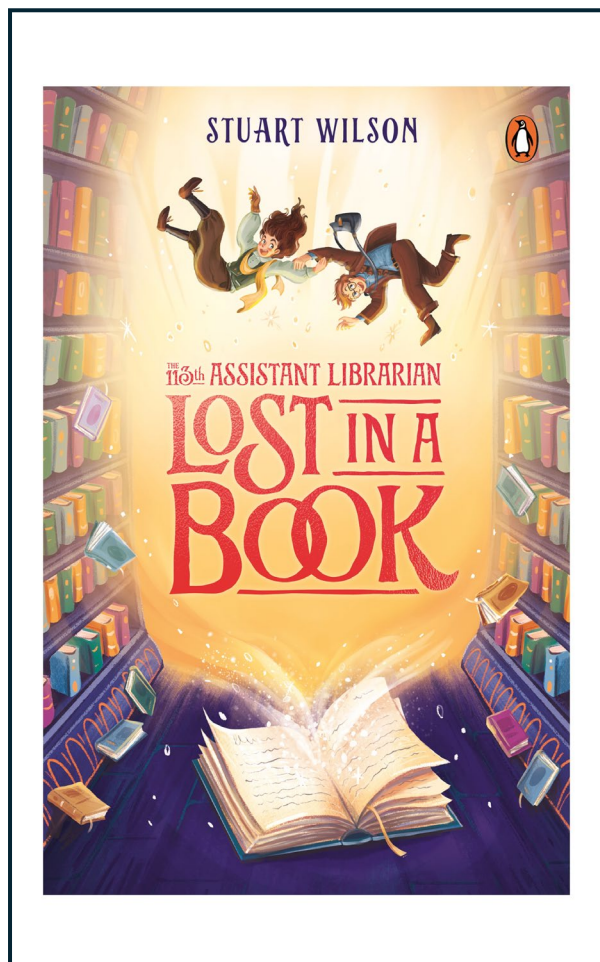




Teachers' Resources



PLOT SUMMARY

Oliver has settled into his life as the 113th assistant librarian. He loves his job – even though it sometimes includes battling giant crabs or fending off firedrakes – and his new friend, the mostly-human Agatha, is always on hand to help.

But when he discovers a rare edition of a history book with unique wording, he realises the slightest misinterpretation could endanger the entire kingdom. Determined to solve this mystery, he and Agatha leave the library – with the help of an unpredictable transporting book – to establish the truth. But can they prevent Annabel Clowritch, the esteemed Member for Upper-Lower Tumbledown Barrows, from using the text to her own advantage . . . and stop a war?

RECOMMENDED FOR (ages 9+; years 4 to 8)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

• Learning areas: English • General capabilities: Literacy; Critical and creative thinking; Ethical understanding

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

• An adventure-packed sequel to *The 113th Assistant Librarian* • This is a celebration of books, libraries, belonging and finding your place in the world.

THEMES

• Books and knowledge • Family and friends • Standing up for your convictions • Imaginary lands

PUBLICATION DETAILS

ISBN: 9781761347016 (hardback); 9781760149574 (ebook); 9781761354052 (audio book).

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The 113th Assistant Librarian: Lost in a Book

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Stuart Wilson lives in Naarm/Melbourne with his wife and son. He is the author of *The 113th Assistant Librarian* and the Prometheus High books. Quite the oxymoron, he can frequently be found lost in a book.

AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

While Oliver Wormwood has had to deal with dangerous magical texts since his first day on the job, with this sequel I wanted to explore their *literal* power. If we learn our history from books, what happens if the books are wrong? Here, a slight change of wording could have disastrous consequences for Hallarum and the Shrouded Alps.

Secondly, I wanted to bring back Annabel Clowritch, the meddling politician from *The 113th Assistant Librarian*, who sees reading as a threat to her ambitions. An irrepressible character, I knew she was bound to pop her head up again. I also wanted to spend more time with Agatha after the revelations at the end of book 1. As one of my favourite characters (readers seem to connect with her too!), I wanted to help her with her unique condition.

Finally, I knew I needed an explosive, action-packed climax that gives us a glimpse of the world outside the library. Though the central problem facing Oliver and Agatha is mundane, this is still a *fantasy* story. I wanted to hold nothing back during the final act when the magical chaos erupts.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

1. What are you expecting from this second book in the series? Where would you like the story to go? Are there characters you'd like to see again?
2. Look at the cover. What do you think this book will be about? What elements are there on the cover to make you think this?
3. How has the designer created a series look for this book and for the first book in the series, *The 113th Assistant Librarian*? (The cover for the first book is on the back cover of *Lost in a Book*.) Which elements of the two book covers are the same and which are different?
4. Who do you think the characters on the front cover are?
5. The figures on the front cover are holding each other's arms. Do you think this could be significant in the story?
6. Look at the table of contents at the start of the book. Using just this list of chapter titles, (and the knowledge you have from book one, if you've read it) write a synopsis for the story. Be as creative as you like!

Writing Style

Questions and activities

1. *The 113th Assistant Librarian: Lost in a Book* is a sequel to *The 113th Assistant Librarian*. Is the concept of a 'sequel' new in literature? When was the word first used and for what type of book?
2. What are the usual expectations that readers bring the second book in a series? What do *you* expect?



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3. How would you describe Stuart Wilson's writing style?
4. What category or genre would you put the two 113th Assistant Librarian books into? Why have you chosen this?

KEY STUDY TOPICS

Books and knowledge

Questions and activities

1. Research what processes and guidelines are in place to make sure that books (especially nonfiction books) hold correct and accurate information? Do you think these guidelines are used before data is uploaded on the internet?
2. Do you think characters of Phillip Thomas and Gerald Fundersson realised the trouble they were creating when they came up with their plan?
3. Apart from helping students find and check-out books and research information, what other jobs do you think your school librarian does while you are in your regular classes? (Think of the jobs Oliver does as a part of his role as assistant librarian.)
4. Pick your favourite book in the school library and write a review for that book. (Don't forget to give it a rating!)
5. Agatha is amazed and confused when she finds the copy of *Murder of Masons* with a different ending. Why do you think people only put out one version of books and movies? Can you think of any stories (in any format) that have multiple alternate endings?
6. Annabel Clowritch wants to use the information about the border in *A History of the Alpine Conflict* for her own benefit. What do you think her true motives are? Why do you think she doesn't care if it starts another war between the two countries?

Family and friends

Questions and activities

1. Agatha puts herself in danger by leaving the library. Why do you think she was willing to do this?
2. Choose a scene from the book that shows how Agatha and Oliver's friendship has grown and developed since book one.
3. Make a list of Agatha's cats. List their characteristics and how they each represent a part of Agatha's

personality. Imagine if you turned into cats like Agatha. What would each of the different cats be called and what would they represent for you?

4. Oliver's mother really helps him in chapter 17 when they arrive unexpectedly at his family home. (P. 223) Write this scene from his mother's point of view.
5. In groups, describe the dynamics between Oliver and each of his sisters who appear in the story? Do you think it's an accurate depiction of siblings?
6. Split up into groups of threes or fours. Hold a debate with the topic: *Siblings can also be friends*. Have one team argue for this statement and the other against.
7. In book one, Oliver had a slightly strained relationship with his father. How would you describe it in this next story? Would you say it had improved? Why or why not?
8. Oliver faces a real life-or-death dilemma at the end of the book when they are so far from the library. Do you think there was another way he could have helped Agatha? What do his actions in this moment tell you about believing in yourself and trusting yourself to use your own skills and knowledge to problem solve?

Imaginary Lands

Questions and activities

1. Apart from sending Oliver and Agatha on an adventure outside the library, how has the author expanded the world of *The 113th Assistant Librarian* in this new story?
2. Choose one of the places that *Anamnostic Adventure* takes Oliver and Agatha (and Ms Clowritch and her helpers) and write a travel brochure advertising the destination. What are the main attractions and activities? (For example, when they find themselves in Deeper Saccatopec, what is that land like beyond the quicksand?)
3. In a group of three, create a land where *Anamnostic Adventure* might take Oliver and Agatha. Don't forget to describe the immediate surrounding area and introduce a potential problem for our heroes to overcome. There might also be people about or structures to describe.
4. Draw a picture of the group on top of the creature on page p208–209.



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5. Were you surprised when the group landed in the cellar of the Prince Klaus and Princess Thea? Did you think these characters would pop up again in book two? Why or why not?

KEY QUOTES

1. *Magistrate Harcourt was an older man, with drooping jowls and thinning hair. His brows dangled, as did the skin under his eyes, much like an old candle with a long and illustrious career. At his side sat a thin man with a wispy moustache. (P. 120)*

In this passage, how has the author informed the reader about these characters? What does he want the reader to know about them based on these descriptions? At the end of the scene, did you think the characters lived up to their initial descriptions? Why or why not?

2. *'I have another question which might help,' the magistrate went on. 'What is your role, as librarian of the Blackmoor-upon-Wyvern Public Library?'*

Oliver had an answer to this. Some time ago, he had spotted a phrase in one of Hieronymus's old notebooks, buried in a drawer. 'To provide the right information to the right user,' he replied.

'Can you elaborate on that?'

'Whether it is about exposing them to new ideas, or simply answering the questions they have, I help them navigate the library collection.'

'Like a lighthouse in a sea of knowledge,' the magistrate mused. 'Very well. So if this particular book doesn't meet that criteria, that would mean it's either the wrong book or the wrong user.' (P. 127)

Do you think Oliver's answer to the judge's question is a good one? Do you think there is such a thing as the 'wrong book for the wrong user'? Can you think of an example of this? Or do you think that there is no such thing as the 'wrong' book for a person?

3. *He would be lost without Agatha. In fact, at that moment, he felt like he stood on the doorstep of lost. If lost was a house that was empty and endless. (P. 238)*

What do you think of this description? Do you have anyone in your life who you feel this way about? (They could be either a family or friend.)

4. *'Do you want to go talk to her?' Perhaps before you inadvertently amputate one of my favourite limbs?*

'I couldn't. Could I?' She turned to Oliver, then back to the author. Then back to Oliver again. 'I could?'

'I think you could.'

'What if she wants to be left alone?' (P. 166)

Agatha is excited when she sees her favourite novelist Enid B.B. Weathers at the inn having dinner. Why do you think people get nervous when seeing someone they admire? In groups of four, discuss if you think it's okay for Agatha to have gone up to her table? Why or why not? Also talk about what it means to you to be a 'fan' of someone or something.

QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

1. Look at the book list on Worksheet 1 and do the activity writing blurbs for different books.
2. Draw a map of journey Agatha and Oliver's journey. Include their starting point in the library and the different locations they travel to using the book *Anamnestic Adventure*.
3. Oliver is really worried about the information regarding the border between Hallarum and the Shrouded Alps in the different copies of *A History of the Alpine Conflict*. Choose a nonfiction book from your school library. Look through it and pick a piece of information or a picture or photograph from it. Think of ways that you could change that piece of information so that it would have a big impact on the reader and their lives. Do you think that it would be easy for people to have the wrong information given that the internet is used for research these days, instead of books?
4. Read the scene on pages 60–62 about Octavia's returning customer. What do you think the underlying message of this story is? How does it apply to the overall plot in the narrative?
5. Write a short story from the point of view of London looking after the library for a day.



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WORKSHEET

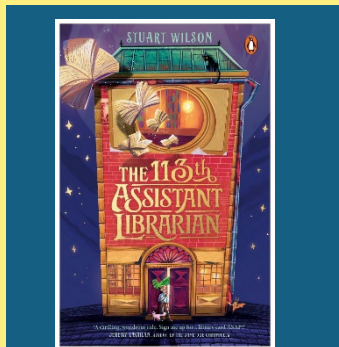
Choose four of the book titles below from the story and write a back cover blurb for each.

TITLE	BLURB
<i>Shipwrecked Again! The Diaries of the Very Sinkable Sally</i>	
<i>The Merman's Guide to Legs</i>	
<i>On the Cultivation of Kelp</i>	
<i>The Loneliest Whale</i>	
<i>The Diving Bell Expeditions of Grace Ætherwell</i>	
<i>A Ride with the Valkyries, Volume 4</i>	
<i>Blackened Tongues in Aspic</i>	
<i>The Breaker's Guide to Oceanic Interregnum</i>	
<i>The Inspector Leng Mysteries by Enid B. B. Weathers: A Study in Cerulean Murder of Masons</i>	
<i>In Search of the Igneous Whale by Thomas Sebold</i>	
<i>A History of the Alpine Conflict by M. W. Ebberdew</i>	
<i>Anamnestic Adventure: A Jaunt Around the Globe by Its Inhabitants</i>	
<i>Krayt's Distant Explorations by Johanna Krayt's</i>	
<i>On the Use of Mirrors in the Cultivation of Tomatoes</i>	



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Further reading from Penguin Random House



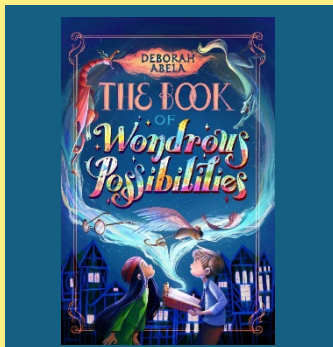
The 113th Assistant Librarian by Stuart Wilson

Oliver Wormwood is sure his new job in the library will be boring. Until he learns that books hold great power – and danger.

By the end of his first day, Oliver has witnessed a death, been frozen by a book, met a perplexing number of cats, and fought off a horde of terrifying creatures.

With only a mysterious girl called Agatha to show him the ropes, Oliver needs to learn fast . . . if he wants to live longer than the 112 assistant librarians before him.

[Teachers' Resources available.](#)



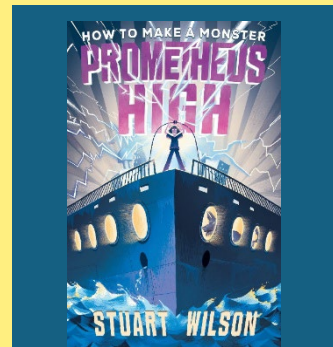
The Book of Wondrous Possibilities by Deborah Abela

Arlo Goodman lives with his Uncle Avery in a run-down flat above their bookshop. He has no friends, except for his pet mouse, Herbert.

But when a girl called Lisette bursts into the shop and begs him to hide her from a murderer, Arlo's life changes forever.

He's swept up into an adventure involving kidnappers, car chases and a story in *The Book of Wondrous Possibilities*, where Arlo and his skymouse battle dragons. But can Arlo find the courage to battle an even greater enemy, who threatens to destroy everything he loves?

[Teachers' Resources available.](#)



Prometheus High: How to Make a Monster by Stuart Wilson

A rusting ocean liner. Thirty students learning to resurrect the dead. A murderous monster on the loose . . . just a typical day at PROMETHEUS HIGH.

Athena Strange's first semester at Prometheus High starts with a bang. But when her lessons in reanimation, robotics and skulkers move too slowly and she has trouble making friends, Athena decides to take matters into her own hands.

On a ship where science and magic collide, and the monster under your bed is probably very real . . . will Athena be able to hold her head above water?

[Teachers' Resources available.](#)



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Order form

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
<i>The 113th Assistant Librarian: Lost in a Book</i>	Stuart Wilson	9781761347016	4-8	\$19.99		
<i>The 113th Assistant Librarian</i>	Stuart Wilson	9781761342257	4-8	\$19.99		
<i>The Book of Wondrous Possibilities</i>	Deborah Abela	9781761044021	3-6	\$16.99		
<i>Prometheus High: How to Make a Monster</i>	Stuart Wilson	9781761042263	5-8	\$16.99		
TOTAL						

NAME: _____

SCHOOL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

STATE: _____

POSTCODE: _____

TEL: _____

EMAIL: _____

ACCOUNT NO.: _____

PURCHASE ORDER NO.: _____

PLEASE SEND ORDER FORMS
TO YOUR LOCAL EDUCATION
SUPPLIER.