

Testimonials on Susan Boyer's school author visits during 2018
funded by Copyright Agency Cultural Fund

Susan's storytelling is based on the book 'Stories of Life at Sydney Cove'

Information at: www.birrongbooks.com

1. Feedback from Karen Tarpey, Teacher Librarian, **Pambula Public School, NSW,**
28th March 2018 (email received March 29, 2018)

Dear Susan,

It was wonderful to meet you and thank you so much for visiting our school yesterday. Your talk was interesting, engaging and grabbed the students' attention immediately. Your storytelling and delivery was enthralling. I/they particularly loved your references to individual characters who you came back to later in your talk. This ensured the students were attentive as they didn't want to miss part of their stories.

Your talk fitted in perfectly with the colonisation unit students had been learning about this term (as part of the Australian Curriculum). The fact that John Hudson and Elizabeth Hayward were also young children when arrested and transported really struck a chord with the students who were shocked by the poverty and desperation of people trying to stay alive at this fascinating time in our history. We could have listened to you all day! **Author visits are so important to students and schools and the benefits to them are immeasurable. They have learnt more about Australian history through your one-hour talk than we could have covered in weeks and even then we would not have been able to engage them as well without knowledge of some of the incredible stories you have researched and shared with them.**

I would highly recommend your visit to other teachers both at primary schools and high schools. I have already been in touch with our Teacher Librarian Network in our area to let them know how fantastic you were. If ever you're down this way again, we'd love to have you visit our school again!

2. Feedback from Trevor Neville, Teacher Librarian, Narooma Public School, NSW, 21st March 2018 (email received 13 April, 2018)

Hi Susan

Thank you for a fantastic presentation. I have had overwhelmingly positive feedback from students and staff, including our AEO (Aboriginal Education Officer). Students have most definitely benefited from your visit; they are all inspired to be writers like you now and I can't keep First Fleet books on the shelves. They have been independently investigating and researching the lives of child convicts.

Staff also spoke positively of your visit and they were impressed with how you talked about your writing process and use of primary sources in your research. These are key components in the History syllabus. You have created a real 'buzz' around History researching and writing in our school and there is a waiting list for 'Across Great Divides'.

I'm looking forward to some follow up lessons with the kids and getting their feedback as well. I will also show students and staff your website and the resources available.

I would certainly recommend your author visits to other schools. Please let us know if you're available for future author visits.

3. Feedback from Leanne Howell, Teacher Librarian, Coerwull Public School, Lithgow 28th Feb, 2018 (email received 18th March 2018)

Hi Susan.

Thank you again. The students benefited greatly from your visit. They were so interested in the stories about the people on the First Fleet and the Indigenous people that they had not heard about before. Your visit gave them a good understanding and appreciation of what life must have been like from all perspectives during that time.

I would highly recommend your visit to other schools. Thank you again. We all enjoyed your visit!

Photo:

28th Feb 2018 Coerwull Public School,
Lithgow, supplied by Leanne Howell,
Teacher Librarian



4. Feedback from Alison Verkuylen, Librarian, Merewether Public School, NSW November 10, 2017. (email received 14th Nov 2017)

Hi Susan,

I thought your presentation was great! All students were highly engaged and one student commented that it felt like you only spoke for 10 minutes. We enjoyed the use of technology (the whiteboard images and the kookaburra sounds) and the use of props. Everyone loved getting to know a bit more about the characters.

I would highly recommend your visit to other schools. I myself would love to have you visit again if I teach this unit in the future. Thanks again, I can't wait to read your book!

5. Hannah Byrne, Assistant Principal, The Junction Public School, Merewether NSW Oct19, 2017
Email received 13th Nov 2017

Hi Susan,

Sorry this had taken a while!! The students at The Junction thoroughly enjoyed your visit and your talk. They were able to connect their classroom learning to the various stories you told and were intrigued and fascinated by the different perspectives you spoke through.

They were engaged throughout and particularly responded to your use of visuals both interactive and physical and also recordings.

Thank you again for reaching out to us here at The Junction PS and for your fantastic talk.

6. Feedback from Donna McGrath, class teacher Blayney Public School, NSW 6th November 2017 (email received 8th Nov 2017)

Hello,

The talk on Monday the 6th of November 2017 was excellent. It aligned perfectly with the curriculum and the resources were fabulous. The students were very engaged and had a number of questions during and after your talk. A number of them were very interested in the stories and wish to obtain more information. I would highly recommend you talk to other schools as it was of a very high standard.

6. Feedback from Sean Holmes, class teacher and Assistant Principal, Orchard Hills Public School, NSW, (email received 22nd October 2018)

Susan's visit gave our students an in depth understanding of intriguing stories from both Aboriginal and British perspectives. Her talk aligned closely with the History Syllabus and created a deep understanding of what took place during the early years of British settlement for our students. Our students were engaged throughout Susan's visit and asked many thought-provoking questions.

Sean Holmes, Assistant Principal

Orchard Hills Public School