

# No more writer's block

The ANZA Writers Group is back and better than ever, and at a recent meeting was visited by Singapore-based children's author Sarah Mounsey.

**THE ANZA WRITERS** Group has been around for years – in various forms and with fluctuating numbers of attendees – but was recently given a fresh burst of life by a collective of people wanting to get the group back up and running for good.

Thanks to the help of Ken Hickson and Jacqui Smith, a revitalised Writers Group meeting was arranged in mid-May, and saw a diverse group of people band together to share ideas, network and of course talk about writing and getting published. The group included all kinds of writers – from poets, novelists and composers to editors, journalists and public relations professionals. Some people in the group write to make a living and others for pure enjoyment, but a shared interest in the written word made the conversation interesting and relevant to all.

The next meeting, held in June, focused on writing for children and featured a visit from children's author Sarah Mounsey, whose *Paw Prints* book series was conceived at this very group back in 2011 – a veritable ANZA Writers Group success

story! So far there are three books in the series (*Purple Paw Prints*, *Paw Prints on the Magic Sofa*, and most recently *Paw Prints and the Itchy Spots*), which Mounsey self-published to great success – the series even won a bronze medal in the Moonbeam Children's Book Awards in the 'Best Picture Book Series' category.

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Originally from Brisbane, Mounsey spent eight years in London before moving to Singapore a few years ago, where she works as a primary school teacher. Mounsey describes the *Paw Prints* series as 'ridiculous reality'; they are about a young boy, Eddie, and his dog Oscar, who seem to create chaos wherever they go – however unwittingly.

The group had plenty of questions for Mounsey, particularly about her decision

to self-publish and the journey from having an idea to making it a reality. It was particularly interesting to see Mounsey's writing process for the books, which members of the group were able to do when she pulled out her early storyboards and notebooks, as well as sketches from her dedicated illustrator, Jade Fang.

The ANZA Writers Group meets monthly, and at this stage the group is only getting bigger and better. Writers of all backgrounds and levels of experience are welcome to join the meetings, which serve as both a place to workshop and discuss writing, as well as to network with other writers and hear from visiting industry experts from both Singapore and around the world. So why not come and join? You never know – it might be where you come up with your next best-seller!

For more information on the ANZA Writers Group, visit [anza.org.sg](http://anza.org.sg), or email Jacqui Smith at [writers@anza.org.sg](mailto:writers@anza.org.sg)



Left to right: Children's author Sarah Mounsey with the three books in the *Paw Prints* series; the ANZA Writers Group at their July meeting (Sarah Mounsey front row, far left); Jacqui Smith at the meeting in July.