



Wombat Books
Stories you'll want to share

Teachers' Notes

Mila & Ivy

Katrina McKelvey / Jasmine Berry

ISBN: 9781761110801

Recommended retail: \$24.99

Reading level: Ages 5 to 8 Picture Book



Book Summary

Mila is a cardboard design engineer. She is currently designing and constructing a cupcake catapult with her little sister, Ivy. However, things change when Ivy destroys their project, making cardboard confetti instead. Mila is devastated and wants nothing more to do with Ivy. Mila continues to engineer - alone. But something is missing. Maybe Ivy was making cardboard confetti for a reason. So how do sisters rebuild their relationship while engineering their next ultimate cardboard creation?

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Reasons to Study

Mila and Ivy is an excellent springboard for many learning opportunities in classrooms.

1) Emotional resilience: Mila and Ivy are sisters. Their relationship breaks down during the story like so many sibling relationships. The sisters go through many emotions until they reconcile. Students could discuss these emotions, why they are a normal part of life, and how to navigate to a resolution.

2) STEM outcomes: Mila and Ivy is a great starting point for students to think of themselves as engineers. The story highlights the process of designing, building, testing, and that good teamwork helps along the way. It also shows that projects don't always work but to not give up.

Cardboard boxes are an easy material to source. Students could be encouraged to engineer their own products using only cardboard boxes. It's a great opportunity to do some recycling. Students should plan and design their project using Mathematics concepts such as measurement. Predicting should be encouraged too.

3) Complex emotions: Mila and Ivy explores complex emotions including frustration, heartbreak, stubbornness, and determination. It also explores the act of apologising and asking for forgiveness. These could be discussed and students could share stories of how they have felt this way.

4) Relationships: Mila and Ivy are sisters. This relationship can be simple and complex. Big sisters can find it hard and frustrating to include little sisters in their activities sometimes. Students could discuss this feeling and ways of including little sisters more.

5) Language: Mila and Ivy is full of verbs and onomatopoeia. Students could go for a hunt to try and find these words in the text.

Themes

Overcoming disaster and heartbreak
and emotions

Problem solving

Relationship between sisters
STEM Concepts

Feelings
Love and Forgiveness

About the Author:



Katrina McKelvey is a children's author, picture book manuscript assessor, former primary school teacher, and wife and mother living in Newcastle, NSW. She's highly involved in CBCA, SCBWI, LittleScribe, community events, literary conferences and festivals, and loves visiting schools. She's written many children's picture books and educational readers including her new title *Mila and Ivy*. Other much loved books include *Isla's Family Tree*, *Chasing Rainbows*, *No Baths Week* and *Up To Something*. Katrina's left-handed, loves tea, scary movies and rollercoasters, and is addicted to mint chocolate. When she was little, a hot air balloon accidentally landed in her backyard.

Author Notes:

The idea for this story came to me after our family got a new puppy. She used to chew cardboard boxes into very small pieces while she was teething. She left cardboard confetti all over the house.



I absolutely love to write stories full of verbs and sounds. It helps me show the reader the energy inside my story instead of telling them about it. Then they can feel this energy for themselves.

The characters, Mila and Ivy remind me of myself and my sister. I'm older than her by two years. We used to play together in our large backyard doing things like climbing trees, jumping on our trampoline (no nets back then), riding our bikes (no helmets back then either), and doing jigsaw puzzles. We got on well most of the time. But every so often we would disagree on something – just like any sisters. Sometimes the disagreements were huge. But we always fixed them. And I'm happy to say we're still friends today

About the Illustrator



Jasmine Berry grew up in beautiful Albany, Western Australia.

She has been drawing to impress the other kids, since she was old enough to hold a colouring pencil.

But lately, she crafts these exciting and magical worlds with her computer, iPad and many coffees.

She lives in Perth with her husband and with two adorable cats, and a rather large collection of succulents.

Instagram: @jasmineberryart or <https://www.instagram.com/jasmineberryart/>

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Key Curriculum Areas:

CURRICULUM AREAS AND KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

Foundation (Kindergarten/Prep)

English, Science, Visual Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

ACELT1575	ACELA1429	ACELA1434	ACELY1653
ACELT1577	ACELA1430	ACELA1786	ACELY1646
ACELT1783	ACELA1432	ACELY1651	
ACELT1578	ACELA1435	ACELY1652	
ACSSU004	ACSIS012	ACSIS233	
ACAVAN107	ACAVAM108		
ACHASSIO05			

Year One

English, Science, Visual Arts, Humanities and Social Science

ACELA1444	ACELA1451	ACELT1582	ACELY1656
ACELA1787	ACELA1452	ACELT1584	ACELY1788
ACELA1447	ACELA1458	ACELT1586	ACELY1660
ACELA1449	ACELT1581	ACELT1832	ACELT1581
ACSSU019	ACSIS213	ACHASSIO22	
ACAVAN107	ACAVAM108		

Year Two

English, Science, Visual Arts, Humanities and Social Science

ACELA1461	ACELA1463	ACELT1833	
ACELA1462	ACELT1591	ACELY1665	
ACSHE035	ACSIS041	ACHASSIO38	
ACAVAN107	ACAVAM108		

Teaching Points and Activities

This book may be used in whole class, small group or independent learning activities in schools.

Please note, the following suggestions and activities are suited to a variety of year levels spanning Foundation to Year 6 primary aged children. Some activities may be applicable to early secondary school students, as well.

Knowledge and Literal Understanding

Pre-reading Questions

1. Show the cover to the class and ask the students what they think the book might be about.
2. Read the back cover blurb. Does this give them more of an idea of what the book could be about?
3. Ask students if they can recognize the setting of this story from the cover image.

After-reading Questions

4. Ask students if Mila or Ivy reminds them of anyone they know: a friend, a sibling, themselves perhaps.
5. How does Mila change over the course of the story?
6. Ask students what they think of the story outcome. Do they agree with the ending?
7. The author was inspired by her puppy making a mess to write this story, how do you think that transformed into a story about a little sister making a mess?

Discussion Questions

Overcoming disaster and heartbreak:

- How was Mila feeling when she discovered the cardboard confetti Ivy made?
- What are some things you can do if you are made feel upset or disappointed like Mila?
- How was Ivy feeling when Mila thought she was destroying their creations?
- Instead of hiding, how else could Ivy have shown Mila she was only trying to help?
- Have you ever felt like your heart is broken? Describe how that felt.

Relationship between sisters:

- Mila and Ivy love to make things together out of cardboard. What types of activities do you like to do with your brother/s or sister/s?
- Ivy was trying to help Mila by making confetti, but Mila thought Ivy was destroying their creations. Can you describe a time when something like this has happened to you?
- What does Ivy's badge say? Why did Mila make it? How did this make Ivy feel?

Feelings and emotions:

- Draw a flow diagram of all the different feelings experienced by Mila. Do one for Ivy too.
- Can you think of a moment where you experienced the feelings of either Mila or Ivy? How did you handle it?
- Look closely at the pets in the story. What do you notice? What feelings are they experiencing?

Love and forgiveness:

- How did Mila and Ivy show love in the story?
- What are the different ways in which your family shows love?
- What is forgiveness? How can you show you have forgiven someone? Name two ways Mila showed Ivy forgiveness?

Activities

STEM Concepts and Problem Solving:

- Design and make your own cardboard catapult.
 - Are you working alone, with a partner, or as a team?
 - Research catapult designs.
 - Draw design plans for your own catapult.
 - What materials do you need?
 - How are you going to join things?
 - What measurements do you need?
 - Test it. Record your testing.
 - Why did it work?
 - Why did it fail? What adjustments can you make?
- Name other things that can be made out of cardboard.



Katrina McKelvey is available for author talks and workshops. Contact Wombat Books for more information.

Mila & Ivy Teachers' Notes can be used in schools (independent learning, small groups, and whole classes); at home with caregivers; and as part of mental health support programs facilitated by counsellors, psychologists, children's charities, etc.

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