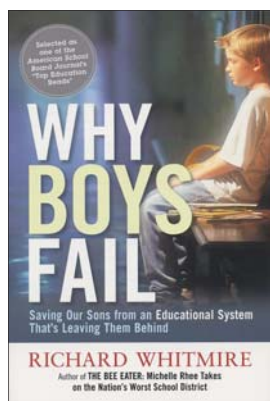


ET Books



Why boys fail

Richard Whitmire
American Management Association
ISBN13: 9780814420171
Distributed in Australia by McGraw-Hill Education
RR \$21.95
Richard Whitmire is a former editorial writer for USA Today and president of the National Educational Writers Association. He's not an academic and this book is the better for it. His writing style is typical American business journalism... lots of facts, short chapters and many interviews

with students, class teachers, school principals and government officials. He paints a depressing picture of male education in the US where the abysmal literacy and numeracy levels of many African and hispanic American male school leavers render them almost unemployable. On the brighter side, he also describes schools, colleges and education districts that are tackling the problem successfully.

He acknowledges that Australia and the UK are years ahead of the US in identifying and addressing the problem. Chapter 8 *The International Story: Australian Struggle with the Boy Troubles* describes how programs at Killara High School and Blue Mountains Grammar School have been successful.

Much of this book isn't relevant in the Australian context but it's worth reading, if only to acknowledge how easy it would have been to do nothing and let our boys suffer the consequences.



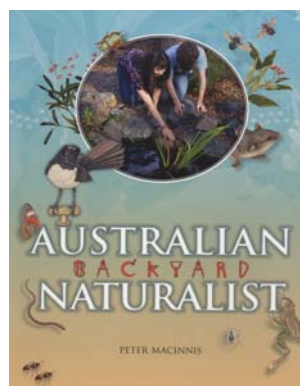
Who you are is what you do

Heather McAllister
Wilkins Farago
ISBN: 9780980607024
RR \$29.99
This 72-page hard cover book is designed to help school leavers to decide what they want to do with their lives.

The publisher's blurb states: "...a funky and informative workbook, designed to help teenagers make good decisions when taking the sometimes scary step of entering life after school."

It's probably full of useful ideas and suggestions but this reviewer could not get past the messy graphics and odd colour choices. Blue type on a blue background? Red highlights over black type, on a blue background? Pink panels with blue type? White reverse type out of grey?

It's aimed at Year 12s so maybe it will work for them.



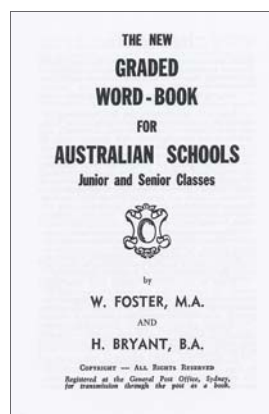
Australian backyard naturalist

Peter Macinnis
National Library of Australia
ISBN: 9780642277428
RR \$29.00
For the money, this one is splendid value. It's a handsome 250 x 200 mm format and runs to 13 chapters over 220 text pages. Each page is a delight, with short informative text and beautiful illustrations and photographs. Though it's described as a book for children, adults will find it equally interesting (for personal reference and to answer kids' questions).

The 13 chapters discuss: mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles, spiders, butterflies and moths, flies and mosquitoes, ants and ant lions, other stingers, biters and nasties, litter leaf animals, snails and their slug relatives, earthworms and leeches, other insects you may meet; and in the final chapter how to make your own equipment.

Each chapter starts with an introduction, followed by a naturalist's story; facts; a detailed look at a particular topic, for example how cuckoos trick their host birds into bringing up their young; and fun and practical projects to do in the backyard.

A comprehensive list of references and a well organised index complete this excellent book.



The new graded word-book for Australian schools

W Foster and H Bryant
Scribe Publications
ISBN: 9781921844768
RR 19.95
The publisher's blurb describes this as 'A treasure from the past rediscovered in an op-shop.'

"The book was first published more than 50 years ago. Forgotten for decades, a battered copy was discovered in a seaside op-shop last year. Now re-published in a facsimile edition, which recreates the original, it is a time capsule full of linguistic gems, from chapters entitled *Shades of Meaning* and *One hundred Troublesome Words*, to a directory of proverbs.

"More than just a piece of nostalgia, this is a charming and vigorous lesson in the use of the English language, the abuse of which has been bemoaned far and wide."

Some teachers will view this little book as a quaint window to the past, others will want to have it as a reference for the precise use of English. One hopes that it may perhaps contribute to the continuing purity of the language.

Got a minute?

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