

# PICTURE BOOKS FOR PRIMARY STANDING ORDER

Happy New Year! And welcome to our first picture books standing order for 2021. We're delighted to welcome all our new ASO customers and to say hello again to our regulars. Please don't hesitate to contact our customer service team at any time if you have questions about any of your standing orders.

It's mid-November as I write these notes and there is a feeling of optimism in the air. I certainly hope it's a positive and happy year for all of us. And so to our books...

Our featured picture book is called **Day Break** and it's a meaningful offering about Australia Day, written by Amy McQuire and illustrated by award-winning artist, Matt Chun. This moving picture book looks at different stories about Australia Day. A young Indigenous girl takes the reader through the day as she and her family visit Country and hold their own ceremony to remember the past. It's a beautiful book that will open up discussion about Australia Day and what it means to different people.

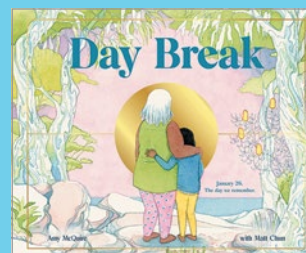
**Olive** by award-winning creators Edwina Wyatt and Lucia Masciullo is a sweet and poignant story about a little girl called Lilah whose cat, Olive, passes away. Olive's family plants an olive tree in remembrance of Olive and they tell Lilah that it will help her remember. But Lilah doesn't want to remember. She wants Olive. The tree grows, even though Lilah refuses to take care of it. Then one day, a strange cat wanders into Lilah's yard. Lilah doesn't want the cat, but when it gets stuck in Olive's tree, Lilah discovers her memories of Olive... and a new friend. The story is the perfect jumping-off point to talk about loss, grief, memories, rebirth and finding happiness.

I love **Jetty Jumping** by Andrea Rowe and Hannah Sommerville. It has such a joyful, summery feel to it. It's about Milla and her friends who like to play around the jetty and take 'big brave jumps from the jetty into the deep blue of the sea'. Except for Milla, who is too scared to jump. There are dark shadows down there, mysterious ripples and scary seaweed. When Milla's bracelet falls into the sea, Milla falls after it and discovers the beauty and joy to be found in the ocean. The illustrations are delightful, full of the exuberance of childhood.

**Joe and the Stars** by Phil Cummings and Connah Brecon is a stunning picture book about resilience, family and friendship. Joe lives 'where the dust was as orange as sunset, the land was flat and the sky was wide.' Joe's favourite thing to do is to climb a huge old tree that his grandfather planted in the yard and star gaze. 'He loved the stars, their endless mystery and wonder.' And then, 'with memories packed in boxes', Joe and his family move to the noisy city where the 'brightness of the stars had been stolen away by the powerful city lights'. So Joe finds a way to make his own stars and it's these stars that also help him to make new friends and a new life. Phil Cummings's text is beautiful and Connah Brecon's illustrations are breathtaking—glowing oranges, blues and purples that perfectly capture the magnificence of the night sky.

Happy reading.

*Belinda*



## FEATURED BOOK: **DAY BREAK**

## FEATURED AUTHOR: **AMY McQUIRE**



Amy McQuire is a Darumbal and South Sea Islander woman from Rockhampton in Central Queensland. She is a freelance writer and journalist, and is currently completing a PhD at the University of Queensland

into media representations of violence against Aboriginal women.

Amy began her career straight out of high school, completing a cadetship at the *National Indigenous Times* (NIT) newspaper. Over the past four years, Amy has co-hosted the investigative podcast 'Curtain' with human rights lawyer Martin Hodgson. Amy has a strong interest in writing about justice, culture and heritage and feminism.

For more information see: [amymcquire.com/about-1](http://amymcquire.com/about-1).

## FEATURED ILLUSTRATOR: **MATT CHUN**



Matt Chun is an artist and writer, currently based on unceded Tsleil-Waututh land, Vancouver, Canada. Living, travelling and creating with his 9-year-old son, Matt's work spans text, drawing, sculptural installation, children's books and

comics. Matt is the current Children's Literature Fellow at the State Library of Victoria in Naarm, Melbourne. He is also the current 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art's Emerging Writer.

For more information see: [mattchun.com.au](http://mattchun.com.au).

## COMING NEXT ISSUE

### **MARCH OF THE ANTS**

URSULA DUBOSARSKY & TOHBY RIDDLE

### **9 THINGS TO REMEMBER**

ALISON BINKS

### **THE BLUE FLOWER**

SONYA HARTNETT & GABRIEL EVANS

### **MO AND CROW**

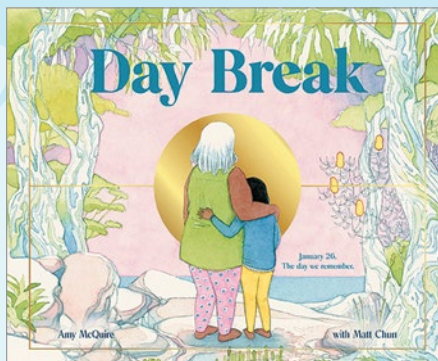
JO KASCH & JONATHAN BENTLEY

### **MAIN ABIJA (MY GRANDAD)**

KAREN ROGERS

### **THE FLYING ANGEL**

VICKI BENNETT & TULL SUWANNAKIT



## DAY BREAK

Author: **AMY MCQUIRE**

Illustrator: **MATT CHUN**

SCIS: **1991271**

ISBN: **9781760508159**

RRP: **\$24.99**

Recommended for **MID TO UPPER  
PRIMARY**

*Day Break* is the story of a family making their way back to Country on January 26. We see the strength they draw from being together, and from sharing stories as they move through a shifting landscape.

The story refocuses the narratives around 'Australia Day' on Indigenous survival and resistance, and in doing so honours the past while looking to the future. Confronting yet truthful, painful yet full of hope, *Day Break* is a crucial story that will open up a conversation on truth-telling for the next generation.



## STUDY NOTES

### WRITING STYLE

- Why is this book called *Day Break*? It begins at day break but does the author have another meaning in mind?
- What is wrong with the image of the teacher instructing her class to draw the Australian flag? What else might they have been encouraged to draw?
- Write a short passage about what Australia Day could be.

### ILLUSTRATION STYLE

- Examine the aerial views of the action on page 3. What does this perspective reveal in this image?
- Draw a picture of the narrator and her Nan, returning to Country.

### THEMES

Several themes are discussed in this picture book. Read the quotes relating to each theme, then answer the questions:

- Australia Day and Nationhood
  - "My teacher says January 26 is when we celebrate the settlement of Australia. She says white men discovered our country."
  - "Dad says: 'This isn't a celebration' and Nan says: 'We'll hold our own ceremony.'"
  - The celebration of Australia Day is contested in Australia. Indigenous or First Nations people alternatively call it Invasion Day or Survival Day. How should all Australians celebrate their nation's history? On what day might an Australia Day be celebrated? Is there a date which has significance for all Australians?
- War and Nationhood
  - "My teacher says the Australian spirit was born in a foreign war."
  - Images of our nationhood are tied to the myth of Gallipoli, a battle fought during WWI, and to the heroism exhibited by Australian soldiers in other wars. And yet we fail to acknowledge the tragedy of the Frontier Wars which pitted Indigenous people against their white invaders. Should war be a source of celebration for a nation?
  - What occurred during the Australian Frontier Wars?
  - Every war has a perceived winner and a loser. But no-one really wins a war. David Metzenthen and Michael Camilleri's book *One Minute's Silence*

(Allen & Unwin, 2014) makes this point abundantly clear. Read and discuss in relation to this topic.

- Visit the Australian War Memorial website, as a national institution commemorating war history. [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au).
- Indigenous History
  - "But Dad says we were already here. For tens of thousands of years."
  - Indigenous people have been owners of this land for millennia. Their history and cultural practices were interrupted by the arrival of European settlers/invasors. Many lives were lost and many families separated over successive decades to the present day. Look at the list of milestone events and movements that have taken place and ask students to research any that they might be interested in:
    - » Frontier Wars
    - » Stolen Generations
    - » Freedom Ride
    - » Reconciliation Movement
    - » NAIDOC Week (First full week in July)
    - » National Sorry Day (May 26)
    - » Uluru Statement
- Indigenous Culture
  - Indigenous people have always celebrated their art in dance, art and expression. One of the most exciting developments in contemporary arts has been the prominence of so many Indigenous artists, writers, actors, musicians, performers and directors. Invite students to read other picture books or fiction by Indigenous writers and illustrators; watch films or plays; and attend performances or exhibitions by Indigenous artists. Some suggested reading includes:
    - » Coombes, Debbie *Going to the Footy*, Magabala Books, 2019.
    - » Fox, Mem *I'm Australian Too*. Illustrated by Ronjooy Ghosh. Scholastic, 2017.
    - » Muir, Aunty Fay and Lawson, Sue *Respect*. Illustrated by Lisa Kennedy. Magabala Books, 2020.
    - » Tapsell, Miranda and Tyler, Joshua *Aunty's Wedding*. Illustrated by Samantha Fry. Allen & Unwin, 2020.
    - » Wheatley, Nadia *My Place*. Illustrated by Donna Rawlins. Walker Books, 2008, 1987.
  - Research the work of contemporary Indigenous writers and illustrators such as Bronwyn Bancroft, Sally Morgan, Boori Monty Pryor, Brenton McKenna,

Dub Leffler, Aunty Joy Murphy, Lisa Kennedy and Gregg Dreise.

- Read books which include Indigenous languages. Share some of the books published by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation: 'Community Literacy Projects' <https://bit.ly/399nloJ>.
- Ownership of Land
  - "The ancestors are still here, on this Country. 'And as long as you are here, on this Country, you will remember. It is our land. They were here before there was an "Australia". And one day, Nan says, she will join them. Always was. Always will be.'"
  - Research the relationship with the Land which Indigenous people hold sacred. What have been some key moments in that history? For example, research the Mabo Decision.
- Public Monuments and Memorials
  - "We don't need statues," Nan says. "We hold our memories on Country. This is where we remember our heroes."
  - Statues often memorialise white heroes, while Indigenous heroes are often overlooked. But Indigenous people celebrate their heroes in their own way. How do they honour them?
  - Research the lives of significant Indigenous figures in our past such as Bennelong, Jandamarra, Pemulwuy, Truganini, Denis Walker, Oodgeroo Noonuccal, Faith Bandler, Charles Perkins, Albert Namatjira, David Unaipon, Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri and Dick Roughsey.
- Memory
  - "If we forget what happened to us," Dad says, "we lose a part of who we are." How important are memories and remembrance?

### CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Create a classroom mural re-telling this story in the students' own images.
- Design a new cover for this book.
- Create your own list of things you feel/love/don't like about Australia. Then illustrate that list.
- Research traditional Aboriginal games on sites such as: 'Traditional Aboriginal games & activities' Creative Spirits. <https://bit.ly/36Rpg4a>.



## OLIVE

Author: **EDWINA WYATT**

Illustrator: **LUCIA MASCIULLO**

SCIS: **1990436**

ISBN: **9781760504083**

RRP: **\$24.99**

Recommended for: **LOWER TO MID PRIMARY**

Lilah's beloved cat dies and all she's left with is an olive tree to remember her by. Seasons pass and the tree grows but Lilah is too grief stricken to see its beauty and connection to Olive. Until, one day, in the safety of the tree's branches, and with the help of a stray cat, Lilah is ready to remember.

### STUDY NOTES

- *Olive* is a gentle introduction to young readers about death and the complicated processes of grief and remembering. Grieving a pet is often the first experience of grief that children will encounter.
- There are a lot of serious themes in this book, but they are discussed gently, and with respect to the way that people grieve differently. The themes include:
  - o Loss
  - o Remembering
  - o Life cycles
  - o Grief
  - o Pets
  - o Anger
  - o Death
- Look at the illustration on the second page of the story, where Lilah learns that Olive has died. Why do you think there are no words on this page? What words would you use to describe what is happening here?
- There are particular places in the book that Lilah thinks of as belonging to Olive—the steps, the fence and the roof. Make a list of

three places that remind you of a person or pet who is special to you.

- When Lilah remembers Olive, the picture shows all the places that Lilah and Olive played together. Draw a picture of your own house that shows all of the places that you share with someone special to you.
- Why do you think the illustrator uses black and white illustrations on the pages where Lilah remembers Olive?
- Why doesn't Lilah want to remember Olive at first? She is angry when the orange cat first appears in Olive's special places. What other emotions do you think she is feeling in the story?
- How do you think Lilah feels at the end of the story? Why do you think she might find comfort in being able to tell someone else about how special Olive was to her?
- Are there particular words in the book that make you feel certain emotions? Make a list of the words in the story that make you feel

comforted, sad, happy or angry. What other words might you use to describe each of these emotions?

- Death is something that can be very sad, and difficult to understand. What do you understand about death? Can you use the olive tree as a way to describe the cycle of life? What are the various stages of life and death? What other things can you see in the illustrations that have a life cycle?
- Why do you think Lilah's family chooses to plant an olive tree to help them remember Olive? Do you have a special tree, place or object that helps you to remember a pet or a person who has died? Draw a picture of it and describe how it reminds you of them.
- Imagine that you are Lilah, sitting in the tree with the orange cat at the end of the book, telling it all about Olive. What do you think she tells it? Use words or pictures to show their conversation.



## JETTY JUMPING

Author: **ANDREA ROWE**

Illustrator: **HANNAH SOMMERVILLE**

SCIS: **1990420**

ISBN: **9781760500658**

RRP: **\$24.99**

Recommended for: **LOWER TO MID PRIMARY**

While Milla's friends take big, brave jumps off the jetty, Milla stays on the blistering wood, scared of what lurks below. But when Milla accidentally falls off the edge, she discovers the beauty of the deep, dark sea—and her summer changes forever.

### STUDY NOTES

- Are you like any of the characters in *Jetty Jumping*? Which one are you most like and why?
- "Milla dangles her legs, bites her lip and twists her bracelet, out on the end of the towering jetty." How does Milla feel here? Underline the parts of the sentence that show you how Milla is feeling.
- As Milla watches her friends, she wishes that she were braver. Write about the bravest thing you've ever done. Why was it brave? Share it with your class and talk about the things that help you to feel brave.
- What is Milla afraid of when she looks down at the water? Are you afraid of things you can't see? What would you say to Milla to help her feel less afraid?
- Should Milla have to jump if she doesn't want to? Does she want to jump? What makes her decide to jump in the end?

- Milla and her friends enjoy being at the jetty together. Describe something that you enjoy doing with your friends. Why does it make you happy?
- "Clementine pin-drops, Bonnie torpedoes, Clancy belly-whacks." The words used to describe Milla's friends' actions are verbs. A verb is a doing word, like run or jump. These verbs are especially descriptive, and are unique to each character. Come up with three verbs to describe the way you move. Now come up with a verb to describe the way that three of your friends move.
- How would you describe the illustrations in the book? How do they make you feel? How does the illustrator use size and colour in the pictures to make the jetty and the ocean seem playful on some pages and frightening on others? Use size and shape in a picture to draw something that is frightening and then describe which parts of your picture add to this feeling and why.

- Make a list of as many words as you can think of that remind you of summer and the beach—try to use all of your senses to come up with your list (what does it look like, smell like, feel like, sound like and taste like?) Do any of the words on your list appear in the book either in the text or in the illustrations?
- Draw or paint your own summer picture that uses elements from each of your senses. Come up with a list of sense words for some of the other themes in the book—bravery, courage, friendship.
- When Milla loses her bracelet, she dives into the ocean without thinking of her fear. Sometimes our fear of losing something can be bigger than our fear of something else. Have you ever lost something precious to you? Describe it. Write a story where you have to overcome something you're afraid of in order to get it back. How would you illustrate your story?





## JOE AND THE STARS

Author: **PHIL CUMMINGS**  
 Illustrator: **CONNAH BRECON**  
 SCIS: **1990433**  
 ISBN: **9781742995045**  
 RRP: **\$24.99**

Recommended for: **LOWER TO MID PRIMARY**

In the red dust, where the sky is wide, Joe loves watching the stars. He marvels at their mystery and wonder. But when his family moves to the city . . . the stars are hard to see. Will Joe find a way to make them shine again?

### STUDY NOTES

- Before reading the story, as a class look closely at the cover and title, and discuss what you can learn about the story. Some things that you might like to include in your discussion could be:
  - What is the title of this story?
  - Who do you think is pictured on the cover?
  - What is the boy on the cover doing in the picture?
  - Why do you think he is doing this?
  - How do you think he is feeling in the cover picture, and why?
  - What can you tell about the boy on the cover from the picture and title—where do you think he lives, how old might he be and what things might be important to him?
  - What do you think could happen in this story?
  - How does the cover artwork make you feel? What are some words that you might use to describe this picture?
- Joe and the Stars* starts with a description of the part of the world where Joe lives. It mentions the soil—"the dust was as orange as sunset; the landscape the land was flat; and the sky the sky was wide." As a class discuss this description, and the words the author has chosen for the different aspects of it.

- Joe likes to watch the sunrise and sunset from the branch in his tree. Get up early and watch the sun rise one day, and that evening also watch the sun set. Does the sunrise look different from the sunset? If so, in what way, and why? You might want to take several photos of both the sunrise and the sunset so that you can more easily compare them later. Paint pictures of the sunrise and the sunset you saw and share them with your class.
- When Joe can't see the stars anymore because of the big city's lights, he creates a starscape of his own. How do you think he created all the little stars that he hung from the tree? Create a starscape of your own. Draw stars on thin cardboard, cut the star shapes out and cover them in aluminium foil. Punch holes in them and hang them from strings across the windows or ceiling, or pin them to the walls. Use a permanent marker to write a word on each star that you think describes how Joe feels when he looks at his home-made starscape.
- In the story, the author talks about Joe's Grandpa, the things that he did with Joe, and things that he said—but Joe's Grandpa doesn't appear in the book. Why do you think this might be? How do you think Joe feels about his Grandpa? Why do you think this?
- As a class, discuss how you think Joe feels

- What are some words that you can use to describe all the different feelings that Joe has throughout the course of the story?
- When Joe moves to the city, he finds that



it is very different. The house he lives in is different, the window he looks out is different, the sounds are different and even the sky at night is different!

- Think about where you live, and whether it is more like where Joe lived in the country, or where he lives in the city.
- What are some of the things where you live that are similar to Joe's old home.
- What are some things where you live that are similar to Joe's new home?
- What are the sounds, sights and colours in the world around you where you live?
- Do you live in a city, town or out in the country?
- Write a short description of what you can see when you look out your bedroom window, and how you feel about the view.
- Illustrate your description with a drawing or painting of the view from your bedroom window.
- What do the stars look like at night where you live? Does the sky look like the country sky at the start of the book, or more like the city sky at the end? Look carefully at all the artwork in the book showing the stars at night. What are the different shapes, colours and patterns that the illustrator has used? Create a night sky artwork of your own using acrylic paint on black card. Paint the background colours using blues and purples in deep swirls like the ones in the sky in *Joe and the Stars*, then dot stars on using white or silver paint. You can flick sprays of paint off a toothbrush, or you can make individual stars with the tip of a pencil dipped in paint.



- What else can we learn about Joe's home from this sentence?
- What other sorts of skies might there be, and how could we describe them?
- Why does the author talk about the colour of the dust rather than the colour of the ground? What does this tell us about the climate of Joe's home?
- Individually, or in pairs, write a description of where you live using the same or a similar format.

when he first moves to the city with his family. Some things to include in your discussion are:

- Why do you think Joe and his family might be moving to the city?
- How do you think Joe feels about his family moving?
- How do you think Joe feels about his new home when they first arrive?
- How do you think Joe feels about his new home at the very end of the story? Why do you think this?