

The Little Possum who
Looked Up

By Kim Maslin
Illustrations John Field

Other books in the series



The Tweeting Galah

Learn from the experiences of cheeky Gabbo, the Galah from Esperance, Western Australia, and his friends as they navigate their way through the world of social networking, online gaming and digital devices. The animals' lessons are brought to life using innovative augmented reality technology.

Covering the topics of:

Posting inappropriate content online

Cyber bullying / Online photo permissions

Online stranger danger

Too much screen time



The Surfing Penguin

Join cheeky Gabbo the Galah once more, along with some new furry (and feathery) friends as they experience the benefits and risks of digital technologies. Augmented reality components engage young readers in a meaningful way, extending their opportunities to interact with the stories.

Covering the topics of:

Viewing inappropriate content online

Cyber bullying

Online gaming / Trolling

Sharing personal information / Location tracking

It does not do to dwell on dreams and forget to live, remember that.

- Albus Dumbledore

Copyright © 2019 Kim Maslin

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

This story is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the products of the author's imagination or used fictitiously.

Although every precaution has been taken to verify the accuracy of the cyber safety information contained herein, the author assumes no responsibility for any errors or omissions. Furthermore, the characterisation of the animals is narrative-driven, and no guarantee is made as to the accuracy of the Australian animal habitats, diets, lifestyles and mannerisms depicted. No liability is assumed for damages that may result from the use of the information contained within.

This book is typeset in Print Bold, Print Clearly and Mountains of Christmas.

Illustrations © 2019 John Field. All rights reserved.

Adapted for Kindle Direct Publishing eBook

First eBook release 2020

Kim Maslin, Self-Publisher
PO Box 977
Esperance
WA 6450

www.kimmaslin.com

The Little Possum Who Looked Up

Pebbles the Possum looked down at her screen,
Looking up places that she'd never been.
She saw twinkling stars, the moon shining bright;
She saw flying comets with their streaks of light.





Then she **looked up** and gazed at the sky,
Where she saw the moon, shining high.
She had an idea and let out a squeal.
Forget the screen! Let's see the moon for real!

So she tinkered and tailored,
And she cut with care.
She tried and she tested,
But she wasn't quite there.

She would need some help to get off the land.
She would need somebody to give her a hand.





First she found Mum, working online,

TAPPING AND TYPING

To meet her deadline.

She didn't **look up**.

She found Granny Sybil nestled in her nook,

CLICKING AND FLICKING

Through her ebook.

She didn't look up.





She found her sister going berserk,

SURFING AND SEARCHING

As she did her homework.

She didn't **look up**.

Then she found Dad ordering some food,

VIEWING AND DROOLING

About what to include.

He didn't **look up**.





She found Uncle Brush following the cricket,

TUNING IN AND CHEERING

As his team took a wicket.

He didn't **look up**.

She found Poppa Possum in front of the news.

It was

BLASTING AND BLARING,

But he was having a snooze.

He didn't **look up.**





She found Aunty Dot scrolling through her feed,

LIKING AND SWIPING

With amazing speed.

She didn't **look up**.

She found her brother taking aim,

WHOOPING WHILE SHOOTING

His friend in a game.

He didn't **look up**.





Everyone cared more for their screens than helping her out,
So she threw back her head and started to shout.

“Enough **clickety-clicks** and **tappety-taps**,
No more browsing and buzzing and snapping of apps.
Stop the switching and swiping and linking and liking!
Quit flicking and following and friending and fighting!
This scrolling and screening, it’s too wide-spread,
So **please, please, please**, can you

LOOK UP INSTEAD,”

She stamped her foot; it came down with a thud.

It shook the router and out came the plug.



And just like that, the Wi-Fi was down,

And all eyes were up, looking around.

“Pebbles, you’re right,” agreed her mother,

“It’s time to look up and spend time with each other.

These devices and gadgets are useful and fun.

They help us work and get things done.

But the one thing they can never replace

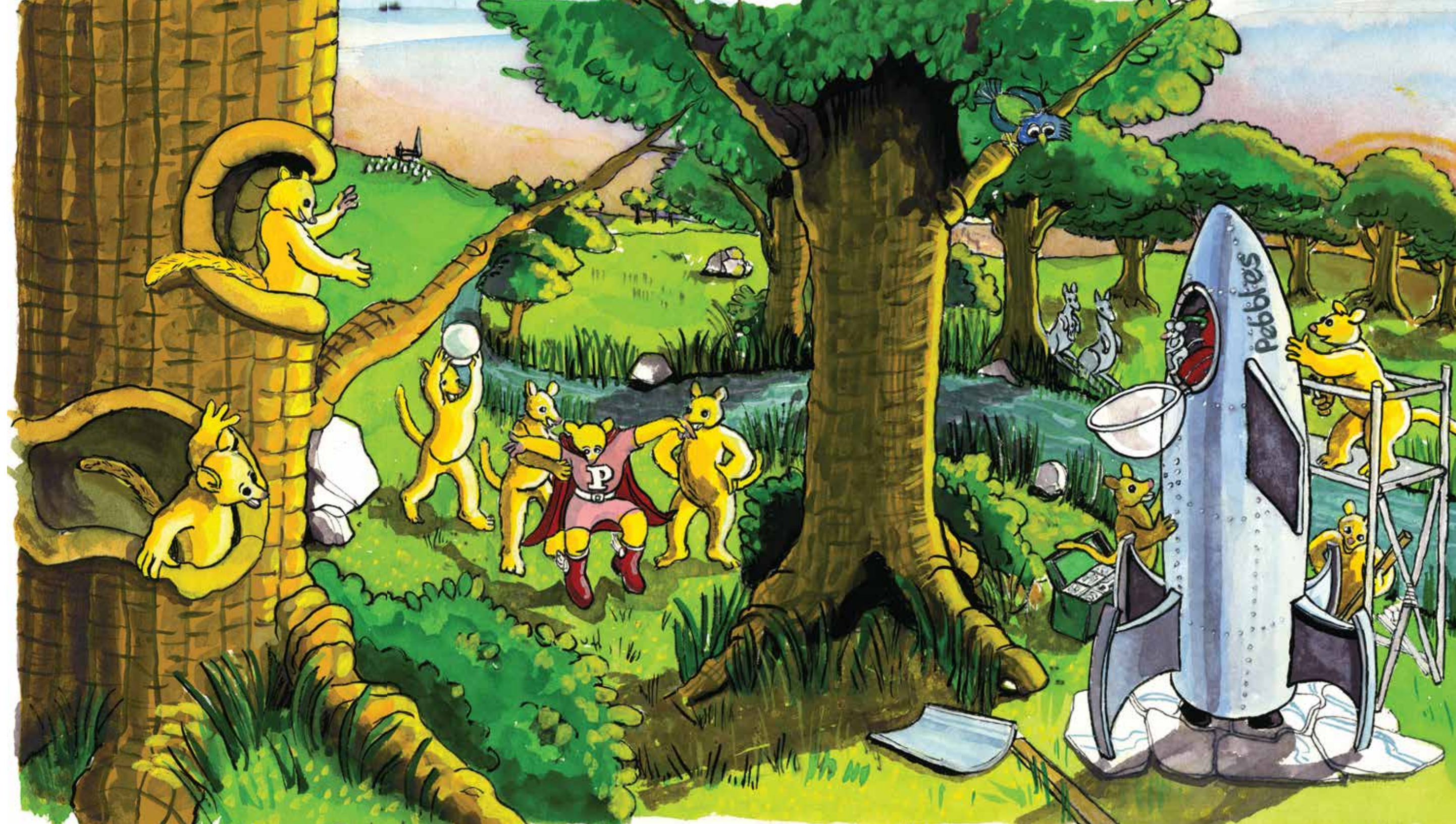
Is time spent together, face to face.

So for at least one hour every day,

Let’s all lock our screens away,

And instead, as a family, let’s talk and play.”

So they tinkered and tailored,
And they cut with care.
They tried and they tested,
And they were finally there!



Off Pebbles went, shooting through the sky!

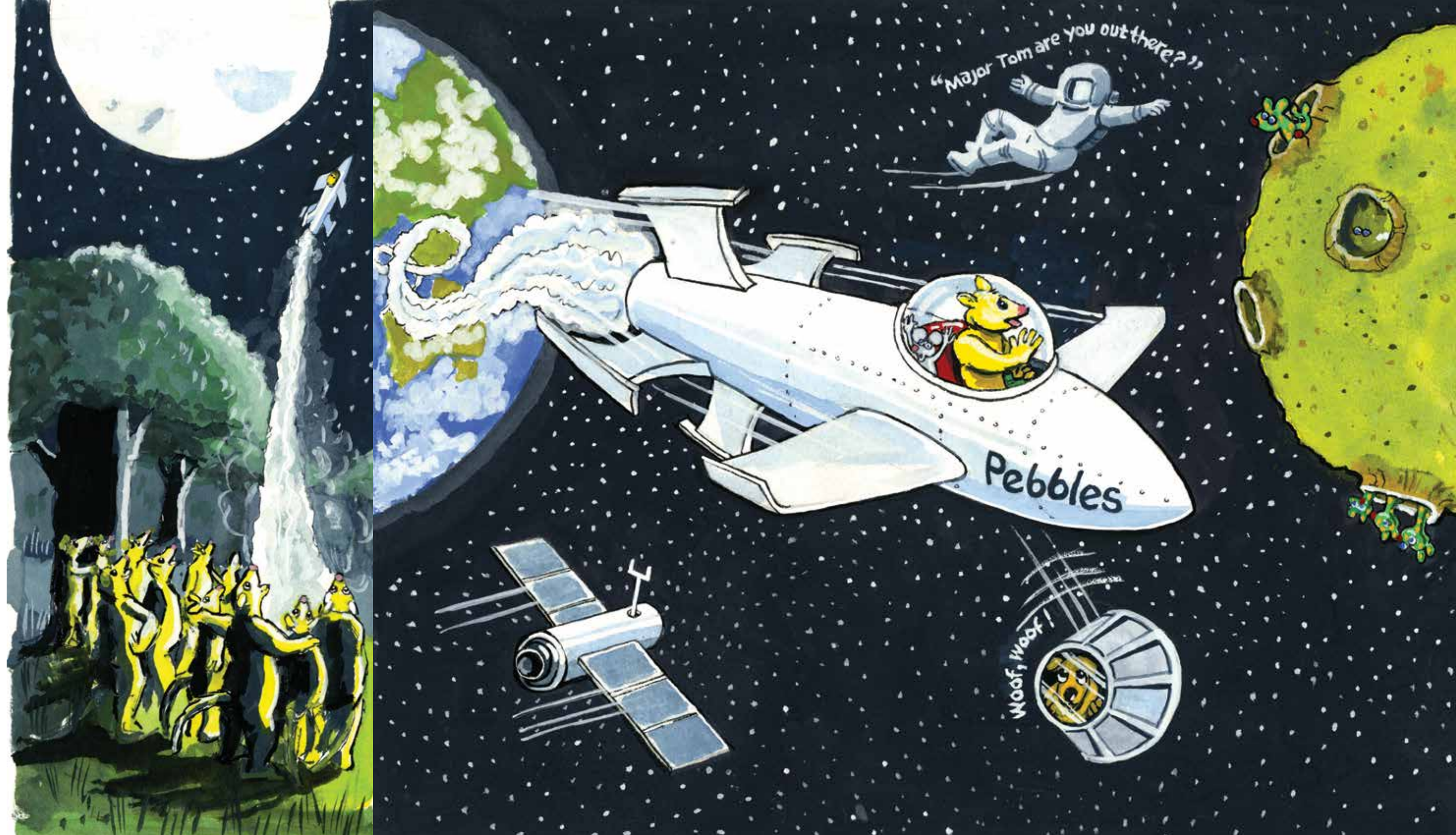
Her family **looked up**, watching her fly.

It was a successful mission, their greatest

ENDEAVOUR

Made all the better by doing it

TOGETHER.



Using this Book

The Little Possum Who Looked Up was inspired by the growing research into the effects of too much screen time. The goal of this book is to raise awareness of the importance of balancing the use of digital devices. At the same time, it strives to highlight the benefits of technology and the ways it can help us achieve different goals, whether it be work, study or recreational.

This book is designed to address key parts of the F-2 Australian Curriculum in Digital Technologies, English, Science, Health and Humanities & Social Sciences.

Suggested reflection questions:

1. Why did Pebbles the Possum need her family's help? What was she trying to create?
2. How did Pebbles the Possum feel when her family members were too busy to help her?
3. Why do you think Pebbles the Possum wanted to visit the moon instead of looking at it on a screen?
4. Go back through the book and find what activity each family member was doing. Which digital device were they using? How was the digital device helping them complete their activity?
5. Give an example of when you've been too busy using a digital device to help someone?
6. What rules does your family have in place to balance screen time use? Can you think of any other ideas for helping families balance screen time?

STEM Challenge: Have a go at building your own rocket ship using recycled materials.

For more learning ideas, resources and activities visit:

www.kimmaslin.com

About the Creators



Dr Kim Maslin

Dr Kim Maslin is a digital technologies educator, researcher, and author. She has taught in early years, primary and secondary school contexts, and is the author of The Tweeting Galah series. Kim's research focuses on children's creativity with digital technologies.

She currently lives in Esperance, Western Australia.



John Field

John Field was born in London, England. He has worked for many years in advertising and graphic design in both the United Kingdom and Australia. John currently lives in Perth, Western Australia.

When Pebbles the Possum looks up from her screen, she sees the moon shining brightly outside her window. She decides to stop looking up faraway places on her digital device and to visit them in real life instead. But to finish her rocket ship and get to the moon, she'll need some help from her family. If only they would **LOOK UP** from their screens long enough to help her!

Praise for *The Little Possum Who Looked Up*

"We are living in a technological world that allows us to connect, learn and be entertained in unprecedented ways. In this beautiful children's book, Pebbles the Possum gently reminds us that our use of technology needs to be balanced and not displace face-to-face connection, communication, relationships and experiences. *The Little Possum Who Looked Up* provides us all with an opportunity to reflect on our use of technology and the wonderful experiences we can share together online and offline."

Kayelene Kerr - Cyber Safety and Digital Wellness Specialist, WA Child Safety Services

"I am a huge fan of Kim Maslin's cyber-safety stories! *The Little Possum Who Looked Up* is another fabulous title to add to my technology-themed children's book list. This story is very relatable for kids and adults alike, as it addresses monitoring screen time and learning to be present by spending quality time with the people you love.

The rhythmic rhyme of the words make this story flow beautifully!"

Julie Smith - The Techie Teacher