



Psychologists for the
Promotion of World Peace



CHILDREN'S PEACE LITERATURE AWARDS

Psychologists for the Promotion of World Peace (PPOWP) encourage the study of issues related to the promotion of peace and prevention of war, and advocate the use of peaceful rather than violent methods for the resolution of conflict. We believe that peace is possible through the application of alternative methods of conflict resolution, whether the conflict be at an international level or interpersonal level. Everything we do to encourage others to believe non-violent solutions are possible and to actively express their concerns helps to bring about changes that will ripple through all levels of society. By working together with understanding, we can all help make peace possible.

PPOWP wishes to recognize authors who promote the peaceful resolution of conflict through their work. As our children live in an increasingly threatened world, it is important to present them with constructive alternatives to violence and hostility. We believe that literature has a significant influence on children's attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, we wish to support and encourage authors whose work promotes peace and the understanding of others.

The goal of this biennial Award is to promote the peaceful resolution of conflict by recognising and encouraging Australian authors of children's books with that theme.

This award is coordinated by Members of the South Australian PPOWP Group.

Past winners include:

- 1987: Gillian Rubinstein for Space Demons*
- 1989: Victor Kelleher for The Makers
- 1991: Libby Gleeson for Dodger*
- 1993: Isobelle Carmody for The Gathering and Bob Graham for Rose Meets Mr. Wintergarten*
- 1995: Brian Caswell for Deucalion*
- 1997: James Moloney for A Bridge to Wiseman's Cove
- 1999: Phillip Gwynne for Deadly Unna?
- 2001: James Moloney for Touch me

*Denotes books for which PPOWP has written discussion ideas for teachers and parents. These are included at the end of this document.

For enquiries contact relating to any information in this brochure contact the **Peace Education Coordinator** - Margot Trinder at The Australian Psychological Society, Phone: 03 8662 3300, Fax: 03 9663 6177; Email: m.trinder@psychsociety.com.au

2003 WINNER:

***Sky Legs by Irimi Savvides** (Hodder Headline Australia, 0-7336-1495-7 (pbk) 297 pp).

This is an engaging story of how Eleni responds to the challenge presented by her family's relocation from inner Sydney to the Blue Mountains during her final years of schooling. We meet Eleni first in a school for clowns in Byron Bay. We learn that she responds to landscape, writes haiku, enjoys the company of friends, and that she is talented. At her new school, her background and abilities do not attract other students to her. She says "I am that deadly combination. Different, new – and good at something." Eleni finds her inner clown, learns to 'walk on clouds' and challenges the fear that perpetuates intolerance. *Sky Legs* is most suited to older teenagers and young adults.

SHORT LIST

Dark Wind Blowing by Jackie French (Angus & Robertson 0-207-19796-2 (pbk) 122 pp)

This book is full of suspense. When everyone has been invited to a birthday party except one boy in a class, a tense situation provides an opportunity for the community to act cooperatively and assertively.

Tom Jones Saves the World by Steven Herrick (University of Queensland Press (pbk) 178 pp)

Written in Herrick's trademark spare, effective, easy-to-read verse, this entertaining primary school novel follows the developing friendship between a young boy and girl as they work out creative and ingenious ways to bring about a family reconciliation and gently nudge a father into relaxation and trust.

Two Weeks in Grade Six by Anna and Mary K Pershall (Puffin 0-14-330020-2 (pbk) 187 pp)

Kaitlin has been accepted because of her friendship with the popular Shelley. When she is allocated to a new table group with the school's top five 'losers', she finds herself vulnerable. With the wise help of her visiting English grandmother, Kaitlin emerges from the experience a stronger person, ready to face the even greater challenges of life in secondary school.

Theme List

Mitch 2 Sue by Kate Walker (Omnibus Books (South Australia) an imprint of Scholastic Australia Pty Ltd 1-86291-539-3 (pbk) 150 pp).

This book is written as a series of emails between cousins Mitch and Sue, both in Year 9 but attending different high schools. The story picks up on the nuances between the way boys and girls respond to bullying and deal with it as well as the interpersonal relationships and fickle loyalties that can be so hurtful and cruel at that age. Solutions of various kinds are exchanged in the emails and it's good to have the issues of schoolyard bullying policies discussed by the kids.

Teacher's Pet by Morris Gleitzman (Puffin 0-14-038799-4 (pbk) 191 pp)

Ginger Smith is a schoolgirl who befriends a stray dog and sets about to save the dog from the new deputy principal. Both Ginger and the deputy principal become able to see the world a bit more from the other's point of view as a result of Ginger's patience, her creative problem solving that occurs in unusual circumstances.

2001 WINNER:

Touch me by James Moloney (University of Queensland Press).

A moving novel about young love and young death. Xavier comes to appreciate friendship, and to suspect the 'win at all costs' principles of his rugby coach

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

The simple gift by Steven Herrick (University of Queensland Press).

A verse novel about Billy the runaway, Old Bill the hobo, and Caitlin the rich kid who mops at MacDonalds; a story of love, friendship and survival.

SHORT LIST

I am Jack by Suzanne Gervay, illustrated by Cathy Wilcox (Harper Collins).

Jack has problems with bullying at school, but has many helpers together with his own sense of humour and coping skills.

Bossy big boots' blister by Wayne Gilholm, illustrated by Lisa Coutts (Macmillan Education Australia).

Jemima is bossy especially to her two friends. They argue over who will wear Cinderella's shoes, but later become friends again.

Omega by Christine Harris (Random House).

Adventure, meetings with alien minds and attempts to find negotiated solutions, in a post-nuclear future.

Something's fishy Hazel Green by Odo Hirsch, illustrated by Andrew McLean (Allen & Unwin).

A Hazel Green detective story: Who stole the giant lobsters, and why?

The frog family by Pamela Rushby, illustrated by Elizabeth Alger (Rigby).

A step-family and a green frog!

Other Recommended Books

Butterflies by Suzanne Gervay (Harper Collins).

Katherine who is almost eighteen, was severely burnt at three years of age. She refuses to be a victim and struggles for her own identity and independence.

Dolphins dance by Jutta Goetze (Black Dog Books).

Told by Ali about her brother Max who is autistic. The family copes, with the help of several people and some friendly dolphins. A thoughtful book.

I don't want to go to school by Christine Harris, illustrated by Craig Smith (Random House Australia).

A delightful picture book about two children confronting their fear of going to school.

Mahalia by Joanne Horniman (Allen & Unwin).

Matt is seventeen and raising his baby as a single parent. He is unemployed and often lonely, but has good friends of both sexes. The story is told with realism and with moments of joy and of despair.

1999 WINNER:

Deadly Unna? by Phillip Gwynne. (Penguin Books).

Gary struggles against in-grained racist attitudes in the local population. With dry humour, he paints himself as a coward on the football field, but shows strength of character in facing up to the more abstract challenges off the field and away from the safety zone of the country football culture.

SHORT LIST

Sink or Swim by Ron Bunney. (Fremantle Arts Centre Press).

Earl, a cray fisherman takes Bazza under his wing, giving him on-the-job training as a deck-hand. On the way, he also teaches Bazza life skills, presenting him with positive examples of successfully dealing with interpersonal conflict.

The Biography of Gilbert Alexander Pig by Gael Cresp & David Cox. (Benchmark Publications Management).

A slightly zany picture book story based on "the three little pigs". The resolution of conflict makes use of some catchy language that might encourage some constructive behaviour in real-life situations.

Soldier on the Hill by Jackie French. (Angus & Robertson - HarperCollins).

A Japanese soldier is in hiding in the Australian landscape. Individuals whose countries are at war with each other show that it is possible to rise above the situation and give help where it is needed.

More than a Game by Peter McFarlane. (Penguin Books).

An AFL football team has Tammy's wholehearted support. Tammy struggles with teasing, bullying, harassment, competition from her peers, and family pressures. Experience with Tammy, some of her growth as a result of dealing successfully with these challenges.

Other Recommended Books

Leaves for Mr. Walter by Janeen Brian and David Cox (Margaret Hamilton Books).

An attractively illustrated book for the younger audience about potential conflict between neighbours. The quiet persistence and a positive attitude of a child stops the conflict from developing and there is a better outcome for both parties.

Hazel Green by Odo Hirsch. (Allen & Unwin).

The quirky Hazel Green is no angel but she is likeable. Hazel goes to considerable effort, as she tries to reach a satisfactory resolution of a conflict that was not really of her own making.

Buzzard Breath and Brains by James Moloney. (University of Queensland Press).

There is a conflict and bullying theme throughout this book. Various attempts and efforts are made to resolve conflict.

Homestrung by Helen McKerral. (Hyland House Publishing).

A girl struggles with the adjustments she is forced to make after her mother dies. She is confronted with both personal and interpersonal conflicts, but is supported by a loyal friend.

Too Much to Ask For by Katherine Pershall and Mary K. Pershall (Puffin Books).

On the theme of changing friendships and conflict between schoolgirls, this book is relatively easy to read. It may suit children in the middle primary years, a time when their friendships and relationships can be particularly challenging.

1997 WINNER

A Bridge to Wiseman's Cove by James Moloney (UQP).

At fifteen Carl finds himself responsible for his wayward younger brother, and struggling to earn respect both for himself and from a community which scorns his family. The plot is strong and the writing compelling, with excellent characterizations. Resilience and forgiveness are shown by different characters and the ending is both believable and optimistic.

SHORT LIST

Surfing Mr Petrovic by Colin Bowles (Penguin Aust.)

A highly commended and appealing story for primary-school aged children. Three mischievous boys cruelly harass an elderly European man, then it gets out of control. Tao tells how he gets into more and more trouble both at school and with his family, partly through not wanting to feel left out. However he comes to understand Mr Petrovic, and makes amends with his father and his mother's new partner too.

Asturias by Brian Caswell (UQP).

A moving and complex story for older children, about the members of a band who are threatened by conflicts amongst themselves and also between themselves and commercial interests. They keep their integrity through courage, their supportiveness towards each other, and their ability to learn from the lessons of the past.

Through the Witch's Window by Caroline Macdonald (Penguin Aust.).

Four children whose lives have been dislocated by their parents' search for work meet Rose Tattoo, an eccentric artist. Should they regard her as a witch, and whether they do or not, how should they treat her? A subtle and tightly-written story for primary schoolers.

Other Recommended Books

Last Refuge by Dianne Bates (Hodder Headline Aust.).

Clearly portrays the damaging effects of domestic violence on the victims' self-confidence and all the family relationships, with a positive eventual outcome.

Only the Heart by Brian Caswell & David Phu An Chiem (UQP).

A story about refugees from Vietnam and their efforts to make a new life, which shows the importance of not giving up hope.

Favourite Live Thing by Jean Chapman (UQP).

Suitable for middle-primary school children, the story concerns how positive acts and cooperation towards a common goal can break down antagonism.

Trivia Man by Laurine Croasdale (UQP).

A bullied boy shares his isolation with another, until his talent for quiz games and forward planning brings a positive solution.

Angel by Phil Cummings (Random House).

Very real family members try to deal with their grief over a son's death, until his re-appearance fresh from angel school helps them learn to survive life without his presence.

The Apostle Bird by Garry Disher (Hodder Headline Aust.).

Set in the time of the Great Depression, there are conflicts in a gold-mining community between ethnic and social groups, which Neil has some part in resolving.

Summerland by Jackie French (Harper Collins).

A girl has developed a fantasy alternative world as a way of coping, as some children do, and the story tells how she learns to face things and take the initiative in order to save herself and others.

Streetwise by John Maddocks (UQP).

Tom is learning to deal with his parents separating and with the unexpected discovery of having being adopted. He must adjust to a less protective environment and take new responsibilities for his life.

Soula the Ruler by Peter McFarlane (Harper Collins).

The recognizable bullying of a teacher by her class leads to her breakdown, and her replacement looks set for a similar fate before Soula steps in to take charge. By involving everybody she succeeds in bringing fame to the class as well as in helping their former teacher.

Johnny Hart's Heroes by David Metzthen (Penguin Aust.)

Endurance, tolerance of social differences and the power of friendship help a diverse group of people who go droving, saving their sheep and also gaining publicity for the strengths and plight of country people affected by drought.

Mr Biffy's Battles by Richard Tulloch (Penguin Aust.)

Two clowns come to realize the benefits of cooperation. Great illustrations extend the text and there is plenty of appropriately slapstick humour.

* DISCUSSION IDEAS FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Sky Legs by Iri Savvides (2003 - Hodder Headline Australia Limited).

For quite different reasons, Eleni and her new friend Peter each face bullying at school. Eleni draws on her family background, her education, and her creative skills to challenge the fear and intolerance that helps perpetuate the bullying aspects of the culture at school.

This book acknowledges the importance of addressing fear as one of the key sources of a wide variety of conflict. It not only examines conflict in bullying at school, it also examines conflict in Eleni's family history. Sky Legs also explores how Eleni manages despite significant losses and changes in her life.

Sky Legs is probably most suited to older teenage children and young adults. It would make good reading and discussion material for students from years 10, 11 and 12.

Possible Discussion Questions:

1. Why did bullying probably happen at Eleni's new school and what kept it going?
2. Who were the targets of the bullying and what were the targeted characteristics of those people?
3. What characteristics of the bullies were portrayed? Were there characteristics of the bullies that could have been portrayed more?
4. How did Eleni develop the strength to challenge her fears in relation to bullying at school?
5. How did Eleni's family and cultural background help her deal with the challenges she faced at her new school?
6. What does Sky Legs say about running away as one possible reaction to challenges or problems?
7. How did Eleni's beliefs and imagination affect her problem-solving?

ROSE MEETS MR WINTERGARTEN by Bob Graham (Puffin)

A delightful picture book for 2 to 7 year olds. This simple story tells how Rose's family – the Summers – move next door to the dark house of the frightening Mr Wintergarten. By personal contact and fairy cakes Rose wins Mr Wintergarten over. The beautiful illustrations are an integral part of this happy book.

1. Does Rose believe the evil tales told about Mr Wintergarten?

2. Is it a good idea to be nice to everyone?
3. Did it make a difference to Mr Windergarten that Rose gave him a present?
4. Why do you think this book won a prize?

DODGER by Libby Gleeson (Turner & Chambers – 1990)

A novel for late primary/early secondary school years. This book relates the story of an adolescent boy at high school who struggles with a range of issues including: his mother's death, his acceptance of the need for his truck-driving father to be away a lot, his reputation with some teachers (and the sports teacher in particular), personal doubts, and trying to accept and respond to the positive expectations of a new teacher to the school. The story is told through an oscillation between narrative and the new teacher's letters to her friend (a fellow beginning teacher). Mick is cast as Dodger in the play "Oliver", although he is not sure he wants to take the part. Mick learns to deal with the conflicts both within himself and with the others in his world. And the teacher also does some growing up.

1. What are the conflicts and what is the range of emotions that Mick goes through, and how does he deal with them?
2. How do you think Mick felt after the play was finished? Why?
3. What was the critical difference that helped Mick in this story?
4. What difference do you think Mick's struggles will make for him in the future?
5. What elements of this book do you think the judges identified to award the prize?

DEUCALION by Brian Caswell (UQP)

A science fiction thriller for High School Students. This thought provoking story has overtones of the colonization of Australia. Deucalion is a planet that is light years from earth but by 2200 space travel is sophisticated enough for it to be populated as it has a similar climate to earth. However there is already life on Deucalion – the Elokoi who are regarded as inferior to humans even though they possess empathic qualities the earthlings lack. The Elokoi are treated very badly particularly in the first years of settlement and are placed on reserves. Deucalion is very rich in mineral reserves that are being exploited for the benefit of Corporations on Earth. Jane, Denny, Eleni and Daryl are caught up in the political and economic machinations of powerful forces which, with help from the Elokoi they manage to overcome.

Questions:

1. What do you most admire about the Elokoi?
2. Why didn't Jane like her previous self?
3. Do you think the principles of non violent protest apply to all situations?
4. Do you think this book deserved a Peace prize?

SPACE DEMONS – Gillian Rubinstein, (1986). .

This book will appeal to 12-16 year olds.

The main themes:

- Computer games/isolation and competitiveness
- Peer pressure
- The power and seductiveness of guns and violence
- The different worlds of parents and teenagers
- Acknowledging the dark side of human nature, but promoting the positive side as a higher level of functioning

Questions about the book to stimulate discussion and thought about non-violent conflict resolution.

- Do we have choices in how to respond or are there situations where there is no choice but to engage in violence?
- If there are choices, are the answers always clear whether to take a violent path or a non-violent path?
- What was the most exciting part of the book? If it was during some of the violent parts, what does this mean for our awareness of what is stimulating and the choices we make?
- There seemed to be a big separation between the parents' experiences of what was going on and the experiences of the people playing the game. How could the parents of the people playing the games have shared some of the experiences they were having, without reducing enjoyment of the experience or without reducing learning from the experience.
- What, if anything, does this book say about human nature?
- Were there any parts of the book you found disturbing or frightening? If so, why?
- What age group do you think the book is suited to and why?
- Why do you think the judges selected this book as a good example for the Children's Peace Literature Award? Are there any reasons you can think of that make the book less suitable for such an award? How could it have been improved if it was being written specifically to win such a prize?
- The book was first published in 1986. Do you think it has stood the test of time? Has it been dated by the technology described in the book? Is there anything else which dates the book from your point of view?