

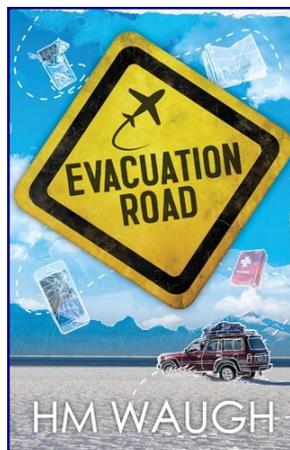
## **Evacuation Road**

By HM Waugh  
Publisher: Rhiza Edge  
ISBN 9781761110351 SCIS: 5368358  
\$19.99

**SECONDARY BOOK  
OF THE MONTH**

### *Blurb:*

Eva is far from home when everything goes wrong. And then it gets even worse. Her evacuation bus leaves her behind, stranded with classmates she barely knows. The chase is on. But South America is big, and the old rules are changing quickly. This is the road trip Eva never knew she needed. This is the race for the last flight home.



### *Lamont Review:*

Eva is on the school trip of a lifetime to South America, until she finds herself caught up in a nightmare.

Eva, Mike and Odati are stranded. Their bus and their teacher have left, and they must fend for themselves.

The world is changing all around them and chaos is everywhere. The banking system has collapsed and the rules they used to play by have been thrown out the window. How are they going to survive? And will they get the last plane home?

This is a real journey of self discovery for all of them. Eva is struggling with being caught in this situation with people she hardly knows (or likes). Mike is struggling with an ongoing, secret drug issue that is causing problems for all of them. And they are all struggling as they deal with the difficult circumstances that they never thought they would find themselves in.

It is at times a harrowing and eye-opening story, as the things they thought were important suddenly are not. Trust becomes more important than ever, and past prejudices must be cast aside.

This is a wonderful, fast-paced story, told over the six days before the last flight out, that will be enjoyed by all secondary students.

*Reviewed by Sam*

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

## **It's Not You, It's Me**

By Gabrielle Williams

Publisher: Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781760526078 SCIS: 5368342

\$19.99

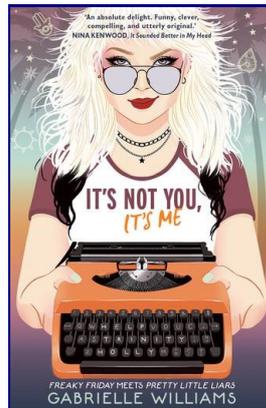
### *Blurb:*

Holly Fitzgerald has inexplicably woken up inside the body of an LA teenager called Trinity Byrne in 1980 - trapping Trinity in Holly's forty-year-old body back in Melbourne, 2020.

Mind. Officially. Blown.

Holly finds herself navigating a brand-new body, family and cute boy next door - not to mention rock band that might just make it, and potential kidnapper. Meanwhile, lies intersect with truth, hurtling both Holly and Trinity towards a dangerous fate as the connections between them grow deeper and stranger than either could have ever imagined.

*Freaky Friday* meets *Pretty Little Liars* - if the Liars were an all-girl punk band from the 1980s - in this highly original soul-swap story from the critically acclaimed author of *My Life as a Hashtag*.



### *Lamont Review:*

This book grabs you on the first page and doesn't let go until the end.

Holly is a 40-year-old Australian woman who has been mysteriously thrown into the body of Trinity, a 16-year-old girl in Los Angeles.

There are many twists and turns that I am not going to give away, as there were many I did not see coming! But there are life saving and life changing reasons for the body swap, and the connections between the two characters are many.

To start with, they are both born on the 29th February, and both have the rarest blood type in the world - Rhnull - look it up, only 43 people. Wow!

With themes of your relationship to your body, family, destiny and second chances, this is a wonderful 'what if' novel that asks many questions.

I found it totally engrossing! A great read for those aged 13 and above.

*Reviewed by Rob*

## **Banjo Tully**

By Justin D'Ath

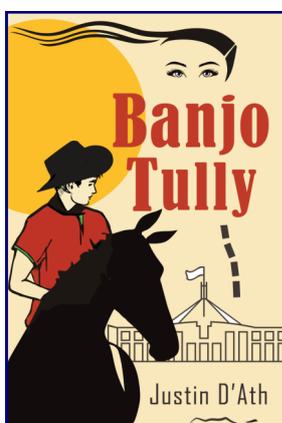
Publisher: Ford Street Publishing

ISBN 9781925804904 SCIS: 5372925

\$17.95

### *Blurb:*

Banjo Tully hasn't ever given much thought to climate change. But when he meets self-described 'conservation nut' Mai Le — after the worst drought in living memory puts his future in jeopardy — Banjo sets out on an 800-kilometre solo horse ride. It's a journey that might not only save his family's farm, but could also change the planet.



### *Lamont Review:*

Banjo rides his horse Milly the 21 kilometre journey to school for 'ride to school' day. He knows that the kids are supposed to ride bikes, but it is simply too far and anyway, why shouldn't he be able to claim a free movie ticket like everyone else?

When he is sent home from school, Banjo calls his parents - only to discover they are planning on selling his horse Milly due to the extreme drought. Banjo is not happy with this, so he decides to ride her to his Gran's house instead. When Gran tells him that she is too old and can't look after Milly, Banjo doesn't know what to do.

His dilemma is solved when he runs into a girl from school, Mai Le, and he stays with her family. Here Banjo learns of a climate emergency summit taking place in Canberra in 12 days time. With much assistance and encouragement from Mai Le, he decides to make the 800km ride there to make a statement.

During his journey, his legend grows. So to does his Go Fund Me page that Mai Le has organised.

Banjo never set out to be a hero, and has doubts about completing the journey along the way. But can his actions make a difference?

With great characters and a strong topical, Australian storyline, and containing themes of climate change, making a difference, resilience, and community spirit, this is an ideal classroom novel for students in Years 5 - 8.

*Reviewed by Rob*

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

## **Anything But Fine**

By Tobias Madden

Publisher: Penguin

ISBN 9781761042027 SCIS: 5368353

\$19.99

A heartfelt and hilarious Australian YA debut from a rising star.

Luca is ready to audition for the Australian Ballet School. All it takes to crush his dreams is one missed step... and a broken foot.

Jordan is the gorgeous rowing star and school captain of Luca's new school. Everyone says he's straight - but Luca's not so sure...

As their unlikely bond grows stronger, Luca starts to wonder - who is he without ballet? And is he setting himself up for another heartbreak?



### *Lamont Review:*

Luca is an amazing ballet dancer and is preparing for The Australian Ballet School auditions. When he falls down the steps and crushes his ankle, his life falls apart.

Forced to change schools, the first person he meets is Amina and she becomes his new best friend. Then he meets Jordan and their friendship grows. The only problem Luca is in love with him, but Jordan is straight. Or is he?

Luca must find out who he is really is, and if ballet and Jordan are any part of his future. For Amina, she has to find the courage to stand up to her parents, who want her to be a doctor, when all she wants to be is a teacher.

This is a book to devour in one sitting. Luca, Amina and Jordan are such engaging characters that feel so real and natural you can't help liking them.

It's a love story between the two boys, but also a story of growing up and finding out who you really are and who you want to be.

It has beautiful friendships running through the book, and will best suit readers in Year 10 and up. I loved it!

Reviewed by Michelle

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

## **Road Tripping with Pearl Nash**

By Poppy Nwosu

Publisher: Wakefield Press

ISBN 9781743058435 SCIS: 5368346

\$24.95

### *Blurb:*

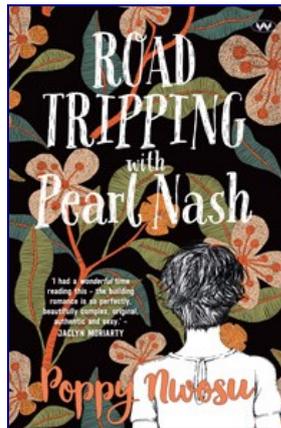
The summer is finally here, and Pearl Nash is on a mission to save her slowly disintegrating friendship with a whirlwind end-of-year road trip that is definitely, absolutely, most positively going to solve all her problems.

Except, instead of her best friend Daisy's feet on her dash, suddenly Pearl ends up stuck in the middle of the desert beside Obi Okocha, a boy with a mega-watt smile and an endlessly irritating attitude. Tasked with delivering him to the most epic end-of-year party ever, located in a beach shack in literal middle-of-nowhere woop woop, Pearl Nash is certain that nothing could be worse than this.

She's wrong.

Add in a breakdown, multiple arguments, an AWOL nana and a kiss that was most definitely a huge mistake, and suddenly Pearl has the perfect ingredients for the perfect disaster.

*Road Tripping with Pearl Nash* is a story about home and family, about breaking apart and fusing together, and, of course, about love.



### *Lamont Review:*

Pearl is going on a road trip to check on her Nana, who no one can get in contact with. In reality, the side trip to find Nana is just an excuse to go to a beach party to sort out her friendship with Daisy.

Instead of Daisy in her van, Pearl finds herself travelling with Obi, the most irritating boy she has ever met with the most amazing smile. What could possibly go wrong?

This is a beautifully written story about friendship, family, growing up and falling in love.

I loved this story. The dialogue and the characters are so authentic it's almost like you are there with them. Family and friendship shine through this book - how wonderful they are, as well as how complex, messy and confusing they can be.

A wonderful story that readers in Year 9 and up will love.

*Reviewed by Michelle*

## **Take Me With You When You Go**

By David Levithan and Jennifer Niven

Publisher: Penguin

ISBN 9780241550809 SCIS: 5372927

\$17.99

From the authors of *All the Bright Places* and *Every Day* comes a story of hope, family, and finding your home in the people who matter the most.

Ezra Ahern wakes up one day to find his older sister, Bea, gone. No note, no sign, nothing but an email address hidden somewhere only he would find it. Ezra never expected to be left behind with their abusive stepfather and their neglectful mother - how is he supposed to navigate life without Bea?

Bea Ahern already knew she needed to get as far away from home as possible. But a message in her inbox changes everything, and she finds herself alone in a new city - without Ez, without a real plan - chasing someone who might not even want to be found.

As things unravel at home for Ezra, Bea confronts secrets about their past that will forever change the way they think about their family. Together and apart, broken by abuse but connected by love, this brother and sister must learn to trust themselves before they can find a way back to each other.



### *Lamont Review:*

The story is written through emails between Bea, who has just run away from home, and her brother Ezra, who has been left behind.

Bea is searching for a better life with a loving parent that she knows is out there somewhere. She is running from an abusive stepfather and a neglectful, uncaring mother.

This leaves Ezra behind though. Soon enough Ezra too leaves home to stay with various friends and vows to never return.

Bea has also left a boyfriend and a best friend behind, and we witness their hurt and betrayal, mostly through their interactions with Ezra.

Bea and Ezra know that the one good thing that they have in this world is the love that they have for each other, but they must go through turmoil and upheaval before they can be reunited.

This is a tremendous story of a sibling bonds, domestic violence, and changing your world to make it better for yourself and those you love. This story is full of courage and hope for a better future.

With these mature themes and some use of the 'F' word, it would best suit readers aged 15 and older.

*Reviewed by Rob*