



Dialogue

Catalogue for CAE Book Groups 2010



Book
Year

Dialogue

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Gabrielle Markus

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CAE

253 Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000

Telephone (03) 9652 0620

Facsimile (03) 9663 1856

Email bookgroups@cae.edu.au

Website www.cae.edu.au

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introduction

CAE Book Groups

Over sixty years of reading and discussion

In 2010 CAE Book Groups celebrates sixty-three continuous years of activity. A flexible program with significant autonomy, members of CAE Book Groups select their own pool of titles for their year's reading list; decide on monthly meeting times; choose their own members; and pick a place to meet such as a private home, café or library. CAE Book Group members also suggest titles for inclusion in the program. From international award-winners to debut Australian authors there are over 1,000 books to choose from. Reading group guides accompany each box of books and the questions provided can be used to frame the groups' discussion. CAE Book Groups is part of the Centre for Adult Education, which provides learning experiences and opportunities to the community through a wide range of programs and services.

Using *Dialogue*

- The titles have been grouped thematically, with fiction and nonfiction titles often sitting side by side.
 - Six icons are provided as a reference:  crime fiction;  fiction;  biography, memoir, autobiography;  large print;  nonfiction;  short stories.
 - A selection of *Reactions* from group members has been included to provide a broad perspective on the titles in the program. The *Reactions* we receive from all our book groups provide vital feedback to CAE Book Groups staff.
- Each book description listing includes the number of pages in the book, as well as the year the book was published.
 - A list of the new titles added between 2007 and 2010 can be found at the beginning of *Dialogue*.
 - There are five indexes: Box Number Index – allows groups to check the accuracy of each box number transcribed from *Dialogue* to their selections card, Author Index – arranged alphabetically by surname, Title Index, Nonfiction Index and Large Print Index.
 - Please ensure all members of your group have access to *Dialogue*.
 - Members are advised of new titles added throughout the year via CAE Book Groups e-newsletter – if you are interested in receiving CAE Book Groups e-newsletter please check off the box on your enrolment form.
 - Titles can be added or deleted from your list throughout the year. Please contact CAE Book Groups office.
 - *Dialogue* is also available as a PDF. Email us to receive a copy.

Enquiries

Telephone (03) 9652 0620

Facsimile (03) 9663 1856

Email bookgroups@cae.edu.au

Web www.cae.edu.au

new titles 2007 – 2010

New titles included between 2007 and 2010.

1991 *Bel Canto*

Ann Patchett

A wonderful tale of the human voice, making all things possible for the finding of love, growth and understanding between people who suddenly find themselves together. The characters were developed very well and emotions beautifully described. A great discussion about the author's reference to public grief. We loved the book.

Blackburn 10

2022 *The Boat*

Nam Le

Brilliant! Nam Le displays an amazing breadth of global experience, cultural knowledge and language in these stories.

Ivanhoe: The Most Intelligent Book Group

1960 *Careless*

Deborah Robertson

What a great read! Deborah Robertson's characters were so real that (as one member put it) if you saw pictures of them you would know who each of them were. The attention to detail – normal, everyday things we all take for granted – was remarkable. Great discussion and definitely a writer to look out for.

Portarlington 1

1995 *The Book Thief*

Markus Zusak

Beautifully written, very inventive way of 'humanising' death as a character. Descriptions so simple but left a lasting impression. Loved this book!

Goolgowi

1959 *Mister Pip*

Lloyd Jones

This book was a very popular choice with our group. We thought the style of the writing and Matilda's matter of fact manner, whilst not actually glossing over the horrors, somehow managed to help the reader move on. We loved that the story showed the power of books and the imagination, and that in the face of all destruction this power will prevail.

Nowra Evening Book Discussion Group

2001 *Nineteen Minutes*

Jodi Picoult

A gripping read, enjoyed by all, that generated a long discussion on bullying, American gun laws, teenage misfits and the effect of a school shooting on all involved. As parents of teenagers we also wondered if this could happen to anyone's child. Highly recommended.

Oakleigh: The Claytons

1976 *Restless*

William Boyd

Everybody enjoyed this book very much! The topic of trust – in families and in the community, was discussed at length. Also, how fiction can fuse into historical myth – with the reporting of war versus propaganda, for example. Highly recommended.

Leongatha 1

1977 *The Road*

Cormac McCarthy

This book provoked a terrific discussion. Even though McCarthy is seen as a bloke's writer, our all-female group 'enjoyed' the book, despite its harrowing content. The class of the prose, the strength of the father-son relationship and the spare style won us over.

Fish Creek 1

1980 *The Tenderness of Wolves*

Stef Penney

Everyone loved this rollicking good read! The characters, the setting, the plot were all engaging and well written – hard to believe the author has never been to the Canadian snow. By the end of our discussion, we had cast most of the characters for a movie ... our read of the year!

Caulfield 3

2002 *The Time Traveler's Wife*

Audrey Niffenegger

The book was universally liked by the group and generated lively discussion about love, loss, determinism and chaos. All agreed that the author had created an extremely original concept. Several members thought that the prose was beautiful. A most entertaining and moving love story!

Woodend Abstracts

1994 *The Thirteenth Tale*

Diane Setterfield

Many thanks CAE for sending us this new book. Complex and intriguing, it generated spirited discussion, with some enjoying the writer's craft and use of language and others finding it too involved and needing some editing.

Ashburton A.C.C.

1943 *The Weather Makers*

Tim Flannery

Tim Flannery writes well and in a way that the layman can follow. He has some serious messages to get across and most members found the book very sobering reading.

Gatton: Valley Readers

BOX	TITLE	AUTHOR	PAGE
V			
1941	Vernon God Little	D.B.C. Pierre	119
2015	The Voluptuous Delights of Peanut Butter and Jam	Lauren Liebenberg	20
2012	Voyages to the South Seas	Danielle Clode	55
W			
1984	Water for Elephants	Sara Gruen	66
2048	We Are All Made of Glue	Marina Lewycka	44
1942	We Need to Talk About Kevin	Lionel Shriver	119
1943	The Weather Makers	Tim Flannery	96
1914	Well Done, Those Men	Barry Heard	79
1996	What Was Lost	Catherine O'Flynn	20
2026	When in Rome	Penelope Green	55
2029	When Will There Be Good News?	Kate Atkinson	119
2030	The White Tiger	Aravind Adiga	119
2053	The Winter Vault	Anne Michaels	44
2054	Wolf Hall	Hilary Mantel	66
2041	The Women in Black	Madeleine St John	44
Y			
1944	You Gotta Have Balls	Lily Brett	32

1958 *Unpolished Gem*

Alice Pung

Wonderful discussion – even of dreaming in another language! It included very moving descriptions of depression from the inside and the death of a grandparent with occasional wicked humour. Please can we have another book on the family's life in Vietnam and Cambodia?

Camberra Ladies of the Lake

1984 *Water for Elephants*

Sara Gruen

All but one of our group loved the book. It provoked a lot of discussion on a wide range of topics – from circuses to the Depression, to nursing homes, to the art of writing. A great read.

Paynesville 2

1981 *Theft*

Peter Carey

*All found this book very enjoyable, and a great discussion was held. We felt the strength of *Theft* was its narrative voice and the multi-layered storyline. We felt there were hints of love in many other forms apart from the relationship between (main characters) Marlene and Butcher.*

Mornington 5

1920 A Complicated Kindness

Miriam Toews

We were intrigued by this strange and wonderful story. There was great discussion regarding society, religion and family and comparisons with our own parallel cultural experiences. There was much debate about the roles and disappearances of mother and then father! We explored various threads and happily remained divided.

Belmont East 1

1922 Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close

Jonathan Safran Foer

Most members were fascinated by this book, and surprisingly few challenged the use of 'postmodern' techniques. Even the member who didn't like it and found it artificial and unbelievable, seemed to have engaged with it on a very deep level. We had an interesting discussion on grief and the ways that people can be expected to recover, or not recover, from massive disasters. A great start to our year.

Canberra: Wig and Pen Book Group

1924 The Highest Tide

Jim Lynch

The highlight of the year! A book enjoyed by all the group for its science, characters, descriptions of place and insight into a boy's summer. We felt the ending was not satisfactory, but this didn't diminish our enjoyment of the book as a whole.

Idindiji

1970 The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid

Bill Bryson

This book has been the most popular that our group has read. There was a tremendous amount of discussion not just about the book but also about the childhood memories of our members. There was a lot of laughter as our group recalled the past.

RACV Club Library 1

1933 Purple Hibiscus **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

Everyone decided this was a brilliant book and a number found it very disturbing. We had a good discussion about the personal and political turmoil, the oppression of family and religious life, and the subtlety with which these issues were drawn against a background of a wonderfully described physical environment. We discussed colonialism vigorously with arguments for and against. The open-ended closing was also a masterpiece!

Somerton Park: Babylon

1912 Shadowboxing

Tony Birch

This book generated engaged discussion. We enjoyed being able to relate to the setting and some had experiences of the inner suburbs at the time of the novel. It was an eye-opening book, but also challenging for many: the boxing, the domestic violence, the passivity of females. Discussion centred on father-son relationships and improvements in society since the 60's. The group appreciated Tony Birch's gift for description – his writing is eloquent and spare, yet rewarding.

Yarram 1

2015 The Voluptuous Delights of Peanut Butter and Jam

Lauren Liebenberg

We found The Voluptuous Delights of Peanut Butter and Jam to be a well worthwhile book to read and discuss. Discussion was lively, and we gained a better insight into the problems of Zimbabwe and of white colonial children growing up in a very tense political situation.

Sunraysia U3A

1554 *Romulus, My Father*

Raimond Gaita

All group members thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. We found it engaging from the start and were really interested in the characters. A very complex situation presented very simply and beautifully.

City of Glen Eira: Town Hall Tales

1958 *Unpolished Gem*

Alice Pung

This is a wonderful book for discussion. We were able to draw on our own backgrounds and also learn a lot more about the migrant experience. The anecdotes and humour of the book generated empathy for the characters, such as Alice, her mother and grandmother.

Rosanna 2

1652 *When We Were Orphans*

Kazuo Ishiguro

Ishiguro is a master of subtleties. Whilst in some of his writings he appears more English than the English, he uses words with fine Japanese brushstrokes crafting his work layer upon layer. We enjoyed this book!

Mt Martha 2

Under My Skin

Doris Lessing

An outstanding 20th-century autobiography, this first volume takes Lessing from her African childhood to London in 1949. She magically recreates her childhood world and responses. Her early freedom in the African landscape, her often turbulent relationship with her parents, her awareness of her own body, her intense involvements with people, politics, Communism and everything around her are all conveyed with keen intelligence.

1 1994 419pp

Unpolished Gem

Alice Pung

Set in Melbourne's western suburbs, *Unpolished Gem* documents the arrival of Pung's Cambodian-Chinese family to Australia in the 1970s with humour and insight. Populating her pages with eccentric and often hilarious characters, she captures the essence of the Asian immigrant experience, highlighting homesickness and heartache as well as the determination to survive and prosper. More than a meditation on cultural difference, it is also the coming-of-age story of a talented young woman struggling to balance her parent's dreams and expectations with her own.

1 **1** 2006 282pp

V

The Voluptuous Delights of Peanut Butter and Jam

Lauren Liebenberg

Set in Rhodesia in the late 1970s and told from the perspective of two young sisters, Nyree and Cia O'Callohan's father has been conscripted to fight against the black freedom fighters. They are being raised by their mother and strict grandfather. The girls are caught up in an imaginative and innocent world, as they roam around their run down colonial farm, until their damaged, orphaned cousin Ronin comes to stay and evil enters their world. *The Voluptuous Delights of Peanut Butter and Jam* is a beautifully written but sad story about growing up in Africa during a time of civil war.

1 2008 245pp

1565

W

Washington Square

Henry James

The surface is less complex and intricate than in many of James's other works, as he portrays the consciousness of a plain, young and rich American girl, dominated by a brilliant father and courted by a self-serving suitor.

1 1880 174pp

The Watcher on the Cast-Iron Balcony

Hal Porter

This autobiography of life in Melbourne and country Victoria from 1910 is a witty self-revelation of its writer as boy and youth and contains strikingly evocative writing about the people and culture around him.

1 1963 256pp

What Was Lost

Catherine O'Flynn

Birmingham, 1984. Junior detective Kate follows 'suspects' at the newly opened Green Oaks shopping centre and befriends the local newsagent's adult son, Adrian. But when this curious, independent-spirited ten-year-old disappears, Adrian falls under suspicion. In 2004, Adrian's sister Lisa and Green Oaks security guard Kurt become entranced by the little girl they keep glimpsing on the centre's security cameras. Could it be Kate? An intricately plotted, satisfying novel exploring grief, loneliness and the importance of friendship. Winner of the Costa First Book Award.

1 2007 242pp

When We Were Orphans

Kazuo Ishiguro

A celebrated detective is driven to solve the mystery of the disappearance of his parents when he was a child. The novel becomes a disturbing and challenging exploration of the relationship between the colonial British, China and Japan, and of the way simplistic ideas of oneself and the world might distort reality. Set in England and Shanghai in the early and mid-20th century, this is an ironic, complex and deeply moving tragic-comedy.

1 2000 368pp

Wildlife

Richard Ford

In the summer of 1960 the town of Great Falls, Montana, is ringed by fires. Joe's father loses his job and goes off fire-fighting. His mother meets Warren Mitchell. In spare, understated prose Ford evokes a young male making his way in a world of adult upheaval which he only partly comprehends. Memorable.

1 1990 162pp

36

68

1996

1652

1293



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