

Children's Laureate meets Children's Commissioner in a celebration of SA children's creativity



Australian Children's Laureate, Ursula Dubosarsky arrives in Adelaide today at the invitation of South Australia's Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly.

Ursula Dubosarsky is the author of over 60 books for children and young adults. She has won many prizes for her writing, including the 2001 Adelaide Festival Literary Award for Children's Literature for *Abyssinia*.

In one of her first engagements since being announced as the Children's Laureate for 2020/21, Ursula will guide 100 South Australian children aged 8 – 12 years through the process of writing their own story. Ursula will be joined by South Australian children's author and illustrator, Andrew Joyner.

Timed to coincide with the Fringe Festival and Writer's Week, the Children's Stories event will take place in the Mortlock Wing of the State Library. The children will be guided through a simple exercise that will teach them to write and illustrate their own story, the best of which will be selected as part of a display the State Library will present celebrating children's creativity.

The Commissioner's Children's Stories event came about in response to comments Commissioner Connolly had received from children and young people about how busy everyone is and how children and young people don't get the opportunities they would like, to explore their creativity and use their imagination. The event aims to promote children and young people's right to access arts and culture and to actively participate in it.

A number of South Australian young writers will also be attending as 'Inspiration Speakers'. They will each host a small group of children, sharing their own experiences and insights on what it takes to be a good writer, while supporting the children to write and illustrate their own stories. As well as writing their own short story, the children will have an opportunity to meet and ask questions of the Laureate as she makes her way around to each group.

One of the young Inspiration Speakers attending is Adela Teubner, winner of last year's 2019 Tennyson Medal. Adela met Ursula Dubosarsky when she was just ten years old, and is excited to be re-connecting with her again.

Quotes attributable to Commissioner Connolly:

We know adults are worried about literacy levels today and how reading and writing is so critical to their education. It is also very important for children and young people to use these skills just for the fun of it! Providing more opportunities for wonder and creativity enables children to see a direct link between these literacy skills and their imaginations. Children throughout South Australia have told me that they love books and reading, and that they love stories. They have also told me that 'because everyone is so busy these days they don't always get time to do fun, creative things!' I wanted to create an event that would allow kids to explore wonder and imagination, and to see that storytelling is something they can learn and participate in easily.

Quotes attributable to Children's Laureate, Ursula Dubosarsky:

I am thrilled to be in Adelaide at the Commissioner's invitation and to share my 'Read For Your Life' message. I can't wait to work with some of Adelaide's youngest storytellers alongside Andrew Joyner. It will be a wonderful start to my two year journey to inspire children to join their local library, get their own library card and begin their lifelong reading journey. An opportunity to write and illustrate your own short story will unlock the creativity and imaginations of these young storytellers in amazing ways. I cannot wait to see what the children come up with!

Background:

The Children's Laureate is the national ambassador for reading and Australian children's literature, speaking on behalf of all creators and the entire industry representing reading advocates, educators, librarians, booksellers and publishers. Appointed every two years to promote the transformational power of reading, creativity and story in the lives of young Australians, the Children's Laureate spends extensive time speaking directly with children, education specialists, government ministers and librarians, in both metropolitan and regional communities across the country.

For more information on the Children's Laureate visit the Australian Children's Laureate Foundation: www.childrenslaureate.org.au

Note to Editors: Face to face and/or phone interviews can be arranged with Ursula Dubosarsky upon request. News crews welcome at Tuesday's event.

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