



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Upper primary
(ages 9–11; years 4 to 6)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Critical and creative thinking, Personal and social capability, Ethical understanding
- **Cross-curriculum priorities:** Sustainability

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- To learn about activism and discuss the best way to have a positive impact
- To explore concepts of right and wrong
- To learn about deafness

THEMES

- Family and friends
- Activism
- Finding your voice
- Social and environmental justice
- Enacting positive change
- Ethics

PREPARED BY

Penguin Random House Australia and Nat Amooore

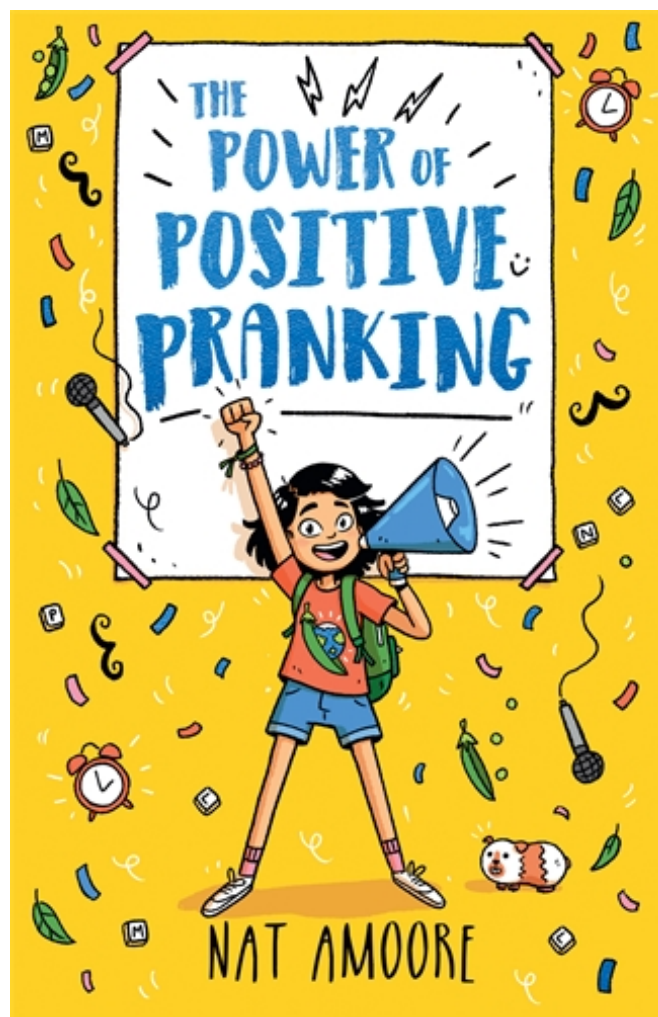
PUBLICATION DETAILS

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The Power of Positive Pranking

Nat Amooore

PLOT SUMMARY

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.

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

A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER

You've no doubt already heard of Nat Amore – the high-energy Sydney author whose debut book, *The Secrets of a Schoolyard Millionaire*, was a runaway hit, becoming the **#1 bestselling debut children's fiction book in Australia** in 2019!

I'd like to introduce you to Nat's second book, *The Power of Positive Pranking* – and, in particular, the elements that will make this story **perfect for study in schools**.

As Nat says, 'It's another wacky adventure following a group of kids from Watterson Primary as they prank their way in and out of trouble. This book is a real shout-out to all the kids in the world who are standing up for what they think is right and refusing to let the baddies win.'

So it's about pranks? Sounds too naughty for schools, right? Wrong! While it's **chock-full of humour** and has a light-hearted tone, there is so much depth in this story for students aged 8 to 12 to discuss and unpack in class.

The overarching theme of the book is **standing up for what you believe in**. Like the inspirational Greta Thunberg, the kids who organise #schoolstrikeforclimate, or Aussie Year 4 student Molly Steer, who campaigned to ban straws to save the reef, Casey and her friends feel passionately about doing what they can to change the world for the better.

Here are some of the **themes and ideas** explored in the story:

- Climate change, sustainability and the environment
- Activism and taking every opportunity to make a difference
- Finding your voice and making yourself heard
- Being the best person you can be
- Bringing injustices to light (in this case, stopping a corrupt mayor from turning the park into a high-rise development!)
- Working together to achieve your goals
- Trusting your friends – and knowing each other's strengths
- Different types of families – for instance, Casey is being raised by her dad and her grandfather, both of whom have otosclerosis, which can cause deafness. (This is based on Nat's own family's experiences, plus she had lots of help from the Deaf community in Australia in writing these characters.)

As well as great discussion points, *The Power of Positive Pranking* can also encourage students to get active: to find inspiring quotes that sum up their own **values** (based on 'Trixie Wu's Thoughts On . . .' cards);

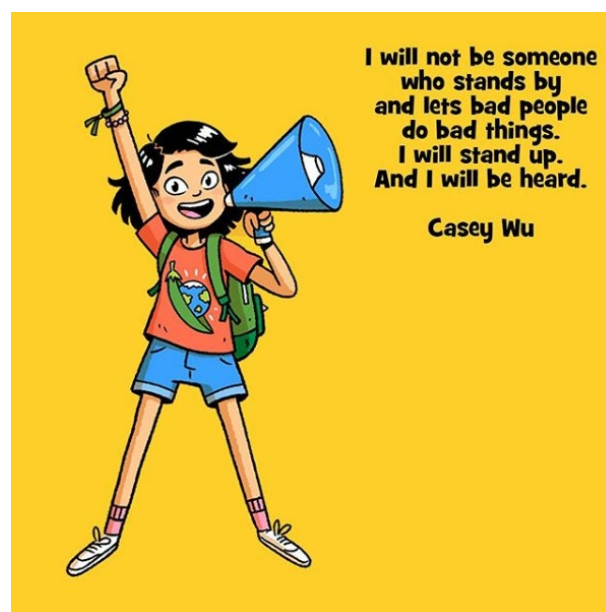
to explore ways they can **make change happen** in their own worlds (whether that's signing a petition, writing to their local politician, or helping in the community); and to start some **creative writing**, about the happenings in their own school and community.

Perhaps students everywhere around Australia will even be inspired to start their own 'Green Peas' groups! It's all about being **positive** – as Rule 26 in the story says, '**Lead the change.**'

Happy reading!

Zoe Walton

Publisher – Young Readers



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nat Amore is a writer who is passionate about encouraging kids to read, write and explore their imagination without boundaries. With a background in writing for screen, she wrote and directed international award-winning short film *Elemenopee* and has a feature film screenplay and a kids' TV series in development. Nat was a recipient of the CBCA Maurice Saxby Creative Development Program for 2018.

In February 2018, Nat (along with fellow hosts Kate and Liz) launched kidlit podcast *One More Page* (onemorepagepodcast.com), which was a finalist in the 'Best Newcomer' category for the 2018 Australian Podcast Awards. The podcast has featured in publications such as *Books+Publishing*, *Buzz Words* and the SCBWI AUS&NZ newsletters.

Find out more about Nat, including how to book her for school visits, at: natamore.com



PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Look carefully at the front cover of this book. What can you already tell about the story from the title and illustrations?
2. Now read the back cover blurb – does this fit with what you came up with after looking at the front cover?

PRE-READING RESOURCES

Watch a sign language conversation about the book:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jE5Cx2SRCV8>

Watch the first one and a half chapters being read by different authors:



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gvf4Ajpp3_U

KEY STUDY TOPICS

Communication

There are around 6500 different languages that are spoken around the world. Most of these are very rare, with less than 1000 people using the language. But there are millions of people who use a language daily, without speaking at all. In fact, it's estimated that there are 130 sign languages around the world.

While we all know a little bit of sign language already – when we wave hello and goodbye, or when we nod and shake our heads – there is still a whole language we can learn with our hands.

A survey in 2015 discovered that 20,000 people in Australia were using Auslan (that's short for **A**ustralian **s**ign **l**anguage) to communicate every day.

Questions

1. How many languages can you list? Students can write their own, work in groups or call out while someone lists them on the board.

Now try thinking of other ways of communicating that don't involve speaking and/or hearing.
E.g. braille, morse code, flag semaphore, etc.
2. What is the most common language spoken around the world? Hint: it's not English.
3. Learning new words is another way to learn new ways to communicate. Casey in *The Power of Positive Pranking* loves to learn new words! Use a dictionary to learn five new words you have never heard of that you really like. Explain what they mean, why you like them and then use them in a sentence.

Trixie Wu's Thoughts On . . .

WORDS

Learn AS MANY as you can what you have to say matters, and the more words you know, the better you can say it. Read. Read a lot. Think. Think a lot. Then speak, and be heard. Some of my favourite words . . .

CONTEMPLATE	EPIPHANY
ZEALOUS	INCENDIARY
SERENDIPITOUS	TENACIOUS
DEFIANT	

And my favourite of all . . .

CASEY ☺

xMum



Activities

1. Take a look at the Auslan alphabet chart. You can find one here:
<https://support.ridbc.org.au/auslanbee/resources>.
Or watch a video demonstrating the Auslan alphabet here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6oS7-jBYeQI>

Practice fingerspelling your name to get familiar with the alphabet.

Another great way to learn different ways of communicating is by playing games! Why not try playing 'telephone' using the Auslan alphabet, by



passing a message person-by-person down a line of students, using only non-verbal communication? How much did the message change from start to finish? Or split up into groups and try a game of charades, letting sign language add an extra layer to your non-verbal communication.

2. Use different forms of communication to solve problems as a group by trying this activity.

Split up into groups of three. Each group will have a task to solve, HOWEVER each person can only do ONE of the following: read (Person 1), speak (Person 2) or move their feet (Person 3). As neither Person 1 nor Person 2 is allowed to move around the room, make sure they're facing each other!

Person 1 is given written instructions and communicates these non-verbally to Person 2, who then needs to communicate the instructions verbally to Person 3, who will carry out the instructions.

For example, Person 1 reads the instructions handed to them, then communicates these instructions to Person 2 (eg, 'get a book and place it in the middle of your group') without speaking or moving from their spot (moving hands is allowed). Person 2 then interprets these instructions aloud for Person 3 by guessing the meaning of Person 1's hand movements. Person 3 then completes the task once the Person 1 and 2 have finished communicating.

3. Casey and her friends decide to start a school newspaper, as a way of bringing attention to the things that are important to them, such as sustainability and the environment. Choose a topic you're passionate about, or something that is happening in your local community, and write a newspaper report about it. Here are some steps to remember in writing your article:
 - Make sure your first paragraph answers the questions: who, what, where, when, and how.
 - Hook your reader with your first sentence.
 - Do some research to look for additional facts to make your story interesting.
 - Write a catchy heading for your report.
 - Include quotes – perhaps you could even interview a local person for your report.
 - Check your facts.

GREEN PEAS RULE 5

TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO
MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



Enacting positive change

Casey, Zeke and Cookie are passionate about helping make a better world by showing others how they can have a positive impact.

Trixie Wu's Thoughts On . . .

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

You only get one life, Casey-baby. Make it count. Make a difference, whatever you want that to be - big or small, to one person or to the whole world. Be the change you want to see. Find your strength and use it

xMum



Questions

1. While Casey, Zeke and Cookie have their hearts in the right place, they occasionally stepped over the line between right and wrong in their quest to make a better world. Bugging the mayor's office is an obvious case of doing the wrong thing. Can you think of any other ways that the Green Peas might have been able to gain information that would expose the mayor without compromising right and wrong?
2. Research three people close to your own age that have had a big impact in the world. What was it that they did? Why was it important?
3. What is something YOU believe strongly in, something that you would like to stand up for? How might you do this? Remember that there are many different ways to be an activist and they're not all public-facing!
4. If you were to start your own group like Green Peas, what would it be called? What would your group do and what would you stand for?

Now list your group's first ten rules.



- What are five things you wish you could change about the world?
- What does Trixie mean when she says 'Just because someone is in a position of power, doesn't make them a leader'? What does it mean to be a good leader? Which characters in the book do you think were good leaders, and why?

Trixie Wu's Thoughts On . . .

LEADERS

Just because someone is in a position of power, doesn't make them a leader. A lot of people in this world desire power. A lot desire a better life for themselves. But very few desire a better world for us all.

Trixie



Activities

- Make a vision board or poster representing five ways we could make the world a better place. Don't limit yourself, and try thinking BIG!

Then consider five ways (big or small) you, as one person in your daily life, can work towards improving the areas you showed on your poster.
- Speak up with a public speaking exercise! Kids can prepare a three-minute speech on a topic they feel passionately about, then present it to the class.
- Casey likes to refer often to the cards her mum wrote about the things that were important to her, with 'Trixie Wu's Thoughts On . . .' Make five of your own 'Thoughts On . . .' cards that share your thoughts and feelings on topics you feel strongly about.

Ethics and morality

Questions

- Whilst Casey knew that bugging the mayor's office was wrong, she justified it by telling herself it was for the greater good. Do you think this was morally right or wrong? Is it ever okay to let the ends justify the means?

Do you remember reading that Senior Detective McKenzie can't use the evidence the Green Peas obtained because they captured it illegally? Does this change your answer to the questions above?
- Throughout the book, we learn that a lot of Casey's passion for activism comes from her knowledge of her mother, and we see that many

of her thoughts on what is right and wrong are informed by the 'Trixie Wu's Thoughts On . . .' cards.

Do you think Casey would have made different decisions if she hadn't had her mum's voice on those cards? Are there different ways to interpret the messages Trixie left behind?

Characters

Trixie Wu's Thoughts On . . .

YOUR TRIBE

It's important to find your tribe, Casey. That doesn't necessarily mean people like you, it means people who complement you. Some people educate. Some people learn. Some lead. Some follow. Some shout. Some whisper. Your tribe should be a beautiful mix of it all. Find the friends that make you a better person and then hold on tight.

xMum



Questions

- Which character in the book do you identify with most strongly? Is it the same character you'd most like to meet?
- Why do you think the Green Peas work well together? What is it about their personalities and skills that are similar or different from each other, and how does this help them as a team?
- Were you surprised to learn about Casey's dad's past life as an activist at the end of the book? What about learning that he used to pull pranks as well?



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



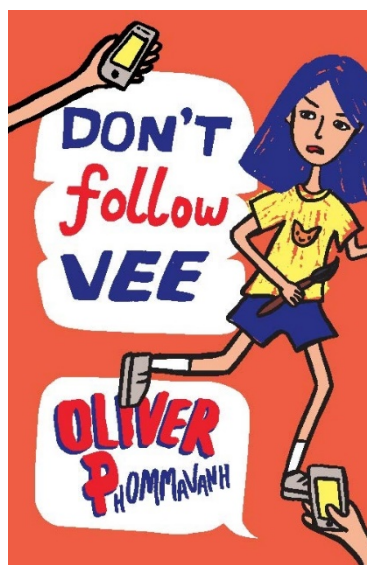
Secrets of a Schoolyard Millionaire
by Nat Amore

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.



Don't Follow Vee
by Oliver Phommavanh

100,000 followers on Instagram - a young girl's dream, right? Wrong! Please DON'T FOLLOW VEE!

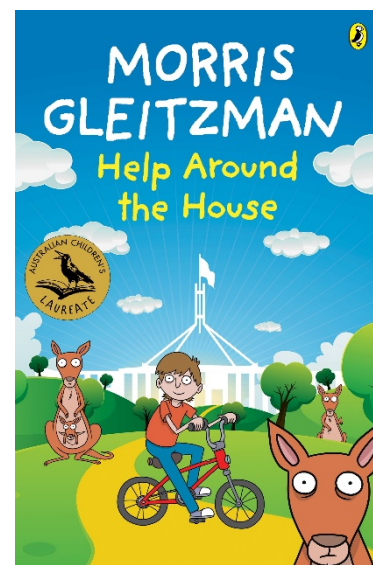
Another hilarious tale from the fabulously crazy Oliver P!

I'm not on social media, but everyone knows all about my life - from birth - thanks to Mum's Instagram, The Chronicles of Vee. It used to be a bit of fun, but when we got to 100,000 followers, Mum's started to take it way too seriously.

My mission?

Stop my mum posting everything about my life.

Teachers' resources available.



Help Around the House
by Morris Gleitzman

The funny and moving story of a boy and his friends never losing heart in a sometimes heartless world. Perfect for 8+ readers.

Ludo helps other people. It's how he was brought up.

When Dad is elected to Federal Parliament, Ludo grabs the chance to make Australia an even better place.

But he soon discovers it's not the homeless of the national capital who most need his help - it's the rich and powerful.

Teachers' resources available.

WORKSHEET: DECODING SIGN LANGUAGE

Using printed copies of an Auslan fingerspelling chart, cut out images of individual letters and then paste them into the squares below to form words. Then swap your sheet with a classmate and ask them to decode the sign language you've just created!

Advanced option: prepare two or three words that you will then sign to a classmate. Your classmate watches your hands and decodes each word as you sign it!



POSITIVE OR PERILOUS PRANKING?

Sometimes, it's hard to realise when you're taking things too far.

Break up into small groups, then come up with ideas for pranks. Take inspiration from Casey and the Green Peas if you need to! Then swap your worksheet with another group and rate the pranks they came up with. Do you think their pranks are funny and positive, or going too far? As a class, discuss some of the decisions you made and why.

Prank	Funny or Too Far?



MY THOUGHTS ON ...

Casey uses her mum's 'Trixie Wu's Thoughts On ...' cards as a source of both comfort and guidance throughout the book. Think about the things you feel strongly about (anything from injustice to your favourite ice-cream!), and start to formulate some of your own cards to serve as markers of who you are and what's important to you.

You can use the boxes below, or turn this into an art activity and go wild with cardboard, coloured pencils and more. Don't forget to sign your name at the bottom!

My Thoughts On ...

My Thoughts On ...



My Thoughts On ...

My Thoughts On ...



ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
The Power of Positive Pranking	Nat Amore	9780143796381	4-6	\$14.99		
Secrets of a Schoolyard Millionaire	Nat Amore	9780143796374	4-6	\$14.99		
Don't Follow Vee	Oliver Phommavanh	9780143505747	4-7	\$16.99		
Help Around the House	Morris Gleitzman	9780143793236	4-6	\$16.99		
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