

Author to appear at YP Field Days 2025

ONE of Australia's most-loved children's authors, Mem Fox will be a star attraction at this year's Yorke Peninsula Field Days on Tuesday, September 30.

Ms Fox has written more than 40 books for children, including *Possum Magic*, *Time for Bed*, *Where Is the Green Sheep?* and *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes*.

In 1983, she became Australia's best-selling writer and has been a pre-eminent author for children for an entire generation.

Her first book, *Possum Magic*, is still available in hardback after more than 30 years and her latest book, *Meerkat Mayhem*, was published in November.

A passionate advocate for early childhood education and literacy, Ms Fox urges parents to read to their children regularly and with plenty of expression.

"The more expressively we read, the more fantastic the experience will be," she said.

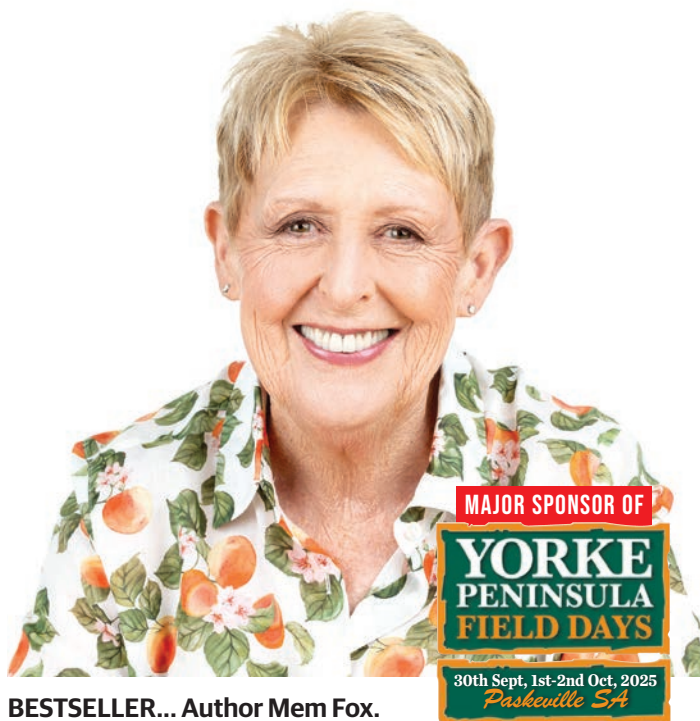
"The more our kids love books, the more they'll pretend to read them; and the more they pretend to read, the more quickly they'll learn to read."

She explained that it is not simply about reading aloud, but about reading aloud well.

Familiarity and genuine enjoyment of the story, she said, help maintain enthusiasm — even after many repetitions.

"When we read the story, we are usually familiar with it. We should like it, and naturally we'll maintain our enthusiasm for it — even if we've read it five thousand times," Ms Fox said.

Expression played a vital role in holding children's attention, she said.



BESTSELLER... Author Mem Fox.

"The ups and downs of our voices, and our pauses and points of emphasis are like music, literally, to the ears of young children, and young children love music."

Ms Fox also highlighted the importance of repetition, saying that consistency helped children to absorb language patterns and rhythm.

"Simple tunes also make anything easier to remember, so it's useful to read a book in exactly the same way every time and ... to read the same book over and over again," she said.

"The more quickly children pick up the 'tune' of the words, the more they'll remember them and the more quickly they'll have

fun trying to 'read' the story themselves, with the same expression as we do."

Ms Fox was born in Melbourne, grew up in Zimbabwe and studied drama in England before returning to Australia in 1970.

She is a retired associate professor of literacy studies from Flinders University, where she taught teachers for 24 years.

She will appear at 10am and 1pm on Tuesday, September 30, as part of the line up at the YP Field Days Guest Speaker Centre, presented by the Cunliffe Women in Agriculture and Business, and Arthurton Women's Agricultural Bureau.

Admission to events in the centre is free for all field days attendees.