

**CHILDREN’S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA (TASMANIAN BRANCH)
RECEPTION TO MARK BOOK WEEK 2024
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
FRIDAY 16 AUGUST 2024, GOVERNMENT HOUSE BALL ROOM**

VICE-REGAL SALUTE

Good afternoon, everyone. I warmly welcome you all to this event to mark Book Week 2024.

I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose Country we gather. I acknowledge today’s Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and deep connection to land, sea, and waters.

Since its inception in 1945, Book Week, now known as Children’s Book Week, has grown from a single award into a comprehensive celebration of children’s literature. The Children’s Book Council of Australia (CBCA) Awards now span several categories, including CBCA Book of the Year for Older Readers, for Younger Readers, for Early Childhood, and for Picture Books. There is also the Eve Pownall Award for Information Books and the CBCA Award for New Illustrator.

These awards highlight the exceptional contributions of authors and illustrators to our children’s lives, with literature playing such an important role in their education and development.

This year’s theme is “Reading Magic”, and it is a reminder of the educational and transformative power of books.

I am very proud to serve as a Reading Champion for our Premier’s Reading Challenge. This role supports efforts to encourage children to read more and

improve literacy across our State. Promoting a love of reading aligns with the goals of Book Week and our vision to nurture a strong culture of reading¹

One of the key initiatives of our CBCA is the *Read Aloud To Your Child Every Day Campaign*, launched by our Tasmanian Branch in 2023. This campaign addresses concerns about our low literacy rates and promotes reading aloud to children daily².

Research consistently shows that reading aloud enhances language skills, cognitive abilities, and emotional development³.

This campaign is supported by the distribution of books such as *Tassie Rhymes for Little Tigers*, funded by the Toast for Kids Charity and the Lyone Foundation.

I commend Tasmanian schools for participating in the Shadow Judging program, which allows students to engage with the CBCA Book Awards' shortlisted titles⁴. Shortly, we shall hear from Shadow Judges, who are students from Calvin Christian School, on their thoughts on the books that they have reviewed in this year's program.

May I conclude and acknowledge the commitment made to advance reading and literacy by the CBCA through programs such as Book Week.

Thank you for being here today to celebrate Book Week and to celebrate the importance of literature and its positive influence on our young readers.

¹ <https://www.decyp.tas.gov.au/about-us/events/premiers-reading-challenge/ambassadors/>

² Felicity Sly/Paula Chatwood 14 July 2024

³ Rabinowitz, S., Pavlov, C., Mireku, B., Ying, K., Zhang, J., & Read, K. (2021). I Feel Less Blue When I Read With You: The Effect of Reading Aloud With a Child on Adult Readers' Affect. *Frontiers in psychology*, 12, 706729. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.706729>

⁴ Correspondence Felicity Sly/Paula Chatwood 14 July 2024