



OMNIBUS BOOKS

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Author	Sally Morgan & Ezekiel Kwaymullina
Illustrator	Craig Smith
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Previous publications

Sally Morgan

Magpie Learns a Lesson

(Omnibus Books, 2014)

A Feast for Wombat

(Omnibus Books, 2014)

Sally Morgan & Ezekiel Kwaymullina

One Rule for Jack

(Omnibus Books, 2014)

Going Bush with Grandpa

(Omnibus Books, 2014)

Craig Smith

One Rule for Jack

(Omnibus Books, 2014)

Going Bush with Grandpa

(Omnibus Books, 2014)

Bungawitta (Omnibus Books, 2011)

Redback on the Toilet Seat

(Omnibus Books, 2008)

Just You Wait! (Omnibus Books, 2004)

The Monster Fish (Omnibus Books, 1999)

I Want Earrings! (Omnibus Books, 1997)

Teachers' Notes

The Memory Shed

Written by Sally Morgan & Ezekiel
Kwaymullina
Illustrated by Craig Smith

Teachers' Notes by Rae Carlyle

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Introduction

Down at the bottom of the garden lurks an old green shed. Grandma insists that the shed knows that she is planning on clearing it out and buying a shiny new metal shed to replace it. Annie is certain that even though it might look like the shed is moving closer in the dark, there is no way it is actually happening. But then, on a stormy night during a power cut, she is not so sure. Maybe Grandma is right and the shed really is taking steps to protect itself and its contents!

What Grandma and Annie find in the shed, and Grandma's decisions regarding what to do with the shed and its contents, make for a delightful and heart-warming story of the past, of family, and of connections built between people and then shared with future generations.

About the Authors

Bestselling author and artist Sally Morgan teams with Ezekiel Kwaymullina to produce the second of a series of chapter books based on Indigenous children, country and family. Sally Morgan is an Australian Aboriginal author, dramatist and artist, widely known for her first book, *My Place*. Her artwork is represented in many collections in Australia and overseas. Her son Ezekiel Kwaymullina has written fantasy for young readers and collaborated with Sally on this and other stories. He has also written a picture book, *The Two-hearted Numbat*, which was illustrated by his sister Ambelin Kwaymullina. Sally and her family live in Perth.

About the Illustrator

Craig Smith is one of Australia's busiest illustrators, and has illustrated hundreds of educational and other books since the 1970s, when he began his career. Early picture books include the classics *Whistle up the Chimney* by Nan Hunt and *Black Dog* by Christobel Mattingley. He has illustrated many picture books and junior novels for Omnibus Books, more recently the award-winning *Bungawitta* by Emily Rodda. He now combines illustrating with delivering talks and drawing workshops in schools around Australia. He lives in Melbourne.

Activities

English

The Memory Shed opens with the sentences *It's a wild and stormy night. Outside the wind is howling, the lightning is sizzling and the thunder is booming.* The opening sentences of all stories are important in setting the scene. They create pictures in the reader's mind of what is happening, and what is likely to happen next.

- As a class discuss the opening passage.
 - What sort of mental image do you get from these first two sentences?
 - What sort of stories do you think are most likely to start with this type of opening phrases? Are they likely to be scary? Exciting? Have dangerous adventures? Be happy and cheerful? Discuss what you think this type of opening predicts for the rest of a story and why you think so.
- The opening sentence describes in only a few words both when the action is happening (night), and what is happening (a wild storm).
 - The fact that it is night tells us that it is likely to be dark, and possibly cold. What does the fact that it is wild and stormy tell us? What can we predict might be happening?
- Some other sentences that use the same pattern as this one include:
 - It was a clear and sunny morning.*
 - It was a hot and windy afternoon.*
 - It was a grey and blustery day.*
 - As a class, brainstorm as many different sentences as you can that use the same pattern as the ones above. Individually write a short story using one of the sentences from your list. Share the stories with the class and discuss how the opening phrase sets the scene.
- Sally Morgan and Ezekiel Kwaymullina use *howling*, *booming*, and *sizzling* to describe the sounds of the storm outside.
 - What other words are used in the story to describe sounds? As a class make a list of the sound-words used in the book.
 - Onomatopoeia is where the sound made when you say a word is similar to the sound it is describing. Boom, Sizzle, and Howl are all onomatopoeic words. Look at the list you have made - how many of the words in it are onomatopoeic?
 - Write a short story or a poem using lots of onomatopoeia. You can use words from the list you made, or think of some that aren't on the list to use. You can even try inventing some yourself!

When Grandma is riding the bike on pages 36 to 38, she '*swings out into the street*', '*zooms down the road*' and '*zips around the corner*'.

- *Swings*, *zooms* and *zips* are all verbs that are used to describe the way Grandma (and her bike) are moving.
- As a class read through the book and see how many other movement words you can find. Are they all verbs? If they are not verbs, what type of word are they?
- Write a paragraph describing the way someone who is using a car, bike, boat, skateboard, or other vehicle is moving. Use as many different verbs to describe their movement as you can.
- As a class discuss the stories you have written, and the different verbs class members have used. Choose one verb from each story and look at what that word tells you. For example 'run' 'zoom' and 'zip' tell you that someone is moving fast, while 'lurch', 'jerk', and 'wobble' tell you that the movement is uneven and unbalanced.
- As a class make a table of the different verbs you have discussed, with columns showing what types of movement they are describing. Remember that some words will tell you more than one thing - for example if someone 'swishes past' they are travelling both fast and smoothly.

Creative Activities

- When Grandma was a little girl living in a bush camp, they had no toys or games to play with and had to invent their own things to do to have fun. In pairs or small groups invent a game that you can play using things easily found in the natural environment (e.g. leaves, twigs, mud). Share your games with the class, and take turns playing everyone else's.
- Make a puddle-splash painting. Pour several small pools of different coloured paints on to the middle of a large piece of paper, and then use the end of a stick to splash them around. Experiment with dragging the stick through the paint to mix colours, and flicking it at the paper to make splashes.
- Lots of people have sheds in their yards. Some people keep gardening equipment in them, while other people (like Annie's grandma) keep old things they don't use much any more in them. If you had a shed of your very own, what do you think you would like to keep in it? As a class, discuss what class members' families keep in any sheds they have. Individually draw pictures of some of the things that your family keep in storage. As a class use the pictures to make a large graph or chart to show the different things that different people keep.
- When you are old, what sorts of special things do you think you might still have from your childhood? Write a short story set fifty years in the future, where you are sharing stories about some of your special things with your grandchild.

- Visit a local nursing home and talk to the elderly residents about their childhood experiences.
 - Draw a picture of some of the things that the elderly people talked about. Use your picture to make a thank-you card to send to them.

- Annie’s grandfather made the shed from wood and metal that other people had thrown away.
 - Go for a walk around the local area and make a list of all the things that you can see discarded or otherwise unowned that you could use to make a shed.
 - When you return to the classroom, design a shed or other small outbuilding using the materials on your list. Remember to label all the parts of your design!

- Make a memory-wall collage. Think about all the things that are important to you, and that you want to remember when you are an adult. You can use photos or drawings, or choose objects to represent events, and make a large collage. For example, you could use a piece of wool to represent a jumper that your grandma knitted you or a dried flower to represent a special day. Draw a picture of a favourite toy. Use all the collages to make a class memory-wall display. Write brief explanations of the objects and pictures you have used, and why they are important to you, and include them in the display.

- Write a poem about memories.

- Look for Depression-era photographs, either in the school library or online, or ask your family if they have any. As a class look at the photographs and discuss what life must have been like for the people shown. Hypothesise as to what the people were doing, and why. Choose one person shown in one of the photos and write a story from their point of view that describes and explains the events leading up to the photograph being taken. Remember that cameras were not nearly as common back then, and having a photo taken was a special thing!

Science and Technology

The storm at the beginning of the story is made extra scary and spooky by the fact that there is no power. In Australia it is not unusual for the power to occasionally go out during a storm, but for most of the time we can rely on the electricity working when we need it to. A hundred years ago though this wasn’t the case at all, and even 50 years ago many people didn’t have a reliable supply of electricity, or even any electricity at all, in their homes.

- As a class, discuss times that you have experienced power cuts or blackouts in your homes.
 - What did you do during the power cut?
 - How did you see at night?
 - How did you stay warm?

- What did you eat? Did you cook, and if so how?
- What did you do for entertainment?
- Before people had electricity in their homes, they still cooked and cleaned and had light and heat. As a class discuss all the different methods and technologies that they used to make their homes comfortable without electricity.
- What would you and your family do if the electricity stopped working for a week? Individually, make a plan of all the things you could do to live comfortably without electricity. List the things that you would need that you already have in the house, like torches, the things you would need more of, such as batteries, and the things that you don't have but would really like to have, like a gas or kerosene-powered refrigerator.
- In some parts of the world, reliable heating in winter is a necessity. Without some way to warm their homes people wouldn't survive. In Australia heating is more of a luxury. It makes our homes more comfortable in winter, but even in the coldest parts of Australia people can survive in winter without heating if they have enough warm clothes and blankets. As a class discuss necessities and luxuries.
 - What makes something a necessity as opposed to a luxury?
 - Can something be a luxury for one person but a necessity for another? Try to think of some examples. For instance people with serious medical conditions will often need things that other people can live without.
 - Think of all the comforts you have in your home. Which ones could you most easily do without? Which ones could you manage without, but would have to replace with something else? (e.g. you can manage without an electric stove, but still need some way to cook food)
 - As a class make a graph to show the modern comforts that class members would miss the most if they had to live like people did a hundred years ago.

History and Geography

In *The Memory Shed*, Grandma tells Annie stories about when she was a little girl living in a bush camp during the Depression.

- As a class research and discuss the Depression.
 - What was the Depression?
 - When was the Depression, and how long did it last?
 - Who did the Depression affect?
 - What were some of the things that people did during the Depression to survive? Would it have been different for people living in cities than for people living rurally? What might some of these differences have been?

When Grandma was living in the bush camp during the Depression, her family was very poor. She says that *Unless my father caught food for us in the bush, we didn't eat.*

- What sort of bush food can be found in your local area?
 - If you live in a city, think about where the nearest bushland is to your home. Could you walk there if you had to?
 - What native animals live in your area that you could eat (if you could catch them)?
 - What introduced animals are in your area that could be a source of food?
 - Go on a walk through local bushland and see if you can identify any possible plant food sources.

- Before Europeans colonised Australia, all indigenous people survived on the food they could catch or find in the bush. It was much harder for people to survive on bush food during the Depression. (A resource for this discussion is the picture book *Tucker* by Ian Abdulla [Omnibus Books 1994, but released in paperback in 2014].) As a class discuss why it would have been more difficult to find enough to eat in the bush during the Depression, than it was before European colonisation. Think about the effects that colonisation had on: the bush; native animals, their environment, and their population levels; human population levels.

- When Europeans first colonised Australia, several of them starved or came near to starving in places where the local indigenous people could find plenty of food. As a class discuss why the colonists might have found it so hard to find enough food.