

AUSTRALIA READS

TEACHERS' NOTES

INTRODUCING THE AUSTRALIA READS SPECIAL EDITIONS

Young readers and teens are going to absolutely adore our Australia Reads Special Editions!



Published for Australian Reading Hour 2021 to celebrate the wonder and magic of reading, these books have been specially written and illustrated by some of Australia's most admired (and generous) authors: the award-winning team of Ursula Dubosarsky and Andrew Joyner, the dynamic duo of Professor Lisa Harvey-Smith and First Dog on the Moon, AFL kids series writers Nicole Hayes and Adrian Beck, plus acclaimed YA rom-com writer Jenna Guillaume.

There's fun for every student who loves reading, and for every student who doesn't... yet!

Key Curriculum Areas

Learning areas: English

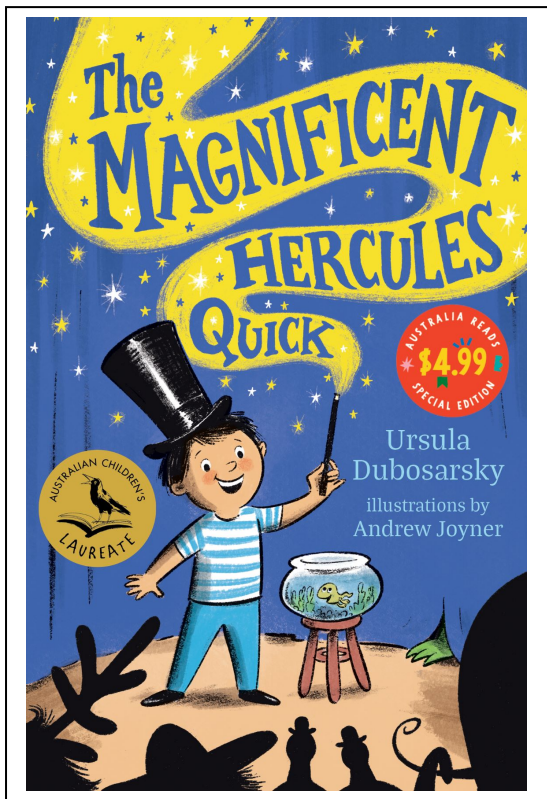
General capabilities:

- ✓ Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses (ACELT1610)
- ✓ Understand how to move beyond making bare assertions and take account of differing perspectives and points of view (ACELA1502)
- ✓ Understand how texts vary in purpose, structure, and topic as well as the degree of formality (ACELA1504)

THE MAGNIFICENT HERCULES QUICK

By Ursula Dubosarsky with illustrations by Andrew Joyner

9781761065712 | Allen & Unwin | September 2021



Synopsis

A hilarious story about an ordinary boy who does a series of odd jobs for his eccentric neighbours.

Hercules Quick dreams of being a magnificent magician. He is saving up to buy a box of magic tricks. Luckily, he has plenty of neighbours who need his help. Whether it's lending a hand to Professor Calamari or doing an out of season spring-clean for Queen Claude, no job is too odd for Hercules.

***Need something done? Ask Hercules Quick.
Only ten cents!***

**From the bestselling creators of *The Terrible Plop*.
An Australia Reads exclusive story.**

Recommended Ages: 5-8 | For Grades: Prep – Three

Themes: Family | Friendship | Belonging | Teamwork | Problem Solving | Humour

About the Book Creators

Ursula Dubosarsky was born and grew up in Sydney and wanted to be a writer from the age of six. She is now the author of over 60 books for children and young adults, and her work is published all over the world. She has won several national literary awards, including the NSW Premier's Literary Award a record five times, and internationally she has been nominated for both the Hans Christian Andersen Award and the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Prize. Ursula Dubosarsky is the current Australian Children's Laureate.



<http://ursuladubosarsky.squarespace.com>

Andrew Joyner is a highly acclaimed picture book creator who has illustrated many of Ursula Dubosarsky's picture book texts to great success. Together they have won and been short-listed for many awards, including the CBCA Awards and children's choice awards. Andrew's books have been published in more than twenty-five countries. He lives in South Australia with his family.



<https://www.andrewjoyner.com.au>

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Suggested Activities

Before Reading

- Discuss the cover illustrations with your students. Ask them to make predictions about the story based on the cover illustration. What do they think the story might be about?
- Read the blurb. Do your students have any questions about the story after reading the blurb?
- How have student predictions changed or been influenced by the blurb?
- Ask students to make predictions about what odd jobs Hercules Quick might be asked to do.
- Ask students to make notes of their predictions to refer to later. They might wish to do this in a reading journal, or as a class activity using post it notes or a shared white board.

After Reading

- Ask students to write a review about *The Magnificent Hercules Quick*, or to make a podcast recording recounting the story. This might also work as an oral presentation to the class supported by a Prezi or a PowerPoint presentation.
- Ask students whom of all the characters would they want for a friend? Why? What would they do or talk about together?
- Ask students to keep a diary as if they were a character in *The Magnificent Hercules Quick*. Write down key events that happen during the story and reflect on how they affected the character and why.
- Ask students to write a short story featuring a chosen character from *The Magnificent Hercules Quick* and themselves as a character. How would they work together? Would they be friends or enemies? What adventures would they have?
- Ask students to make a book trailer for *The Magnificent Hercules Quick*. Reference for teachers <https://englishteaching101.com/book-trailer-project/>
- Ask students to write a brief prediction or even a synopsis of where they think the next book in this series might begin. Which characters might be important to the plot line? How do they predict the series might end?
- Ask students to write a 3-minute skit script enacting a pivotal moment between characters in *The Magnificent Hercules Quick*.

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Suggested Activities continued ...

Letter from a character

Ask students to choose a character from *The Magnificent Hercules Quick*. Imagining they are that chosen character and they are in their situation, take this opportunity to express thoughts and feelings about events in *The Magnificent Hercules Quick*.

6 Word Story

Using only six words, sum up *The Magnificent Hercules Quick* and its story line. You may choose to do this from the point of view of one of the characters.

Character Voki

Choose two characters from *The Magnificent Hercules Quick* and create talking avatars for them using Voki.com. Go to <https://www.voki.com/> and log-in or create a Voki account. (Note: If you are not logged in, you will not be able to embed your Voki in your blog/keynote.)

Choose two characters from the book. Create a Voki for those characters. You're writing the speech in first person as if the character is talking about himself/herself. Include the following details in your speech: Three text details that describe their behaviours, how they feel, what they might be thinking about one another/their situation, their appearance, etc.

Due to the word count limitations in each Voki, you may need to do a few Vokis for your characters to complete the speech requirements.

Thinking about the characters

Go to <http://oneword.com/> and after reading the instructions, click 'go'.

You will have ONE minute. With the word that appears at the top of the screen, choose to do one of the following: Write a piece of dialogue between two characters using the word provided OR Write as much as you can about a character using the word provided.

Do NOT submit your writing. Instead, highlight what you have written, copy and paste OR take a screenshot of the page. Paste this into a page in your Digital Scrapbook. Don't forget to copy in the URL and date your work.

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Suggested Activities continued ...

Hot Seat Activity

This activity asks students to inhabit the skin of a particular character. There are many variations on this teaching strategy: students can interview each other in groups, one student can be interviewed by a 'studio audience' or interested student journalists can prepare questions for their classmates.

This strategy aims to immerse students in the worlds of the characters and encourage them to see 'through their eyes'. Students gain an understanding of the complexity of characters, with plenty of classroom discussion about why a character would (or wouldn't) do or say something, helping students to understand the importance of 'real' characters in narrative.

Variations:

Put a number of students in the hot seat as one character.

Put students in the hot seat as a character and ask them questions to do with real life.

Ask hot seat students about their memories.

Ask hot seat students to tell 'two truths and a lie'.

Put students on the spot with no preparation time.

Allow students time to prepare their questions and answers.

Write a letter to another character 'in character'.

Write a letter home 'in character'.

A note on reading from our book creators

*'Read at breakfast with that first cup of tea or coffee – or bowl of cereal! Nobody likes talking at breakfast time (do they?) so it's a great time to read a book...
Soon you won't be able to start the day without it.'*

Ursula Dubosarsky

*'When I'm not making books, I like to read them, especially poetry books. I don't
Go on, give it a try.'*

Andrew Joyner

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Even more suggested Activities ...

While Reading

There are numerous approaches to novel study that are based around group reading, independent reading, literature circles and teachers reading aloud. Whichever method you choose (or methods, as multiple approaches are often an effective way to cater for varying academic needs in the classroom), using a double-entry or dialectical journal is a worthwhile skill for students to grasp.

To create a double-entry journal (DEJ), students divide a page into two columns; one being 'Quote from the Text', the other 'My Thinking'. Depending on the focus you choose to adopt for your class/student (and using multiple foci is possible), the DEJ is a solid summative assessment piece that displays the thinking of each student in relation to the chosen passages. Encourage accurate recording, use of quotation marks and inclusion of page numbers.

Sample Foci:

Recording unfamiliar words: By recording words that students have not encountered often enough to remember their definition, students can be encouraged to develop the strategy of finding the meanings of words in context. Although this is a simple strategy, it forms a basic skill that equips students for future reading and thinking.

Recording interesting phrases/passages: In the first column, students are asked to write down words, clauses, sentences or passages they find interesting, powerful, humorous etc. In the second column they detail why they chose that particular passage and their thoughts on it.

Prediction: Students are asked to make predictions about characters and plot etc. based on their reading. Ask them to justify their thinking by explaining why they think something is going to happen in the way they have predicted.

Visualising: Students record the parts of the text that inspire them to visualise. They explain what they find easy to visualise by quoting lines from the text that describe what they're experiencing. They can also move beyond visualising to include the other senses, recording lines that encourage them to imagine smelling, tasting, touching and hearing.

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Suggested Activities continued...

Reading with a focus, a pen in hand and a journal open for use is purposeful reading. Students are engaged with their reading and not passive. Students are teaching themselves the art of note-taking; **something which we expect students to be able to do, but don't often actually train them to do.**

Making Connections

Using a DEJ to make connections uses some tried and true teaching strategies. There are a number of connections students can make simply by recording the passage or the quote from the text and using the grid below (it could be a good idea to make a classroom poster for reference).

Connection	Example
Text to Self	<i>'This reminds of a time when I ...'</i>
Text to World	<i>'This reminds me of Hollywood/Alaska/Chinese acrobats ...'</i>
Text to Text	<i>'I remember a character reacting like this before' ...</i> activates prior knowledge
See http://www.busyteacherscafe.com/literacy/comprehension_strategies.html For complimentary references and downloads	

Character Mapping

Character maps provide students with visual portrayals of the characters they meet in *The Magnificent Hercules Quick*. They provide key information for character analysis and comparison.

Sample Character Maps can be found here:

<https://www.literacyleader.com/sites/default/files/Character%20Graphic%20Organizers.pdf>

When creating a character map, students should begin by placing the character's name in the centre of the map. Students can then identify a character trait or quality to place in the oval on each branch of the map. Each character trait or quality must be supported with evidence from the novel.

Examples of the evidence that supports each trait or quality form the sub-branches of each branch of the character map. This evidence is placed in the circles that branch out from each oval.

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Suggested Activities continued...

Sociogram

A sociogram takes character maps one step further and shows the relationships between characters. As students read the novel and encounter new characters, they create a box for each one. In each character box, students name and describe in point form what they know about the character. They then use arrows between the boxes to highlight and describe the relationships between characters. Again, this becomes part of the process of reading and responding to the novel. As they read, students will become more aware of character development and how the characters are interrelated. At the end of the novel, they will have a complete overview of all characters. A sample Sociogram can be seen here https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Sociogram-of-character-book-ties-within-10-comic-books-of-the-Marvel-Universe_fig2_342860839

Suggested Further Reading

[ASK HERCULES QUICK](#) by Ursula Dubosarsky, Andrew Joyner, published by Allen & Unwin, 2019.

[BRINDABELLA](#) by Ursula Dubosarsky, Andrew Joyner, published by Allen & Unwin, 2018.

[THE WORD SPY](#) by Ursula Dubosarsky, Tohby Riddle, published by Penguin Random House, 2011.

[THE PINK HAT](#) by Andrew Joyner, published by Random House Australia Children's, 2018.

[PIERRE'S NOT THERE](#) by Ursula Dubosarsky, Christopher Nielsen, published by Allen & Unwin, 2020.

[BORIS SEES THE LIGHT](#) by Andrew Joyner, published by Scholastic, 2013.

Get involved with Australian Reading Hour!

#AustraliaReads #StoriesThatMatter #MoreBooksMoreOften #AustralianReadingHour

Australian Reading Hour celebrates **Stories that Matter** on Tuesday 14 September 2021 with events and activities in schools, libraries and bookshops featuring some of Australia's best-loved authors.

- Sign your school up for one of our virtual events: <https://australiareads.org.au/events/>
- Encourage students to start a book club with some friends or classmates.
- Create your very own Australia Reads logo: <https://australiareads.org.au/custom/>
- Plan an event in your school library: <https://australiareads.org.au/australian-reading-hour/>
- Follow along and join in @australiareads on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

AUSTRALIA READS | PROMOTING A LOVE OF BOOKS

Order Australia Reads Special Editions for School

These Australia Reads Special Editions have been created to help make good books readily accessible for young people and are available from your usual school suppliers.

For Primary Schools	
Title:	The Magnificent Hercules
Creators:	Ursula Dubosarsky & Andrew Joyner
ISBN:	9781761065712
Publishers:	Allen & Unwin
Format:	96 pages B format Paperback
RRP:	\$4.99
Category:	Fiction, Adventure, Humour
For Primary Schools	
Title:	AFL Little Legends: The Missing Cup
Creators:	Nicole Hayes & Adrian Beck
ISBN:	9781760509828
Publishers:	Hardie Grant Children's Publishing
Format:	96 pages B format Paperback
RRP:	\$4.99
Category:	Fiction, Humour, AFL, Sport, Mystery
For Primary Schools	
Title:	Little Book Big Universe
Author:	Professor Lisa-Harvey Smith
Illustrator:	First Dog on the Moon
ISBN:	9781760762292
Publishers:	Thames & Hudson Australia
Format:	96 pages B format Paperback
RRP:	\$4.99
Category:	Non-Fiction, STEM, Science, Natural History
For Secondary Schools	
Title:	The Deep End
Author:	Jenna Guillaume
ISBN:	9781760987305
Publishers:	Pan Macmillan Australia
Format:	96 pages B format Paperback
RRP:	\$4.99
Category:	Young Adult, Teenage, Relationships

At Australia Reads we're passionate about getting more Australians to read more books, more often.

Discover 300 ambassadors available for school visits and events, plus downloadable learning activities and more at australiareads.org.au

With special thanks to the wonderful teams at Allen & Unwin, Hardie Grant Children's Publishing, Pan Macmillan Australia and Thames & Hudson who have made the publication of these four fabulous books possible!

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