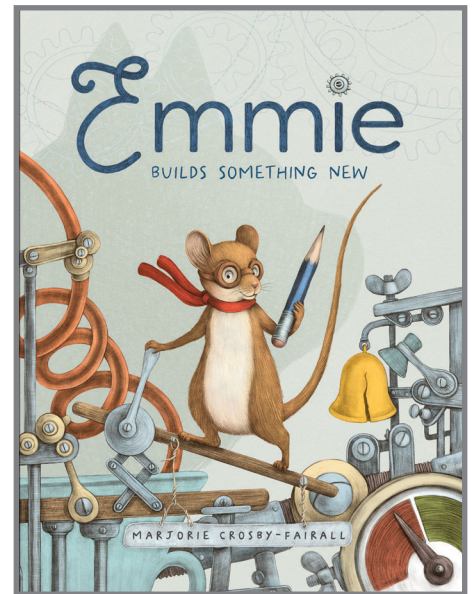


Emmie Builds Something New

AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

MARJORIE CROSBY-FAIRALL



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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary

SYNOPSIS

Emmie the mouse is an extraordinary inventor. There is no problem she can't fix! But then a new kind of problem arrives. The type of problem that has claws, a long swishy tail and a mischievous gleam in its eyes . . . Emmie is sure that she has an idea big enough to frighten the problem away.

But perhaps the best way to tackle a problem is friendship, not fear?

ABOUT THE CREATOR

Marjorie Crosby-Fairall dreamt of illustrating books her whole life. After completing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration at Northern Illinois University, she moved to Australia where she has worked in many areas of illustration. Marjorie's illustrations have inspired the Myer Christmas windows and won or been shortlisted for multiple awards, including the CBCA Eve Pownall Award, the Wilderness Society Environment Award and the Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year. Her books have also appeared on the CBCA Notable list, and the Premier's Reading Challenge lists.

THEMES

- Problem solving
- Inventions
- Friendship
- Misunderstandings
- Forgiveness

STUDY NOTES

BEFORE READING

- Think about the title of the book. What does it mean to 'build something new'? What does this tell you about the story? Come back and reflect on your answers to this question after you've finished the book. Would you add anything to your meaning?
- Have you ever been annoyed to have someone disrupt your routine or your space? How did you navigate that?
- What is an inventor? Have you ever invented something?

WHILE READING**Literacy**

- A verb is a word that describes action or movement. The writer uses verbs to describe the different ways that Emmie's creations move as she tries to scare off the cat. Make a list of the verbs that the author uses to describe the movement of Emmie's creatures.
 - Now, come up with a list of verbs that you would use to describe the way a cat moves.
- Emmie is perfectly happy with her life, until the cat arrives. But, after a lot of effort to scare it off, she comes to realise that maybe having the cat around isn't such a bad thing after all. Describe Emmie's life before the cat arrives. Compare this to the picture on the final page of the book. What has Emmie added to her home to make space for the cat?
 - How do you think this friendship has made her life better?
- The creator uses detailed illustrations to tell parts of the story. This is similar to a comic, or graphic novel, where the illustrations give the reader new information, rather than just illustrating the information provided by the text. Have you read any graphic novels before? What other similarities can you find between a graphic novel and this book? How is it different from a graphic novel?
 - What would you change about the book to turn it into a graphic novel?

Comprehension

- What does Emmie do with the things that nobody wants?
- What is the 'huge problem' that upsets Emmie's way of life? What clues can you find that tell you what it is before you see it?
- Why is the cat such a problem for Emmie?
- What is Emmie's big idea? Why doesn't it work?
- What does Emmie do before she starts to build one of her inventions?
- What was it that really scared the cat? What does this make Emmie realise?
- What is Emmie's best idea of all? Do you agree that it was a good idea?

AFTER READING

- What do you think Emmie learnt from her experience with the cat? What do you think she might do next time she encounters a problem?
- What did you learn about the process of inventing? What kind of skills do you need to be a good inventor?
- How would you describe the ending of the story? How did it make you feel?

Creative Activities

- Find something from your house that nobody wants anymore and, imagining that you're Emmie, craft it into something new. Then, have a market day in your classroom and swap your designs for something someone else has made!
- Design your own creature to scare away an intruder. Like Emmie, use parts that you might be able to find in your house, and make sure you label all of the parts to show what they do.
- Imagine that you are the cat. Write a short story from the cat's perspective, as if you've just been attacked by one of Emmie's creatures.
- Write a short review of the story—imagine that you're trying to describe it to someone who hasn't read it yet? What would they like about it? What wouldn't they like? What other books or films would you compare it to?

AUTHOR OF NOTES
BEC KAVANAGH