

## [Quirky books for kids](#)

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[books](#), [children](#),



Caren Trafford is a children's book writer and publisher, whose environmental books have reached over 200,000 children in Australia, New Zealand, Korea, the UK, the US and Canada. They have been translated into Korean, Thai and Indonesian. She visits schools and libraries around the world to talk to students about what they can do to help reduce waste and pollution and make a difference. "The solutions need all of us to treat the planet as precious," she says, "and act rather than just talk about solutions."

### **How did it all begin?**

It all started when I became known as the "worm poo lady". After completing my Masters of Environmental Studies at Macquarie University, I became infamous as the 'Worm POO lady' when I landed a job selling thousands of tonnes of Worm POO to anyone that would buy it. I worked for the largest worm farm in the world (bigger than a soccer field!) and my mission was to discover if Vermicast (worm poo) was a viable soil conditioner. In South Korea, they call me "the Australian protector of worms".

### **Where do you get your ideas and inspiration?**

The topics that I write about are every-day universal environmental issues. What I try to do is to make the issues personal. When you see polar bears dying on the TV, that's personal.

The books I write take the facts, offer solutions and use quirky characters to convey the messages.

The characters are fun, the messages are clear and simple, the illustrations make you giggle, and because the books are all written with a sense of humour, they have become hugely popular.

### **Tell us about some of the characters that inhabit your books?**

I use humour and I want to make my readers laugh. Take GOOBIE, a very interesting piece of poo with a lot to say about sewage and recycling. The trick was to create a character that didn't look like a baked potato! All my characters are clearly identifiable. WASU, for example, a very adventurous water-droplet, has a huge following in South Korea. DUMPI is one of my favourites; he's a brown paper bag that just loves to rap! The characters are designed to make the messages memorable.

### **Why are kids' books with a green message important?**

My readers will be voting by 2020, when the first set of emission targets are to be achieved. And by 2050 some of them will be our leaders. Scare tactics might sell newspapers and media space but they won't work on our kids. Take the example of the kid who's scared by their maths teacher and never again likes maths; scaring our kids about the environment is the wrong tack.

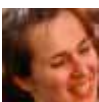
Everything we do has an impact – good or bad. These books show how we need to understand the impact – the consequences of our actions - and identify the alternatives. Then we can make informed choices.



[Author Caren Trafford with her beloved dogs](#)

[www.planetkids.biz](http://www.planetkids.biz)

### **This post was written by:**



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