

extra fingers

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There would have been bunnies

DAD, reading from a slide that was part of Isabella's Society and Environment assignment: "Now you've written here, 'As dictator of Rome, Caesar wasted too much money, killed too many, humiliated the Queen of Egypt and sacrificed two protesters.'"

ISABELLA: "Hmm-hmm."

DAD: "Well, killed too many what? People?"

Elephants? Ducks? What was it?"

ISABELLA: "All of those things. He killed too much of everything."

DAD: "Yes, alright. But most importantly it would have been the people he killed. That's what would have gotten to people."

ISABELLA, shocked: "No, not just the people, Dad. He killed so many sweet animals. Look!

Image: Hare Hunting (Roman Mosaic) Roman Art Civic Museum, Oderzo, Italy. isabella was right. The Romans apparently spread the rabbit throughout the Roman Empire as a game animal.

Five more years, Dad!

ISABELLA: “Dad, your hair’s made it this far. You’ve gotten to this age with all your hair staying its normal black colour, so I don’t see why you shouldn’t be able to last another five years. Five more years, Dad! Think about it. It can’t be that hard for it to make it to my father/daughter dinner in Year 12.”

(Reading from her notes) ‘Games were held, with beast-hunts involving four hundred lions, and gladiator contests. At the Circus Maximus, two armies of prisoners of war, each of two thousand people, two hundred horses and twenty elephants, fought to the death.’ That’s so terrible!”

DAD: “Yes it is. But—”

ISABELLA: “I’m putting animals in too.”

DAD: “Well, you can, but people in Roman times wouldn’t have cared about the animals being slaughtered. Truly they wouldn’t have.”

ISABELLA: “I still don’t care! Animals are very important. You tell me that all the time.”

DAD: “Yes I know I do.”

ISABELLA: “Well, that’s why I’m going to put them in. Little bunnies!”

DAD: “Little bunnies! Where did they come from?”

ISABELLA: “There would have been bunnies, Dad. He killed lions and elephants so he definitely would have killed bunnies too. So mean!”

The slide then as it finally read: “As dictator of Rome, Caesar wasted too much money, killed too many people (and animals), humiliated the Queen of Egypt and sacrificed two protesters.”

They were in my hands

DAD: “I really love our trampoline, Ams. It’s great for lying on in winter and getting the sun’s warmth because it’s got such a great black surface that you can lie back on and soak up the sun’s rays. So, I think we’ll be keeping the trampoline even after you’ve grown out of it.”

AMELIE: “No you won’t be.”

DAD: “Yeah. Why not? Like I said, it’s got such a great black surface that you can lie back on and soak up the sun.”

AMELIE: “No, Dad. You won’t be keeping it.”

DAD: “Why’s that?”

AMELIE: “You won’t be able to keep it forever because it’s got a hole in it.”

DAD: “Has it?”

AMELIE: “Hmm-hmm.”

DAD: “How on earth did that happen?”

AMELIE: “I went on it with clippers [grass clippers].”

DAD: “What? Why’d you do that for?”

AMELIE: “I don’t know. They were in my hands when I went on.”

We're even luckier than you

DAD, talking to **ISABELLA** and **AMELIE**: "You two are very lucky living in the country you do that never has to deal with wars. A lot of people in the world have to deal with wars and violence all the time. It's terrible for them. Some countries are continuously war-torn; there are civil wars going on in some countries all the time. All kinds of horrible things happen in some countries. And there are refugees all over the world trying their best to flee from governments – no, I mean regimes – that want to kill them. So, you're very lucky living where you do. We're all very lucky in fact. You're lucky, I'm lucky, all of us in this family are lucky."

ISABELLA: "Yeah, well, we're even luckier than you, Dad."

DAD: "You think so? I'm not so su—"

ISABELLA: "Dad, you had to eat stew."

Trees

AMELIE: "Dad, there was a big tree stump and, um, they didn't chop it down but it was like they pulled the roots out."

DAD: "Oh."

AMELIE: "Dad, are they going to get that tree back in? Because it was just lying there in the sand."

DAD: "No, I think that'll be the end of that tree."

AMELIE: "Really?"

DAD: "Yeah . . . sadly."

AMELIE: "Why?"

DAD: "Well, the tree will go so they can put a building where the tree was."

AMELIE: "I know. I mean it used to be a bit, um, better without [plans for] that big building. I mean, we don't really need it."

DAD: "You don't like it when the trees go, do you?"

AMELIE: "No. It's sad because it's just like us having to be standing in the ground and then all of a sudden we just get like our legs chopped off or something."

Sorry Day

AMELIE: "Dad, do you know what Sorry Day is? I do."

DAD: "Yeah, I know what Sorry Day is."

AMELIE: "We had to, um, do this sheet where we had to look things up on the computer to find out what it was. I didn't know what Sorry Day was so I had to look it up and everything and now I know what it means . . . But I can't remember."

DAD: "What's that?"

AMELIE: "I can't remember what it means. I've got it on my sheet though. You'll get it at the end of the year so you'll be able to see what it means then."

DAD: "Oh."

AMELIE: "Yeah."

DAD: "Okay."

AMELIE: "Or you might get it some day in between. I don't know."

DAD: "You don't know?"

AMELIE: "No."

DAD: "Oh. Okay. Thanks, darl."

Most robbers are men

HOLLY: “Boys can be sneaky. And they’re not as honest as girls.”

AMELIE: “Yeah that’s true.”

DAD: “That’s true, is it? How do you know?”

HOLLY: “Well we haven’t tested it or anything but I’m just saying what I expect it to be.”

DAD: “Well what is your experience? Has a boy ever stolen something from you?”

HOLLY, severely: “Yes!”

DAD: “What?”

HOLLY: “Um . . . well, in kindergarten.”

DAD: “‘In kindergarten’. I like this.

Because this is what you’re basing all your—”

HOLLY: “No but, Daddy! Also the media . . . have you seen all those men who shoot people in America?”

DAD: “What’s that got to do with stealing?”

HOLLY: “No but I’m just saying that—”

ISABELLA, interrupting and pausing between each word: “Most robbers are men.”

DAD: “Most robbers are men?”

HOLLY: “They are! They are!”

ISABELLA: “In every known robbery there has been, like, two men and one girl.”

The West Coast Seagulls

In a sport-obsessed city such as Perth, where probably almost everyone knows the local football team is called the West Coast Eagles, it’s really quite wonderful living in a house with someone who doesn’t always remember that.

ISABELLA, regarding her Italian homework where she had to write things about herself in Italian: “She made me write all kinds of things about myself.”

DAD: “Did she? Like what?”

ISABELLA: “Oh I don’t know. What my favourite food is, what my favourite movie is, what my favourite band is . . . or singer, what

my favourite football team is.”

DAD: “Your favourite football team? But you don’t have a favourite football team.”

ISABELLA: “I know. But she wanted me to put one down anyway.”

DAD: “What! Well what did you do? What did you end up putting down?”

ISABELLA: “The West Coast Seagulls.”

DAD: “Seagulls?”

ISABELLA: “Yeah. That’s them, isn’t it?”

Rolling right along

ISABELLA: “I’m so hopeless at gymnastics. I can’t do a handstand; I can’t do a cartwheel – all my cartwheels just end up being really tiny ones; all I end up doing all the time are forward rolls. When all the other kids are doing their cartwheels and handstands I just say to my teacher, ‘Can I please just do another forward roll?’ And then she lets me. Because my cartwheels are just so tiny and they’re always going off to one side. Emily-Grace is always going, ‘Oh, you’re doing so well, Issy!’ She’s so nice. But I’m just glad the teacher lets me do forward rolls.”

‘WANTED! Mens, Ladies & Kids’

AMELIE, as told by Holly, as she passed a clothing bin that said, ‘WANTED! Mens, Ladies & Kids’: “Mans (sic), ladies and kids? I don’t want to go in that bin.”

Sir David and Goliath

HOLLY: “Dad, you know Saint David and Goliath?”

DAD: “What’s that?”

HOLLY: “Saint David and Goliath? You would have heard of them.”

DAD: “No, it’s not Saint David.”

HOLLY: “Alright, Sir then.”



THE LAST WORD

Just crazy

AMELIE, during a news report on the radio about a shooting where someone had been killed: “How many people die every day? In the world? There’s so many people that die every day. It’s heaps, Dad! And then people go and shoot people. I mean, how crazy is that! That’s just so crazy when there’s so many people dying anyway.”