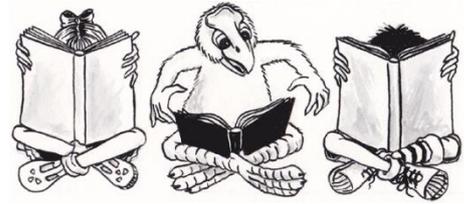


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Atmospheric: the burning story of climate change **by Carole Wilkinson**

Publisher: black dog books / Walker Books

RRP \$21.99

Atmospheric is a nonfiction book with a difference. Designed to educate teens about climate change and its history, each chapter opens with a short story related to the topic of the chapter. The first chapter is set in the present and presents information about the atmosphere and the effect of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. We are then taken back in time to look at topics such as the use of coal, the development of agriculture, the Industrial Revolution, increasing scientific knowledge, smog, oil exploitation, and environmental activism.

Although this is an Australian publication frequently referring to Australian examples, most of the information presented is universal. The tables, diagrams, and photos in the text are complemented by a timeline, glossary, index, and addresses for relevant websites.

The author, Carole Wilkinson, is more well-known as a writer of teen fiction, and her skill is evident in the short stories that preface each chapter. However, Carole also has a science background and is part of a climate action group in Melbourne. She has obviously researched the topic very thoroughly and presents the information in short chunks that are generally very easy to follow and understand.

Although this book was an enjoyable and informative read, I am disappointed that all the diagrams and photos are in black and white. Colour would have made things clearer and the book more appealing. The logic behind the way the chapters were organised was not obvious to me. Although the overall movement was from the past to modern times, many chapters were not in strict chronological order. Unfortunately, the first chapter is the one that contains the most difficult scientific information and I wonder if some readers may be put off by this.

The topic of climate change is an important one for today's teens to understand and this book certainly contains lots of well-presented information, but I am not convinced that it will be of sufficient appeal to attract readers that don't already have an interest in this area.

Author's website:

www.carolewilkinson.com.au

**Reviewed by Penny Guy, RLIANZA,
children and teenagers librarian**

