

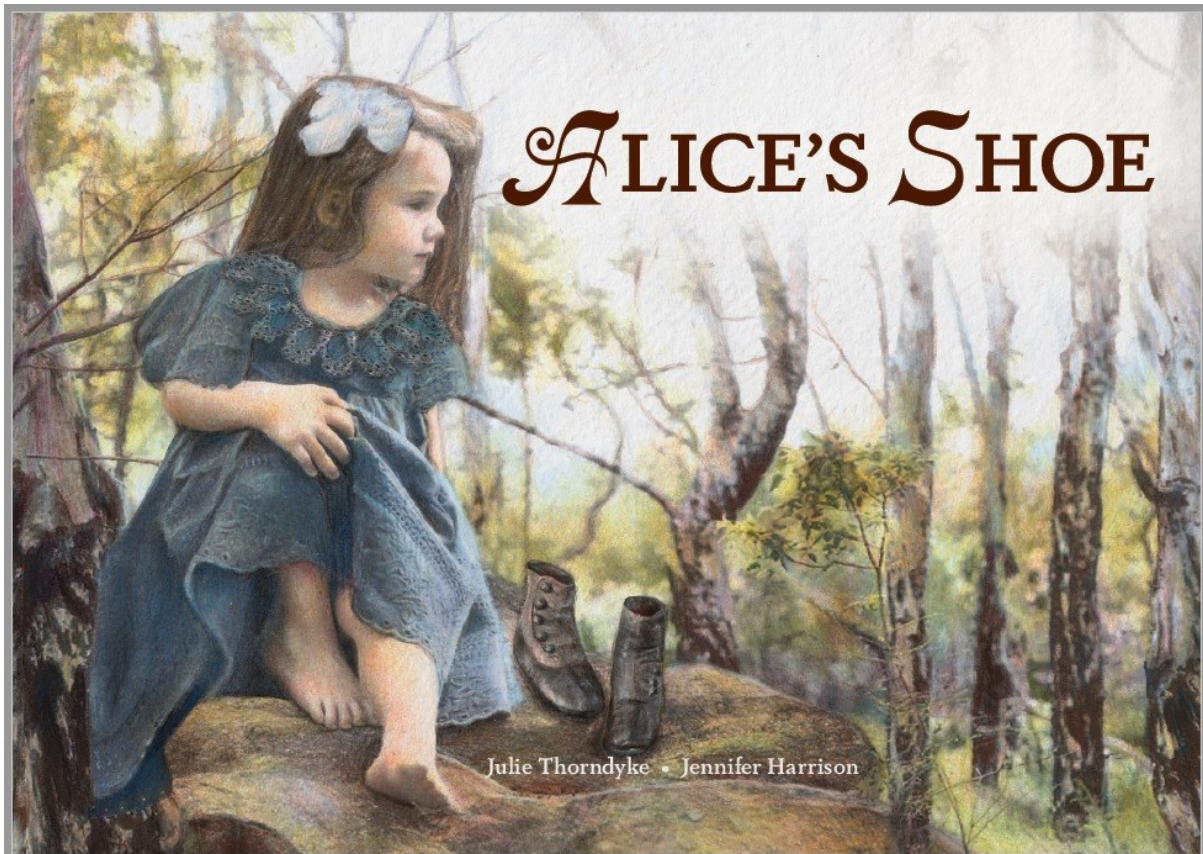
Alice's Shoe

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Illustrations by Jennifer Harrison

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SYNOPSIS

A country child, Alice ran barefoot. On smooth waxed floorboards, dusty clay in the yard, icy water in the creek... she refused to wear shoes. After losing her sight and hearing through illness Alice slowly made her way back to life and became the first deafblind person in Australia to be educated.

Her hated shoe was Alice's first connection with the world of language as she learnt to sign.

Alice's Shoe tells the childhood story of Alice Betteridge, who became known as "Australia's Helen Keller".

THEMES

- Sensory impairment
- Literacy and language
- Biography

TEACHING NOTES Alice's Shoe

- Communication for people who live with deafblindness
- Women - education - early 20th century NSW

TEACHING NOTES Alice's Shoe

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julie Thorndyke writes poetry and fiction for children and adults. Editor of *Eucalypt: a tanka journal* since 2017, Julie's books include *Mrs Rickaby's Lullaby* (adult novel), *Divertimento* (short stories), *Borrowed Riches* (tanka) and picture books *Waiting for the Night* and *Watching through the Day*. Her stories and poems for children have been published in *The NSW School Magazine*. In 2020 she co-edited *Splash, Slither, Squawk!* anthology for The Society of Women Writers NSW. She was Highly Commended in the Nance Donkin Literary Award 2021. Julie and her family live in Sydney with two ragdoll cats and a collie dog.

Walking each day past photographs of Alice Betteridge in the corridor, while working as research librarian at RIDBC, inspired Julie to write a book for children about this remarkable person. She hopes that children living with deafblindness will be encouraged by the story of *Alice's Shoe*.



Alice Betteridge and her teacher, Miss R. S. Reid, B.A., 1906



Helen Keller meets Alice Betteridge

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Jennifer Harrison lives in Adelaide with her son Nathaniel. Since leaving university she has worked as a graphic designer, commercial artist and art director. Her illustrations have been commissioned for book covers, magazines and packaging for overseas and local markets and she has exhibited in Adelaide galleries.

MidnightSun published her children's book *Olivia's Voice* in March 2017 and *Vanishing* in November 2018, both written by Mike Lucas.

Vocabulary

Identify words requiring explanation whilst the reading of the book and pause briefly to explain their meanings.

e.g

fertile - soil or land producing or capable of producing abundant vegetation or crops

spurting - gush out in a sudden and forceful stream

nestled - settle or lie comfortably within or against something

embroidered - decorated with patterns sewn on with thread

tottered - move in an unsteady way

deafblind - a person has both impaired hearing and impaired sight

chaise longue - a chair with a lengthened seat that forms a leg rest for reclining

pinafore - a sleeveless apron worn over a young girl's dress

lace edged handkerchief - a square of cotton or other finely woven material, typically carried in one's pocket and intended for blowing or wiping one's nose

Discussion Questions

1. Why is the book called *Alice's Shoe*?
2. Why is her shoe important to the story?
3. How did Alice's life change after her illness?
4. *It was as if she was muffled by a large grey blanket.*
What does the word "muffled" mean? How did this change Alice's world?
5. Alice needed to use her other senses to help her when she no longer had sight and sound. What textures, smells and tastes could Alice use to understand the world around her?
6. Alice could not hear her teacher talk or see sign language. What did Miss Reid do instead?
7. How do you think it changed Alice's life when she learnt to communicate using sign language and Braille?
8. People who are Deaf or hearing impaired, but have unimpaired vision, are able to use sign language. Do you know what the system of sign language used in Australia is called? (answer: AUSLAN)

Language

ADJECTIVES are words that describe the things (nouns) in the world around us.

List all the adjectives you can find in the story.

- green
- fertile
- golden
- noisy
- big
- blue

SYNONYMS FOR SHOE

How many other words can you think of for SHOE?

- boot
- sandal
- slipper
- sneaker
-

Activities

OUR FIVE SENSES

List our five senses

1. -----
2. -----
3. -----
4. -----
5. -----

When normal function of vision and hearing is affected by damage to the structure of the eyes or ears, this is called **sensory impairment**.

TEACHING NOTES Alice's Shoe

Activity: using a blindfold and ear plugs, try to identify everyday objects using only taste, smell and touch.

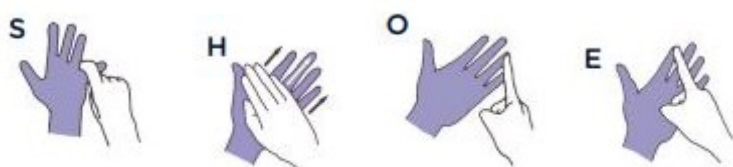
See if you can find some of the textures that Alice felt. e.g. soft velvet, cool tiles, rough stone

TACTILE SIGNING

Deafblindness means that a person has both impaired hearing and impaired sight.

Tactile signing is a method of communication that uses the sense of touch. A pattern of signs is made on the deafblind person's hand.

How did Miss Reid sign the word "shoe" for Alice?



Activity:

- In pairs, practice tactile signing the word SHOE on your partner's hand.
- Can you spell each other's names too?

DEAFBLIND ALPHABET

The right hand represents the sender who forms letters onto the left palm of the person receiving information

A	B	C	D	E
F	G	H	I	J
K	L	M	N	O
P	Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	X	Y
Z				

SENSES AUSTRALIA
Your trusted partner in disability services

senses.org.au

<https://www.deafblindinformation.org.au/living-with-deafblindness/deafblind-communication/deafblind-manual-alphabet/>

BRAILLE

At school, after learning tactile sign language, Alice was able to learn to read and write in **braille**, using her sense of touch. Braille uses patterns of raised dots for each letter of the alphabet.

Find out more about braille on this website:

<https://brailleaustralia.org/about-braille/>

Using the chart below, can you spell “shoe” in braille?

UEB uncontracted (grade 1) braille symbols

Note: The braille symbols have been shown here with small shadow dots to indicate the empty dots in the 6-dot cell. Raised braille is produced without these shadow dots.

Letters

⠁	⠃	⠉	⠇	⠑	⠋	⠎	⠏	⠕	⠗
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
⠅	⠊	⠍	⠉	⠏	⠋	⠎	⠕	⠗	⠞
k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
⠠	⠡	⠢	⠣	⠤	⠥				
u	v	w	x	y	z				

⠠⠎ ⠠⠏ ⠠⠕ ⠠⠑

s h o e

THE WORD SHOE IN OTHER LANGUAGES

Do you know the word for “shoe” in a language other than English?

Make a class list of these words.

SHOES IN HISTORY

Alice most likely had leather boots with buttons or laces.

What other types of footwear have been worn at different times and in different countries?

Resources to help:

TEACHING NOTES Alice's Shoe

A History of Shoes timeline -The Victoria and Albert Museum

<https://www.vam.ac.uk/shoestimeline/>

Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "shoe". Encyclopedia Britannica, 14 Jul.

2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/shoe>

Whose shoes? STAGE 1 History: Years 1 & 2 Topic: Present and past family life

<https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/learning/history-whose-shoes/whose-shoes>

ALICE'S HOME

Alice lived with her family in country New South Wales.

How many animals can you find in the words and pictures of the book?

1. cat
2. cow
3. kookaburra
4. dog
5. kittens
6. birds