

All The Little Tricky Things

By Karys McEwen

Publisher: Text Publishing

ISBN 9781922458377 SCIS: 5400442

\$14.99

Blurb:

A novel about taking on new challenges, dealing with change and growing up, *All the Little Tricky Things* is perfect for readers about to start secondary school, or those moving into a new stage in life.

It's the start of the summer holidays and twelve-year-old Bertie is worried. Next year she's going to a high school in the city, while all her friends stay behind in Merri, the small town she's lived in all her life.

To help her feel better prepared for high school, her best friend, Claire, makes a list of tasks Bertie has to complete over the summer. They start working through the list together, only to find that some of the cracks in their friendship are beginning to show. Soon, Bertie's not even sure she'll have one friend by the end of the summer.

All the Little Tricky Things is a charming, heartfelt novel about a time when everything is changing, and a girl who's trying to make sense of it all.



Lamont Review:

This is a fabulous debut novel by the president of the CBCA's Victorian branch, Karys McEwen. As a school librarian she clearly understands young people, their feelings and what they need to read.

The storyline follows Bertie's life as she transitions from Grade 6 into high school. She suffers from anxiety and has always lived in the shadow of her best friend, Claire. Now Bertie is going to go to a big school in the city (one hour each way by train), and she is not at all sure that she will be able to cope with the upheaval.

When they add the new girl, Shiny, to their friendship group, Bertie soon feels that three is a crowd and that Claire is replacing her. How will Bertie cope with all of this upheaval?

This is a tremendous story about growing up, facing your fears and dealing with change. It is beautifully written, and will be a really useful asset for both upper primary students facing high school, as well as for those new to high school who are finding the move challenging. It is also just a lovely read for all those in upper primary and above.

Reviewed by Rob

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

The Way of Dog

By Zana Fraillon

Publisher: University of Queensland Press

ISBN 9780702265563 SCIS: 5399555

\$16.99

Blurb:

A powerful, inventive, sweet and deeply moving novel from the bestselling author of *The Bone Sparrow*.

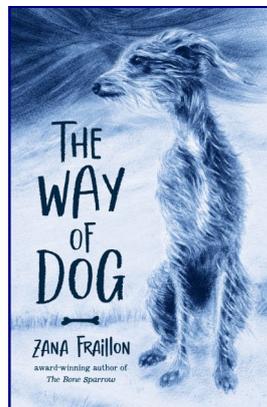
Be strong. Be fierce. Life is more than a concrete floor.

Scruffity is born into the harsh, grey world of a puppy farm. Taken from his mamma and locked in a concrete cage, what he yearns for most is Family. To belong is The Way of Dog. But no one wants him.

Just as his chances of adoption grow dangerously thin, Scruffity is set free by a boy as unwanted and lonely as he is.

Outside, Scruffity learns all about The Way of Dog - it is to run, to dig, to howl and, biggest of all, to love. But when tragedy strikes, Scruffity is suddenly all alone.

How does a dog find his way home when he never had one to begin with?



Lamont Review:

Written in verse, with incredible illustrations, and seen through the eyes of Scruffity the dog, this is a wonderful middle grade story.

Scruffity is born into a harsh environment, but when MyManpup decides to free him and leave his abusive home, things are looking up.

But many things go wrong, and Scruffity adopts new people four times, and teaches them how to behave to be happy - to live The Way of Dog!

Humorous, but also full of tragedy and containing themes of cruelty, both to humans and animals, hope, and the bond between dogs and their humans, this is a terrific and easy to read novel that is ideal for students aged 10—14.

Reviewed by Rob

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

How To Tackle Your Dreams

By Fiona Hardy

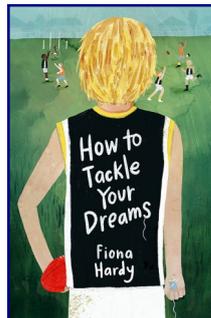
Publisher: Affirm Press

ISBN 9781922626684 SCIS: 5400437

\$19.99

Blurb:

Everyone knows that Homer loves Australian Rules football. But ever since his dad moved away and his mum was drafted in the women's league, something has changed. He's spending more time fixing clothes with his grandfather than scoring goals with his friends. When Homer's upgraded school shirt becomes the talk of the playground, he sees a business opportunity that could make him enough money to visit his dad. But the more stitches Homer makes, the more that everything else in his life begins to unravel. His friends don't understand him, his dad feels further away than ever, and even playing football doesn't feel like the escape it used to. Can Homer find a way to get back to how things used to be? And what does it mean if he can't? From the award-winning author behind *How to Make a Movie in 12 Days* and *How to Write the Soundtrack to Your Life* comes a warm and funny celebration of following your dreams, wherever they lead.



Lamont Review:

Homer loves playing Aussie Rules football, just like his Mum who has been drafted to the AFLW.

Since his Mum and Dad split up and his Dad moved to Perth, Homer spends lots of time with his grandparents who encourage his love of sewing and fashion.

Nothing feels right to Homer without his Dad around. When the kids at school ask him to fix their PE shirts because they are so uncomfortable, he thinks he can make enough money from his sewing for his Dad to visit.

But this just means extra work, and he struggles to fit in footy training, sewing, homework and friends. Life feels so complicated and he feels like no one understands him. Can Homer find a way to follow his dreams without everything falling apart?

This is a beautifully written story about Homer's struggles after the separation of his parents, and his mixed feelings around it. Homer and his friends are wonderful characters, and readers will easily relate to their experiences. Strong themes of family and friendship make this a perfect book for all lower secondary students.

Reviewed by Michelle