



Teacher Resource

Book Week 2026

Focus Questions

As a class, discuss the stories featured in the BTN Book Week 2026 Special. Students will then respond to the following focus questions:

School Libraries

1. Why do the students in the BTN story like spending time in the library?
2. What are some things you can do in a school library besides borrow books?
3. Why do you think libraries have changed over time?
4. Why is it important to know how to find reliable information when researching?
5. Do you think libraries will look different in the future? What might change?

Deborah Frenkel Interview

1. What type of books does Deborah Frenkel write?
2. How did Deborah get the idea to write *The Truck Cat*?
3. What does Deborah think makes a good story?
4. What advice does Deborah give to young people who find it hard to get into reading?
5. What is your favourite picture book? Why?

Young Authors

1. Which two countries are the Torres Strait Islands located between? Find on a map.
2. Who are some of the characters in the book?
3. What is the main message of the book?
4. Why was it important for the students to make the book?
5. What new word in Torres Strait Creole did you learn?

Braille

1. Before watching the video, what did you know about Braille?
2. How does the six-dot system work in Braille?

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KEY LEARNING

Students will explore the topics covered in the BTN Book Week 2026 Special.

CURRICULUM

English – Year 4

Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories engaging by the way they develop character, setting and plot tensions.

Recognise similar storylines, ideas and relationships in different contexts in literary texts by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors.

English – Year 5

Create and edit literary texts, experimenting with figurative language, storylines, characters and settings from texts students have experienced.

Identify aspects of literary texts that represent details or information about historical, social and cultural contexts in literature by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors.

English – Year 6

Identify responses to characters and events in literary texts, drawn from historical, social or cultural contexts, by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors.

Create and edit literary texts that adapt plot structure, characters, settings and/or ideas from texts students have experienced, and experiment with literary devices.

3. Why do you think Braille uses patterns of dots rather than pictures or raised letters?
4. What could schools and libraries do to make reading more accessible to everyone?
5. What did you learn about Braille from Amaaya and Hamza?

Shadow Judges

1. What is Shadow Judging?
2. Why were the Book of the Year Awards created?
3. Who can vote in the Shadow Judging Book of the Year Awards?
4. What are some of the categories in the awards? List 1-2.
5. What is one of the rules for judging the awards?

Activity: School Library - Class Discussion

After watching the BTN School Library story hold a class discussion, using the following questions to start the discussion:

- Why do we have libraries? Think about what your school library offers and make a list of reasons why we need libraries.
- Why is it important to have libraries?
- What's your favourite thing about going to the library? List your top 3 favourite things about your school library.

How is your school library promoting and celebrating Book Week? Students will discuss and respond to the following.

- How do you celebrate Book Week? Create a calendar of events being held at your school during Book Week.
- If you could create your own Book Week theme, what would it be?
- What character are you dressing up for during Book Week?
- Does your school hold a Book Week parade? What does it look like? What was your favourite costume from the parade and why?

Activity: Warm Up Activity

The theme for Book Week 2026 is a 'Symphony of Stories'! In this activity students will explore how music can represent ideas, characters, emotions and themes of a book. Students will select a song that they think represents a book their class is currently reading or has read during the year.

Ask students the following question... *"If the book we are reading had a soundtrack, what would it be?"*

Explain to students that just as music can communicate emotions and tell stories, books can create a mood, atmosphere and emotional response. Discuss how music can represent characters, emotions, themes, relationships, conflict and mood.



Students will choose one song they believe represents the book and make connections between the song and the book, thinking about the following:

- A character
- An emotion
- A theme
- An event or setting
- The overall message

Students will then respond to one or more of the following...

- This song makes me think of the book because...
- The mood of the song reminds me of...
- The lyrics relate to the theme of...
- I chose this song because...

Each student will contribute their song to create a class playlist.

Activity: How to Build Stories

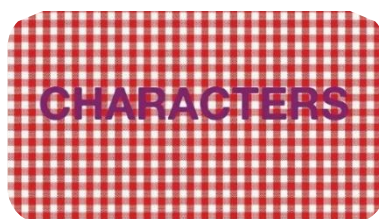
Visual storytelling and understanding the importance of narrative is key in the making of a successful picture book. Start this activity by asking your students what they think a picture book is, recording their ideas during the discussion. Talk to students about the elements and techniques of effective storytelling. In pairs, students will make a list of useful tips for story writing, including tips on how to build character development, plot tension and narrative.

In pairs students will discuss what their favourite picture book is and why, using these questions to guide the discussion.

- What is your favourite picture book? Why?
- How did the illustrator and author make the story interesting or exciting?
- What did you like about the words and the pictures?
- Could the pictures tell the story without the words?
- What techniques does the illustrator use?

How to Build Stories

Use the ABC Education's Digibook [How to build Stories](#), which explains how to build your own stories, using tricks to create exciting characters, plots, settings, genres and language.



Activity: Literary Techniques

Authors use literary techniques to bring their ideas to life and shape how readers experience a story. They can engage, enlighten and even enchant! Literary devices are used not only by poets and writers, but also in day-to-day conversation.

Students will learn how to identify common literary techniques and how to use them in their own poems and stories. Visit [ABC Education](https://www.abc.edu.au/learning/literary-techniques) to learn about literacy techniques. For each technique there is a:

- Explanation
- Example
- Effect
- Exercise
- Guiding question
- Further Resources



Imagery



Alliteration



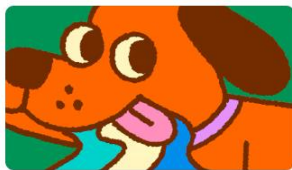
Personification



Simile



Metaphor



Hyperbole



Idiom



Onomatopoeia

Activity: Responding to Books

Responding to a book gives students the chance to share their opinions, think more deeply and use their imagination. Students choose a book they have recently read and complete the following activities.

The Ending

Think carefully about how the book ended.

- What did you think of the ending? Did you find it satisfying, surprising, exciting or disappointing? Explain why.
- Did the ending answer all of your questions?
- Was there anything you would change?

Challenge

Imagine you are the author. Write a new ending for the story. You might change what happens to a character, solve a problem in a different way or add an unexpected twist.

Interview a Character

Choose one character from your book and imagine you are a journalist interviewing them. Write five interesting questions you would like to ask the character. Then, answer the questions as if you are the character, trying to reveal something about the character's:

- thoughts and feelings
- experiences
- relationships
- choices and decisions

Challenge

Which question/s do you think the author would find difficult to answer? Give reasons for your answer.

Change One Thing

Choose one event from the story and change it. What happens next? How would this change affect the characters and the ending?

Design a New Cover

Create a new book cover that captures the mood, characters or important ideas in the story. Write a short explanation of your design choices.

Would You Recommend It?

Imagine a friend is looking for their next great read. Would you recommend your book? Write a 2-minute pitch to convince someone to read your book that includes:

- the title and author
- a brief description of the story. No spoilers!
- what you enjoyed most
- who you think would enjoy reading it
- your overall rating out of five.

Give reasons for your opinion. A great recommendation helps readers decide whether a book might be right for them.

Activity: Indigenous Literacy

Class Discussion

After watching the BTN Young Authors story, hold a class discussion using the following questions.

- What animals featured in the book?
- What do the young authors want people to learn about their culture?
- Why did they choose to create a children's book?
- What message does the pelican's journey communicate about caring for the environment?

First Nations Stories in your Library

There are a range of children's books which help us understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. What First Nations stories do you have in your library? Visit your school library to explore books written by First Nations authors. Create a display of books in your library written by First Nations authors to share with other classes at your school.

Below is a range of books that can help introduce your students to First Nations perspectives.

- *Dark Emu* by Bruce Pascoe
- *Our Flag, Our Story: The Torres Strait Islander Flag* by Bernard Namok Jnr and Thomas Mayo
- *Took the Children Away* by Archie Roach
- *Hello, Hello* by Children from the Spinifex Writing Camp
- *Freedom Day: Vincent Lingiari and the Story of the Wave Hill Walk-Off* by Thomas Mayor and Rosie Smiler
- *Stolen Girl* by Trina Saffioti
- *Little Bird's Day* by Sally Morgan



Little Bird's Day by Sally Morgan, illustrated by Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr

Choose one book (fiction or non-fiction) from your library that is age-appropriate and engaging that you can read aloud as a class. It is a great way to share First Nations perspectives with your class and develop understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, cultures and histories.

Students will reflect on the story and respond to one or more of the following questions.

- Who is the author and/or illustrator of the book?
- What traditional lands are they from?
- What parts of the story could you relate to personally?
- What First Nations voices are heard in the story?
- What did you learn about First Nations experiences or culture?
- Are there Indigenous language words you learnt in the book?
- Were there cultural practices or traditions mentioned in the book?
- Were there historical events or references included in the book?

Activity: Braille - Class Discussion

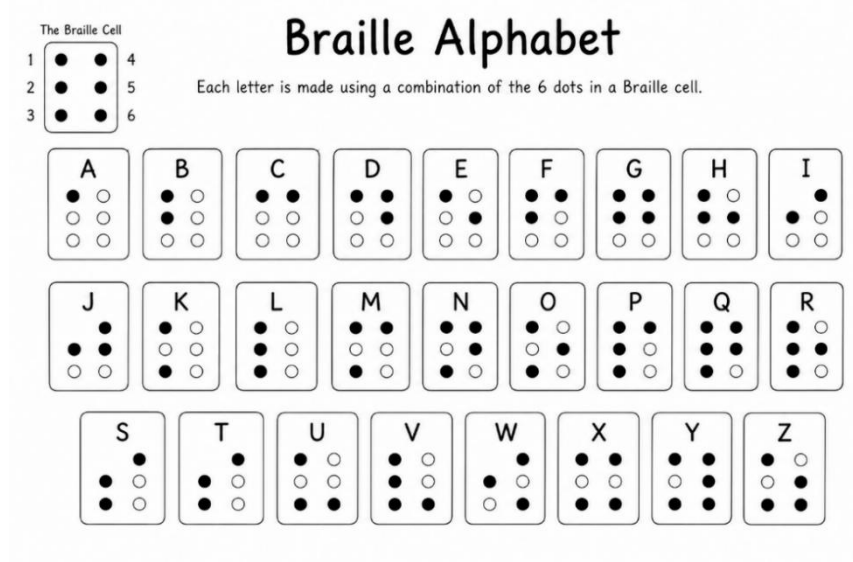
After watching the BTN Braille story hold a class discussion, using the following questions to start the discussion:

- What is Braille?
- Why is it an important way for some people to access information?
- Where might you find Braille in everyday life? (lifts, pedestrian crossing, public signs, medicine labels, books)
- What have you learnt about the importance of making information accessible to everyone?



Activity: Decoding Braille

Braille is a system of raised dots that people who are blind or have low vision can use to read and write. Each Braille symbol is made using a pattern of up to six dots. Using the Braille alphabet chart, students decode the word below. What does the word spell? (*Braille*)



Students then choose a word - it could be their first name, a favourite food or an animal. Use the Braille alphabet chart to work out the dot pattern for each letter, then write their word in Braille.

Students swap their Braille word with a partner and decode each other's words. Respond to the following questions:

- What patterns did you notice in the Braille symbols?
- Which letters were easy to decode? Which were more challenging?

Challenge

Write a short message in Braille for a classmate to decode!

Activity: Design Challenge

Students will choose one piece of everyday information and redesign it so that it is accessible to as many people as possible. For example:

- a classroom door sign
- an information sign at a zoo or museum
- a restaurant menu
- an emergency evacuation sign
- a sign at a park or playground.

Students should make sure that their designs...

- clearly communicate the important information
- are easy to understand
- include a Braille or tactile feature where appropriate

Tactile features are parts of an object that can be felt with your hands or fingers to help you understand information.

For example, raised letters, symbols, shapes or textures.

- be designed to help as many people as possible access the information independently.

After completing their design, students can share it with the class and explain the choices they made to make their information more accessible.

Activity: Tactile Bank Notes

The [BTN Tactile Bank Notes](#) story explains how Connor started an online petition to get the Reserve Bank of Australia to add tactile features to Aussie bank notes.

Students watch the story then answer the following questions:

- What are tactile bank notes?
- Why did Connor want Australia to get tactile bank notes in Australia?
- What action did he take to get tactile features on Aussie bank notes?
- What did the Reserve Bank of Australia announce about tactile bank notes?
- What did Connor learn from the experience?



[BTN Tactile Bank Notes](#)

Learn more about the accessibility features of banknotes [here](#) Explore the features [here](#).

Activity: Top 100 Australian Books Countdown

If you want to have a say on your favourite book, ABC's Radio National is asking Aussies to vote for the 100 best Australian books of all time - including kids' books.

Voting opens Monday, 31 August and closes Thursday 1 October.

More details [here](#)

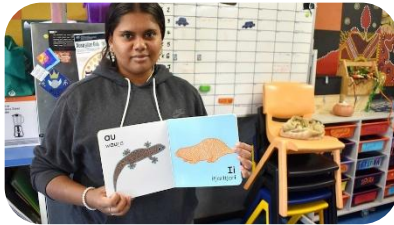


Activity: BTN Stories about Authors

As a class watch one or more of the following BTN stories to learn more about a range of authors, including some young authors. After watching any one of the BTN videos ask students to respond to the discussion questions (to find the teacher resources go to the related BTN Classroom Episode and download the Episode Package).



[BTN Young Author](#)



[BTN Pitjantjatjara Book](#)



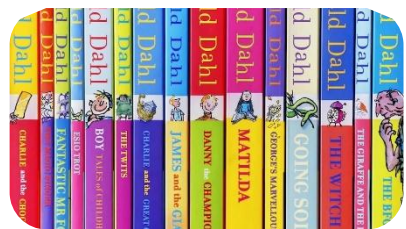
[BTN Teen Novelist](#)



[BTN Young Author](#)



[BTN Charles Dickens](#)



[BTN Roald Dahl Changes](#)

BTN English Collection

Visit BTN's collection of stories which focus on English. Look for BTN stories with the pencil icon  to find supporting teacher resources all linked to the Australian Curriculum.

[BTN – English Collection](#)



Useful Websites

- [Children's Book Week](#) – Children's Book Council of Australia
- [Book Week 2025](#) – BTN
- [History of Libraries](#) – BTN
- [School Libraries](#) – BTN
- [Braille literacy is vital to achieving equal access for blind children](#) – ABC Education
- [Braille: What you need to know](#) – Vision Australia
- [What is Braille](#) – Guide Dogs Australia
- [Pitjantjatjara Book](#) – BTN
- [Indigenous Literacy Foundation \(ILF\)](#)
- [Shadow Judging](#) – CBCA