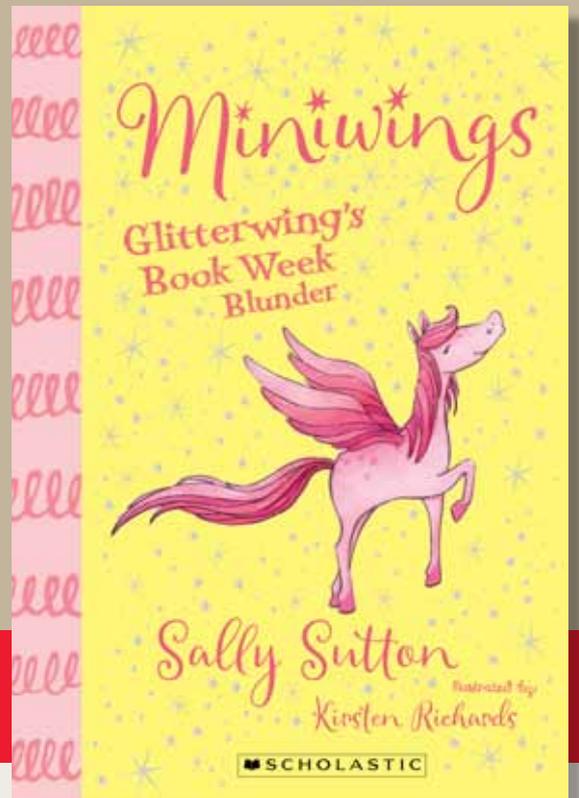


Miniwings: Glitterwing's Book Week Blunder

Text by Sally Sutton

Illustrations by Kirsten Richards

- Art • Reading • Writing • Onomatopoeia
- Dictionary • Oral Language
- Transactional Writing



Synopsis

Sisters Sophia and Clara have been given six miniature winged toy horses by their Nana. They named them Miniwings and believed they were harmless. Boring even. But they were wrong. These horses talk in their own secret language and keep getting the girls into trouble. Sophia and Clara must keep the Miniwings a secret from the grown-ups, otherwise they'll lose their new best friends.

In Book 1, Sophia and Clara are excited about the upcoming Book Week at their school. On Friday there will be a parade where students dress up as a book character. But they are most excited about the visit from their favourite author Suzie Gamble the day before. So much so that they forget to plan their costume for the parade. Mum agrees to take them to Craft King to buy a costume. In the meantime, the Miniwings are getting up to mischief, playing dress-up with Mum's clothes, lip gloss and perfume. Mum discovers the mess and the shopping trip is cancelled for today.

The day before the parade, Suzie Gamble arrives for her author visit. She is not the glamorous author that the sisters were expecting from her photo on the back of the books. But once she begins reading aloud, they realise that it must be her; she is just too good.

Mum takes the girls to Craft King, but someone else has hitched a ride. While Mum wanders off to look for new lip gloss, the Miniwings explode out of the shopping bag. The sisters try to intervene, but the Miniwings succeed in covering the aisles in paint, feathers, stickers, glitter and beads. Mum arrives back just in time to see the shop manager go flying onto the floor, landing in a puddle of green paint. Mum trips over too, and crashes into a stack of boxes. What mayhem! Needless to say, no costume is bought that day.

Dad suggests the girls dress up as ghosts, but the Miniwings, now on their best behaviour, decide to help the sisters make their own costume. They will go as Canterbury, the White Stallion (Suzie Gamble's favourite horse). Sophia gives in and decides to let Clara be the front of the horse, while she takes the back end.

At the parade, the Canterbury costume is terribly uncomfortable and falls apart, landing Sophia flat in the mud. But she takes inspiration from Suzie Gamble's words about Canterbury: "Inside, he's strong and brave, and he never gives up." The girls stumble their way through the parade, and although they miss out on all the prizes, they end up winning an extra bonus prize for their strength and determination: a voucher from Craft King, presented by Ms Wiglet, the shop manager from the store! Luckily Ms Wiglet doesn't recognise the girls. At first ...



About the Author and Illustrator

Sally Sutton. Born in Auckland, New Zealand, Sally Sutton decided she wanted to be a writer when she was six years old. She is now a best-selling, award-winning author of many popular books, including *Roadworks* with Brian Lovelock (winner Best Picture Book NZ Post Children's Book Awards 2009) and its sequels *Demolition* and *Construction* (published by Walker Books.) Other picture books include *Farmer John's Tractor* (with Robyn Belton), *When We Go Camping* (with Cat Chapman) and *Ambulance, Ambulance!* (with Brian Lovelock.) Many of her picture books have been named Storylines Notable Books.

Sally's first junior fiction series with Scholastic was her humorous, native animal Diary series: *Diary of a Pukeko*, *Diary of a Bat*, *Diary of a Frog* and *Diary of a Sea Lion*, illustrated by Dave Gunson. She is thrilled to be working on chapter books again with the hugely enjoyable *Miniwings* series, illustrated by Kirsten Richards.

Sally loves to write for different age groups, but strives to bring the same qualities to all her writing: a strong plot, lively and rhythmic language, and a big dose of fun. Sally holds an MA (1st class Hons.) in German. She has a keen interest in Grimms' fairy tales and European languages, and also enjoys writing plays. She lives in Auckland with her husband and two daughters.

Kirsten Richards grew up in a small village in the Berkshire Downs, in the South of England, where she spent most of her days running, jumping and climbing trees. If she wasn't covered in mud, she would most probably be scribbling down stories to amuse her sister, or encouraging her pets to sit nicely whilst they had their portraits drawn.

After completing a foundation Art and Design course Kirsten moved to Swansea where she spent three very happy years studying towards a degree in General Illustration. She graduated in 2006 and emerged bright-eyed and bushy-tailed into the world of children's publishing.

Since then Kirsten has worked on a whole array of exciting projects, including books with Scholastic USA, Oxford University Press, Hodder Children's Books, Thomas Nelson and Top That! One of her highlights was in late 2008 when *The Littlest Pilgrim* (Scholastic USA) made its mark, spending three weeks on the New York Times bestsellers list.

Since moving to New Zealand, Kirsten has spent time teaching art and design to both adults and children and designing merchandise, souvenirs and fashion garments for children of all ages. She now runs a boutique design and illustration company where she draws, paints and designs to her heart's content. The illustrated junior fiction series *Miniwings* (written by Sally Sutton) is her second title with Scholastic NZ, following on from Lucy Davey's picture book *Dinosaur Hunting*.

Writing Style

Miniwings is a funny, fast-paced story with well-placed illustrations and text to support a reader growing in confidence. The language is lively and fun and will draw readers along. The *Miniwings* characters are likely to feature in many readers' own writing and imaginative play.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

Share the cover with the children and ask them to guess what the story will be about. Do they think it will be a true story? How can they tell?

Share the dedication. Who is SS? Who might Charlotte and Alice be?

Sophia's Diary (pp. 4–5)

Why can't Sophia tell the reader about the *Miniwings* out loud? What might happen if the wrong person found out about them? Ask the children to suggest words that describe the *Miniwings* based on the information on the cover and in Sophia's diary. Sophia's diary entry mentions a secret language; turn to the back of the book to show the Dictionary. Explain when and how to use the Dictionary.

Meet the *Miniwings* (pp. 6–7)

Show the illustration and ask the children to choose a favourite horse based on the illustrations. After reading the information about each *Miniwing*, have they chosen a different favourite? Why?

Chapter One

- What is a blunder? What two things does Sophia say kids like to do? (p. 9)
- Suzie Gamble is Sophia and Clara's favourite author, who is yours? Which character would you dress up as for a book parade? (p. 11)
- What does Whizz say will happen if they can't think of a costume? (p. 13)
- Why don't the girls want to go as 'Horse Girl'? Why does Sophia think Suzie is a 'snazzy lady'? (p. 14)
- Even though the girls both think that going as a horse is a good idea, what can't they agree on? (p. 19)

Chapter Two

- What does 'I made my eyes into daggers and threw them at Clara' mean? What was Sophia trying to say to Clara without speaking to her? Why didn't she just say it out loud? How did the girls convince their mum to take them to Craft King? (pp. 23–24)
- What were the *Miniwings* up to while the girls spoke to their mum? (pp. 25–27)
- What information about the *Miniwings* did you learn from their song? (p. 29)



teacher toolkit

 SCHOLASTIC

- Who did their mum think had made the mess? What was the consequence for the girls? (p. 32)

Chapter Three

- Why was Thursday both brilliant and terrifying? (p. 33)
- Why were the girls so surprised when they first saw Suzie Gamble? (p. 34)
- What convinced Sophia that it was the real Suzie? (p. 36)
- How does Suzie make the characters so real? Do you believe her? (p. 39)
- Why is Canterbury Suzie's favourite horse? (p. 40)
- What do the girls do to get their mum to take them to Craft King? Would that work in your house? (p. 42)

Chapter Four

- Using the Dictionary of Miniwing-ese at the back of the book, translate "Oofy, what a squooch! I nearly got squeezled!" (p. 48)
- What were the Miniwings doing at Craft King? (pp. 52–53)
- Why couldn't the Miniwings help the girls clean up the mess? (p. 54)

Chapter Five

- What is 'Murphy's Law'? (p. 58)
- What did the manager look like when she stood back up? (p. 60)
- Why can't their mum explain how the mess happened to the manager? (p. 61)
- What are the two main consequences of what happened at Craft King for the girls? (p. 63)
- What is a 'pair of total no-hopers'? What does Dad suggest they dress up as? Are the girls happy with that? Why? (pp. 64–65)

Chapter Six

- Why does Sophia think that doom is worse than despair, disappointment and disgrace? (p. 67)
- How do the girls feel about the Miniwings being so 'peskery'? (pp. 70–71)
- What do the Miniwings suggest that saves the day? (pp. 73–77)

Chapter Seven

- What are the four 'WORST THINGS' about being the back end of a horse? (pp. 78–79)
- How does Suzie unknowingly help Sophia and Clara? (pp. 82–83)
- Why do Sophia and Clara get a surprise prize? Do you think they deserved it? (pp. 88–89)

Activities

ACTIVITY 1: ONOMATOPOEIA

The ponies whizzed, whirred, zipped and zoomed. These words are examples of onomatopoeia. As a group or class, make a word bank of onomatopoeic words. Think of an activity that has lots of noises, for example, cooking, or playing at the park. Draw yourself and your family or friends doing the activity and add the words that describe the sounds. Share your drawing with your group or class and add any other words that the group or class suggest fit your drawing.

ACTIVITY 2: HOW-TO GUIDE

In the story, Sophia and Clara share their tips for getting what they want from their mother. Write 4–5 of your best tips to help someone younger out of a tricky situation. Some examples might be, 'How to join in with a game', 'How to do a handstand in the pool', 'How to get a command block in Minecraft'.

ACTIVITY 3: DICTIONARY

Look at the Dictionary again and write a story using as many of the Miniwing-ese words that you can. Give your story a title and design the cover for it. Remember to add your name as the author and illustrator.

ACTIVITY 4: DESIGN YOUR OWN MINIWING

Look at pages 4–5 again. Design a seventh Miniwing. Give it a name and write a description about it. Try to make it unique.

ACTIVITY 5: SEE ATTACHED

Written by Sarina Dickson



ACTIVITY 5: WHAT HAPPENED FIRST?

Several things went wrong for Sophia and Clara in Craft King. Cut the following list of events into strips then glue them into your workbook in the order in which they happened. You might need to read Chapter Four again to help you.

The Miniwings dropped to the floor and froze.



There were so many shelves I felt dizzy when I looked up.



She gave us the KILLER MOTHER LOOK.



Mum slipped on the beads.



The manager fell over.



The rainbow shopping bag began to jump.



We heard a ping.



Out rolled Whizz.



Clara twisted her fringe.



The manager came around the corner.



Glitterwing fluttered out of the bag.



Mum fell over.



Moonlight shot out like a flying blueberry.



Clara looked at me with panic in her eyes.



Green paint went everywhere.



The Miniwings were too busy dressing up to help.



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