



## I Can Jump Puddles

*Alan Marshall*

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## I Can Jump Puddles Alan Marshall

I Can Jump Puddles is Alan Marshall's story of his childhood - a happy world in which, despite his crippling poliomyelitis, he plays, climbs, fights, swims, rides and laughs. His world was the Australian countryside early last century: rough-riders, bushmen, farmers and tellers of tall stories - a world held precious by the young Alan.

## I Can Jump Puddles Details

Date : Published July 31st 2004 by Penguin Books AU (first published 1955)

ISBN : 9780143003045

Author : Alan Marshall

Format : Paperback 264 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Biography, Cultural, Australia, Classics, Autobiography, Memoir



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## **From Reader Review I Can Jump Puddles for online ebook**

### **Tanishqa says**

it was really hard to get into but once i picked up the audio book (which was incredible, highly recommend) version it was much easier to read. it was a nice, real and uplifting story (especially for someone who has struggled with health problems in the past) that gave me a break from my fantasy worlds

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### **Sarah Hollars says**

A sweet book about a boy growing up in Australia during the turn of the century. Really loved living in this world if only for a moment. In ways it was a condensed boys version of Anne of Green Gables.

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### **Velvetink says**

This was one of our obligatory high school reads. My best friend's mother was crippled with polio and during the 60's in Sydney you would still see kids in primary schools in calipers. An inspiring book.

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### **Alpheus Williams says**

When I first came to Australia I don't think there was a school in the country that didn't have a class set of this book. Almost every anthology of Australian literature had an excerpt from "I Can Jump Puddles", or an Alan Marshal short story. So I don't know how I managed to miss reading it for all these years. For some reason the story of a little boy overcoming the effects of polio, despite or maybe because I too had suffered contracting that disease albeit, not as badly as Alan Marshal, didn't appeal.

As Marshal himself said, he didn't set out to tell the story of a little boy overcoming and contending with the effects of polio but wanted to portray Australia at the time of his boyhood on the cusp of change. While he does this, he also tells his story, the story of a boy with wonderful sense of fun and an indomitable spirit. But it is his portrait of a younger, fresher, more innocent Australia that draws me to this book and has enriched my understanding of my adopted country.

Marshall draws us scene after scene of an earlier time, a small close-knit community, a cadre of characters of all ages and walks of life. His story telling radiates a love and compassion for the land, the country and his fellow human beings. I will go on to explore his other contributions to Australian story telling, because I believe these are, no doubt, the inherent strengths that will continue in his novels and short stories.

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### **Amy says**

I charming story about a courageous, young boy with infantile paralysis. The book is based upon the author's childhood, which makes it an even more interesting read. The spirit of Alan hardly ever wavers despite the attitude of people around him. His father is a strong character throughout the story; showing concern yet a rock of belief and faith in what his son can achieve. Other characters that pop into the story come for a short time but hold a strong impact on Alan's development. Alan knows the way he deserves to be treated and does not settle for less than that. That alone makes him brave. I loved this story. It was affirming for other's in his position and inspiring to say the least. Highly recommend.

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### **Petya says**

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### **Tassi says**

This novel written by Alan Marshall is about his life growing up with Infantile Paralysis. It is an interesting book about how Alan faces his troubles in his everyday life, such as: horse riding, running, fishing, fighting, hunting, swimming and many more things.

In this novel we find that after a lot of strong determination Alan finally achieves his goals, even though it was harder for him than most other children. Alan did not look upon himself as a lame person and found it extremely rude if they called him this, as mentioned in the book, I quote 'I raised myself on my elbow in the gutter, looking at mother with an expression of astonishment. 'Lame, mum? I exclaimed with some force. 'What did you say I was lame for?

As you can see by this bit of information, Alan seems shocked by being called lame, as he doesn't look upon himself in this way. I quote 'The word crippled to me suggested a condition that could be applied to some people, but not to myself.'

The character of Alan is full of energetic determination, he never stopped himself from doing anything that everyone else was doing, such as going down a really steep mountain with his friends. No one really thought that he could do it, but he did.

Joe Carmichael was Alan's best friend, they were always together spending most Saturday's together, as they

lived close. Joe was a humorous young boy, full of life and enthusiasm. He never put Alan down about his "disability" for not being able to do certain things. Most of the time he just forgot and treated him like any other young boy. They had many exciting adventures together, one of my favourite being the fishing episode where Joe's pants were burnt.

Alan's dad was a man that loved and worked with horses. His job was looking after the horses and riding them. He loved talking to Alan about the horses, whether it be about, why it's a good horse or pointers on how to ride them. Like any father, Alan's dad believed that his son could do anything he set his mind to and always let him try new things without treating him any differently.

Alan's mum was quiet and was always worrying about Alan, not really wanting him to try new things that children his age would be doing. It was only because of his father that Alan got to do certain things, such as the hunting trip with Peter Finaly who was a friendly man that did business with Alan's father.

I thought it was an interesting book because it shows that we should be positive no matter what our condition may be, accept who we are and to not be angry with what you have been given. There is a great moral to this book that should be learnt by all. I recommend this book to those 11 years and older. I give this book about 3 out of 5, only because I found it slightly boring in places and struggled to get through it.

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Happy Readings

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### **Nada Dosti says**

I started reading this book during a summer day when i was around 10 yrs old. I remember few things from the book but i still can remember the sensation of reading it. It was motivational book which helped me with self esteem, with a lot of new words to my vocabulary (i didn't know what a siluete meant) at that time and also lot of knowledge such as geographical (it talks a lot abt the nature in Australia) and about fauna. A MUST!

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### **Michelle Rae says**

listened to the audiobook, found the background music very distracting. apart from that it was an okay story.

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### **Sandi Parsons says**

I first read I Can Jump Puddles in my childhood, but if asked, I couldn't honestly tell you what it was about other than the autobiography of a child who had survived polio.

Challenge 6, from Sue over on Doddyaboutbooks calls for a book which features a character with a chronic illness or disability, and as I'm looking at expanding my school's collection of Australia classics, it seemed the ideal time to revisit I Can Jump Puddles.

You can read my full review [here](#)

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### **Janelle says**

I wanted to buy this from Scholastic Books when I was in Year 3 but the librarian told me it was for 6th graders and I was too young for it. So I bought something else instead... and borrowed it at the end of the week. I kept borrowing it for many years. I absolutely loved it. Alan Marshall was one of my childhood heroes. I'm glad that I eventually found my own copy of it. But I wish that librarian hadn't discouraged me.

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### **Sarah says**

Okay--so I read this in a Reader's Digest Condensed book, so it certainly was not very long. I enjoyed it--a memoir written by a man who was partially paralyzed from polio, and lived in the Australian outback. He refused to limit himself because of his paralysis and shares some wonderful memories from his young life.

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### **Fatima says**

This is a beautiful book. Very funny. The characters are all so different, and each one of them is so entertaining. Marshall's characterisation is brilliant. True he was working with actual real people, which would've made it easier. But, still, these people were great. I loved the feeling of hope throughout the book. The way he wrote about trying to make the adults see that he was happy, but never quite being able to - it was so poignant. It made me reflect on the way I view people with a disability. And everyone always called him brave, but he didn't feel brave. He was just living in this world, the way everyone else was. He was such a positive and optimistic child, and he took on so many challenges and mastered them all. It was so uplifting. And his dad was absolutely wonderful. Just a really delightful book, and I feel better at having read it.

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### **catscreamo says**

this whole series is really good ! sad that it's not more famous outside Aus bc it's touching and inspirational almost without intending to be

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### **Jeanette says**

I first read Alan Marshall's autobiography of his childhood - *I Can Jump Puddles* (1955) as part of the school curriculum in early high school. I loved the bighearted story of overcoming adversity then, but wasn't sure what to expect when I reread it as part of the Popsugar 2016 book challenge (a book you read in high school).

I loved it. Marshall's clear, crisp, descriptive style is almost contemporary in its use of point of view (young

Alan's), it's construction of scenes with action, setting, dialogue and, often, humour. Marshall bring his childhood in rural Victoria ('Turalla') in the early 20th century - with its colourful characters in a time before cars and electricity - to vivid life. Born in 1902, Marshall contracted Polio at the age of six which resulted in a long hospital stay and permanent paralysis of his legs (complete in one, partial in the other). Young Alan, encouraged by his father, refused to see himself as a cripple and became even more determined to achieve physical prowess, competing with the other kids without fear or favour despite his dependence of crutches - and when adults hesitated to teach him skills, he taught himself. The story is also about family and friendship. Alan's dad shines through as a thoughtful and generous man.

The charm of this book is in bringing to life a past era - perhaps with a romanticised tinge - of horse drawn vehicles, bullock teams, and rugged outdoor men. While the women (Alan's sisters, mother, Mrs Caruthers, his friend's Joe's mother, the poster's wife) are portrayed more in passing, their presence if felt – and Alan's Dad puts great store by Miles Franklin's Brilliant Career. It is clear that both men and women are tough, resilient and resourceful people - maybe with some values and approaches to life that may be confronting to us today (e.g. approaches to violence and bullying) but also with much to admire. I wondered about the virtual absence of local aboriginal people in the story. Yet, despite these lacuna - *I Can Jump Puddles* was an engaging read made more special by my old 1955 edition with its simple but delightful illustrations by Alan Forbes.

A wonderful recreation of a bygone era that evoked some faint echoes of my own childhood in outback Queensland over a half-century later.

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