



# TEACHERS' RESOURCES

## RECOMMENDED FOR

Upper primary: ages 8–11; years 3 to 5

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## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social capabilities.
- **Cross-curriculum priorities:** Sustainability

## REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Language and literacy
- Creative and critical thinking
- Sustainability themes

## THEMES

- Schools
- Humour
- Friendship
- Sustainability and nature
- Play
- Sport
- Cooking

## PREPARED BY

Damian Callinan & Penguin Random House Australia

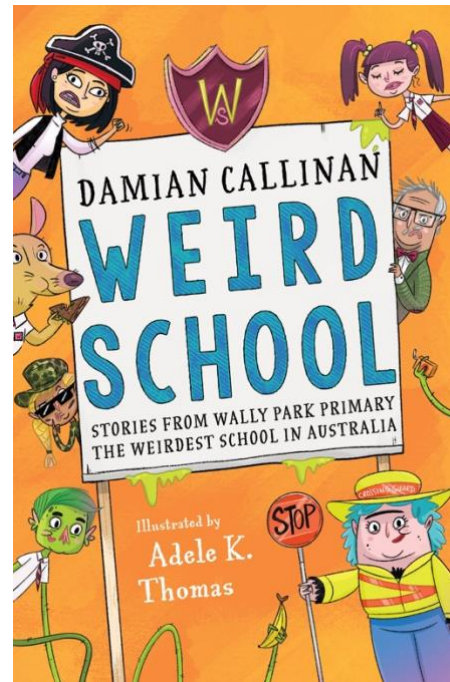
## PUBLICATION DETAILS

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## Weird School

Damian Callinan

Illustrated by Adele K. Thomas

## PLOT SUMMARY

Welcome to Wally Park Primary, the Weirdest School in Australia!

Some people think that all schools are the same. They might have different uniforms, slogans and emblems but in the end, there isn't much difference between them . . .

THESE PEOPLE ARE WRONG!

They have not been to Wally Park PS.

A normal day at Wally Park would be the weirdest day in any other school's history. There's an annual Extreme Walkathon few students survive, a talking Naughty Tree and an Out-of-Bounds Area you might truly never return from *and* the meanest (and most vain) principal in Australia.

Keep everything crossed that your family is not moving to Wally Park any time soon!

A weird and wonderfully funny story collection about Australia's wackiest school!

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Damian Callinan** is an award-winning comedian, actor and writer. A three-time nominee for Most Outstanding Show at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, he is best known to TV and film audiences for his roles in *Skithouse*, *Spicks and Specks* and *Backyard Ashes*, and has been described as 'one of the

best character comedians in the country' (*Herald Sun*).

His solo show *The Merger* was adapted into a multi-award-winning screenplay penned by and starring Callinan, and is now available on Netflix.

[Photo credit: James Penlidis.]

## Q&A WITH DAMIAN

**Tell us about your inspiration for this book. Why did you write *Weird School*?** Before I became a comedian, actor and writer, I was a school teacher. One year when I was teaching Grade 4, I started writing a story to read to my students. It was called *The New Kid* about an alien who has been unexpectedly enrolled in the school. I planned to one day write it out properly, but when I finally got around to it, I liked the idea of writing a series of stories about schools where weird things happen. Eventually that idea became *Weird School* where all the weird things happen in one school, Wally Park Primary School.

Wally Park PS is a familiar Australian primary school but with all the recognisable elements turned on their head: a walkathon that pushes the limits, a swimming carnival where getting sunburnt is the least of your worries, a newsletter that is bit too honest and an Out of Bounds area that really should be out of bounds.

It's been fun to write and there are many more stories that didn't make it into this book so, as long as no one shuts down Wally Park Primary School, down the track you might get to read about a parent-teacher quiz night that gets out of hand and a time portal in the silent reading corner.

### **Is Wally Park similar to any schools you have visited?**

There was one particular year in my teaching career when things certainly got quite weird.

I became involved in an ongoing prank battle with one of my colleagues, Bernard, who was also one of my friends and Aussie Rules teammates who was very creative and ultra-competitive. The students in both of our classes were willing participants.

Some of the highlights included – the whole class refusing to stop silent reading, all of the girls in my class going missing (I eventually found them in the sports press) and Bernard's whole class giving him socks for Christmas.

**What is your favourite scene in *Weird School*?** The Ms Luu story was the first story that I wrote, so I have a soft spot for her training in the modified classroom with her crack team in the pop up sports science lab.

I particularly like the moment where the whole class are taking cover in a makeshift fort from the rampaging 3D printed pirate version of their teacher.

**Which illustration is your favourite?** I love the picture of Pam the lollipop lady on the cover. My favourite internal illustration is Team Green Morrow riding El Gorro. I love how much character Adele has given the bull. You could almost sense his shame at the toxic poo he's just dropped.

**Have you or your family had any other funny experiences at school like the characters in *Weird School*?** One year I was team teaching in adjoining Grade 4 classes. My co-teacher Leanne and I decided we would turn one of our classrooms into the interior of an aircraft and created a flight simulation experience one night after school.

Leanne and I were the pilots and we had parents dressed as flight attendants doing safety demonstrations, handing out kids travel packs and serving them aircraft dinners. We created a fake storm and watched an inflight movie. More parents were set up as customs in a fictional country after we landed.

Once they cleared customs and passport control, the kids checked into other classrooms that we had set up as hotels. If I ever bump into ex-students from that year, they always recall that night and tell me that it was their favourite ever visit to Dumbumistan.



## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



**Adele K. Thomas** is a Melbourne-based illustrator and art director, with more than thirteen years of experience in animated film and TV design and children's books.

Adele has illustrated multiple children's book series including *The Champion Charlies*, *Mermaid Holidays* and *Pearl the Magical Unicorn*. She has also

written and illustrated a picture book called *Animals Eat Their Veggies Too!* And was shortlisted for the Children's Book Council of Australia's Crichton Award for her illustration work on *The Monster Maintenance Manual*. Adele is a self-described geek who enjoys collecting LEGO mini figures and hanging out with her dog, Jasper. [Photo credit: Bjorn Wilde]

## CHARACTERS

- Which characters in *Weird School* were your favourites? Why?
- Create your own characters at a 'weird school' and write a story about them. What happens to them? Do they get in trouble? Are there any aliens or competitions involved? What do your characters look like? Who are their friends?

## SUSTAINABILITY

- In the story, *The Naughty Tree*, some of the students band together to save Eucalyptus Wallius Parkus, a very old tree with some special powers.
- Write a story featuring the trees at your school.
- Join in [National Tree Day](#) and plant some trees.

## VISUAL LITERACY

The illustrator of *Weird School*, Adele K. Thomas, has had fun illustrating some of the characters from this book:

- Create your own character studies by drawing pictures of the characters from your stories in the previous activities. Try drawing them as they actively participate in a funny or weird activity.
- Illustrate a scene from the story, including as many of the characters that you can.

- Create your own *Weird School* story mini graphic novel.
- Look at the illustrations throughout *Weird School*. Pick a favourite one and describe what you see.

Is there more in it than is described in the text? What are some of the extra details the illustrator has included?

## ACTIVITIES

### CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

#### MS LUU 6.0

1. Make up a list of additional 'Fake Lesson Plans' for Ms Luu's Class in case Mr Drummond makes another surprise visit.
2. Imagine Ms Luu was trying out for more than one Olympic event.  
  
In the style of the steeplechase treadmill, describe some of the other state of the art training equipment to help her train for the following events in the classroom – Javelin, Long Jump, Skateboarding, 10 Metre Platform Diving, Ski Jumping, Beach Volleyball and Kite Surfing.
3. It took 6 attempts to get a 3D printed version of Ms Luu that they could use and even then, she had some kinks.
4. Imagine that you could 3D print versions of your own teacher. Make a list of 6 versions and outline the kinks in each copy.

#### EXTREME WALKATHON

1. You've been given the job of making up the challenges for the next Wally Park Extreme Walkathon. You have to write them in rhyming couplets.
2. Make up a team of 4 who have the special skills/super-powers that could help you overcome each of those challenges.
3. Write a story about an alien suddenly being a new kid in your class.

#### OUT OF BOUNDS

1. Write the next part of the story after Jasper disappears into the Out of Bounds.
2. Describe what the Out of Bounds would look like if it was based on your life over the last 24 hours.
3. Draw an Out of Bounds version of your school.



## THE NAUGHTY TREE

1. Add some more helpful or fun branches to Eucalyptus Wallius Parkius. Design signs for them using Eucy's technique.
2. Write a conversation between Wah Yung & Eucy using rhyming slang.  
  
See if you can make up some of your own rhyming slang or find some other ones that aren't used in the book.
3. What do you think might be higher up in the tree where the Wally Park Rangers never ventured?

## SCHOOLS SHOWBIZ SPECTACULAR

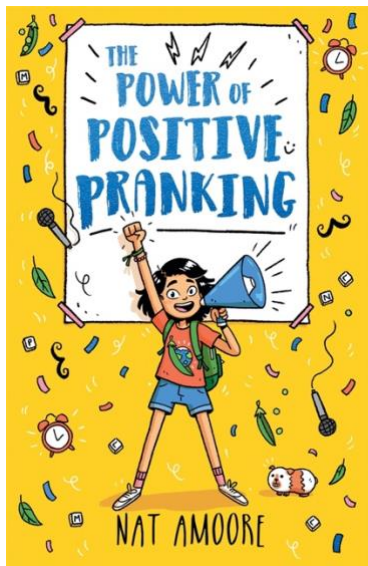
1. Make up a list of other made-up participating schools & describe their acts.
2. What if you found out that one of the buildings in your school was sentient like the Wally Park Hall?  
  
Describe your first encounter when all of its secrets are revealed.
3. Imagine you are an undercover school inspector.  
  
Write a 2 week diary, as you report on your own school, or maybe even report on a different weird school.

## OTHER BITS

1. You've been handed the reins to write your school newsletter for this week. Go!
2. In the style of the Swimming Carnival wrap up, write a version summarising the Wally Park Athletics Carnival.
3. Imagine you went to Camp Risky in the previous year that there were hundreds of complaints from the parents/guardians. Write your daily diary.
4. In the 'Welcome to Wally Park' introduction some schools were mentioned that only had one weird thing about them. Add to that list by making up your own.
5. Design and illustrate Student of the Week certificates for some of the students mentioned in the newsletter.
6. Rewrite your canteen menu. You could adapt it to a particular cuisine as Jeanne Clare did by making it an all-French affair or perhaps base it around a theme – street food, dangerous food, Greshloot 7 food as preferred by Zipcop . . . earwig pita wrap anyone?



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



*The Power of Positive Pranking* by Nat Amooore

Read the funny and outrageous story of three best friends, one greedy mayor and a whole lot of pranking.

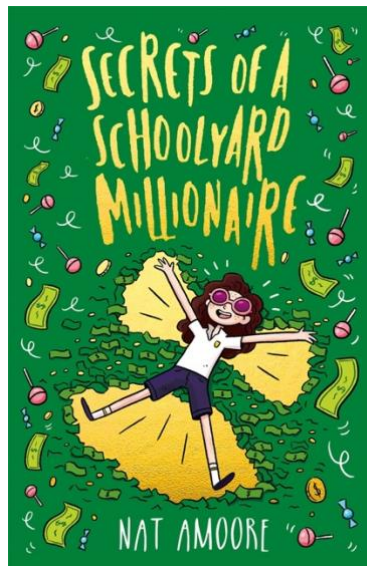
Green Peas is our name and pranking's our game!

A symphony of alarm clocks at assembly? Yep, that was us. A stampede of fluffy guinea pigs? It's next on our agenda.

But for me, Cookie and Zeke, it's about more than just fun. We're determined to make a difference. And when the adults won't listen, us kids will find a way to be heard – as long as we can stay out of detention!

No activist is too small, no prank too big . . . and things are about to get personal.

*Teachers' resources available.*



*Secrets of a Schoolyard Millionaire* by Nat Amooore

Read the hilarious story of one bag of cash, two best friends and a whole lot of trouble.

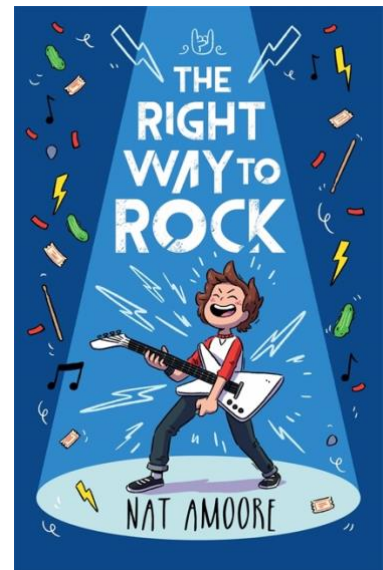
Finding a million dollars in your backyard – every kid's dream, right? That's what me and my best friend Toby thought too.

Jumping castles at school. Lollipops for our adoring fans. Wearing sunglasses indoors ('cos that's what all the millionaires do).

There's a lot you can get with a million dollars . . . including a whole lot of trouble.

Bonus tips on how to be a schoolyard millionaire inside!

*Teachers' resources available.*



*The Right Way to Rock* by Nat Amooore

Read the rockin' story of two new friends, one arts fiasco and a whole lot of music.

Without music, the world is just blah. That's my take on life, anyway.

Mum says rock is the only music worth listening to, but I think everyone should find their own beat.

When I hear that Principal Keiren plans to cut all of the arts classes at Watterson Primary, there's no way me and my new mate Flynn are gonna let that happen. We're dragging our secret Broadway appreciation society into the spotlight.

It's time for *Watterson: The Musical!*

*Teachers' resources available.*



## ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
Weird School	Damian Callinan & Adele K. Thomas	9781760893446	3-5	\$14.99		
Secrets of a Schoolyard Millionaire	Nat Amooore	9780143796374	3-5	\$14.99		
The Power of Positive Pranking	Nat Amooore	9780143796381	3-5	\$14.99		
The Right Way to Rock	Nat Amooore	9781760897703	3-5	\$14.99		
<b>TOTAL</b>						

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<p>NAME: _____</p> <p>SCHOOL: _____</p> <p>ADDRESS: _____</p> <p>STATE: _____</p> <p>POSTCODE: _____</p> <p>TEL: _____</p> <p>EMAIL: _____</p> <p>ACCOUNT NO.: _____</p> <p>PURCHASE ORDER NO.: _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>PLEASE SEND ORDER FORMS TO YOUR LOCAL EDUCATION SUPPLIER.</p>
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