

Teaching Guide

Milly and the Chittens

Synopsis

Milly McGinty's bedroom is a disaster. When Mum insists that she cleans it up, she discovers that the chaos is hiding, not just the usual dirty socks and rotten potatoes, but also a trio of fantastical creatures. The three baby griffins are half chick and half kitten and Milly has the perfect name for them – chittens. Milly's messy bedroom turns out to be the ideal habitat for the rubbish-eating chittens, but Mum's cleaning frenzy is threatening their environment. With the help of the Department of Conservation, Milly has her room declared a special conservation zone and Mum must leave the mess alone. Now just one more challenge remains, she must overcome her shyness and find a way to win the city-wide talent contest in order to win the money she needs to keep the chittens. Unfortunately, she and her band are awful. It takes a lot of practise and a little chitten magic to make it to the top.

Themes

Mythological creatures, personal responsibility, shyness, challenging yourself, family relationships, conservation, habitats, endangered species, music

Questions

1. What kind of a creature is a griffin?
2. What does mythological mean?
3. Why do you think Mum wants Milly to clean her room?
4. What is a habitat?
5. What does it mean when an animal is endangered? Name some of New Zealand's endangered animals.
6. Would you like a pet chitten?
7. Do you think Milly and the chittens should have won the talent contest?

Extra for experts

1. Name some other mythological creatures. Which ones are made from combinations of two or more real animals?
2. What are some creatures in Maori mythology?

Activities

1. Draw your own mixed-up creature.
2. Where would your creature live and what would it eat?