

PROBLAMATIC PROJECT



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THE KIDS' CANCER PROJECT **WRITE A BOOK IN A DAY**

Parameters Form

Team Details

STATE: VIC
DIVISION: Middle School (Required word count 3500 to 5000 words)
SCHOOL/GROUP: St Francis Catholic College
TEAM NAME: SFCC Melton 4
TEAM ID: 1381

Parameters and random words

Parameters

Primary character 1 Teacher
Primary character 2 Plumber
Non-human character Lizard
Setting Abandoned house
Issue Heatwave

Random words

novel
goosey
yam
plunge
homework

Instructions

- Start no earlier than **8am**
- Write an original story:
 - based on all **five parameters** (above)
 - including all **five random words** (above) as written, and in bold type
 - with some identifiable **Australian content** (in theme or setting or characters, etc)
 - keeping within the allowed word count (remember every word on every page counts)!
 - include this parameters form in your book **immediately after the front cover**
- Remember: **Every** word on **every** page counts. This includes your front cover, back cover, blurb, acknowledgements and copyright form.
- Be sure to give yourself enough time to submit your book and complete the following checklist before 9pm**

Log on to the Team Coordinator Portal to:

- ☐ Check the spelling of your team name and team members' names
(how these are spelt on submission will be how they are displayed on certificates)
- ☐ Complete the Declaration
- ☐ Submit your finished book in **both** PDF and plain text format by 9pm



Melton Team 4 would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this book was created, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Melton Team 4 would also like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this book will be read. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.



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“This book is dedicated to all the art teachers who helped us bring our colourful creations to life” – Melton Team 4



Chapter 1: The Meeting

“Darn it!”

The voice comes out as an echo through the empty house. Dirt and rust cover the metal poles that hold up the roof whilst black mould lines the crevices of the walls. The cracked and yellow stained windows that lined the house warp the tight curls and soft features of the new inheritor. Ms. Amanda Dolly continues her search for a large book whilst muttering under her breath. Finally, amid all the dirt and grime lays a **novel** on the floor.

“Finally,” she says whilst picking up the **novel** and starts her trek back to the office she came from.

In the middle of the room sits an old wooden desk with its edges worn down from constant use before it was abandoned, intricate webs from the spiders who have lived here for longer than Ms. Dolly has been alive, fill every corner of the room. The creaking floorboards scream as she crosses from the door to the desk and squeak when she starts to kneel and lifts the worn-down leg of the centre desk. She gently shoves the faded copy of Robinson Crusoe under the leg and prays it will make the desk flat.

However, just as Ms. Dolly sets down the **homework** from her year 5 art class, the loud distorted *DING* of the doorbell echoes through the house. She quickly walks out of the office ignoring the creaking that sends a shiver down her back and walks through the big foyer being careful not to trip over her long, floral skirt with her heeled white boots. When she gets to the door, she can see the blue and white van of the plumbing services she called two days ago to fix the run-down bathroom, that smells like something died in it.

She takes a long deep breath to calm her slight anger about how long it took them to get here and opens the door. A burst of heat from outside spills into the house from the heatwave that had lingered in Warlu Springs for at least two weeks now, and already melted half the rust and mould of the roof onto the furniture. Before Ms. Dolly could focus on the fact that her aircon is broken, a short man with rosy, sweat ridden cheeks and facial hair speaks up.

“I’m Dan, your plumber from Aussie Aqua Plumbing” he says in that professional tone that says he does not want to be there. Ms. Dolly smiles warmly and lets Dan inside the old house.

“Everything in the bathroom needs to be fixed before I can move in” she explains sweetly to Dan as he nods writing down that information as they walk towards the old rotten door of the bathroom. A harsh smell of mould and dead rats comes from the room.

“Sorry for the smell” Ms. Dolly rushes out to say,

“It’s been in my family for ages, and no one’s lived here for a while.” Dan just smiles and walks towards the room clearly not bothered by the smell that has been unsettling Ms. Dolly for ages.

“Well, I’m going back to my office while you work” she announces, “If you need anything I’ll be in the third door to the left.”

“No problem” Dan quietly agrees and goes off into the bathroom as Ms. Dolly makes her way back to the office to continue the animal plushies that was assigned for **homework** for the year 5’s.



Chapter 2: Incoming

Ms. Dolly sits down and starts to check all handmade animals that her class of 11-year-olds made. The glue and **yarn** of each of the animals stick to Ms. Dolly's hand as the melting drips of wood glue fall from the roof and onto the painfully splintered desk. Suddenly, loud sounds of clinking echo across the creaky, mold-filled office from outside of the door. A sudden rush of curiosity filled her as she stopped grading the **homework** and swiftly stood up to check what the sound was. She made her way to the door as the floorboards screeched and groaned from the neglect of the past owners. With every step, she examined the area to find the source of the annoying noise, finding nothing she decides to check up on the plumber.

"Dan? You out here? Questioned Ms. Dolly

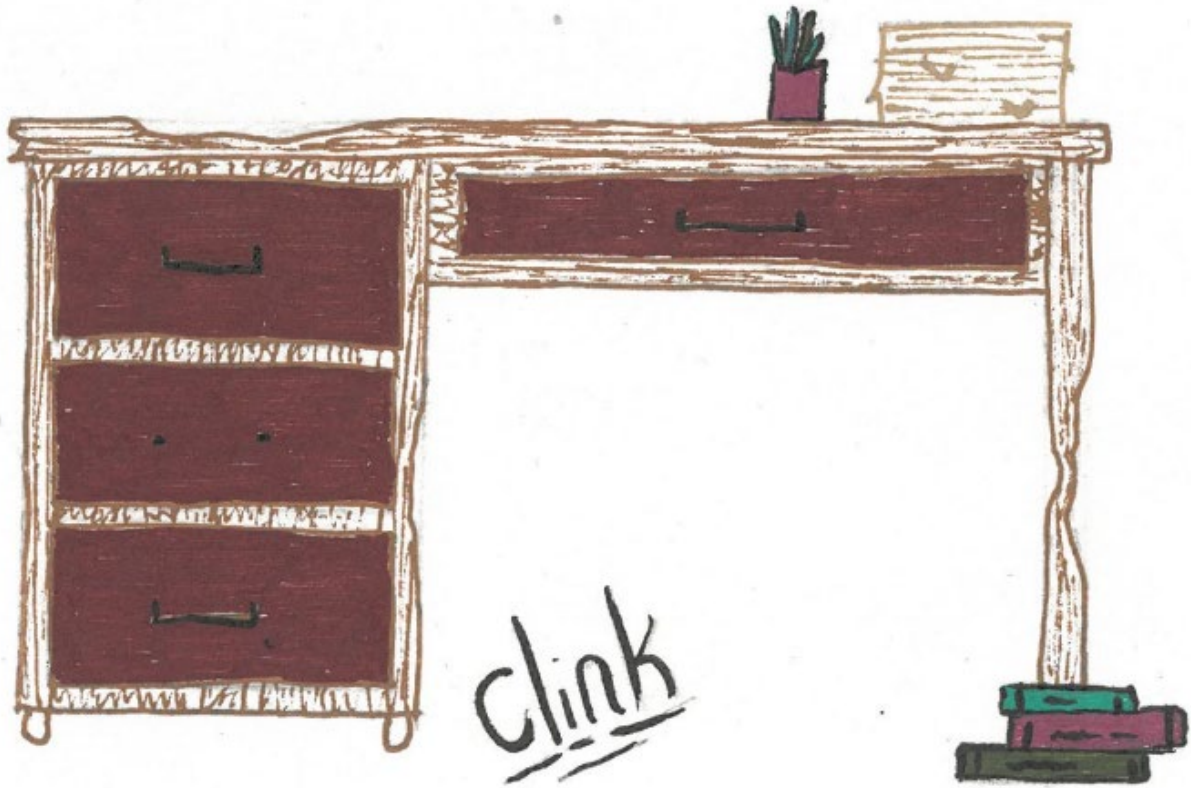
"I'm just right over here, ma'am," Dan replies, his tone sounding slightly amused.

Ms. Dolly then continues to follow the sound of Dan's voice and walks straight into the musty bathroom, which has a foul stench. Ms. Dolly genuinely wonders how Dan can work in these conditions without gasping for fresh air 24/7. She certainly could not do it.

Ms. Dolly and Dan end up exchanging pleasantries and talk about the house and what upcoming renovations would be next, eventually they both could not take the stench anymore and had step outside for air.

"Well, it was lovely to chat with you, but I really need to get back to grading, Dan."

Dan turns around and starts working on the bathroom again while the rustling sound lingers in Ms. Dolly's mind. She tries to ignore her thoughts and starts walking back to her office. On the way, she sees the worn-down state of the walls, half of the wallpaper is missing, and the wood foundation is showing through. She wonders on how to restore it. Ms. Dolly reaches her office and opens the door that gives out a loud creak. She closes the door behind her, sighing at the thought of the work is piled on her desk. When she goes to her desk to continuing marking the **homework**, she sees that all **homework** is missing. Dolly takes a step closer to the desk and notices that there is some type of substance on her desk, she takes a small amount rubs it between her fingers and confirms that the whole table, covered in splinters is also covered in a **goeey** substance. Looking around in confusion wondering where all of them disappeared to, she steps back in puzzlement. When she moves back, she hears a soft rustle underneath her and realises that the whole floor is coated with **homework**.



Chapter 3: Missing Art

“Where did I put that gosh darn **homework**?” Ms. Dolly gets down on her knees and looks around the floor for the lost paper. Her skirt gets covered in a layer of dust as she scans the papers on the floor and searches through the thrown folders.

“I swear I just had it on my desk...” She gets up and sifts through the papers scattered across her desk, then she jumps, hearing a yell from across the house.

“AAAHHHH!” Something jumps out from behind the toilet, messing up his tools *Tools clang together on the floor*

“MY TOOLS!” Tools are scattered across the floor as Dan desperately tries to pick them up, confused and delirious from the mess. A sliver of green manages to slip out the door unnoticed.

“What in the world...” Lining his tools back up, Dan looks around the bathroom, searching for the cause. Confused, Dan looks behind the toilet, trying to find the source of the mess, only to find nothing. Leaving the bathroom, Dan makes his way to Ms. Dolly’s desk to ask about the bizarre experience.

“Ma’am, do you have any pets?”

With a puzzled expression, Ms. Dolly answers, “Umm, no, I do not. Why do you ask?”

“Because I just had an animal jump at me... It messed up all my tools and scared me half to death.” Dan replies hesitantly, sounding just as puzzled.

“Well, what did the animal look like? It could have just been a bug.” Ms. Dolly inquires,

“The darn thing was all green and scaly” Dan refutes.

AGFHH



Chapter 4: The Realisation

Little did they know, the truth was even stranger than they imagined.

"It's gone now, so you should just leave it in the past." Ms. Dolly assures.

"But where did it even come from?" Dan questions

"We are in the middle of the outback, anything can come from anywhere over here!" Ms. Dolly answers in an agitated voice because she just remembered the **homework** was still missing.

"Anyways, I have a favour to ask of you. Can you help me find a student's **homework**?"

"Sure. What did it look like? Was it a lizard?" Dan tries to lighten the mood of the situation by joking around.

"Uh... how would you know? It was a **yarn** painting of a blue tongued lizard; I left it out to dry in the sunlight a while back on my desk because the heatwave should dry it out quicker" she says as she leads him to her desk.

"Are you sure it wasn't this" Dan questions as he lifts the only piece of paper on her desk which was just basking in the sunlight with the **gooey**, sticky prints of a lizard's feet travelling off the page.

Ms. Dolly erupts in laughter "So you're saying that the **yarn** and glue Lizard magically woke up and left?!?!?" she laughs even harder "I'm sorry but that's way too funny."

Dan keeps a straight face "Then how else would it vanish if not like that?" Dan inquires.

"That's easy, it just... Uh... it..." Ms. Dolly keeps racking her brain for answers but cannot find any. "Umm I don't know, how?"

"I told you, the most logical explanation for it is that it grew and left and it seems it took a **plunge** in your glue" Dan says pointing at the puddle of glue exactly where the lizard was on the page.

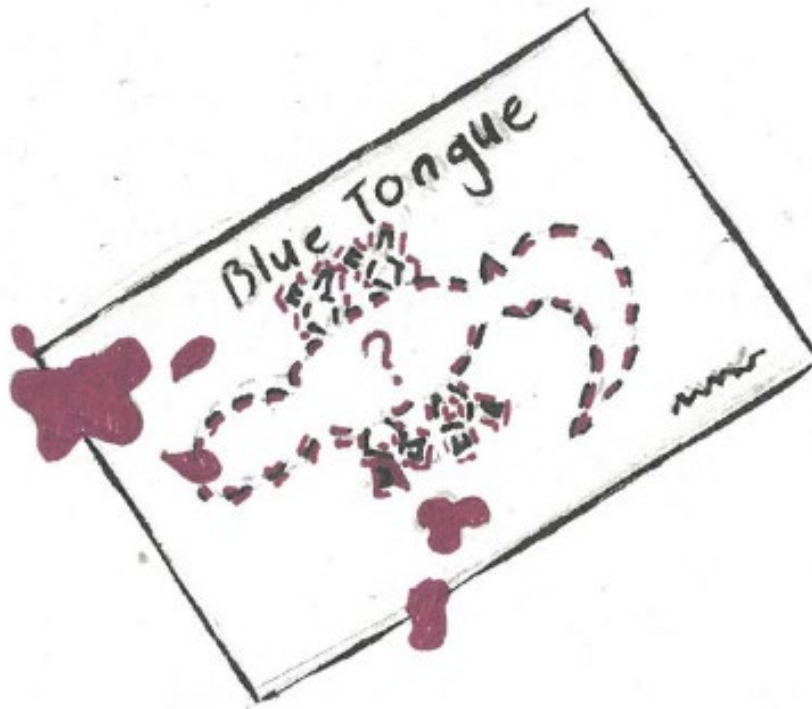
"Well, I am in quite a predicament. Living art, runaway **homework**, and a massive heatwave. I can't even have a cold shower or anything because the shower is broken." Ms. Dolly complains.

"Another problem, the lizard dropped some of my tools down the drain, so the shower is going to stay unfixed for a while," Dan adds to the rant.

SLAM!!! Ms. Dolly and Dan both turn to look at where the loud noise came from only to see a small thin streak of green running through the mess to Ms. Dolly's desk. They try to grab at it, but it only climbs further up the splintered and wilted desk.

"Just stay calm" Dan says slowly not wanting the stringy lizard to run away however it is too late as Ms. Dolly races forward to catch the woolly reptile as it thumps up the table.

"NOT MY WORK YOU SLIMY MONSTER!!!!" Ms. Dolly yells while running to her desk while the lizard just stares at her.



Chapter 5: The Chase

Suddenly the lizard sprung off the splintered desk, thumping on the creaky floorboards.

“HEY! WHAT THE HECK!” She screamed, lunging for the reptile as it slips through her hands, narrowly escaping.

The sticky lizard flicked its blue coloured tongue out at them before scurrying into another room through a piece of crumbling wall. Ms. Dolly whirled around the corner, mapping out the layout of her newly inherited house. The lizard was running in every corner of the decaying room, dodging every moment Ms. Dolly swiped at it. It scrambled rapidly into the hallway, slipping under a missing floorboard and Ms. Dolly went flying into the wall. It shook the flimsy house’s frame from the impact, causing fragments of dust to spew all around her.

“Little bugga!” Dan called out from the other end of the hallway.

Ms. Dolly pushed herself up and staggered onto her feet. Her once baby soft knees, now covered in splinters and grazed, along with her slightly torn skirt. She was beginning to get frustrated as tears formed in her eyes. With children, at least they could understand when she yelled stop, but it was impossible for a little **yarn** critter to comprehend her. Dan rushed up to her, dodging all the nails that stuck out of the floor and dusted her skirt off.

“Are you okay?” He held her hip where she had potentially bruised it, looking into her eyes with a soft gaze.

Her puppy-like eyes looked back at his, “I’m okay... thank you” her cheeks turned a rosy pink, forming a warm smile that met her eyes.

“I’m glad... now should we get back to catching the rogue artwork?”

“That’d be a smart idea” Ms. Dolly chuckled quietly.

The lizard popped its head out of a crack in one of the closed doors, bolting out and zooming past them. Dan tried to step on its tail quickly, but the **yarn** pulled off and it kept dashing forward, even quicker without the excess tail to drag.

“No!!!” She cried, falling into Dan’s arms in distress. She pulled away at once, realising what she had done, and took off after the lizard again to avoid his eyes.



Chapter 6: Pursuit

“Dan, I think... I think the lizards melting...” she stuttered.

“I can see that...” he remarked in a playful tone, picking up a piece of the **gooey yarn**.

Dan quietly crawled towards the exit door without anyone noticing, shielding the door from the lizard. Pitter patters of glue spots splattered from wall to wall as Ms. Dolly desperately reaches out for the lizard, but she could never seem to catch it. The walls crumbled with each movement, as the scorching heat seeps through cracks in the windows. The house became increasingly humid and stuffy, causing the lizard to slow down. As the lizard was getting away it started to become increasingly more tired, losing its **yarn** along the way, after realizing that it decided to hide in between a crack in the wall.

Ms. Dolly started to become worried about the lizard in this massive heatwave, knowing that the glue could melt at any moment. Dan also started to worry about the lizard, knowing that if the lizard's body temperature exceeded forty degrees it could start causing the lizard to melt at a rapid rate and cause bad health problems. Then Ms. Dolly and Dan the plumber decide to go on a search for the lizard in hope of saving its life.

Ms. Dolly says to Dan “We need to find this wild art project otherwise my student will not get his grade that he deserves.”

Dan replied with “I see some green **yarn** we should follow it.”

As they started to follow the melted off **yarn**, Dan noticed that Ms Dolly was looking very pale.

Dan asked if Ms. Dolly was okay.

As Dan said this, Ms Dolly fainted due to the heat. Dan caught her and lowered her gently onto the floor, as he ran to the kitchen to wet a rag. Once the rag was soaked in the cold water, he made his way back, knelt beside her and pressed it against the back of her neck to wake her up. Then Dan helped Ms. Dolly to the kitchen, and she comes back to her senses.

Ms Dolly says, "I'm really sorry, I don't know what came over me... I haven't had a lot of water today."

Dan replied with "You need to be more careful in this heat otherwise you could have heatstroke."

Ms. Dolly replied softly, "Sorry, I'll be more careful from now on" meeting his eyes

Dan added quickly, "We should start looking for that darn lizard again."

Then they both heard a THUMP!



Chapter 7: Planning

They followed the green **yarn** towards a room in the house that no one had been in. The room was even worse compared to the rest of the house, with cobwebs in every corner, moulding wallpaper, a smashed window, and every little insect you could imagine crawling across the walls. As the two walked further into the room, they were hit with a foul smell that caused them to cover their noses at once. The floor was covered with holes, decay, and rainwater. Right in the corner of the room, there the lizard was, peacefully eating a large insect, although half of its body was gone. Ms. Dolly and Dan looked at each other and knew that one wrong move and they would **plunge** onto the grotesque scene before them. Dan walked with caution as Ms. Dolly scanned the room and she noticed a closet; there was something inside that they could use. She tapped Dan on the shoulder and asked him to fetch a crowbar from his toolbox.

“Quick” she ordered impatiently.

Dan scrambled for his toolbox, which was across the house. He hurriedly came back with his toolbox panting and sweating, “Here you go.”

Ms. Dolly grabbed the crowbar from his sweaty hands and tried to pry open the closet door.

“DAN! Help me please!”

Dan grabbed onto her as they both pulled on the crowbar.

The door opened with a *BANG!!!*

Inside, Ms. Dolly found a container, a book on reptiles, and old posters of animals and insects. She snatched the book and started looking through it, whilst Dan examined the rest of the closet.

“Whoever’s house this was, they must’ve loved animals.” Dan exclaimed.

“Found it!” Ms. Dolly excitedly showed a page on lizards to Dan, and they both reached out for the container, accidentally brushing their hands. Ms. Dolly pulled back her hand as Dan grabbed the container.

They made up a plan to catch the lizard. First, they would fill up the container with water and lure the lizard with insects into the water.



Chapter 8: Execution

“Dan, why don’t we split up? I think I’ll get the water, and I am afraid to say that I will have to leave the job of getting the insects to you” Ms. Dolly says.

“No worries, with this house it won’t be too long to find any bugs, no offence” Dan responded.

They both agree and start moving with haste. Ms. Dolly runs to what remains of the kitchen to get water. She fills the container a little above halfway and puts the lid on so none of the water spills and escapes. On the other hand, Dan’s task is a little more direct. He inspects the house and chooses the most run-down room. He looks around the room and sees a small group of all kinds of insects. He grabs a small box from his tool kit and clasps all of them into the box, then seals it tight.

Ms. Dolly and Dan return to the front of the door where the lizard was last seen. They peek inside the room and notice that the lizard was gone. They both looked at each other with defeat but knew that they could not squander. They both moved quickly but could not move too quickly, as the floorboards creaked with every small movement. After a little bit of searching, they finally find the lizard in the bedroom underneath the bed. Ms. Dolly opens the lid and places it down on the floor near the door while Dan opens the box, places insects in the water, and moves away from the door so that they are out of view.

The lizard sees the water but does not move at first, after a bit it slowly moves closer, it carefully enters the water then, *BAM!!!* The lid snapped shut.

They lift the container to observe the lizard, although the water starts to turn a murky colour when they look inside, as if the goo that transformed the lizard alive has now washed off and has turned him back to normal.



Chapter 9: The Revival

“We need to find something to fix him! I do not have any art supplies though...” she frowned.

“That is okay! I have durable glue in my van; I can get it”

He awkwardly slipped out the front door, running to the van so he could return before anything else happened.

Ms. Dolly put all the pieces of the lizard in place, arranging them like nothing had happened. When Dan arrived back at the desk, Ms. Dolly reached for it and touched his hand.

“Do you want me to help you?”

he questioned, holding the top of her hand and pressing the glue handle. Splat! Went the glue as he guided her without trouble the outline of the lizard, making sure every piece was fully covered in glue.

“Thank you, you’ve been such a help today, I don’t know what I would’ve done without you.” She admired the reconstructed **yarn** lizard, glancing up on the last word.

“It’s been a pleasure” Dan put the tube of glue on the desk, backing up to look around her house, the pair both reflecting on how adventurous their day had been.

“Well, I think it might be time to head back, the heat is dying off finally and I think we have completed everything. Is there anything else you would like?” he joked, leaning against the doorframe before stepping outside.

Ms. Dolly reached up to hold his cheek in her palm and gave him a quick peck on the lips.

“I think that’s it.” Her teeth bearing in a wide smile; cheeks turning a rosy-pink colour.

Dan grabbed the cap off his head and gently put it on her head.

“Let me know if you want any help refurbishing the house, I’m always one call away” Dan gazed into her hazel eyes once more, before turning around and heading to his van.

Ms. Dolly watched as Dan drove away, fidgeting with the oil-stained cap on her head as she watched the dust clouds build up from his tires as he cruised down the road. Her eyes fluttered closed as she heard the gravel under his tires.



Chapter 10: The Return

Creak comes from the old heavy front door as Ms. Dolly shuts it in front of her. She leans against the door frame peeking out of the stained yellow and cracked window as she continues watching Dan drive off in his blue and white van, the logo slowly fading as he gets further away from her.

Ms. Dolly limps away from the door towards the office, still reeling from the adventure that just occurred. The floorboards creak under her weight as she hobbled towards the desk, already too nervous to check her hip and knees for any bruising or cuts.

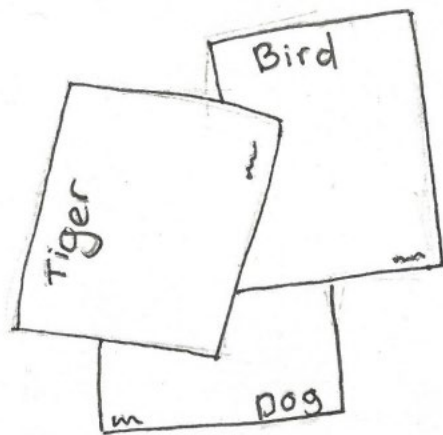
“I just need to get out of here” she thinks to herself as she gathers all the art works, still wet from the melted mould and rust that dripped onto them during the chase. She places them gently into her bag, then rushes out of the office being careful not to accidentally step in the hole in the floorboards or a rusted nail. She reaches the living room and looks at the chaos that surrounds her. Dirt lines the floorboards as tiny footsteps of goo run across the walls and floors clearly marking out where the **yarn** lizard had travelled.

Ms. Dolly hurries out of the house trying to avoid the bedroom and kitchen so as not to see the absolute mess that the sneaky little lizard has left behind. Despite this, her white boots now stained beige from dirt and grime stuck to the floor only making the complaints of the wooden house grow louder.

By the time Ms. Dolly made it the car, she refused to even think about coming back to that dump of a house, already knowing what a pain it would be to have to scrub the goo off everything and all the other things that needed to be reworked. Although she remembered she had Dans help, which calmed her nerves down. She hopped into the car and gently placed down the bag of artworks into the crevice of her dusty car, being careful not to crease the paper in fear of it coming back alive.

By the time she got back to school, her hip felt even worse, and she could feel the swelling in her ankle from when she got her foot stuck in the floor. “It’s fine, I’ll just keep marking the **homework**” she mumbles, but as she takes all the pages out of her bag, she feels something brush past her leg. She quickly looks down and nothing is there, but when she looks back up all the pages are blank, and the little **yarn** drawings are gone.

“DARN IT!”



Problematic Project

When a student's school project comes alive and decides to play an impromptu game of hide and seek that sends Ms. Dolly and the plumber Dan on a wild goose chase around the no longer abandoned house. Shenanigans ensue.

