

## FREE MONKEYS

### Features include:

- Humour
- Intertextuality and cross-text referencing
- Off-white paper for reading accessibility
- Engaging and relatable characters

<b>SERIES</b>	Free Monkeys
<b>TITLE</b>	Free Monkeys #1
<b>AUTHOR</b>	Rob Lisle
<b>ILLUSTRATOR</b>	Ben Sullivan
<b>PUBLISHER</b>	Redback Publishing (Also online at <a href="http://REDeBOOKS.com.au">REDeBOOKS.com.au</a> )
<b>PUBLICATION DATE</b>	September 2025
<b>ISBN</b>	978-1-761402-05-0
<b>PRICE</b>	\$19.99
<b>FORMAT</b>	Paperback, 200x130 mm
<b>EXTENT</b>	260 pages, black and white
<b>GENRE</b>	Children's Fiction plus Hi-Lo
<b>AGE SUITABILITY</b>	Interest age 7+ years
<b>READING AGE</b>	7+ years
<b>BIC/CBMC</b>	YFQ/D3M69

## ABOUT THE BOOK

Archibald Templeton is looking to revive his family's fallen empire – with the help of his loyal monkey butlers. But things quickly spiral out of control when he creates Frankenstein's Monkey. Now, he must deal with a chaotic, rampaging creation, while his trusty apes spring into action to save the day. Meanwhile, on the weird side of town, Monty, a mischievous monkey trapped in a run-down animal rescue, is plotting his escape. His plan is working when his dream of freedom is suddenly dashed. Soon, Monty finds himself at the Templeton Manor leading a monkey butler revolution.

*Free Monkeys* is full of heart, action and silly jokes. It is about overcoming disappointment, chasing your dreams, and never giving up



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rob Lisle is an award-nominated writer and artist from Melbourne, Australia. Speddy, as some know him, helms the silly 'toilet book' *The Devil's Toilet*, *Vamoose*, and the critically acclaimed *Sluggish* that tells the story of an everyday slug battling depression and anxiety.

As a full-time creator and father of twins, Rob can be found bound to a desk covered in Lego, Barbies and Salt'n'Vinegar chips.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Ben Sullivan is a prolific artist with a long and varied list of credits including *Toby* and *Magic Pencil*. Ben has worked with many of the industry's veterans as well as a bunch of promising up-and-comers. Ben's talent shines in a number of different mediums and a wide range of styles.

With two kids, two cats, and too many deadlines, Ben Sullivan sits, with brush in hand, a good paper stock, and a tea gone cold.



## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATIONS

*Free Monkeys* is a graphic novel with black and white illustrations.

Each of the characters is designed to visually represent key features of their personality, supporting the themes and character arcs of the story with elements of visual literacy.

The tone is humorous and compelling for young and reluctant readers, with many hidden details to spot.



## THEMES IN THE STORY

*Free Monkeys* deals with the themes of perseverance, individuality and teamwork. There is an especially heavy emphasis on chasing your dreams as Monty dreams of returning to the circus, and does not let the many setbacks stop him pursuing this dream.

### CLASSROOM DISCUSSION IDEAS

#### CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Discuss how each of the monkeys has a distinct feature of their personality which makes them unique. What was each of the monkey's special characteristic, and how does that help them or change throughout the story?

#### NARRATION

Every story we read has a narrator. In graphic novels a lot of the writing is dialogue, but there is still someone narrating the action. Where can we read the narrator's voice in graphic novels? In *Free Monkeys*, what kind of narration is it? First, second or third person? A combination?

#### FREEDOM

Think about when Scooter says, "Roam far enough and you'll find bars". What exactly does he mean by this? Does he have an optimistic or pessimistic view of the world? Why might this be? What about Monty? What are his thoughts on freedom?

#### PLOT

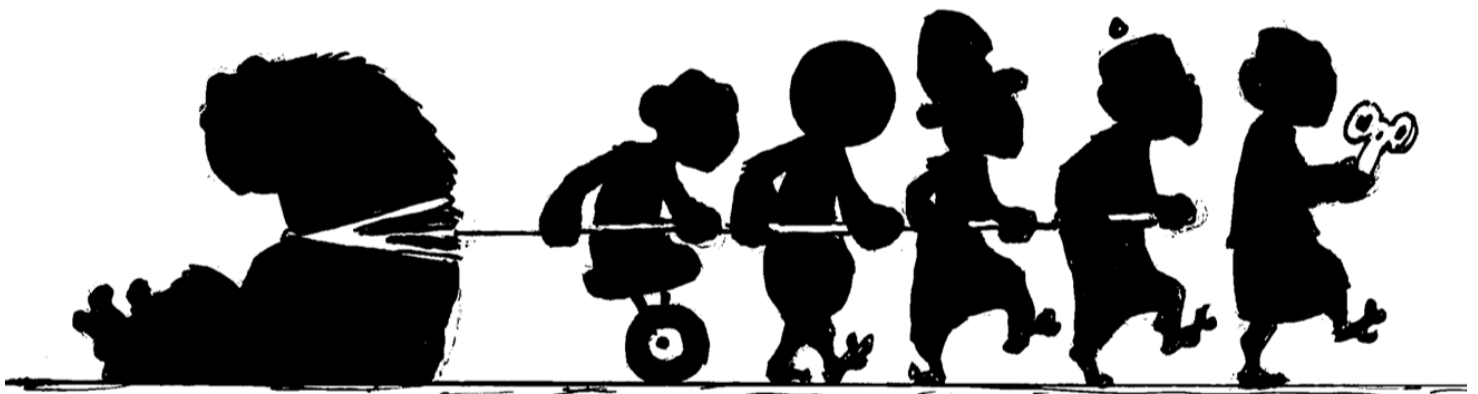
In dot points, summarise the plot of *Free Monkeys*. How would you explain the events to someone who has not read it?

#### CLIMAX

Can you identify the climax in the story? Discuss what a climax in a story is and how a writer makes it exciting to read. Where in a story should the climax be placed?

#### GENRE

*Free Monkeys* is primarily an adventure story. Discuss the elements that make it fit into this genre. There are also elements of other genres, such as humour, science-fiction and parody. Can you identify some features of these genres?



# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

## ACTIVITY 1

### Aims of This Activity

Identify common sayings and metaphors and how they have been literally displayed in the text.

### Description of Activity

- There are many common sayings or metaphors in our vocabulary that we use to express concepts or ideas.
- In *Free Monkeys*, there are a lot of these common sayings that have been depicted literally, rather than figuratively. For example, Georgie's mum says that there are "too many clowns on the road". While in the text we see literal clowns driving the cars, when used in everyday life this expression refers to there being many bad drivers on the road, as opposed to real clowns.

- Find the following terms from *Free Monkeys* and observe how they have been displayed literally. Write suggestions for what these could mean figuratively.

- Bored out of his brains
- Monkey suit
- Buckethead
- Key to happiness
- Cowardly chickens
- There's something fishy going on here

### Extension activity:

Find another idiom or common saying and define what it means metaphorically. Then make a poster or draw a literal representation of that saying.

## ACTIVITY 2

### Aims of This Activity

Understanding narrator voice and point of view.

### Description of Activity

- The narrator bubbles have a distinctive voice throughout the story. Have a think about who might be telling this story. What do they look like? What is their relationship with the characters? Do they know them at all, or are they an impartial third person?
- Draw the narrator and include a description.

### Extension activity:

Record the events of your day and write them out as though the narrator of *Free Monkeys* was narrating your day.

## ACTIVITY 3

### Aims of This Activity

To understand and develop skills in characterisation through visual literacy.

### Description of Activity

Each of the monkeys has a specific trait that defines them. It is reflected in both their name and their appearance. Create another Monkey who could join the team and consider the following features.

- What is your monkey's special trait?
- Think of a name connected to this.
- What does your monkey look like? Can you tell what their trait is from just looking at them?

### Extension activity:

Rewrite one of the scenes from *Free Monkeys* and insert your newly designed monkey.





## ART ACTIVITIES

Colour in the characters

# SONAR



## ART ACTIVITIES

Colour in the characters

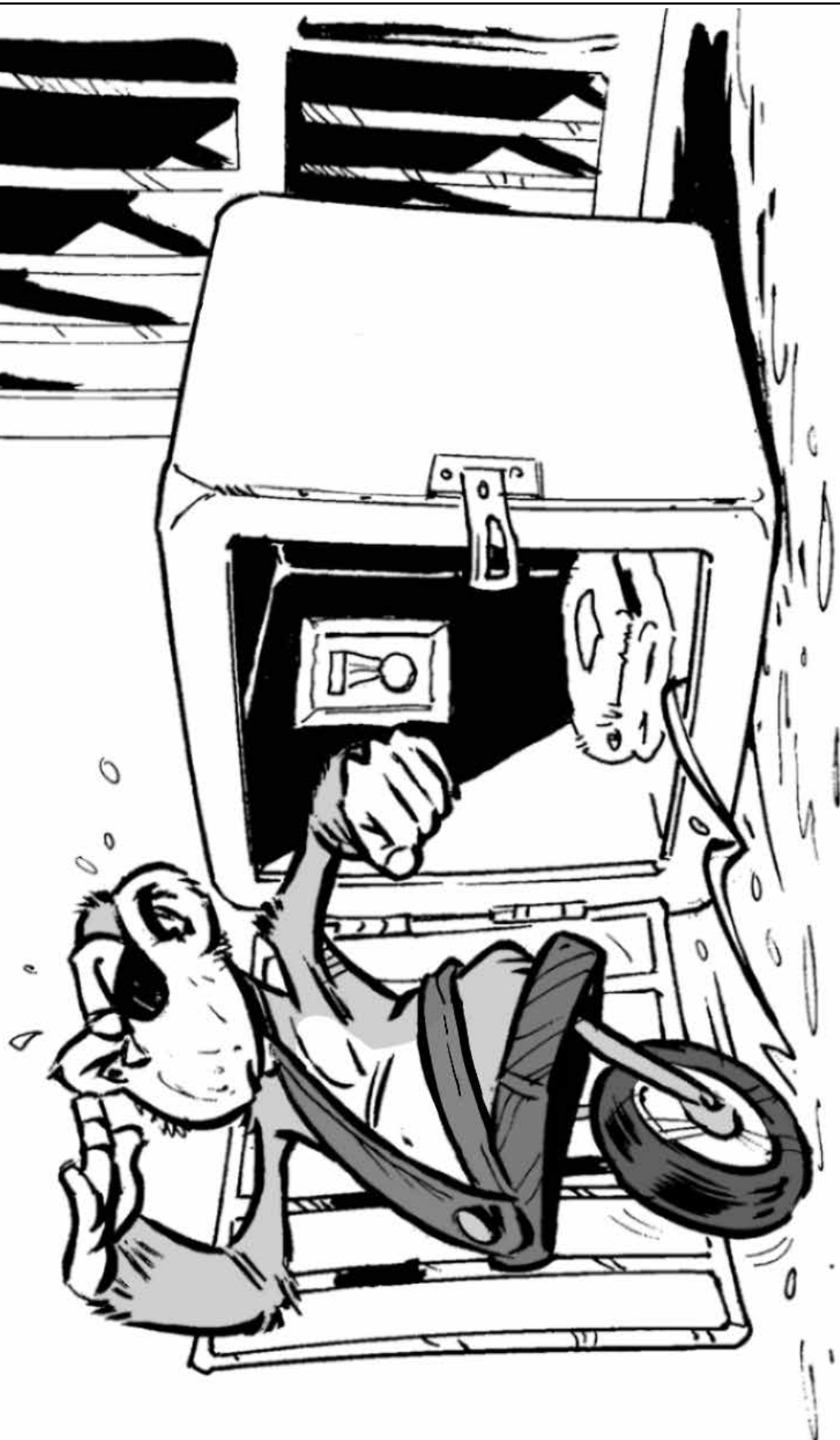
# BRAINER



## ART ACTIVITIES

Colour in the characters

# SCOOTER



## ART ACTIVITIES

Colour in the characters

# NO-BRAINER







# BOOK ORDERS

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by Rob Lisle and Ben Sullivan

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