

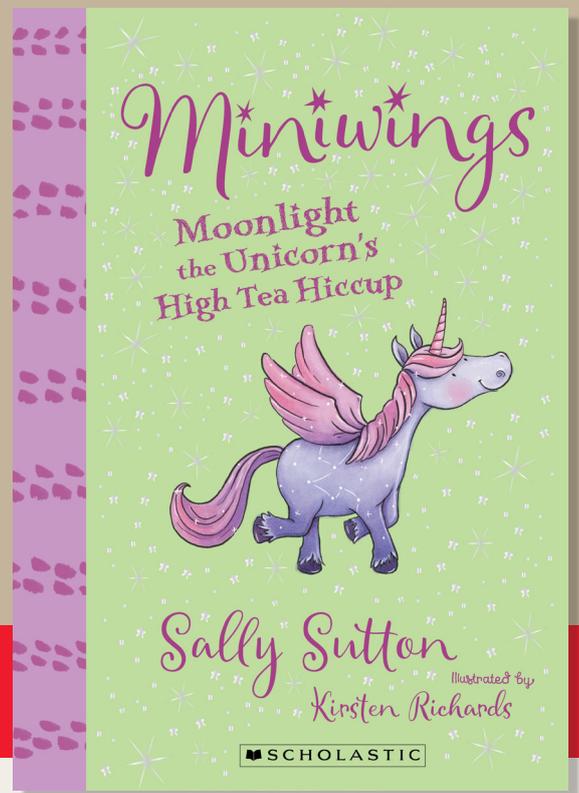
# Miniwings #6

## Moonlight the Unicorn's High Tea Hiccup

Text by Sally Sutton

Illustrations by Kirsten Richards

• Art • Reading • Writing • Thinking Skills • Lexile: 560L •



### Synopsis

Sisters Sophia and Clara named their six miniature, winged toy horses 'Miniwings' in Book 1 of the series. In Book 6, the sisters have been invited to a high tea with the Honorary Great-Aunties. Moonlight salivates on hearing about all the gorgeous food they're going to eat at the high tea and wants to come, too. But Sophia and Clara know the Miniwings will only misbehave so say no. The six Miniwings hide in the girls' hats and come along anyway. They're not at the high tea for five minutes before they've knocked over a plate of sandwiches. The girls' mother of course thinks they've dropped the food all over the ground. Great-Auntie Mavis isn't worried, though. She invites the 'angels' to help her in the kitchen instead to make more sandwiches. Once inside the kitchen she tells the girls to blow off the grass and the sandwiches will be just like new. No one will notice.

Outside in the sun one of the Great Aunties falls asleep. Sophie regales the old ladies with her newly acquired information about how the guts works. Then she notices that her hat is vibrating. The Miniwings have the hiccups. And they're not the only ones ... Clara and Sophie's mother has an allergy to cucumbers and thinks she might have eaten one by mistake. She rushes off to the toilet, just as Great Auntie Mavis announces it is time for cake. And just when Clara and Sophie's hats begin to fall apart.

Great Auntie Mavis looks for glue to help piece the girls hats together. In the kitchen the girls have a peek at the sweet things. They decide to have just a tiny taste. Moonlight sees the beautiful chocolate cake and in a dreamy state crashes right into the middle of it. He eats his way through the cake, and shakes himself off when he gets outside, splattering chocolate icing all over the walls. Flying blind he crashes into other Miniwings, the fridge, and finally topples the cake off its plate into a slushy heap on the floor.

The girls know they are in big trouble until they come up with a plan. They put the cake, broken biscuits, crushed berries, and cream in a bowl altogether and call it Eton Mess. The Great Aunties are delighted they can eat the dessert without their dentures.



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## About the Author and Illustrator

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*. 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. After she left school she completed 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 project with Scholastic NZ, following on from illustrating Lucy Davey's picture book *Dinosaur Hunting*.

## Writing Style

*Miniwings* is a funny, early chapter book with colourful illustrations that supports a reader growing in confidence. The books can be read aloud or read by an independent reader. Each book begins with a letter to the reader from Sophia explaining how they ended up with the *Miniwings* and why it is important to keep them secret from adults. Throughout the story, Sophia, the main character in the *Miniwings* stories, talks directly to the readers in a lively, fun tone. The sentences are short and at times rhythmic. Super-charged verbs and alliteration spice up the action. For example, 'They whizzed and they whirred. They zipped and they zoomed.' Written in first person, past tense with lots of narration, description and action.

The *Miniwings* speak in their own language throughout the story. Readers can look at the Dictionary of *Miniwing-ese* on page 92-93, if they can't understand their language. Scattered throughout the book are diagrams, lists, large fonts, and illustrations to accentuate the text, and help readers understand what is happening in the story. The story is set mostly at their Great Aunt Mavis's house and garden. Themes such as greed, problem solving, improvising and allergies are covered in *Moonlight the Unicorn's High Tea Hiccup*.

## Illustration Style

Kirsten has created the illustrations in acrylic inks and finished the pictures in Photoshop. There is a range of full colour double-page spreads, as well as pages with small illustrations, some coloured, some black and white. The pictures are stylised: faces are round with minimal features, and tiny noses and mouths. Most of the pictures feature the main characters front-on. Smaller illustrations are scattered around the double page spreads.



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# Shared Learning and Discussion Points

## ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

- Look at the cover. Predict what this story will be about and what mischief this Miniwing will get up to in the story?
- Why has the author written a letter to the readers before the story starts?
- Which is your favourite Miniwing and why?
- Sophia says that she and Clara are super-polite and never greedy. Do you believe her? Why/Why not? p.9
- Why are the Great-Aunties “honorary”? p.10
- Why did the girls dress up for the high tea? P.12
- Why does Moonlight dribble when he talks/thinks about food? P.15
- How did Moonlight show his anger when told he wasn't invited to the high tea? P.17
- What did Sophia say that she soon regretted saying in front of the Miniwings? P.19
- Why did Sophia liken Great-Auntie Mavis to a banana? P.23
- Why were the girls not impressed with the brunch they'd been invited to earlier in the week? P.26
- How did the plate of sandwiches end up on the ground? P.28
- What was Great-Auntie Mavis's solution to fixing the sandwiches? P.36
- What are dentures and what happened to Great-Auntie Mavis's dentures? P.38
- How did Sophia entertain the old ladies? P.41
- What interesting facts did you learn from Sophia's speech? Pp.41-48
- What has upset Sophia and Clara's mother's stomach? How does it affect her? P.47
- What happened to the girls' hats? How did they intend fixing the fake fruit back onto their hats? P.54
- What is the secret of tasting a cake without leaving evidence? Have you ever tried it? P.58
- How do all the sweet things end up splattered around the room? Pp.60-63
- What solution does Sophia have for the mess that saves the day? P.76
- What did the old ladies think of the Eton Mess dessert? Pp.81-82 And why didn't they need their dentures for this pudding?
- Do you think Sophia was a good example of not being greedy? P.83 Why not?
- Why did the hats have to be cut off their head? P.86
- Do you think Moonlight has learnt his lesson? If not, why not? P.91

## Activities

### ACTIVITY 1: ETON MESS RECIPE

Imagine it is you in the kitchen and you have to save the day. What else could the girls do with the bits of cake, cream, strawberries, etc. Come up with your own Eton Mess Recipe or some other magical dessert recipe. Ask if you can trial it at home and bring in a piece(s) for your class to taste.

### ACTIVITY 2: DIGESTIVE DIAGRAM

Ask the students to design a project showing what they learned about the digestive system. Encourage the students to include up to five more new facts and diagrams that the class will find interesting. Students can then display their project or share it aloud in class.

### ACTIVITY 3: TIMELINE OF CATASTROPHIC EVENTS

Ask the students to draw a flow chart of all the catastrophic events that happen during the story.

### ACTIVITY 4: CAUSE AND EFFECT

Encourage the students to contemplate the catastrophic events and consider what was the cause and what was the effect. What led to the other? Discuss if they had made other choices whether it would have still happened.

Written by Maria Gill



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