

Susea Spray  
Author Visits



Information Booklet

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## About The Author

A retired classroom teacher who majored in English and Children's Literature, Susea spent 23 years making literacy learning fun for her young students. Her favourite time of day was sitting down with a book or two and immersing her students in the world of storytelling.



Susea has always written in one form or another. A decade ago, she and her husband commenced on an around the world sailing odyssey. Their travels were recorded on Susea's sailing blog.

As she documented the sailing journey, notes and ideas for children's picture books were taking form. At long last Susea had found her passion and a voice. She now shares her love of language, sailing and sea with young and old through the eyes of a big blue boat and a young girl - her Captain.

Susea's first book *A Big Blue Boat*, was released in March 2022. A 2023 Purple Dragonfly Award winner, 2022 Literary Titan Silver Award Winner, 2022 book finalist in the Page Turner Awards, and a 2021 Page Turner Awards writing finalist. *A Big Blue Boat* is the first in the series. Based upon Susea's adventures, the book fills the niche market of realistic sailing stories for young children, particularly girls.

The first sequel about life on the brine was Children's Picture Book Genre Winner and shortlisted in the 2023 Page Turner Awards. It's currently being illustrated by Australian illustrator, Emma Stuart, and is due for release in late 2024.

In her spare time, Susea also loves to research, cook, photograph, quilt, embroider, walk, and work on her sailing blog.



Illustration by Emma Stuart

## The Book

Written for 4–8-year-olds, *A Big Blue Boat* is a fun, rollicking frolicking tale about a boat, a girl, and the sea.

When the seas build, what will *A Big Blue Boat* and her captain do? Will they find a safe haven in time?

This is an interactive story that children love reading along with. Its rhythm, rhyme and repetition make the book perfect for pre and early readers.

Children will love Lesley Cybulka's bright, coloured illustrations that bring the story to life.



For Teachers

I email you a copy of the Teacher Resource Pack prior to my visit. This complements the book, has activities and ideas for most areas of the curriculum, and is aligned to the National Framework. The pack caters for grades F-3.

The Visit

Two session options are available. They cater for F-2/3, F-6, and years 3-6.

In addition to sharing my book with the students, my visit introduces to them the adventure that led to my writing of the 'A Big Blue Boat' books.

For F-2/3 and F-6 groups, the session includes:

- The use of a map and imagery that introduces them to a sailing journey where they learn about rare and extinct animals, ocean life, and the life people on remote islands lead.
- The reading which includes learning the actions for the story and parts of a boat.
- Students are encouraged to join in as I read.
- Students making a boat.
- Students are encouraged to ask questions and make comments throughout the session.
- All activity materials are provided by the author.



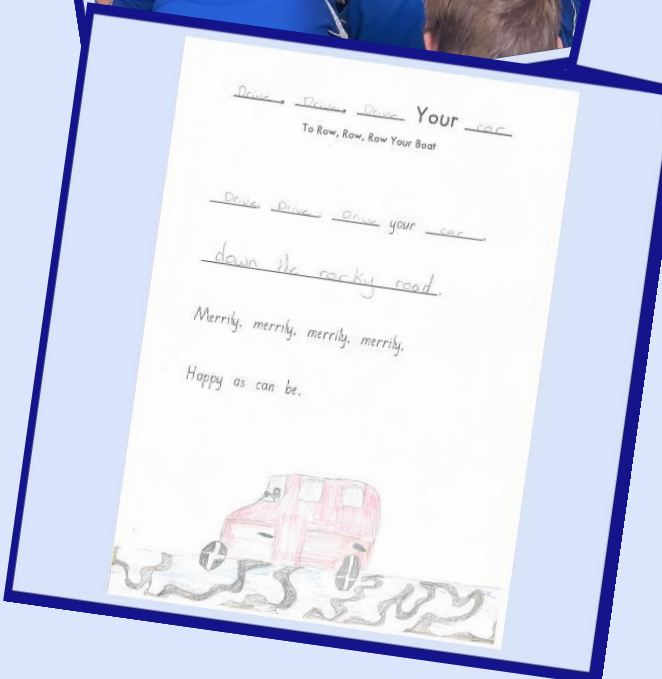
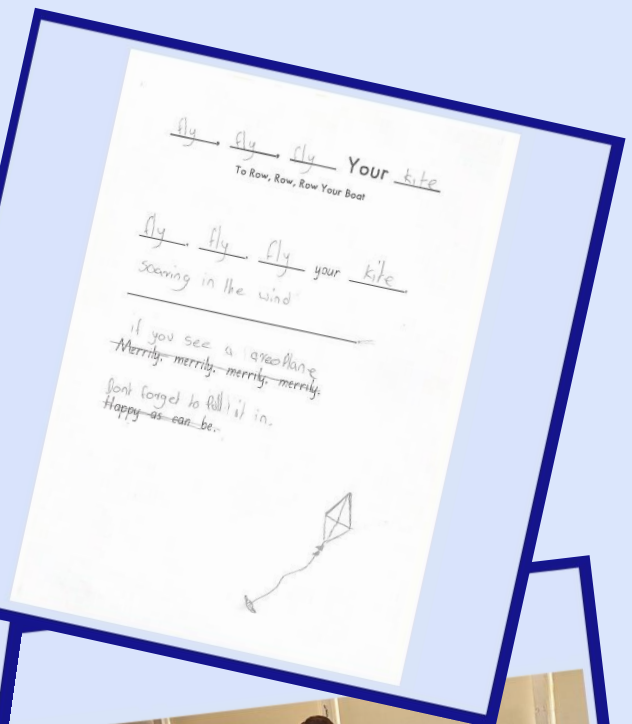
Recommended largest group: 40

I often work with individual class groups.



For years 3-6, the Writing Experience Workshop includes:

- Sharing my childhood experiences around reading and writing.
- Sharing the journey that led me to become an author with the publication of A Big Blue Boat.
- Sharing my writing processes. This includes showing students my works in progress.
- Students get to create their own simple rhythmic work using the foundation of an old favourite.
- Students are encouraged to ask questions and make comments throughout the session.
- All activity materials are provided by the author. Students also take home a bookmark and an additional activity centred around boats is provided.



Class groups Recommended Maximum: 30

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For After the Visit

- **A writing or boat making activity is provided.**
- **Each student receives a bookmark.**

**I often visit small schools and have all students from K-6 in the same session. For these sessions I bring activities that cater for all age groups.**

Materials Provided by the School

- **A monitor for presenting to larger groups.**
- **A book stand for presenting to smaller groups.**
- **Pencils, textas, crayons, glue, and scissors for the children to use.**

For Parents and Staff Members

**I offer schools the opportunity to provide for parents and staff members, a complimentary 1-hour session where I introduce them to the journey that led to the writing of the A Big Blue Boat books.**

**The books will be available for purchase after the session.**

**This can be held before or after school hours.**

For Schools

**In support of literacy development, Spray Publications provides a 15% commission to the school for all book sales sold by the school.**

**Prior to the visit, an order form will be sent to the school for forwarding to parents.**

**Orders with payment are to be sent back to the school. Two weeks prior to the visit, the school is requested to provide the author with the quantities required – a form for collating the book quantities will be provided.**

**The author will deliver the signed purchased books in bulk on arrival.**

**This will save parents \$8+ in postage.**

Book Prices:

**Hard Cover: \$34.00 RRP**

**Soft Cover: \$19.99 RRP**

**Activity Book: \$15.00 RRP**

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Dates Available 2024/2025

**October – November NSW**  
**December – Yorke Peninsula South Australia**  
**February – April – Riverland, Victoria, NSW**

Time Duration

**1 hour**

**Note:**

I have vocal issues and must monitor carefully and request 1 hour between sessions. For larger schools, I come over several days at no additional cost. This provides my vocal cords the care they require to ensure my author visits are successful.

Price:

- **\$5 per child or \$149 fixed fee for less than 30 children**
- **Option 2 (coming October 2024)**  
This option provides an opportunity to participate in a STEM activity by creating a plasticine boat that floats.  
It's for:  
Years 2/3 and Years 3-6 where F-6 are in one session. (F and Year 1 make a lid boat)  
As a follow up activity for Years 3-6 who partake in the Writing Experience Workshop.  
\$6 per child

**There are no additional costs.**

Payment

**Payment can be made on the day of the author visit or within 7 working days after the visit.**

**A credit card facility is available.**

Books Available from:

**Spray Publications Direct at: 0419818174 or susea.spray@gmail.com**  
**Peter Pal**  
**ALS Library Services**  
**James Bennett**  
**West Books**  
**Book Stop, Victor Harbor**  
**Tahmoor News and Gifts, Tahmoor**  
**The Book Cow – Kingston, Canberra**

Words from Teachers

Susea's visit to Yarrawonga College was a highlight for all the Prep to Year 2 students. Every student was thoroughly engaged in the sessions, joining in with the actions when Susea read 'A Big Blue Boat' and asking many thoughtful questions when she explained her sailing journey. It was such an integrated hour, which covered aspects of History, Geography, Art as well as English. Susea also provided a multitude of follow up activities in all curriculum areas.

Susea was extremely well planned and organised, so the sessions ran very smoothly. Susea quickly developed a rapport with the students, she made her expectations clear, and she provided constant positive reinforcement ensuring her sessions were enjoyed by all students.

The teachers all raved about her sessions so much that we have invited Susea to come back to our school to work with the Year 3s and 4s.

Thank you Susea and Bob for providing such a rich experience for our students.

*Rebecca, Curriculum and Pedagogy Leading Teacher P-6, Yarrawonga College P-12*

Susea was engaging and had all students entertained from the start to end. I enjoyed the use of visual aids (map and boat) as it helped us (audience) to better understand Susea and her husband's boat trip. Susea answered students' questions without hesitation and was happy to guide students in the boat activities. Susea was lovely.'

*Melissa, teacher: Heron's Creek Public School*

We really appreciated your willingness to extend your time & go with the flow of the students' interests. You were prepared and organised, and the students responded to this. I was impressed with your ability to maintain attention even from some of our less attentive students.

In all this was engaging and fun & thoroughly enjoyable. The book, songs & activities were wonderful.

*Barbara, teacher: Lockhart Primary School*

Susea is a great author who writes interesting and engaging stories. She was able to capture the imagination and attention of my 5/6 class for entire 45minutes. Susea has an incredible ability to not only write but tell her stories as if you were along for the journey with her. We are very grateful to have Susea come to our school and share her career as an author with us. It has inspired our students to become better writers and further their potential.

*Taj, teacher: Strathmerton Primary School*



Words from Students

**'I love the dolphin picture you showed us. I liked making the boat. I mostly liked singing the book.'**

**Year 1 Boy**

**'I like the photos and I liked making the boat and the singing and the rhyming words.'**

**Year 2 Girl**

**'I like the rhyming and how it feels like you are on the sea.'**

**Year 2 Girl**

**I liked that you told us about the things that you saw on your journey and how you made the book feel like you're on the boat.'**

**Year 6 Boy**