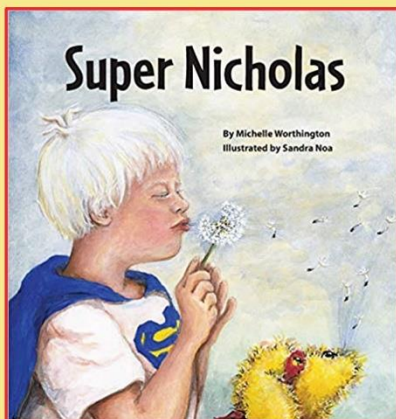




Author Spotlight — Michell Worthington



Images used courtesy of Michelle Worthington. Please respect copyright. All rights reserved.



Author: **Michelle Worthington**

Michelle, you are a prolific and accomplished children's author. When did you know you wanted to be a writer?

I have always made up stories in my head, but I wasn't very good at writing them down. I am not very good at spelling and I was too scared to make a mistake, so I didn't write any of them down until I was in Grade 5. My Grade 5 teacher encouraged me to start with writing poetry to get my confidence up and I started writing from then and have never stopped!

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

Until very recently, I have written at the kitchen table, on the back of takeaway napkins and anything I could find in the middle of the night when a story idea come to me. Now I have a desk in a corner of my kids' playroom that I use as an office and a writing spot, but I still get most of my ideas when I am out and about or in bed.

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

I write down the idea on paper then edit it as a type it on the computer

When do you write?

When do you get your ideas?

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

I always have a story bubbling away in my brain and they usually get louder right before they are ready to be written, like a kettle boiling and then whistling.

What gave you the idea for Super Nicholas?

It is written for a little boy named Nicholas Love who always dressed up as a super hero. I wrote the story for him when he was sick in hospital.

What do you like best about Super Nicholas?

I like that kindness is a super power. It is often underestimated how important it is.

Do you like the way Sandra Noa has illustrated your story?

Sandra was the third illustrator who did some sample drawings for the book and she was able to capture the family perfectly.

How did you feel when you wrote Super Nicholas?

I miss Nicholas, but I also feel happy that his beautiful smile and kind heart will live on inside the pages of the book.

How do you hope readers will feel?

I hope that readers will look for superheroes in their everyday lives and recognise it also in themselves.

How would you like parents and teachers to present Super Nicholas to children?

There aren't many books where the main character has Down Syndrome. This book isn't about Nicholas being different, but I hope parents and teachers can initiate a conversation about diversity and not judging people by how they look.

What is the most important message you would like parents and teachers to discuss and children to take away from your story?

Kindness is a superpower. There are many people in our everyday lives who show us kindness in many different ways.

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

Let students make mistakes, then explain the process and reasoning behind editing as a way to improve the story, not change or grade it.

Do you have any advice for children as writers?

If you have a story in your head or heart, don't be afraid to share it. It just might make the world a better place.

What is your favourite picture book?

Possum Magic

Who is your favourite author? What do you like about his or her work?

Ever since I was young, I have loved the way Mem Fox could capture uniquely Australian stories that still have global appeal. You can tell that she really loves words, the way they sound and how they make you feel. She is who I aspire to be like.