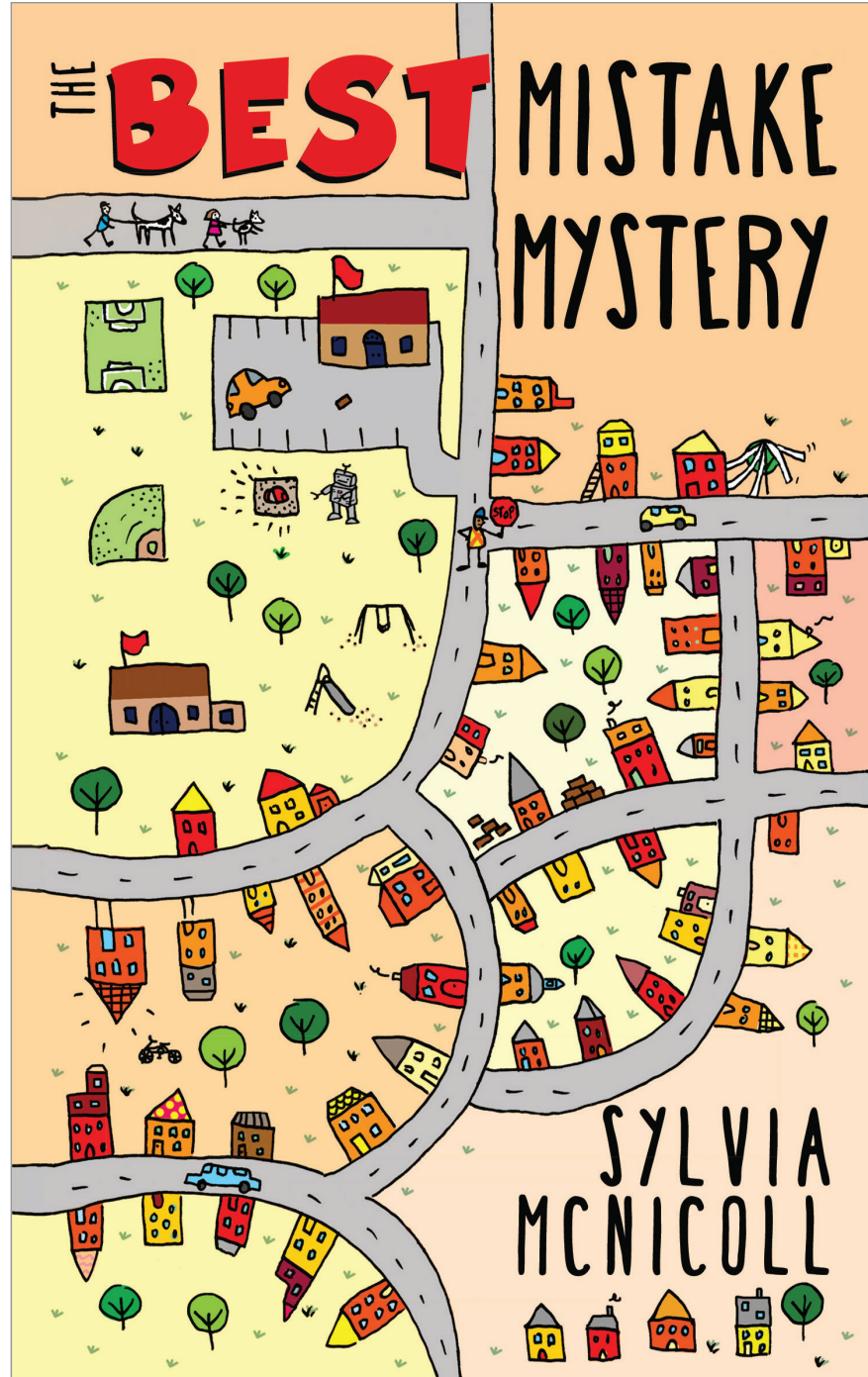


# TEACHERS' GUIDE



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# MAPPING

Tania Howells, the illustrator, created a map for the cover of this book. Why do you think she did that? Create a map of your own neighborhood using these steps.

- 1) Think of five of your favourite places in your neighborhood. Perhaps they have a funny or happy memory to them. Write down why they are special to you.
- 2) Search for a Google map of your neighborhood. Copy and draw, or trace the main streets.
- 3) Create a legend for your map by drawing symbols of your favourite places.
- 4) Using these symbols, locate these places on the map.

**Creative follow up: Create a map for your own mystery story.**

# VOCABULARY BUILDING

In the first chapter or Mistake One, lots happens and high action verbs move the story along. Look for these high powered verbs in the first chapter. Find them in the word search.

## HIGH ACTION VERBS



angles

shout

spike

startle

wave

blind

folds

twitches

shoos

knit

squeezes

wail

purls

snickering

squint

# DISCUSSING

## 1. The chapters are called mistakes in *The Best Mistake Mystery*. Why?

What is main character Stephen Noble's big mistake in the first chapter?

Predict why you think Mrs. Worsley rushes her students out of the classroom without their agendas.

Are mistakes always wrong?

Tell the class about a mistake that you made from which you recovered—getting off the bus at the wrong stop etc.

## 2. What viewpoint is used in *The Best Mistake Mystery*?

How is this viewpoint of the story different from a diary entry?

# USING LITERATURE CIRCLES

1. In a small group, assign the following roles to discuss chapter one. Each group member must come to the circle prepared. If there are more than four people in your group, two people can play the social critic role. For each chapter switch roles.

**Discussion Leader:** Your role is to prepare three open ended questions to initiate the discussion. (Example: Did anything in the story surprise you?)

**Word Smith:** Your role is to focus on the use of language or words in the story. During the reading, use sticky notes to mark special words, new words, unusual words, and interesting words or phrases in the book that you would like to bring up in the discussion later.

**Emotional Pointer:** Your role is to be able to identify the one or two key turning points in the chapter. Discuss with the group how these key events affected the main character.

**Social Critic:** Your role is to identify the social issues being addressed in the story. Consider what the beliefs or values the characters were struggling for or against.

2. In a small group, take turns giving your opinion of the following open ended questions:

What did you think of the story?

Which character is most like you?

What would you have done if...

What did that make you think of?

### Summarizing

Create short diary entries for each of the chapters/mistakes.

*Eg.*

*Dear Diary,*

*Today the fire alarm went off.*

# VISUALIZING

Draw a picture to illustrate a major event in each chapter. This could be to show a mistake or a clue. Using these pictures and speech bubbles, make a storyboard of the novel.

# DRAMATIZING

In a small group, select your favourite scene from *The Best Mistake Mystery*. Create a tableau of the scene. Present it in front of the class. Scenes should:

- 1) Use a variety of levels
- 2) Involve everyone
- 3) Depict people or inanimate objects
- 4) Depict an emotional moment

# RESEARCHING

1. On the internet, search for “Mistakes that turned out great” to find and list some inventions that were accidentally discovered.
2. List some of the breeds or kinds of dogs in your neighbourhood. Jot down some of their names if you know them. Choose one dog and research three facts about its breed.
3. Research the author, Sylvia McNicoll, to discover some basic facts about her life that might explain why she wrote this book.



# WRITING

**Choose a writing idea from the list below:**

1. Write a narrative about the dog breed you looked up using the three facts you researched.
2. Recount a story about something you lost and how you went about finding it.
3. Recount a mistake you recently made. How did you recover? What did you learn from it?
4. Using the dialogue from the story (the sentences with quotation marks around them), create scripts of your favourite scenes. If you like, change some of the dialogue to the way you would say the lines.

## SHARING AND EDITING

Read your stories about dog breeds, what you lost or making a mistake, out loud to a peer editing group. Listen and watch for any mistakes you have made so you can correct them.

Ask your group for any places they were confused about and take suggestions as to how to make these scenes, sentences or words clearer.