

WEDNESDAY 8 APRIL 2020

Supporting a life-long love of reading during the COVID crisis

APA, ASA & NCU announce special arrangement for school storytimes

The Australian Publishers Association (APA), the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and the National Copyright Unit (NCU) for Australian schools are pleased to announce a special arrangement for school storytimes during the COVID-19 outbreak that will ensure teachers (including teacher librarians) are able to continue to read stories to students, whether they are learning from the school or at home.

As Australian schools explore new ways to deliver quality education to Australian students during the COVID-19 outbreak, it is more important than ever that Australian students and families have access to stories to encourage literacy and a love of reading.

The APA, the ASA and the NCU share a common goal that all children should be able to enjoy books and stories from the earliest years. Teacher storytimes make this opportunity available to many families, including those without books at home.

While the Copyright Act enables teachers to read stories to students in class, the APA, the ASA, and schools are taking these steps to clarify any doubts about how these rules apply to remote learning and virtual storytimes. The Boards of the APA and ASA have asked their members to suspend any requirements for copyright permission to be sought, in order to allow schools to make recordings or livestream storytimes so children aren't denied this important and much-loved activity.

For the duration of the pandemic, virtual storytimes will be sanctioned by this industry agreement. This will enable teachers to read stories to children as part of teaching activities, and also if teachers wish to read stories to provide additional connection with their classes at this time, such as hosting a virtual storytime for students and their families.

It is the policy of the APA and the ASA that its members allow schools to read Australian children's books online to students and families without any need for specific permission or payment, as follows:

1. Teachers are encouraged to live stream Storytime wherever possible (such as via Google Classroom, a Zoom call or Facebook live streaming). If a school has the technical capacity to do so, teachers are encouraged to limit access to the live stream to students of the school and their families.

For ASA enquiries, please contact Lucy Hayward, Marketing & Communications Manager: lucy@asauthors.org. For APA enquiries please contact Colin Ho, Public Relations & External Communications: colin.ho@publishers.asn.au. If teachers need further information about this Storytime Agreement, or have copyright questions regarding COVID 19, please contact NCU: smartcopying@det.edu.nsw.au

2. If live streaming is not practical, a teacher may make available a recording of Storytime online, provided that:
 - a. the recording is “view only”, so that no further copies can be made or downloaded. For example, you could film yourself reading a story to children in your class and upload it to your school’s digital learning environment for students to access at home; and
 - b. wherever possible that recording should be made available using password protected access in a digital teaching environment, rather than made available generally on the internet. For example, if you can give students access to the recording via a platform such as Google Classroom instead of Facebook, you should do so.
3. Teachers must provide bibliographic details of the featured book at the beginning of any published recording of Storytime, including the title, author, illustrator and publisher.
4. This policy is temporary and will remain in force whilst schools are required to provide remote learning for students due to the COVID-19 emergency. Recordings can only be used during the period of the outbreak and must be taken down and deleted when schools resume normal teaching practices, or the conclusion of term 2 for each school who has taken part in this Storytime arrangement, whichever is earlier.

The Australian school sector is grateful to the ASA and APA for their support with this important initiative, and acknowledges the effort of many individual publishers and authors to support student learning at this critical time.

Teachers are encouraged to continue to read Australian stories to students under these Storytime arrangements and to support Australian creators by exploring and using the quality resources that have been made available to the sector at this time.

For more information about the Australian Publishers Association see:
<https://www.publishers.asn.au/>

For more information about the Australian Society of Authors see:
<https://www.asauthors.org/>

For more information about the National Copyright Unit see:
www.smartcopying.edu.au/copyright-guidelines/footer-menu/about-us

For ASA enquiries, please contact Lucy Hayward, Marketing & Communications Manager: lucy@asauthors.org. For APA enquiries please contact Colin Ho, Public Relations & External Communications: colin.ho@publishers.asn.au. If teachers need further information about this Storytime Agreement, or have copyright questions regarding COVID 19, please contact NCU: smartcopying@det.edu.nsw.au