both Livy and Bob and will thoroughly enjoy this delightful story.

It is perfect for those in Year 4 and up.

Reviewed by Michelle