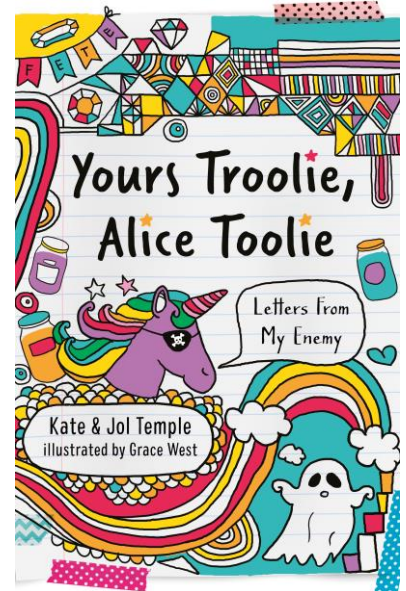


# Yours Troolie, Alice Toolie

By Kate & Jol Temple,  
illustrated by Grace West

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Recommended for 7-10-year olds



## Summary

Something very bad has happened to Alice Toolie. Her secret diary has been read by her worst enemy – Jimmy Cook.

It's war! Until Ms Fennel decides that Alice and Jimmy need to make peace and become pen pals for the term.

And it works! Before long, Alice and Jimmy are planning to make billions of dollars for the school fete—and with a captured ghost and jars full of unicorn vomit, it's sure to be their time to shine.

A laugh-out-loud book filled with sparkle and slime, from the CBCA award-winning writers of the *Captain Jimmy Cook Discovers* series.



*Yours Troolie, Alice Toolie* is an epistolary novel with a twist because these two outsized characters don't want to be writing to each other, at all.

The letters—filled with up-to-the-minute playground language, word plays, typographical tricks and illustrations and lively humour—are very short, allowing access to less secure readers. Along the way, all will enjoy the subtle accretion of details that create the plot and reveal the stark differences and surprising similarities between Alice and Jimmy.

*Yours Troolie, Alice Toolie* goes straight to the primary school funny bone—delivering heart-warming and thought-provoking scenes along the way.

## Themes

- humour
- friendship
- letter writing
- problem solving
- school fetes
- primary school

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Contact Carolyn Walsh, Education Marketing Manager,  
Ph: +02 8425 0150 Email: [education@allenandunwin.com](mailto:education@allenandunwin.com)

## In the classroom

### Comprehension questions

1. What did Jimmy do to make Ms Fennel come up with the pen pal project? (p. 1)
2. Why is Alice equally in trouble? (p. 9)
3. What does Ms Fennel hope writing to each other will achieve? (p. 10)
4. What is the first thing Alice and Jimmy decide they have in common (other than sharing the same number of arms, legs and heads)? (pp. 11-12)
5. Why is Alice so sure a ghost is in the Level 2 toilets? (p. 15)
6. What mistake does Jimmy make when he goes to investigate the ghost the first time? (p. 22)
7. According to Jimmy, why shouldn't Jenny Philpot use the preschool toilets? (p. 25)
8. What do Jimmy and Alice use for ghost 'bait'? (p. 48)
9. Which 'facts' about Jimmy and Alice are untrue? (pp. 54-55)
10. Why does Alice appear on morning TV and what does Jimmy think of her performance? (pp. 62-63)

### Activities and discussion questions

1. Come up with a list of words to describe the sort of person you think Alice Toolie is.

Give examples of things that happen in the book that made you think she is that sort of person. For example, you might say that Alice is a bit of a show-off as she thinks she's famous and the best at everything, including counting; or that she is brave because she stays in the toilet to catch the ghost, while Jimmy runs away. Try the same exercise for Jimmy Cook.

Alice is...	because...
a show-off	she thinks she's famous and the best at everything, including counting
brave	she stays in the toilet to catch the ghost
Jimmy is...	because...

2. Break into groups of two, where one member of the group imagines they are Jimmy and the other imagines they are Alice Toolie.

The person being Jimmy needs to introduce themselves and describe (Jimmy's) interests, strengths and weaknesses. REMEMBER: this is Jimmy speaking so it needs to be the way he sees himself.

Once finished, the other person (Alice) should agree with the description of Jimmy or give other opinions on his character. Try the same exercise in reverse.

3. (a) Why do you think Jimmy finishes his letters with a different word after 'Yours'?  
(b) What does quixotry really mean? Is it a word that describes both Jimmy and Alice's ideas?
4. Why do you think Jimmy and Alice's mums are so keen to organise playdates? What do you think Jimmy's mother thinks he might learn from Alice, and what do you think Alice's mother thinks she could learn from him?
5. *Also, you make stuff up like, ALL THE TIME. But then I realised that I like making stuff up too! Like amazing dance routines, ideas to save the ocean and inventing new kinds of sparkle slime! So it turns out we do actually have something in common besides both having two arms and two legs!* (p 201)  
For all their differences, do you agree Alice and Jimmy are actually very similar people? Name some of things from the story that tell you that.
6. (a) Why do you think some words are bolded and put in capital letters in Jimmy's letters?  
(b) What other ways are words and ideas emphasised in Alice's letters?  
(c) Why do you think the font is different in Jimmy, Alice and Mrs Fennel's letters?
7. *Like the saying goes: if you want to make a pancake, you've got to break your legs.* (p 44)  
Jimmy peppers his letters with sayings and facts that aren't strictly correct. Make a list of some of the silliest examples you can find in the story.
8. Alice's slime becomes a 'craze' at Jimmy's school. What sort of crazes have gone through your school, how long did they last and what do you think about them now?
9. Do you think that Jimmy and Alice will remain friends after the term is over and they don't have to write to each other anymore?
10. **Extension:** what is the word to describe a novel written as a series of letters?

## In the authors' own words:

'This book is a standalone spin-off of the CBCA award-winning Captain Jimmy Cook Discovers series. Thousands of girls read the Jimmy Cook Discovers series and asked us for a book that focused on the female characters. Kids enjoyed discussing the many incorrect stereotypes that Jimmy had made and this provided a great avenue to discussing how characters are created and how we build our own judgements.'

—Kate and Jol Temple

## The authors and illustrator

**Kate and Jol Temple** write funny books for kids and are the award-winning authors of *Captain Jimmy Cook Discovers Third Grade*—the first in a two-book series about a boy set on being a famous explorer, one disaster at a time. It was selected as Honour Book for 2017 by the Children's Book Council of Australia and shortlisted for Best Designed Book of the Year.

Their picture books include *Room on Our Rock*, *Mike I Don't Like*, *Parrot Carrot* and *I Got This Hat*, which was National Simultaneous Storytime Book and read by over half a million kids on the same day.

**Grace West** is a young illustrator and graphic designer working under the nom de plume *North South Grace West*. She is passionate about illustration, books, typography and print design.