

An extract from

Little Hao and the Golden Kites

by Mavis Scott

*Each year the Emperor watched a kite competition
among the rich people who lived in his palace.*

Soon it was time for all the people to gather by the steps of the Palace to see the rich nobles bring out their Golden Kites.

Little Hao heard drumbeats. The nobles were coming.

There they were!

First came Lord North Wind.
His kite was like a dragon,
shining golden in the sunlight.

“Aaaah!” said all the people.
“That one will win the
Emperor’s prize.”



Next came Lord Noble Horse. His kite was like a golden eagle
with its wings spread wide.

It soared into the sky. The people cheered and clapped.

Last of all came Lord Black Mountain. His kite was made like the flames
from a fire, and there were rich jewels in its tail. The fire kite sparkled
all over the sky.

The people cheered their loudest.

“That one wins! That one wins!” they called.



Some students are investigating how pollution affects the environment. They have researched the effects of plastic bags. This is what they have written.

Should we pay for plastic bags?



People should pay for the plastic bags they use for their shopping. According to experts from Clean Up Australia, Australians use over six billion plastic bags a year and many of these are used for carrying shopping home from supermarkets. Making people pay for these plastic bags would encourage them to use reusable bags.

Some plastic bags can last in the environment for up to 1000 years before they disintegrate (break down). Plastic bags are harmful to wildlife as they can kill animals, especially in the ocean.

Also, when plastic bags are made, dangerous gases are released that pollute the atmosphere. If we use fewer plastic bags there would be less air pollution, as well as less land and water pollution.

We need to reduce the number of plastic bags in the environment. Making people pay will help to stop them using plastic bags and force them to use reusable bags for their shopping!

Cities and towns in Australia are host to hundreds of bird species. Some live in these places permanently, others visit during the summer or pass through during annual migrations. The captions below give information about a few of the native and introduced species that may be seen in people's backyards.

Kookaburra: An Australian icon that enjoys gardens and parklands. They are carnivorous, feeding on lizards, insects and small mammals. **Voice:** A distinctive staccato "laugh". **Status:** Fairly widespread.

Australian King Parrot: A large brightly-coloured parrot; the male has a scarlet-coloured head and the female a green one. They feed on seeds and fruit and they are usually seen in pairs. **Voice:** Long, ringing whistle and harsh screeches. **Status:** Fairly widespread.

Galah: A native species that feeds on seeds, grains, nuts and insect larvae. They are found throughout Australia. Usually seen in pairs or flocks. **Voice:** Creaky. **Status:** Fairly widespread.

Common Myna (Indian Myna): An introduced species that thrives in urban habitats. They are omnivorous and are usually seen in pairs or flocks. They forage on the ground looking for insects to eat and scavenge fruit and soft berries. **Voice:** Raucous rattles. **Status:** Prolific and numbers increasing.

Australian Magpie: A large bird that digs for worms and grubs in lawns and parks. **Voice:** Loud musical flute-like song. **Status:** Widespread and numbers increasing.

backyard birds

