

12. In a story an incident can be exaggerated or stretched to the limit to increase the humour. This can be seen in slapstick. Discuss using examples from 'A Read Dog's Dinner' (*So Festy!*)

13. Euphemisms are used frequently in our society. Have the students research the word and give examples from the story 'Tales from the Freezer' (*So Festy!*) Have the students compile a list and write their own story using some of them.

14. Sometimes our efforts to be politically correct can be quite amusing. E.g. 'horizontally challenged' for 'overweight'. What other politically correct phrases can the students recall?

15. A reader has certain expectations about what will happen in a story. When the ending comes as a complete surprise it is often humorous for the reader. Find examples from *So Sick!* and *So Festy!*

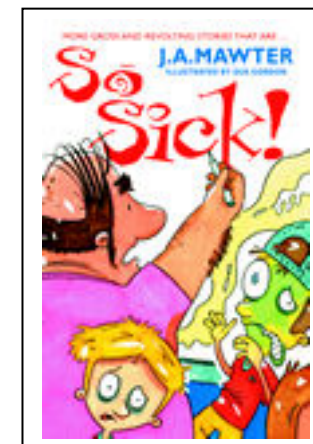
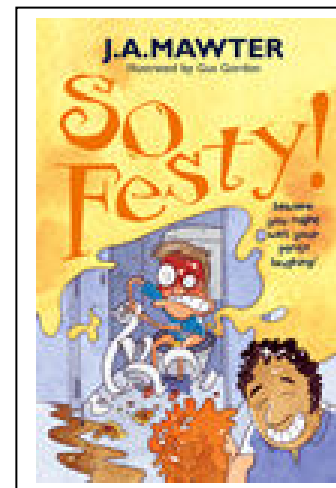
---o0o0o0o---

Other titles in the 'So' series:

So Gross! 0207197334
So Feral! 0207198373
So Grotty! 0207200076 (due July 04)

For more information check out the HarperCollins website
www.harpercollins.com.au

 **HarperCollins Publishers**
Australia



TEACHING IDEAS
USING
'SO FESTY!' & 'SO SICK!'
by
J.A. MAWTER

The “So” books are ideal for working with a class to discuss all aspects of humour. They are especially good for reading aloud to a group of students at the beginning of the day. It will put them into a happy frame of mind so that they are more likely to learn. Conversely, a good laugh at the end of the day can be just what everyone needs to dissipate tension.

Ideas for group discussion and units of work:

1. The stories in *So Sick!* And *So Festy!* are all humorous. What makes them funny?
2. Why is humour good for you? Discuss the healing aspects of laughter. Humour is being used in hospitals, especially with children, to assist the healing process. Students can research this by looking up the Clown Doctors at www.humanfoundation.com.au or by contacting a number of Laughter Clubs for more information.
3. Humour is often used as a means of reducing tension. Discuss examples used in ‘Tales from the Freezer’ (*So Festy!*). Have the students give examples from their own experience. What were the outcomes of these situations?
4. Discuss the different sorts of humour: e.g. puns, satire, jokes, slapstick, word plays, parody, absurdities, incongruities, human predicaments (first kiss, pimples). Can the students think of any other types of humour? Divide the students into groups: each group is to research one type of humour. Look for examples within the books *So Festy!* and *So Sick!* Ask students to write their own examples and share them with the class. Make up a group story using some or all of them.
5. Discuss the fictional authors’ names in ‘The Fantastic Fart Factory’ (*So Festy!*) e.g. Freia Imogen Nayshun. Have the students make up their own list of ‘pun’ names – can be done as a group session or a written exercise.

6. Discuss double meanings e.g. in ‘The Smelling Bee’ (*So Sick!*), the teacher is called Mr Epeler. Epeler in French means ‘to spell’. Divide the class into groups to compile lists from the books. Pay attention to story titles. Compare these lists as a class. Use the examples from another story.

7. Discuss jokes and how they suddenly appear in a time of crisis or a serious event e.g. politics, war, racism, death, a taboo subject. Discuss how jokes can create a deeper insight into a situation once the emotion has been overridden. What works better – a spoken joke or one that is written?
8. Internal dialogue is very different to spoken dialogue. It can be used very effectively in a story if a character is unable to speak their mind. Show examples of internal dialogue being used in a story e.g. ‘The Smelling Bee’ (*So Sick!*) and Ned throughout ‘A Read Dog’s Dinner’ (*So Festy!*). Discuss how this dialogue affects (i) the story, (ii) the reader.
9. In a humorous story the humour can come from the characters or from the situation. Discuss how humorous characters are portrayed. Is there a ‘straight’ man? If so, why? How does this convey the humour? Compare Lenny to Max in ‘Tales from the Freezer’ (*Sp Festy!*).
10. Nicknames: Discuss how people can be labelled with nicknames? Do they hurt people’s feelings? If so, why? Is the use of nicknames a form of bullying? How can you use a nickname to your advantage? Give examples.
11. Discuss taboo language. What is it? Why is it taboo? Does it offend? If so, who and why? Does it make people laugh? If so, why? Which characters have taboo names in ‘The fantastic Fart Factory’ (*So Festy!*)? What language in ‘The Smelling Bee’ (*So Sick!*) can be considered taboo?