

Children's Book Week 16<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> August 2008

Theme: Fuel Your Mind

**'Fuel Your Mind'**

700 word article by Hazel Edwards

[www.hazeledwards.com](http://www.hazeledwards.com)

**F for Faction, Fiction and Non Fiction**

**U for Understanding**

**E for Electronic**

**L for Literacy**

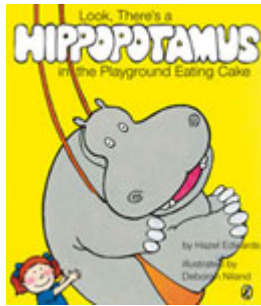
What will be the fuel from books? Ideas? Music? Words? Dramatising stories? Building something from instructions? 'How to.....'

Teachers and librarians seeking Book Week activities to involve young readers and even those NOT so keen on reading may appreciate an author's viewpoint on linking books to the 2008 Fuel Your Mind theme.



**F for Faction, Fiction and Non Fiction**

Seeing or reading from another's perspective or gaining vicarious or secondhand experience via a book, is a form of mind fuel. The author provides the fuel, but the reader must ignite it.



Whereas 'fiction' like 'There's a Hippopotamus on our Roof Eating Cake' is imaginary with composite characters and may begin with 'what if?', non fiction has to be factual. Midway is **FACTION**. Often the settings may be realistic, like the 1912 Antarctic setting of the Mawson expedition in 'Antarctic Closeup' (Making Tracks series) which includes a real telescope from the National Museum Collection and husky antics with frozen penguin. However, the boy John, is a complete invention, a dramatic device to attract young readers, since no real child was there at that time.

The Darwin setting of my YA novel 'Outback Ferals' with the beer can regatta and Night Markets is realistic, but the story of Kyle the undercover scientist is fiction. However the readers' desire for adventure can be fuelled by the crocodile chase, the chopper ride and other fast paced outback action. Readers may wish to imitate eccentric Rem's CD 'Backpacker' music and create their own.

## **U for Understanding**

Interviewing is one way of gaining understanding or researching a topic, so encouraging interview skills in students can fuel ideas. Draft questions for real people and/or characters from fiction. Then answer them.

My O Gang stories about a group of kids solving mysteries while orienteering are being re-issued and so the 'how to orienteer' with a map and compass is relevant.

Acting out classroom plays or how to make something from instructions on the page is another type of fuelling. Avoiding 'Committeeitis' and getting people to work together can be learnt from a book too.



Just as an analysis of 'Difficult Personalities and applying the strategies can fuel better classroom relationships.

Putting on an event or a festival is a way of showing your mind has been or can be fuelled by ideas.

### **E for Electronic**

Often a story is recorded on disk, whether a CD, DVD or yet to be invented electronic format. 'Bumble' a picture book based around the music of 'Flight of the BumbleBee' which is on the early primary curriculum demonstrates how to use music as fuel for student imaginations while or before writing. Or they can compose their own for spooky stories such as 'Two Left Sneakers'

Electronic stories such as bike blogs entice 'young blokes' to 'fuel their mind' with ways of combining adventure and words, in short extracts.

Discovering facts via interview or visiting settings is a daily part of my work, whether for fiction, faction or non fiction but those ideas have to be crafted.

Recently my cartographer son and I co-wrote his ex-blog into a book 'Cycling Solo: Ireland to Istanbul'. He did ALL the cycling for five months and most of the writing in out-of-the-way Internet cafes. But we shared the editing of the blog extracts. Our only earlier collaboration had been when he provided the original 'hippopotamus on the roof eating cake' idea, when he was a three year old.

Challenge your young readers to collaborate on electronic writing.

### **L for Literacy**

Literacy is not a matter of controlled vocabulary and short sentences; it is choosing subjects and styles of writing which will intrigue the audience or readership.

Check out these links for relevant titles for 'Fuel the Mind' theme

[www.hazeledwards.com](http://www.hazeledwards.com) for teachers' notes

#### **New**

- Bumble illust Mini Goss, New Frontier.
- Teacher Solutions: 3 books of classroom plays
- Trust Me anthology Ford St Publishing (Two Left Sneakers story)

#### **Relevant**

- There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake (Penguin Puffin ) and other hippo titles
- Dramatics ( new edition of Primary Drama Resource) Teacher Solutions
- Gang O chapter book, Orienteering Services.
- Cluey Writing, Orienteering Services
- Antarctic Closeup in National Museum 'Making Tracks series.
- Cycling Solo: Ireland to Istanbul ISBN 1920785922 Brolga Publishers Pan Macmillan Distribution
- Outback Ferals, Hachette. ISBN: 0734409354