Citation for the ALEA Medal
Robyn English
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Robyn has had a long and active involvement with the Australian Literacy Educators’ Association since first joining in the late 1980s. Her involvement includes active leadership in two local councils and the Victorian State group. She has attended numerous National and State conferences, having several papers accepted for presentation at some of these. The first was the 1997 Darwin conference where a group, including Robyn, shared a local council initiative to develop teacher skills in conjunction with local university staff. The most recent was the 2016 Adelaide conference where she ran a workshop on using picture books to teach grammar.

Robyn’s passion for writing saw her offer a contribution to the very first edition of Practically Primary in 1995, involvement that has continued over twenty years. She now holds the role of reviews editor for the renamed Practical Literacy: the Early and Primary Years. She authored an article in Literacy Learning: the Middle Years journal and most recently, contributed a vignette to the teachers’ edition of Tadpoles in the Torrens.

As an active ALEA member she has been on conference planning groups and has advocated for ALEA at the school level. She has been part of teams to run workshops and small-scale conferences for practising teachers and frequently offered workshop sessions to share her experience and experimentation in literacy teaching and learning. Most recently, she was invited by the ALEA Tas North Local Council to run workshops as part of a teacher development day, sharing her love of picture books and the study of words with interstate colleagues.

Whilst seconded to the University of Melbourne, Robyn introduced pre-service teachers to the benefits of ALEA membership and on several occasions presented the ALEA prize for excellence in literacy studies to awardees at the Dean’s honours ceremonies.

Through many professional roles, from a beginning teacher in a primary classroom, to her current position as a primary school principal, Robyn has enacted the ALEA central tenants with students, colleagues, parents and as a volunteer teacher educator with Teachers Across Borders in Cambodia. She is a very proud participant in ALEA and has relished opportunities that membership has given her to work with national and international literacy experts.

It is therefore with great pleasure that ALEA honours Robyn English with the ALEA Medal in recognition of her outstanding contribution to ALEA over many years.