

# CREATE a **kids' book**



## **Assessment and Workshops**

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Chairman  
Gary Banks  
Productivity Commission  
GPO Box 1428  
Canberra 2601  
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Dear Mr Banks,

My business, Create a Kids' Book, helps would-be authors and illustrators reach publishable standard with their work. As such, I see myself as a valuable part of the publication process, and also part of what makes Melbourne a UNESCO City of Literature.

Thirty years ago, I kept a record of my children's reading, now published by Routledge as *Stories, Pictures and Reality: Two children tell*. They were both almost five before they met Australia in picture books or other titles for young children. Nor did they, with one exception (Roughsey and Trisize's picture books) ever meet indigenous characters in their books.

The picture is so different today, with many brilliant authors and artists creating vibrant works, set firmly on Australian soil. Children can now know they exist as Australians in the terms of the story-world.

I am vitally concerned both with nurturing emerging writers, and with children being able to see themselves and their lives reflected in books.

I understand that the parallel importation of books will make publishers less enthusiastic about publishing Australian content, and that authors will receive less money for their work (very few of them earn even a living wage, even under the current rules).

Our book trade is vibrant. Publishers and independent bookshops flourish, and even the authors are at least able to find a market. I can sell my services to emerging writers as well.

Other parts of the world (USA and the UK are of course the most relevant) do not have parallel importation rights, so are protecting their own creators. We must do so too.

Yours sincerely,

Virginia Lowe.