



Editor's Note: Authors available for interview on request.

Aussie authors awarded for contribution to children's language and literacy

Young author among Speech Pathology Australia's 2007 Book of the Year winners

Two of Australia's best-loved children's authors - Mem Fox and Morris Gleitzman - will be among those recognised today by Speech Pathology Australia, for their significant contribution to children's language and literature.

Morris Gleitzman (*Doubling Thomas*), Graeme Base (*Uno's Garden*) and new young author, Lachie Hume (*Clancy the Courageous Cow*), will each be presented with one of Speech Pathology Australia's 2007 'Book of the Year' awards in Melbourne.

Author of *Possum Magic* – the highest selling Australian children's picture book ever – Mem Fox will be inducted into Speech Pathology Australia's 'Hall of Fame' for her significant contribution to children's language and literature.

Speech Pathology Australia's National Councillor, Natalie Ellston, said the Book of the Year awards help parents to identify books that develop their children's speech, language and literacy skills.

"As the professional body for speech pathologists, we are in a unique position to recommend books that can assist children's language and literacy development. This is the essence of what makes our annual awards so special," Ms Ellston said.

"Each year, we select three children's books based on their appeal to children and educational value, including their ability to encourage communication, interaction and discussion.

"This year's winning books combine an eclectic mix of vibrant language, humour and colour, which are instrumental in assisting the development of literacy skills."

Mem Fox said she is honoured to be inducted into Speech Pathology Australia's Hall of Fame.

"Literacy has become the great focus of my life, it's my passion. I now spend most of my time giving presentations and travelling the world urging parents, teachers and others to read aloud to children to help improve literacy skills," Ms Fox said.

About the Book of the Year awards:

The annual Book of the Year awards will be presented as part of Speech Pathology Week, 22 to 28 July, held each year to celebrate the profession and its vital role in helping Australians with speech and language difficulties.

The awards for the 'best book for language development' are presented to Australian authors in three categories: Young Children, Lower Primary and Upper Primary. The awards are judged on an author's ability to promote interaction, communication and literacy development.

For more information visit: www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au.

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Book of the Year 2007 Winners:

Author	Book	Award
Mem Fox	NA	Children's Language and Literature Award - Hall of Fame
Lachie Hume	Clancy the Courageous Cow With its quirky sense of fun, this book is packed full of opportunities to attract a child's attention and stretch their vocabulary and language skills through laughing, playing and learning.	Young Children
Graeme Base	Uno's Garden Exploring the thought-provoking issue of balance of life on our planet, this book is engaging while it encourages the development of imagination and curiosity. It will stimulate important discussion..	Lower Primary
Morris Gleitzman	Doubting Thomas Combining lots of laughs and witty word-play, with the clever use of a French element to play with vocabulary, this story is sure to entice the young reader to keep turning the pages.	Upper Primary

About Speech Pathology Australia

Speech Pathology Australia is the peak body for more than 3,700 members. Speech Pathology Australia supports and regulates the ethical, clinical and professional standards of its members. For more information visit: www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au

Notes to Media

- The Book of the Year Awards will be presented on 23 July at the East Melbourne Library - 122 George Street, East Melbourne.
- Speech Pathology Australia's National Councillor, Ms Natalie Ellston, is available for interview to discuss the Book of the Year Awards and Speech Pathology Week.
- Mem Fox, Morris Gleitzman and Lachie Hume are available for interview to discuss the inspiration for their work and why children's literature is so important.
- Images of book covers available in jpeg format.

Media Contacts

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