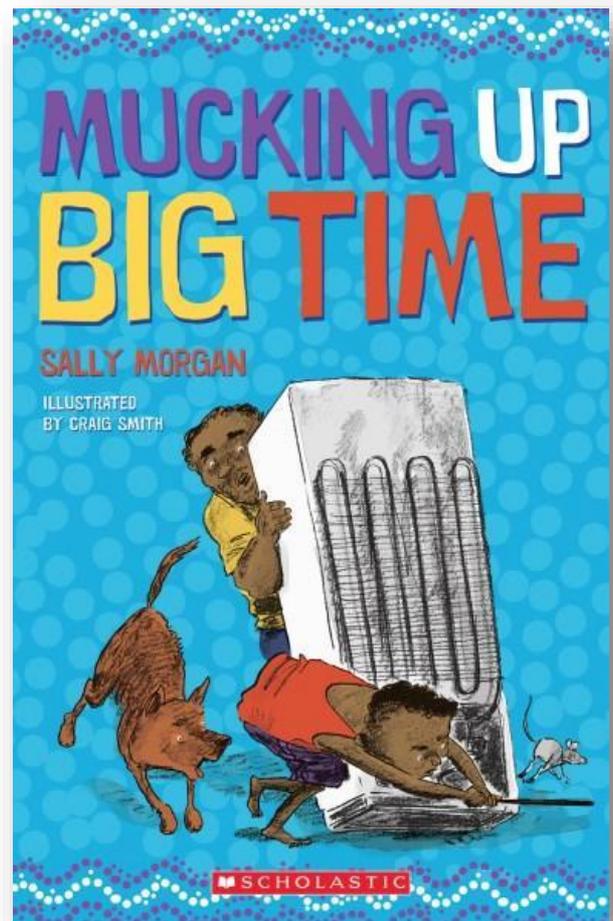


Mucking Up Big Time

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Robbie has hatched a plan to trick his mates. But when he puts rabbit poo in the freezer, he never imagines that his sister Rosalie will think it's a jar of chocolates. It's not so funny now that the rabbit poo has caused a big stink with all of his family. Soon Robbie realises he's mucked up big time and saying sorry just won't be enough. But it takes some time — and more drama — for him to realise exactly why everyone is stirred up. *Mucking Up Big Time* is a lively and charming tale about family lessons, forgiveness and resilience.

RECOMMENDED READING LEVEL: Mid Primary

TEACHER NOTES

- Have you ever played a funny trick or been at the end of a funny trick that didn't go so well? What were the consequences of the trick? How did the people involved feel?
- 'Boy, is Dad mad at me! His eyes are bulging and he's tapping his foot.' (p 1) How can you tell when your family or friends are mad at you? Come up with a mind map of verbs and adjectives that might tell you someone is mad. Then create similar mind maps for words that show you when someone is happy, sad and disgusted.
- 'My trick was germ-free.' Where do germs live? What are some things germs can cause? In what ways do we protect ourselves from germs every day?
- Robbie wants to write an apology card. What do you think might be included in the design of an apology card? Visit the card section at a newsagent or supermarket. What other occasions are cards made for? Pick an occasion and design your own card for it. Think about the words, colours and images that suit the mood of your card.
- As a class, discuss the cost of items in *Mucking Up Big Time*, such as chocolate sultanas, a skateboard, a fridge and a dining table. Show the class various shop catalogues and the prices attached to groceries and products. Ask students to each bring in an item and play a class price-guessing game.
- 'Only by the skin of our teeth' (p 32) is another way of saying 'only just'. Can you think of any other sayings that mean something other than the words that make it up? Why do you think such sayings and phrases might come about?
- Why is saying sorry not enough sometimes? How might sorry be expressed in other ways?
- On pp 44–45, what do you notice about the way Robbie describes the cake? Personification is when you assign the qualities of a person to an object or

something non-human. Why might an author choose to personify something? Pick an object or non-human creature and describe it in a couple of paragraphs using personification.

- What lessons does Robbie learn by the end of the story?