

Lexie Moon and the Remote Control Catastrophe

AUTHOR

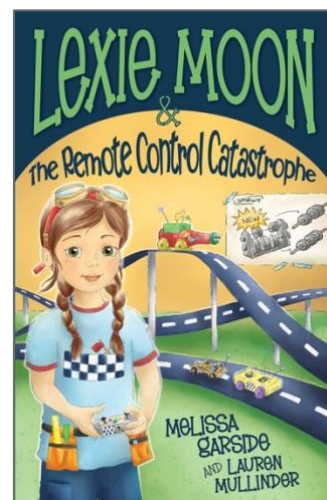
Melissa Garside

ILLUSTRATOR

Lauren Mullinder

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower to Mid Primary



SYNOPSIS

Kid inventor Lexie Moon has built a scrap-box remote-control car she hopes will win second prize in the local competition—a Mega-Boost signal amplifier she desperately wants. But when her transmitter and the prize disappear, Lexie discovers they’ve been stolen by Connie van Quish, sister of the infamous Gizmo Lightfinger. Connie has combined them into a powerful UniMote, a device capable of controlling any remotely operated machine. With gadgets across town spiralling into chaos, Lexie and Grandad race to track down The UniMote, stop Connie’s schemes and restore order. Along the way, Lexie discovers that teamwork, family—and even little sisters—can make all the difference. A fast, funny STEM-themed adventure filled with invention, problem-solving and remote-control mayhem.

Lexie Moon and the Remote Control Catastrophe is the third book in the Lexie Moon series.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In writing for children, Melissa Garside brings together her lifelong love of language with a deep understanding of what children love to read, drawn from her years as a teacher.

Melissa lives south of Sydney with her family, their hilarious golden retriever and some entertaining free-ranging chooks. When she’s not writing or teaching, she enjoys getting her hands dirty in the garden, immersing herself in nature and using her family as guinea pigs for her recipe-free kitchen experiments. Melissa also sheepishly admits to collecting books about words and subscribing to online dictionaries. Find out more about Melissa at: www.melissagarside.com

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Lauren is an illustrator, graphic designer, artist and educator. Based in her home studio in Adelaide, South Australia, Lauren spends her time illustrating children’s books, exploring the natural world and developing workshops in art, drawing fundamentals and environment design. Her other recent books include *Superheroes for a Day*, written by Craig Cormick, and *Birdie Lights up the World*, written by Alison McLennan. Find out more about Lauren at: www.laurenmullinder.com

Teaching notes prepared by Melissa Garside

THEMES & DISCUSSION

THEMES

- Siblings and friendship
- Teamwork and problem-solving
- Recycling and upcycling
- Remote control technology
- Girls in STEM
- Design, technology and inventions
- Ethical use of technology

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

BEFORE READING

- Look at the front cover of the book and read the blurb on the back:
 - What objects can you see in the illustration? What do you think this book will be about? What clues make you think that?
 - What do you think the object on the poster in the background is? What do you think it is for?
 - The title is *Lexie Moon and the Remote Control Catastrophe*. What does the word 'catastrophe' mean? Make a list of synonyms for this word.
 - What types of remote control devices have you used? Which types of remote control devices do you predict will be in this book?
 - Who do you think the book is aimed at? Why?
 - What do you think the purpose of this book is? E.g. to instruct, to persuade, to entertain, to inform?
 - Look at the character on the cover. What do you predict the character will be like? Brainstorm adjectives you think will describe this character.
- Read the blurb on the back of the book:
 - How realistic or imaginary do you think this book will be? Which aspects do you think will be more realistic and which aspects do you think will be more imaginary?
 - How serious or funny do you think this book will be?
- Record your predictions and check if they were correct when you finish reading the story.

DURING AND AFTER READING

- In the book, Lexie Moon faces several problems (e.g. Lexie has to find a replacement gearbox for her scrap-box remote control car). Write down some of these problems as you are reading.
 - What did Lexie do in each of these situations?
 - Would you have done the same thing or something different? Why?
- Chart the emotions that Lexie feels at different points in the book. How do her feelings affect her actions?
- In the story, Lexie Moon feels responsible for her Pro-Mote invention, even after it has been stolen. Hold a class discussion or debate about whether and to what extent inventors are responsible for how their inventions are used by other people.
- Write a character profile for one of the characters in the book (e.g. Lexie Moon, Grandad, Jamie, Aunt Agnes or Connie van Quish).
 - What do they look like?
 - How old are they?
 - What do they do in the book?
 - List some adjectives that describe the character's personality.
 - Do you like the character? Why/why not?
 - What does the character want in the book? Do they get what they want?
- Write a story element analysis for the book.

- Who are the main characters?
- Who is your favourite character and why?
- Where is the story set? When is the story set?
- What happens at the beginning, middle and end of the story?
- What is the theme of the story?
- What is the main problem in the story? What is the solution to the problem? Can you think of another possible solution to the problem?
- Did you like the story? Why/Why not?
- Write your own blurb for the book. Remember to make it interesting to hook in the reader, but don't give away the ending!
- Choose an exciting incident from the book (e.g. the crash during the scrap-box remote control car race or the cars in the carpark driving by themselves). Write and present a TV news report about the incident, either individually or in pairs (with one as the anchor and one as the on-location reporter).
- Register: How does language change when recounting an incident to different people using different media (e.g. TV news, written newspaper report, telling your friends, personal social media posts)?

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Science and Technology

- Design and build your own prototype scrap-box car using found materials.
 - Race them using an inclined plane (ramp) to investigate which designs, materials and surfaces produce the greatest speed
 - Investigate the sustainability of various materials and their impacts on the environment
 - How could you improve your design?
- Use a range of methods to design and build your own self-propelled car (e.g. using balloon power, elastic band power or water power) and investigate which methods of propulsion are the most effective.
- Investigate various types of upcycling (using unwanted materials to create something new), such as T-shirt bags, PET bottle terrariums, cardboard ball maze game, newspaper pots.
- Design your own upcycled product to meet a need you have identified.
- Research one type of remote control technology and present your research as a project, poster or presentation.
 - What is it?
 - What is it used for?
 - Who invented it?
 - When was it invented?
 - What materials is it made from?
 - How does it work?
 - How well does it do the job it was made for?
 - What are the pros and cons of this technology?
 - Is there another type of technology that does the same job? Compare and contrast the two.

Creative Arts

- Create your own cover for the book.
- Re-enact your favourite scene from the book using readers theatre.
- Draw, paint or decorate your own model of a remote control car. Discuss the factors that determine if something has good aesthetics and come up with your own criteria for judging good design.