

## RECOMMENDED FOR

Primary and lower secondary

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## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Intercultural Understanding, Personal and Social Capability
- **Cross-curriculum priorities:** Sustainability

## REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Language and literacy
- Visual literacy
- Imagery, figurative language, and poetry
- Intercultural understanding
- Intertextual understanding

## THEMES

- Belonging
- Journeys
- Self-awareness

## PREPARED BY

Penguin Random House Australia, Jordan Collins and Anna Buckley (with special thanks)

## PUBLICATION DETAILS

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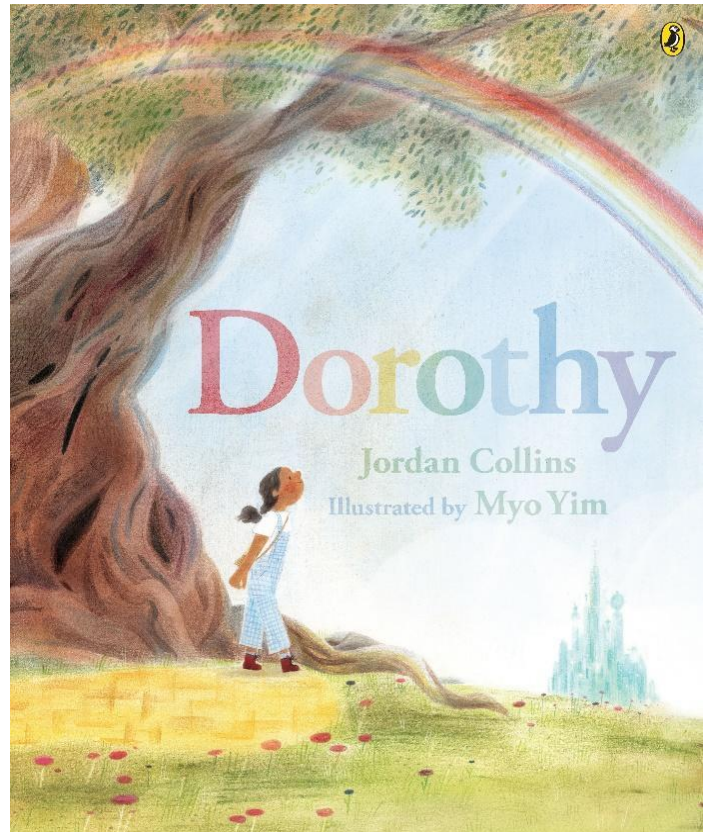
**Format:** Hardback

**Pages:** 32

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# Dorothy

Jordan Collins  
Illustrated by Myo Yim

## PLOT SUMMARY

*Dorothy* is a reimagining of the classic story of *The Wizard of Oz*, where the modern Dorothy, wearing her ruby Doc Marten boots, searches for her own sense of home.

'Where is my home?' Dorothy asks, in her drive to find where she belongs. She searches from the immense mountains to within herself to find a place where she fits.

This is a captivating and lyrical own-voices picture book exploring homecoming, belonging and identity, with exquisite illustrations capturing the essence of a journey of self-acceptance.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Jordan Collins was born in Chicago, Illinois and moved to Australia when they were eight years old. Their heritage is African-American Greek-Australian, meaning that their skin is dark, their hair is curly and they have spent a large part of their life feeling torn between cultures and expectations.

Growing up, no matter where they found themselves or how they were doing, they could always find home and belonging in the pages of a book. Now they write to give other people, like Jordan, a little taste of the home they have made for themselves.

Dorothy is Jordan's second picture book, with *Where?* (illustrated by Phil Lesnie) published in mid-2022 with A&U.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Myo Yim is a Korean author-illustrator living in Australia. Since her debut picture books, *To the Forest of Night*, published in Korea and *Rajah Street*, published in Australia, she has illustrated about 15 books over the last decade

including *White Sunday*. Originally from Seoul, South Korea, Myo now lives in Byron Bay, Australia with her husband and two boys.

## AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

### Q&A with Jordan Collins

***Congratulations on your new picture book, Dorothy. Please tell us what it's about.***

Thank you! The book is all about growing up as a biracial person in a country where I was not born. I talk about the struggle of finding 'home' for people like me, but with a fantastical spin.

***What are you hoping readers will take away from your book?***

I'm hoping readers can learn that the definition of home isn't as narrow as we often think it is and that we can all find a place where we belong.

***Can you tell us a bit about your writing process?***

My writing process is a little chaotic. Often, I will have an idea and turn it over in my head for a long time until I find a phrase that I like. Usually, that phrase will be a

metaphor, and the rest of my writing will lean into that metaphor.

***What were your favourite books as a kid?***

I used to read absolutely anything and everything when I was a child, any book I could get my hands on! Though my favourites were anything to do with dragons, especially *The Inheritance Cycle* series by Christopher Paolini.

***What advice would you give aspiring children's authors?***

My best piece of advice is to get out there! Even if it feels uncomfortable at first or makes you nervous. We all learn and grow by stepping outside of our comfort zone.

## PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Before reading this book, ensure student understanding of *The Wizard of Oz* and the original character of Dorothy.
2. Explore the notion of 'home'.
3. What similarities are there between the trailer of *The Wizard of Oz* and the cover of *Dorothy*?

### **Activities**

1. Watch a movie trailer for *The Wizard of Oz* (rated G). Discuss any images, songs or characters that students recognise.
2. Think, pair and share the notion of home. For example, houses, apartments, countries, a sense of belonging, security, etc.
3. In small groups, list as many similarities as possible between the movie trailer and the cover of the picture book. For example, rainbow, rainbow coloured font, poppies, Emerald City, red shoes, yellow brick road, blue-checked clothing, etc.



## WRITING STYLE (from page 5)

*I have a pair of Doc Martens on and  
They shine dully in this half light and  
I click my toes together once,  
Twice, three times.  
I whisper, I mumble I barely let loose the call.  
'Where is my home? Where is my home?  
Where is my home?'*

### Questions

1. What is the effect of the language technique of **repetition** in this passage?
2. What are some clues in this passage that makes it more like a poem rather than prose?

## VISUAL STYLE (pages 30-31)



### Questions

1. Describe the **colours** of the above illustration. How do they make you feel? How do you think the character Dorothy feels in this picture?
2. Why do you think this illustration spreads across the double page? What does this suggest?

### Activities

1. Students find another example of a double spread in the text and comment on the colours and the salient image.
2. How does the illustration of your example of the double spread make you feel? How do you think the character Dorothy feels in your chosen picture?

## WRITING AND VISUAL STYLE (Pages 8-9)



### Questions

1. What is a *rhetorical question*?
2. The **question** on page 9 says, 'Where is my home?' How does the rhetorical question make you aware of how Dorothy feels?
3. How do the colours of the illustration help you understand how Dorothy feels?
4. Do you think the words and visuals work together to create meaning? Why or why not?

## GENERAL CAPABILITIES

### Literacy

#### Activities

1. Find three unfamiliar words in the text and find the definition.

Extension: use each new word in a sentence.

### Intercultural Understanding

#### Activities

1. Read Jordan Collins's Q&A and biography.

#### Questions

1. What is the main reason that Collins gives for writing *Dorothy*?
2. Does understanding Collins's context make you respond to the text differently? Why or why not?



## Personal and Social Capability

### Activities

1. Where is your sense of home? Write a list of descriptive words that describes your home. This may be your house, favourite place, country, etc.
2. Write these descriptive words into a paragraph that uses imagery.
3. Use your paragraph to create an illustration suitable for a picture book. This may be hand drawn or created through technology.

## CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES

### Sustainability

#### Activity

##### Illustration a)



##### Illustration b)



Compare illustrations a) and b) above and describe what is in each picture.

#### Questions

1. What colours do they use?
2. Is there a significant image in both? What is the image?

3. What are the differences and similarities in each of the illustrations?
4. How do you think Dorothy is feeling in each of these illustrations?
5. What is Collins saying about the role of nature in finding our sense of home?

## THEMES AND ANALYSIS

### Belonging

Wanting to belong is part of being human and we can belong in many ways. We can belong to our family, friends, communities, teams, countries, etc. *Dorothy* links the concept of home as a way to feel connected.

Collins explores the different ways a person can feel like they belong. In *Dorothy* it says, 'Sometimes home is a person. A warm embrace or tiny words,' (p14) and, 'Sometimes home is the way that the sun sets over a mountain and licks the sky with crimson and sapphire.' (p15) Collins is contrasting the different ways of belonging and that it is unique for everyone. She is also exploring the idea that what we need to belong can change for us individually over the course of time.

### Journeys

Journeys, typically moving from one place to another, are not always associated with the idea of home. Journey alludes to something non-permanent such as a commute or a holiday.

Collins, however, suggests that the journey itself can provide a home. The text states, 'Sometimes home is not the being but the getting somewhere.' These words are accompanied with Yim's illustrations of a golden, yellow brick road, lush forests, and a rainbow. These colours and objects in the image create a positive tone, emphasising that, 'sometimes' and 'somewhere' can be a comforting experience.

### Self-awareness

Self-awareness is being aware of one's own actions, feelings and thoughts and being able to reflect on ourselves. Self-awareness is often not something we are born with, but a process or a journey.

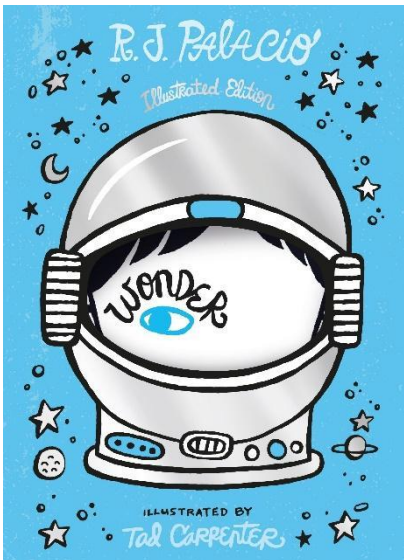
In *Dorothy*, Collins shows the main character going through a process of self-awareness. At the beginning of the book, Dorothy asks, 'Where is my home? Where



is my home?' (p5). The repetition suggests she is restless and has more questions than answers at this stage. As the book progresses, Dorothy expands her search from within herself to her environment, calling to the 'olives that danced from stout trees' (p10) and 'the smooth pebbles beneath the waves.' (p11) By the end of the book, Dorothy, through her travels, has become more self-aware and discovers that 'sometimes home is yourself, your ribcage, your beating heart.' (p24) The repetition of 'your' demonstrates Dorothy is now finding answers within herself. Collins has provided the character of Dorothy a home through a journey of self-awareness.



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



**Wonder – Illustrated Edition**  
by R. J. Palacio

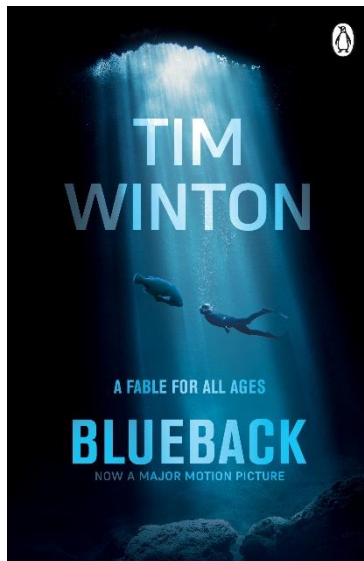
**Why this story?**

*Wonder* is another great example of looking for belonging and self-assurance suitable for upper primary and lower secondary students.

This is the story of Auggie, who wants to be an ordinary ten-year-old. He does ordinary things - eating ice cream, playing on his Xbox. He feels ordinary – inside. But ordinary kids don't make other ordinary kids run away screaming in playgrounds. Ordinary kids aren't stared at wherever they go.

Born with a terrible facial abnormality, Auggie has been home-schooled by his parents his whole life. Now, for the first time, he's being sent to a real school – and he's dreading it. All he wants is to be accepted – but can he convince his new classmates that he's just like them, underneath it all?

*Teachers' notes available.*



**Blueback**  
by Tim Winton

**Why this story?**

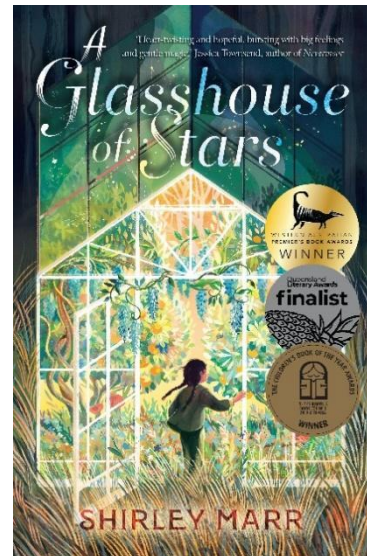
*Blueback* is suitable for upper primary and lower secondary. It is an achingly beautiful story about family, belonging, and living a life in tune with the environment, from Tim Winton, one of Australia's best-loved authors.

Abel Jackson's boyhood belongs to a vanishing world. On an idyllic stretch of coast whose waters teem with fish, he lives a simple existence. It's just him and his mother in the house at Longboat Bay, but Abel has friends in the sea, particularly the magnificent old groper he meets when diving.

As the years pass, things change, but one thing seems to remain constant: the greed of humans. When the modern world comes to his patch of sea, Abel wonders what can stand in its way.

*Blueback* is a deceptively simple allegory about a boy who matures through fortitude and who finds wisdom through living in harmony with all forms of life.

*Teachers' notes available.*



**A Glasshouse of Stars**  
by Shirley Marr

**Why this story?**

*A Glasshouse of Stars* explores the notion of belonging and is suitable for upper primary students.

Meixing Lim and her family have arrived at the New House in the New Land. Everything is vast and unknown to Meixing – including the house she names Big Scary. She is embarrassed by her second-hand shoes, has trouble understanding the language at school, and is finding it hard to make friends.

Meixing's only solace is a glasshouse in the garden, which inexplicably holds the sun and the moon and the secrets of her memory and imagination.

When her fragile universe is rocked by tragedy, it will take all of Meixing's bravery to find her place of belonging in this new world.


*Book club notes available.*



## WORKSHEET: Language and Visual Techniques

Research the following language and visual techniques. Find examples in the text *Dorothy*.

**Extension task:** Add another column to explain the effect of the language or visual technique on the reader. What does the language technique and the example want the reader to think, or feel, or know?

Language / Visual Technique	Definition	Example from <i>Dorothy</i>
Repetition	Repetition is when a word or phrase is repeated to emphasise an idea.	<i>'Where is my home? Where is my home? Where is my home?' (p5)</i>
Imagery	Words and phrases that evoke our senses; taste, smell, feel, see, hear.	
Rhetorical question		
Personification		
Tone (Language)		
Tone (Visual)		
Simile		<i>Sometimes home is the constellations of stars Etched into the sky like braille (p15)</i>
Metaphor		
Salience (Visual)		
Colour		
Symbolism		



## WORKSHEET: Writing Activity

Complete the close passage by selecting the correct words below.

Jordan Collins is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the picture book *Dorothy*. Collins wrote this book because of her \_\_\_\_\_ heritage and how home is not as simple as the house where you live. Collins uses \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_ in the passage, 'Where is my home? Where is my home? Where is my home?' to show the audience her deep desire to find a place of \_\_\_\_\_.

The illustrations on pages 6 & 7 show many smaller \_\_\_\_\_ of different places. This demonstrates how the \_\_\_\_\_ Dorothy feels \_\_\_\_\_ in her environment and not a \_\_\_\_\_ with these aspects and places of her life. In the phrase, 'Sometimes home is you', Collins is \_\_\_\_\_ that to find our sense of home, we can look within \_\_\_\_\_ and find comfort in our own lives. This picture book is not only about the character Dorothy, but comments on the \_\_\_\_\_ quality of wanting a place where we feel at home.

overwhelmed	connection	conveying	images	cultural	human
repetition	character	belonging	author	ourselves	rhetorical question





## ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
<i>Dorothy</i>	Jordan Collins	9781761044243	3 - 8	\$24.99		
<i>Wonder: Illustrated edition</i>	R. J. Palacio	9780241574621	5 - 8	\$35.99		
<i>Blueback</i>	Tim Winton	9780143779155	5 - 8	\$22.99		
<i>A Glasshouse of Stars</i>	Shirley Marr	9781760899547	5 - 8	\$16.99		
<b>TOTAL</b>						

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