



***Willbee the Bumblebee* - Craig Smith and Maureen Thomson**

Published by Scholastic, RRP \$26.00 with CD.

Craig Smith remembers his mother, Maureen, telling him the Willbee story when he was a child. Now, the mother and son have collaborated to introduce the young bumblebee to a new generation of children.

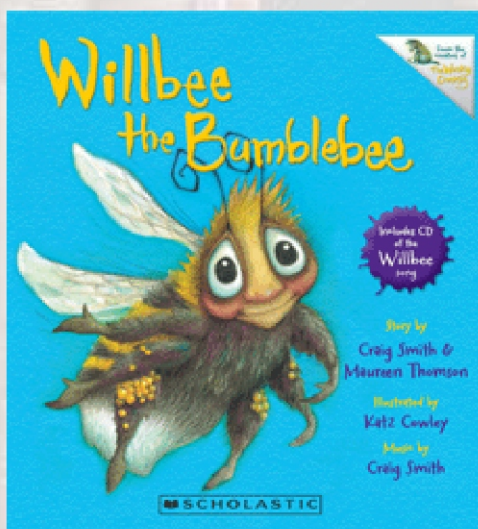
Willbee is a busy little bee who spends all day collecting pollen and helping to make the garden grow. He's a happy chap, until his black and yellow jersey is snagged on a thorn. "And as Willbee flew away, he did not stop, his jersey unravelled from the bottom to the top."

Willbee is covered in embarrassment (and nothing else). Monica, a kind monarch butterfly, and spider Steve, a master weaver, come to his rescue. Willbee's dignity is soon restored. "With his new jersey on, he got back his hum, all his bits were warmed up, even his bum!"

Illustrator Katz Cowley's wide-eyed characters are delightful. Little Willbee is a cute pink-cheeked bee with a bashful smile. The long-limbed butterfly and nimble spider are friendly creatures with expressive faces. Richly-coloured flowers and greenery enhance the garden setting.

An accompanying CD adds to the pleasure with guitar and vocals by the author, Craig Smith. The kazoo is a perfect instrument for a bumblebee sound. Children will be buzzing!

Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett.



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Promoting the enjoyment of children's literature.