



# Water Witcher

Books Reviewed:

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Issue:

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Reviewer:

[Margaret Mallett](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

This big, square, shiny picture book inspires a tremendously strong sense of place. A farming family in the Australian bush struggle to cope with a severe drought. Dad and young Dougie make their way by horse and cart to Last Stop Well and haul up water bucket by bucket to fill their tank. Ormerod uses a restricted palette of fierce oranges, parched browns and strident blues to show an arid landscape ? ?the crops are brown and crisp in the sun?. The strong black line defining people and animals somehow emphasizes their vulnerability in the harsh, dry heat.

Vivid pictures and lively, dialogue rich text will engross young readers. Has Dougie inherited his grandfather?s water witching gift? Yes ? but much effort is involved and there are no quick results. We share the exhilaration of the young water witcher and his family when he is finally successful and the palette changes to blue and purple against a cool, white background.

This book tells of a childhood where hardships have to be endured, but there is also plenty of playful family banter and some caring affection shown to the pet joey and cockatoo. I wholeheartedly recommend it for any primary school collection.

Running Order:

3

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