Elwyn Jenkins’s previous books about South African children’s literature in English have established him as an authority in the field. In *Seedlings* his entertaining discussions of familiar and obscure books, and adult and child writers, recapture their lives and times. Anyone with an interest in the country’s history, peoples and cultures will find much to enjoy, grieve over and admire. Talking animals and birds, tokolosh and fairies, sensitive children, independent-minded girls, boy heroes, teenagers swept up in the social upheavals of apartheid and subsequent changes in the country and in the African continent – the chapters of this book recall and analyse the stories, poems and personal narratives. This is a book that will provide insights and guidance for educators, librarians and parents – the intermediaries in bringing books to young people. Those who would like to pursue a study of the literature in more depth will find the research survey and overview of sources helpful.

‘This scholarly view of what went on in the world of children’s books in South Africa during the last two hundred years is utterly fascinating... There are invaluable lessons here, both for the writers who are mentioned in the book and...’
the writers for South Africa’s children who are still to emerge.’ Lesley Beake, author

‘What a fascinating ‘dip into’ book! From such characters as Baden-Powell, Kipling and Tolkien, and from the earliest San legends through to cigarette cards, sentimental poetry and anti-apartheid protest writings by children themselves. If you take the upbringing of children seriously, then you must consider their books with an equally careful eye. Elwyn’s views are balanced, well-informed, highly relevant to our history and to our national literature.’ Jay Heale, international authority on children’s books.