



*The reason literacy is important is that literature is the operating instructions. The best manual we have. The most useful guide to the country we're visiting, life.*

**Ursula K. Le Guin**

This online conference will engage with the school library's important role in literacy development specifically in the area of reading. We will hear from researchers, key commentators, practitioners, and creators, showcasing inspirational ideas and examples of best practice. The SLAV 2021 Awards will be presented at this event.

## **Conference Program**

<b>8.30am</b>	<b>Trade Exhibition</b>
<b>9.00am</b>	<b>Welcome</b> Di Ruffles - President, SLAV
<b>9.13am</b>	<b>Keynote Address - The Power of Literacy</b> Dr Sue Thomson
<b>10.06am</b>	<b>Featured Address - Reading Cultures in BookTok, Bookstagram and BookTube</b> Bronwyn Reddan, Research Fellow
<b>10.36am</b>	<b>Morning Tea Break and Trade Exhibition</b>
<b>11.00am</b>	<b>Concurrent sessions</b>  <b>Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge: It's Not Just for Primary Schools</b> Margaret Lawson  <b>The Library: The Thinking Hub of the School</b> Ana Hantzis and Rebecca Cooney  <b>International Picture Books</b> Margot Lindgren
<b>11.33pm</b>	<b>Featured - Panel</b>  <b>Graphic Novels as Protest</b>  <b>Bernard Caleo in conversation with Safdar Ahmed and Miranda Burton</b>
<b>12.13pm</b>	<b>Lunch Break &amp; Trade Exhibition</b>

*Literacy is the most basic currency of the knowledge economy.*

**Barack Obama**

- 1.00pm**            **SLAV Awards**
- The Penny Geoghegan Award**
  - SLAV Innovators Award**
  - The SLAV Research Fellowship**
  - The SLAV School Leaders Award**
  - John Ward Award**
- 1.33pm**            **Concurrent Sessions**
- Improving Reading Engagement @ Emmanuel: An Improving Literacy In The Secondary Years Project (ILSY)**  
Rachel McGennisken, Catherine Ryan, Andrea Lane and Margaret Sinnott
  - Reading Together to Make Difference: A Global Reading Challenge Program**  
Wendy Logan
  - Improving Year 7 Reading Engagement: A 2020 VIT Inquiry Project**  
Kathryn McKendry
- 2.06pm**            **Featured Address**
- The Power of the Imagination**  
Sofie Laguna
- 2.39pm**            **Keynote Address**
- Leading Reading in Your School: From Literacy Policy Positioning to TikTok**  
Dr Margaret Merga
- 3.37pm**            **Final Announcements**
- 3.42pm**            **Conference Close**

Registration via the SLAV website Professional Learning page  
or <https://slav.wildapricot.org/event-4122652>





## Keynotes

### The Power of Literacy

Dr Sue Thomson

**Dr Sue Thomson** is ACER's Deputy CEO (Research). She provides senior leadership to staff in several research programs including Surveys and International Assessments, Systemwide Testing, Educational Policy and Practice, Education and Development and Tertiary Education. In October 2018, Sue was elected to join the Standing Committee of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

Dr Thomson is also the National Research Coordinator for Australia in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which measures achievement in mathematics and science for students in grades 4 and 8, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), which measures reading literacy of grade 4 students, and the National Project Manager for Australia for the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which examines reading, mathematical and scientific literacy of 15-year-old students.

Dr Thomson's research at ACER has involved extensive analysis of large-scale national and international data sets - the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY), as well as TIMSS and PISA. In more recent work she has also collaborated on projects involving analysis of the longitudinal data collection associated with PISA. She has experience with a wide range of complex statistical procedures, including cluster analysis, discriminant analysis and multi-level modelling.

### Leading Reading in Your School: From Literacy Policy Positioning to TikTok

Dr. Margaret K. Merga

School library professionals play a key role in supporting students' literacy skill development and maintenance, building positive attitudes toward reading. I will briefly outline some of the literacy-supportive roles that school library professionals have, and how they are research-supported and reflective of best practice in encouraging young people to be life-long readers. Drawing on recent UK examples, I will illustrate how we can position our library, our staff and ourselves in our school's literacy policy documents as key literacy resources. Finally, I will explore how we can learn from young people's use of #Booktok on TikTok to support students' reading engagement. This keynote will draw on the most recent research in the areas discussed, and there will be opportunities for brief discussion and questions so that you can feel actively involved in your professional learning.

**Dr Margaret K. Merga** has conducted extensive research in literacy and librarianship. She has published more than 85 journal articles, and is a strong advocate of communicating research findings beyond academia. She is the author of three recent books in research methods, reading, and school librarianship, as well as an upcoming book on libraries and wellbeing. In 2020 she was honoured as inaugural Patron of the Australian School Library Association, and in 2021 she won

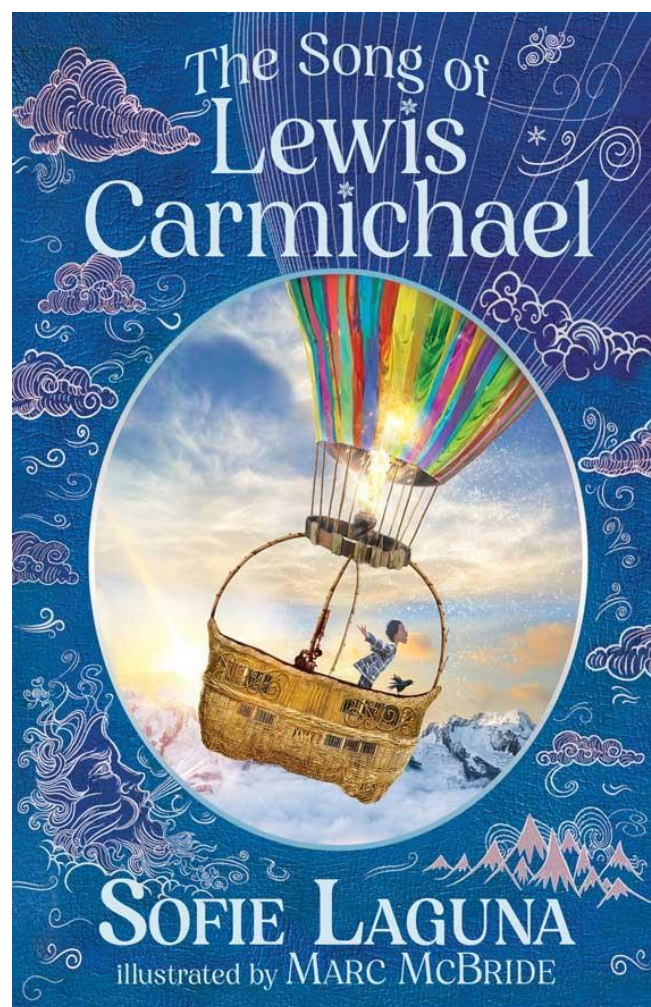
an American Association of School Librarians ESLS Research Grant. Her work has been used to promote reading and library initiatives in Australia and internationally, and she has consulted with schools, professional associations and government departments on a range of literacy initiatives, such as the Department of Education Western Australia's Never Stop Reading programme.

## Featured Addresses

### The Power of the Imagination

Sofie Laguna

**Sofie Laguna's** many books for young people have been published in the US, the UK and in translation throughout Europe and Asia. She has been shortlisted for the Queensland Premier's Awards, and twice been awarded Honour Book by the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA). She is also a highly acclaimed author for adults. Sofie lives in Melbourne with her husband, Marc McBride, and their two young sons.



### Reading Cultures in BookTok, Bookstagram and BookTube

Bronwyn Reddan

How do teenage readers engage with books on the digital platforms Instagram, TikTok and YouTube? As part of an ARC-funded project investigating how Australian teenagers choose leisure reading material, we are mapping the digital ecology of teen reading in Australia. One aspect of this mapping is to examine the reading practices and book talk in the digital

communities created by users of online social media networks. This presentation offers insight into the evolution of different reading cultures on BookTube, Bookstagram and BookTok, and the influence these cultures have on how young people access information or recommendations about books.

**Bronwyn Reddan** is a Research Fellow on the ARC project 'Discovering a "Good Read": Cultural Pathways to Reading for Australian Teens'. Her research examines social and cultural histories of emotion and literature, with a particular focus on fairy tales and women's writing.

## Panel

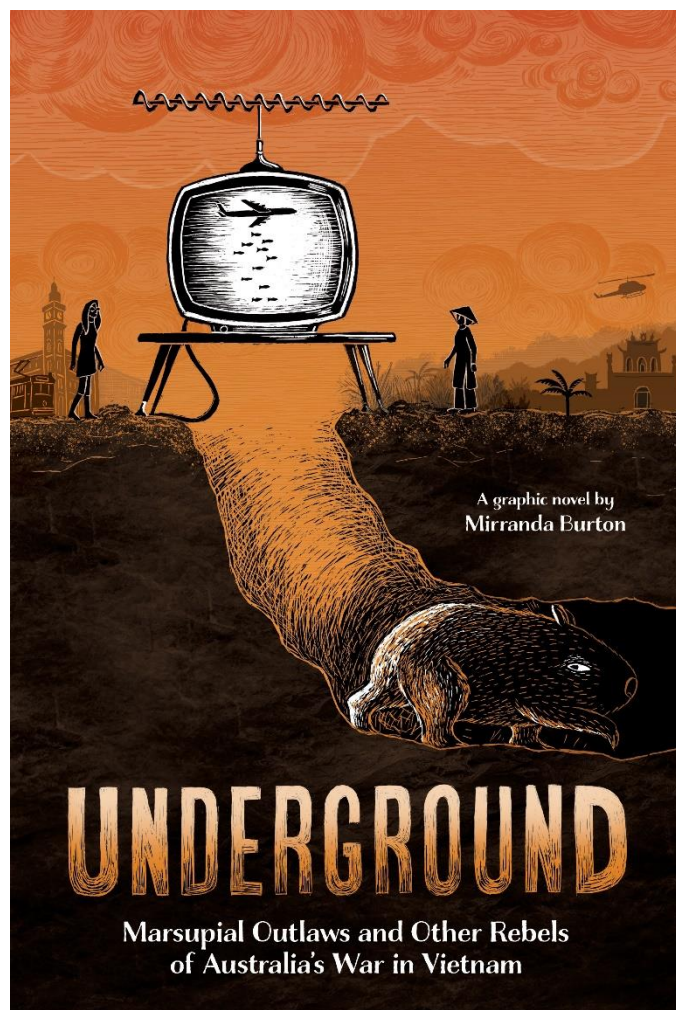
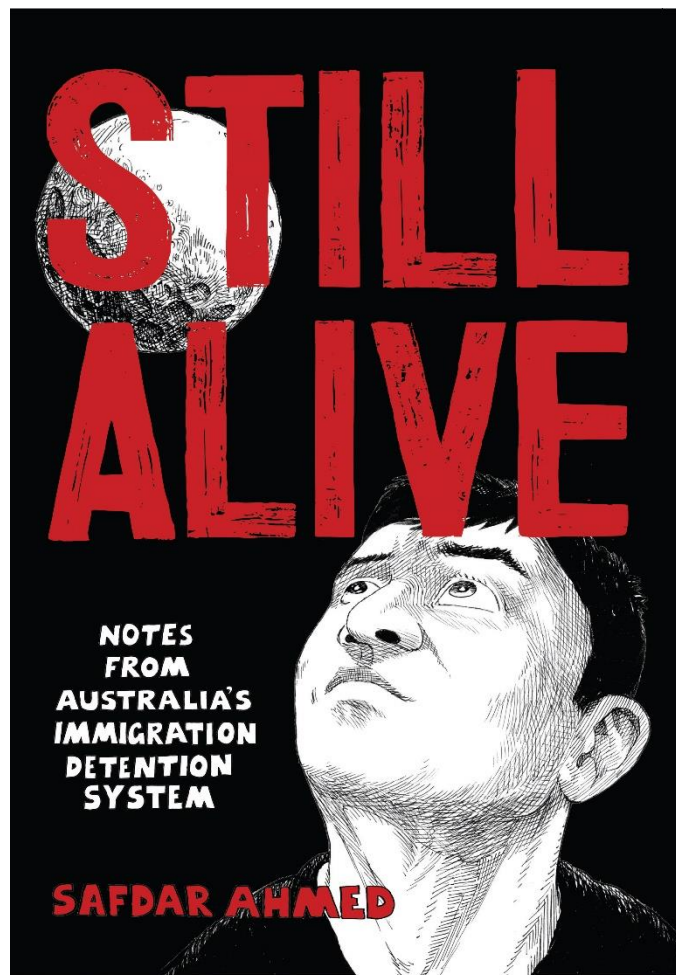
### Graphic Novels as Protest Bernard Caleo in Conversation with Safdar Ahmed and Mirranda Burton

Many graphic novels are fuelled by a desire for social justice. Join Mirranda Burton (*Underground: Marsupial Outlaws and Other Rebels of Australia's War in Vietnam*) and Safdar Ahmed (*Still Alive: Notes from Australia's Immigration Detention System*) in conversation with comic book commentator Bernard Caleo as they discuss what powered these projects, and the connections between graphic language and political literacy.

**Bernard Caleo** is a comic book teacher, maker and commentator. With Erica Wagner and Elizabeth MacFarlane, he began the graphic novel publishing enterprise Twelve Panels Press, and in 2021 they published Safdar Ahmed's *Still Alive: Notes from Australia's Immigration Detention System*. Bernard is currently drawing and writing a PhD about Australian comics. [cardigancomics.com](http://cardigancomics.com)

**Safdar Ahmed** is a Sydney-based artist, musician and educator. He is a founding member of the community art organisation Refugee Art Project, and member of eleven, a collective of contemporary Muslim Australian artists, curators and writers. He is the author of *Reform and Modernity in Islam* (IB Tauris, 2013) and the Walkley Award-winning documentary web-comic *Villawood: Notes from an immigration detention centre* (2015). He also sings and plays guitar with the anti-racist death metal band Hazeen.

**Mirranda Burton** was born in Auckland, New Zealand. Working for many years in commercial and independent animation and as a visual artist was the catalyst for making graphic novels, and in 2011 her first book, *Hidden*, was published by Black Pepper Publishing. In 2011 Mirranda became artist in residence for two years at Dunmoochin in Australian artist Clifton Pugh's former studio. During this residency she also learned of the Pughs' wombat, who was registered for military service in Vietnam in 1972, which started a long investigation into Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, resulting in her graphic novel *Underground: Marsupial Outlaws and Other Rebels of Australia's War in Vietnam*.





## Concurrent Sessions

### Improving Year 7 Reading Engagement: A 2020 VIT Inquiry Project

Kathryn McKendry

This presentation will be about a small action research/inquiry project designed to improve reading engagement for Year 7 aliterate readers, to satisfy an application for full VIT registration. The project ran for one semester and was based on supportive practices gathered from professional reading and from my own observations and ideas. Two Year 7 classes were involved, with a high number of aliterate readers in each class. Each lesson was designed around one supportive practice for increasing reading engagement. The lessons were conducted via Zoom and face-to-face during Terms 3 and 4 of 2020. Pre and post inquiry surveys were conducted to gather data on how students felt about each supportive practice at the beginning and then again at the end of the project. This session will report on the findings.

**Kathryn McKendry** is a teacher-librarian at Lauriston Girl's School in Melbourne. She graduated from Charles Sturt University with a Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship) in 2018. Kathryn loves all aspects of her work in a school library, in particular teaching research skills, fostering reading engagement and creating a reading community in her school. She has an emerging interest in action research, use of data and teacher collaboration to guide future programmes and planning.

### International Picture Books

Margot Lindgren

English is the first language of many Australians, and this gives us access to books from USA, UK, NZ, Canada, and South Africa. Thanks to the work of some publishers who specialise in book translation we also have access to books from other languages. Often these books have won awards in their country of origin, but are not easily accessed. This presentation will feature several very special picture books which can be shared with a range of students from years 5 to 8.

**Margot Lindgren** worked as a Teacher-Librarian in NSW Primary Schools for 33 years in a variety of settings, from small rural schools to her last role at a large metropolitan campus. She believes strongly in the importance of school libraries and has a passion for children's literature which she shares through her blog – Momo Time to Read. Margot is currently the National Secretary of IBBY Australia (International Board on Books for the Young) and in 2021 she was selected as a judge for the CBCA Picture Book of the Year awards 2022-23.

### Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge: It's Not Just for Primary Schools

Margaret Lawson

Many Primary schools participate in the Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge every year but then when students get to

secondary school the reading challenge disappears from the literacy landscape. Margaret will talk about the structures that the Sion Library Team have put into place to support and encourage participation in the Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge. From individual reading goals, marketing strategies, through to dovetailing into the school "colours" program. The presentation will include results of an end of challenge survey and student voice highlighting the impact of the reading challenge on engagement with recreational reading throughout the school year.

**Margaret Lawson** works as Head of Library and Information Services at Our Lady of Sion College in Box Hill. She has over twenty years of teaching experience in Information Technology and Humanities and has been an active eLearning educator. She maintains a blog which documented her journey from classroom teacher to teacher-librarian called Infowhelm and actively promotes school libraries through her twitter account @konstantkaos and her instagram @lovemyschoollibrary.

### The Library: The Thinking Hub of the School

Ana Hantzis and Rebecca Cooney

The Glen Waverley Secondary College Library is the "thinking hub" and heart of our school. At the core of our work is our drive to ensure our students leave school as lifelong learners with the literacy skills to ensure they are connected, empathetic and critical citizens within their communities. As educators, we are in a unique position to provide students with a range of experiences that help them to develop the skills they need to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century. The general capabilities are the responsibility of all teachers, and this is reflected in the work we do with students in our library space. We will share our approach to these challenges through practical strategies and examples of this practice in action in our wide reading program.

**Ana Hantzis** is an experience teacher-librarian who leads a vibrant library team in the high-performing Glen Waverley College community.

**Rebecca Cooney** has a background in both Literacy and 21st Century learning and enjoys learning and working from her library colleagues.

### Reading Together to Make Difference: A Global Reading Challenge Program

Wendy Logan

This reading program is aimed at any year level and is built around the 17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. It encourages students to read all kinds of books from your library, to suit each goal, so can be set up to use existing resources at minimal cost but for major effect. The program offers many advantages on different levels. It is very motivating because it builds in different text types to suit differentiated learning. It encourages students to really engage with the deeper meanings of the "global goals" in a safe and scaffolded way. Also, it can be set up to easily raise money for a suitable cause to prove that "reading together

can make a difference". It offers a new take on reading challenges to suit the challenges in our modern world.

**Wendy Logan** is currently Head of Library at The Ridgeway Campus of Ivanhoe Grammar School. This library is a busy, popular space for students in years 7 to 12 and provides a dynamic reading program for years 7, 8 and 10, as well as targeted research programs for all year levels. Wendy works closely with her library team to deliver innovative reading programs to encourage students to 'choose to read' in this busy world and to make sure they all have positive library experiences to help them in the future.

### **Improving Reading Engagement @ Emmanuel: An Improving Literacy in The Secondary Years Project (ILSY)**

**Rachel McGennissen, Catherine Ryan, Andrea Lane and Margaret Sinnott**

During 2021 Emmanuel College, Warrnambool, has participated in a professional development program Improving Literacy In The Secondary Years, inviting us to look at improving literacy across the school. The four areas we have focussed on are:

- Improving reading intervention in Year 7 and 8.
- Teaching explicit reading skills to enable students to deepen their ability to reflect on their own reading experience.
- Actively encouraging and promoting reading for enjoyment across the school.
- What is Literacy at Emmanuel College? Reviewing what has been done and planning new ways of improving Literacy.

**Rachel McGennissen** is the Senior Education Officer, Catholic Education Ballarat. Rachel has a secondary background and is leading 'Improving Literacy In The Secondary Years', a system wide Strategy.

**Catherine Ryan** is Head of the English Faculty at Emmanuel College and a passionate senior English and Literature teacher.

**Andrea Lane** is in Early Intervention and Learning Diversity. Andrea has a Primary teaching/Learning Diversity background and is keen to explore how reading skills can be embedded into whole class instruction in the Secondary setting.

**Margaret Sinnott** is Head of Library and a Teacher Librarian at Emmanuel College, a member of the SLAV Council and enthusiastically tries to find the 'best' book for each reader.

### **NOTE:**

The online conference will be complemented by a static trade exhibition.

Participants may move between concurrent sessions on the day and do not need to nominate a choice. Recordings of all sessions will be provided.

### **Registration**

SLAV Members - \$200

Non – Members - \$300

Includes all recordings.

<https://slav.wildapricot.org/event-4122652>



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*Literacy is more important than ever it was, in this world of text and email, a world of written information. We need to read and write, we need global citizens who can read comfortably, comprehend what they are reading, understand nuance, and make themselves understood.*

**Neil Gaiman, 2013**

*'Why our future depends on libraries, reading and daydreaming'*