

Superheroes, comic books, comics & cartoons

Chatterbooks activity pack



Reading and activity ideas for your Chatterbooks group

Superheroes, comic books, comics and cartoons

About this pack

This Chatterbooks activity pack takes a look at comic books and cartoons – and lots of other graphic ways of telling stories.

As well as a wealth of reading suggestions there are ideas for discussion and group activities – including making your own comic books, and being superheroes!

It's brought to you by The Reading Agency and all the publisher partners in Children's Reading Partners.

Chatterbooks [www.readinggroups.org/chatterbooks] is a reading group programme for children aged 4 to 14 years. It is coordinated by The Reading Agency and its patron is author Dame Jacqueline Wilson. Chatterbooks groups run in libraries and schools, supporting and inspiring children's literacy development by encouraging them to have a really good time reading and talking about books.

The Reading Agency is an independent charity working to inspire more people to read more through programmes for adults, young people and Children – including the Summer Reading Challenge, and Chatterbooks. See www.readingagency.org.uk

Children's Reading Partners is a national partnership of children's publishers and libraries working together to bring reading promotions and author events to as many children and young people as possible.

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Ideas for discussion and activities

Warm ups

Mixed up superheroes



Can you unscramble these words to find the names of 12 superheroes, superheroines, or superhero groups?

NAME SPUR

RIVAL DEED

BANTAM

ITS BEE CHILDREN

WE RANDOM WON

TOM DOOR COD

A MAC TOWN

COT FAST UNFAIR

NEW OR EVIL

DREAM SPIN

NOBLE GINGER

ROY WON BED

(Answers at the end of this pack)

(Adapted from *101 Things to do to Become a Superhero*, publ. Bloomsbury)



Sounds and pictures!

Make a list together of lots of comic book 'sound' words like POW! BAM! KAPOW! SPLAT! WHACK! BOOM! SMASH! CRASH! Then make large cardboard cut-outs of all these sounds.

Get children to choose which ones they want, and then in groups of two or three come up with a tableau of an action shot from a comic book story – with one person holding the word

up to complete the picture.

They then hold that position and you could take a photo – and with these photos you could actually create a comic strip or comic book. (See activity below)

Body language

As a superhero you should be able to read other people's body language and their physical behaviour, so that you can understand them better – and work out what they are up to!

An understanding of body language will also help you to be a better and more powerful communicator.

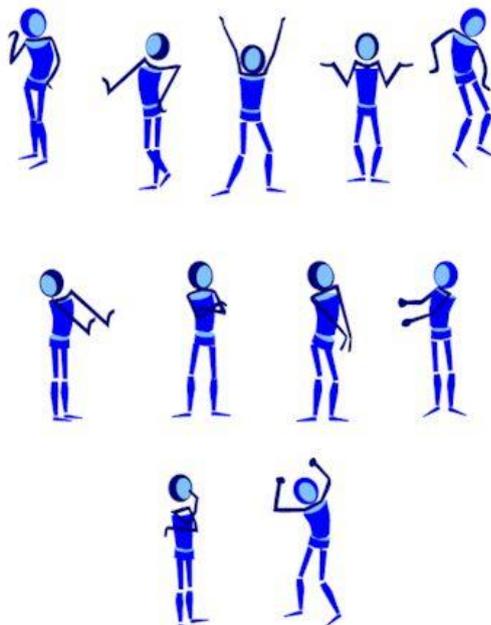
Think about eye contact, facial expressions, the space you use, your posture and your gestures – we use all these to communicate, often without realising!

Here's a game you can play to practise reading each other's body language.

- Write down a list of words to describe someone's feelings or character – eg. 'powerful', 'hungry', 'dreamy'.
- Then write a list of activities – eg. 'reading a book', 'eating dinner'.
- Cut the words out and fold them up – separate the feelings and activities into two bowls.
- Take turns to draw a slip from each bowl, and silently perform the action in the style given – eg. 'reading a book dreamily.'
- Everyone else has to guess both the action and the feeling from body language alone.

(Adapted from *101 Things to do to Become a Superhero*, publ. Bloomsbury)

Look at the pictures below – how do you think each person here is feeling or behaving or feeling?



Things to talk about

Superhero skills

Here's an excerpt from *Superhero School* where Stan has his first lesson at Mighty High with class teacher Miss Marbles:

'Let's begin with a simple question,' she said. 'What makes a superhero? Anyone?' Several hands shot up. 'Superpowers,' said the dark-haired girl. 'Nice teeth,' said someone else. 'Muscles.' Tank grinned, flexing his arms... 'Yes.' Miss Marbles nodded. 'These things are all important but nobody becomes a superhero unless they are willing to learn... Perhaps you imagine that becoming a superhero is as simple as learning to ride a bike. Let me tell you it isn't. It requires patience, dedication and the right kind of tights.'

Get everyone to think of all the skills a superhero might need – both physical and mental skills. Collect everyone's ideas on a flipchart and talk about what these skills might be useful for.

Favourite comics, favourite cartoon characters

Get together a collection of cartoon books, graphic novels, comics and comic books – and cartoon strips from newspapers.

Which are children's favourite comics, and favourite cartoon characters?

Think about animated cartoons as well.

What do they like best about them? Why?

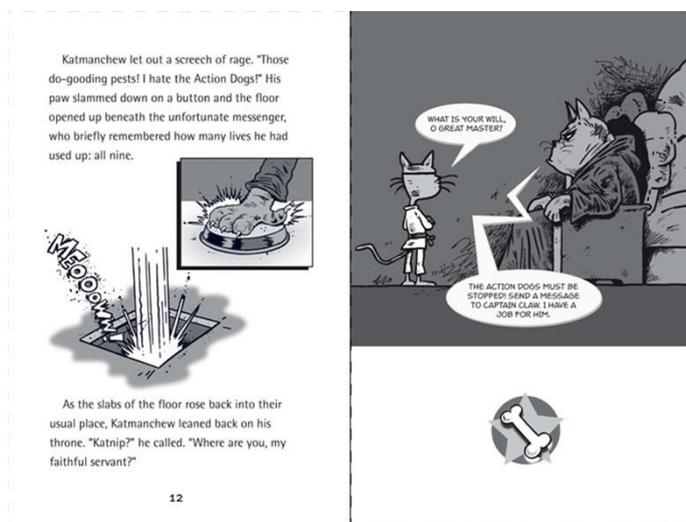
Make a list of all the cartoon characters you can think of – eg. Snoopy, Wimpy Kid, the Flintstones, the Simpsons, Micky Mouse.

Different kinds of comic book formats

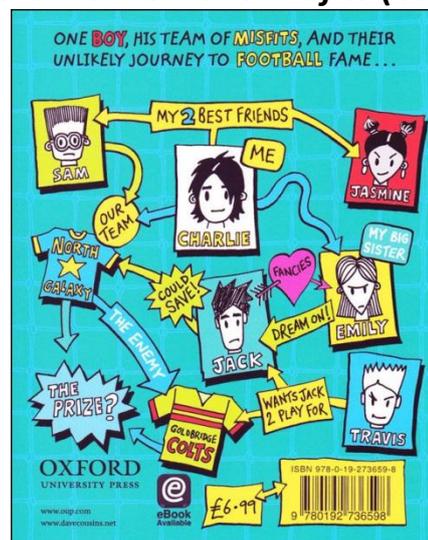
Have a look at different comic books and see all the ways in which authors use a comic book format to tell a story.

Here are examples from some of the above featured books:

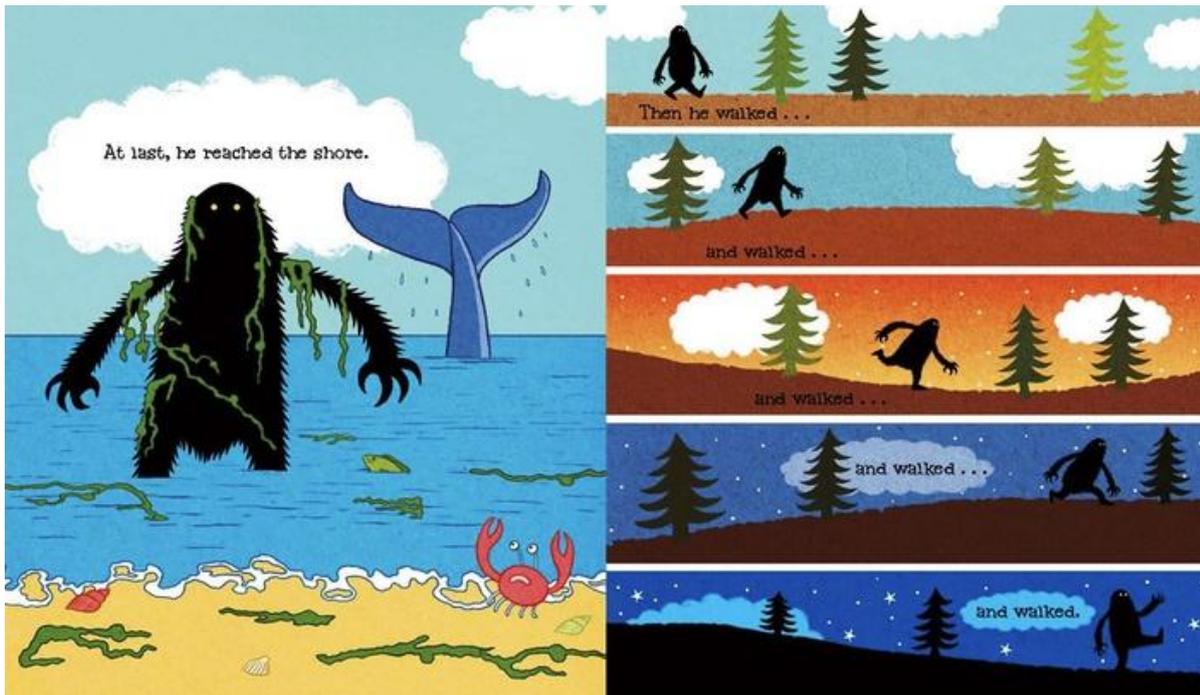
Action Dogs (Barlow & Skidmore)



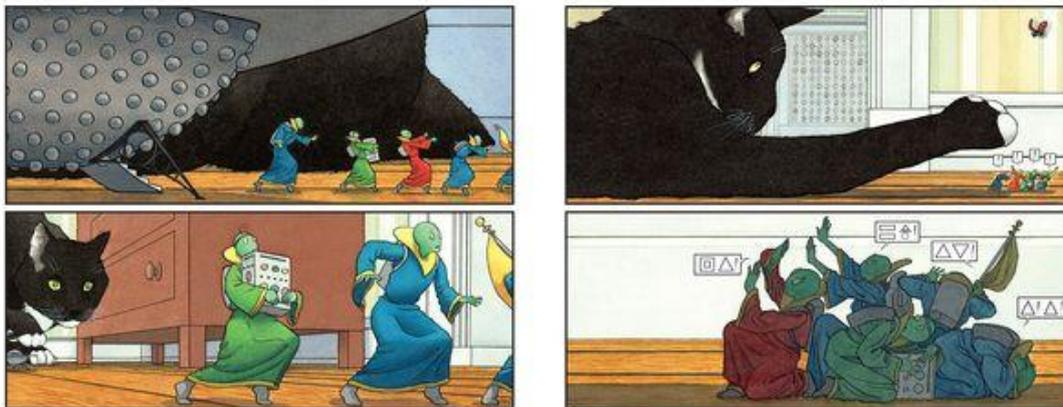
Charlie Merrick's Misfits (Cousins)



The Lonely Beast (Judge)



Mr Wuffles (Wiesner)



Longer activities

Make your own comic book, or a comic strip

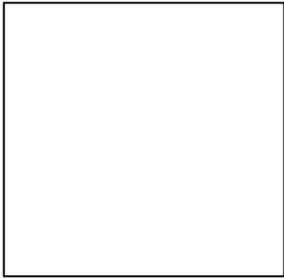
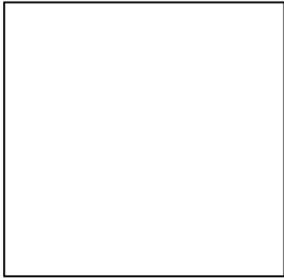
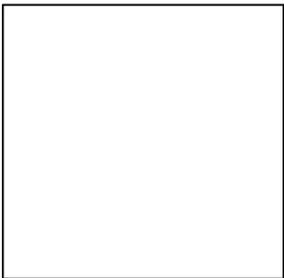
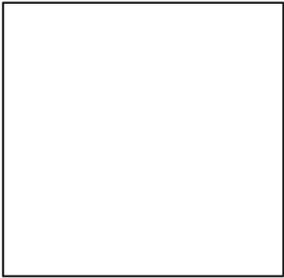
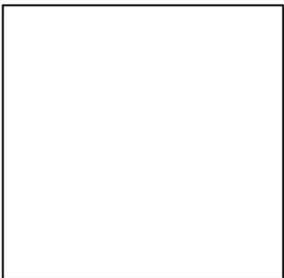
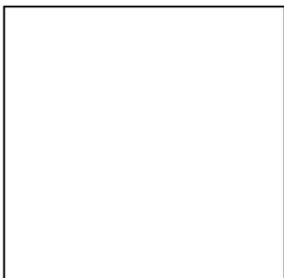
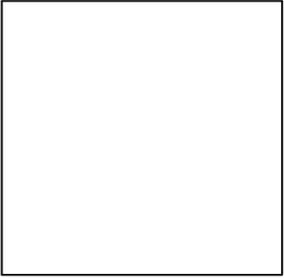
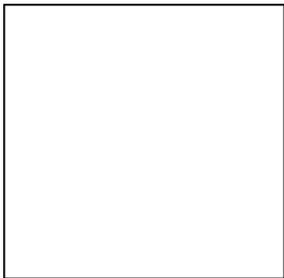
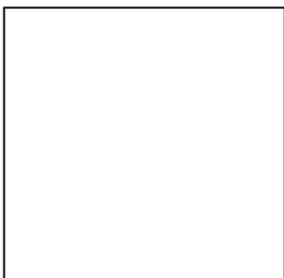
You could do this as a group, working out together the ideas, characters and storyline, and then sharing out the illustrations.

- Choose a simple storyline – eg. a fairy story, a dream you’ve had, or maybe a day at school!
- Decide how you want to present it – eg. with speech bubbles, or pictures without words; maybe pages divided into strips across or down; colour or b/w.
- Plot your story – do a storyboard or plan – you can use the template below

- Think about your characters – don't have too many. Do a first page with them all on. Something simple to identify each one – eg cape, big nose, frizzy hair, hat
- What sound effects will you have? How will you show them in the page?

For help and ideas with this the Usborne book *Write and Draw Your Own Comics* is excellent (see p18 of this pack) – as are the Phoenix Comic and Guardian Children's Books websites (p19).

See also the 'Sound and Pictures!' activity on p3 above.

		
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Chapter books – it's how you write it!

Have a look at chapter books like *Turning to Jelly* (Guard), *Wendy Quill* (Meddour), *My Brilliant Life* (Wilkins), *Oliver Fibbs* (Hartley).

You'll see that instead of using the standard lay-out of text writers will emphasise important or exciting parts of the story by using different font designs and sizes, and variety in how they place the text. It's often very simple but very effective.

For example in *Turning to Jelly* the author uses a *handwritten* font – and also uses lots of different fonts to get ideas across

– eg. **BOLD** nervous EXHAUSTED

Try doing this with the words below; you could do it by hand – writing & drawing, maybe decorating the letters, or by using fonts on a computer – see if you can make the words look like the ideas and feelings they are describing.

Massive

Fast

Fat

Ringing

Pretty

Slow

Thin

Sunny

Angry

Happy

Enthusiastic

Loving

Funny

Crumpled

Wavy

Looking at

Talk together about the kinds of presentation people prefer and why – different fonts and doodles? Plenty of pictures? Just text? Comic book style?

Be a superhero!

'If you're going to be superheroes, you need to look the part.' *The Awakening: Factor 4* (Mason)



And you need to think about lots more things besides! - there's your identity, your superpowers, your special weapon...

Here's a template to get you going:

What's your superpower?	Invisibility? X-ray vision? The power to turn things into chocolate...! Knowing your superpower may help you to decide your name – or deciding your name may lead you to your superpower.
Choose your name	This can be linked to your superpower – eg. The Chocolateer! Or it might be a signature colour – eg. the Blue Shadow. Are you like an animal? Or a force of nature? Or a mythical hero?
Design a logo 	Something simple and easily recognisable – eg. a particular letter, or shape.
What's your special weapon?	In <i>Superhero School</i> the Green Meanie has a Gigantinator which when fired, makes things bigger or smaller.
Any gadgets?	A power ring? An amplifying earpiece? Smoke bombs? Grappling hooks?
Design your outfit	What clothes will you need? What material will be most practical? What colour? A cape? Boots? How will you disguise your identity – special headgear? A mask? A belt for your gadgets?

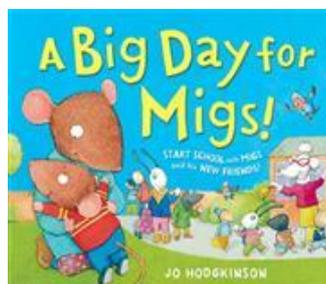
Draw yourself here!

Name..... Superhero name..... Logo:

The books! Superheroes, comic books, comics and cartoons

Superheroes – of all kinds!

Picture Books



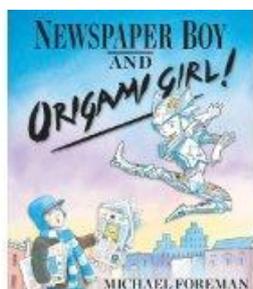
Jo Hodgkinson *A Big Day for Migs!* Andersen Press
9781-1783440382

It's a big day for Migs – he is starting school! He is looking forward to it, but he is also feeling a bit apprehensive, until, that is, he finds the perfect thing to help him overcome his shyness... a Superman costume! A 'superhero' picture book for younger children:

He finds a hat, a cloak, some boots. He feels so brave in this new suit.

'I'm MIGHTY MIGS and I declare- that I'm as strong as any bear!.'

Jo Hodgkinson won first prize in the Emerging Talent category of Cheltenham Illustration Awards celebrating narrative illustration. Following several years teaching Art at Istanbul International Community School, Jo has returned to the UK and is currently living in Worcester.



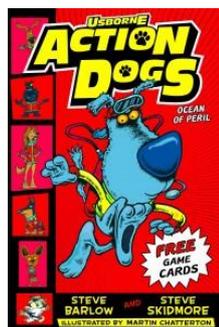
Michael Foreman *Newspaper Boy and Origami Girl!*
Andersen 978-1849395199

When a group of bullies steal a poor newspaper boy's money, his bag suddenly flies into the air and the newspapers transform into Origami Girl. Joey is whisked away on a hair-raising chase with his new superhero friend in order to confront the bullies! A Dickensian style tale with a cool superheroine:

Origami Girl crashed through the skylight onto the table and dived in amongst the crooks, somersaulting, spinning, back-flipping, cartwheeling and knocking them over like skittles.

Michael Foreman is one of the most talented and popular creators of children's books today. His highly acclaimed books are published all over the world. He lives in St Ives in Cornwall, and London.

Chapter books

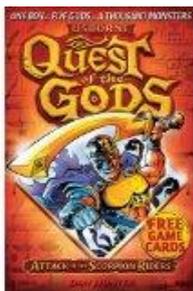


Steve Barlow & Steve Skidmore *Action Dogs: Ocean of Peril*
978-1409520191

The world is in deadly danger and only one team of heroes can save it... Six highly trained daredevil dogs who fight crime with their bare paws – and their hi-tech gadgets. It's time to call – ACTION DOGS! Can they stand up to the Action Dogs' deadly enemy – the dreaded Katmanchew?

No-one knew who the Action Dogs were or where they came from. But when humans needed help, they were always there, saving people from terrible danger and making criminals wish they'd stayed in bed.

The Two Steves: Steve Barlow lives in Somerset and when he's not writing, he enjoys sailing. Steve Skidmore lives in Leicester and trained as a teacher before becoming a full-time author. The Two Steves began collaborating in 1987 after meeting while working at a school in Nottingham, and have produced many books, which they are actively involved in making available as Apps. Make sure you have a look at the special Chatterbooks Action Dogs Activity Pack!



Dan Hunter *The Quest of the Gods: Attack of the Scorpion Riders* Usborne 978-1409521051

One boy, five Gods, and a thousand monsters. Ancient Egypt is in trouble; the evil Pharaoh, Oba, has captured five of the most powerful good gods. Now deadly plagues are destroying the land and bloodthirsty monsters terrorise the people. Only one boy can stop them: Akori, an orphaned farm-boy with a huge destiny...

Akori's fingers strayed to the birthmark on his arm. He traced its outline, pretending it was a falcon bracelet made of gold...The mark even looked like a bird with its wings spread wide. Birds could fly anywhere they liked...

Dan Hunter has written four more adventures in this *Quest of the Gods* series – see **Further reading** – and there the books have free collectable game cards and games to download and play. See www.questofthegods.co.uk



Alan MacDonald *Superhero School: the Revenge of the Green Meanie* Bloomsbury 978-1408825235

Stan Button had always dreamed of becoming a superhero. One day a letter arrives inviting him for an interview at the mysterious Mighty High School. To his amazement, Stan is offered a place – starting immediately. Lessons in supervillain-spotting and tights-wearing mean he is soon ready to defeat the evil Green Meanie.

Suddenly Stan's ears began to prickle. It was the strange feeling he always got when something bad or alarming was about to happen. He didn't stop to think.

This adventure is illustrated throughout by **Nigel Baines**, for brilliant comic-book style fun.

Alan MacDonald has written over eighty children's books. In 2010, *Dirty Bertie: Loo!* Was winner of the Leicestershire Children's Book Prize. Alan also writes for TV, including 'Horrid Henry' on CITV.

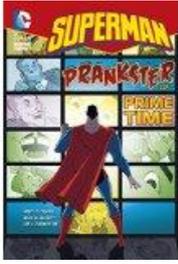


Donald Lemke *Batman: Mad Hatter's Movie Madness* Curious Fox 978-1782021438

The Mad Hatter is using 3-D glasses to brainwash the teenagers of Gotham, including Robin. The Dark Knight must follow the teenagers, stop the Mad Hatter and save the Boy Wonder from a villainous Wonderland.

This illustrated chapter book is one of a *DC Super Heroes: Batman* series by various authors. With interest level ages 8-12 and reading level for ages 7-8.

How do you like this new chapter book version of Batman, compared with the original comic book version? Which do you prefer? What do children think of the new sidekick character, Tim? And how about the villain Mad Hatter? – rate him against other Batman villains, eg. Catwoman and The Joker.



**Martin Pasco *Superman: Prankster of Prime Time*
Curious Fox 978-1782021490**

Action packed chapter book, with full colour illustrations featuring the Man of Steel as he defeats aliens and supervillains. After being released from prison, the evil Prankster takes his trickster talents to TV. The villain recruits people to perform practical jokes on TV – soon people realise that each prank is a preview for a crime, and Superman isn't amused. One of a series of *Superman* stories by various authors, from the pages of DC Comics.

And...



**Agnieszka Biskup and Tammy Enz *Batman Tech: the Explosive Reality Behind Dark Knight Gadgetry*
Curious Fox 978-1782021032**

When it comes to fighting crime, technology is Batman's greatest weapon. From his gadget-packed Utility Belt to his high-tech Batmobile, the Dark Knight tackles Gotham's criminal underworld. But does any of his gear have a basis in reality? *Batman Tech* uncovers the real-world connections behind Batman's equipment. Visually stunning, with a great mix of photos, diagrams and Batman artwork. Plus fascinating science and tech facts! Attractive fact-file presentation and useful glossary.

What tools will the Dark Knight use in the future? No-one knows for sure. But advancements in real-world science and engineering are likely to find a place on Batman's Utility Belt.

Agnieszka Biskup is a science writer and editor based in Chicago. She is a former editor for the science section of the Boston Globe as well as the children's science magazine *Muse*.

Tammy Enz became a civil engineer because of her awe of the massive steel bridges that spanned the Mississippi River. She just had to figure out how they worked.

Picture books (almost) without words, comic books and graphic novels

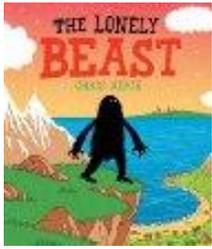


**Cece Bell *El Deafo* Abrams and Chronicle
978-1419712173**

This is a funny, deeply honest graphic novel memoir for 8-12s. It chronicles the author's hearing loss at a young age and her experiences with a powerful and very awkward hearing aid called the Phonic Ear.

It enables her to hear—sometimes things she shouldn't—but also isolates her from her classmates. She just wants to fit in and find a friend, someone who appreciates her, Phonic Ear and all. Finally, she is able to harness the power of the Phonic Ear and become "El Deafo, Listener for All." She can make a place for herself in the world and find true friends.

Cece Bell is the illustrator of the successful *Sock Monkey* series from Candlewick. She has a graduate degree in illustration and design from Kent State University. She is hearing impaired.



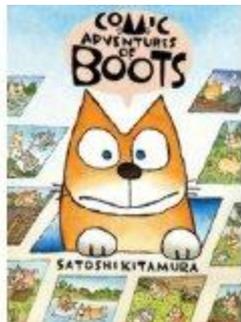
Chris Judge *The Lonely Beast* Andersen 978-1849392556

Have you heard of the Beasts? No, not many people have. That's because they are very rare. This is the tale of one such Beast, whose determination to overcome his loneliness leads him to undertake a daring and dangerous quest to find others like him . . . This is a picture book with a very imaginative take on comic-book presentation.

They (Beasts) are very quiet creatures, who live alone high in the mountains or deep in the woods. They like nothing more than tending their beautiful gardens...drinking tea...reading a good book...

Chris Judge is an award winning author and illustrator from Dublin. His picture books include *The Lonely Beast* series, *The Great Explorer* and *TiN*. He has recently illustrated Roddy Doyle's new children's book *Brilliant*.

Visit [The Lonely Beast website](#). And enjoy the activity sheets also available for download from our website!



Satoshi Kitamura *The Comic Adventures of Boots* Andersen Press 978-0099456230

A wonderful collection of comic tales, told in an engagingly comic strip format style about the loveable but dopey cat, Boots: humorously philosophical stories with titles such as 'Operation Fish-Biscuit,' and 'Pleased to Meet You, Madame Quark.'

Check out the inside front and back pages. Boots can do magic!

Satoshi Kitamura was born in Tokyo and worked in advertising there before moving to London in 1980. He won the Mother Goose Award for *Angry Arthur* and has created over 20 books for children. Here's a taste of *Boots*!





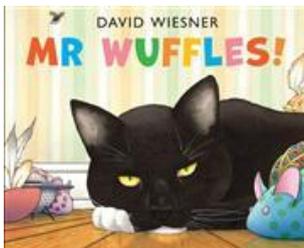
Shaun Tan *The Arrival* Hodder 978-0340969939

What drives so many to leave everything behind and journey alone to a mysterious country, without family or friends, where the future is unknown? This silent graphic novel is the story of every migrant, every refugee, every displaced person, and a tribute to all those who have made the journey.

Shaun Tan grew up in the northern suburbs of Perth, Western Australia. He currently works full time as a freelance artist and author in Melbourne, and has become best known for illustrated books that deal with social, political and historical subjects through surreal, dream-like imagery, such as *The*

Rabbits, and *The Red Tree*.

Here are two pages from the book:



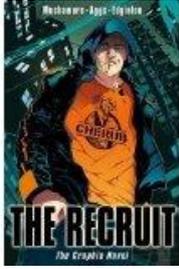
**David Wiesner *Mr Wuffles!* Andersen Press
978-1783441167**

Mr Wuffles ignores all the toys people buy for him. He's not lazy, he's just very picky. Now Mr Wuffles has the perfect toy and he's ready to play. But it's not really a toy at all. It's something much more interesting . . .

David Wiesner is one of the best-loved and most highly acclaimed picture book creators in the world. His books, including *Tuesday* and *Flotsam*, have been translated into more than a dozen languages and have won numerous awards all over the globe. He lives with his family outside of Philadelphia, USA.

Mr Wuffles sees emerging from this strange 'toy' some strange creatures, who speak in a coded language – what do you think they are saying?

There is a [wonderful film clip](#) you can share with your group, where the author discusses his inspiration for the *Mr Wuffles* books. Children will be amazed by his special floor level camera, designed to follow his cat around!



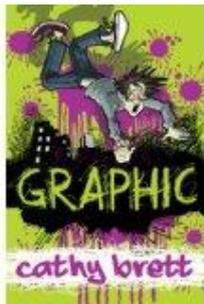
For older readers 13+

Robert Muchamore, John Aggs, Ian Edginton
***CHERUB – The Recruit: The Graphic Novel* Hodder**
978-1444903188

A terrorist doesn't let strangers into her flat because they might be undercover police or intelligence agents, but her children bring their mates home and they run all over the place. The terrorist doesn't know that one of these kids has bugged every room in her house, made copies of all her computer files and stolen her address book. The kid works for CHERUB. CHERUB agents live in the real world, slipping under adult radar and getting information that sends criminals and terrorists to jail. For official purposes these children do not exist...

Robert Muchamore worked as a private investigator for many years. He is now published in over twenty languages with millions of *CHERUB* and *Henderson's Boys* books sold. You can find out more at www.muchamore.com and www.cherubcampus.com

Chapter books with cartoon and zany illustrations

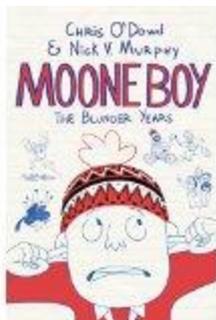


Cathy Brett *Graphic* Barrington Stoke
978-1781122143

Joe is a keen artist, a keen artist with a massive crush on Honey. But Honey is dating Cal who is something of a bully. When Joe imagines all the horrible things that could happen to Cal and draws them, horrible things begin happening. Can he literally draw his dreams into reality? Particularly suitable for struggling, reluctant and dyslexic readers of 12+

I love to draw...I draw all the time, even when I'm not supposed to. But there are some things I won't draw any more, because of what happened last term. Last term my drawings got me into big trouble...You might not believe my story, but here's what happened.

Cathy Brett writes animation film scripts, graphic novels and illustrates other people's books, in between blogging, teaching design and touring around the country.



Chris O'Dowd & Nick Vincent Murphy
***Moone Boy: the Blunder Years* Macmillan**
978-1447270942

Martin Moone is eleven and completely fed up with being the only boy in a family of girls. He's desperate for a decent wingman to help him navigate his idiotic life. So when best mate Padraic suggests Martin get an imaginary friend – or 'IF' for short – he decides to give it a go. His first attempt is Loopy Lou, a hyperactive goofball who loves writing rubbish rap songs. But Martin soon gets fed up with Lou's loopiness and decides to try for someone a little less wacky. Enter Sean 'Caution' Murphy, an imaginary office clerk with a passion for laziness and a head full of dodgy jokes. But getting rid of Lou is not easy, and having TWO imaginary friends is a recipe for trouble!

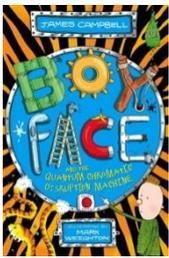
*These pages are riddled with ridicule, peppered with pranks and seasoned with spelling mistakes. So if you're looking for a tale that deals with the perils and hazards of imaginary friendship, you should find **Moone Boy: The Blunder Years** completely satisfactory.*

Chris O'Dowd is an award-winning actor, writer and director. He has appeared in many films, and has also starred in cult TV series *The IT Crowd*, *Family Tree* and *Girls*, as well as *Moone Boy* for Sky, which he wrote and directed with his friend Nick Vincent Murphy.

Nick Vincent Murphy is an Irish screenwriter from Kilkenny, now based in London. In 2010 he co-wrote a short film, *Capturing Santa*, with Chris O'Dowd, which they then developed into comedy series *Moone Boy*, which recently won an International Emmy for Best Comedy.

Have a look at these [clips from the *Moone Boy*](#) TV series and the [trailer for *Moone Boy*](#), the book.

Chapter books with cartoon and comic-book style illustrations – and zany text and fonts!



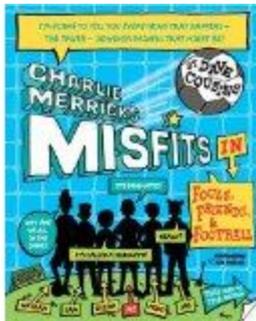
James Campbell *Boyface* Hodder 978-144922073

Boyface Antelope has been waiting his whole life to turn ten and be allowed to enter his parents' stripe-mongering shop so he can take stripes off animals and put them on something different. Like tartan onto badgers, or removing the stripes of zebras to make ponies. On the morning of his tenth birthday he has to look after the shop on his own! Will he be able to keep the stripemongery running smoothly?

The process of having their stripes removed was completely painless for the zebras.

Sometimes it did tickle a bit which made the zebras titter uncontrollably until they sneezed and sneezed and sneezed and then stopped abruptly as if nothing had happened.

James Campbell is a comedian who teaches comedy workshops to children and young people. He has appeared on children's television programme *Blue Peter*, teaching children how to create and perform jokes.



Dave Cousins *Charlie Merrick's Misfits in Fools, Friends and Football* OUP 978-0192736598

Charlie loves football. He watches it, memorizes facts about it, and he's even the captain of the local youth team, North Star Galaxy. When Charlie discovers that youth teams are being selected to play in exhibition matches at the World Cup tournament he decides to enter North Star – though that's not easy when your team are kind of rubbish at football! This book takes the form of Charlie's competition

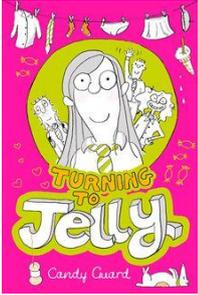
entry for his team to play a warm-up match at the World Cup – it's crammed with hilarious doodles, true facts, and match reports, and is totally accessible for boys, girls, and footie-mad kids everywhere!

'We are giving the Man-of-the-Match award...to a whole team!...And that team is...NORTH STAR GALAXY!' The crowd erupted. We stared at him. 'But we lost!' said Donut.

Fabrice grinned. 'Sometimes the best team does lose'.

Dave Cousins' short story *The Floodlight Man* was broadcast on BBC Radio Five Live, and an extract from *15 Days Without a Head* was one of the winning stories featured in the SCBWI 'Undiscovered Voices Anthology' in 2010. Dave lives in Hertfordshire.

There's a great section at the end of this book about creating comic strips and pictures!



Candy Guard *Turning to Jelly* Macmillan 978-1447256106

Big school means big problems in the first book in this comic-book-style illustrated series about twelve-year-old Jelly Rowntree and her friends.

Jelly (who is wobbly only when she runs and when Roger Lovely is in the vicinity) and her dorky best friends Ruby and Myf are going to secondary school. They know it's time to be cool and stop playing with dolls in their secret club ...

I am sick of being an embarrassed person...People only really care if they make fools of themselves – if it's someone else they're just thankful and relieved it's not them. So really it was a kindness to others to make a fool of yourself, if you thought about it.

Candy Guard is a writer, animator and cartoonist. Her main influences are Beryl the Peril and Claire Bretecher (look her up!) and she has created Dolly Pond, the feisty yet weedy central character of her award-winning animated sit.com *Pond Life* – there's loads of it on you-tube if you want to have a look.

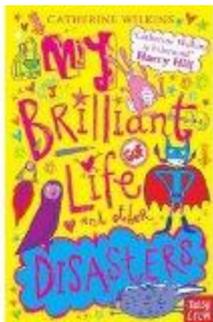


Laurie S. Sutton *Scooby Doo! The Secret of the Sea Creature* Curious Fox 978-1782011094

In this action-packed illustrated chapter book, You Choose the path to take and help Scooby and the gang solve a spooky mystery and expose the villain behind the mask. Scooby Doo and the Mystery Inc. gang need your help solving this maritime mystery. Will the gang stick together or split up? Does Scooby Doo deserve a Scooby Snack? You Choose!

Laurie Sutton is an editor for Marvel, DC Comics, Starblaze, and Tekno Comics. She has written *Adam Strange* for DC, *Star Trek: Voyager* for Marvel, plus *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* and *Witch Hunter* for Malibu Comics. She lives in Florida.

This is one of a series of You Choose! Scooby Doo adventures – anyone of them would provide the basis for a great activity and discussion session.



Catherine Wilkins *My Brilliant Life and Other Disasters* Nosy Crow 978-0857631596

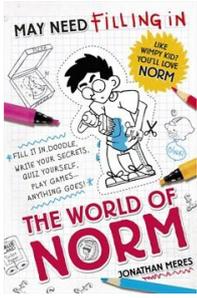
Life is sweet! Jessica's got her best friend back (mostly), and her comic is about to be launched (in the playground). The only ink blot on the landscape is Scarlett, Amelia's super-cool, annoying cousin, who happens to draw cartoons too. Soon Jessica is fighting for her cartoonist life...

The comic is beautiful, in my opinion. It's not very long, just one piece of A4, folded in half. It's all been printed out on Lewis's dad's fancy printer

(without him knowing.) The front cover is one of my now-famous sheep cartoons..Page Two, also known as the inside cover, is a quiz...'Which EastEnders Character are You?'...Page Three is an original comic strip...The fourth and final page, which is also the back cover, is a collection of spoof news and gossip about our school.

Catherine Wilkins is a writer and comedian. She writes jokes and stories which she performs around the country to strangers in the dark, trying to make them laugh. Catherine has always wanted to write funny stories for children and is finding the whole process more exciting than that time she bungee jumped. She lives in London.

Do it yourself!



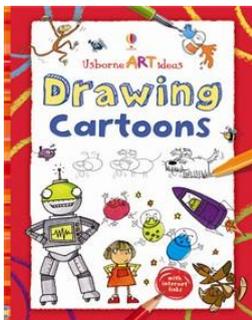
Jonathan Meres *The World of NORM: May Need Filling In* Orchard Books 978-1408334270

The first full-length activity book dedicated to the World of Norm! Packed with quizzes, games, doodles, fun facts and lots more. You'd be abso-flipping-lutely mad to miss out!

Chatterbooks champion **Jonathan Meres** is based in Edinburgh. A former stand-up comedian, he has won a Time Out award for comedy. Jonathan is now a writer and an actor; he has written books for Barrington Stoke, as well as the bestselling books and TV series *Yo! Diary!*

Have a go at doing a **comic strip about 'My Unbe-flipping-lievable Day'** – there's a storyboard template on p172.

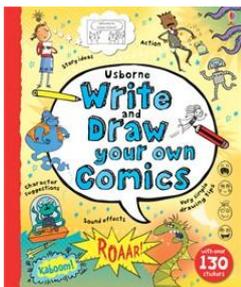
Or create a **Superhero!** – see p134.



Anna Milbourne *Drawing Cartoons* Usborne 978-1409508960

This book is brimming with easy and original ideas for drawing all kinds of cartoons from funny animals and superheroes to flick-book animations. It has step by step instructions which explain different techniques, including filling-in and shading, drawing in perspective and making a comic strip on a computer – plus downloadable pictures and [internet links](#) to recommended websites with lots more drawing advice and inspiration.

Anna Milbourne has written children's books about all kinds of things, such as tadpoles and frogs, dinosaurs and drawing, knights, princesses and Ancient Greek heroes, as well as some about a curious penguin called Pipkin. She lives in London.



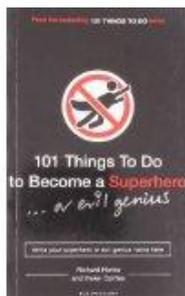
Louie Stowell *Write and Draw your own Comics* Usborne 978-1409564256

A brilliant activity book for budding comic artists to imagine and draw their own comic strips. There are simple step-by-step instructions, with lots of handy tips and hints, showing children how to create graphic stories using all the devices employed in 'real' comics. The book includes ideas for characters and storylines, sample comic strips and drawing tips – and there are stickers to add

to comic strips for extra colour and detail.

Louie Stowell is a writer and editor at Usborne Publishing. She has also drawn a lot of cartoons, and, more recently, has been writing an interactive stories for school kids with a start-up called Fiction Express. Her first interactive story *The School for Supervillains* is published by Readzone.

Check out the extracts from the book on our website – fab ideas for drawing **Superheroes versus Robots!** And for thinking up your **Superhero superpowers!**



Helen Szirtes & Richard Horne *101 things to Do to Become a Superhero (...or Evil Genius)* Bloomsbury 978-1408802571

You are just 101 Things away from global fame (and possibly world domination). Inside this book is everything you need to transform yourself from mere mortal into exciting, dynamic total superhero material. Make things, learn amazing tricks, and be inspired by genius ideas. Develop your Stealth, and Telepathy, then Select a sidekick, Groom your dark side, before

Learning to fly! Learn, make, practise and cheat your way to hero (or evil villain) status.

This is quite a demanding read for Chatterbooks age readers, with a mix of serious and fanrasising content. It's probably especially useful for group leaders for getting ideas for 'superhero' activities – see 'Longer activities' for some ideas from this book.

Helen Szirtes co-authored the children's bestseller *101 Things to Do Before You're Old and Boring*. Helen also writes poetry and is working on her first children's novel.

Richard Horne is a designer of record covers, book jackets and websites. This is his fifth book in the bestselling *101 Things* series. Richard lives in Norwich.

Have a look too at these great links:

The Phoenix Comic: How to make Awesome Comics!

This is a brilliant online [One Stop Shop](#) for downloading an unlimited number of fun sheets with ideas for drawing comics and telling stories.

To get The fab Phoenix Comic [visit their website](#) - and read a digital issue for free!

Guardian Children's website: 'How to Draw'

Learn how to draw characters just like those featured in your favourite books, with these step by step guides by children's book illustrators.

An [inspirational page](#) full of drawing ideas – have a go at drawing Norm or a Boxtroll! Or a pooping dinosaur, a windy day – or [a superhero!](#)

Further reading

	More books by featured authors		
Dan Hunter	Quest of the Gods series <i>Curse of the Demon Dog</i> <i>Lair of the Winged Monster</i> <i>Rise of the Horned Warrior</i> <i>Shadow of the Storm Lord</i>	Usborne	978-1409521068 978-1409521082 978-1409562023 978-1409521099
Satoshi Kitamura	<i>U.F.O Diary</i> Picture book	Andersen	978-1842705919
David Wiesner	<i>Tuesday</i> Picture book	Houghton Mifflin	978-0395870822

Catherine Wilkins	<i>My Best Friend and Other Enemies</i> <i>My School Musical and Other Punishments</i>	Nosy Crow	978-0857630957 978-0857633095
	Superheroes – and villains		
Michael Foreman	<i>Superfrog!</i> (Picture book)	Andersen	978-1849392198
Steve Hartley & Beatrice Lum	<i>Oliver Fibbs: The Clash of the Mega Robots</i>	Macmillan	978-1447220329
David McKee	<i>Elmer and Super El</i> (Picture book)	Andersen	978-1849394574
Mark Walden	<i>H.I.V.E (Higher Institute of Villainous Education</i> Plus further books in this series	Bloomsbury	978-1408815908
	Picture/Comic Books/Graphic Novels		
Raymond Briggs	<i>Father Christmas</i>	Puffin	978-0723277972
Eoin Colfer	<i>The Opal Deception</i> An Artemis Fowl Graphic Novel	Disney	978-1423145288
Neil Gaiman & P.Craig Russell	<i>Coraline</i> Graphic novel adaptation	Bloomsbury	978-0747594062
Goscinnny & Uderzo	<i>Asterix</i> series	Orion	
Herge	<i>Tintin</i> adventures	Egmont	
Chris Judge	<i>The Lonely Beast</i> Picture book	Andersen	978-1849392556
Hope Larson & Madeleine L'Engle	<i>A Wrinkle in Time: the Graphic Novel</i> Excellent graphic novel adaptation of the classic story	Farrar, Straus & Giroux	978-0374386153
Jesse Leon McCann	<i>Scooby Doo and the Rock'n'Roll Zombie</i> One of the Scooby Doo 8x8 picture book series by various authors	Curious Fox	978-1782021704
Sarah McIntyre	<i>Vern and Lettuce</i>	David Fickling	978-1849921749
Lincoln Peirce	<i>Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild</i> One of the Big Nate comic book series	Andrews McMeel	978-1449436346
Rick Riordan	<i>The Titan's Curse</i> Percy Jackson & the Olympians Graphic Novel	Disney	978-1423145516
	Chapter books with cartoon/comic book illustrations &/or zany text		
Clementine Beauvais	<i>Scam on the CAM</i>	Hodder	978-1444912548
Sarah Courtauld	<i>Buckle and Squash and the Monstrous Moat Dragon</i> Winner of the Sainsbury's Children's Book Award (5-9s) 2014	Macmillan	978-1447255550
Cressida Cowell	<i>How to Train Your Dragon</i>	Hodder	978-0340999073
James Gelsey	<i>Scooby Doo and the Sunken Ship</i> One of the Scooby Doo 'Mysteries' series by various authors	Curious Fox	978-1782021520

Paul Mason	<i>The Awakening (Factor 4)</i>	Bloomsbury	978-1408180679
Wendy Meddour & Mina May	<i>Wendy Quill is Full Up of Wrong</i> Wendy Quill series	OUP	978-0192794673
Chris Mould	<i>Pirates'n'Pistols</i>	Hodder	978-1444920550
Mo O'Hara	<i>My Big Fat Zombie Goldfish 4: Any Fin is Possible</i> Zombie Goldfish series	Macmillan	978-1447262954
Chris Riddell	<i>Ottoline and the Yellow Cat</i>	Macmillan	978-1405050579
Jamie Thomson	<i>The Wrong Side of the Galaxy</i>	Hodder	978-1408330265

Answers: Mixed up superheroes

SUPERMAN

DAREDEVIL

BATMAN

THE INCREDIBLES

WONDER WOMAN

DOCTOR DOOM

CATWOMAN

FANTASTIC FOUR

WOLVERINE

SPIDERMAN

GREEN GOBLIN

BOY WONDER