



# Tristan Bancks: Changing the world one word and challenge at a time

We spoke with Room to Read Author Advocate Tristan Bancks, an Australian children's and young adult author who founded the World Change Challenge, an initiative where authors partner with schools to build awareness around Room to Read's global literacy work. Together, they're committed to creating a world free from illiteracy and gender inequality.

**Q: Hey Tristan! Tell us more about your most recent book, "Cop & Robber."**

A: "Cop & Robber" is a crime/mystery novel for ages 10+ about Nash Hall, a kid whose dad is a criminal and mother is a cop. When Nash's dad wants him to help with a robbery, Nash is thrown into an exhilarating and dangerous predicament. It's fast-paced and action-packed for readers who love a thriller!

**Q: What was your writing process like for this book? How did you come up with the idea?**

A: The idea came out of a crime writing workshop that I hosted with students, and one student's parent was a police officer and their house was part of the police station. I thought it'd be interesting to write a character who lives in the police station but their other parent was a criminal, putting young readers in a difficult conundrum that encourages them to think creatively and critically to solve problems.

**Q: Are you working on any book projects now?**

A: I am. I'm taking a break from social media to really focus on writing my next book that brings to life an idea I have had for many years. It's called Scar Town and it's set on the lakeshore of a drowned town. It's out in August 2023.

**Q: What's on your bookshelf right now?**

A: I am currently reading "You Are the Happiness You Seek: Uncovering the Awareness of Being" by Rupert Spira. Also, "In the Winter Dark" by Tim Winton.

## World Change Challenge

Students and teachers embark on a series of challenges together — anything from book swaps to covering a teacher in slime — in order to raise awareness and funds for young learners around the world. More than 10,000 students in more than 80 schools have been involved in the World Change Challenge since its inception in April 2012.

In celebration of the 10th anniversary of the World Change Challenge and raising over \$200,000 AUD to support Room to Read to date, Tristan shares the thrill of bringing challenges to children in his community in the hopes that more schools, authors and groups across the globe will be inspired to take action for global education. We encourage you to tap into your local communities and schools to kickstart your own World Change Challenge with these engaging activities:

### **Drop Everything and Read**

Exactly as it sounds — log off, shut down, sit down and just read! This challenge prompts students to be present with the pleasure of a book in hand by dedicating at least 30 minutes of their day to reading a book of choice without any distractions. Are you up for it?

### **Slime a Teacher**

Get slimy and smiley with the "Slime a Teacher" challenge! Select a group of agreeable teachers to participate and place your bets (donations) on which teacher you'd like to see get covered in slime in front of your school. Funds raised on behalf of each sponsored teacher support students in historically low-income communities to gain access to quality reading materials and resources for their educational development. It's really a win-win!

### **Book Swap**

On an assigned school day, ask each student to bring in a book or multiple books they have read and are happy to part with. Display the books in the classroom along with a donation collection box and allow students to find new books by donating a dollar per book. This challenge encourages students to find joy and community in reading by sharing books with their fellow classmates.

JOIN THE CHALLENGE

*Like this book list?*

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