

Bailey Finch Takes a Stand

By Ingrid Laguna
Publisher: Text Publishing
ISBN 9781922330994 SCIS: 5372928
\$14.99

PRIMARY FICTION
BOOK OF THE
MONTH

Blurb:

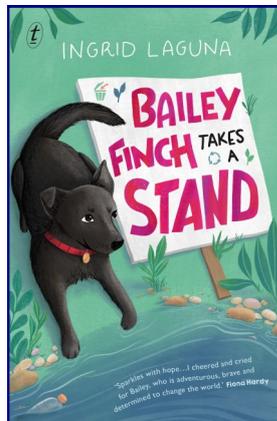
Bailey's mum had always said that being by the creek with Bailey and her dad was as good as it gets. She had shown Bailey sap glistening on tree trunks. They had crouched together to nudge a beetle onto a leaf. They had sat on the creek's edge with their bare feet in the water.

It's one year since Bailey's mum died. And her dad doesn't seem to care much about anything. But Bailey still spends afternoons by the creek with her dog, Sheba.

Until Sheba gets sick—very sick—from something she must have swallowed while swimming in the creek. And Bailey notices all the rubbish polluting the waterway.

Between visits to Sheba in the vet hospital, Bailey tries to find a way to make the creek safe for Sheba and other animals. And through her unexpected friendship with Israel, a quiet boy who knows about endangered species, Bailey Finch finds the courage to take a stand.

Bailey Finch Takes a Stand is a moving story about love and loss, about caring for the environment and standing up to make change happen.



Lamont Review:

Bailey loves playing down by the creek with her wonderful dog, Sheba. But it hasn't really been the same in the last year, ever since her Mum died and her Dad doesn't get out of the house.

When Sheba swallows glass and is in a critical condition, Bailey decides it is time to clean up the creek. With her new found home-schooled friend Israel, they decide to make it happen.

But can two kids make a difference, and will her beloved dog Sheba even survive?

A story of loss, grief, friendships, animals and environmental protection, and about standing up in order to make a difference, this is a great novel that is best suited to readers aged 8—12.

Reviewed by Rob

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

The Ava Show

By Cecily Anne Paterson
Publisher: Wombat Books
ISBN 9781761110405 SCIS: 5368513
\$16.99

Blurb:

Ava's been training hard for an awesome athletics season, and is looking forward to celebrating her 12th birthday. Life's great—and Chloe the dog is having puppies! Even if Mum gets annoyed at Ava's lack of organisation, Ava can always rely on her best friend Josie and her sister Maddie to pick up after her.

But when the pandemic hits, everything's cancelled. There's no school, no birthday, no athletics, no toilet paper and definitely no Josie to rely on. When a puppy goes missing, it's Ava's fault. Can she mend her irresponsible ways in time?



Lamont Review:

Ava relies on everyone around her to do everything for her, including her Mum, her big sister Maddie and her best friend Josie. It's just the way it always is! Ava is always late and unorganised, and whilst this is becoming more and more annoying to those around her, she just doesn't seem to notice or care.

Until, that is, the pandemic hits and life as Ava and her family and friends knew it, in quiet Kangaroo Valley, changes completely!

As Ava has to accept that her day to day life is changing, she also forced to see that life does not always revolve around her. Her family and friends are suffering too, and she must start to think of others and take some responsibility for herself.

Even though it is set during a time of upheaval, it is also a great story about family, friendship, growing up and how we can all adapt to change.

On a personal note, having had a daughter in Year 6 last year, just like Ava, this was at times like looking through a window into our house!

It is an easy to read story, and one that middle and upper primary students will thoroughly relate to.

Reviewed by Sam

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

Cranky Chicken

By Katherine Battersby

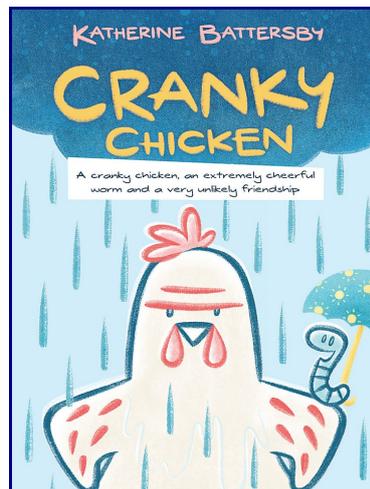
Publisher: Lothian Children's Books / Hachette

ISBN 9780734420954 SCIS: 5368415

\$14.99

Blurb:

Everything about Chicken is cranky. Cranky eyes, cranky eyebrows, super-sharp cranky beak, even cranky scratchy feet. And everything makes Chicken cranky. The sun is too bright, the dirt is too dirty. What Cranky Chicken is not is lonely. Nope, nope, definitely not. But then along comes a very cheerful worm named Speedy, who just wants to be friends. The first book in a charming illustrated series about mismatched friends who bring joy, companionship and a new perspective to each other's lives. Perfect for fans of *Elephant and Piggie* and *The Bad Guys*.



Lamont Review:

A delightful new junior graphic novel story, the first tale in a new series about two very unlikely friends.

Follow Cranky Chicken (who is basically cranky about everything) and his new friend Speedy the worm (who is quite cheerful), as they embark on an unlikely friendship.

With neither of them having had a friend before, this is a new adventure for both of them!

Deciding that they will be BFF's (Best Feathered Friends - even though Speedy doesn't have any feathers), they discover all the simple things that make friendship great.

This is a perfect story for newly independent readers. Told in an easy-to-read graphic novel format, it is a great introduction to this style for junior readers.

Reviewed by Sam

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

The School For Talking Pets

By Anne Hawkins & Illustrated by Beth Harvey

Publisher: Harper Collins

ISBN 9781460759202 SCIS: 5372933

\$16.99

Blurb:

DOCTOR DOLITTLE MEETS WILLY WONKA IN THIS FUNNY AND THRILLING ADVENTURE FROM AN EXCITING NEW VOICE. Pets? Tick! TALKING pets? Double tick! Silly spies, secret plots and one shy kid who might just save the day? Tick, tick, tick! Anything's possible at the School for Talking Pets... When Rusty Mulligan and his pet blue-tongued lizard win a week on a secret island, at Miss Alice Einstein's School for Talking Pets, the shy twelve-year-old is thrilled. His best friend will learn to talk! But once on the island, things don't go to plan... And Rusty must work with the other competition winners, a terrifyingly tattooed gardener, and a multitude of clever animals to save the school from the clutches of the two secret agents who have come to shut it down - by any means necessary...



Lamont Review:

Ever wondered what your pet is thinking? Wouldn't it be great to be able to talk to each other!

This opportunity comes true for 12-year-old Rusty, and his pet blue tongued lizard Bongo, when Rusty wins a competition to spend a week at Miss Alice Einstein's School for Talking Pets.

But once on the island, Rusty uncovers an evil plot exists to shut the school down. Can he save the day? And will his stubborn lizard Bongo ever actually talk?

Filled with talking animals of all descriptions, including science-loving cats and aircraft-building pigs, this is a wonderful and fun-filled journey into an amazing world of incredible animals.

Perfectly suited to readers in middle to upper primary.

Reviewed by Rob

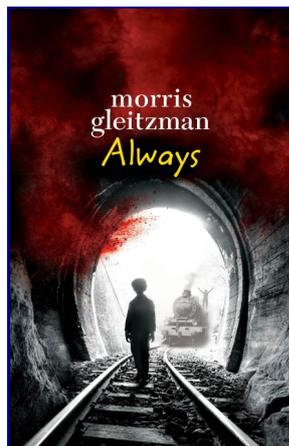
Always

By Morris Gleitzman
Publisher: Viking / Penguin
ISBN 9780143793243 SCIS: 5372937
\$19.99

Blurb:

The much-anticipated final journey in the story of Felix, hero of Morris Gleitzman's multi-award-winning *Once, Then, Now, After, Soon* and *Maybe*.

It's fifteen years since readers were first introduced to Felix in *Once* and across six celebrated books, our brave young hero has survived many unforgettable and emotional journeys. Now comes the seventh and final part of Felix's story, bringing to a powerful climax a series that countless young readers around the world will remember - *Always*.



Lamont Review:

Always seeing the best in people.
Always helping those in need.
Always facing problems head on.
Always telling a great story to add to the life of the incredible Felix.

Now 90 years old, Felix still finds it in his heart to help others. When Wassin arrives at his door, Felix knows that he must help this young boy as they take a journey across the globe to fix problems, both of today and the past.

For 16 years we have been delighted to share the miracle of Felix, on his journey from childhood to being lucky enough to become an old man.

This book is a lovely story to read alone, but for those of us that have shared in Felix's life journey, it is a must read and a terrific final instalment.

A great read for anyone aged 9 - 90.

Reviewed by Rob

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

The Song of Lewis Carmichael

By Sofie Laguna & Illustrated by Marc McBride

Publisher: Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781760878573 SCIS: 5372935

\$16.99

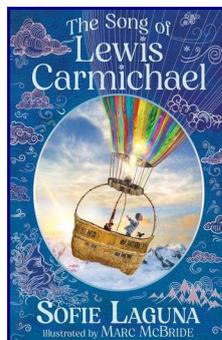
Blurb:

Matthew stood on the snowy peak and stared out at the world spread before him. Every picture in his books had been limited by the size of the page, contained within frames. Here, there was no frame. Here, the picture didn't end. Beyond those icy plains, the sea, and beyond the sea, a land that floated on the ice, drifting northwards. Matthew put the binoculars to his eyes and saw valleys and cliffs and rivers all made of snow. Everywhere was white.

Matthew has dreamed and read and thought about the North Pole for as long as he can remember. And he has done it secretly. It is a place that cannot be tarnished by the world in which he lives - a world in which he struggles to find answers and make friends, while everything seems to come easily to other children.

But one day, a crow called Lewis Carmichael lands at Matthew's window - a crow who believes in Matthew in the most simple and ordinary ways. Soon, the unexpected voyage of a lifetime begins, and it will change everything...

An unforgettable adventure story from award-winning children's book author Sofie Laguna, with enchanting illustrations by Marc McBride.



Lamont Review:

Imagine a young boy who struggles in the real world, both at school and in making friends. Someone who feels like he is not enough even for his parents. This is how Matthew feels before a crow named Lewis Carmichael lands on his window.

Lewis Carmichael encourages Matthew to come out onto the roof to take a hot air balloon ride to the North Pole. The North Pole and everything related to the Arctic are indeed Matthew's one obsession!

Then, with encouragement, often in the form of song, Lewis persuades Michael to face challenge after challenge. We witness Michael's growth into a much more adventurous and outgoing boy.

The Song of Lewis Carmichael is a beautifully written and magical story, about an incredible journey.

Giving a real insight into Arctic conditions, and with themes of resilience, friendship, imagination and family, this is a terrific story suitable to all readers aged 8 and above.

Reviewed by Rob