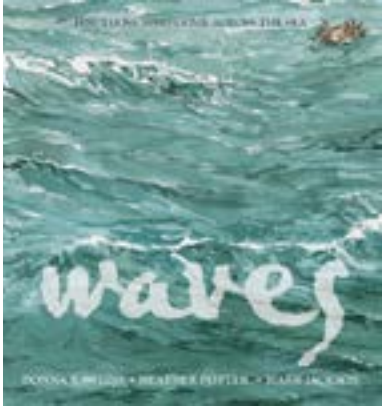


Kritikos

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Waves is a new picture book, written by Donna Rawlins and beautifully illustrated by Mark Jackson and Heather Potter, that explores the history immigration to Australia, with the tagline 'for those who come across the sea'. It centres around fictitious stories of children who've migrated to Australia by boat across our country's many waves of immigration. Each of the spreads features one first-person story, beginning with Anak, 50,000 years before the present, right through to Abdul in the 2000s. Echoing our country's immigrant experience, the stories themselves are a mix of hope, devastation and insight, with tales of lost children, pirate attacks and convicts, beginning from destinations as far afield as Ireland, Afghanistan, Italy, Vietnam and post-war Europe.

Teaching at a school with a high proportion of new arrivals and refugees, I can absolutely see myself using this book as a learning tool. In fact, it's a relatively easy-to-access book for early secondary and EAL students, I thought it worthwhile to introduce it as a text to my Year 8 literacy class. Students enjoyed that 'each page is somebody's story and it's not all set in the same year – there is a variation of years,' as well as a range of countries covered, many of which the students in my class could relate to. They felt that the name of the book was particularly fitting, given that it concentrated on immigration by boat. Potter and Jackson's illustrations were a definite highlight and the aspect that the students found most enjoyable.

Although read as a whole the stories can be a little repetitive, the individual stories would absolutely be worthy of inclusion in some sort of timeline activity looking at Australia's migration history.

If there is a limitation to this book, it is that there are no years printed within the stories themselves, although relevant dates are included on the inside front and back covers. Nor are there specific countries mentioned, meaning that a basic knowledge of migration patterns to Australia is needed in order to determine which countries or regions the immigrants are from. These issues mean that unless the reader is particularly familiar with the history of immigration to Australia, there will be a lot of flipping back and forth between the stories and the end pages to contextualise the timeframe in which the stories take place. If you choose to read the book aloud as a class, the origins and timeframes may need to be explained to students.

That said, there are many clues within the stories themselves which easily lend themselves to developing inferential literacy skills. Encouraging students to use the clues in the text to infer the timeframe in which the story has taken place and the countries the subjects are from could be an excellent way of using this book in the classroom. Although most vocabulary will be familiar to students, some foreign terms may need explaining.

In these times of fractured political discourse around immigration, *Waves* is a reminder to us all that 'if you are not an Indigenous Australian, your family has, at some stage, come to Australia from across the waves.'

Most of us are relatively new arrivals to this country, and we all have a story to share. As such, this text is a worthy resource for both students and teachers.

With thanks to Yianna, Year 8, for her contributions.

Waves: For Those Who Come Across the Sea

by Donna Rawlins
Illustrations by Mark Jackson
and Heather Potter

2019

Melbourne

Picture book, 33 pages

Illustrations

Reviewed by Katie O'Connell
Sunshine College, Sunshine