Can You Keep a Secret?

An artefact and exegetical essay investigating the poetics of children's rhymes and verse

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Mark Carthew

Swinburne University of Technology

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Abstract

This submission consists of two complementary creative works: an anthology of children's rhymes *Can You Keep a Secret? Timeless Rhymes to Share and Treasure* (Carthew 2008a); and a companion music CD, *Timeless Songs to Share and Treasure* (Carthew 2009). Random House Australia published both the anthology and the CD. The submission is accompanied by an exegesis that explores how these creative works came into being, and the attraction of the rhymes and songs that led to their selection. The exegesis also explores the *resonance* of these children's rhymes; and the poetic, musical and kinaesthetic features that led to their grouping in the six chapters—nursery rhymes, playtime rhymes, action rhymes, counting rhymes, finger-plays, and lullabies and gentle rhymes.

The overarching genre of ‘nursery rhymes’ is acknowledged as part of the oral tradition in literary lore and for the purposes of this exegesis are defined as rhymes for early childhood often, though not exclusively, characterised by a traditional or historical heritage. The selections, placement and musical arrangements in these collections provide a distinctive way of connecting with or *being with* these rhymes, therefore providing insight into their individual and collective aesthetic and poetic functioning.

**Key Words:** Children's rhymes, musicality, anthology, poetics.
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Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award to the candidate of any other degree or diploma, except where due reference is made in the text of the examinable outcome. To the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text of the examinable outcome or subsequent post production editorial mark-ups for re-printing. Pre-press editorial proofing of the published book was carried out in consultation with Random House children’s editor Kimberley Bennett and children’s publisher Linsay Knight. Production of the book and music CD was organised by Random House Australia's design and production team. All illustrations for the book and CD were completed by Jobi Murphy. The music CD was produced and arranged by me in conjunction with Highway 9 Productions recording studio and sound engineer Sean O'Sullivan.

A transcription of the song arrangements was commissioned from Katie Wardrobe at Midnight Music www.midnightmusic.com.au. Proof reading and document formatting was conducted by Joan Howard in accordance with the Australian Standards for Editing Practice (ASEP) for research students' theses and dissertations. The typed transcript of the Margaret Mahy interview recording was commissioned from SmartDocs Pty Ltd. In respect to both artefacts every effort has been made to acknowledge ownership via the permissions process and due diligence has been exerted in the research of works attributed to public domain.

Due to the commercial nature of the published works and copyright restrictions related to artwork and permissions, copies of the final published works are located in the Swinburne library.

Signed:

Mark Carthew
Dedication

For my wife Carolyn and our children
Michael, Laura and Simon.

Their love, support and encouragement is the inspiration.
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Preface

Can You Keep a Secret? Timeless rhymes to share and treasure (Carthew 2008a) together with the songs and rhymes arranged and produced for the accompanying CD Timeless songs to share and treasure (Carthew 2009) are presented as a celebration and tableau vivant of children’s rhymes and verse gathered together in published form.

These anthologies represent research and endeavour associated with my attraction to, and collection of, nursery rhymes. Both the artefact and accompanying exegesis therefore provide an opportunity to reflect on that attraction. For the purposes of this exegesis I define nursery rhymes as part of a broader genre generally known as children's rhymes or rhymes for early childhood. While nursery rhymes exist as part of a historical tradition in the literary lore of cultures and peoples, they are present in various guises in popular culture such as games, chants and song—inspiring writers, musicians, performers and those connected with young people in educative and care settings to emulate the form.

It is important for me to emphasise that engagement through action or learning by doing has been a guiding principle throughout my professional life as a teacher, educator, writer and performer. It is in this context that I selected and grouped together the rhymes for this collection. I did this because these rhymes have qualities that encourage a connection between movement and communication or bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence’, a concept which Gardner (1993) defines as the ability to solve problems or to fashion products using ones whole body, or parts of the body’ (p. 9). The traditional and original rhymes and music arrangements in this collection celebrate that inspiration and it is a principle of selection.

The roots of nursery rhymes have spawned analysis based on political, cultural and social histories (Bettelheim 1976; Jack 2008; Turner 1969), however they are also often simply shared by adults and children in the spirit of play and the whimsical—highlighting wordplay’s attraction as a part of language use and communication. The variety and also commonalty present in these rhymes draws attention to the distinctive format of the book’s six chapter.
categorisations. I explore this in regard to my anthological planning in the commentary section on each chapter and use these sections to reflect on poetic features in these rhymes. The book’s concept, design and contents produce a melding of my creative and poetic aesthetic, which achieves my goal as an anthologist. In VanderMeer’s words (2003), it can be described as:

A finely made book, well designed and executed, can be as intoxicating as any exotic drink. It exists as a creative act sometimes irrespective of the book’s contents. And, at the place where content and format fuse, you will find the perfect book.

It is recommended that the published book and music CD are read and listened to before reading the exegesis as this is essential to appreciate their relationship and aesthetic for as Custodero observes:

To be “in the moment” is to encounter the aesthetic — fully engaged in an activity for which one’s individual contributions are perceived as vital, aware of surprise relationships between seemingly disparate phenomena, and enveloped by sensory images of colour, sound, and movement meeting personal criteria for beauty (2005, p. 36).

This is especially important while reading the commentary section of the exegesis, as some specific rhymes and songs are discussed that refer back to the published book and the music CD. The commentary section performs a vital function in the exegesis as it explores the structure and thinking behind the six chapters and the way they provide distinctiveness in the collection. I have also included a transcript of the CD’s music score (Appendix 1) as a reference tool for the song and vocal arrangements using music notation, melody and chord structure. The transcripts of interviews with Dr June Factor, Celia Lottridge and Margaret Mahy (Appendix 3) represent a unique aspect of this project and informed the thinking process that helped to shape this exegesis.

Throughout this exegesis I use a number of key terms that are used regularly and I explain their use in the exegesis as they are encountered. I also provide a list of acronyms and key definitions in a glossary (Appendix 4).
Chapter 1

Anthological gathering as method and practice
Introduction

More than any other genre of writing, poetry is influenced by its oral roots...cognitive psychologists have discovered that techniques associated with poetry – like alliteration, meter, and rhyme – increase the memorability of a text (Rubin, 1995). Through most of human history, verbal creations had to be easy to remember; in oral cultures, all composed texts had features we today associate with poetry, because otherwise they would not be remembered and would disappear from history (Kaufman & Kaufman 2009, p. 177).

While exegeses have had a scholarly association with biblical dissertations, the emergence of arts based PhDs has seen a broadening of the exegetical function that allows writers and creators to talk about their own work' and contribute to cultural reading and canon (Krauth 2002, p. 4). The complementary nature of my artefacts and their evolution from my arts and teaching practice offers insight into this exegetical function. The combined artefact has resulted from my interaction with the textuality of books, music and verse; their touch, imagery and the call of the printed, spoken and sung word. This underlines linguistic resources (speech and writing) as a part of a multimodal ensemble in which resources are organised, designed and orchestrated' (Jewitt 2007, p. 276).

The anthology and CD celebrate the multimodal functioning of song, music, movement and rhymes and highlight the centrality of the reader or respondee. This centrality is made clear in the title of both book and CD, ‘Can you keep a secret?’ a title which positions the receiver as the conduit to their interactive content. The invitational question and respective sub-titles ‘Timeless rhymes (and songs) to share and treasure’ and suggests that ‘the secret’ lies within language’s transaction with their poetic and music content.
Fundamental to this exegesis is the thesis that to understand the notion of a resonant aesthetic we need to look at the elements or combination of elements whose synergy inspires a pleasurable response.

Accomplished and ‘successful’ writers, poets, anthologists, minstrels and wordsmiths demonstrate the ability to filter and synthesise elements to their advantage, successfully combining the necessary key elements of their chosen genre in a valued mix. Therefore some questions arise:

- What are these key elements and how are they best described?
- How do these elements translate across cultural ways of seeing or hearing?
- In what ways does their aesthetic link to both meaning-making and imagination in children’s rhymes?

At the project’s heart is a recognition that children’s rhymes celebrate and enhance a form of ‘jouissance’ (Barthes 1989, p. vi) or joyful connection to the sounds and visualisation of imagined worlds. This connection provides a way of knowing that while focused on the object of enquiry is also performative (Turner 1982). In Turner’s words, they bring data home to us in their fullness, in the plenitude of their action meaning’ (1982, p. 91). This is described further by Conquergood as another way of knowing that is grounded in the active, intimate, hands-on participation and personal connection’ (2002, p.146). It is therefore the interaction with the intimate and specific features of children’s
rhymes and verse which is central to this project. These features include the poetic elements of rhythm, rhyme, alliteration and metaphor and other ways of creating the lyrical through verse. Their unique arrangement is brought into focus by the sequence and structure of each chapter and CD track. These intersecting features, and their ability to assist in forming connections with others, are explored further in my commentary on each chapter. Their intersection with language is specifically addressed, echoing Mithen’s thesis of the interlinking between movement and music:

Language and music share three modes of expression: they can be vocal as in speech and song; they can be gestural as in sign language and they can be written down (2006, p. 15).

These three modes of expression are clear in both artefacts and overlap with a theory of synthesising reading and language use articulated by Rosenblatt:

...part of the magic—and indeed the essence—of language is the fact that it must be internalized by each individual human being, with all the special overtones that each unique person and unique situation entail. Hence language is at once social and intensely individual (1978, p. 20).

In constructing these artefacts I was aware that individuals respond to the artistic stimulus in their own way, and that aesthetic contemplation is what each individual makes of his or her response to the artistic stimulus (Rosenblatt 1978). The strength of considering this is that, “reading a text of literature will be closer to the aesthetic end’ (Nodelman & Reimer 2003, p. 221). More specifically with Can You Keep a Secret? (Carthew 2008a) this aesthetic is situated in a poetic way of meaning making; a poetic that is comprised of features such as meter, rhythm, rhyme, onomatopoeia, alliteration, repetition, kinaesthetics, movement and gesture.

The traditional rhymes gathered in my artefact are alive in meme, by which I mean they exist as part of cultural and literary lore and in the collective memory of peoples and cultures. This book, and its traditional and new works, contribute to that lore. As Davis notes the:
classic examples of memes are catch-phrases, tunes, fashions, recipes, and skills. “Meme” now appears in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) as: “n. Biol (shortened from mimeme), that which is imitated, an element of culture that may be considered to be passed on by non-genetic means.” (Davis, CB 2007, p. 597).

Memes are part of ‘cultural transmission’ Dawkins (1976, p. 189) and could therefore be viewed as the literary equivalent of biological selection as there is something in the strength of their makeup that helps certain rhymes stay alive over time and cultures. In Davis’s words:

..."most cultural" theories propose that culture itself is subject to a process of natural selection, and that a kind of cultural replicator-predominately called a "meme"-exists independently of genes and individuals. (Davis, CB 2007, p. 596).

The association between children’s rhymes and meme provides a justification of value’ (Boyes1990) for the worth of anthological artefacts as recorded culture and history draws attention to the role and responsibility of the anthologist as both scribe and contributor to literary lore. This understanding is exemplified by the pioneering endeavor of Lady Alice Gomme (1894) whose research employed the most advanced forms of contemporary methodology and was the first work to define children’s games as a separate branch of folklore’ (Boyes1990, p. 200).

Building knowledge and understanding of the work of anthologists and pioneers in children’s literature during this project led me to the ever burgeoning resource of old and rare rhyme collections in digitised projects such as Google Books digitisation program (2009), Project Gutenberg (2010) and Project Eclipse (2009); projects that have broadened the scope of archival material available to modern day anthologists and researchers. These projects deepened my understanding of the oral and transitory nature of children’s verse. They also brought into focus the function of human desire in the recording of versions for pleasure giving, meaning making, and retrievability — a point that underpins
this anthology and the CD as a reference and archival resource for experiencing the combined and individual effect of these rhymes.

It is the temptation and delicious evocation of words and meaning that has driven the research and contribution of the great writers and collectors of children's rhymes and stories. My search for ‘the poetic’ was vitally connected with my ability to connect with the aesthetic in these rhymes and as such this exegesis provides an opportunity to think as much about the properties of the rhymes themselves, as it is about the nature of the creativity that produced them, their formal properties and cultural meaning (Taylor 2007). Maybe as Taylor suggests ‘we may, perhaps, need a new coinage—recorderly?—for a text receptacle whose raison d'être is fulfilled once something is written in it’ (2007, p. 11).

The Opie’s recording of the old Cornish rhyme below resonates in my psyche, perhaps acting as an allegory for the anthological choices and raison d'être for the content and chapters in the book and song arrangements on the music CD:

Come back! Come back! You Spanish knight,
And choose the fairest in your sight   (Opie & Opie 1985, p. 96).

Anthological gathering as method and practice

words
fell down
like falling snow, led
me where I
wished to go (Burgemeestre 2005).

Wright draws attention to ‘the dance of understanding’ (Wright, in O’Toole 2006, p. 132) as a way of developing insight gained from the act of performing, reflecting, and physically feeling work and responses in action. Wright's comment echoes Custodero’s notion of being with which he describes as being ‘in the moment’ or ‘to encounter the aesthetic’ (2005, p. 36). I return to this notion as a thread throughout the exegesis in relation to my relationship with
these rhymes and songs. It is a relationship that started with gathering, which is itself predicated upon the desire to collect:

The desire to collect things is by no means a universal one. However among those who are either blessed or afflicted with this strange compulsion, the condition is one of all encompassing fascination (Calloway 2004, p. 7).

It is important to reiterate that my attraction to collecting these particular rhymes and songs was based on their poetic resonance. I define poetic resonance as a form of poetic or lyric based attraction that leads to interaction or engagement. Central to this exegesis is my exploration and reflection on the elements and qualities that comprise this aesthetic.

When I began this project my quest was to research and compile in one accessible volume, a vibrant and unique compilation of engaging rhymes and verse for children. The process of compilation was informed by my various roles as a primary teacher, children’s writer, development and series editor, performer and educator. This background positions me as an ideal observer of the functioning of nursery rhymes as a composite literary genre.

The act of making a rhyme anthology with traditional material represents a unique form of anthological and creative endeavor. In my experience, these types of anthologies evolve from that which has come before, thereby relying on perpetuation and variation for existence, an evolution noted by Lam:

Although many of the nursery rhymes still sung to infants today pre-date even early modernity, the expansion of children’s literature and publications in the nineteenth century imparted important additions to nursery rhyme repertoire (2008).

Thus, the conceptualisation, development and realisation of this project can be viewed as knowledge making that evolves from dialogue associated with the work’s intricate parts and body as a whole. These dialogues are framed by the understanding of creative arts enquiry advocated by Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt (2007) acknowledging the legitimacy and value of active practitioner
research as a way of knowing and connecting with meaning. This value can be further understood by the proposition that together with the creative work, the task of the exegesis is to produce movement in thought itself (Bolt 2007, p. 33).

This movement of thought emanates from practice led research, noted by Arnold (2007) as a research that enables the academy to look at practice as a way of bringing forth research both in itself and in an interaction with the ideas and debates that may be teased out from it’ (p. 3). As a practicing children’s writer, educator and producer of resources for children, my practice is therefore also my research and my methodology is that of an active practitioner. It is ‘living research’ (O’Toole 2006, p. 71) and has been informed by experience, reflection and response to these rhymes in a variety of reflective and interactive contexts—in many cases they have been trialled and shared with the very audiences for which the artefact is intended, resulting in decisions based on real life interactions. O’Toole’s definition of ‘living research’ aptly describes the reflective and reflexive decisions, processes and interactions in this project, therefore making it important to stress that, for arts educators to ignore reflective practitioner research design is to remain ignorant to the kind of artistic processes that are the lifeblood of our work’ (Taylor 1996, cited in O’Toole 2006, p. 57).

In considering the modes of language in the artefact and their raison d’être, I am conscious that movement of thought generated by exposure to the creative works (Bolt, 2007) extends beyond the domain of the creator. The work exists in its own space and spheres of influence for those who come into contact with it. It is as if the voice poetica of the works is waiting for, and dependent on, interaction to enable response.

Such movement of thought and voice in my dual artefacts can be seen as more than the whole as the sum of its parts, for these rhymes and songs create both a combined and individual effect. I have been able to form a relationship with these rhymes via my senses and a gut feeling that is a response to their poetic resonance. This methodology has provided a prism like lens from which to examine the movement of thought generated by both the act of creating these works and their aesthetic. My drive to seek out and consider quality publishable
works ran in tandem with my authorial intent to create something distinctive; something special that had points of difference to other established anthologies and rhyme based works. This required a knowledgeable vision, but I wish to make clear that while my previous experience informed what I was looking for in terms of the broader brush stroke of content, I was also very much open to the surprises gained by research and modes of inquiry that led to the discovery of lesser known rhymes and even the penning of original works and arrangements.

Was this luck? Right place right time? Or was there something about my way of operating and researching that created a *chrysalis* in the form of a new tale?

Living with these rhymes, continually contemplating and justifying was my way of operating; a way that saw some rhymes maintain their privileged position and others replaced by new discoveries. Working on the exegesis during the artefacts' generation had (and is still having) a recursive impact, dovetailing into the personal and publishing drive of myself as creator.

This point is made patently clear within this work by the later addition of the music CD and music score, post initial publication. I hadn’t predicted this and it is a fascinating outcome from a reflective arts practitioner's point of view, as I don’t believe I would have reflected on this particular piece of creative output with the same level of depth or intensity without the demands of the exegetical process. Artistic process is spontaneous and reflexive. Projecting forward and visualising (creating) new works even before old works are finished is part of my writing practice; and this methodology places these two creative works in the context of a body of work that also provides signposts for the conceptualisation of future creations. Concept and design processes inform the construction of any created object and are the basis of traditional methods of documenting process and knowledge formation (Yerramareddy & Lu 1992). With the emergence of more and more arts practice based theses, artist/practitioners are recognising the methodology of action research. Davis, in her article on action research in thesis writing ‘Rethinking the Architecture’ (Davis, JM 2007), points out that much of the knowledge formation and design processes in her own
thesis was sequential and cyclic as opposed to linear (pp.186-187); this resonates with my own experience in the making of this arts based project.

Arts knowledge making is cumulative, cyclic and interactive and can be seen in the broader interpretation of design as conceptualisation—something envisioned and imagined. Practice and process has been informed by knowledge gained from accumulated understandings of genre based material, participant observation, research of print documents, targeted research of school and public libraries, investigations of museum archives, sound recordings, email conservations, recorded interviews, conversations, internet searches, conference participation and analysis of relevant literature. The research context of this project was also informed by a desire for commercial success.

Therefore the design of this project was constructed under ‘authorial’ pressures to create an object that would:

a. attract interest and a contract from an established publisher;

b. be published and achieve enough commercial sales on its first print run to generate a shelf life beyond of the traditional short sale or return periods; and

c. be a creative work worthy for its contribution to the field of writing and the genre of children’s rhymes, including a broader contribution to knowledge as a PhD artefact and object of exegetical reflection.

The desire to design something with longevity aligned with creative insecurity and the broader perception that a writer is only as good as their next book; good in this sense being equated with market sales success or peer generated esteem. Similarly it could be argued that artists in other media experience similar feelings, a point reinforced by Verboord’s opinion that ‘an author’s prestige is dependent on how s/he is perceived by significant others’ (Verboord 2003, p. 262).

Writerly motivation in this project came from an understanding that ideas are generated as a result of previous ideas, sensual experiences or intellectual / temporal encounters, forming and reforming until their shape and reality is
realised in accessible textual, visual or aural forms. Understandings of action research and the notion of active practitioner research inform and describe my practice of creating children’s literature and in particular children’s anthologies.

My practice as a primary school educator and writer interacting with the meta-language of educational pedagogy provided both the vehicle and formative method of the project’s material. Culler underlines Knapps’ proposition that literary language could be defended as an account of a certain type of representation that provoked a certain kind of interest (Culler, 2007, p. 27). The research for this project has allowed me to connect with, and form judgments about, a ‘certain kind of interest’ because of my unique vantage point as a creator, teacher, educator and performer. That interest informs my activity as a passionate hunter and gatherer of engaging children’s rhymes and songs—with ideas and thoughts constantly evolving and continuing beyond process, publication and production. These ideas endure to affect my thinking as a producer of books and mixed media for children’s publishing markets.

**Back to Front (The Journey Begins)**

The hidden collisions, the hidden juxtapositions, when we play games with language we find that language is capable of these things (Mahy 2008, Appendix 3.3).

The way that certain songs and stories percolate through and into our individual and collective meme is, of course, part of their mystery and attraction.

As an anthologist, I am connected to the *joie de vivre* associated with both the collection and discovery of language’s hidden treasures—this something special is an essential part of the motivation of any collector. My love of collecting literary objects is both a passion and privilege for ‘collecting will provide you with a wide range of experiences, from the sense of discovery to understanding what you have collected and why’ (Rinker 1996, p. 26), sometimes disregarding the literary canon.

Valued and commercially published collections by definition contribute to the literary canon, by which I mean ‘those texts that are said to have an enduring
quality by virtue of their universal themes, literary craft and/or significant meaning’ (Kümmerling-Meibauer & Meibauer 1999, p. 13). The strength of considering this here is that it foregrounds my desire to write, collect and publish children’s verse and rhymes in commercially available forums; a process that through the act of creating has helped me develop works of significance in the genre of children’s literature. My understanding of children’s literature is not limited by age restraints, and while my publishing imperative clearly aligns with appeal to young children, I acknowledge the significance of the dual readership of adults and children (van-Lierop Debrauwer, 1999), which I have addressed in previous compilations.

My first major publishing commission in the genre of children’s rhyme anthologies involved the dual readership of teachers and children and resulted from a commission by Pearson Education Australia to compile a large format anthology I Hear Thunder (Carthew, 1999). The publishing brief for that book focused on a mix of contemporary and traditional rhymes featuring alliteration, end rhymes and use of initial consonant blends. The title was designed to complement 26 books of original rhymes I had written for the early childhood education market, each of which focused on specific initial consonant blends. This background serves to demonstrate from the outset that my thinking as a book creator and anthologist has been influenced by judgment about how published works can complement each other.

I Hear Thunder, along with another commission to produce a series of big book anthologies of early childhood rhymes as part of the Chatterbox K-6 literacy series, provided pivotal cumulative knowledge for the construction of commercially valued and publishable rhyme anthologies. Constructing these big book anthologies influenced the chapter sections generated in Can You Keep a secret? This is illustrated in the respective title and subtitle content focus of earlier books: Three Purple Elephants and other counting rhymes (Carthew 2003a), Open Shut Them and other finger plays (Carthew 2003b) and Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes! And other action rhymes (Carthew 2003c). As part of the Chatterbox project I also produced an accompanying music CD All Join In! (Carthew 2003d) and worked closely on the title Girls and boys come out to
play and other nursery rhymes (Keane 2003). These synchronous authorial and editorial roles provided privileged insights into the genre of nursery rhymes as a subset of the broader oral tradition, noted by researcher and folkloric historian June Factor as ‘away the child gains a sense of the music of the language, the way language works...of its dramatic possibilities. Its intonation. Its pitch...’ (Carthew 2008b, p. 9; see also Appendix 3.1).

Producing children’s picture books and anthologies for education and trade markets also led to a strong personal belief in the merit of producing an accompanying music CD for this project. This belief was informed by enthusiastic responses to the earlier Chatterbox anthologies and CD. Affirmation for this response from early childhood and primary educators was further consolidated by publishing industry awards. Similarly my work on other publishing projects informed my understanding of producing books series with thematic links. My roles as series editor of the illustrated play script series VoiceWorks, and development editor for other streams of the Chatterbox series, involved writing and commissioning a range of other purpose oriented works, including plays and poetry anthologies for primary age students.

The process of conceptualising and making these artefacts was built on knowledge gained from ‘lived experience’, enabling me to identify creative space and opportunity for an innovative contribution to the genre of children’s rhyme anthologies.

**Back to the Future**

It was during my research for the four big books of rhymes for Pearson Education that I began thinking about sequels as there was just so much material of similar attraction that I wanted to fit into each book’s relatively short page limit of twenty four pages. I felt a great sense of confidence that if the first four books were well received, then there would be appeal (especially in educative settings) in a follow up four book set of rhymes based on similar categorisations; and so, I began the process of compiling another four anthologies under the same themes of nursery rhymes, counting rhymes, finger plays and actions rhymes. I subsequently submitted these manuscripts to
Pearson Education for consideration; however they decided not to publish an extra series. Undeterred, I remained resolute in my commitment to the attraction of these titles and began thinking about developing the manuscripts for publication in trade publishing—that arm of publishing that utilises the distribution networks and mechanisms associated with commercial bookstores and outlets designed for general public access.

I had been thinking about the merits of combining these follow up rhyme anthologies of nursery, counting, action rhymes and finger plays into one volume for some time as I had thought it would have market appeal in trade publishing. These titles subsequently morphed into a much larger anthology with the working title, *Forty Years on an Iceberg*. I chose that title because I wanted it to reflect a rhyme from within the collection, and it had intriguing nomenclature based on its wordplay and origin as a less familiar Canadian rhyme. I also thought that title would link well to the accompanying song arrangement that I had planned and eventually came to fruition (see Appendix 1.3; Carthew 2008a, p. 19; CD trk 3).

My initial manuscript submission to Random House Australia had ‘*Forty Years on an Iceberg*’ as the working title, with four sections or chapters: nursery rhymes, action rhymes, counting rhymes and finger plays. The manuscript was accepted and evolved into a fully illustrated publication of 196 pages enabling the inclusion of two additional sub genre chapters. The manuscript was also renamed *Can You Keep a Secret? Timeless rhymes to share and treasure*. The single volume allowed creative space to consider the appeal of two additional categorisations. This process was important to the final shape of the work and I had numerous discussions with my publisher Linsay Knight about layout possibilities. Discussion on various ways to delineate rhymes into groups also included the pragmatic production considerations of page extent, size, design and market appeal, all factors affecting price points and marketing. After much thought and research about possible bundling options, I made the decision that the two extra sections or chapters would be ‘Playtime Rhymes’ and ‘Lullabies and Gentle Rhymes’, respectively focusing on rhymes with playful, tactile elements and rhymes with the calming musical and gentle influence of lullabies.
By ‘adding’ these two sections, the work seemed more complete and well rounded, providing a significant sense of body and depth to the final manuscript.

I found a particular satisfaction in the addition of the lullabies and playtime rhymes section, as they provided a sense of completion and an opportunity to reflect on the ways that these six sections seemed to have appeal across cultures—and I was enjoying discovering multicultural rhymes that could be placed in all sections. Importantly to the final layout of the book, the addition of a lullabies and gentle rhymes section provided an opportunity to add what I felt was a resolving chapter, providing a calming, reflective ending not only to the book, but also the accompanying music CD – an attribute I had often observed to be present in other works within the children's genre envisioned for use in the night time rituals of shared reading or singing a child to sleep.

**Knowing as Knowledge: Children’s Anthologies as Genre**

The planning and design concept for *Can You Keep a Secret?* was based on a clear understanding of the standard required to achieve publication in the genre of children’s anthologies. Knowledge of genre, running in tandem with publishing acumen, editorial craftsmanship and anthological skill, are part of my arts practice as a children’s writer and anthologist. Peer based interest in anthologies as a genre is evident in the book’s citation as a Children’s Book Council of Australia (CBCA) Notable Book (*2009 Notable Australian Children’s Books* 2009) and numerous reviews (The Reading Stack 2008; Morrow 2008; Cornwell 2008). Such affirmation has stimulated my awareness of the importance of rhyme and poetry anthologies as resources for increasing knowledge of children’s lore and personal memory, a point made by Celia Lottridge in a recent interview:

> The memory of rhymes from very early childhood may often be connected to a whole experience of contact with a loved person (mother, father etc.),
of anticipation of a favourite action such as bouncing at the end of a horse-riding rhyme, of being held and rocked. It also is predictable shared language which is very satisfying to a child who is gaining language skills. These are seminal experiences which become part of the underlying pattern of the individual's thought and are remembered in a very primal and often joyful way (Lottridge 2009, Appendix 3.2).

Early in this project I began to reflect on my attraction to rhyme anthologies, poems and other work and realised that my own writing and selections in Can You Keep a Secret? were beginning to reveal some correlations with specific poetic features. This realisation corresponded with a mounting sense of ownership, reflecting personal pride and satisfaction with the choices made in my collections. I was constantly planning and revisiting the layout, imagining and conceptualising its texture and peculiarity. I envisioned the timbre of page presence and sound making associated with each rhyme's textuality and interplay between image and sound, and also articulated in my own thinking the various educative outcomes that could be associated with the usage of each and every rhyme. I realised that I was envisioning the reader and speaker as follows:

The speaker, it is often pointed out, offers many non-verbal cues to the listener, for example, through emphasis, pitch, inflection, rhythm, and, if face-to-face, facial expression and gesture. The writer thus must seek verbal substitutes for these. Hence the reader, in contrast to the listener finds it necessary to construct the speaker, the author—the voice, the tone, the rhyme, the inflection, the persona—as part of what he decodes from the text. The relation with the author in actuality becomes a transaction between the reader and the author’s text (Rosenblatt 1978, p. 20).

I realised that there was a transformation occurring in my relationship with these texts, as I developed a strong sense of ownership in the collection and affinity with their history and origin. Part of my consideration for selection involved the responsibility of acknowledging correct origin and creative attribution, namely,
affirming the original author, publisher, date and place of publication, all bibliographic data that has enormous importance for the anthologist researcher. This also has other implications, for if ownership is not in the public domain then part of the author's role is to ensure that all legal permissions are gained from copyright owners. In Can You Keep a Secret? evidence of this is found in the Sources and Acknowledgments section of the book (pp. 181-182) and on the insert slick of the CD where all permission details are outlined.

This applies to both traditional and contemporary material and my original rhymes and songs in this collection. This information is the basis of information for the publishing and book industry, now formalised worldwide via the International Standard Book Number (ISBN), Cataloging-In-Publication (CIP) information and 'Legal Deposit' Systems (National Library of Australia 2010).

In the early stages of this project, I was motivated to read, gather and research as many other children's rhymes anthologies as possible, which served the dual purposes of providing potential content and ideas on ways of treating design and layout. Gathering and reading these collections spurred my passion to create something different, something reflecting my own character as a creator of anthologies. This desire coincided with a growing awareness that collections or anthologies from other anthologists reflected a certain aspect of their individuality, or conversely, in some cases, a conforming predictability where common rhymes were repeated without a great deal of variation, and exclusive of the language and lore of non-English cultures. This observation inspired me to construct a distinctive anthology taking into account engaging, lesser known and culturally inclusive rhymes.

The Art of the Almanac

Anthology [Medieval Greek, anthologia, literally, “gathering of flowers”] A selection of literary, musical, or artistic works or parts of works (Merriam-Webster’s Encyclopedia of Literature p. 56).

Daniel Gerould’s (2007) essay on the anthologist’s craft draws attention to the Medieval Greek definition of anthology. My anthology and music CD collection could be described as types of almanac and perform a literary and artistic
function as repositories of selected works. Allegorically Can you keep a Secret? could be viewed as a bunch of rhyming flowers’, sourced, selected and arranged in a particular way based on their individual qualities and my artistry and skill as arranger.

I draw attention to physical form and design arrangements as they are part of my book’s individuality and attraction. As creator I wanted my anthology to be distinctive. It could be suggested that distinctiveness in substantive children’s anthologies such as Can You Keep a Secret? leads to a situation where they are located in a ‘higher than usual’ price bracket. My experience in publishing tells me that this is due to a range of influences, including anthologies larger than normal page extent and publisher’s preparedness to allocate a budget for hard covers, less than regular sizing, high quality paper and more often than not, extensive full colour illustration. This genre appears to attract a ‘design sensibility’ recognisable as a type of ‘classic’ look and feel, a point that is reinforced by the way book stores sometimes place children’s rhyme anthologies in privileged shelf arrangements. This observation also reinforces perceptions of ‘classic’ or esteemed value.

Regard for the value of rhymes in education contexts is also made clear in the statement from the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development:

The foundations of success in early school literacy learning and subsequent successful outcomes...are derived from a number of key factors including...in some cultures, knowledge of nursery rhymes (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2009).

The literary and pedagogical value of nursery rhymes highlights another related aspect of my anthologist’s journey, a journey that evolved from a love of book collecting and children’s folklore. That interest in folklore resulted in a yearning to discover and acknowledge lesser known rhymes from diverse sources; a drive that has facilitated unique inclusions in this anthology.
While ‘artistic style’ and design aesthetics is a topic of significant relevance to illustrated texts in any genre, my principle focus however in this exegesis is with my editorial selections and why certain rhymes and songs created attraction and connections with each other. These connections, along with my experience as an editor consolidated my understanding that collections reflect the voice of the creator, as well as empowering the text, a point reinforced by definitions of copyright which acknowledge the anthologist’s moral rights to be recognised as the copyright owner of an act of original creation. (Attorney-General’s Department 2009) Legal understanding of copyright is enshrined in the documents of the 1896 Berne convention, now present in the World International Property Organisation Copyright Treaty (2009). I draw attention to this aspect of anthological endeavour because copyright acknowledgements are subject to protocols in the publishing industry that reflect legal requirements.

Copyright and permission searching is therefore a key responsibility of any anthologist or compilation related genre that uses diverse sources; and I demonstrate this in the permissions and acknowledgement sections of both the book and CD. These acknowledgements perform a record keeping function and are an important means of maintaining public and literary awareness of works in the public domain and those with attribution of ownership. In this respect, I have also become acutely aware of the role that exegetical research can play in knowledge making as it has only been since publication, and only as a result of research generated by exegetical reflection, that I discovered that the lyrics and melody of ‘Open Shut Them’ were published between 1950 and 1965 in *Songs for the Nursery School* compiled by and attributed to Laura Pendleton MacCarteney (MacCarteney n.d.).

MacCarteney's ownership would seem to have been ‘lost’ via the rhyme’s immersion into popular language culture and public domain—a view perpetuated by its non-attribution in other anthologies. The ABC’s *Hickory Dickory*
(Hickory Dickory 1979) attributes it to Pendleton, but another ABC resource the New Useful Book (Clark 1995, p. 2) attributes permission back to the ABC without further reference detail, highlighting the complexity of investigating permission trails. I talk further about the vagaries of permission searches and trails with some examples in the commentary section. All acknowledgments are also carefully detailed in the published book and CD as required by publishing and legal convention.

Historical back-story associated with nursery rhymes serves to demonstrate their function as vehicles of social comment and opinionated allegory. In the words of Factor:

There are also colloquial terms which attract the young by their vivacity or extravagance...the young rollout these ornamental phrases with the greatest of pleasure...inevitably, a powerful influence on the language and play of the young has been the popular culture of their time (Factor 2000, pp. xxvii-xxviii).

Evidence of this allegorical and cultural functioning can also be seen in rhymes where political or public commentary is related to specific characters such as in the verse of 'The Grand Old Duke of York' and 'Old King Cole'. In 'Goosey Goosey Gander' for instance, 'Goosey' was supposedly a reference to the military marching goose step of Oliver Cromwell's Roundhead Army (Foster 2008; Thomas 1930); an army which persecuted catholic's and others refusing to covert to Puritanism during the sixteenth century. The 'Lady's chamber' was a concealed closet, sometimes found in the bedrooms of wealthy women and a place where catholic priests sought refuge. Foster also mentions Thomas's contention that the rhyme was a warning to Catholics and the notion of getting kicked down the stairs purportedly referred to a Cardinal Beaton who met a murderous and grisly fate after being pushed down stairs for refusing conversion (Foster 2008, p. 52).

Historical or social commentary in certain rhymes contributes to their appeal; however that function was not the only basis for placing rhymes in this anthology, as my main intention was to feature rhymes bound with the poetic.
For instance ‘Gوءey Goosey Gander’ and ‘Cackle Cackle Mother Goose’ (pp. 24-25) were paired together based on my vision of a farmyard scene featuring geese and visioning page spreads with thematic narrative and imagery. They epitomise classic nursery rhymes via their allusion to Mother Goose imagery, something I talk about further in the nursery rhymes commentary. The relevance of the label and concept of ‘Mother Goose’ is that it is used in both general parlance and publishing as a signifier of traditional origin (or rather lack of certain origin) and my encounters with this motif have had an invigorating effect on my interest in the history of children’s rhymes and creating anthologies containing folkloric material.

This interest coincided with my desire to research less documented nursery rhymes from a variety of countries and cultures. The alliterative rhyming qualities of goosey / gander / veranda point to my predisposition to select rhymes with a strong rhythm and end rhyme sounds, a consistent feature of the rhymes in Can you keep a secret?
Chapter 2

In Search of the Poetic
In Search of the Poetic

Poetry, first of all, was and still must be a musical form. It is speech musicked. It, to be most powerful, must reach to where speech begins, as sound, and bring the sound into full focus as highly rhythmic communication. High speech. (Baraka, cited in Sometimes 2009, p. 7)

It became clear during my initial phase of gathering rhymes for this project that poems, songs and verse were demonstrating a familiar mix of ‘poetic’ elements. Poetic elements such as rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, repetition, assonance and consonance were becoming prominent in my growing stockpile of editorial options. I was seeing a pattern emerge that revolved around rhymes and songs with that ‘special something’, something evocative, musical or poetic that I believed would hold the reader’s or listener’s interest.

I was becoming more attuned to my reasons for attraction to the aesthetic in these rhymes—an aesthetic that is bound with their poetic.

Poetics. Performance-centered research features the fabricated, invented, imagined, constructed nature of human realities...rituals, festivals, spectacles, dramas, narratives, metaphors, games, celebrations. These heightened, reflexive genres reveal the possibilities and limits of everyday role-playing and invention. They remind us that cultures and persons are more than just created; they are creative. They hold out the promise of reimagining and refashioning the world (Conquergood 1989, p. 83).

I found it useful to consider children’s rhymes in the light of Conquergood’s definition of poetics, as they are part of the imagined, reimagined, refashioned and the creative. They are fluid, changeable and interactive, incorporating the musical, rhythmic, imagined and performed worlds in various combinations. These combinations informed the anthological selection process and provided me with an opportunity to reflect on the attraction and resonant aesthetic of children’s verse, rhymes and song. Australian anthologist, folklorist and researcher Dr June Factor offers a further perspective:
If you listen to the first sounds a baby makes—they're rhythmic, they're melodic and they're repetitive. And they usually rhyme... There are even early onomatopoetic sound utterances. The reaction of adults is to mimic and reinforce those sounds by offering extensions, such as early childhood nursery rhymes – in the English tradition there's *This Little Piggy Went To Market, Inky Winky Spider, Round and Round the Garden*... These are all verse. I think that poetry is the first language, the ‘natural’ language and we have to learn prose, which is more difficult, more complex. (Factor, in Carthew 2008b, p. 8; Appendix 3.1)

The *resonant* in poetic language, viewed through my rhyme choices, brought to light features contributing to that resonance: meter, rhythm, tone, rhyme, beat, tonal intervals, melody, harmony, repetition, alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, gesture and ‗kinaesthetic physicality’—all features that in various combinations and forms come together with language delivery and reception to create response.

The ability of these rhymes to be enjoyed and remembered has its roots in beat. In the words of Nicholson Baker: ‘The four beat-line is the soul of English poetry’ (2009, p. 10). African singer Ladysmith Black Mambazo's words aptly describe the poetic ‗kinaesthetic physicality’ of language, movement and song:

...you teach your child to dance and you sing for him or her. That is the first thing ... your first dance is before you start to sing. Because we all know harmony is difficult but to dance is easy. Because the African person must get rhythm first. You clap and clap and clap and then you get rhythm (Mambazo, cited in Alison 2001, p. 117).

However my anthological choice making was not just about a search for *the resonant*. My skill as an anthologist also required recognition of the discordant, and an ability to predict attraction for the listener, speaker and writer (Rosenblatt, 1978); therefore it is also what is *not* in a collection that is also of significance. The film editor’s *cutting room floor*’ is analogous to the anthological process; and the mass of options spread over my desk, floor and data files highlighted the rich consideration process and the power of choice.
For me the holistic phrase, ‘the whole is but the sum of its parts’ can be interpreted as ‘the whole is larger than the sum of its parts’ for this project reflects both the independent functioning of rhymes, as well as their poetic and artistic union. This notion is evident in the way that we pick, chose and relate to individual songs from music CDs, yet also simultaneously identify with and reference their existence as part of broader disc compilations. Through thinking about attraction I also became increasingly aware that these rhymes stimulate and encourage interaction with others in unique and powerful ways. How the poetic assists this function is something I expand upon in the various commentary sections as each chapter highlights the ability of rhymes to stimulate connection with wordplay, imagination and engagement with others in different ways.

**Position, Position…**

My definition of ‘anthological choice’ is not limited to choices of single rhymes; it also includes envisioning the construction of both the book and CD, as well as their contextual relationship to the other rhymes and songs in the collection. It encompasses a predictive envisioning of the interrelationship between purpose and response. Therefore the placement and positioning of each rhyme or song in relationship to other rhymes was of critical significance, as their contextual compatibility with other rhymes on the same page spread or section adds to their way of making meaning. Wendy Whiteley’s words articulate the importance of position and the way art works combine to create effect, ‘When two works are put together they set up a conversation…they spark one another’ (2010).

The way poetic conversations or movement of thought are influenced by position and placement is evident throughout *Can You Keep a Secret?* (Carthew 2008a). One simple and clear example is the way ‘Musie Brown’ (p. 50) and ‘Jack Be Nimble’ (p. 51) are positioned to create both separate and combined responses around the theme of the candlestick. They literally spark off one another. The rhymes, poems, music and visual narrative in this collection can of course be viewed and experienced in isolation or broken into components, evoking discrete and explicit responses; but they are also part of a whole. I was determined to seek out and connect individual rhymes and songs
together to form a ‘connected’ whole – and this was achieved by the thoughtful placement of each rhyme in the sequence and content of the chapters.

Anthologist Herb Boyd's recollection of Richard Wright's tongue in cheek, ‘All you need to compile an anthology is a pair of scissors and a pot of glue’ (Boyd 2003, p. 50), hints more than a little wryly at the trials and tribulations of anthologists' struggle for recognition, and my experience allows me to say confidently that the process of researching and thinking about options is as complex as it is consuming. It is also dependent on opportunistic publishing possibilities, otherwise known in aspirational writing parlance as ‘right place, right time’. While the front story is based on my individual writer's journey in attracting publication via market appeal, the back story is embedded in my interaction with both audience and text—and my research ability to discover and rediscover the worlds, words and works of others.

As an anthologist I have a heightened awareness that words, poems and stories cannot be collected and bound together without the will and creative insight of the collector, yet I am also aware that it is the words themselves, bound in poetic form that beckon, tempt and invite the gathering of thought that influences their position in collections.

This is something I foreground in the foreword of Can you keep a secret? Timeless rhymes to share and treasure (pp. viii-ix) and it is important to read that foreword to contextualise this commentary.

‘Being with’: Encountering the Aesthetic

The development of this project has revolved around categorisation of children's rhymes as a way of forming a distinctive anthology. Therefore the following commentary on the book chapters describes my choice of the six chapter categorisations of nursery rhymes, playtime rhymes, action rhymes, counting rhymes, finger plays, and lullabies and gentle rhymes. Each one of these sub-genres is part of literary lore and the broader genre and rich tradition of nursery rhymes.
Within the scope of this exegesis, it is not possible to analyse or deconstruct each rhyme and song in the collection, so I limit my discussion to explaining the shaping of each chapter and selection of key rhymes and songs that provide insight into my anthological thinking. Each rhyme or song in the collection was carefully considered to achieve a cohesive sense of belonging and progression. I therefore utilise this commentary to describe some of the features and influences contributing to that belonging and placement. This also provides me with space to discuss the archetypical features of each chapter.

Attraction to these rhyme’s and their aesthetic is personal, allusive and bound with individual response to the poetic, something Bolt (2004) alludes to when she comments on Heidegger’s representational framework of a ‘work setting up a world’ (p. 113). I mention this as I felt that this compilation would set up a special way of thinking about children’s rhymes. The way that this imaginary and artistic world belongs to the reader, as well as the world, is described in Margaret Mahy words:

...but somewhere out there there’s a reader who will receive it and in a way complete what the writer began at the story or the poem or whatever and it goes in an arc...then the story goes out into the world and it goes from one privacy to another in a way because when the reader reads it, the reader receives it, not quite in the way always that the writer anticipated but they make it their own in a particular way by receiving it in their particular way (Mahy 2008, Appendix 3.3).

Music, like poetry affects our response in particular ways and that understanding was one of my main motivations for including the CD with the book as ‘music is remarkably good at expressing emotion and arousing emotion in its listeners’ (Mithen 2006, p. 24). While the book and CD are separate entities and exist as creative works in their own right, it is important for me to re-emphasise that I had always envisaged their combination from the conceptualisation of the project because this synergy is an important aspect of the project’s distinctiveness and contribution to the genre of children’s rhyme anthologies.
Chapter 3

Commentary on the Book Chapters
with an Exploration of Selected Rhymes and Songs
Nursery Rhymes
In the preface I define nursery rhymes as part of a broader genre generally known as children’s rhymes or rhymes for early childhood. While ‘Nursery Rhymes’ is the first chapter of the book, it is also the umbrella genre in which the other sections fit. That is why it is first.

Nursery rhymes have also been described by the late childlore scholar Professor Ian Turner as ‘rhymes that adults teach to children’ (1969, p. 1). Turner’s definition draws attention to my educative purpose in choosing these rhymes. The function of nursery rhymes in pedagogy is clear in documents such as the recent Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (Council of Australian Governments 2009). This document includes the statement that children engage with and gain meaning from texts when ‘they sing and chant rhymes, jingles and songs’ (p.11). This statement, along with anecdotal feedback from teachers and parents provided me with a strong sense of validation for including the music CD with the hard copy book.

Nursery rhymes are handed down through generations and throughout the process of compiling this anthology I have been struck by how rhymes survive over time and become ‘shared’ memory. In this regard I was intrigued early in my research by how often I encountered the concept of Mother Goose, a figurative and allegorical motif highlighting the longevity and ‘illuminative vein of folklore’ (Thomas 1930, p. 8). This enduring association is evident in the popular anthologies, My Very First Mother Goose (Opie 1996), Here Comes Mother Goose (Opie 1999) and Tail Feathers From...
*Mother Goose: The Opie Rhyme Book* (Opie 1988), all works that utilise the motif as part of their market appeal.

My interest in Mother Goose's allegorical use in describing traditional rhymes is important to draw attention to, because many *Mother Goose* collections were part of my source material and it required significant effort to identify original authorship and copyright status. They also provide an example of nursery rhymes in the public domain.

Iona and Peter Opie's iconic *Oxford Dictionary of Nursery rhymes* (1951) upholds the tradition and role of children's anthologies as repositories of knowledge about origin when they note Shakespearean scholar James Orchard Halliwell's *The Nursery Rhymes of England: Collected principally from oral tradition* (Halliwell 1849) and *Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales* (1849) as "he basis of almost every nursery anthology" (Opie & Opie 1951, p. v). However the Opies also observe that Halliwell's work was itself indebted to references from other collections such as *Gammer Gurten's Garland or the Nursery Parnassus* (1866), *The Popular Rhymes of Scotland* (Chambers 1858), Bellenden Ker's *Essay on the Archeology of Nursery Rhymes* (1834) and other works at the iconic Bodleian library especially *Songs for the Nursery*, an excellent seventy six page booklet which first appeared in 1805' (Opie & Opie 1951, p. vi). These historical connections led me to reflect on the significant Anglo-centric content in print collections available in Australia; an outcome linked to Australia's post industrial publishing connectedness to the language and 'recorded' culture of Great Britain and the United States. I mention this fact as it was an important spur for my desire to find alternative sources of information in order to create a more culturally diverse artefact.

My desire to celebrate diversity is informed by my knowledge of the Australian publishing industry. As Patrick Gallagher notes, "until 50 years ago the purpose of publishers in Australia was to act as distributors for overseas companies, mainly British' (2007, p. 137). Gallagher's examination of distribution practices underlines the historical background that has resulted in the Anglo centric and British heritage focus of many rhyme collections in Australian markets. My research of older rhymes and rhymes from different cultures led me to the
innovative research project – Project ECLIPSE (Exemplary Children's Literature Interface Project for Scholarly Education) with Professor Kay E. Vandergrift as principal investigator:

Mother Goose is an especially important topic in the study of the history of children's literature because such rhymes are a universal experience of childhood that cross national, cultural, and gender boundaries (Project Eclipse 2009).

This project with its broad research data base of historical and visual Mother Goose imagery provided affirmation for my desire to include rhymes from across cultures:

Young children of many cultures are familiar with simple nursery rhymes similar to those that English-speaking youngsters refer to as Mother Goose rhymes. Such rhymes, chants, lullabies, and singing and counting-out games serve as accompaniments to everyday activities and point to people and objects familiar in a child's world. They have survived because of the appeal of their musical and poetic qualities and because they serve as introductions to the worlds of wonder and nonsense so important to the developing imaginations and language skills of children (Project Eclipse 2009).

Project Eclipse's research raises the issue of both the value and the scarcity of rhymes translated from languages other than English and while it is outside the focus of this commentary to fully explore ‘Mother Goose’ as a motif across cultures, the project clearly demonstrates scholarly interest in literary lore as a way of recognising diversity. This value is articulated in the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Cultural Diversity Plan 2008-2010: In the context of a global environment there has never been a more important time for us to understand and embrace our cultural and linguistic diversity (DEECD 2008). I re-emphasise this as the inclusion of rhymes from other cultures was a key part of my planning and is perhaps echoed in a question posed by the late Professor M.V.O'Shea: What virtues do these
stories possess that have kept them alive for so long a time?‘ (cited in Perrault 1901, p. vii).

In contemplating O’Shea’s apt question, I became increasingly conscious of the role of recording in sustaining longevity. The ‘recorderly’ function of anthologies foregrounds the anthologist’s role as a perpetuator of, and contributor to, literary lore. At a macro level, my own sense of responsibility in committing these particular rhymes and songs to print and recorded form is underscored by Bruno Bettelheim’s comment that ‘myths and fairy tales alike attain a definite form only when they are committed to writing and are no longer subject to continuous change’ (1975, p. 26). However, the corollary to this is that recorded versions are themselves only snapshots of versions that can be subject to change or variation.

Variation is evident at a micro editorial level in the nursery rhyme page spread featuring ‘Cackle Cackle Mother Goose’ and ‘Goosey Goosey Gander’ (pp. 24-25). Interestingly, I found had a number of versions of ‘Goosey Goosey Gander’ to choose from—including the most commonly transcribed version:

\begin{verbatim}
Goosey goosey gander,
Whither shall I wander?
Upstairs and downstairs
And in my lady’s chamber.
There I met an old man
Who wouldn’t say his prayers,
So I took him by his left leg
And threw him down the stairs
\end{verbatim}

(Opie & Opie 1951, p. 191)

However, I chose the less provocative, farmyard based version.

\begin{verbatim}
Goosey Goosey Gander,
Where do you wander?
Your place is in the poultry yard,
Not on the verandah!
\end{verbatim}

(Traditional)

I selected this rhyme’s partner verse ‘Cackle, Cackle, Mother Goose’ because it highlights the echoing questions ‘Have you any feathers loose?’ (p. 24) and
‘Where do you wander?’ (p. 25) in the second lines of these two rhymes. These questions create a strong sense of connection between the rhymes and set up a conversation like narrative.

Cackle, cackle, Mother Goose,
Have you any feathers loose?
Truly have I, pretty fellow,
Half enough to fill a pillow.
Here are quills, take one or two,
And down to make a bed for you. (Traditional)

The use of questions creates the presence of a storyteller, a poetic device that invites the reader to either reflect or respond, a feature that is present in other rhymes in the collection such as ‘Mary had a Little Lamb’ (p. 22) and ‘Down by the Bay’ (p. 34).

These poetic devices serve to underline the multiplicity of ways in which rhymes combine with sound patterns, narrative and imagery and even punctuated expression to affect response (Truss 2003). The strength of considering this is that it highlights my planning for ‘thematic’ double page spreads throughout the entire book—‘thematic’ being something I define as having a logical or perceivable connection.

Contemporary storyteller Tanya Batt talks about the value of narrative and story linked to imagined worlds:

The value of storytelling lies in its intimacy and immediacy, its mercurial nature; the sound of the human voice that warbles and waves; its uniqueness, its flexibility and magic of conjuring words from air and worlds from the imagination (2006, p. 26).

The ability of nursery rhymes to stimulate a peculiar type of imaginative narrative provides an excellent example of how imagined worlds can be conjured with linguistic brevity. Throughout my writing career I have been intrigued by the way rhymes and poems evoke response in such short linguistic spaces; that reflection has brought into focus the functioning of specific structural mechanisms of the poetic that create that space.
Use of end rhymes is one such structural mechanism that appears as a consistent feature of nursery rhymes. Eminent scholar Jeffery Wainwright's succinct definition below and subsequent table of ‘rhyme’ types (fig. 5) seem pertinent, as these provide a most useful overview for specific analysis of the rhymes in this and indeed other collections:

The definition of rhyme in English has to do with the arrangement of consonants and vowels. The family of rhyming effects can be described in the following seven types, where C= the consonant and V= the vowel. The recurring sound is highlighted (2004, p. 105).

As dictionaries of literary terms attest (Baldrick 2008), there are many characteristics of rhyme present in nursery rhymes. Abram’s (1993) glossary is illuminating:

In English versification the standard rhyme consists in the identity, in rhyming words, of the last stressed vowel and all of the speech sounds following that vowel (p. 150).

While reading Henry Lanz’s The Physical Basis of Rime (1931) I was struck by Lanz’s attempt to dissect and explore every associated linguistic, cultural and socio-semantic relationship in rhymes with purposeful precision. However, contemporary literary theorist Terry Eagleton in his recent book, How to Read a Poem (2007) offers a point of view on overly analytical dissection of poetry:

Establishing what a poem literarily says, or what meter it may use, or whether it rhymes are objective matters on which critics may concur... but
talk of tone, mood, pace, gesture and like is purely subjective. What I hear as rancorous you may hear as jubilant. You read a garrulous what I read eloquent. Tone in a poem is not a matter of F major or B minor (p. 102).

I understand Eagleton to mean that every rhyme or poem has the potential to evoke individual response and mean different things to different people. And so, I return to *Can You Keep a Secret?* with the challenge to articulate and reflect on the way features such as meter, rhythm, rhyme, tone, form and conceptual imagery evoke response, based not only on my own aesthetic sensibilities, but also observation of the response and commentary from others.

As previously mentioned, I was determined from the outset of ‘visualising’ this project to include rhymes with qualities aligned with my attraction to a resonant poetic in rhymes from a variety of cultural traditions, albeit in the context of a primarily English language oriented product. My acknowledgment of the importance of rhymes from other cultures is demonstrated very quickly in my nursery rhymes section via placement of the rhymes, ‘*Tinga Layo*’ (West Indian), ‘*El sol es de oro*’ (The Sun’s A Gold Medallion) (Spanish), ‘*Lucciola Lucciola*’ (Firefly, Firefly) (Italian), ‘*Les Marionettes*’ (The Marionettes) (French), and ‘*My Leprechaun*’ (Irish). These rhymes immediately flag the value I place on multicultural rhymes and this is something I echo throughout the other sections via inclusion of rhymes from a range of countries.

Affirmation of the original language is also achieved in these specific examples by placing the indigenous language versions before the English language versions—a subtle yet important feature affirming the value of the original language and an acknowledgement of the importance of the cultural heritage of the rhymes, not just the English translation or transliteration. This feature is recognised in Project Eclipse’s statement that:

> Such international versions point to both the universality and the unique qualities of these staples of child culture. Surely the future will bring both verbal and visual images of Mother Goose corollaries from many cultures to more nearly represent the multicultural world in which we live (Project Eclipse 2009).
My research for rhymes from other cultures connected me with numerous rhyme collectors including Hispanic scholar and author Alma Flor Ada. Researching and reading Ada's prolific collections in both Spanish and English consolidated my view that it was essential to balance my own collection with rhymes from a range of cultures. Interestingly, Ada's collections also include a linkage to Mother Goose, *Mamá Goose: a latino nursery treasury; un tesoro de rimas infantiles*, (Ada & Campoy 2004), a compilation which features Hispanic and English translations.

I included the rhyme *Es sol es de oro* (The Sun’s Gold a Medallion) sourced from Ada's and Campoy's anthology *¡Pío Peep!* (Ada & Campoy 2003) and adapted into English by Alice Shertle, as it provides an example of the power of presenting rhymes in both the original language and English—strengthening understanding and appreciation of the rhyme’s original Spanish origin.

**Es sol es de oro (The Sun’s a Gold Medallion)**

*Es sol es de oro,*  
La luna es de plata  
y las estrellitas  
son de hoja de lata.  

The sun’s a gold medallion,  
The moon’s a silver ball.  
The little stars are only tin;  
I love them best of all.  

(Traditional, Spanish, p.11)

I was drawn to this rhyme for its imagery of the sun, moon and stars, motifs echoed in other rhymes scattered through my collection. Notably there is strong four beat meter and end rhyming pattern evident in both languages. The complimentary rhyme *As I Was Walking Through the City* (p. 10) shows my preference for rhymes with thematic connections, as its third line, *There I met a Spanish lady* provides context and flow into *El sol es de oro*, once again
highlights the importance I place on connected texts and imagery in double page spreads.

Such placement emphasises the issue of anthological responsibility and role as a rhyme 'historian' and recorder; a notion emphasised in micro-decisions such as my variation of the forth line from its original, `washing her clothes at night' to `washing her clothes just right'. This variation seemed to me more poetically pleasing, as the original repetition of `atnight' twice seemed to read more like a clunky poetic mistake than a device designed to create effect.

Variation as part of evolving language and musical inventiveness is highlighted in my song arrangement of `Incy Wincy Spider' and `Forty Years on an Iceberg' (see Appendix 1.3; trk 3).

I chose to place `Incy Wincy Spider' (p. 138) in the finger play section for its fun sense of word play and recognition as a traditional finger play, however it is also commonly categorised as a nursery rhyme and the unique way I arranged `Incy Wincy Spider' with the nursery rhyme `Forty Years on an Iceberg' on the music
CD (trk 3) provides the context for discussing this rhyme in this nursery rhyme commentary.

My placement of these two rhymes in the anthology draws attention to the multiple and shared characteristics of each chapter. Also, at the time of going to press, the CD had not been produced and had that CD been in place from the outset, I may well have designed them as a double page spread. This is something I have since created and highlighted as a separate website link and music resource (Carthew 2010b: (see also fig. 7).

‘In cy Wincy Spider’ is featured in many Mother Goose and nursery rhyme collections and its placement also draws attention to the attraction of onomatopoeic spellings and wordplay. I discovered numerous spelling variations of this rhyme when researching rhymes for Open Shut Them and other finger plays (Carthew 2003b) and music CD All Join In! (Carthew 2003d) including Inky Winky Spider, Ency Weency Spider, Ency Wency Spider, Incy Wincey, Itsy Bitsy Spider, Teensy Weensy Spider, Inky Pinky Spider and Ipsy Wispy Spider. In the end I chose the spelling ‘Incy Wincy’ because it appeared to be one of the most common interpretations found in Australia and New Zealand and I wished to reflect Australian literary lore in the artefact.

Such phonetic and alliterative variations provide evidence of the way humans morph language and conjure adaptations, a point emphasised by June Factor (2000) when she says, ‘language and cultural distinctiveness in a particular location creates a different kinds of colloquial usage’ (p. xxvi).

Factor’s comment rings true for me and my own experience when she echoes Dorothy Howard’s observation of ‘the powerful attraction of ritual in children’s play, and the richly poetic, rhythmic and collaborative qualities of games and rhymes in the playground’ (2005, p. 5). The role of repetition in the ritual recitation of rhymes such as ‘Incy Wincy Spider’, ‘Twinkle Little Star’ and ‘The Grand Old Duke of York’ is something I have observed by the way audiences often complete the actions without the need for any instruction, an observation that perhaps points to the notion of previous experience and usage.
An important design feature of the Incy Wincy CD recording (trk 3) is that the third verse is music only; a deliberate song arrangement based on my observation that by doing actions only with no singing, the audience becomes totally engaged with internalising the rhyme and visualising the actions, a point that is also highlighted in the action rhymes category. The musical morphing of _Incy Wincy Spider_ into ‘Forty years on an iceberg' on the CD arrangement is the result of a creative inspiration I had while teaching. One day after a class recitation, I decided that this rhyme called out for musical accompaniment, so I improvised a spur of the moment tune that was to become the basis for the CD recording. I also wrote a marching style motif utilising a walking bass tag ending for the students to march around the room (See Appendix 1.3, bars 73-80).

The effect of subliminal memory is interesting in this context, as I didn’t realise until a number of years later when reflecting on the chord structure and melody line prior to production of the CD that my classroom tune was in fact a melodic variation on _Incy Wincy Spider_. My subsequent realisation of the similarity in melody precipitated my idea for a melodic transition from one song into the other as means of creating an innovative song arrangement. I now use this tune as one of my standard icebreakers for both adult and student audiences and it never fails to engage audiences. One possible reason for this revolves around the need to concentrate on the matching word to action sequence; also being relatively unusual and unknown it seems to intrigue audiences, especially with the kinaesthetic counting of pyjama button actions matching the 4/4 beat metre of _nothing to wear_ but _py-jam – as_’ and the mime style actions of _over the ocean wide_’ (broad evocation with arms and hands) and _wind was cold and icy_’ (shiver) etc. A similar invitation to connect with the rhythmic kinaesthetic is a feature of the French children’s song _Les Marionettes_, a song based rhyme that came to my attention in a little known publication called _International Songs for Children_ (Clarke & Williams, 1980), a book of action rhymes and songs originally produced by the Free Kindergarten Association of Victoria in conjunction with the Victorian Multicultural Resource Centre.
Les Marionettes (The Marionettes)
Ainsi font, font, font,
Les petites marionettes.
Ainsi font, font, font,
Trois petits tours et puis s’en vont.
They dance so, so, so,
The little marionettes.
They dance so, so, so,
Three little turns and off they go.

Traditional French (Clarke & Williams, 1980, p. 39)

The rhyme’s internal meter and melodic strength evokes a dance like musicality, connecting readers of the text with the imagined puppeteer dancing in unison with marionettes. The repetitive font, font, font (so, so, so) echoes the up and down movement of the marionettes legs and 5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} melodic interval of c-d-c produces a pleasing affect and so confirming the performative function of play. This song also utilises a familiar pentatonic major scale first-third-fifth (do mi sol) melodic progression that is found in many traditional children’s tunes and enhancing its folkloric effect.

![Figure 8: Les Marionettes Melody (Clarke & Williams 1980. p. 39)](image)

The melody of Les Marionettes (fig.8) highlights how melodic intervals can combine with rhythmic devices to create effect, as the quicker moving quavers ♪ ♪ (often interpreted in performance as bounced or dotted quavers) help create a sense of galloping movement. Although in the context of this book and discussion many readers would be unfamiliar with the tune, so their connection
with and response to the pace of the rhyme is only at a textual level. This therefore highlights the privileged position of knowing the melody.

I didn’t include this song version on the CD for unless one has prior knowledge of the rhyme’s traditional melody, the reader can only respond to the meter and rhyme of the words and imagery available to them as experienced from the page. I mention this as it draws attention to the extra level of information being brought to the attention of the reader / listener in rhymes where sensory inputs are available via the combination of book (print and imagery) and CD (music).

Another nursery rhyme I discovered in the same archival source is the Irish rhyme ‘My Leprechaun’ (Clarke & Williams 1980, p. 83). While presented in English (pp. 32-33), I ensured that the original interpretation of the Gaelic word brógeen or bróigin was included in the page notes to provide a link to the Irish heritage of the rhyme. While this rhyme did not have a full Gaelic version in my source material, I became increasingly aware that my research passion and interest were being drawn to transliterations and especially those rhymes that utilised strict rhyme. Strict rhyme is further expounded in the Italian rhyme ‘Lucciola, Lucciola’ (Firefly, Firefly) (p. 14).

**Lucciola Lucciola**

Lucciola lucciola, gialla gialla  
metti la briglia alla cavalla  
che la vuole il figlio del re,  
lucciola vieni con me.

The Italian verse clearly uses metrical strict rhyme’ in unison with syllabic form and reader’s attention is drawn to the rhythm of each rhyming couplet regardless of any linguistic understanding. This is an important observation as it reinforces the significance of end rhymes throughout the collection— a point I reinforce in the discussion of each section. It became clear as I settled on the final layout for this first nursery rhyme section that there was much more complexity in these rhymes than just their strength of meter and rhythm. The rhyme ‘Wash the Dishes’ (p. 20) provided clarity and insight into layers of meaning making present in these rhymes:
Wash the dishes
Wash the dishes,
Wipe the dishes,
Ring the bell for tea;
Three good wishes,
Three good kisses,
I will give to thee. (Traditional)

When reflecting on this rhyme and other like rhymes I asked myself: So what was it about this particular nursery rhyme that resonated? Was it simply the attraction of strict end rhyme? I was hit by an epiphany, aptly articulated by Wainwright:

Familiarly, the early enthusiasm for nursery rhymes, chants, schoolyard games, songs advertising slogans and jingles all feature the same kind of gestural characteristics. Gesture is an important concept here. What I mean by gesture in language are those qualities we employ to signal meaning strongly by emphasizing particular word sounds, rhythmic sequences or patterns (2004, p. 2).

Gesture as part of nursery rhymes' poetic aesthetic is clearly seen by ‘Wash the Dishes’ rhythmic invitation to imagine and act out washing and wiping dishes, ringing the bell for tea and blowing kisses. The poetic 'call to action' clearly evident in this rhyme highlights the imagined possibilities and role of gesture working in unison with sound patterns. Gesture and movement in combination with tactile playfulness are part of structure and meaning making in nursery rhymes and in particular the next section of Can You Keep a Secret?, namely playtime rhymes.
Playtime Rhymes

While compiling the draft of Can You Keep a Secret? I was in a hospital waiting room when I observed a young mother and child playing and giggling as the mother recited out loud ‘Round and Round the Garden’. My observation of tenderness in the mother and child’s physicality and their mutually joyful anticipation evident in body language and expression provided a pivotal moment of insight to a question I had been thinking about for a long time.

What is it about play rhymes that connects us with others?

It was clear that this mother and child connected verbally, physically and emotionally while ‘playing’ this rhyme out loud, both eagerly awaiting the much anticipated tickle. Observing this wordplay interaction awoke memories of togetherness experienced in my own childhood interactions with my parents and significant others, feelings that are part of the construction of ‘playtime’ rhymes and their ability to facilitate mood conducive to play.

Figure 9: Round and Round the Garden, illustrated by Jobi Murphy (Carthew 2008a, p. 39)

The importance of fun, humour and satire as part of the ‘mood making’ and attraction in children’s rhymes is certainly an aspect of nursery rhymes that is deserving of far greater scrutiny as it is often regarded as a cultural reflection of adult forms of humour. Once again, the rhymes themselves provide insight into
that functioning, evidenced in playground variations utilising humorous parody such as the following variation of Round and Round the Garden:

Round and round the haystack,
Went the little mouse
One step,
Two steps,
In his little house. (Matterson 1969, p. 14)

The last line in this variation ‘In his little house’ parodies the original version’s last line of ‘tickle under there!’, an ending that explicitly invites the tactile dimensions of communication via touch; an invitation that is bound with notions of trust, fun, togetherness and game like play. It became plain to me that the meaning of ‘playtime’ binding this group of rhymes together is amplified by the way they engage the reader or listener in a ‘playful’ fashion. This is achieved by language encouraging a playful type of physical and tactile connection. It is however the specific evocation of togetherness encouraged by playfulness that provides the sub-text for this playtime chapter. Hännikäinen discusses this at some length in her research study on play in Finnish, Nordic, and Swedish day care centers:

The present study...suggests playful actions to be a sign of togetherness. Playful actions might contribute to both the rise and maintenance of togetherness. Maybe it is also possible to assume, when coming back to the objects of an activity, that the feeling of togetherness links the other objects of playful actions together (2001, p.133).

The rhymes in this section consolidate feelings of playful togetherness and ‘Round and Round the Garden’ is just one such example. For the purposes of this commentary the terms ‘playtime’ and ‘playful’ are interchangeable, as the ‘Playtime’ chapter heading in the book was designed to provide a consumer oriented message to signify rhymes that both encourage and validate play as a valued activity. And so the question arises, if these rhymes have common elements and ‘ways of being’ similar to other categories — what is it that made me categorise these selections as uniquely ‘playful’?
In search of the answer to the question, I found myself reflecting on the value of rhymes in contemporary pedagogy, especially in regard to their encouragement of playfulness in language exploration (Fleer 1996; Hännikäinen 2001; Samuelsson & Carlson 2008; White et al. 2007). The value of rhymes in language development is articulated by Fisher & Williams:

Through the repetition of nursery rhymes, jingles and poems, children learn the sounds of their language and gain phonemic awareness that enables them to hear the individual phonemes in words (Fisher & Williams, cited in Williams & Rask 2003, p. 528).

Understanding educative attraction and expressive qualities in the playfulness of children's rhymes also involves an examination of the role of gesture in communication and the study of kinesics. Theresa Antes offers a useful definition:

Kinesics, the study of gesture and facial expression in a language system, has only recently received attention as an important subfield of semiotics or linguistics; however, the role played by gestures is undoubtedly as old as spoken language itself, if not older. Gestures are an integral part of everyday communication, sometimes accompanied by verbal language, sometimes standing alone (1996, p. 439).

Playtime rhymes provide insight into ‘kinesics’ as many of these rhymes include an element of action, physicality or gesture as part of their way of communicating. The title rhyme of the book and CD, Can You Keep a Secret? also provides an example of the different ways gesture functions in communication, as observation of the act of asking a question indicates that it is often accompanied by some degree of gestural movement in facial expression or body movement. I have certainly observed this with my own interaction with audiences in the way I lean forward toward either an individual or a group, utilising a range of gestures to create an invitational connection and intimacy with the rhyme's questioning call ‘Can You Keep a Secret? I don't suppose you can' and follow-up admonition of ‘You mustn't laugh, you mustn't cry, but do the
best you can!’ The deliberate provocation in the second line provides advice like, tongue-in-cheek affirmation of childlike playfulness and imagination.

The first person narrative draws attention to the notion of performance as part of ‘performativity’ (Conquergood 1982; Turner 1989) when communicating with others, a term generating mixed meanings in both scholarly discourse and common use. However, for the purpose of this exegesis, I regard performativity as a type of performance – or as Amanda Kemp aptly describes, ‘performance as a way of knowing and a way of showing’ (Kemp, cited in Conquergood 2002, p. 152) and this is something I discuss in greater depth in the action rhymes section.

The book’s title rhyme ‘Can you keep a secret?’, also incorporates that which Iona and Peter Opie in *The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren* (2001) describe as a ‘ritual declaration’ or ‘oral code of legislation’, utilising language and gestures which have been an accepted part of ritual since times long before our own’ (p. 121). This could be more easily understood as the embedding of implicit meaning and codes of behaviour transmitted via oral language, games and interactions of childhood. The Opies’ note the historical and social significance of gestures, such as crossing fingers, as a form of symbolic accompaniment to oath making, lying and other game like variations. These variations draw attention to the use of rhymes for purposes of amusement, often turning these rhymes into types of play or games.

In Ohio children bind themselves to silence by saying: ‘Cross my heart and hope to die, lock my lips and throw away the key’, and they make the gesture of turning a key in their lips and throwing it away. (Opie & Opie 2001, p. 141).

Antes also draws attention to the significance of gestures in communication: Gestures are recognised as iconic signs, made up of a motivated signifier and a signified. They are, at the same time, culture-specific and thus conventional. This being the case, they are generally nontransferable, but must be learned just as foreign languages are learned (1996, p. 447).
An example of these iconic signs and the use of gesture is evident in the song ‘Open Shut Them’ where the opening and closing of hands signifies the opening and closing of a mouth. The most well known melody for this traditional rhyme is the version familiar to Australian audiences via its use on the ABC television show Playschool (fig. 10) and various other commercial nursery rhyme CDs.

Figure 10: Open Shut Them (Clark 1995, p. 46)

However I created a different version with my own melodic and rhythmic nuances in the key of C (fig. 11).

Figure 11: Open Shut Them (Carthew 2009, full version Appendix 1.6)

My arrangement of this song moves at a quicker pace, courtesy of a quaver based rhythmic structure and a feeling of increased brightness aided by its higher tonal centre in the key of C. Such manipulation of key signatures and music tonality is well known for its use by composers as a way to communicate atmosphere and to modulate people’s mood states’ (Mead & Ball 2007, p. 73).

There is consensus in research that music has a demonstrable effect on mood (Smith & Noon 1998) and key signatures have also been noted as affecting a
song’s feel, mood and by extension aesthetic (Balter 2004). While key signatures help create a ‘feel’ in music, pitch is critical for vocal engagement and I was mindful that some songs sung by adults for children are outside of children’s vocal range. The musical merit of this decision is affirmed by Debbie Cavalier when she comments:

It’s important to remember that a natural, comfortable range for a young child’s voice is from middle C to G (a perfect fifth above). This range can be extended by a few notes on either end as a child goes from preschool into the primary grades (2007).

My music industry collaborations with established songwriters from Bushfire Press also informed my decision to ensure the melody lines of my song arrangements generally sat in the range between the D above middle C and high D. The songs on the CD were selected for their lively feel and playful, action orientation, and as a result, I arranged most of the songs in the key of G or D to establish a bright and up tempo mood. Pragmatically, as a producer of the CD, these keys also suited the violin, an instrument I was keen to feature in some of the arrangements. The addition of upbeat electric guitar in CD recording helped create a more contemporary and rockier sound, consolidating my desire to create a distinctive interpretation complementing the fun filled tempo contrasts of slowing down and speeding up in the ‘creep them, creep them, creep them, creep them, right up to your chin’ lines. This game like aspect of the song creates anticipation for young audiences leading up to the expected opening of the mouth as if in readiness to bite, although it is hard to sing with a wide open mouth! Most importantly, the anticipatory, climactic aspect of this rhyme foregrounds the power of predictive anticipation as a hook for engagement in children’s rhymes and wordplay.

This element of anticipation is clearly evident in the repeated use of the clap as a key feature of this song. In the traditional version (fig. 10) the clap occurs on the ‘on beat’, i.e., on the word clap, however my version features the clap on the ‘off beat’, i.e., after the word clap ‘give a little clap’ (fig. 11). I based this decision
on my teaching and performance experience of playing this song and noting children's and adult audience's enjoyment of the predictive challenge.

Watching young children and parents share the moment of clapping and the associated element of prediction consolidated in my mind that one of the key reasons for grouping the rhymes under this heading of playtime is their ability to promote playfulness linked with togetherness. Togetherness clearly combines with playfulness and the tactile in the Dutch ‘hop on the knee’ bouncing rhyme *Damespaarden* (Riding Horses)’ (p. 53), a rhyme that encourages, and indeed relies on, the rollicking body interaction between adult and child. I was delighted when I discovered this rhyme while researching Dr Gwenda Davey's field notes in the archives of the Australian Children’s Folklore Collection.

This rhyme is an unambiguous example of a poem whose structure is bound with togetherness, as the trotting horse mimicry is reinforced by the act of bouncing a child up and down on the knees as a central mechanism of engagement. Excitement is further created by the deliberate act of slowing down and speeding up—a feature of the rhyme designed to create the horse like imagery of transition from a gallop to a canter, in so doing certainly helping to establish a strong sense of game play, anticipation and predictability reinforcing these features as elements generating playful interaction for both child and adult.

As a little known rhyme in Australian contexts, the galloping / trotting game aspect of this rhyme may not be as obvious on the first read through. However I put forward that the stress points and accented beat on the ‘D’ in *Dames* and softer accent on the ‘p’ in *pa* and rhythmic syllabification of *Dames-pa-ard-en*...
create a strong galloping meter that longs for out loud recitation. The tactile nature of this hop-on-the-knee bouncing rhyme highlights conceptual similarities with other finger plays and action rhymes that utilise touch as a hook for engagement and encouragement of interaction. The interaction encouraged in the sub-genre of _hop on the knee_ rhymes is worthy of further attention in research and I was delighted to uncover such a little known and interesting example, especially one from another culture.

This rhyme is actually the chorus part of a much longer traditional verse I discovered in the archives of the Australian Children's Folklore collection. I decided to include the chorus only as this had a rhythm and mood that sat with the spirit of the collection and complemented the musical rhythm of the more familiar English song / rhyme *Horsey, Horsey*. Another factor influencing selection of both rhymes was the attraction of horse based imagery created by their pairing. *Damespaarden*’s Dutch origin also suited my wish to include multicultural rhymes in each category and in the absence of a title in the museum’s archive file notes, I made the decision to call the rhyme *Damespaarden* (Riding Horses), highlighting the conceptual focus of the rhyme in English, while giving prominence to the original Dutch origin.

It is worth reflecting here on the verse which I did not include in the publication which was a first verse excerpt sourced from the research notes of Dr Gwenda Davey in the Children's Folklore Collection Archives, Victoria Museum, Australia (Davey n.d.):

```
Hop, hop paadje             Hop, Hop horsie
Met je vlassen staartje    With your flaxen tail
Met je koperen voetjes     with your copper feet
Paard, wat loop je zoetjes Horse you go too slow.
Kun je niet wat harder lopen? Can’t you go a little faster?
Zal ik een zakje haver kopen? Shall I buy you a bag of oats?
Toen liep’t paardje op een draf! Then the horse runs off in a trot!
Toen ik ‘m een zakje haver gaf! When I promised a bag of oats!
```
An instructive linguistic aspect of the above excerpt of 'Damespaarden (Riding Horses)' is the rhythmical strict rhyming strength evident in the original Dutch that is missing in the English translation. My non-inclusion of this verse once again brings into prominence the significance of both rhythm and strict end rhyme to my choice making and writing, as I became increasingly aware that end rhyme patterns were one of the most prevalent poetic devices or elements evident in the collection.

My attention therefore turned to the attraction of rhymes across cultures to see if there were other commonalities in aesthetic and resonant appeal. Peter Jusczyk echoed my own questioning:

\[
\text{What fascinates the child about verse so that he/she demands to have poems read over and over again? Is it merely the content of the verse that attracts the child? Or does he/she find pleasure in aspects of the form of the verse as well? (1977, p. 559).}
\]

One of the commonalities in regard to playtime rhymes is pleasure situated with playful connection to others and in particular the way these types of rhymes create a sense of togetherness. Researcher Dorothy Howard foregrounded links between the language of rhymes and togetherness in her pioneering research on children's rhymes, play and verbal lore:

\[
\text{In the beginning my attention had been concentrated on the verbal aspects of children’s play. But as I spent more and more time in the playground, I became more and more aware that children’s voices accompanied other body movements and that children moved in group patterns (Howard, cited in Factor 2005, p. 5).}
\]

To answer Juscyk’s questions and to consider the multi-layered functioning of rhymes in Can You Keep a Secret? it is important to consider the kinaesthetic relationship between words, movement and imagination— a relationship that is a notable feature of the next section of rhymes that I grouped together under the heading of action rhymes.
Action Rhymes
Action Rhymes

It is important to reiterate that ‘engagement through action’ or ‘learning by doing’ was a key principle of selection in the collection. Action rhymes have qualities that encourage a connection between movement and communication or ‘bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence’ (Gardner 1993), and these action rhymes were therefore selected and placed together because they encourage participation and kinaesthetic interaction.

The action rhymes in this collection have a strong rhythmic drive, a device which, when combined with other features such as alliteration and rhyme, impacts positively on engagement with poetic forms (Jusczyk 1977). These features run in tandem with an inherited musicality, a characteristic that leads to the interchangeable labeling of ‘action rhymes’ as ‘action songs’ —a duality that I acknowledge in the title of the accompanying music CD, Can you keep a secret? Timeless Songs to Share and Treasure (Carthew 2009).

Wainwright (2004) draws attention to the relationship between poetry and music, noting that the ‘incantatory’ musical qualities of beat, lyric, pattern and dance are part of ‘the close relation between poetry and song’ (p. 2). This musical element is part of their appeal, a point extended by Stephen Mithen when he says that ‘music can not only express emotional states but induce them in oneself and others’ (2006, p. 98). Mithen’s statement points to the power of sharing musical experience and the jouissance, or emotionally ‘joyful’ physical musicality that is a key characteristic of action rhymes. Music’s ability to act as a trigger for emotional response and collaboration with text is something that Eco notes: ‘in short, it installs a new relationship between the contemplation and the utilization of a work’ (Eco, cited in O’Meara 2008, p. 12, italics in original). Readerly relationship with music has stimulated considerable discourse (Barthes & Heath 1977; Eco 1989) and while outside the scope of this exegesis, I do return to music’s power to stimulate engagement, metaphor, imagery and in particular, emotional response in the final lullabies and quiet rhymes section.
The search for specific action rhymes with a heightened, resonant musical quality began in earnest in my early years as a music teacher as I was constantly searching for music resources to engage my students. My commercial interest in action rhymes as publishable works began in earnest when I was commissioned to create the anthology of action rhymes for Pearson Education Australia, *Heads shoulders, knees and toes: and other action rhymes*.

As part of the searching process I discovered the British publishing company, A & C Black, a publisher with regard for the commercial and educational appeal of traditional and contemporary action rhymes. Their series of verse songbooks and resources came complete with recordings, chord structures and melody lines; and the popular and commercial appeal of their content is evidenced by the fact that many of their song book collections such as *Okki-Tokki-Unga: Action songs for children* (Harrop 1976), *Strawberry Fair: 51 Traditional songs* (Williams 1985) and *Appussidu: Songs for children* (Harrop, Blakeley & Gadsby 1975) are all still in print (*A&C Black Music Catalogue 2010: Music publications* 2010). The commercial availability of these books and their continued advertisement in catalogues over a long period of time provides clear evidence of the value associated with action rhymes and songs in the publishing marketplace, a business environment where back listing, remaindering and out-of-print editions is common (Shatzkin 1982).

A number of other companies around the world publish material in this area, thus affirming the value of this type of project. One such example is the Australian Broadcasting Commission (2010) which publishes a prodigious list of print and audio-visual resources featuring both traditional and contemporary children's verse and song. I reiterate though, that my goal was centered on a desire to create something different and original in its anthological mix. This desire is epitomised in my reference to one of my favourite action rhymes and songs *Skinnamarink* (p.70; trk 1), a rhyme which I draw attention to in the
introduction to the book. I also positioned this song as the first track on the CD showing in two distinct ways the value I place on this rhyme's ability to capture the essence and spirit of both artefacts.

‗Skinnamarink‘ came to my attention many years ago in a music resource produced by Canadian entertainers and TV show presenters, Sharon, Lois and Bram called *Elephant Jam* (1980). A particular feature of this book resource was its multicultural nature and eclectic mix of traditional playground chants, rhymes, finger plays, language games and action songs mixed with text, images and music scores. This collection was unlike anything I had seen before, featuring not only the expected English and Canadian French games and rhymes, but also Spanish, West Indian and Eastern European rhymes, all reflecting cultural diversity that I had not found in other collections readily available in Australia at the time. I mention this because my exposure to this book and other culturally diverse resources such as the Orff Schulwerk teacher’s manual *Orff and Kodaly: Adapted for the Elementary School* (Wheeler & Raebeck 1985) played a vital role in inspiring my desire to compile a vibrant and culturally balanced collection. They also provided peer based affirmation for the use of movement and action rhymes in both education and literary contexts.

*Skinnamarink*’s strong rhythmic drive and nexus with alliteration, consonance and syllabification is an immediate part of its attraction. The alliterative syllabification in its title echoes the title of the hit song

![Image of Skinnamarink](image-url)
‘Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious’ (Sherman & Sherman 1964) from the film *Mary Poppins*. Such comparison points to human enjoyment of, and attraction to, the playfulness of ‘scat vocals’ or phrases with nonsense syllables. Nonsensical rhymes are key elements echoed in the iconic rhyming verse of Roald Dahl, Spike Milligan, Dr Seuss, Margaret Mahy and Australia’s own master of rhythmic alliterative nonsense verse CJ Dennis, whose much loved popular poem ‘Triantiwontigolope’ (Dennis 1921) is a prime example.

However one of the distinct differences between ‘Skinnamarink’ and ‘Triantiwontigolope’ is the way Skinnamarink’s inherent musicality is linked to movement in its functioning, with poetic features acting as signposts for action and physical engagement. This feature is consistent in action rhymes and is one of the reasons these rhymes are so strongly represented on the CD; I could have easily produced a music CD of action rhymes alone. It is therefore informative to reflect on the four rhymes from this section that were chosen for the CD: ‘Skinnamarink’, ‘Little Green Frog’, ‘The Ants Go Marching’ and ‘Old MacDonald’, as they are excellent examples of the musical physicality evident in these types of rhymes, and provide cross-sectional links to the discussion on gesture in wordplay in the playtime sections.

I deliberately placed ‘Skinnamarink’ as the first track on the CD for its rhythmic strength and sense of alliterative fun. The kinaesthetic qualities evident demonstrate the linkage between movement and words, qualities representative of other songs to follow. In this song the corresponding movement from one side of the body (elbow) to the other, associated with a change in the music from the G major to the G diminished chord demonstrates a strong ‘kinesic’ musical connection; ‘kinesics’ defined by Birdwhistell as ‘a systematic study of how human beings communicate through body movement and gesture’ (1983, p. 352).

Despite the fact that this connection between music and gesture is difficult to measure in terms of subjective notions of auditory pleasure, there is general consensus in western music that the root note of chords and tonal structure is pivotal in chordal and transitional relations. This is supported by Parncutt’s observation:
It is possible to perceive more than one tone at once (the chord evokes multiple pitches) but the chord can have only one root at a time (the root note of the chord is ambiguous) (1994, p.149, brackets in original).

This is important here as the root note’s vitality in “Skinnamarink” is clearly seen in the musical relationship between the G major and the G diminished chord (fig.15, bars 4-7); where the pleasing effect of the transition between these two chords combines with other rhythmic features to create attraction.

The resonance in the transition of the initial chords in this song leads me to agree with Parncutt & Strasburger’s view that “in general, the better a chord blends, the more likely it is to be perceived as a single sonority, with a single, well-defined root; and the more consonant it sounds’ (1994, p. 93).

It is also useful to note that the accompanying sheet music (Appendix 1.1; fig. 15) assists readers and singers by indicating phonetic enunciation via the use of hyphens, matching the word intonation to the corresponding triplets and bounced quavers, crochets and minims. Even without an understanding of musical theory, the short hyphens assist in visualising and understanding the intonation. In the absence of sheet music, such understanding of rhythmic or musical nuance is totally dependent on oral renditions (spoken or sung) or that which can be grasped via the semantic or visual cues from text. This demonstrates the function of the music score as an alternative means of interpreting and performing the music from the CD arrangements.

The swapping of the elbows from the left side of the body to the right when singing “skinnamarinky dinky dink’ and “skinnamarinky doo’ is a vital first ‘hook’
in this song and is part of the song’s attraction, especially once the song is known. The second section (fig. 16) also uses body movement to create a sense of moving with the shape of the song, with progressive actions moving down the body in symbolic representation of the sun moving through the day until sunset. This is achieved via touching—head/morning, waist/afternoon and knees/evening, until the resolving swinging up of one arm into the shape of a crescent moon to match the phrase ‘underneath the moon’.

The song’s narrative connects with others by way of pointing to one’s own eye to match the ‘I’, placing a hand over the heart to indicate ‘love’, then pointing at someone or something on ‘you’, a combination of text and action that work together to both imply and create intimacy. The importance of gestures and movement to the book’s functioning was something I flagged in my Foreword via the highlighting of clear body orientated imagery from ‘Skinnamarink’ (fig. 17).

As an illustrated text, visual imagery acts as a cue for matching specific movements or actions accompanying selected rhymes and this is something I will talk further about in the finger plays section, a sub-genre where there is a strong tradition and expectation of matching specific actions to words or phrases. Returning
to the music accompaniment, I wish to stress again that I wanted to make my song arrangements fresh and contemporary and the CD version of this song provides a clear example of a contemporary, rock style lead break played by electric guitar in the introduction (trk 1; fig. 18).

**Guitar riff intro**

![Figure 18: Skinnamarink, guitar riff introductory bars 1-3 (full version Appendix 1.1)](image18)

The song rhyme _The Little Green Frog_ (p. 79; trk 4) was one of the late inclusions in this collection as I selected it following one of my experiences at a children’s bookstore storytime session. On my arrival to perform as a guest speaker I unexpectedly witnessed the children and parents singing _Galumph went the Little Green Frog_ as part their welcome ritual. I immediately began to accommodate them on my guitar, being careful to simply echo the existing rhyme and tune which was in a major key in both of the song’s sections. Without doubt it was my observation of the affection demonstrated for this song that inspired me to place it in the final edit of _Can You Keep a Secret?_. Subsequent reflection and research also re-kindled a memory and understanding that this camp song was popular in the scouts (a movement I was a part of in my adolescence)—known under various guises as _Ga lumph_ or _The Frog_.

![Figure 19: The Little Green Frog, illustrated by Jobi Murphy (Carthew 2008a, p. 79)](image19)
The song’s distinctiveness is situated its use of onomatopoeia in the representational frog word / sound of ‘Galumph’. This song also provides a clear example of variance in onomatopoeic sound making, as regional variations include ‘Galoopmh’, ‘Da Glumpf’ and ‘Mm-ahh’.

These variations point to the fun of word play pattern making aptly described by Lottridge:

> All of these are patterned language forms and rhyme is a vital part of the pattern. It's also part of the fun of the rhyme and helps the person saying the rhyme play with language and anticipate or remember the ending of a line (Lottridge 2009, Appendix 3.2).

Listening to this song released a familiarity in my psyche; however I just couldn’t remember ‘exactly’ where I had heard it before, although it is highly likely that I heard it back in my scouting days or in my travels around schools. I have experienced déjá vu encounters with music and verse before and this perhaps highlights the fluidity associated with the oral nature and transmission of children’s folklore, songs and rhymes. The way certain songs and rhymes gather in our individual and collective memory is something that is part of their mystery and attraction.

Part of this song’s appeal is no doubt the way humans are attracted to mimicry and acting out. *The Little Green Frog* uses the repetitive allure of hand actions mimicking the opening and shutting of the imaginary frog’s mouth in concert with the repetitive phrasing of the ‘Gaumph’ in ‘Gaumph went the little green frog one day’. The function of repetition as a hook is also once again emphasised in the corresponding action of frogs eating flies. The influence of changing tempo and tone is made clear in the liveliness of the second section, a section that features the highly anticipated and repetitive ‘clap’. Traditionally this song has always transitioned from a minor to a major key to accentuate that change. However, I decided to keep both verses in the traditionally lively and bright major key, adding to the unique character of my song arrangement. This draws attention to the sense of expectation associated with hearing a familiar tune or lyric and raises the issue of ‘triggers’ that stimulate memory. Memories
triggered by association with familiar tunes or songs appear to receive some research and media attention (Cady, Harris & Knappenberger 2008; Larson 2009) and, whilst outside the scope of this exegesis, the relationship between specific actions and their function as memory triggers is certainly an area for further research, especially in regard to the relationship between memory and movement.

Repetition and onomatopoeia combine with the kinaesthetic in word play in the popular song ‘Old MacDonald’. The repetitive and highly anticipated acting out of animal mimicry provides a vehicle for humour as well as engagement. Lum aptly notes ‘the uses and function of rhythmic play and melodic utterances are many and varied’ (2009, p. 39) and I agree with his recommendation that the specific study of rhythmic play in the lives of early childhood and primary school children is an area worthy of continued exploration. The role of humour and its nuances in rhythmic wordplay and song is equally worth investigating, as that functioning is clearly evident in rhymes such as ‘Old Macdonald’, ‘Bingo’, ‘Okki-Tokki-Unga’, ‘Here we go Lobby Loo’, ‘A Ram Sam Sam’ and many others in the action rhymes section and collection. It is in this light that I wish to talk about the two action rhymes ‘Old MacDonald’ (pp. 80-81) and ‘The Ants Go Marching’ (pp. 64-67).

It would seem reasonable to say that there is something about the attraction of mimicking animal noises, combined with the song’s rhythmic and melodic appeal that contributes to ‘Old MacDonald’s’ popularity. Human penchant for vocalisation and the theatrical is something I have observed as both a music and primary teacher. Brian Sutton-Smith (2005) in his discussion on play as a type of theatre draws attention to this affinity when citing Keith Sawyer’s (1997) suggestion that preschool play and dramatic reenactments can be viewed as systemic multi-vocal improvisation impersonation (Sawyer, cited in Sutton-Smith 2005, p. 191). The importance of these actions in human behaviour is supported by Schechner’s comment that ‘dancing, singing, wearing masks, and costumes; impersonating other people, animals…acting out narratives…are all integral to being human’ (1994, p. 614).
The attraction of making animal noises, onomatopoeic or other vocalisations perceived as humorous and/or engaging draws attention to the comparison between _Old MacDonald_ and _The Little Green Frog_. When I thought about my choices in this section my attention was drawn to the way these rhymes display similarity in function to the train noises of _Chuff! Chuff! Chuff! Chuff!_ in the song rhyme _Down by the Station_ (p. 85). Certainly the iconic status of these three songs as well loved song rhymes, draws attention to the importance of quirky noise mimicry.

Quirkiness and action based mimicry is also a marked feature of the _The Ants Go Marching_ (pp. 64-67). There is a delightful, yet distinct juxtaposition present in this rhyme, a juxtaposition that emanates from the combination of the explicit military style marching overtones with childlike imagery. This is enhanced by the mimicry present in the lines _The little stops to suck his thumb..._' and _The little one stops to tie his shoe..._' etc. These lines combine with the irrepressible physicality of the strong marching rhythms and culminate in the _boom, boom..._' at the end of each stanza, a hook which involves the interactive bumping of hips with a partner. These physical elements combine with the strong resonance of the melody line (see Appendix 1.12); resonance that arguably has roots in the melody's popular links to the _Battle Hymn of the Republic_. Without doubt, it was the combination of resonant movement orientated elements that led me to place this rhyme in the action rhymes section, rather than the counting section, where it would also sit comfortably.

This rhyme also provides a clear example of rhymes that utilise counting or numeric concepts to create effect; rhymes I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter concerned with counting rhymes. Dorothy Howard comments that the _literal_ and figurative meaning in children's play language is a labyrinthian path with unexpected turnings. Only children know the turnings' (Howard 1960, p.138). It is in the light of Howard's comment that I wish to take a closer look at the counting rhymes section in regard to not only their numeric content, but also some unexpected turnings in the anthological process.
Counting Rhymes

Figure 20: Five Sea Shells, illustrated by Jobi Murphy (Carthew 2008a, p. 106)

In this chapter I outline and discuss my thinking related to rhymes with mathematical or counting concepts embedded in their structure. The internalisation of the mathematical or numeric is a peculiar feature of certain nursery rhymes and it is a feature that also has a relationship with the rhythmic. It is this characteristic that led to the establishment and grouping together of the rhymes in this section under the heading of ‘Counting Rhymes’.

Counting out loud is a human peculiarity familiar across cultures and while often related to everyday needs and interactions, it can also be heard as a communicative activity associated with play in school playgrounds and is at times combined with games, chants and song. It is this connection with play that is important for me to emphasise here, as counting’s engaging qualities informed my anthological purpose and led to my desire to create this chapter.

‘Out loud’ counting is also associated with chant and its occurrence can also be heard where groups congregate and engage with communal or shared oral language. The chant of ‘Aussie, Aussie, Aussie, Oi! Oi! Oi!’ is one contemporary Australian example. Football cheer squads and other sports supporters, who gather in large groups at public venues, often use ‘out loud’ chants and taunts as a mechanism to support their teams e.g. ‘One, two, three, four, who do you think we barrack for?’.
The power of chant to engage and affect response arose in a radio interview focused on *Can you Keep a Secret?* with broadcasters Matthew Abraham and David Bevan (ABC 891 Adelaide Morning Program, 2008). Subsequent on air discussion drew attention to the rhythmic power and musicality of call and response type rhymes and the similarities evident in Barack Obama’s ‘Yes we can’ speech delivered during his presidential election campaign (Obama 2008). The links between musicality, rhythm and counting rhymes came into sharp focus for me during my work developing *Three Purple Elephants and Other Counting Rhymes* (Carthew 2003a), a big book designed for early childhood. The experience of conceptualising, theorising and selecting rhymes for that compilation encouraged me to think about counting rhymes as a sub-genre and to reflect on their defining characteristics.

Research related to other anthologies such as my own *Apple on a stick: playground chants and rhymes* (Carthew 2004), *First verses: counting rhymes* (Foster 1996), and resource collections such as *Jump rope rhymes: nothing but the classics!* (*Jump rope rhymes: nothing but the classics!* 1998), and *One, Two, Skip a few! First Number Rhymes* (Arenson 1998) was also crucial to my deliberations. These anthologies contained rhymes with conceptual mathematical links and I was determined to present a logical mathematical structure in this section. My line of investigation for this task was strongly informed by the popularity of clapping and skipping rhymes or what is known in America as ‘jump rope’ rhymes. These types of rhymes and chants are characterised by vocalisations synchronous with actions such as skipping, hopping, clapping or other physical movement. They also often utilise language with clear reference to counting.

The relationship between the physicality of action rhymes and counting is evidenced by the use of such rhymes in the physical education program *Jump Rope for Heart* (National Heart Foundation in association with the Australian...
Council for Health 1983). In this respect it seems clear that my role as a physical education teacher and Jump Rope for Heart co-coordinator during my primary school career provided exposure to the rhythmic and kinaesthetic properties of the rhymes in skipping games and this has in turn contributed to my collective knowledge as an anthologist. I also have no doubt that this exposure directly affected my choice and variation of the rhyme *Oliver Twist* where I added in the metrical repeats (see fig. 22):

![Oliver Twist](image)

*Figure 22: Oliver Twist, illustrated by Jobi Murphy (Carthew 2008a, pp. 108-109)*

I placed the repetitive ‘Oliver, Oliver, Oliver Twist; Can you, can you, can you do this?’ in motion in order to create a beat similar to the meter experienced in skipping chants. This exposure to the power of skipping and its relationship to counting highlights the relationship with the previous section of action rhymes made clear in the interpretative and instructional panel illustration (fig. 22).

Such skipping style counting rhymes draw attention to gender associated with game playing in the language sharing of clapping and chanting games. Some of these activities appear at least in public situations to be practiced and demonstrated more readily by girls. While gender related to play is a huge area
of study and outside the scope of this exegesis, it is relevant to discuss here, as I aspired to appeal to, and engage, both genders throughout my creative works and this was a major consideration in my thinking as I gathered and selected rhymes for this section of the anthology. My observation of play activity in education settings suggests that the generalisation that primary age girls are the principle public demonstrators of skipping games and hand clapping rhymes in play situations is a reasonable assertion.

This observation certainly does not mean that boys do not participate in, or enjoy, such activities, far from it. The desire and attraction for rhymes and chant could be argued to also inform games such as ‘Himpo Bumpo’, ‘Charlie over the water’, ‘brandy’ and ‘tag’; physical action rhymes and games noticeably popular with boys. Turner takes this further and makes the important point that the purpose of counting rhymes is often entwined with game rules such as to ‘determine who shall be ‘he or ‘it’ (Turner 1969, p. 135). Certainly my own observations as a physical education teacher support the view that boys love skipping just as much girls.

Watching the rhythmic power of a turning rope, and the associated predictive effect of a rope swirling and hitting the ground, highlights the predictive and poetic effect of musical beat. There is no doubt that the mesmerising beat associated with such activities, experienced in unison with vocalisations and body movement, helps to sustain attraction even well after the rope’s swinging and vocalised games have stopped. The strength of considering this idea is that chanting counting rhymes in unison with movement adds to appeal— not only in counting rhymes, but also other rhymes and language games.
It is therefore useful to reflect on how *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (1993) describes Chant:

> As less a definite form than a mode of verbal performance somewhere between speech and song ...harkening back to the drama of traditional rituals (p. 182).

The counting rhymes of early childhood use the recitative and repetitive in a similar way to chant and therefore provide an example of traditional verbal and kinaesthetic rituals. As a primary teacher, I became acutely aware of the educative function of counting rhymes as I would often hear time’s table chants, and counting songs, games and rhymes sung in classrooms on a regular basis. These rhymes are often used as a means of early language and mathematical learning; and they are also used in learning English as a Second Language (ESL), with the numbers one to ten often being one of a first encounters with a foreign language and bi-lingual learning. The repetitive, rhythmic beat and pull of music is used as a way of helping learners engage with and learn first concepts. This is evident in resources such as *Sing-a-Lingo®* (Madera & Madera 2009) and ‗Musical Times Tables‘ (Spencer & Murray 2008) and other contemporary resources incorporating song, music, movement and dance to reinforce language development.

By looking at one of the lesser known counting rhymes, namely *Zoom, Zoom, Zoom* (p. 104), I wish to foreground the way rhymes in this collection interrelate with imagery and music.

For this particular rhyme I also wrote an accompanying song for the CD recording (trk 14; Appendix 1.14), and added a recorded sound effect to represent a real rocket launch/blast off. In terms of this rhyme’s place in the collection and its link to specific aspects of numeracy, it is the descending counting pattern of ‘five, four, three, two, one – blast off!’ that acts as a hook and vital conduit for the visualisation.

When I perform this to school children, I often use the page illustration (fig. 24) projected onto a large screen and begin the countdown element by showing five fingers and removing them in animated sequence, at which point the audience
seemingly on cue and with demonstrable intuition, invariably finishes off the descending countdown with gusto. To complement this anticipated exuberance, I conducted research to source the *perfect* rocket sound effect to bring forth the rocket imagery. My desire was to find a sound effect which zoomed in and then flew into the stratosphere, capturing the imagination of the listener. I believe I achieved this result, as audiences with whom I have shared this song appear to collectively *feel* the rocket launch; and in so doing they are encouraged to imagine and *experience* the act of taking off through space. This highlights that our imagination is stimulated by various inputs our senses -

Ferrington brings into view the importance of sound effects as stimulus points when he notes, "Good audio production design can expand human experience throughout the multi-sensory image building capability of the mind" (1994, p. 63).

Figure 24: Zoom, Zoom, Zoom, illustration by Jobi Murphy (Carthew 2008a, p. 104)
The use of sound effects on the CD in *Zoom, Zoom, Zoom* (trk 14) and songs from other sections such as *Old Macdonald* (trk 4) and *Little Green Frog* (trk 11) brings into focus:

The ability to form mental images of objects and events not immediately available to the senses is the essence of human imagination. This unique attribute of the mind makes possible the ability to seemingly see, smell, hear, and feel things which do not exist in the present tense (Ferrington 1994, p. 62)

The act of imagining a rocket ship blasting towards the moon in *Zoom, Zoom, Zoom*, expands a dramatic notion captured by Elam that: "The spectator translates what he sees and hears on the stage into a fictional dramatic world" (Elam, cited in O'Neill 1985, p. 98) and brings into focus Ferrington's concept of the theatre of the mind and the mechanisms of sensory input on imagination and response (fig. 25).

The construction of an imagined, dramatic world is part of the aesthetic in my artefacts. It is also the mainstay of the storyteller, minstrel, poet, writer, reader and listener. An example of how the imagined dramatic world combines with the
numeric is encapsulated in the age old rhyme ‘The Grand Old Duke of York’ (p.116) and partner verse ‘Ten Thousand Men’ (p. 117). I united these two rhymes in the anthology for the specific purpose of giving prominence to the value of partner rhymes/songs and wrote ‘Ten Thousand Men’ to achieve that aim. However, this rhyme’s placement as the final double page spread in this chapter also draws attention to the mathematical progression in the chapter.

The longevity of ‘The Grand Old Duke of York’ is brought into relief by popular culture and linguistic researcher Albert Jack (2008) who traces its origins back to King James and the revolution of 1688; and historical events such as Prince Frederick’s failed attempt to invade and conquer France (Jack 2008, pp. 52-55). While I found that history intriguing, I have no doubt that one of the rhymes most powerful and engaging hooks is the simple kinaesthetic resonance of the words UP and DOWN. The use of these two words highlights the power of the easily identified repetition and juxtaposition of the ‘action’ of up and down.

I purposefully wrote the verse / lyrics and melodic counterpoint in ‘Ten Thousand Men’ to highlight the poetic call of these repeated words even further with the call of ‘Up! Up! Up!’ immediately followed by ‘Down! Down! Down!’
dovetailing into what I have observed as children’s natural affinity with both repetition and marching up and down; in this way answering the rhyme’s internal call to be both chanted and acted out via movement and action.

This rhyme’s placement at the end of this chapter reflects my anthological planning, as I set out to achieve mathematical progression and sequence; starting at rhymes using the singular alpha numeric concept of one, moving through to larger numbers such as two, three, five, ten, twenty and so forth. Interestingly, in my quest to find contemporary and traditional rhymes containing, or alluding to counting, I found that some mathematical concepts and numbers tend to appear more prevalently in children’s verse than others.

My ‘slush pile’ collection of potential counting rhymes showed that many more rhymes utilised the numbers one, two, three, five and ten than other number concepts, with five and ten appearing most often. It would seem no coincidence that the highly successful early childhood orientated singing group High Five and the Australian children’s writer Mem Fox’s recent book Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes (2008)—a book which made the New York Times’ best seller list for 18 weeks in 2008/9 (Fox 2010)—both feature the use of these two numbers. Indeed Five Little Owls (p. 143), the inspiration for my 2007 picture book of the same name, is another example.

My growing awareness of the use of these numbers in existing collections spurred my desire to create a sense of difference in this chapter’s progression and page spreads. I therefore became more interested in seeking out rhymes and songs featuring a broader range of numbers or at least numbers used in less predictable or expected ways. As a result, a quick scan of this counting chapter’s progression reveals mathematical concepts based on a variety of graduating conceptual frameworks. This includes ‘counting on’ as in One Potato, Two Potato’ (p. 94), ‘counting backwards’ as in Five Bananas’ (p. 98), ‘The Train’ (p. 102) & Five Little Seashells’ (p. 106) and ‘counting in doubles’ as in Two, four, six, eight’ (p. 95).

Other counting notions are also present in the rhymes in this chapter. Counting backwards by twos is the principal hook in Ten Little Candles’ (p. 110),
cumulative, larger multiplier sequences are the distinctive feature of ‘Noah’s Ark’ (p. 112) and mathematical logic riddles are part of the rhyme ‘As I Was Going to St Ives’ (p. 101), a rhyme which also features a repeated focus on the number seven and its cumulative multiplier effect. Selection of ‘As I Was Going to St Ives’ was strategic, as I was keen to include a rhyme featuring the number seven as it is relatively uncommon in counting rhymes.

In ‘Ten Little Candles’ (p.110), the kinaesthetic links between rhyme, action and the numeric are underlined by the action of blowing out candles. It is certainly my experience that the mime like action of blowing out two candles on each Wh! Wh! powerfully connects children and adults alike to the idea of counting backwards by twos. Selecting and positioning this rhyme was important, as the counting back by twos echoes the dropping off of the two train carriages in the dance like game structure of ‘The Train’ (p. 102), a traditional rhyme that uses shared dramatic play as a pivotal hook.

However, my central focus was on the mathematical concepts embedded in the language of these rhymes, as that was my key criteria for defining them as counting rhymes. The selection of rhymes categorised under the heading of counting rhymes in Can You Keep a Secret? therefore provides a clear example of rhymes, chants and songs that in Schwartz’s words, ‘capitalize on children’s enchantment with language sounds involving numbers’ (1995, p. 487).

![Image of Ten Little Candles](image-url)
Finger Plays
Finger Plays

‘Finger plays’ is a self-descriptive term for early childhood oriented rhymes that communicate ideas using fingers as a vital part of their structure. Their way of linking actions and representative visualisations leads me to concur with Clinciu’s reflection that it is the concretisation of our image making that is grounded in the ‘visual-kinaesthetic, abstracting being strongly quartered in figural and image’ (2009, p. 81). Finger plays are also sometimes seen as a particular sort of rhyme which the late childlore scholar Professor Ian Turner described as ‘finger-games or feature-designation rhymes of a kind which are more often taught by adults to children’ (1969, p. 136). However, while they can be used as a mechanism for teaching concepts about language, I wish to re-state that one of my key reasons for featuring finger plays in this collection is that ‘the best reason for singing and acting together is that it is fun’ (Matterson 1969, p. 9), and more specifically, the fun way that finger plays involve music, language and the movement of hands and fingers.

Similarly to other chapters in the book, crossover into other categorisations is evident and this is especially clear in relation to the playtime rhyme chapter; a number of these rhymes could have easily been placed in either chapter. This possibility reinforces the notion of ‘attribute multiplicity’, which is something that I have been continually referring to as an important tenet of my decision making. An example of that multiplicity is evident in the way a number of finger plays in my selections incorporate rhythmic language related to counting. This is clearly evident in the finger plays ‘Two Little Blackbirds’ (p.124), ‘Five Little Fishies’ (p. 129) and ‘Ten Little Fingers’ (p. 130), where counting concepts are a substantial focus of their narrative and combine with the rhyme, rhythm, meter and alliteration to create effect. My positioning of the finger plays section as the fifth chapter,
following directly on from counting rhymes was designed to both acknowledge and emphasise that connection.

I have no doubt that the special connection between counting rhymes and finger plays is related to the human’s physiology of five fingers and five toes, which can be used as an aid in the demonstration of 0-10 counting concepts; a notion demonstrated by the practice of sequentially tugging on or wriggling of fingers and/or toes when reciting “This little piggy went to market, this little piggy stayed home’ etc in the rhyme “This Little Piggy” (p. 43). There is something special in the way that finger play rhymes convey meaning and a sense of playful enjoyment, which is perhaps one of the reasons they remain popular, as discussed in my recent publication, "Being with' drama, music and the arts":

Engagement with the imagined worlds, musical and playful in picture books, rhymes and action songs is the start of one of the most essential ingredients in any successful drama, music or arts activity - HAVING FUN! (Carthew 2010a).

Human ability to make meaning from words combined with body movement is one of the defining features of action based nursery rhymes such as finger plays. This ability, along with the social and educative aspects of play has generated considerable discourse and discussion (Fleer 1996; Slade 1954; O’Toole 2009; Toye & Pendeville 2000). While outside the scope of this exegesis to explicate the theories and study of dramatic play, Sinclair et al. (2009) provide valuable insight to the working of finger plays in young children’s imaginations when they note in regard to children that, “the use of space and symbol, key tools in the lexicon of drama are already stored in their own lexicon of "makebelieve"” (p. 67).

The uniqueness of finger plays, however, comes from their playful utilisation of fingers as a means of creating symbolism. Finger plays such as “Little Arabella Miller’ (p. 126), for example, utilise touch to great effect conjuring imagery of real life caterpillars crawling up bodies with the words “first it crawled upon her mother, then upon her baby brother’; and children love using their arms, hands and fingers to make the shapes and mimic the actions of creatures such as
hedgehogs, snakes, spiders, birds and ostriches with long necks. My own ‘Dinosaur Apatosaur’ (Carthew 1999, p. 136) uses arms, hands and finger movement to accentuate the poem’s rhythmic structure, drawing attention to the kinaesthetic in these types of rhymes via the parallel between the swaying of the dinosaur’s tail and the onomatopoeic ending of ‘Swish, swish, swish!’

My appreciation of the musicality and rhythm of finger plays began when I was teaching primary school music. It was during this time that I used many of the finger plays included in this collection as part of my music teaching program. As a result I found myself researching resources featuring action songs and finger plays including the book Elephant Jam (Sharon, Lois & Bram 1980), the same book in which I discovered the action song ‘Skinamarink’. These resources had a pivotal effect on my appreciation of finger plays and my desire to include multi-cultural action rhymes and finger plays in classroom activities and publishing projects.

Figure 29: The Cherry Tree, illustration by Jobi Murphy (Carthew 2008a, pp. 120-121)

Through my use of these rhymes in school programs I have come to understand that finger plays have a strong relationship with the learning of concepts and as I previously mentioned, this is one of the reasons counting
often features as part of their narrative. This relationship is clearly illustrated in the finger play ‘The Cherry Tree’ (fig. 28; pp. 120-121) in which the imagery reinforces numeric ideas in the text highlighting the paired cherries, the number of leaves in the tree as well as accentuating the girl’s hands and fingers.

Two examples of finger plays in *Can You Keep a Secret?* that highlight the ways concept ideas function in children’s rhymes are ‘Here are Grandmas’ Glasses’ (p. 122) and ‘Here are the Ladies Knives and Forks’ (p. 123). In these two examples, the literal function of their image making is made clear by their focus on key words situated in the rhyme that invite a ‘concept matching’ process to convey meaning. In ‘Here are Grandmas‘ Glasses’ the key words glasses, hat, hands, arms, lap and the more suggestive nap clearly highlight the literal way gestures and mime are used to invite representational imagery. The pairing of these rhymes provides an example of my conceptual planning for each double page spread in the collection—both rhymes are designed to complement one another through their similar form and focus on concrete objects.

The value of rhymes and books featuring concepts in educational pedagogy reflects a ‘rich tradition in children’s literature’ (Zeece 1996, p. 221) and this is perhaps one of the reasons why concept books have prominence within the publishing and educational products industries (Bolton 2001; Kümerling-Meibauer & Meibauer 2005).

A focus on concepts’ is evident in the language of children’s rhymes. Some of these concepts include: colours; counting; movement based actions such as - up, down, over, under, in, out, slow, fast etc; and figurative concepts such as long, short, big, little. Other abstract concepts include: seasons, wet, dry, wind and rain etc and those less easily described associated with the metaphorical
and whimsical such as when ‘the elephants laughed at the monkey’s tricks’ in ‘Noah’s Ark’ (p. 113) and birds ‘spreading their wings across the sky’ in ‘The Ostrich’ (p. 113). The ability of these rhymes to stimulate imagery and metaphorical associations through the use of allegory in combination with finger and hand movements highlights the significance of finger plays as a form of sign language.

While this is not the forum to fully analyse sign languages as semiotic systems, it is worth briefly reflecting on the importance of signs in representational and metaphorical communication as they are an integral part of the makeup of finger plays.

Communicating using hands and fingers is unquestionably part of the uniqueness and attraction of finger plays. Wilcox (2005) notes interesting similarities with the many forms of established sign languages around the world. I wish to stress this here, as the use of gestures in finger plays points to their ability to transfer meaning both kinaesthetically and visually, aided by understandings of, but not entirely dependent on, spoken language. The utilisation of gestures in finger plays in imitative ways is noted by kindergarten and early childhood educator Friedrich Fröbel, ‘What the child imitates, he begins to understand’ (Fröbel n.d., cited in Poulsson 1893) (fig. 30).

The popular finger play ‘Where is Thumbkin?’ (p. 132) provides an example of the way gestures combine with repetition and imitative form. It also draws attention to the antiphonal nature of call and response (Bill 1993) meaning the style is based on lines sung or chanted in alternation.
This antiphonal functioning is clear in ‘Where is Thumbkin’s’ repetitive text and melody structure, rhythmic meter and echo like question and answer format.

My interaction with these types of rhymes throughout my career has brought into focus the performative nature of call and response. I say this as it is a technique I have used with other finger plays and rhymes that do not have an obvious antiphonal structure. One example where I use call and response with audiences as a way of reciting and teaching is with ‘There was a Little Turtle’ (p. 135). In a kinaesthetic combination of words and action, I recite the words line by line while simultaneously demonstrating the actions. The audience then echoes and copies in response: the turtle’s flippers flapping to ‘there was a turtle’; a turtle swimming through water to ‘swam through the puddles’; fingers crawling up the body to ‘climbed up the rocks’; and making the shape of the sides of an imagined box (top, sides and bottom) by simultaneously moving hands out, down and in, matching the shape of a box to the words ‘lived in a box’. In the last line the ‘bounced quaver’ rhythm of ‘ta timka ta’ amplifies the connection between the syntax of English bound with the kinaesthetic and musical.

A strong sense of kinaesthetic connection with the act of clapping or snapping is created when simultaneously acting out the lines ‘snapped at a mosquito’, ‘snapped at a flea’. The power of clapping and other body actions in communicating with others was driven home to me with stark clarity when sharing this rhyme with a group of hearing impaired children. The synergy created by body based actions connected all of us not only with this rhyme, but other action rhymes and songs. The movement element of the last line ‘hid away’ produced a strong sense of game play—an ‘idea’ communicated by the quick action of placing hands behind the back on ‘but he couldn’t catch me!’
This action resulted in what appeared to be an ‘understood’ invitation to ‘play it again’. It was clear that non-hearing, as well as hearing children understood the subtlety and fun in the game element. In this respect, American mime advocate Tim Chartier’s observation of like interactions resonates when he says, ‘the use of several convincing mime illusions transformed the atmosphere from quiet and uncertain to laughing and engaged’ (2010, p. 28). This once again reinforces the point that physical representation is a means of creating engagement and *joie de vivre*.

An example of a different sort of *joie de vivre* that I experienced during my research occurred when I was investigating the origins of the *The Beehive*, sometimes also known as *Here is the Beehive* (p. 44), a finger play rhyme I chose to include in the playtime rhymes section. I conducted numerous searches of imprint acknowledgments from reputable publishing houses, all of which noted *The Beehive* as traditional or provided no attribution of origin at all (by default ascribing no copyright or ownership attribution). However, I eventually discovered in Elizabeth Matterson’s *This Little Puffin* (1969) that she credited this rhyme to Emilie Poulsson, however most unusually without any reference to a permission’s source. After embarking on a sleuth like exercise searching for the the original source of this rhyme (something developed over my years of work as a series and development editor) I eventually determined that *The Beehive* existed as the first verse and stanza of an original piece entitled *The Counting Lesson* (fig.32) in Emilie Poulsson’s book *Finger Plays for Nursery and Kindergarten* (1893, pp. 54-56), an acknowledgement I have never seen mentioned in any previous source material. This rhyme's perpetuation via oral transmission and common usage has resulted in many publishers (and anthologists) attributing this rhyme in good faith as anonymous or traditional; therefore providing extra credence to the rhyme’s folkloric and public domain like status.
One of the peculiar features of Poulsson’s ‘The Counting Lesson’ (1893, pp. 54-55), is that the first verse and stanza has an attraction and resonance missing in the second. This is a result of slight clumsiness in the resolution and break in rhythm evident in the final four lines. This may be a contributing factor for the second verse’s lapse into obscurity, leaving only the popular first verse as the most commonly heard and recognised in meme. Even now with greater knowledge and connection to the rhyme’s context as a result of exegetic research, I stand by my original decision to use only the first verse based on appreciation of its musicality and rhythm. A similar example of ‘an nexation’ into the collective psyche is evident in the finger play rhyme ‘Piggy Wig and Piggie Wee’ a rhyme mostly cited as traditional, but as far as I can make out also originally published as part of a bigger rhyme entitled ‘The Pigs’ (Poulsson 1893, pp. 26-27).

Figure 33: The Counting Lesson, illustrated by LJ Bridgman (Poulsson 1893, pp 54-55)
Interestingly my cross checking of annotations from various other source anthologies invariably credits this rhyme as traditional, and I didn't uncover this crucial information until after my own anthology had gone to press. However, like 'The Beehive', I cannot be one hundred per cent sure that Poulsson has not annexed this first verse into her work. This information will of course be rectified in future editions if confirmed, and is already noted in my mark ups.

This discovery highlights the way the anthology contributes to knowledge in the genre. Like 'The Beehive', the common usage of 'Piggy Wig and Piggy Wee' has only focused on four of the five verses with the fourth verse of the original left out. Most people would not even realise that there was originally a fourth verse and it is worth looking at the 'lostverse' to understand why:

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Figure 34: The Pigs, illustrated by LJ Bridgman (Poulsson 1893, pp. 26-27)
Fourth Verse: Piggie Wig and Piggie Wee,
What was their delight to see
Dinner ready not far off-
Such a full and tempting trough!  (Poulsson 1893, p. 27)

It is clear on recitation that there is a break in scansion and clumsiness to the rhythm of the second line which is ultimately recovered by the flow in the third and fourth lines. However, it is the close rhyme ‘tough’ and ‘off’ that can sound odd and appear visually ambiguous as the end letter sound combinations in ‘ough’ can have numerous phonetic ‘end sounds’. This ambiguity highlights the power and attraction of musical rhythm and strict end rhymes, something that is present in virtually every rhyme in this collection.

There is, nonetheless, no ambiguity in the defining characteristic of finger plays using hands and fingers to communicate meaning in combination with words, images, music and body movement. In this regard the final chapter of my book provides an opportunity to reflect on the defining features and characteristics present in the category of lullabies and gentle rhymes.
Lullabies and Gentle Rhymes
Lullabies and Gentle Rhymes

What is it about lullabies that have made them so loved and valued across both time and cultures? What are the distinctive features that define lullabies and gentle rhymes? How is it that these rhymes create a calming effect? I kept returning to these questions as I poured over thousands of options for this final chapter. The addition of the word ‘gentle’ in this categorisation was a vital point of difference from other collections and enabled inclusion of rhymes that sat well within the section, yet did not have the identifiable song traits of lullabies. And so, an additional question arises: How do we define ‘gentleness’?

Numerous studies examine the calming effect of lullabies and music on infants and adults alike (Cassidy & Standley 1995; Custodero & Johnson-Green 2008; Metzger 1984; Standley & Madsen 1990) and my decisions in this chapter were based on selecting lullabies and rhymes that demonstrate ‘a calming sweet melody and words that have in themselves a soothing effect’ (Metzger 1984, p. 253). It was the soothing effect of tone, timbre, rhythm, melody, lyric and connection with the conveyance of affection in each lullaby and ‘gentle’ rhyme that attracted me to particular songs.

Lullabies have an intrinsic musicality. They are part of an ancient tradition and are described by Bradley in his study of Aboriginal lullabies in the Yanyuwa community, as part of our ‘...knowledge about song. Song is embedded with knowledge and is thus inherently powerful’ (Bradley, cited in Mackinlay 1999, p. 102). The aesthetic properties of the lullaby promote connection with the emotional contact of parenting and mothering (Mackinlay 2009; Balter 2004; Trehub et al.1997); a point made clear in War’s definition of the lullaby ‘as a type of song sung by mothers and nurses all over the world to coax their babies to sleep’ (2007, p. 5). Cassidy and Standley also note that: ‘Singing lullabies is an established custom within our culture to soothe, comfort and pacify newborns’ (1995, p. 209). In the modern era this aspect of lullabies could be extended to listening to lullabies in recorded form. Certainly my desire to create a collection that would have value in sharing, soothing and engaging young children was something informing the research and compilation process for this
project. As I thought about the value of lullabies in the nurturing of young children, it was clear to me that the association of lullabies and gentle rhyme with the themes of night time provided justification for placing this chapter at the end of the book. This notion is worth expanding on as it was based on a number of considerations.

Firstly, the positioning of lullabies and gentle rhymes was one of sequential significance in relation to the other chapters, in that it echoes and moves from the physical activity of day, into the resolving calmness of night—providing a logic to the positioning of lullabies and gentle rhymes as the final chapter. London notes this transition:

Lullabies are typically sung at the end of the day, in the child’s bedroom, with the child dressed for and ready for bed. And presumably the child knows that when a parent starts singing in this context, she is being urged to quiet down and try to fall asleep. (2008, pp. 255-256)

The decision to start and finish this anthology with two of the most familiar and recognisable childhood rhyme categories—nursery rhymes and lullabies—revolved around my wish to achieve familiarity when first encountering the book and a feeling of progression and resolution when reading it through to its end. This point underlines the publishing and authorial pressure of melding appeal to consumers, with creative and artistic innovation.

Secondly the association with night time draws attention to the role of parents in the routines of young children and the value we attribute to these rhymes in children's rest and sleep cycles. My decision to position this chapter last is also indicative of a tradition in children's anthologies; a tradition that is at least in part due to the use of books, stories and lullabies in bed time rituals. The strength of considering this relationship is noted by Mackinlay & Baker (2005):

The musical qualities contained in lullabies are not only effective in calming babies, singing lullabies also facilitates a relaxation response in mothers and can assist in their ability to cope with the demands of

The importance of lullabies in our relationship with significant others is also mentioned in their 2006 study citing a survey of American parents by Custodero, Britto, & Xin (2002) that two-thirds of the parents reported that they sang and played music with their infants every day’ (p. 148). The extent of this interaction supports London’s view that it is the kind of affective response that these songs may generate that makes them apt choices as lullabies’ (2008, p. 256). These studies draw attention to the affection for the lullaby as one of nursery rhymes loved forms.

Association with bedtime has resulted in lullabies and ‘gentle’ rhymes featuring night time subject matter as one of their popular themes and as a result the moon, and stars as a conceptual partner motif, are regularly encountered. These motifs have cross cultural resonance and I made a concerted effort to research and include rhymes from other countries such as the Sri Lankan lullaby ‘Moon, Moon’ (p. 155), the Spanish ‘A dormir va la roses (Now Softly the Roses)’ (p.153) and ‘Hine, Hine’ (p. 165), a Maori rhyme I chose to partner with the indigenous Australian lullaby ‘Vullah Vunnah Nuh’ (p. 164). Contemporary children’s picture books such as The Night Garden (Hurst 2007) Bilby Moon (Spurling 2000), The Midnight Feast (Wild & James 1999) and Good Night Sun, Hello Moon (Viola 2004) are examples of similar themed titles that highlight the significance of bedtime books and related subject matter in publishing.

The inclusion of ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ (Taylor & Taylor 1806, pp. 10-11) highlights the resonance and attraction of night motifs as well as my determination to reinvigorate awareness of Taylor’s original five verses. I was aware that many (if not most) contemporary versions of ‘Twinkle Twinkle Little Star’ only record the first stanza with a repeat of the first two lines, however I included all five verses in the anthology (pp. 146-147) and the companion music
CD (trk 16), in order to celebrate and maintain awareness of Taylor’s original poem.

The appeal of the full text version and the CD arrangement of ‘Twinkle Twinkle Little Star’ was highlighted at a professional development session at The New Zealand College of Early Childhood Education; where after a focus on action rhymes and finger plays in the session I decided to finish by listening to my CD recording of this song. As we listened, I was struck by the way that the audience connected with the musical arrangement. This experience consolidated my view that live recordings add a unique dynamic to voice and musical presence; a dynamic that is difficult to duplicate via the computerised synced timing of multi-tracked recording. Acoustic music, combined with live recording, adds a further layer to this synergy and this is clearly evident on the CD. The inclusion of ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ in both the book and the accompanying CD also highlighted my determination to reinvigorate awareness of the original five verses, as well as provide engaging song arrangements. Albert Jack contextualises the origins of this rhyme’s music heritage in his book of nursery rhyme history Pop Goes the Weasel (2008):

It is often claimed that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91) composed the tune, but he was only six years old when the French folksong was first published. It is more likely that he borrowed the folk tune as motif for the piano variations that he wrote as a seventeen year old (p. 227).

Significantly, the commonly recited repetition of the first two lines at the end of each verse is not in the original, but acts to resolve the stanza and melody. This rhyme also has a form that lends itself to parody as Iona and Peter Opie note in the Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes:

...the Star has been frequently parodied, an example being the Mad Hatter’s
Twinkle, twinkle, Little bat!
How I wonder where you’re at!
Up above the world you fly,
Like tea-tray in the sky. (Lewis Caroll, cited in Opie & Opie 1951, p. v)
Lewis Carroll's borrowing of the form provides an example of how versions with long traditions in print and public sharing can be both upheld and varied—a point that supports the view that it is the nature of playground rhymes to shift and morph with intentional and unintentional variations. This is demonstrated in ‘Golden Slumbers’ (Chettle, Haughton & Dekker 1603), a rhyme that was brought back into popular culture by The Beatles variation on their hit album Abbey Road (Lennon & McCartney 1969). I stayed as true as I could to Dekker’s original verse by retaining the phrase ‘kiss your eyes’ instead of the Beatle’s variation of ‘fill your eyes’, foregrounding my practice as literary collector with an interest in both the traditional and the contemporary.

I reiterate here that by ‘traditional’ I mean it has stood the test of time. One such traditional rhyme is ‘Frère Jacques’, a rhyme immersed into our English speaking collective psyche from its French based roots, so much so that it is also known by the Anglicised versions of ‘Are You Sleeping?’ or ‘Brother John’.

Are You Sleeping?

Figure 36: Are You Sleeping? (Wheeler & Raebek 1985, p. 174)

‘Frère Jacques’ is a children’s song / rhyme recognised the world over and it utilises a simple repetitive melody line characteristic of other popular folkloric tunes such as ‘Row, Row, Row Your Boat’, ‘Three Blind Mice’ and ‘Hot Cross Buns’. I included it on the accompanying CD (trk 13) based on my desire to highlight its peculiar and less acknowledged sharing of the same melody line with two other traditional and similarly well known song rhymes, ‘I Hear Thunder’ and ‘Where is Thumbkin?’ This was achieved by joining the three rhymes into a unique medley arrangement utilising changes in texture and tempo to accentuate their shared melody in different musical ways.
Close consideration of *Frère Jacques* draws attention to the linguistic feature of onomatopoeia, which has been defined by Moore as *the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named* (2004, p. 901). The first verse of *Frère Jacques* is normally sung in the traditional French and features the onomatopoeic sounds and action of bells ringing in its last phrase, *ding, dang, dong*. This sound letter relationship highlights a *special kind of speech act that accomplishes the action* (Culler 2007, p. 372).

Some French versions purportedly spell this last phrase, *din dan, don* and yet the majority of commercial recordings clearly enunciate the end *ng* sound. This onomatopoeic conundrum intrigued me, as I wasn’t convinced that this was a literal French translation. There was consensus within the editorial team at Random House and we made the decision to use *ding, dang, dong* in both the French and English verses. However, I was determined to find out more about the French interpretation of the bell sound and post-publication correspondence with people in France indicated that, the onomatopoeic sound of a bell ringing equally elicits a similar *ng* sound in French and English and the transcription *din dan, don* makes little linguistic or onomatopoeic sense in French. While outside the scope of this exegesis, it certainly highlights the importance of the way in which onomatopoeic sounds are represented in print, especially in translations. Another example encountered in this collection is *Dandini, Dandini, Dostana* (pp. 156-157) a traditional Turkish rhyme that features the sounds *æ – eee – eee – ee* in the resolving last stanza. I found this rhyme while searching archives in Museum Victoria’s Children’s Folklore Collection and my attention was drawn immediately to that feature as part of its attraction. In an interesting area for further research, multicultural rhymes such as these serve to highlight that onomatopoeia appears to work across language barriers.

Another aspect of these rhymes that needs no linguistic interpretation is touch. Lullabies frequently involve the tactile in their composition and *Rock-a-Bye, Baby* (pp. 162-163) was included to highlight the physical and kinaesthetic element of rocking often associated with lullabies and gentle rhymes. The narrative in the lullabies *Rocking* (p. 161) and *Rock-a-bye, Baby* (p. 162-163) highlights the role of music, movement and the tactile in the nurturing of babies.
and young children. Howle underlines the use of rocking combined with rhythm and music as a specific technique and kinaesthetic feature of lullabies when she notes, ‘rocking frequently accompanies the singing of lullabies, as does touching, rubbing, smiling, warmth and cuddling’ (1989, p. 19). This observation draws attention to the role of the lullaby in communicating affection through touch.

These connections are taken further via the use of metaphor and it is used with great affect within the lullaby and gentle rhymes sub-genre. One example is the seafaring metaphor in ‘Baby’s Boat’ (p. 159) which begins with the allusion to a young child’s boat ‘rocking’ on the sea and utilises allegory to great effect in each subsequent line of the first stanza:

    Baby’s boats a silver moon,
    Sailing on the sky;
    Sailing on a sea of dew
    While the clouds float by.                           (Traditional)

Metaphors provide deeper layers of meaning in many of these lullabies and numerous examples are encountered throughout the collection such as; ‘Dance to your daddy, my little lamb’ in ‘Dance to Your Daddy’ (p. 167) and ‘Your mother shakes the dreamland tree’ in ‘Sleep, Baby Sleep’ (p. 150).

Metaphor combined with a range of rhythmic and musical elements is strongly featured in the allegorical verse of Eugene Field’s ‘Wynken, Blynken and Nod’ (Field 1905, pp. 79-80) which I placed as the important end rhyme of the compilation. I chose to finish with this verse as it has an aesthetic bound with the poetic, musicality and word play that is evocative of the spirit of the collection. I was also keen to emphasise the primacy of the ‘you’ in the verse’s narrative; a primacy that I had flagged in the title of my anthology:

    And you shall see the beautiful things,
    As you rock on the misty sea,
    Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three:
    Wynken,
    Blyken,
    And nod.                         (Field, cited in Carthew 2008a, p. 177)
Lullabies and gentle rhymes are inherently rhythmic and musical, although being musical is more a characteristic of lullabies than gentle rhymes. They are also one of the more passive categories within the collection and one reason for this is the way they are used in adult child interaction. Mackinlay notes that:

in the context of lullaby performance children are the recipients rather than the performers and thus lullaby songs are not intended to be sung by children but rather sung to and for the child by an adult (1999, pp. 100-101).

These rhymes are intrinsically linked to settling children to sleep and providing tenderness and affection. The caring connection between adults with children that is embodied in their language and mode of delivery is one of their defining characteristics. Their gentle nature in comparison to the more active, movement based rhymes also serves to highlight the breadth of the collection in *Can you keep a Secret?* and the distinctive characteristics and attraction of each chapter.
Conclusion

In what ways can we describe the poetic in children’s rhymes and songs? What is it about these rhymes that have kept them alive in meme and literary lore for so long? And how did the practice of gathering and experiencing response to these rhymes with children affect my anthological decisions?

Some answers to these questions have been brought into focus by my practice led journey; a journey where writing, teaching and gathering has melded as a ‘form of artistry in which it is hard to tell the dancer from the dance’ (Simons, cited in Sinclair 2009, p. 50). This allegory for arts creation goes some way to describing my understanding of the writerly self as I danced and played with words, and their combined forms, as a way of meaning making in my artefacts.

My development of these artefacts into published form has highlighted the connection between the poetic in words and the ways their verse structure, movement and sense combines to create resonance. I have highlighted the way that these rhymes and songs create emotion, joy, involvement and interaction, through their way of being both the dance and the inspiration for the dancer. These rhymes can be read, performed, listened to and reflected upon; they stimulate communication and affectionate playful interaction with others; and they connect with the meaning-making function of language. They are dream weavers and dream catchers.

My exegesis has shown that my anthological practice has revolved around a way of seeing (Berger 1972) and being with (Custodero 2005), two aspects that are inherent in my way of being as a writer, teacher, performer and gatherer of children’s rhymes, verse narrative and song. Perhaps my individual way of seeing could be described by Kristine O’Connell George’s delightful poem, ‘The Blue Between’ (cited in Janezcko 2002, p. 37)

Everyone watches clouds,
Naming creatures they’ve seen.
I see the sky differently,
I see the blue between -
As Koch aptly notes: "Each word has a little music of its own' (Koch, cited in Wainwright 2004, p. 1) and these rhymes and songs draw our attention to the 'incantatory musical' qualities of beat, drum and dance...and the close relation between poetry and song' (Wainwright 2004, p. 2). My artefacts therefore illustrate that close relation and the way the poetic elements of alliteration, rhyme, rhythm, onomatopoeia, metaphor, meter, tone, assonance and consonance combine to create effect.

The way that these rhymes combine together with movement and gesture has been a pivotal point of exegetical exploration and enlightenment, for as Wainwright notes "early enthusiasm for nursery rhymes, chants, schoolyard games songs ...all feature the same kind of gestural characteristics' (2004, p. 2). Certainly the six chapter categories of the anthology were influenced by differences in the way gesture, movement, signal making and interaction with others function in these rhymes and songs. However it is the power of words, and the way they affect the reader / listener, which illuminates the aesthetic that is children's rhyme and song.

That aesthetic is the reason many of these children's rhymes have already left traces in meme, something seen in the longevity of traditional favourites. By placing well known, lesser known and new rhymes and songs together in a unique published form, I have achieved a distinctive and resonant mix which has contributed to their recognition. This uniqueness and contribution to knowledge has been evidenced by the recognition of Can you keep a secret? Timeless rhymes to share and treasure as a 2009 Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) Notable Book, with the acknowledgment accompanied by the following citation:

Rhymes are considered a fundamental part of every child's first experience of the magic of language. They carry our history and oral traditions. This collection of over 100 traditional rhymes (with the occasional rhyme penned by the editor) are drawn from various cultures and time periods. The rhymes are organised loosely by category and selected for their lyrical qualities. Whimsical, surprising, adventurous, lively, fun – there are rhymes
in this book for every mood that will delight readers of all ages (2009 Notable Australian Children’s Books 2009, p. 15).

This project provided me with the opportunity to explore my identity as a writer and gatherer of words in poetic form. Most specifically it has provided practice led insights into the creative process associated with producing an anthology of children’s rhymes. As I think about future publishing projects, I realise that my practice as a children’s writer, anthologist and editor has been irrevocably affected by this project and exegetical process. Both the anthology and its accompanying CD have provided vehicles for understanding objects of inquiry and evidence that ‘practical knowledge is ultimately the result of practice rather than vica versa’ (Barrett, in Barrett & Bolt 2007, p. 6).

These dual artefacts embody the interdisciplinary connection between language, communication, music and movement and this exegesis has gone some way to describing this multilayered aesthetic. By gathering together these rhymes and songs, I have found a deeper understanding of the poetic in the anthologising process. This has in turn highlighted the highly personalised experience of action learning (Mann & Clarke 2007) and my active practice as a writer and gatherer in the world of words. A practice led journey that continues to be connected with my desire to celebrate and create works in the imagined and poetic worlds of children’s story, rhyme and song.
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*This reference list has been compiled using the EndNote (X2.0.4) version of the Swinburne Harvard author-date system.*
Appendices
Can You Keep a Secret?

Timeless Songs to Share and Treasure

[Music Score]
Vocal tracks with book page reference

CD Track 1: Skinnamarink (p. 70)

CD Track 2: The Grand Old Duke of York + Ten Thousand Men (pp. 116-117)

CD Track 3: Incy Wincy Spider (p. 138) + Forty Years on an Iceberg (p. 19)

CD Track 4: The Little Green Frog (p. 79)

CD Track 5: (SPOKEN) Can You Keep a Secret? (p. 38)

CD Track 6: Open Shut Them (p. 48)

CD Track 7: (SPOKEN) Round and Round the Garden (p. 39)

CD Track 8: The Three Bears (pp. 96-97)

CD Track 9: (SPOKEN) Rosemary Green (p. 173)

CD Track 10: Lavender's Blue (Dilly Dilly) (pp. 172-173)

CD Track 11: Old Macdonald (pp. 80-81)

CD Track 12: The Ants Go Marching (pp. 64-67)

CD Track 13: (Medley) Where is Thumbkin / (p. 132)

I Hear Thunder / (p. 139)

Frère Jacques (p. 152)

CD Track 14: Zoom, Zoom, Zoom (p. 104)

CD Track 15: (SPOKEN) Starlight, Star Bright (p. 147)

CD Track 16: Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star (p. 146-147)
1. Skinnamarink

Traditional

Moderate \( \frac{\text{=}}{\text{=}} \) 100

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{G} & \text{Em} & \text{Am} & \text{D} & \text{G} & \text{D}^7 \\
\text{Gdim} & & & & & \\
& & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

Skin-na-mar-in-k-y dink - y dink

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{G} & \text{Gdim} & \text{G} & \text{Gdim} & \text{D} & \text{Am} \\
\text{D} & & & & & \\
& & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

skin-na-mar-in-k-y doo I love you! Skin-na-mar-in-k-y dink-y dink

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{Am} & \text{D} & \text{Am} & \text{D}^7 & \text{G} \\
& & & & & \\
& & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

skin-na-mar-in-k-y doo I love you! I

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{G} & \text{G}^7 & \text{C} & \text{A} & \text{A}^7/C^\# \\
& & & & & \\
& & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

love you in the morn-ing and in the af-ter-noon, I love you in the eve-ning,

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{D} & \text{D}^7 & \text{G} & \text{Gdim} \\
& & & & & \\
& & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

un-derneath the moon; Skin-na-mar-in-k-y dink - y dink

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{G} & \text{G}/F & \text{E}^7 & \text{A}^7 & \text{D}^7 & \text{G} \\
& & & & & \\
& & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

skin-na-mar-in-k-y doo I love you!
2. The Grand Old Duke of York and Ten Thousand Men*

*Words and music by Mark Carthew

Traditional

March \( \frac{d}{=120} \)

Oh, the grand old Duke of York, He had ten thou-sand men. He

marched them up to the top of the hill, and he marched them down a-gain And

when they were up they were up and when they were down they were down, And

when they were on-ly half-way up they were neith-er up nor down! Ten thou-sand,
ten thou-sand, ten thou-sand men. Up the hill, up the hill, and up the hill a-
gain Up! Up! Up! Down! Down! Down! Up, down,
turn a-round, up and down! Ten thousand, ten thousand,
Oh, the grand old Duke of York, He

ten thousand men. Up the hill, up the hill, and
had ten thousand men. He marched them up to the top of the hill, and he

up the hill a-gain Up! Up! Up!
marched them down a-gain And when they were up they were up and

Down! Down! Down! Up, down,
when they were down they were down, And when they were only

turn a-round, up and down!
half-way up they were neither up nor down!
3. Incy-Wincy Spider & Forty Years On An Iceberg*

Traditional

*Words - Anonymous,
Arrangement/music - Mark Carthew

Moderate \( \frac{\text{Crotchet}}{\text{Quaver}} = 120 \)

The in-cy win-cy spi-der climbed up the wa-ter

spout down came the rain and washed the spi-der out

Out came the

sun_ and dried up all the rain, And the in-cy win-cy spi-der climbed

up the spout a-gain

The gain

The in-cy win-cy spi-der climbed up the wa-ter

spout down came the rain and washed the spi-der out

Out came the
D A7 D
sun__ and dried up all the rain, And the in-cy win-cy

D A7 D
spi-der climbed up the spout a-gain

D A7 D
For-ty years on an ice-berg o-ver the o-cen wide Noth-ing to wear but py

D A7 D Slow G D
jam-as, Noth-ing to do but slide. The wind was cold and i-cy Jack

D A7 D
a tempo
Frost be-gan to bite I had to hug my po-lar bear to keep me warm at

1. D D D D
night night, night, night, night, night, night,

A7 D A7 D
night, night, night, good - night, night, night!
4. The Little Green Frog

Traditional
Variation by Mark Carthew

Moderate $\text{ÿ} = 130$

A D A D

Ga - lumpf went the lit - tle green frog one day, ga -

A D

lumpf went the lit - tle green Ga - lumpf went the lit - tle green

A D

frog one day, and the frog went glumph, glumph, glumph But we

A

all know frogs go (clap) La de da de da (clap) La de da de da

D

(clap) La de da de da We all know frogs go (clap) La de da de da they

A D

don't go glumph, glumph, glumph Ga - glumph
5. Can you keep a secret?

(Interesting)

Can you keep a secret?
I don’t suppose you can.
You mustn’t laugh, you mustn’t cry,
But do the best you can!
6. Open, Shut Them

Brightly $\frac{\text{C G C G F G}}{\text{E C G E G E}}$

Op - en, shut them op - en, shut them give a lit - tle clap (clap)

Slow $\frac{\text{C G C G F G C}}{\text{E C G E G E}}$

Op - en, shut them, op - en, shut them, put them in your lap

Presto $\frac{\text{C G C G G}}{\text{E C G E G E}}$

Creep them, creep them, slow - ly creep them, right up to your chin

a tempo $\frac{\text{C G C G F G C}}{\text{E C G E G E}}$

Op - en wide your lit - tle mouth, but do not let them in!
7. Round and Round the Garden

Traditional

(Spoken)

Round and round the garden
Like a teddy bear;
One Step, two steps,
Tickle under there!
8. The Three Bears

Traditional

Andante \( \frac{\text{b} = 100}{\text{B}} \)

1. When Gold-i-locks went to the house of the bears Oh,
what did her blue eyes see? A bowl that was huge, a bowl that was small, a bowl that was tiny and that was all, she counted them one, two, three

When three

2. When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears,
Oh, what did her blue eyes see?
A chair that was huge,
A chair that was small,
A chair that was tiny, and that was all;
She counted them, one, two, three

3. When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears,
Oh, what did her blue eyes see?
A bed that was huge,
A bed that was small,
A bed that was tiny, and that was all;
She counted them, one, two, three

4. When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears,
Oh, what did her blue eyes see?
A bear that was huge,
A bear that was small,
A bear that was tiny, and that was all;
They growled at her, grr, grr, grr!
9. Rosemary Green

Traditional

(Spoken)

Rosemary green and lavender blue,

Thyme and sweet marjoram, hyssop and rue.
10. Lavender's Blue (Dilly Dilly)

Traditional

\[\text{Gently} \quad \frac{4}{4} \quad \text{G} \]

\[\text{D} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{G} \quad \text{G} \]

\[\text{Lav-en-der's blue, dilly, dilly} \quad \text{lav-en-der's green} \quad \text{When you are} \quad \text{King, dilly dilly} \quad \text{I shall be Queen} \]

2. Who told you so, dilly, dilly,
Who told you so?
'Twas my own heart, dilly, dilly,
That told me so

5. Lavender's blue, dilly, dilly,
Lavender's green
When you are King, dilly, dilly,
I shall be Queen

3. Call up your friends, dilly, dilly,
Set them to work
Some to the plough, dilly, dilly,
Some to the fork

6. Who told you so, dilly, dilly,
Who told you so?
'Twas my own heart, dilly, dilly,
That told me so

4. Some to the hay, dilly, dilly,
Some to thresh corn
Whilst you and I, dilly, dilly,
Keep ourselves warm
11. Old MacDonald Had A Farm

Moderate $\frac{\text{C}}{4} = 120$

Traditional

G  D7  G  G  C  G  D7

1. Old Mac-Don-ald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O
O and on his farm he had some cows, E-I-E-I-O
With a moo-moo here, and a moo-moo there, Here a moo, there a moo,

G

ev - ery - where a moo - moo, Old Mac - Don - ald

G

had a farm, E-I-E-I-O

2. Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O
And on his farm he had some sheep, E-I-E-I-O
With a baa-baa here, and a baa-baa there,
Here a baa, there a baa,
Everywhere a baa-baa,
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O

3. Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O
And on his farm he had some pigs, E-I-E-I-O
With a oink-oink here, and a oink-onik there,
Here a oink, there a oink,
Everywhere a oink-oink,
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O

4. Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O
And on his farm he had some ducks, E-I-E-I-O
With a quack-quack here, and a quack-quack there,
Here a quack, there a quack,
Everywhere a quack-quack,
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O
12. The Ants Go Marching

Traditional

March \( \frac{\text{j}}{120} \)

\[
\text{Am} \quad \text{G} \quad \text{F} \quad \text{E} \quad \text{Am}
\]

(The Intro)

7

\[
\text{Am} \quad \text{C} \quad \text{Am}
\]

ants go marching one by one, Hurrah! Hurrah! The ants go marching

12

\[
\text{C} \quad \text{E} \quad \text{Am} \quad \text{G}
\]

one by one, Hurrah! Hurrah! The ants go marching one by one, the

17

\[
\text{F} \quad \text{E} \quad \text{Am} \quad \text{G} \quad \text{F} \quad \text{E}
\]

little one stops to suck his thumb and they all went marching down to the

21

\[
\text{Am}
\]

earth to get out of the rain (boom, boom) the

23

\[
\text{Am}
\]

earth to get out of the rain (boom, boom) The rain

2. The ants go marching two by two, Hurrah! Hurrah!
The ants go marching two by two, Hurrah! Hurrah!
The ants go marching two by two, The little one stops to tie his shoe And they all went marching down To the earth to get out of the rain (boom, boom) The earth to get out of the rain (boom, boom)

3. The ants go marching three by three... The little one stops to climb a tree...

4. The ants go marching four by four... The little one stops to shut the door...

5. The ants go marching five by five... The little one stops to take a dive...

6. The ants go marching six by six... The little one stops to pick up sticks...

7. The ants go marching seven by seven... The little one stops to pray to heaven...

8. The ants go marching eight by eight... The little one stops to shut the gate...

9. The ants go marching nine by nine... The little one stops to check the time...

10. The ants go marching ten by ten... The little one stops to say "The end"...
13. Where Is Thumbkin?/
I Hear Thunder/Frere Jacques
Traditional
Arranged Mark Carthew

Steady \( \frac{4}{4} \) \( \text{F} \)

\( \text{F} \) \( \text{C} \) \( \text{F} \) \( \text{C} \) \( \text{F} \)

Very well. I thank you. Run away, run away.

Slower \( \frac{4}{4} \) \( \text{D} \)

\( \text{F} \) \( \text{C} \) \( \text{F} \) \( \text{C} \) \( \text{F} \)

A D A D

A D A D

D

I hear thunder. I hear thunder. Hark, don’t you? Hark don’t you?

I see blue skies, I see blue skies, Way up high, way up high,

Pit-ter pat-ter rain-drops, pit-ter pat-ter rain-drops I’m wet through, so are you!

Hur-ry up the sun-shine, hur-ry up the sun-shine. We’ll soon dry, we’ll soon dry.

D

I hear thunder, I hear thunder, I hear thunder, I hear thunder,

I see blue skies, I see blue skies, I see blue skies.

Hark, don’t you? Hark don’t you? Hark, don’t you? Pit-ter pat-ter rain-drops, Way up high, way up high, Hur-ry up the sun-shine, Hur-ry up the sun-shine,

see block lyrics for additional verses
Where is Thumbkin? (additional verses)

2. Where is pointer?  Where is pointer?  Here I am, here I am
   How are you this morning?  Very well I thank you.
   Run away, run away.

3. Where is tall man?  Where is tall man?
   Here I am, here I am
   How are you this morning?
   Very well I thank you.
   Run away, run away.

4. Where is ring man?  Where is ring man?
   Here I am, here I am
   How are you this morning?
   Very well I thank you.
   Run away, run away.

5. Where is pinkie?  Where is pinkie?
   Here I am, here I am
   How are you this morning?
   Very well I thank you.
   Run away, run away.

6. Where's the family?  Where's the family?
   Here we are, here we are
   How are you this morning?
   Very well I thank you.
   Run away, run away.

Words traditional, Music Mark Carthew

Lively $\frac{\text{= 100}}{\text{}}$

D

Zoom, zoom, zoom, we're going to the moon

G

A

Zoom, zoom, zoom, we're going to the moon

If you want to take a trip

D A/C# Bm D D

climb a-board my rocket ship

Zoom, zoom, zoom we're going to the moon

Freely

D

Five, four, three, two, one, blast off!

Zoom, zoom, zoom, we're going to the moon

D A D

Zoom, zoom, zoom, we're going to the moon

(rocket blast-off)
16. Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Words by Jane Taylor (1783-1824)
Melody traditional, variation on French folk song

Ah! vous dirai-je, Maman

Gently \( \frac{4}{4} \) \( \text{G} \) \( \text{D} \) \( \text{G} \) \( \text{D} \)

1. Twinkle, twinkle, little star, How I wonder what you are, Up above the world so high Like a diamond in the sky— Twinkle, twinkle little star—

How I wonder what you are— what you are—

2. When the blazing sun is gone, When he nothing shines upon, Then you show your little light, Twinkle, twinkle all the night

3. Then the traveller in the dark, Thanks you for your tiny spark, He could not see which way to go, If you did not twinkle so

4. In the dark blue sky you keep, And often through my curtains peep, For you never shut your eye Till the sun is in the sky

5. As your bright and tiny spark Lights the traveller in the dark Though I know not what you are Twinkle, twinkle, little star
Appendix 2: Ethics approval documentation for conduct of interviews

>>> Anne Cain 17/04/2008 6:06 PM >>>
To: Dr Dominique Hecq/Mr Mark Carthew, Faculty of Higher Education, Lilydale

Dear Dominique and Mark

SUHREC Project 0708/164 Can you keep a secret? An artefact & exegetical essay investigating the resonance of children’s rhymes, verse and poetics
Dr D Hecq FHEL, Mr Mark Carthew

Approved Duration: From 17/04/2008 To 31/12/2009

I am pleased to advise that the Chair of SHESC3 (or delegated member) has approved the revisions and clarification as emailed by you on 13/04/2008 in response to previous communication (SHESC emails of 27/03/2008 and 11/04/2008). Unless otherwise notified, human research activity in the project may commence in line with standard or any special conditions for on-going ethics clearance.

The standard conditions for ethics clearance include the following:

All human research activity undertaken under Swinburne auspices must conform to Swinburne and external regulatory standards, including the current National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans and with respect to secure data use, retention and disposal.

The named Swinburne Chief Investigator/Supervisor remains responsible for any personnel appointed to or associated with the project being made aware of ethics clearance conditions, including research and consent procedures or instruments approved. Any change in chief investigator-supervisor requires timely notification and SUHREC endorsement.

The above project has been approved as submitted for ethical review by or on behalf of SUHREC. Amendments to approved procedures or instruments ordinarily require prior ethical appraisal/clearance. SUHREC must be notified immediately or as soon as possible thereafter of (a) any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants and any redress measures; (b) proposed changes in protocols; and (c) unforeseen events which might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

At a minimum, an annual report on the progress of the project is required as well as at the conclusion (or abandonment) of the project.

A duly authorised external or internal audit of the project can be undertaken at any time.

Please contact me if you have any queries or concerns about on-going ethics clearance. The SUHREC project number should be cited in communication.

Anne Cain
Secretary, SHESC3
Ms Anne Cain
Research Administrator
Faculty of Business and Enterprise
Swinburne University of Technology
H95
PO Box 218
Hawthorn Vic 3122 Australia
Telephone +61 3 9214 8605
Fax +61 3 9214 5040
email: AnCain@swin.edu.au
Dear Dominique and Mark,

SUHREC Project 0708/164 Can you keep a secret? An artefact & exegetical essay investigating the resonance of children's rhymes, verse and poetics

Dr D Hecq FHEL, Mr Mark Carthew

Approved Duration: From 17/04/2008 To 31/12/2009 [Extension to 30/06/2010]

Thank you for your progress report for the above project which included a request for an extension of duration. There being no change to the protocol as revised and approved to date, I am authorised to issue an extension of ethics clearance in line with standard on-going ethics clearance conditions previously communicated and reprinted below.

Please contact the Research Ethics Office if you have any queries about on-going ethics clearance, citing the SUHREC project number. Copies of clearance e-mails should be retained as part of project record-keeping.

Best wishes for the continuing project.

Yours sincerely,

Kaye Goldenberg

for Keith Wilkins
Research Ethics Officer

******************************************

Kaye Goldenberg
Administrative Officer (Research Ethics)
Swinburne Research (H68)
Swinburne University of Technology
P O Box 218
HAWTHORN VIC 3122
Tel +61 3 9214 8468
Fax +61 3 9214 5267
Attention:

Can You Keep a Secret?

Musicality and resonance in children’s rhymes, verse and poeticis.

Chief Investigator: Mark Carthew  Supervisor: Dr Dominique Hecq

I am conducting a study and exegetical essay for my PhD thesis investigating musicality and resonance in children’s rhymes, verse and poeticis.

The findings of the study will inform parents, educators and others involved in the creative arts furthering our understanding of engagement processes with text and spoken language. It will also provide insight into power of rhyme, call and response, drama, music and movement in the acquisition of language, especially in early childhood.

Participation in the study would involve your taking part in a tape recorded interview of approximately one hour. This study is part of a reflective analysis of the writing and research process in developing the book Can You Keep a Secret? Timeless Rhymes to Share and Treasure to be published by Random House Australia in October 2008. The PhD exegesis is separate to that publication.

As you are someone with wonderfully rich experience in the area of children’s writing and verse, I would greatly value the opportunity to hear some of your own reflections on this topic. Should you be able to participate in this research project, please fill in the attached consent form and retain this information sheet for your own records. I will then contact you to arrange a mutually convenient interview time.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact the investigators:

Mark Carthew  Dr Dominique Hecq
Ph: (03) 9728 2651  Senior Lecturer & PhD Coordinator
Mobile: 0418 352064  (03) 9215 7327
Email: mcarthew@swin.edu.au  Email: DHecq@swin.edu.au

This project has been approved by or on behalf of Swinburne’s Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) in line with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this project, you can contact:

Research Ethics Officer, Swinburne Research (H68)
Swinburne University of Technology, P O Box 218, HAWTHORN VIC 3122.
CAN YOU KEEP A SECRET?

Musicality and resonance in children’s rhymes, verse and poetics.

CONSENT FORM

I consent to participate in the project named above. I have been provided a copy of the project information statement and this consent form and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to be interviewed by the researcher and allow the interview to be recorded by electronic device. I also agree to make myself available for further information if required. I agree to allow excerpts of the interview to be quoted in context of academic and exegetical discourse by the researcher.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that the project is for the purpose of research and not for profit. I also understand that any personal information about me which is gathered in the course of and as the result of my participating in this project will be collected and retained for the purpose of this project and accessed and analysed by the researcher for the purpose of conducting this project.

I agree to participate in this project, realising that I may withdraw my consent at any time.

Signature ___________________________ Date ______________

(Signature of participant)
CAN YOU KEEP A SECRET?

Musicality and resonance in children’s rhymes, verse and poetics.

Sample Interview questions

from Mark Carthew mcarthew@swin.edu.au

1. Childhood rhymes are a cherished part of all cultures. What factors do think embed so many early childhood rhymes in our collective memory?

2. How important do you think rhyme is to the songs, chants & nursery rhymes of childhood?

3. As an anthologist what factors influence your choice of favourite rhymes?

4. Why do you think some rhymes resonate across cultures more easily than others?

5. Educators have often acknowledged the importance of play and the links between body movements and kinaesthetic expression. How important is movement and play?

6. In translocations, how important is it to find a similar poetic nuances and rhyming stanzas?

7. How would you describe the links between musicality and language?

8. What elements of language do you feel define your own voice as a writer and anthologist?

9. As a writer and creator how do you know when ‘an idea’ reaches final form?

10. Is there anything else that you think writers and researchers should reflect on when discussing resonance and poetics in childhood language?

* * * *
Appendix 3: Interview Transcripts
Appendix 3.1: Abridged Interview / Article with Dr June Factor

Carthew, M 2008, 'June Factor: Academic, writer, folklorist, social historian',
Magpies: Talking about books for children, vol. 23, no. 5, November

Dr June Factor is one of Australia's most highly regarded researchers and authors of children's playtime and literature. Her pioneering work along with others such as Professor Ian Turner and Dr Gwenda Davey has paralleled the legendary international work of Ivona and Peter Opie in raising the profile and importance of children's rhymes and the language of childhood.

Australian children's author Mark Carthew talks to June about her research and work in children's literature.

MC: When did your fascination with poetry and wordplay begin?
JF: I just loved the flexibility and power of language from childhood. It's not easy to be specific about time. I do remember being given a volume of Henry Lawson's verse, and one of his prose, around my 10th birthday and I fell in love immediately with Lawson's ballads and stories, and his individual and radical capturing of the sense of Australian world.

It's possible that, as an immigrant child, Lawson's world of the bush, mateship, the city slums, resonated particularly strongly. I suspect that not being a 'local' has always provided me with a kind of double-helix approach to Australian literature.

MC: I imagine you also liked others such as GJ Dennis as well.
JF: I did. In those days there was a lot of poetry in the school magazines & papers and there would be poems written up on the blackboard. There was quite a bit of poetry in the education system and I just lapped it all up. I loved the magical and almost mysterious way in which language can be shaped and moulded, both in poetry and prose.

MC: Childhood rhymes are a cherished part of all cultures. What factors do you think embed so many early childhood rhymes in our collective memory?
JF: I go back one step with that. It seems to me that in many ways poetry in some way probably precedes prose, biologically and physiologically. If you listen to the first sounds a baby makes — they're rhyming, they're melodic and they're repetitive. And they usually rhyme usually. There are eleven early onomatopoeic sound utterances. The reaction of adults is to mimic and reinforce these sounds by offering extensions, such as early childhood nursery rhymes — in the English tradition there's This Little Piggy Went To Market, Enry Witty Spider, Round and Round the Garden ... These are all verse. I think that poetry in some ways is the first language, the 'natural' language and we have to learn prose, which is more difficult, more complex.

MC: I'm reading a book by Steven Mithen, The Singing Neanderthals and one of his assertions is that music or the musiality of language preceded spoken language.
JF: Prose is much more difficult to deconstruct as it doesn't have the audible pillars and regularity of verse and the predictability of its rhyme and rhythm. We are also metaphorical creatures, and poetry is very much a metaphorical art. It's about the verbal visualisation and connection of two things that don't normally go together — and we suddenly see them in a new way.

In this regard I've often been curious as to why it is that storytellers, when they sing, why singing helps the storyteller is really a curious thing and certainly worth further investigation.

MC: How important do you think rhyme is to the songs, chants & nursery rhymes of childhood?
JF: I think it is crucial. There is plenty of historical evidence of children who are not stimulated not developing as we would expect. It's not just physical stimulation. It is also the interaction that comes with the sharing & communicating process. It is also the touching — we are tactile creatures. The smaller the child, the greater the need for touch. Those tactile games
and one-tactile interaction provide a tremendously important component in early language development.

MC: The links between body movement and kinesthetic expression are fascinating. How important is that movement and bodily touch?

JF: It is essential. We don’t survive without touch, but it also the intimacy the bond created as we pass on our culture. It is a way the child gains a sense of the music of the language, of its dramatic possibilities — the way language works. It’s intonation, its pitch, of where you pause and where you don’t — and none of that is ever taught formally. It is entirely learnt by the young child interacting with the adult.

MC: Rhymes that resonate across cultural boundaries are also fascinating in this context. Performers, musicians, teacher etc. know that some move across cultural boundaries.

JF: This may be more for a musicologist to answer, I remember that there was a musicologist, Constantin Ballos, who found that there are in fact certain sound groups and rhythms that seem to resonate. He studied children from a range of different cultures and languages and found the same sound patterns and rhythms everywhere.

There is also a commonality in subject matter — and this is something I do know about. You will find that certain kinds of subject matter seem to be universal. A musicologist at Oxford University in the 1970s, Cherly Rentel, did her doctoral research in some villages in Java and the material she collected from children included subjects like farting. These were traditional villages but there was still a children’s culture.

Children’s verbal and play culture exists in societies where there has never been a school, where children don’t spend vast amounts of time away from adults. Rentel recorded a song about a fruit that caused adults to have itchy bums — the children made a mocking song of this regular event.

MC: In your own collections Far Out, Brussels Sprout, All Right, Vegemite, etc. there is a strong connection with rhyme. Do you find that rhyming structures are important to that rhythmic ‘framing up’ of the subject matter?

JF: Absolutely. It is very important. However, I’m often ask that many teachers don’t recognise that it is actually quite hard to write such tightly rhymed and rhythmic verse. We may think that because the children can say these rhymes — which they learn from each other through playful, joyful repetition — the skill it transfers to writing but it doesn’t without considerable experience and effort.

It’s easier to say these things …

Ding Dong Dell
Pussy in the well
If you don’t believe me
Go and have a smell.

Than to write with this level of wit and linguistic control. Often rhyming writing based on this kind of model is not easy at all. It can be quite a ghastly exercise.

Most of these traditional rhymes are written by the great Anon, one of the greatest writers that has ever been, and they are polished and adapted by thousands of voices ever time and place and that’s why they survive. I’d be hesitant though to say that only the good things survive. The truth is that the survival of particular material is often impossible to explain.

It’s very hard to know why some material survives and some does not. If we go back over Lady Alice Gomme’s collection of children’s traditional playlore in England, Scotland and Wales (2 volumes published at the end of the 19th century & early 20th), there’s some wonderful stuff, but by now much of it has all but disappeared — there are thin games with songs, for example, that are no longer in common usage. In The Singing Game by Tona and Peter Opie, they make the point that some of these song-games still exist in various forms. The history of these is interesting. After the industrial revolution, when children were playing together on the streets and surviving in reasonable numbers, we see the singing games in rich variety, such as the sad cycle of love, loss and death that begins:

Jenny was a weeping oh, a weeping, a weeping.
Oh, Jenny was a weeping on a bright summer’s day, etc.
Oh weeping oh
Jenny was a weeping oh...

Many of these games seem to have disappeared, but social changes have largely eliminated street play and the singing games of this kind are also in decline.

MC: So is this part of the driving force behind June Factor — the desire to preserve some of that culture?

JF: Yes, I think that is a component. My two great loves as a student (and still today)
were literature and history, I came to children's folklore almost by accident. I started talking to my teacher education students about childhood — many were unbelievably romantic about children. These days you can grow up without having much contact with children.

NC: It seems to me that the contribution of anthropologists such as the great Jane and Peter Opie to society is invaluable and the notion of people such as yourself collecting and documenting research and folklore so important.

JF: But it is also important to recognise that I didn't begin with that purpose. I began by feeling sorry that my Teacher Ed students were going to get one hell of a shock when they met children in the school playground.

In the course I was teaching in the English Department at the Institute of Early Childhood Development in Melbourne we had set a unit of English focusing on writing about childhood. To my surprise, because many students had a romantic, clean-and-lovely concept of childhood, they found the novels and autobiographies they were reading rather shocking. In an effort to rectify this I asked about their recollections of childhood games and rhymes. What's interesting is that there is a thin membrane of amnesia covering these memories among young adults. But when I introduced the uncollected children's rhymes in Ian Turner's 1969 collection, Cinderella Dressed in Yella, that thin membrane was pricked and these memories flooded back.

Then I asked my students, when they were out on teaching practice in schools, to spend time in the playground. I sent them out to the playground as undergraduates to watch and listen to the children at play. The result was a collection of hundreds of games, rhymes, sayings, insults, etc., and it was when all this wonderful stuff came back that I became fascinated — and that is how my passion for kids' lore and language began. What started as a means to an end it became an end in itself.

Some of the material the students collected was just amazing. The variety, the richness, the wit, the complexity, the clear-eyed vision of adult life that kept coming through. It had everything. All the literary, stylistic tricks, onomatopoeia, alliteration... I made a list once of the poet's devices the children use in their play and filed three lines. And I thought: most poets would give their right arm for this!

NC: Was there something common in those rhymes that resonated?

JF: It is the recognition of a culture, the culture of childhood. But very soon I realised that it wasn't seen, wasn't recognised as a culture. The words children and culture are not often used together in our society.

NC: As an anthropologist what factors influence your choice of favourite rhymes?

JF: I wasn't interested in favourites. As I became a kind of ethnographer I wanted to collect everything. When I began to put together the Far Out books, I deliberately left out material that was overtly vulgar and obscene because I knew it would never be allowed to reach the children to whom the books belong entirely. I also left out racist material, of which there's plenty. It's important to collect it, and analyse it, but I didn't want to be part of the process of circulating it. Otherwise, I chose material from a range of subjects, styles and play-related functions, to provide variety.

NC: The social aspect of childhood games has been one of your passionate interests.

JF: Children's voluntary play is sociable and collaborative, even when it is passionately competitive, as in a game of Marbles. It is a crucial arena for imagination, invention and improvisation. It is also the place in which friendships are made, consolidated and extended. In much of this play, verbal and kinetic rituals and traditions — many centuries old — provide a continuous thread across countless generations of children. A simple example is the use of the word 'barley' to signify a temporary reticence in a game; its use in this manner is at least 600 years old among English-speaking youngsters.

NC: Your collections of children's play are often cited as favourites with children, teachers and librarians.

JF: During the 1970s and 80s my students produced a mountain of material from their time in primary schools. The early material was included in the 2nd, enlarged edition of Cinderella Dressed in Yella which I co-edited with Ian Turner and Wendy Lowenstein and which was published in 1978. I also drew on this treasure-trove to produce the first of what is now a series of collections of children's verbal lore, Far Out, Brussel Sprout!, first published by Oxford University Press in 1983 and since then republished in countless editions. Once that book was published, I became the happy recipient of many hundreds of letters from children sending me their favourite rhymes, games, etc. Inevitably, these gifts resulted in another book, and then another... There are now six Far Out titles, the most recent being Okey Dokey Karaoke!

In the late 1970s, together with a colleague, Gwenda Davey, we officially titled the growing archive of children's playtime the Australian Children's Folklore Collection. That archive is now held by Museum Victoria, and a few years ago was honoured by UNESCO, which listed the Australian Children's Folklore Collection on its Australian Memory of the World register.

NC: You edit Museum Victoria's magazine Play & Folklore with Dr Gwenda Davey. What does that involve?

JF: Gwenda Davey and I began publishing what we called the Australian Children's Folklore Newsletter in 1981, while at the Institute of Early Childhood Development, to provide an avenue for information and discussion of children's lore and language in this country. It appeared twice a year (mostly) and subscribers, while not numerous, came from across Australia and from overseas. In 1997 we changed the title to Play and Folklore, and in 1999, when the Australian Children's Folklore Collection was donated to Museum Victoria, the Museum became the publisher. Since 2002, Play and Folklore has become an internet publication [www.museumvictoria.vic.gov.au/playandfolklore], with an increasingly international focus although maintaining a strong Australian base.

NC: KIDSPEAK is a wonderful dictionary of Aussie slang and vernacular. That must have been a fun project.

JF: Constructing Kidspeak: a dictionary of Australian children's words, expressions and rhymes (Melbourne University Press, 2000) was demanding but fascinating work. It resulted from all the material I had been gathering over the years. My interest in children's language, both in play and conversation, provided the impulse for the book. But writing a dictionary is very different from any other writing, and I had much to learn. I was ably assisted in the work by Siobhan Hannan. I determined very early in the project not to copy from any
other dictionary — a practice not uncommon in the dictionary world, I discovered — and certainly not to engage in any kind of censorship. I also decided that games must be included because of their central role in children’s lives. I’m happy with the result, and hope one day the book can be updated — children’s language changes even faster than adults!

MC: What’s in the future for June Factor?

JF: Who knows?! I’m writing a history of ‘aliens’ (non-British citizens) in the Australian army during WWI. Currently I’m also part of a team of scholars collecting contemporary children’s playlore across the nation in order to analyse current practices and to compare them with playlore from past generations. It’s a four-year project, and we welcome contributions from children and adults everywhere.

And, I’d like to put together a book of my various pieces of writing about childhood and children’s culture. And then there are the half-finished poems, ideas for this and that...

MC: What elements of language do you feel define your own voice as a writer and anthologist?

JF: I don’t know how to answer this question. I love the colloquial, but I also write social history for adults and that calls on a different language tradition, though I always try to keep an informal voice. And stories, and poetry, and articles for newspapers and journals — they are all written differently.

MC: Is there anything else that you think writers and researchers should reflect on when discussing narrative and poetry in childhood language?

JF: The considerable capacity of children linguistically when operating in their own cultural traditions. If only teachers would build on that...

June’s popular series of wordplay collections including All Right, Veggies!; Far Out, Brussels Sprout! & Okie Dokey, Karaoke! Illustrated by Peter Viskas are published by Emily Books. KIDSPEAK is published by Melbourne University Press.


Mark is currently completing his PhD in writing at Swinburne University Victoria, Australia investigating the musicality of language and resonance in early childhood rhymes. His picture book Five Little Owls, illustrated by Mini Goss (New Frontier) was recently shortlisted in the 2008 Speech Pathology Australia Book Awards.

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ELEVEN
Appendix 3.2: Interview with Celia Lottridge (Canada)
Response to Interview questions Wednesday, 18 March 2009

1. Childhood rhymes are a cherished part of all cultures. What factors do you think embed so many early childhood rhymes in our collective memory?

The memory of rhymes from very early childhood may often be connected to a whole experience of contact with a loved person (mother, father etc.), of anticipation of a favourite action such as bouncing at the end of a horse-riding rhyme, of being held and rocked. It also is predictable shared language which is very satisfying to a child who is gaining language skills. These are seminal experiences which become part of the underlying pattern of the individual's thought and are remembered in a very primal and often joyful way.

2. How important do you think rhyme is to the songs, chants & nursery rhymes of childhood?

All of these are patterned language forms and rhyme is a vital part of the pattern. It's also part of the fun of the rhyme and helps the person saying the rhyme play with language and anticipate or remember the ending of a line. This vital place held by rhyme is true in the languages I'm familiar with which are all European. I'm not sure it is true of all languages.

3. As an anthologist what factors influence your choice of favourite rhymes?

The anthologies I have worked on focus on rhymes which can be used interactively between a parent and a baby or child. Therefore I focus on rhymes which inspire rhythmic motions like rocking, bouncing, or patting.

Another quality I look for is rhyme content that encourages eye contact and physical closeness. And of course I also look for imaginative language and images and a story pattern so that the rhyme has some kind of climax.

4. Why do think some rhymes resonate across cultures more easily than others?
Many rhymes deal with universal situations for example: taking a bumpy ride which might be in a wagon or on a horse or in a stroller; looking at the moon; wanting a sweet treat; going to bed; waiting for a sweet treat. Others are very specific to a region or a culture. For example the Tamil language and culture is very rich in rhymes but many of them have something to do with going to shrines, which is an experience difficult to communicate to North American children in the space of a rhyme. On the other hand most of the children I have worked with live in cities yet they love rhymes about horses so sometimes it's hard to know exactly what makes a rhyme work for a child.

5. Educators have often acknowledged the importance of play and the links between body movements and kinaesthetic expression. How important is movement and play?

I have used rhymes in programs with children from the age of 2 months to 4 years and my observation is that children in this wide age range respond to everything Kinaesthetically. They need to move in response to the rhythm of the language of rhymes. As they get to understanding the meaning of the language they want to express that meaning in movement as well as by hearing and/or saying the words. As for play, the rhymes provide not only rhythm and sound they are little scripts which children from two years or so ad up use when they play. Rhymes enrich the imagination and therefore encourage creative play.

6. In transliterations, how important is it to find a similar poetic nuances and rhyming stanzas?

Transliteration means transferring the symbols of one alphabet into the symbols of another so you are simply representing the language of a rhyme in Tamil, for example, in the roman alphabet so, of course, you keep the Tamil rhythm and rhyme structure.

If you translate a rhyme from one language to another, from German to English or from Tamil to English, then I think the important thing is to decide why you are doing the translation. If your purpose is to let English speakers know the
content of the rhyme I would just do it literally. Translate the meaning of the words. If you want English speaking people to use the rhyme you have to make it work in English, with, hopefully some flavour of the original language. So the poetic nuance and the structure of the rhyme have to work in English. Otherwise no one will be able to use it with children

7. How would you describe the links between musicality and language?

I don't feel qualified to answer this question since I have a limited understanding of musicality, but in terms of rhymes I believe that the rhythm and cadence of rhymes that a child hears and moves to and says over a period of time help her to develop a feel for sound and rhythm in her body and in her vocal expression. This may relate to musicality.

8. What elements of language do you feel define your own voice as a writer and anthologist?

I can't answer this question completely but here are some things that I care about in the language I write and also in anything I would include in an anthology. I'm concerned about the oral rhythm of what I write, that is, how it sounds when read aloud. I like conciseness and precision of language and in this I'm quite influenced by rhymes, I think. I also like unusual and striking words and I can see that children love words that sound interesting.

9. As a writer and creator how do you know when an idea reaches final form?

See my answer to #8. I always read anything I write out loud. If it doesn't sound right it needs more work. It's easy to go o revising endlessly and an editor can be essential in telling me when to stop.

10. Is there anything else that you think writers and researchers should reflect on when discussing resonance and poetics in childhood language?
You asked in a separate email that I comment on particular rhymes that are especially effective in the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program in Canada and why they are effective.

I can't answer this question by identifying particular rhymes. We run groups for parents and their children. The children range from 0 to 4 years and the parents may come from any country in the world and may speak their original language much better than they speak English. Or they may be born Canadian. What works best varies from group to group. However I can identify a few things that make rhymes both effective and loved:

A. The rhyme is a simple narrative with some sort of climax at the end. The child is hugged, bounced vigorously, tickled at the end of the rhyme so that once the child is familiar with the rhyme there is always great anticipation and the parent can see the child enjoying the rhyme.

B. We work on helping the adults visualize what is happening in the rhyme. If it is about the moon we all imagine the moon as we say the rhyme. Or if it's about going along a road we imagine the road. We want the words to have meaning to the adult and eventually to the child.

C. We always emphasize rhythm because everyone loves rhythm ad if participants have a hard time remembering the words they can still feel the rhythm and convey it to the child. If we are teaching a song we teach one verse per week and often do a "la-la" verse so that people can get familiar with the tune and rhythm without worrying about the words.

D. We want our participants to actually use the rhymes in their everyday lives so we never overwhelm them with too many rhymes. We repeat rhymes every week and introduce new ones one at a time. The children love familiarity and don't need several new rhymes each week. In a ten week program we typically teach about 12 rhymes and one or two songs. The adults relax because they begin to realize that we are going to give them plenty of time to learn the rhymes.
Appendix 3.3: Interview with NZ Children’s Author Margaret Mahy

Governor's Bay, Christchurch, NZ July 10 2008

Part 1: 9.30am
Part 2: 3.30pm

Interviewer Mark Carthew

Part 1

Q As you know I’m doing my research into the musicality of children’s language. So thank you very much for helping me with the benefit of your experience in that area. Childhood rhymes are a cherished part of all cultures as we know. But what factors do you think embed so many of those early childhood rhymes that we all love so dearly in our collective memory? It’s a big question to start off with.

A Well I think that it’s not just a response in childhood. I think it’s a human response and I think it begins in childhood and can be encouraged in childhood. I think children spontaneously use rhymes of course. Sometimes doubtful rhymes, but nevertheless rhythmic or musical.

Q It was interesting, I was interviewing June Factor last week and of course she’s quite famous in Australia in particular for all those doubtful rhymes from the playground and her and Dr Gwenda Davey who have done a significant amount of research. Some of the variations that kids come up with, sometimes we wouldn’t allow in print would we but they’re good fun.

A They’re very interesting because nobody seems to know quite where they originate. Particular rhymes and games with words seem to be repeated around the playground but you can’t be sure where they came from. They seem to emerge with a curious spontaneity and of course quite a degree of fundamental association in a lot of cases.
Q: I'm fascinated in some of my research and collections; I'm really fascinated by the tactile nature of some rhymes as well. Grandparents and parents with the, [both interviewer and respondent recite rhyme] —Round and round the garden, like a teddy bear. One step, two steps, tickle under the there." And the resonance that comes through some of those rhymes, immediately we do that. You're joining in as you just joined in there. You'll find that children, adults, grandparents, mothers, fathers, it seems to be embedded in our memory and in the very fibre of our bodies in some cases.

A: And sometimes some of those rhymes you only have to hear once and you remember them.

Q: I'm a Little Teapot would be a perfect example. Once heard, never forgotten. Quite fascinating. Do you share rhymes like that with your own children and grandchildren?

A: Yes I was doing Round and Round the Garden with my grandson just the other day. And then he did it with me. He paid me back though. He goes, —One step, two step," on the same place.

Q: So it's interesting the variations isn't it? That rhyme and others like it, many of your own famous books and famous rhymes do in fact use the technique of rhyming N sounds as one of their hooks, one of the ways of getting the listener and the reader into it. And with songs and chants and nursery rhymes how important is the technique of rhyming to your own work and to that very resonance of embedding do you think?

A: Well it can be very important because in the way it's an exploration of language. The hidden collisions, the hidden juxtapositions, when we play games with language we find that language is capable of these things. There seems to be a reasonably common, I'd hesitate to say universal, but certainly a very common response to rhyme. —There was a young lady of Tottenham, with no manners or perhaps she'd
forgotten them. One day at the vicar's she tore off her knickers, because so she said she felt hot in them."

Q Is that an Edward Lear by any chance?

A No it's...

Q Margaret Mahy?

A No I don't know quite where it came from but it's the sort of thing you hear once and it's fixed in your mind. One rhyme suggests the following rhyme and the probability you might almost say of finding reasonably natural statements involve rhymes for Tottenham for example. It seems an unlikely thing. And yet as you say that, it seems like a reasonably straightforward statement.

Q Yeah it's fascinating the way that those variations, a rhyme such as that we don't know who was the very first person to ever say that and where it morphed into different variants from and...

A *5:49 somewhere but I don't know and * and there's certain sorts of rhymes and jokes. The other thing is that certain of these rhymes and jokes you only had to hear them once and they're engraved in your memory if you happen to be a person who's reasonably receptive to language.

Q Do you think the musicality, that bouncing rhythm and meter is part of that?

A Oh it certainly is where I'm concerned, I'm sure of it.

Q Do you have some favourites? As a writer of your own or if you're sharing them with your grandchildren like you were the other day as you were saying, what factors influence your choice in the particular rhyme that you choose to share? Is that easy...?
A I think it's something to do with the way the story and the language flow together. There's one or two ballads. There's one called Down the Back of the Chair, where it seems to me the language flows along fairly naturally and yet at the same time the story's got a formal shape and within the boundaries of that formality. The language seems to me to flow along fairly naturally as if anyone telling the story would tell it in that particular way. And there's another one, Bubble Trouble, which you may have heard me say, I don't know.

Q Go for it again.

A —Little Mabel blew a bubble, that caused a lot of trouble. Yes it caused a lot of trouble in the bibble bobble way. For it broke away from Mabel and it bobbed across the table. And it bobbled at the baby, had to carry him away. Well the baby didn't grizzle, he began to smile and giggle, for he liked the wibble wobble of the bubble in the air. But Mable ran for cover as the bubble bobbed above her, shouting *7:53 from her mother who was putting up her hair. At the sudden cry of trouble Mother set off at the double for the squealing led to reeling made her terrified and tense. Saw the bubble for a minute with the baby bobbing in it as the bibble bubble * and bobbed across the fence.” And it goes on like that. I won't say the whole thing.

Q So a really strong sense of meter. It's galloping along isn't it.

A There's a strong sense of galloping rhythm and the rhyme is of course a bit of a tongue twister about it. And it's telling a story at the same time.

Q You're a well travelled lady. You've recently been over to accept the Hans Christian Andersen Award and we'll get to that later. Do you find in your experiences of other cultures and places that you've visited, there seem to be some that transfer? I find it personally quite fascinating how some transfer from other cultures across to our English speaking culture and sometimes vice versa, rhymes like Frère Jacques
that were originally claimed by the French, and the Italians out of interest. They both seem to claim that one. But they translate, they're also part of our Anglo-Saxon culture as well. It sort of fascinates me why certain ones resonate more than others or why they transfer across cultures.

A I would find that difficult to have a theory on. It certainly happens from time to time. It must I imagine a lot of occasions when it doesn't *9:22. But you're certainly sharply aware of the occasions when it does with an example Frère Jacques. It's French but it's almost universally an English song too if you know what I mean.

Q You were saying the other night, it does go the other way too, not just in children's rhyme but in story. You've had a lot of translations of your wonderful collections over the years. Have you any thoughts about how that goes back into another language and what makes it appealing back in another language as well?

A I have thought about it and hope about it. I have very little judgement because English is the language that I know almost exclusively. I can read a bit of French but I don't feel I have very much judgement. I get questions sometimes from translators and I've been getting a series of questions from a Chinese translator about all sorts of bits and pieces.

Q Do you know if they're trying, because you use a lot of the...?

A She's trying to be accurate.

Q And trying to retain the sense of rhyme because, and do they always do that?

A It's not even rhyme. These haven't been in rhyme.

Q These have been more your storybook prose.

A Just in prose. She's trying to get the meaning exact and sometimes bearing that in mind it's surprisingly difficult at times to tell somebody
that doesn't have English as a native language. I do manage to tell them what I mean but I never feel confident that now that I've changed the meaning into other words that it's actually going to have anything like the same effect or the same...

Q Have you had any of your verse books translated into other language?

A Yes. Bubble Trouble has been translated but I haven't the faintest idea of how they could do that.

Q Yeah I had a similar experience, I think I was saying to you the other night, with Newts, Lutes and Bandicoots. It's gone into Korean and it's all about the N sounds of words. So God knows how that works in Korean. I've got no idea. So I'd be intrigued. I've been for myself being trying to find a translator to see what they've done because I know that Elizabeth Honey, you'd know Elizabeth, she has a German translator, does quite a lot of work in German. But Heidi, I've forgotten her last name, but I know that she goes to some trouble, because Pamela uses verse quite a great deal as well, to retain both the meaning and also find a rhyming text that retains the meaning which must be no mean feat for a translator to do.

A I'm thinking it must be very difficult. And I just don't see how anyone could reasonably translate Bubble Trouble.

Q I've noticed Margaret when you're getting excited and passionate about sharing some of your own work you start to bring in your body a bit. You're well known as a terrific public performer. How important is that body movement and that expression and the body movement to the audience's reception to your work?

A I think it probably is important. It's involuntary in a way. It's just unless you say certain things and language has a certain rhythm and pace and everything like that, you often can't help having some sort of extended physical expression at the same time as you're saying the words.
Q  I was reading one of your books, a big book, what's the one about, jog my memory, the one about the king. It was a big book.

A  Oh What a Fuss When the King Rides By. [Leaves the room and talks in the background.]

Q  That's a great book Margaret, Oh What a Fuss When the King Rode By.

A  And the drum goes bang, bang, bang.

Q  See and I have the kids going, —the drum goes tap, tap, tap.”

A  Yes the ratatatat I think it says in the book.

Q  Yes ratatatat. And then of course the obvious thing that children and teachers tend to do is get the drum and actually physically do the ratatatat sound. That fascinates me, that physical aspect of the tale.

A  It's not anything that you plan. It just seems to me to be an entirely natural sort of, it seems to me to tie in entirely naturally with the language. [END PART 1]

[START PART 2]

Q  Margaret we're back on take two, second part of this interview with the lovely and absolutely legendary Margaret Mahy. So I'm presently here sitting by Margaret's fire and enjoying her wonderful company. Just to follow on from the first part there Margaret, one of my interests as you know is the musicality of language. And getting back to that king and the ratatatat, there's an absolute musicality that comes through like a false de jure in your writing. And I suppose that's one of my own reasons for being so keen to talk to you today is that to me there's writers out there that just have captured that musicality of the language in their work. And you're most certainly famous for that. How important is that sense of music for you as a writer?
A I think it's very important. As a child I've often been absolutely fascinated by people who brought off some sort of musicality and language. Of course WS Gilbert, even without the music of Sir Arthur Sullivan...

Q Now come on Margaret. You're going to have to give us a bit of a rendition of Gilbert and Sullivan. Have you got a famous Gilbert and Sullivan one that just springs to your mind?

A I can sing, ―I am the very model of a modern major general. Of information vegetable, animal and mineral. I know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical. From Marathon to Waterloo in order categorical. I'm very well acquainted too with matters mathematical. I understand equations both the simple and quadratical. About binomial theorem I'm teeming with a lot o' news. With many cheerful facts about the square of the hypotenuse.” And so on and so forth.

Q So it's good fun isn't it.

A And it seems to flow very naturally and there seems to be something essential about the rhymes and there doesn't seem to be any quality of the author, the poet, forcing himself to...

Q Interesting how, it's really an old, it's been around for a long time and yet Pirates of Penzance continues to be popular even in our modern culture. So there's something there isn't there?

A ―I am a pirate king. I am a pirate king. And it is, it is, a glorious thing to be a pirate king.”

Q You've done a fair bit of writing about pirates yourself Margaret. We're sitting here in Governors Bay looking out and one can almost imagine a pirate ship coming down. How many pirates have you managed to weave into some of your titles? There must be a fair swag.

A I've written quite a lot. When I was a child I was, as it were, forbidden to read comics. But there was one book which I think we'd now call
almost a graphic novel that I did get and I did read. And I think my mother was a bit taken aback by it because it was almost a book. And that was called The Adventures of Middy Malone. And it was about Midshipman Malone and his relationship with *[Takers]3:21 the Irish cook and also with a pirate called Captain Vice. And Captain Vice was a sentimentalised version of Long John Silver. Because in the end Long John Silver is actually a truly unpleasant person. But a lot of the things he says are pleasant.

Q Well pirates in essence aren't very nice people when you think about it.

A Oh no, I don't think so for a moment. But they have come to represent, as they do in the Pirates of Penzance...

Q And the Pirates of the Caribbean as well. Have you seen Johnny Depp in that? That's a fantastic movie. I love it actually.

A Yes. They have come to represent a break out of the repressions of decent society in a way. They're picturesque; they're all sorts of things.

Q Romantic as well.

A Romantic. Captain Vice finally turns out to be quite a goodie in his way. Whereas Long John Silver doesn't.

Q Of course you did a play, Billy Bones in a rock classical in the Voiceworks series when we got together many years ago. That was a fun one too. What inspired that one? Was it Governors Bay inspired that particular play?

A I think it was just the idea of pirates. The Great Piratical Rumbustification.

Q Yes that's right. The most famous of all really I suppose. That's stood the test of time. Is that still in print?
A  It is. Yes I think so. And do you know the Ingoldsby Legends by any chance?

Q  No I don't know that one.

A  I used to be fascinated with the Ingoldsby Legends. There's a lot of wonderful rhyming stories in that. There's one in the Merchant of Venice. —I believe there are few who have heard of the Jew called Shylock of Venice. As arrant a screw and money transactions as ever you knew. An exorbitant miser who never yet lent a *5:24 less than a hundred percent. And as much as the various spendthrift in Venice who took no more care of his pounds and his pennies. Who pressed some * with a loan at the very first sight of his terms that take off and take refuge and flight. Now it isn't my business to pause and enquire, if you...” I'm starting to forget it a bit now.

Q  You're doing very well getting to that point. I would've long lost it.

A  —Suffice for folks that have nothing to do, who would possibly help it with Shylock the Jew.” And later on talking about Portia. —There's a lady, young, handsome, beyond all compare, at a place they call Belmont, whom when I was there at the dinners and parties,” Uncle gave or something. —We all used to stare at. And as for her wealth her solicitor told mine, apart from oil shares, a pearl fishery and goldmine, her iron strong box boxes bursting its locks. It's packed with stocks...” etc etc. And you've got the idea of it. It goes on and on with a flawless rhythm and intricate rhymes and tells the story of the Merchant of Venice.

Q  If I was to ask you what are some of the key elements to...?

A  I hasten to add I don't regard it necessarily as great literature but it's having a joke at the expense of great literature to some extent.

Q  Getting back to your own work now, if someone was to ask you the question what defines a Margaret Mahy piece of prose or verse, are
there some essential aspects or is that not a question that seems to be relevant? Is there something about a Margaret Mahy...?

A It is relevant because I like to think, and I suppose unconsciously and then sometimes consciously I try to make the language serve several purposes. One is of course the question of narration ahead. The other is to give language an imaginative dimension so that at the same time as the action is moving it's accompanied by a sort of imaginative colouring that intensifies the action, intensifies the action anyway for a certain sort of reader. You can't guarantee that everyone is going to be equally, is going to react in the same way to the same bit of writing, but somewhere out there there's a reader who will receive it and in a way complete what the writer began at the story or the poem or whatever it is goes in an arc, and that the writer writes it down and gets it as good as possible and uses musicality to a considerable degree where possible. And then the story goes out into the world and it goes from one privacy to another in a way because when the reader reads it, the reader receives it, not quite in the way always that the writer anticipated but they make it their own in a particular way by receiving it in their particular way.

Q So the reader and the audience is very much part of that whole process of the creative act.

A I think so. And I do think there's a tendency sometimes to regard the writer as actively creative and the reader as passive. But I think a good reader is creative and they complete as I say what the writer began. I certainly feel like this when I'm reading other people's books. And I expect, I hope, that other people come to feel like that about mine. I don't mean that there aren't misreading this and things like that because obviously there are. But...

Q It's sort of a bit like a never-ending story in a sense. As a creator and as a writer yourself you must reach a certain point where you're happy to let it go, that active creation, out into the world as you said before.
A Yes of course you do because you feel, perhaps there's no point in which it's ever finished but there does seem to be a point at which you feel that you've done as much as you can with this particular story and the way the story's told and everything like that. And after that it becomes the reader's responsibility to receive and remake it.

Q With your own writer's journey Margaret, it's full of wonderful, it's been absolutely full of richness and colour and shade and everything. In that journey to where you are today, have you got some advice for people wanting to move into the creative genre of writing, illustrating, film script – I should get onto film scripts because you're currently working on a film script as well.

A I don't know whether I have got any advice because everyone's got to find their own way of doing this. But I think that there are things...I've often spoken to people that are interested in writing and suggested that they read certain things. And they say, ―Oh no I don't want to do that because I might find myself copying them.‖ My own experience is that I've read those things and there are elements in there, in certain stories and poems, that I envy and want to have some of the same effect. But I want to be the person who establishes the effect and I want to do it in my particular way. And I'm never worried particularly about copying what somebody else has done. Though there are times when I think that the story I'm writing will link with say a folk tale or something like that so that somebody who has read Hans Andersen or something like that may find the linkage. And I think that that is a thoroughly legitimate thing to happen in a reader's life. They link the stories in various ways and the stories as I say aren't copied from one another necessarily but they still connect.

Q This sort of gets back to our conversation the other day about JK Rowlands' wonderful success and people like Diana Wynne Jones, both of them who have constructs and ideas that are borrowed from Hans Christian Andersen, Grimm's Tales and folklore and fairy tales that have been handed down over time. In some senses the success of
all those things is the resonance to the fairy tale genre and the folklore...

A

Well the things are there. I mean they take them seriously and sometimes make fun of them too. But although they make fun of them, even when they make fun of them they're still in some ways paying them a tribute. They're not making fun of them in the sense of rubbing them.

Q

Speaking of tributes and Hans Christian Andersen, it's a good cue to your recent acknowledgement of the Hans Christian Andersen Award, the IBBY Award which you recently went over to receive. And I know all of New Zealand and all of the children's literature world was absolutely excited and delighted on your behalf. Can you tell us more about that award an how you felt and how it came to be?

A

It's easy to tell you how I felt. I felt absolutely overwhelmed and excited and of course at some level pleased with myself. It was something that I'd never contemplated winning. It always seemed to be something rather remote, not only from me but from New Zealand too because people who've won it have been European and English and so on and so forth. And I was bowled over. I was utterly thrilled to receive it, not only because of the glory but because it meant that people had read the stories and had enjoyed them and found them significant in some way. And that's very fulfilling obviously for a writer.

Q

You mentioned New Zealand. You've been voted the fourth most trusted person in New Zealand and you've also been voted a living national treasure. Am I right in saying that? I'm sure I read something like that.

A

I believe so.

Q

So your regard in New Zealand is outstanding, as it is in Australia and all across the world. But you've also had particular success in Britain as well which is not an easy market for Australians or New Zealanders
from this part of the world to crack. Can you explain why you’re so popular in Britain?

A I imagine that it partly at any rate because I was brought up on British, English books. There was comparatively little written in New Zealand when I was a child. And of course I can think of one or two books that were good but a lot of them were fairly average and didn’t have anything like the language, the musicality of language or the power of language that British books had. I also came from a family where my mother regarded – as an ex-Christchurch woman - British books as the supreme examples of literature. So perhaps I was affected by that. But I think it was mostly through reading those stories. It took me quite a while before I felt I could naturally write a New Zealand story, even though I’d grown up in New Zealand and been surrounded by New Zealand from infancy. And I think quite a lot of other writers have had this experience too, that the reading and the imaginative, well it just places them imaginatively to some extent. I think Australia preceded New Zealand in getting an Australian voice. But New Zealand now has quite a strong New Zealand voice of its own. Of course I like to think that by far I’m part of it.

Q Well and truly. You’ve got some tremendous writers and illustrators here haven’t you.

A Yes, indeed I think we have. It’s comparatively recent but by now it’s been what, 40 years or something. I don’t know how long Gavin Bishop for example has been illustrating but it’s been quite a lot time now.

Q Speaking of sense of place, Maddigan’s Quest I think, did you place that, I remember reading something, that’s placed in a New Zealand context.

A It’s placed in a New Zealand context and some of the names, if you know New Zealand names, some of those names are recognisable versions let’s say of New Zealand names and some of the scenes and
places are recognisable. But of course it's dealing with a post-apocalyptic time and there's been great shifts of language and scenery and everything like that in that particular story so it is in effect a fantasy.

Q So what's on the radar for Margaret Mahy?

A A picture book of Bubble Trouble is coming out. It's illustrated by Polly Dunbar who did Down the Back of the Chair. And because that's been a successful book they've put us together for Bubble Trouble.

Q That's a great story, the keys down the back of the chair, I like that. That's happened to most of us.

A It's happened to me. And then there's the book called The Magician of Hoad which originally was, many years ago, was a great long fantasy I wrote that was over 800 pages long. Well of course I knew in a way that it was too long and this was confirmed by people who read it. So I've cut it back and cut it back. And it's still quite a long story. But it is the story of a young man with supernatural abilities. The world chooses that say via the king of the country and everything like that to exploit these abilities in a particularly pragmatic way. But actually I suppose you could say that his abilities are really most truly used when he uses them to make some sort of imaginative blending into nature and everything like that. He's also got let's say his faults where his power is concerned because of certain pressures that were put on him in childhood that rather distorted his power. I reckon you could put it like that. The other thing is that running through all this sort of speculation I suppose about the possibility of imagination given another dimension, along with that is a sort of adventure story.

Q And a little bit of a hero with an environmental conscience by the sound of it as well, which is a good message for the current day and age I would think.

A Yes, he is a hero. He's got some of the faults that heroes have. And his partner you could say or one of the characters in the story is a girl who
initially makes her appearance in his life as boy. And the girl dressed as a boy is quite an old figure in a variety of stories and various stories in the past that set the girl free to lead an adventurous life too.

Q Just speaking of that, do you often cast girls in your roles as protagonists? There’s quite a lot of discussion in Australia about making sure of the gender balance.

A Quite often, yes. I have quite a lot and I’ve made them adventurous girls in many cases.

Q Is that because you were an adventurer when you were young?

A Yes I think it is partly. One of the great things I loved doing was climbing trees. The games I played were less, I mean I did play hopscotch and the traditional girls’ games. But what I really loved to do was to act out a story in which I would have some heroic and I’d be riding a wonderful horse, which is quite a girlish thing to want to do when you think of horse stories. And I would be very good at fighting with a sword and all those sorts of things because in those days the sort of films of Douglas Fairbanks, well that was Fairbanks Junior and various people like that. I didn’t see them all but I’d see the posters and things like that and I rather envied the exciting life that they seemed to be leading. Of course nowadays I know that that exciting life was mythologised.

Q You’re doing a great job bringing lots of people into all the exciting stories and characters that you create Margaret. It’s fantastic. Speaking of all those exciting stories though, a question that writers and illustrators often get asked in interviews or with children is about your favourite stories. And it’s often a very tough and very difficult question to answer because for someone in your case, you’ve written so many wonderful stories. But are there any particular ones that you do have a fondness for that spring to mind?
A Well they're a variety of levels. Among the picture books The Great White Man-eating Shark is one of my favourites.

Q Was that set in New Zealand out of interest I suppose?

A It could be. It's a beach.

Q It could be anywhere couldn't it, certainly Australia or New Zealand.

A I think it is, yes, it's a beach. When I was a child and we lived in Northland I can remember somebody catching a shark and pulling it to shore and how dramatic it was. And how weeks and possibly months after the shark had been caught I would go out into the wharf and look down and there through the clear water I could see its bones. And of course the shark is a fearsome fish. So the boy who looks rather like a shark...

Q Yes I can remember him strapping his little fin on. It's a very popular story in the library.

A And he finds himself swimming next to a real shark. And he's been so good at imitating the shark that the shark swimming beside him has fallen in love with him. —*Marry me at once or I'll lose my temper and bite you,*” it says.

Q So did they get married and live happily after? I can't remember the ending...

A No he'd flung himself onto the beach kicking and screaming with terror which was the punishment and the moral of the story for his wanting to frighten other people away from the beach and have it all to himself.

Q Do you like to put moral bents in your work Margaret? Is that something or is that a common Margaret Mahy trait?

A No not exactly. But I mean in that particular story the moral as you might say is rather a joke anyway. I'm having a bit of fun at the idea of
a particular form of story where actions result in a climax that leads the main character to change their life for the better. I don't know that any of the novels or anything like that, I don't think I've ever written a novel that has a tragic or a sad ending. I've written some books that have rather ambivalent endings. But there are books written for young adults and for senior readers, some of which do have tragic endings, some stories with sad endings and I haven't written anything like that. And even some of the books for young adults I think have you might almost say a fairytale structure concealed in their hearts.

Q As we were talking about before, that ode to the Greek myth, tragic Greek legend of course like Pasiphaë and the Minotaur. Essentially it's an absolute tragedy. It's a sad thing and it puts up the wrong flag. On a personal level those sort of stories they resonate in a different sort of way don't they through the tragedy.

A They certainly do, yes. But then you know, I mean I don't know about back then, no, they're not purely children's stories either. That's the thing about them. They're written for a community. They're possibly written for children to read and hear and listen to but also for adults to read and hear and listen to. And so some of those stories have got very, some of Grimm's fairy tales can be very sinister too. Not all of them. Most of them have happy endings but some don't.

Q We were talking about that at the NZRA conference actually. Tanya Batt who you know well, a wonderful storyteller, in her session which was fantastic. Parents that leave Hansel and Gretel, that actually leave their children in the forest, it's the antithesis of what we would regard as what a parent should do. And children and adults alike...

A It's an ultimate betrayal.

Q Yeah, there's messages for the community in those sort of stories and also a great sense of relief and trust in our own parents that do not
leave us in the forest and nurture us I suppose. You're doing a bit of animation lately Margaret. Can you tell us about that?

A Oh well a while ago I wrote scripts for various television series. And then some people, some group has put various stories of mine, they've chosen them and animated them. And then some of the scripts that I've written for television have been adventure stories.

Q And Maddigan's Quest was going into TV.

A Yes it is in TV.

Q How's that been received?

A Quite well I think. It was written primarily for TV and the book was written subsequently. So that's the opposite from the way I usually do things.

Q A good experience?

A Yes it was. It was quite interesting because of course when you write a script you're a member of a team writing. When you write a book you're writing in solitude a lot of the time. And you go through certain stages in either case where the story is I suppose taking you over to a certain extent. And somehow or other as things happen during the day, unconsciously you're trying them out. Can I use this? Can I use this? Is this going to be of any use for me? And of course sometimes things do happen that you think, —Oh can use that. That's good.” So there's a continual exploring of the life around you at certain stages to see what you can fit into the story, what you can adapt, change, seize upon, what you can make work to your advantage within the story. And it certainly happens with television and film scripts. In television you find that other people's skills have to be taken into consideration so that you can make almost anything happen in a story and print on the page. You try the same idea out as a script writer and the producer will say, -Oh
no that's going to be too expensive.” Well things like that. There's a
different...

Q: Very practical considerations in the writing process.
A: Yes that's why I say you write as the member of a team.

Q: Speaking of genres, we've covered a fair bit of territory today, is there a
genre that you haven't written in that you would like to write in?
A: I'd have to have a bit of a think about that because I've written of
course stories with supernatural elements. I've written stories that are
jokes in one way or another. And I've written stories that are straight
family stories with no supernatural events in them at all.

Q: Of course poetry, verse and verse narrative.
A: Yes I've tried a lot of different things.

Q: You've covered a lot of territory.
A: I think I have.

Q: Have you written adult...
A: I think I've got close to it at times but the protagonists have tended to
be young adults. And of course the young adult book is a category of
books that gets a certain sort of review in a certain sort of place in the
library shelves and all that sort of thing. But I like to think of course that
in the adult reading, even anything like The Great White Man-eating
Shark will endure reading it to a child and will possibly see things in it
that the child won't see for some time. There's certain very simple
stories I've written where there's elements of irony. I don't mean that
I'm looking at the adult over the child's head. But I like to think that
when an adult reads that story to a child the adult will get some sort of
fulfilment from reading it too, simply because I've got fulfilment from
reading other people's picture book stories and things like that. When I
read Where the Wild Things Are say to children, "The night Max Waters' wolf *32:15 of one kind or another. His mother called him Wild Thing and Max said, "I'll eat you up." So he was sent to bed without eating anything." Now that beginning has got quite a lot of richness in it for adults as well as children.

Q  Certainly one of the things that you're raising there is...

A  It's very simple and straightforward and yet it's also quite rich that isn't it.

Q  Children's writing is very rich in what it offers to all readership no matter what their age and I think that's such an important point you've just made.

A  You read Alice in Wonderland or anything like that as an adult you're reading it a bit differently than the way you read it when you were a child.

Q  Tolkien, another great example.

A  Oh yes indeed.

Q  Ostensibly The Hobbit was a children's book but loved by adults all over the world. And in recent times, getting back to graphic novels, Shaun Tan's amazing success in Australia and overseas now, Children's Book Council Awards etc for a book that's actually ostensibly probably just as much if not more appreciated by adults in a sense. And that's no disservice to Shaun.

A  That was true in the case of Shaun Tan.

Q  So very, very broad in appeal for people like Shaun. And Graeme Base similarly I think as well.

A  Yes I think that's right.
We've covered a lot of territory there Margaret. Just before we finish, you've worked with a lot of illustrators and editors and publishers over a long period of time, you must have some fond memories of working with various people in the industry.

Well it's quite an interesting question. Of course I do have. At the same time when I started having books published I started having them published in the USA and then they were co-published in England. They were more successful I think in England than they were in the USA. I always think of the picture book stories that I've written as stories with pictures. Whereas I think of something like Where the Things Are as a true picture book. That's not to put the stories with pictures down. But a lot of the books that are written and illustrated by the same person or picture books that are written by one person who has a close connection with the illustrator, you know what you can leave out and what the pictures will show. The Boy Who Was Followed Home, Stephen Kellogg, I wrote a boy who was followed home by hippos. Do you know that book?

Yes I do.

The boy who was followed home by hippos. His mother got rather tired of all the hippos around the place and he was sent to a witch who put a spell on him, making him unattractive to hippos. But the next night when he was coming home from school he felt he was being followed. He looked over his shoulder and the original story said instead four elephants of the African kind were following him. Stephen first of all wanted pictures to carry the climax of the story so if I was reading that book I'd have to be able to show people what was going on in the pictures and to know what was happening there right at the end. The other thing was he wanted to do giraffes instead of elephants at the end because the giraffes are long slim animals that go up and down the page and the elephants are rather like hippos, my point about it was bigger than hippos but he's drawn, they're big oblong, grey animals you might say. And Stephen wanted to do something different. And in an
effort to I suppose achieve in essence a true picture book I went along with those things. But if I was just telling the story and without the pictures and everything like that I might stick with the elephants.

Q Do you think like an illustrator when you write?

A I do to some extent but of course I don't think necessarily in the same terms that the illustrator’s going to think when they come to do the book.

Q So have you worked closely with some illustrators more than others, like in that context when you've really wanted to achieve...?

A Stephen would be the one, he's come across with suggestions and ideas about how things are going to work. Some illustrators get the story and just do the pictures that they think will be appropriate and of course sometimes they're lovely. Jonathan Allen doing The Great White Man-eating Shark, I thought his pictures fitted very well to the story.

Q I won't put you on the spot with the obvious next question of whether or not you have disappointments because I often get that one myself when I'm travelling around. And I always tell the kids that that would be grossly unfair to say that. But it's interesting isn't it how some actually do work better than others when you visualise it as a creator.

A I think that it's not exactly as perhaps, disappointments would be too strong a word, but there's some things where I feel the pictures and the text work very well together and other times when I feel that the pictures are a bit remote from the story as I envisaged it.

Q And you never tried to illustrate yourself? You've never had the urge to pick up a paintbrush?

A I have once. I did, which one was it, the American version of Bubble Trouble I illustrated. But I'm not an illustrator, though I like drawing pictures.
Q Is there anything else? I think we've probably gone on long enough Margaret. Is there anything else you'd like to say when reflecting on either the resonance or the poetics of language or anything else, something that we may not have questioned or a question I haven't asked that you feel you'd like to...?

A Of course sometimes in certain stories the language can be overly colourful and overdone and everything like that. But I think when it strikes right, first of all one thing is that often demands of reading aloud in a way, though when you're reading it off the page you do in a way hear it inside your head and I think that they...I don't know, it's just wonderful when you read a story where there is musicality to the language. I think that one's reaction to that is a very basic human reaction. I think language is so important to us that there's a variety of ways in which our reception of language and our response to it is very important. And the stories and poems that enable us to acknowledge that in one way or another do become important and we do become attached to them and they become sometimes attached to the community, to a particular society. And this applies to some children's books. Of course a lot at the cell of the folk tales are really not children's stories but community stories.

Q Well it's great, people like yourself, Michael Rosen over in the UK, the contribution of your work Margaret to children's literature is just absolutely fantastic. So thank you so much for your time today.

A Well thank you for saying that because you can never be sure yourself.

Q I think there's millions of readers out there...

A It's nice when some reader says that they've enjoyed the book and everything like that.

Q Do you get letters from kids?
A  Yes I do. I posted some just the other day. Sometimes you get them and you know that the letters have been to a considerable extent dictated by a teacher. But sometimes you get fairly spontaneous letters which are a great pleasure. Well so are the ones you get that have been dictated by the teacher too.

Q  I’m sure you’ll get many, many more letters Margaret. All the best with your next ventures and we’re looking forward to hearing and seeing and reading aloud the next Margaret Mahy book. So thanks for that.

A  Thank you very much.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
### Appendix 4: List of Acronyms and Definitions (as used in the exegesis)

#### List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAWP</td>
<td>Australian Association of Writing Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Australian Broadcasting Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>APA</td>
<td>Australian Publishers Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>APWN</td>
<td>Australian Postgraduate Writers Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA</td>
<td>Australian Society of Authors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBCA</td>
<td>Children's Book Council of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Compact disc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP</td>
<td>Cataloging-In-Publication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYKaS</td>
<td>Can You Keep A Secret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEECD</td>
<td>Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, State Government of Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr</td>
<td>Doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN</td>
<td>International Standard Book Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLA</td>
<td>National Library of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OED</td>
<td>Oxford English Dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCBWI</td>
<td>Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trk</td>
<td>track [CD]</td>
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<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>Western Australia</td>
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List of Definitions

Active practitioner research: a way of knowing and connecting with meaning informed by practice and experience. Living research.

Aesthetic: concerned with beauty or appreciation of beauty, purpose and taste.

Alliteration: the same letter or sound at the beginning of closely connected words

Anthology: a published collection of poems or other pieces of writing.

Anthologist: person who collects literature, especially poems and songs, reproductions of art etc.

Anthological: The act of making an anthology or collection.

Antiphonal: sung or chanted in alternation i.e. sung or recited alternately by two groups’ (Moore 2008, p. 52)

Artefact: creative work (specifically Anthology and CD)

Assonance: resemblance of sound between syllables of nearby words, arising particularly from the rhyming of two or more stressed vowels, but not consonants e.g. sonnet, porridge, and killed, cold, culled. (Moore 2008, p. 73).

Attributes: a quality or feature regarded as a characteristic or inherent part of someone or something (Oxford Dictionaries 2010). Synonymous with elements and features.

Canon: works regarded as significant by the literary establishment or by society.

Categorisation: a way of grouping together. Place in a group.

Chant: a repeated rhythmic phrase, typically one shouted or sung in unison by a group, often musical with a sing-song tone.
**Chapter:** Reference to the one of the six chapters in the book, *Can you keep a secret? Timeless rhymes to share and treasure.* Sometimes referred to as a section.

**Consonance:** the recurrence of similar-sounding consonants in close proximity, especially in prosody. Agreement, harmony.

**Educative:** about learning.

**Elements:** (see attributes) discreet parts of poetry.

**Exegesis:** noun (plural exegeses) critical explanation or interpretation of a text.

**Features:** synonymous with attributes, elements and characteristics.

**Folklore:** the traditional beliefs, stories, verse and language of people and the studies of these.

**Genre:** a style or category of art, music, or literature (Oxford Dictionaries 2010).

**Gesture:** a movement of part of the body, especially a hand or the head, to express an idea, feeling or meaning; an action to evoke response or convey intention.

**joie de vivre:** from original French, exuberant enjoyment of life (Oxford Dictionaries 2010).

**Icebreaker:** song or other device to make individuals feel relaxed and comfortable.

**Intonation:** modulation of the voice, accent.

**Jouisance:** joyful connection to the sounds and visualisation of imagined worlds (Barthes 1989, p. vi).

**Kinaesthetic:** an aesthetic linked to the ability to solve problems or to fashion products using one’s whole body, or parts of the body’ (Gardner 1993, p. 9). An aesthetic situated in the nexus between the senses and movement.
**Kinesics:** a systematic study of how human beings communicate through body movement and gesture (Birdwhistell 1981, p. 352).

**Longevity:** stood the test of time.

**Lore:** in cultural and societal memory; traditions and knowledge on a subject or held by a particular group, typically passed from person to person by word of mouth.

**Meme:** (shortened from *mimeme*), that which is imitated, an element of culture that may be considered to be passed on by non-genetic means." ‘ (Oxford English Dictionary (OED) 2007, p. 597). Also commonly understood as something embedded in cultural or literary lore. Also personal.

**Meter:** the rhythm of a piece of poetry, number of measures or beats.

**Method:** form of procedure and way of thinking.

**Morph:** to change.

**Musicality:** relating to music. A sense of music in the language or lyric.

**Multiplicity:** having many attributes, sometimes shared.

**Multicultural:** adj. of, or relating to or constituting several or many cultural or ethnic groups within a society (Moore 2008, p. 839)

**Nursery rhymes:** rhymes for children or early childhood. Sometimes songs.

**Onomatopoeia:** the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named (e.g. *cuckoo*, *sizzle*), (Oxford Dictionaries 2010).

**Pedagogical:** to do with education and theories of teaching and learning.

**Performative:** a way of transferring meaning through action.

**Performativity:** ‘performance as a way of knowing and a way of showing’ (Kemp in Conquergood, 2002, p. 152)
Playful: intended for one’s own or others’ amusement rather than seriously: giving or expressing pleasure in interaction with others. Derivatives Playfulness

Poetica: a sense of the lyrical and poetic.

Poetic: written in verse rather than prose. Having an imaginative or sensitively emotional style of expression. Rhythmic, musical and lyrical.

Poetics: the art, essence and techniques of poetry.

Practice: the application or use of an idea, belief, or method in personal or professional activity; generally related to creative and professional endeavour e.g. practice as a writer/anthologist, practice as a teacher, practice as a performer.

Practice led research: research that enables the academy to look at practice as a way of bringing forth research both in itself and in an interaction with the ideas and debates that may be teased out from it’ (Arnold 2007, p. 3).

Prosody: the patterns of rhythm and sound used in rhymes (Oxford Dictionaries 2010).

Public Domain: the state of belonging or being available to the public as a whole, esp. through not being subject to copyright or other legal restrictions. (Moore 2008, p. 1042)


Resonant: having the ability to evoke enduring images, memories, or emotions. (Oxford Dictionaries 2010).
**Rhyme:** correspondence of sound between words or the endings of words, especially when these are used at the ends of lines of poetry (Oxford Dictionaries 2010).

**Rhythmic:** having rhythm.

**Rime:** archaic variation of rhyme.

**Section:** synonymous with chapter.

**Semiotics:** the study of signs and symbols and their use or interpretation in various fields, especially language. Includes the study of meanings assigned to non-arbitrary signs, as well as cultural systems.

**tableau vivant:** origin French, literally ‘Living picture’ (Oxford Dictionaries 2010).

**Text:** any communicative content under analysis inclusive of new mediums of communication and multiliteracies.

**Textuality:** distinguishing features related to the feel, appearance and medium of text and textual language.

**Thematic:** having a logical or perceivable connection.

**Traditional:** handed down over time, in the public domain, with no attributed author.
Publications produced by the candidate as a result of this project

Published works


Carthew, M 2009, Can you keep a secret? Timeless songs to share and treasure, [CD], Random House Australia, Sydney.

Refereed Papers


*A ranked refereed journal

Also presented as a paper at the Fourteenth Annual AAWP Conference: Margins and Mainstreams, Waikato Institute of Technology, Hamilton, New Zealand, 27 November, The Australian Association of Writing Programs and Writing for Young Readers - An International Conference on Writers of Children’s Books, Biography and Canon, PH Bern, Institut Sekundarstufe 1, Switzerland., 29 May. Unpublished proceedings.


*A ranked refereed journal


*A ranked refereed journal


*B ranked refereed journal
Carthew, M 2010, 'Seeing the blue between: Children's writing in the margins,' *Writing for Young Readers - An International Conference on Writers of Children’s Books, Biography and Canon*, PH Bern, Switzerland.

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