

Teachers Notes

The Tinklers Three: A Very Good Idea

Written by M.C. Badger

Published by Hardie Grant Egmont, 2014

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Write a list of pretend household rules, and explore the idea of rules
- Draw a picture of their siblings (or cousins/friends), and label each person with a name and age
- Invent something to help them get ready for school in the morning
- Discuss what a 'neighbour' is, and who the students' neighbours are
- Draw a picture of their favourite food turning into a tree

About the story

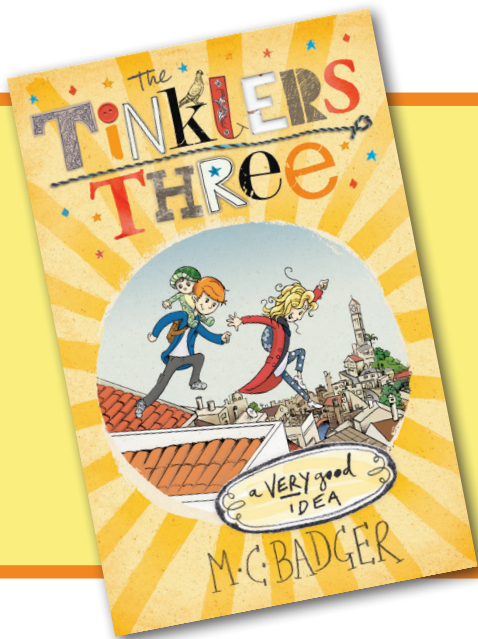
Marcus Tinkler lives with his two sisters, Mila and Turtle. The Tinklers' parents are both in the circus, which is why the Tinklers Three live alone in their apartment. Even though they live alone, they know that it is important to have rules. Some of which they all agree on, and some of which Mila seems to make up as she goes.

The Tinklers Three adventure starts when one morning Marcus wakes up and wonders, can I get from my bed to the doorway without once touching the ground? From there, Marcus and Mila have a very good idea: they should try and get to the Clock Tower in the distance, without once touching the ground, by tea time.

The Tinklers slowly make it from their bedroom to the kitchen, down the stairs of their apartment building, through a window and along a rope to a tree (which bends over to make a bridge that leads them to a rooftop). All the way, the children are thinking of very good ideas of how to get from one place to the next without touching the ground. To make matters harder, Turtle is balancing on Marcus' shoulders most of the way! (But don't worry, she has circus glue all over her so that Marcus won't drop her.)

The Tinklers Three work their way across the rooftops. But just when it looks like they'll reach the clock tower in time for tea, they come to a big gap in the buildings. It's too far for them to jump! So the Tinklers Three kindly ask a pigeon if he and his friends will help them. Just as the Tinklers Three are about to give up hope, they spy a flock of pigeons coming towards them. When the pigeons move together to form a giant bird shape, the three children jump on and finally finish their mission.





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Before you read the story

Ask the students to guess what A Very Good Idea might be about, based on the title and picture on the front cover. Ask the students to discuss what very good ideas they have come up with in the past. Now read the backcover blurb. Ask the students if they are good at climbing, and if they like getting dirty.

Questions & Activities

Chapter One

- What is one of Mila's good ideas?
- Why is Turtle called Turtle?
- What does Marcus decide to do when he wakes up from his dream?
- Have you ever had a dream, and wanted the dream to come true in the morning?

Chapter Two

- What is the one rule all three of the Tinklers agree on?
- Do you ever make up rules?
- Discuss: What are some (real) rules in your house?

Activity

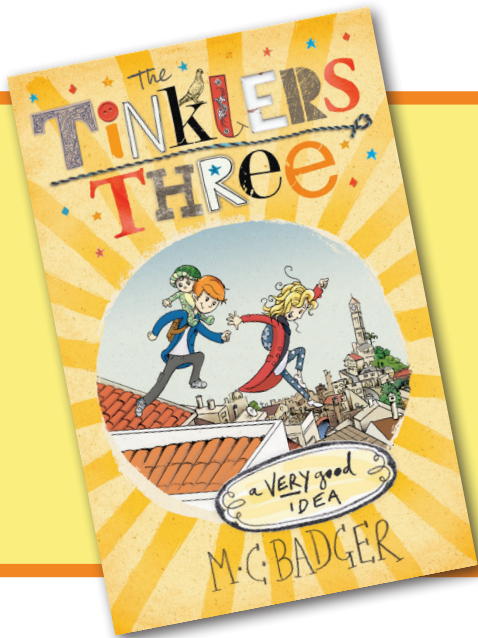
Ask the children to write a list of pretend household rules. They can be as silly or topsy-turvy as they like! (Example: No-one is allowed to eat vegetables until they've finished their dessert.)

Chapter Three

- Why does Marcus have to carry Turtle?
- Mrs Fitz is a grumpy old lady. Why is she like that?
- Discuss: Do you have younger siblings you take care of? How do you look after them?

Activity

Ask the children to draw a picture of their siblings (or cousins or friends). Label them with names and ages.



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Chapter Four

- Discuss: What is a neighbour? Do you know your neighbours? What are they like? Are they like the Splatleys, or are they nice and friendly?
- Discuss: Have you ever not wanted to play with somebody? How did you handle this?

Chapter Five

- Have you ever invented something? What was it, and what did it do?
- Discuss: Have you ever told somebody you weren't scared, but really you were? Why did you do this?

Activity

Ask the children to invent something that will help them get ready for school. (Example: a grabby hand to get things down from high cupboards, or a machine for making the best sandwiches in the world).

Chapter Six

- Do you ever forget things like Mila does? What can you do to help yourself remember things? Is there a song or rhyme that you use? Do you write yourself notes?
- Discuss: Turtle only likes eating lettuce. What's your favourite vegetable?

Chapter Seven

- Have you ever planted something, in the hope of it becoming a tree? What was it?
- Do you think the salami will become a salami tree?

Activity

Ask the students to draw a picture of their favourite food turning into a tree. (Example, a chocolate tree! A cheese tree!).

Chapter Eight

- Why do the pigeons decide to help the Tinklers? Have you ever tried to talk to an animal?
- Do you ever feed the birds in a park or at the beach? What happens once you feed one of them?

