

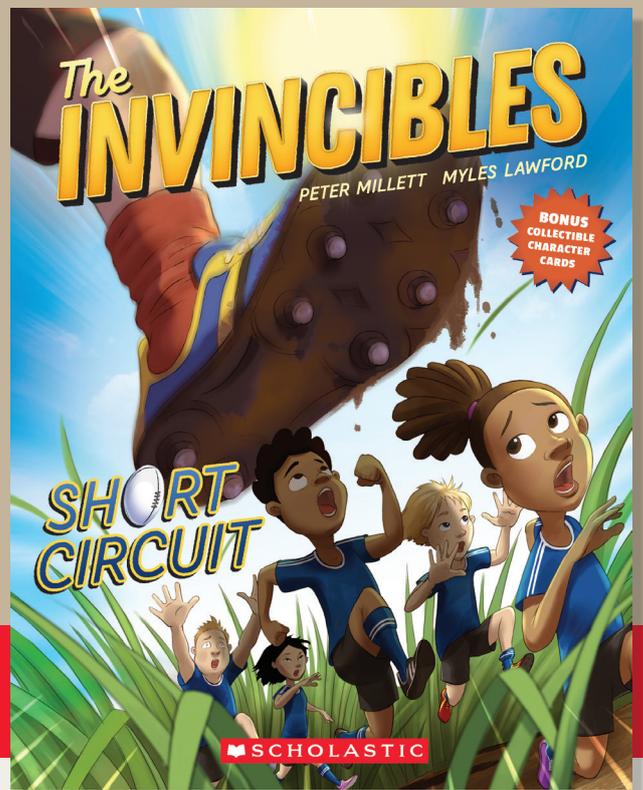
# The Invincibles #2

## Short Circuit

By Peter Millett

Illustrated by Myles Lawford

- Thinking skills • Reading • Writing •
- Art • Lexile: 710L •



## Synopsis

*The Invincibles: Short Circuit* is a story about five children who, in Book 1, are zapped by lightning on a footy field and transformed into a team of powered-up heroes known as The Invincibles. In Book 2 they power up their powers to win a game of footy against Tane's cheating older brother's team. After the game, a real mission comes up and they power up again. But disaster strikes – they disappear, shrinking down to the size of a toothbrush! How can they save anyone when they're this small?

Once they escape hungry weta and magpies, and giant-sized footy players they fly to Arakino and watch the A & P parade. They're shocked to see Tricky Ricky isn't in jail after his last evil deeds. The police had zero clues to work on; he had covered his tracks well. The team suspect he is up to no good again. Tricky Ricky has diverted police attention with a fake bank fire. While they're away, he blasts the All Greats World Champions Cup Float with a terrible smell and steal their priceless world champion medals. To ensure the police don't suspect Tricky Ricky he offers a 20 million dollar reward for their return.

Meanwhile the medals are in a special safety box – a toilet that no one can get into. Except The Invincibles, of course. Once they get in, how are they going to get out, though? They use the medals as surf boards and flush down the toilet, through the sewers and into a river. They also lose the last of their powers and realise they're still miniature sized!

Zinnia suggests they give themselves a power surge from an electric fence. The bolt of power is enough to resume their normal size. They decide to claim the 20 million dollar prize; the last thing Tricky Ricky ever expected to pay out. They've foiled his evil plans once again.

## About the Author

**Peter Millett** is a full-time author living on Auckland's North Shore. From an early age he enjoyed playing word games with rhymes and jokes. He had his first funny verse published in the national newspaper when he was at primary school, and he's been creating comedic rhyming verse ever since. Peter Millett is author of the Children's Choice Award Winner *The ANZAC Puppy*. He also created the comedic junior fiction series *Boy Zero* and *Johnny Danger*.

## About the Illustrator

**Myles Lawford** grew up in New Zealand and studied spatial design at AUT. He has worked in numerous design agencies, using his illustration skills to bring concepts to life. Myles is the illustrator behind Scholastic NZ's *Where's Kiwi?* search and find series, as well as *The 12 Days of Kiwi Christmas*, *We Wish You a Kiwi Christmas* and the Kiwi Corkers *The Three Cattle Dogs Gruff* and *Parakeet in Boots*. Myles lives in Auckland.



teacher toolkit

 SCHOLASTIC

# Writing Style

*The Invincibles: Short Circuit* is a laugh-out-loud sports-themed action-comedy junior fiction book. In Book 2 the five kids calling themselves The Invincibles solve another Tricky Ricky crime. The story is set on their local football field, in a small town called Arakino at an A & P show, and inside a toilet. The author uses super-charged verbs, precise nouns, and the occasional bold text to highlight a word. The text is in the third person past tense. The author uses a range of short and long sentences with a mix of description, dialogue and action. The story is action-packed, engaging and game-relevant to encourage children of all reading levels and cultures across New Zealand. *The Invincibles: Power Up* is written for the 7-9-year-old age group, and has a Lexile reading age of 710 L.

## Shared Learning and Discussion Points

### ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

- Look at the cover. When and where is this story set? How can you tell? What do you think the title *The Invincibles: Short Circuit* could be hinting at in the story?
- When you look at the pictures of the characters and their superhero name, what powers do you think they have?
- Why is the team downhearted at the beginning of the game? P.9
- How does Tana think his older brother's team are cheating? P.12
- What plan does Tana come up with to beat Jason's team? P.13
- Andrea worries it is cheating. What is your opinion?
- How do they hide their glowing spiky hair during the game? P.19
- How did Andrea capture the ball after Jason's drop-kick? P. 26
- Why does Jason say he'll eat Tana's socks? P.33
- How does Scott use his special powers in the game? Pp.40-41
- What rule does the ref try to use to have them disqualified? Pp.43-46
- How does Andrea help Muzza come back from being invisible? Pp.48-49
- Why does Tana go off with the other team's captain? How do the team feel? Pp.50-51
- Why is it ironic when Scotty says, "Cheats never prosper." P.83
- What happens when they power up when they're still half-full of power? Pp.56-57
- What insects could be a problem for the team when they're pint-sized? P.60
- What other dangers could there be on the footy field? Pp.62-64
- What did The Invincibles see at the A & P parade that shocked them? P.72
- What emergency called all the police to one place?
- What is Tricky Ricky's plan to embarrass the All Greats this time? Pp.78-80
- What trouble does Phil get himself into on the float? Pp.80-81
- How do the team work out that there is no trouble at the bank? Pp.85-87
- What was so special about the All Great float? Pp.90-92
- Where has Tricky Ricky hidden the medals? Pp.95-96, 106-107
- Why are the medals considered priceless? P.102
- How does Tricky Ricky prevent the police from thinking he is a suspect? P.104
- Why is Andrea panicking about their 80 minutes of power running out? P.109
- What does Tricky Ricky plan to do with the melted gold from the medals? P.110
- What is Tana's exit plan? P.111
- Why is Tana worry about being the last one left in the toilet? P.116
- Where do the heroes end up after surfing the flushed toilet? P.118
- Why were the team happy at first that Muzza had returned to visibility, and then alarmed? Pp.120-122
- What plan does Andrea and Zinnia have for rebooting their powers? Pp.124-125
- What is Tana's plan for getting revenge on Tricky Ricky? P.135
- What do you predict Tana is going to say to the Team One coach?
- How did Tana help Jason improve his game and how did that ensure Tana would stay their captain? P.140
- Summarise the story with a main idea and four supporting ideas.



# Activities

## ACTIVITY 1: THINKING DIFFERENTLY

Choose three important events from the story and explain how you would have handled them differently to the characters in the story. Explain how it might change the outcome of the story in either a small or major way. Think of the cause and effect. Sometimes your smallest action can have a major impact on others.

## ACTIVITY 2: DAY IN COURT

Ask the students to use the story as the basis for a court trial for Tricky Ricky. Students can be witnesses, expert witnesses called to testify, judge, jury, bailiff, reporter.

## ACTIVITY 3: CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Describe a character as a psychologist or recruiting officer might do. What are they like? Examples? Why are they like that?

## ACTIVITY 4: P.S.

Ask the students to think about what happens next in the story? Encourage the students to write an epilogue in which they explain, using whatever tense and tone the author does – what happened to the characters next.

