

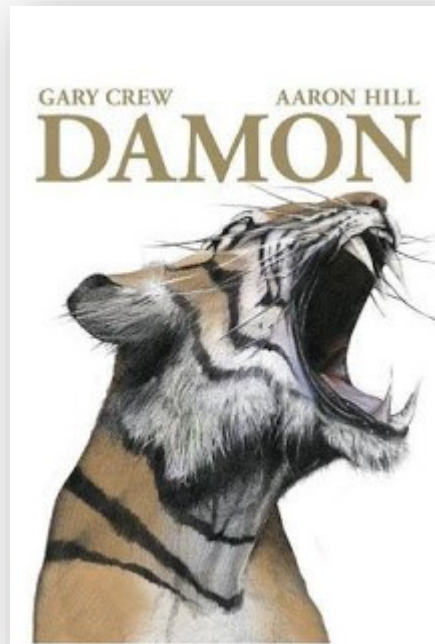
**Title:** Damon

**Author:** Gary Crew

**Illustrator:** Aaron Hill

**Publisher:** Hachette Children's Books (Australia)

**Year:** 2011



## Research Background

The research challenge was to create an illustrated narrative responding to Blake's poem, *Tyger* which celebrates the power of creativity. The innovation was to design a non-traditional picture book to appeal to creatively disenfranchised teenagers. Hence, *Damon* opens with Blake's 'Tyger, tyger, burning bright...' confronting an illustration of a bored teenager.

## Research Contribution

As Shaun Tan writes, 'It's clear that older readers, including you and me, remain interested in the imaginative play of drawings and paintings, telling stories, and learning how to look at things in new ways.' This is true for *Damon* which confronts the notion that illustrative art is for children, particularly when it is generally accepted that (many) young males would prefer to explore images than reading print text. However, Rafidi (2013) makes it clear that one of Crew's hallmarks is 'to make the reader work' as his prose and illustrative texts contain significant narrative gaps which the readers must close creatively.

## Research Significance

*Damon* was awarded a prestigious White Raven Award as noted in the following email extract: 'Each year the language specialists (Lektoren) at the International Youth Library (IYL), in Munich, Germany, select newly published books from around the world that they consider to be especially noteworthy. I am pleased to let you know that *Damon* has been selected as one of the titles for The White Ravens 2012, the annual selection of outstanding international books for children and young adults from all over the world within the last year.' The staff of Hachette Australia

## References

Rafidi, M. (2013); *On the Shoulders of Giants: Insights from Great Australian Picture Book of Authors and Illustrators*. Harbour, Australia.