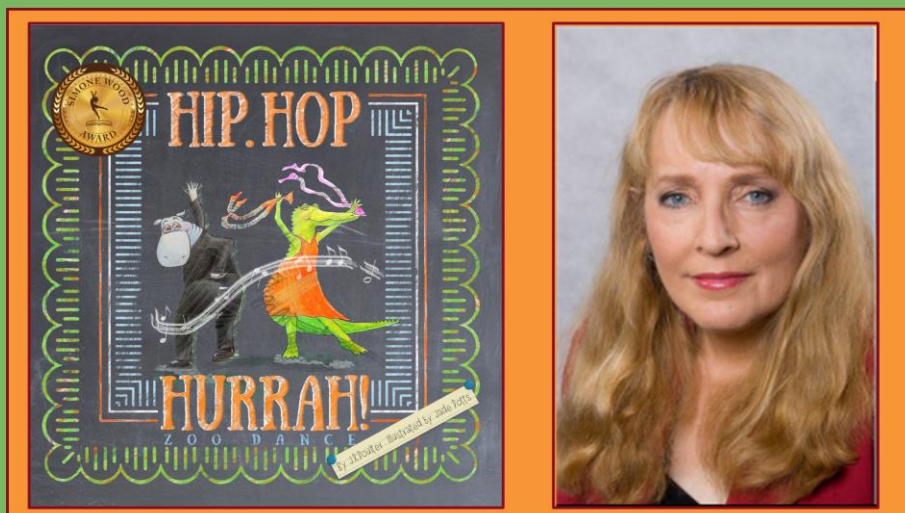




## Author Spotlight: J.R. Poulter



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**J.R. Poulter: author, educator, editor, artist**

***Jennifer, you have written many books over several years, when did you know you wanted to be a writer?***

I have always enjoyed stories and poetry and enjoyed creating my own as well as reading those by others. My father and maternal grandfather introduced me to poetry. My father would take relish in reciting *The Mock Turtle's Song* by Lewis Carroll and *Casabianca* by Mrs Felicia Hemans and my grandfather would recite Banjo Paterson's *The Man from Snowy River* and read, with gusto, *The Hunting of the Snark* by Lewis Carroll. I have the first edition, 1876, willed to me after his death. It brings back vivid, precious memories.

I also have a collected works of Mrs Hemans, illustrated, a first edition, which I found in a second-hand shop — also much prized because of its connection to my darling Dad.

***Where do you write? Do you like to be by yourself in the quiet, or do you like to write in a noisy space?***

In the corner of the lounge room – very noisy as it is where the TV and music hub is for the family. I prefer to work in the quiet, so try to stay up later...

***What do you use to write – pencil and paper or computer?***

Both! I keep a notebook by my bed for those ideas you tend to get at outrageous hours of night and early morning. I also carry pen and paper in my handbag – same reason – you never know when an idea will strike! But I type everything up on computer and sometimes I do the initial write on computer. Depends...

***When do you write?***

All the time, any time, whenever ideas hit!

***When do you get your ideas?***

I'm right brain, so ideas hit any old time!

***Do you think of the story in your head before you write it?***

Sometimes. Sometimes a sentence, phrase, rhyme will come to mind and the rest will flow from there.

***What gave you the idea for Hip Hop Hurrah! Zoo Dance?***

That was a while ago... I think I was playing around with rhymes and liked what evolved. Then it progressed into the improbably odd idea of animals having a jive session in the zoo whilst the zookeeper slept.

***What do you like best about Hip Hop Hurrah! Zoo Dance?***

I LOVE the way it has all come together with Jade's whackily crazy animals and Takara's awesome design elements!

***Tell us a little about the way Jade Potts has illustrated the story.***

Jade is a teacher in the USA and her idea was to do the images in a naïve style as if children were creating their own zoo animal fantasy.

***How did you feel when you wrote Hip Hop Hurrah! Zoo Dance?***

It was fun, funny and joyous!

***How do you hope readers will feel (or respond to your book)?***

I hope the children will find the rhythm in the rhyming text fun and will want to get up and emulate the animal's moves and have FUN doing it!

***How would you like teachers to present Hip Hop Hurrah! Zoo Dance to children?***

I hope they give it a ROLLICKING read, taking full advantage of the rhythm in the rhyming text. If brave enough, perhaps they could get into the groove themselves and do a Hippo wobble and an ostrich strut!

***Do you have any advice for teachers in their role as writing guides?***

Writing should always be as spontaneous as possible. If kids find the actual putting of pen to paper daunting, try getting them to talk their ideas into a recording device (most classes have iPads or notebooks these days, and kids can video themselves expressing their creative energy multi-dimensionally).

