



SCHOOL LIBRARIES READING THE WORLD^v

School Library Association of Victoria

Conference November 24

MCEC

**Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
South Wharf, Melbourne**



November 24
Full Day CONFERENCE

The school library plays a vital role in the development of literate, empathetic and knowledgeable young people.

This conference explores how school libraries create, foster and enable the reading experience to enrich their communities understanding of the world around them and themselves. With a focus on research evidence from leading academics the day explores the texts, tools, experiences, and understandings that underpin how school libraries support us in reading our world.

Conference Program

8.30am Registration – Refreshments available

9.00am Welcome - Di Ruffles, President, SLAV

9.05am Featured Address

How do Australian Teens discover a good read? – Research findings from a national survey of secondary school students.

Dr Bronwyn Reddan, Professor Andrew Singleton, and Associate Professor Leonie Rutherford

10.00am SLAV Awards Presentation

10.25am Morning Tea & Trade Exhibition



11.00am Concurrent Sessions – Round One

- The Primary School Library Cultivating Healthy Identity through Story - Michele Rutter
- Reading the World - Joyce Sendekyi and Patrick Barton
- Genrefying to engage students in reading their world - Joy Whiteside, Leonie Stephenson and Jessica Jones

11.45am Panel – *First Knowledges: Songlines* - Margo Neale and Lynne Kelly with Chair - Shelley Ware

12.15pm Reading– *My Strange Shrinking Parents* – Zeno Swooder

12.30pm Lunch & Trade Exhibition

1.25pm Lighting Round

- Big Summer Read – Christine Peters
- David Lawrence
- The Shelftalkers Challenge – Lauren Kyte
- Vanessa Len



1.45pm Concurrent Sessions – Round Two

- Critical, ethical, and creative: fostering responsible engagement with generative AI – Bridget Forster
- Reading the World – it is in your classroom! - Ruth Woolven
- From Auschwitz to Africa: Using fiction to encourage social change - Suzy Zail and Sian Prior

2.30pm Featured Address

Snapshots from around the world: What are our teens reading today?
Associate Professor Chin Ee Loh

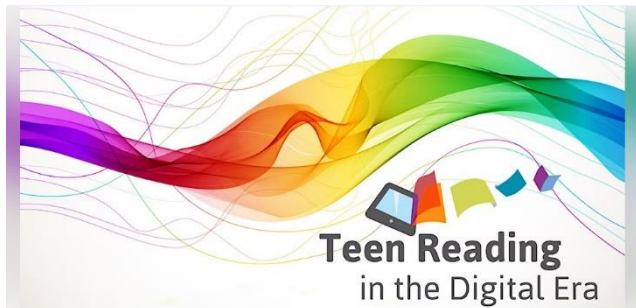
3.25pm Conference Close

Announcements & prizes - Di Ruffles, President, SLAV

FEATURED ADDRESS

How do Australian teens discover a good read? Research findings from a national survey of secondary school students.

**Dr Bronwyn Reddan,
Professor Andrew Singleton,
& Associate Professor Leonie
Rutherford**



This presentation outlines key findings from the Australian Research Council Linkage Project 'Discovering a good read: Pathways to reading for Australian teens'. In 2022 and 2023, we surveyed more than 13 000 Australian secondary school students from NSW, VIC, QLD, and WA about their reading habits and preferences and interviewed 85 teachers and school library professionals.

Today, we offer insights from our data on teenagers' recreational reading tastes and practices with a focus on:

- What place does reading have in the lives of Australian teens?
- What are teens reading?
- How do teens choose what they want to read?
- What is the impact of age, gender, socio-economic and language background, and other social influences on teen reading habits?
- How do teens use school and public library collections?

Bronwyn Reddan is a Research Fellow on the Australian Research Council Linkage project 'Discovering a "Good Read": Pathways to Reading for Australian Teens'. Her research examines the social and emotional dimensions of literary cultures, with a particular interest in digital social reading practices, women's writing, and fairy tales.

Leonie Rutherford is Associate Professor in the School of Communication and Creative Arts at Deakin University where she leads the Teenagers Reading and Digital Practices research program. Her work is intensively engaged with interdisciplinary investigation of youth cultural participation, with a special focus on media (including print and book culture), digital literacies, media policy, and audiences.

Andrew Singleton is Professor of Sociology and Social Research at Deakin University. His research interests include young people and social change, mixed-methods research, personal belief, and alternative religions. Singleton has published extensively in these areas, both nationally and internationally.



PANEL

First Knowledges: Songlines

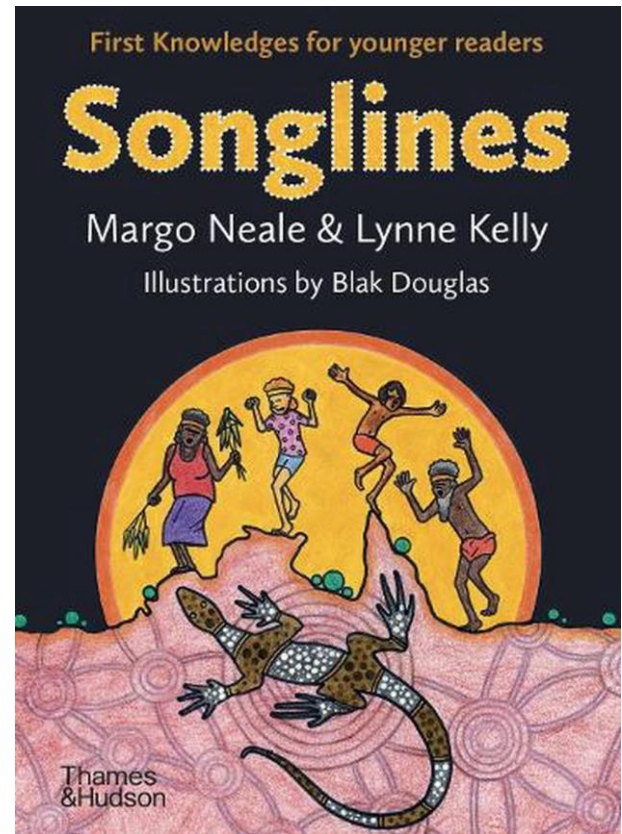
On the back of the enormously successful *First Knowledges* series for adults, **Margo Neale** and **Lynne Kelly** will discuss the newly released Young Readers edition of *First Knowledges: Songlines*.

This series aims to give your students (and you!) an opportunity to learn more about history, art, song, and science through a highly engaging introduction to Indigenous traditional knowledges.



Shelley Ware, Margo Ngawa Neale, and Lynne Kelly

(Clockwise from top-left)



The panel, chaired by **Shelley Ware**, educator, author, media commentator and Indigenous Literacy Foundation Ambassador, will discuss how these traditional knowledges apply today, how they can help all people thrive into the future, and how they can be used across the curriculum.

Margo Ngawa Neale is head of the Centre for Indigenous Knowledges, senior Indigenous curator, and principal adviser to the director of the National Museum of Australia.

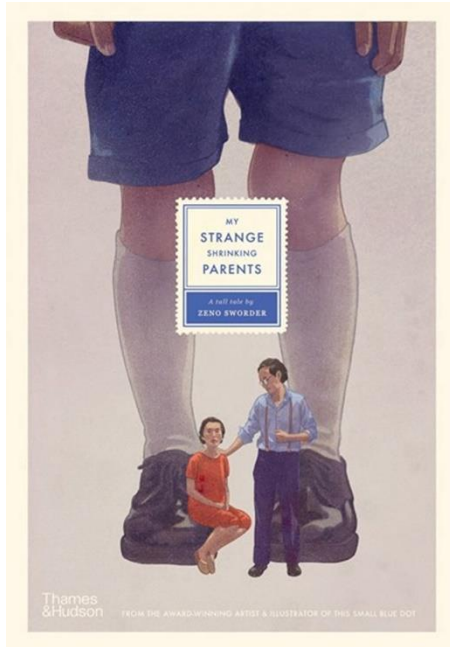
Lynne Kelly is a science writer working as an honorary research associate at La Trobe University. She is the author of *The Memory Code* and *Memory Craft*.



READING

My Strange Shrinking Parents

Zeno Sworder joins us to read his CBCA 2023 Picture Book of the Year.



Zeno Sworder is an author and illustrator for children. His debut picture book *This Small Blue Dot* won the 2021 Children's Book Council Award (CBCA) for New Illustrator, as well as the 2021 Australian Book Design Award (ABDA) for Best Designed Children's Book and Designer's Choice Children's / Young Adult Book of the Year.

Zeno's second book, *My Strange Shrinking Parents*, won this year's CBCA Picture Book of the Year and was shortlisted for the 2023 ABDA Best Designed Children's Picture Book.



FEATURED ADDRESS

Snapshots from around the world: what are our teens reading today?

Associate Professor Chin Ee Loh

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018, reported that teens read less and enjoy reading less compared to prior cohorts. Reasons suggested for the decline include adolescents' increasing schoolwork, competing social demands



for their time, and the distractions of digital devices. However, while digital devices may distract, they may also serve as another source of reading materials for today's teens. In my research in Singapore, I have found that teens generally prefer to read in print when it comes to storybooks and on their devices for news and online-only resources. Frequent and infrequent readers have different habits, as do students with different reading proficiencies and interests. Some teens are reading more than before, whereas others do not read at all.

In this presentation, I draw on studies from Singapore and around the world

to provide a more nuanced and complex snapshot of teen reading habits across different continents. I will discuss the kinds of reading that matter for academic achievement, learning, wellbeing, and participation in the global/local world. I propose we broaden our understanding of what counts as reading so that we can devise multi-pronged approaches to support teens' engaged reading.

Loh Chin Ee is Associate Professor and Deputy Head (Research) at the English Language and Literature Academic Group at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University. Her research focuses literacy and literature education at the intersection of place-based pedagogies, equity, and globalisation. Her work on reading and technology, and school libraries as informal learning environments, have had significant impact on policy and practice. Chin Ee is the Principal and Co-Principal investigator of more than SGD\$5M worth of grants, including the Designing School Libraries of the Future grant, for which she was shortlisted for the Singapore President's Design Award 2023. She is the author of *The Space and Practice of Reading: A Case Study of Reading and Social Class in Singapore* (Routledge, 2017), co-editor of *Literature Education in the Asia-Pacific* (Routledge, 2018) and more than 50 scholarly books and articles. Her forthcoming book, *The Reading Lives of Teens: Research and Practice* (Routledge, forthcoming) compiles international, inter-disciplinary perspectives on adolescent reading. You can find out more about reading on her *How We Read* podcast and the *NIE Education Launchpad* series.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

The Primary School Library Cultivating Healthy Identity through Story – Michele Rutter

This session will focus on the implementation of a primary school library teaching program based on the SLAV 2022 Research Fellowship Award action research project. The session will explore how primary libraries can utilise quality and diverse literature, along with evidence-based pedagogy, to foster prosocial traits in younger students while also supporting a variety of whole school curriculum priorities. Practical teaching resources and curated book lists will be shared during the session.

Michele Rutter is Head of Junior Library at Camberwell Grammar School. She has 24 years' experience as a primary educator in both government and independent schools across Qld and Victoria, the last 8 years as a qualified teacher librarian. Awarded the 2022 SLAV Research Fellowship Award, Michele is passionate about engaging and empowering students through reading and fostering a welcoming and inclusive library space.

'Reading the World' by Joyce Sendeckyj and Patrick Barton

The Reading Detective Program (RDP) at St. Peter's College has addressed the commitment to improve literacy skills for students in Years 7 & 8 since 2019.

As part of his address, our Principal, Chris Black (2021), encourages new students to understand that "Reading Matters", as well as encouraging "reading as a wonderful pastime, that takes you to another place and that's really important in this day and age"; encouraging our students to

understand themselves and the world through story.

With this mandate the RDP has two essential principles; understanding our reading and motivation to read. This involves reading opportunities and choice, as well as the teaching of explicit comprehension skills.

To sustain motivation, students make their own reading choices and are given opportunities for Silent Sustained Reading (SSR) as well as group discussion. The online reading program, Beanstack enables a 'gamification' environment and students can make 'social' connections and discuss the latest reading choices.

The presentation will also outline our 'measures of success' to date, both qualitatively (through feedback) and quantitatively through data analysis (PAT & NAPLAN). Co-presenting, Patrick Barton, English and Drama teacher, will share his work in video for the RDP on comprehension skills with senior students.

Joyce Sendeckyj is a Teacher Librarian and currently Head of Library at St. Peter's Secondary College in Cranbourne and Clyde North Victoria. Joyce's career spans 25 years in primary, secondary, tertiary education, and special libraries such as the International Criminal Court Library in The Hague. She holds the BA in Information Science (Librarianship) and the Master of Teaching, Secondary Education with major foci in Literacy and ICT.

Joyce has presented papers and workshops on literacy and reading to for School Library Association in Victoria (SLAV), New Zealand (SLANZA) and Queensland (QSLA). Joyce's underlying passion is to grow healthy inquisitive minds in her students.

Patrick Barton is an early career teacher of secondary students at St Peter's College, Cranbourne.

Specialising in English and Performing Arts, and with a research background in Early Modern Theatre, Patrick is passionate about exploring multimodal learning experiences for his students.

He is currently undertaking his Graduate Diploma in Information and Library Services at Curtin University.

Genrefying to engage students in reading their world – Joy Whiteside, Leonie Stephenson and Jessica Jones

Christian College Geelong is a P-12 Independent school with five campuses across the Geelong region. The Bellarine and Highton campuses have Middle School students in years 5-9. The library collections include fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels, and digital collections appropriate to the students' learning and reading for pleasure needs. In 2023, new library team members at both campuses brought fresh eyes and experiences and a new approach to collection organization and development. Genrefying the fiction collections in the reading rooms at each middle school campus was recognized as a priority, and planning was brought to fruition by the middle of Term 1. This development made an immediate difference to student engagement and the ability for students to locate a book of interest. It also enabled library team members to assist students more easily and effectively.

The genrefication of a collection is easier than you think. This session will focus on the practicalities of bringing about this change to the school



library and include the benefits to students, as well as some of the complications that need to be considered when you have a multi-campus school.

Joy Whiteside is Library Resource Manager at Christian College Geelong, heading up the five campus library teams and overseeing the development of all digital and print collections. An experienced and passionate teacher-librarian, Joy is a co-convenor of the Geelong SLAV Branch, the SLAV Mentor Program coordinator, has presented at conferences and contributed to *FYI* on many occasions, and has recently joined the board of the SLAV journal *Synergy*.

Leonie Stephenson is a Teacher Librarian at Christian College Geelong, Bellarine Campus and co-convenor of the SLAV Geelong Branch. An experienced and passionate Teacher Librarian, Leonie is new to the Christian College library team this year. She brings the knowledge and understanding of her experiences in secondary, public, and tertiary libraries and has a passion for fostering a love of reading and learning.

Jessica Jones joined the library team at Christian College, Highton campus in 2023. Jessica is an experienced English and languages teacher who commenced Teacher Librarianship Master's studies at CSU this year. Jessica is an enthusiastic and highly motivated team member who is keen to be involved in any strategy that improves student reading and learning.



Critical, ethical and creative: fostering responsible engagement with generative AI – Bridget Forster

As AI Large Language Models such as ChatGPT are increasingly adopted by students and in the workplace, how do we equip students to become critical and ethical users of these tools? This session will focus on strategies for engaging with Large Language Models in the library and classroom. One such way is to use AI generated texts as a counterpoint to Australian YA Literature, allowing students to examine language, style, and literary features that are unique to Australian writing. Issues such as cultural bias, ethics, creativity, and copyright will also be considered.

Bridget Forster is the Head of Kerferd Library at Mentone Girls' Grammar and the 2023 Reading Australia Fellow. Her research project for Reading Australia explores the use of AI generated texts in the classroom to interrogate the notion of an Australian literary voice. Bridget featured on the 2022 Educator Hot List for influential teachers and was the recipient of the 2020 SLAV Innovators Award. Her favourite recent read is Nina Kenwood's *Unnecessary Drama*.

Reading the World – it is in your classroom! – Ruth Woolven

Victoria has a diverse population – there are 290 languages spoken, more than half of Victorians have at least one parent born overseas and more than 50% of the population follow one of 130 faiths (2021 Census). Our students come from a broad range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Librarians and teachers have a responsibility to share resources that

reflect the language and culture of their communities. Ruth will discuss some books for upper primary and lower secondary that embrace this diversity.

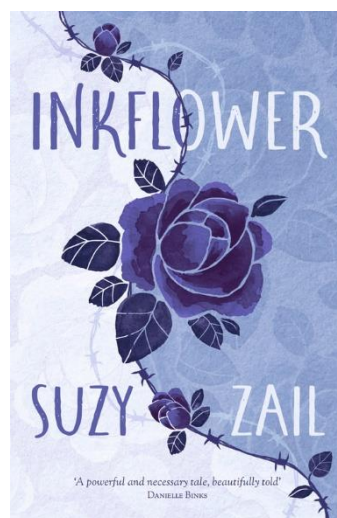
Ruth Woolven is the Manager of the Languages and Multicultural Education Resource Centre (LMERC), a specialised Department of Education library with a focus on languages, EAL, Multicultural Education and the Victorian Curriculum cross curriculum priority areas and capabilities. Ruth previously worked in a primary school library and is the Secretary of the Victorian Branch of the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA).

From Auschwitz to Africa: meet the real heroes – Suzy Zail and Sian Prior

Join internationally published YA author Suzy Zail in an ask-anything-you-want Q and A session led by Sian Prior to learn the real-life stories behind *The Wrong Boy*, *Alexander Altmann A10567*, *I am Change* and her newest novel for young adults, *Inkflower*. Find out where she gains inspiration, how she conducts her research, how she transforms truth into fiction and why she continues to seek out stories to incite change in her teen readers.

Suzy Zail has worked as a litigation lawyer, specialising in Family Law, but now writes full time. Her first novel for young adults, *The Wrong Boy*, was shortlisted for the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, the Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature, the WAYRBA, USBBY and YABBA awards. Her second novel, *Alexander Altmann A10567*, was a Notable Book at the CBCA Awards. Her YA novel, *I Am Change*, is the story of a young Ugandan girl's

struggle to stay in school. In 2022 Suzy published her first picture book, *Arabella's Alphabet Adventure*, a story about an ABC book who escapes the library to travel the world. Suzy's



newest novel, *Inkflower*, is the story of teenage girl who finds out her father has six months to live and a story he's never told about his time in Auschwitz. The story is based on her father's experiences as a

child survivor and the time they spent together after he was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease. Suzy's books have been published in the U.K., U.S., and Europe. She lives in Melbourne and has three children. Visit her online at suzyzail.com.au and @suzyzailauthor.

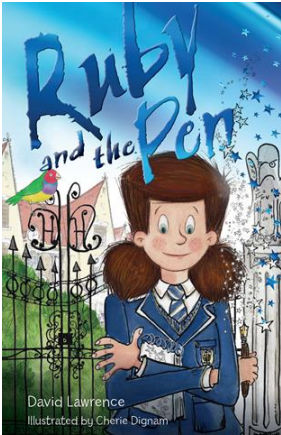
Sian Prior has a multi-faceted career in the arts, education and media. For the last three decades she has been a writer and broadcaster, working in radio, television, print and online. She is best-known for her roles as a presenter on ABC RN, ABC Classic and ABC Melbourne, and as a regular columnist for *The Age/Sydney Morning Herald*. Her essays have been published in magazines and literary journals and she is the author of two books, *Shy: a memoir* and *Childless: a story of freedom and longing* (short-listed for The Age 2022 Book of the Year award). Sian teaches creative writing at RMIT University, runs her own online writing courses, and mentors individual writers.

LIGHTNING ROUND

We will hear from four speakers who each have five minutes.

Big Summer Read – Christine Peters, Maribyrnong Public Library

David Lawrence started out as a financial analyst, he went from creating profit-and-loss statements to performing stand-up comedy and TV writing, before penning his first book in 2007. He has since written another 12 children's books aimed at engaging reluctant readers. David is a proud Ambassador of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.



The Shelftalkers Challenge – Lauren Kyte from Salesian College, Sunbury

Vanessa Len is a bestselling Australian author and educational editor, who has worked on everything from language learning programs to STEM resources, to professional learning for teachers. She is also the author of *Only a Monster* and its sequel *Never a Hero*, and you can find her via her website at <https://www.vanessalen.com>.



SLAV AWARDS

The School Library Association awards for 2023 will be presented at this conference in the following categories:

- The SLAV John Ward Award
- The SLAV Research Fellowship
- The SLAV School Leaders Award
- The SLAV Primary School Leaders Award
- The SLAV Innovators Grant
- The Penny Geoghegan Award



Trade Exhibition

This conference will be enriched by a trade exhibition.

Our supportive trade colleagues would love to chat with you about your interests and your school library needs. Please take the time to stop by their stands to find out how they can support you. The trade exhibition enables us to run a vibrant event and is an integral part of the days program. And there are often prizes for those who take part!

The Sun Book Shop is our official bookshop for this event, and they will join us on the day with a wonderful display of titles.



Registration

<https://slav.wildapricot.org/event-5112973>

SLAV Members - \$300.00

Non – Members - \$450.00



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