

Children celebrate becoming published authors

October 2014

The children from Child Side School from Pre Primary to year 7, have just published over forty new books that will add to the school's library and valuable learning resources. This has been made possible through collaboration between the school and founder of the Book Incubator, Kate Heaslip.

Kate, an award winning published author, set up the Book Incubator to offer innovative and inspiring creative workshops for people of all ages and provide opportunities for people to tell their stories. She is currently studying a Graduate Diploma in Education and is completing her final practical experience at the school.

As part of her time at the school she has undertaken a 'From Storyboard to Print' project with all of the children to guide and mentor them through the process of developing, writing, illustrating and publishing their stories.

Kate explained how "the process is quite simple but the learnings and rewards it provides are significant. I started by discussing with the children the structure of storytelling, developing and building characters and styles of writing. I stress the important factor is for them to express, as author's, their voice".

She went on to describe that "with such a wide age range the story themes and topics chosen varied quite considerably. Some children wrote personal stories while others developed fictional or fantasy stories. The only restrictions placed upon the authors were that the stories had to be their own, non-violent and non-racist.

Once the characters and stories were settled, each child created a storyboard to map out the book and determine what illustrations were required. During this stage they further developed their characters and often made minor changes to the text".

The Book Incubator design studio played a pivotal role in taking each child's storyboard, text and illustrations and desk top publishing the draft book layout. These were provided to the children, as authors, for a final grammar and spelling check/edit before final publication. This process ensured the children were involved and had control during the entire process 'From Storyboard to Print'.

Child Side Principal Leonie O'Connell said that "at Child Side School we give the children the opportunity to learn through real life experiences. This project gave Kate a wonderful way of engaging in literacy program with the children, which was enriched by the engaged, interested and supportive approach of both the children and staff. This included exercising flexibility and collaboration to adapt the normal structure if the From Storyboard to Print" to work within the school structure".

Having run similar projects through the Book Incubator Kate expressed how she "knew that all the connections had been made, when some children got so completely absorbed in the project that you could hear them talking to the characters as they drew".

At the end of the project each and every child received two copies of their book professionally published, which were launched on Friday 17th October. One copy for the child to keep and one for the school, with the option of having more copies published upon request.

Leonie summed it up at the end of the very successful event saying “it was a very rewarding experience to see every single child completely absorbed in reading their own and their friend’s books, this showed how on a personal level each child’s story was valued and celebrated. The project was challenging but provided wonderful rewards as was clearly evident by the delight shown on the children’s faces when they received their books at the launch”.

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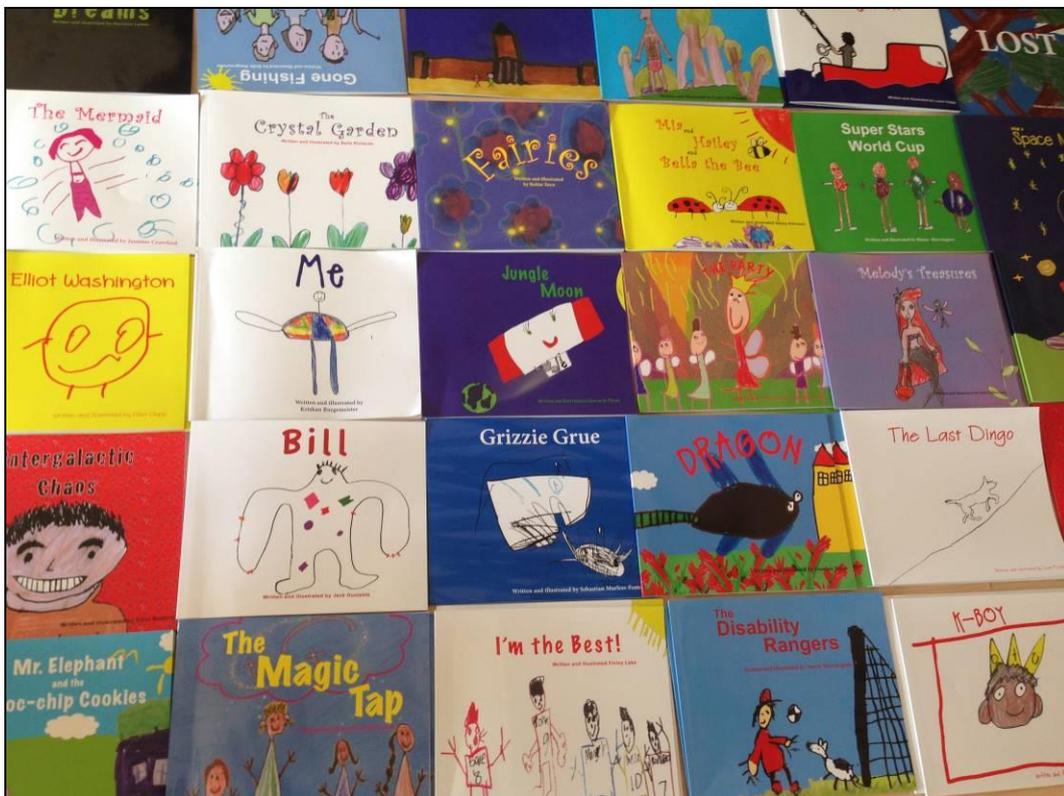
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As part of the celebrations a desk was set up for book signing



Children engaged in their books after the launch



A sample of the forty plus books that have been published