

## LAST WORD



## THE PICTURE BOOK BOOK CLUB

**G**ood picture books are the product of the prodigious skills of writers and illustrators. But why should you have to stop enjoying picture books just because you're now an adult? NICOLA MCGEOWN and colleagues outline how they set up a club for people who want to continue to appreciate picture books long after they have left childhood behind.

I was questioned last year about why I borrow so many picture books when I'm not taking them home to children. This question got me thinking: Are there more people like me? (I hope so!). I'm going to find them and start a sensational picture book club!

I was determined to connect with other adults who appreciate the greatness of picture books and who recognise that these books have something important to say to people of all ages. I also wanted to start a club that connected staff across all library spectrums who use picture books as an important tool and resource in their job.

After months of planning with my three amazing team members, it was decided that once a month we were going to party – picture book style! And it was going to be awesome! – Nicola

The Picture Book Book Club (PBBC) was started to share the awesomeness of picture books and to provide a professional development opportunity for those who are interested in, or work with, children's literature. Our monthly Twitter chat provides the chance for library staff, students, teachers, authors, illustrators and others to connect with their colleagues across the country and the world.

We decided on a Twitter chat – instead of a traditional face-to-face book club – because we wanted to reach picture-book lovers from near and far. We understand that there are some very enthusiastic people in both rural and metropolitan areas, and that it's not just teachers or public librarians who love and appreciate picture books.

There's a series of questions during the chat that the book club members can respond to and discuss that are

(From left) Amy Walduck, Rob Allen, Ashleigh McKergow and Nicola McGeown.

based on a monthly theme, and there is time at the end of the chat to chat with our monthly guest. The chat allows us to explore different aspects of picture books, and not just why we love them. It also aims to provide ample networking and PD opportunities. If you missed our first chat, we recommend that you check out our wrap-up blog post and that you read the full chat on Storify. Both of these can be found on our website, along with full details on how to get involved.

For the PBBC team, establishing the club has also been a rewarding PD opportunity. We have expanded our technical skills by using a suite of digital tools, learned how to market and promote the club, how to set goals, meet deadlines and work as a team. The skills that we have learned will benefit us greatly in our workplaces.

In the future, we see the PBBC growing and evolving, not only as a learning and PD tool but also as a fun and interesting place to discuss the wonderful world of children's picture books.

The Picture Book Book Club meets on the first Thursday of every month. You can join the chat on Twitter – @picturebookbc – and you can find more information at [picturebookbc.wordpress.com](http://picturebookbc.wordpress.com).

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