

TRAPPED!

THE ENTOMBED MINER OF BONNIE VALE

JULIA LAWRIKSON

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YEAR LEVEL: F–Y10

ABOUT THE BOOK

In 1907, the mining town of Bonnie Vale experiences a sudden deluge of rain that floods a gold mine while miners are still at work down the shaft.

Joe's dad is one of them. And it soon becomes clear that he's the only one who hasn't made it back out yet. Where is he? Why didn't he escape with the others? And more importantly, how will they rescue him?

Inspired by the true story of the trapped miner of Bonnie Vale and told in verse, Julia Lawrinson weaves a tale that will beckon readers down into the gold mine with Joe's dad to find out how the rescue unfolded.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julia Lawrinson is an award-winning writer of books for children and young adults. She hails from Perth and, despite leaving school at 15, has a PhD in writing and a Bachelor of Laws with distinction. Julia has worked in a range of organisations, from the arts to parliament to health. She has presented at schools, workshops and conferences across Australia, and in Singapore, Indonesia and the USA, and loves meeting her audience and encouraging reading, learning and curiosity. Her books are about friendship, family and the occasional Jack Russell. She loves the ocean, reading, dog parks and the word serendipity.

THEMES

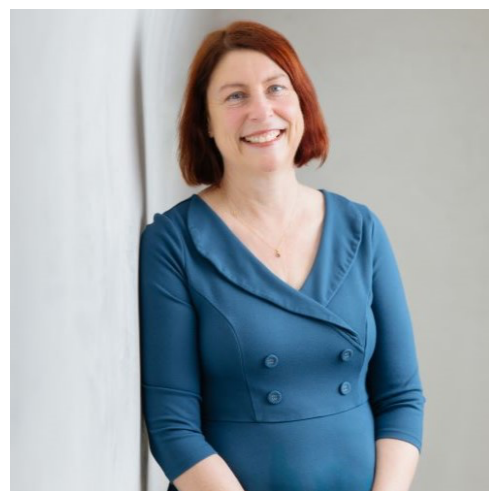
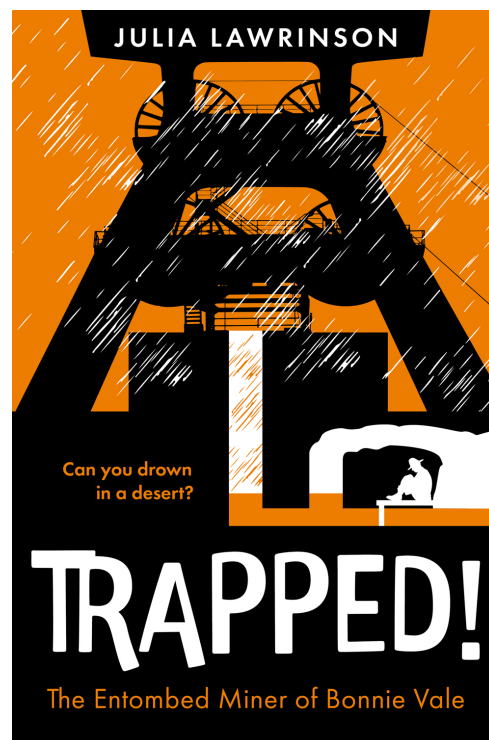
- Coming of age
- Family and father/son relationships
- Immigration
- Racism
- Australian history
- Courage and resilience

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

- F–10 English
- F–10 Humanities and Social Sciences
- F–10 General Capabilities: Literacy, Intercultural Understanding and Critical and Creative Thinking

USEFUL WEBSITES

- Author website: www.julialawrinson.com.au
- Australasian Mine Safety Journal. (2019, July 5). *The Entombed Miner*. <https://www.amsj.com.au/the-entombed-miner/>
- Western Australian Museum. *A Miraculous Rescue* | Western Australian Museum. (n.d.). <https://museum.wa.gov.au/explore/wa-goldfields/dangerous-life/miraculous-rescue>
- State Library WA. (2012, October 12). *Entombed Miner - A digital story by the State Library of WA*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GjEA2pwH7R0>



- 'Mining Horror'. (1907, March 21). *The Daily News (Perth, WA: 1882 - 1955)*, p. 4. Retrieved from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article77619353>

CLASSROOM IDEAS

Discussion questions

1. *Trapped* is written in verse – a narrative poetry style often written in first person. Discuss why this storytelling style works well for *Trapped's* narrator and target audience.
2. Discuss why the author wrote from the perspective of Joe, rather than his father, the entombed miner himself, Modesto 'Charlie' Varischetti.
3. How does help the reader connect to the characters?
4. *Trapped* alternates timelines between Joe's past journey immigrating to Australia and the day his father becomes trapped. How do these timelines compare and contrast against one another? Why do you think the author chose alternating timelines instead of telling a linear story?
5. Compare and contrast how Joe is treated by his schoolmates as an Italian immigrant, to when he is helping with the rescue effort.
6. Explore the symbolism of the British and Italian flags being raised when Varischetti is rescued.
7. Describe the relationship between Joe and his father, and how it changes over the course of the novel.

Activities

1. Using what you've learned from *Trapped*, write your own version of *The Daily Mail* article using headline mentioned on page 66: 'Mining Horror: Miner Entombed' Afterwards, compare it to the real article (accessed via Trove; listed in useful websites above).
2. Create a Frayer model for unfamiliar vocabulary words from the text; examples include: 'trapped', 'entombed', 'diver' and 'mine'.
3. In pages 17–20, the author uses rich imagery to describe the dirty conditions of the Italian camp in Bonnie Vale. Identify keywords and match them to the five senses: taste, touch, sound, smell and sight.
4. Illustrate an alternate cover or diagram from page 91, based on your interpretation of the key themes of the book.
5. Create a storyboard of the key moments of *Trapped*.
6. Write a short story, in verse, from the perspective of Joe's father as he waits in the mine to be rescued.
7. Research what happened to Varischetti and his family after the rescue.
8. Research other famous examples of trapped miners in Australia and compare the miners' experiences. Examples include the mines at Beaconsfield and Mount Lyell.



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