arduous fight for survival becomes the focus of the gripping plot. The harsh Afghan landscape is evoked through powerful descriptions and carefully placed photographs. Also, strong characterisation establishes a potent sense of the danger and trauma of war. A recent interview with the author presents further insight to the narrative. Although some scenes are quite harrowing, there is an empathy and love that permeates this commanding story. It is sure to leave an irrevocable impression on the reader. H. Gardiner

**USER LEVEL:** Stage 4 Stage 5

**SCIS 1702845** Paper $16.99

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**Unspeakable**

RUSHTON, Abbie

Atom, UK, 2015

ISBN 9780349002064

Fifteen year old Megan has a secret so horrible, so traumatic, that the only way to keep it is to not speak at all. Feeling responsible for her friend Hana’s accidental death the previous year, Megan scribbles notes when necessary and contains her guilt and fears within. Never part of the popular group, Megan is now even more isolated with just Luke offering friendship, although both are unrelentingly taunted along with any others with perceived differences. Megan finds an unexpected ally in Jasmine, the bubbly new girl, and both become targets of escalating hostilities. Relationships become tense, and Megan examines her sexuality with both Luke and Jasmine. In Megan’s eyes her mother provides little emotional support reinforcing her need to keep everything contained. The book’s conclusion seems to tie up all the loose ends, perhaps too easily. This text may have relevance in supporting the Self and Relationships strand of PDHPE Years 7–10, and may be beneficial for English K–10 outcomes EN4-7D and EN5-7D in examining difference and diversity. S. Morton

**USER LEVEL:** Stage 5 Stage 6

**KLA:** AC; English; PDHPE

**SYLLABUS:** English K–10; PDHPE 7–10

**SCIS 1700625** Paper $16.99

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The author describes nine-year old Lennie’s life on the family’s Victorian farm, his enthrallment at the engineering marvel of the building of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and his determination to be at the opening. Each chapter concludes with a double page spread of added historical information. Lennie’s journey was an astounding feat of perseverance and independence, albeit supported by a network of his father’s contacts, which might provoke discussion as to its feasibility in a modern context. Occasionally the invented dialogue sounds a little simplistic but the wealth of historically accurate background more than counterbalances this, ably supporting English outcomes EN3-8D and EN4-8D, and is an exemplar in the analysis and use of sources, and supports the History K–10 concepts of Continuity and Change and Perspectives. S. Morton

**USER LEVEL:** Stage 2 Stage 3

**Stage 4**

**KLA:** AC; English; HSIE

**SYLLABUS:** English K–10; History K–10

**SCIS 1696919** $24.99

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Two threads of Australian history combine in this fictionalised reconstruction of Lennie Gwyther – life during the Great Depression and the completion of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Using primary and secondary sources, identified in detail at the end of the book, the author describes nine-year old Lennie’s life on the family’s Victorian farm, his enthrallment at the engineering marvel of the building of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and his determination to be at the opening. Each chapter concludes with a double page spread of added historical information. Lennie’s journey was an astounding feat of perseverance and independence, albeit supported by a network of his father’s contacts, which might provoke discussion as to its feasibility in a modern context. Occasionally the invented dialogue sounds a little simplistic but the wealth of historically accurate background more than counterbalances this, ably supporting English outcomes EN3-8D and EN4-8D, and is an exemplar in the analysis and use of sources, and supports the History K–10 concepts of Continuity and Change and Perspectives. S. Morton

**USER LEVEL:** Stage 2 Stage 3

**Stage 4**

**KLA:** AC; English; HSIE

**SYLLABUS:** English K–10; History K–10

**SCIS 1696919** $24.99

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