

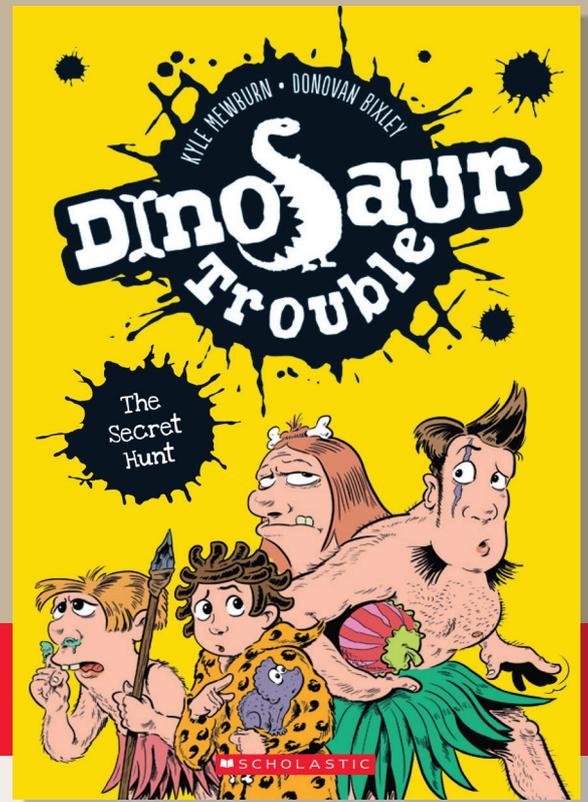
# Dinosaur trouble #4

## The Secret Hunt

Text by Kyle Mewburn

Illustrations by Donovan Bixley

• Art • Reading • Writing • Thinking Skills



## Synopsis

Arg enjoys exploring with his friend Shlok and Krrk-Krrk. But it's a bit hazardous playing hide and seek, and exploring with Shlok when he throws spears first then thinks about whether it is a good idea or not afterwards. On this exploration, it's not. He's accidentally speared his father in the knee. Arg and Shlok don't own up to the accident; instead they hide in a hollow log and watch the hunters worry about who is attacking them. When Shlok's father falls over and spears himself in the other leg, the hunters figure he probably speared himself the first time, too.

The hunters walk off, and Arg and Shlok follow them to find out what they're up to. Arg knows they can't be going hunting because they've already got plenty of meat in the caves, so why are they meeting in secret? They happily traipse behind the hunters, until Shlok plays a practical joke that goes horribly wrong. A raptor attacks Arg and it looks like his time is up, when Shlok plays another joke, which saves Arg's life. But Shlok's practical jokes are not over, his third trick lands Arg in water (literally) infested with crocodiles. Arg grabs onto a reptile and is relieved when it beaches itself on the shore. Turns out it's a non-meat-eating turtle-like creature. From here, Arg can hear a funny noise. He climbs a tree to investigate and finds the hunters doing something very strange on an isolated island – they're playing a game. Arg is gobsmacked – he has never seen them do that before ... and he can't wait to play it with his friend Shlok.

## About the Author & Illustrator

Author Kyle Mewburn has had over 40 children's books published in nine countries. Mewburn's work has won numerous awards, including the NZ Post Children's Book of the Year for *Old Hu-Hu*. Other titles include *Kiss! Kiss! Yuck! Yuck!* (2008 NZ Post Book Awards Best Picture Book and Children's Choice), *Melu* (2013 NZ Post Book Awards Children's Choice), as well as the popular series collaborations with Donovan Bixley, *Dinosaur Rescue* and *Dragon Knight*. Originally from Brisbane, Kyle lives in a grass-roofed, self-built house in Central Otago, NZ.

Illustrator Donovan Bixley is a talented artist with a range of styles. His work brings another dimension to Mewburn's text, often adding hilarious bits of his own to enhance the storyline. Donovan is the only artist to have ever had three books simultaneously shortlisted for the NZ Children's Book Awards (in 2015), with Scholastic titles *Dragon Knight: Fire!*, *Little Red Riding Hood ... Not Quite*, and his debut comic book/novel as author and illustrator *Monkey Boy*, which took out the top prize for junior fiction. Donovan lives in Taupo, NZ, with his wife and three daughters.

# Writing and Illustration Style

Kyle has written the Dinosaur Trouble series with 5-7-year-old readers in mind who have just started reading independently. The younger ones particularly enjoy scatology humour and will love having this series read aloud to them, and the parents will chuckle at the jokes intended for them.

The chapters are short, often ending with a cliff-hanger, which encourages the young readers to keep reading on. There are 50-70 words per page (eight chapters, and 64 pages), which are complemented with 1-2 black, grey and white illustrations. The writing style is humorous, with puns (play on words), and lots of disgusting jokes about snot, vomit, etc. Donovan's illustrations ensure the young readers understand the text, and build on the humour.

## Shared Learning and Discussion Points

### ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

- What can this cover tell you about the type of book this is going to be?
- Predict what this story might be about.
- Where is this story set and who are the main characters?
- Compare and contrast Arg's rules for 'hide-and-find' and Shlok's way of playing the game. (pp. 9-10)
- Look at the pictures of Arg and Shlok's heads on pages 10 and 11. Draw what is in your head, and then share it with a partner. What is the same and what is different to your partner's?
- What are the three things Shlok likes doing? What does he have in common with Arg? (pp. 11-13)
- The author has foreshadowed (given a hint) that something might happen later (p. 13). What is it?
- Find five interesting verbs (doing words) on pages 14-15.
- What do you think Shlok has hit? (pp. 16-17)
- Make up some other possible animals or people Shlok could have hit.
- Where else could the boys have hidden? (pp. 20-21)
- What do you think Arg has seen that is surprising? (pp. 23-24)
- Why does Arg tell Shlok to stay hidden and quiet? (pp. 26-27)
- Write a list with your partner. On one side write why it would be a good reason for Arg and Shlok to reveal themselves, and on the other side, why it would not. Invent a few of your own, too.
- Why do the hunters think it is funny that Shlok's father has hurt himself again? (pp. 28-29)
- What trail do the boys follow? Who or what else could follow this trail? (pp. 30-31)
- Why do you think the hunters are going towards the volcano? (pp. 32-33)
- Why did Shlok think it was funny to rub blood on Arg's back and why has that put him in danger? (pp. 34-35)
- Do you think the raptor is vegetarian or a meat eater? Give reasons to support your argument. (pp. 36-37)
- How did the raptor trick Arg? (p. 39)
- What stops the raptor from attacking Arg? (pp. 40-41)
- What frightens Arg at the cliff? (pp. 44-45)
- How would you feel if a friend played that trick on you? What would you say to them?
- What do you think will happen to Arg in the water? (p. 51)
- Brainstorm what possible dinosaur creatures Arg might have grabbed onto. (pp. 54-55)
- What does the archelon resemble? (pp. 56-57)
- What do you think the hunters are doing on the island? (pp. 60-61)
- What kind of ball games could this game be similar to today? (pp. 62-63)
- What did Arg want to do with Shlok when he caught up with him again? (p. 64)

## Activities

### ACTIVITY 1: CAVE-MEN MAP

Draw a map in Donovan Bixley-style of your school, home and any landscape features such as rivers, hills, lakes and seas, as though it could have been back in the cave-men days.

### ACTIVITY 2: CAVE-MEN CHARACTERS

Draw your family and best-friend(s) in cave-man style. Give them cave-like names and exaggerate one part of their character to make them humorous.

### ACTIVITY 3: WRITE ANOTHER CHAPTER

Arg is looking forward to playing a game with Shlok. How well do you think that will go? Write another chapter saying what happens. Does Shlok pull another trick? Does the raptor find them again? How will the hunters feel when their secret is exposed?



#### ACTIVITY 4: VENN DO IT!

Compare and contrast Arg and Shlok's personalities in a Venn Diagram. Put how they are different and unique in their own circle, and in the middle (where the two circles meet), say how they are alike.



#### ACTIVITY 6: KNOW YOUR CHARACTER!

Fill in the chart below about Shlok's character.

### KNOW YOUR CHARACTER!

Character's name?  
Shlok

What does he  
look like?

What is his  
personality like?

Give an example  
from the book.

Give an example  
from the book.



What does he  
like to do?

Give an example  
from the book.