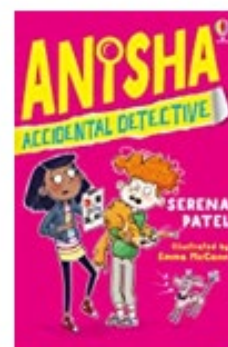
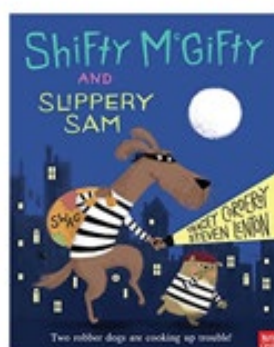
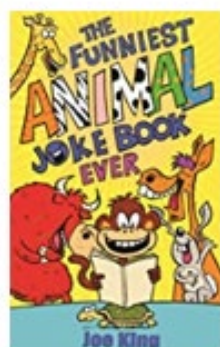
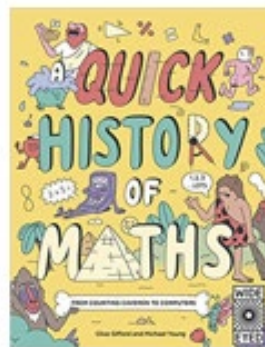
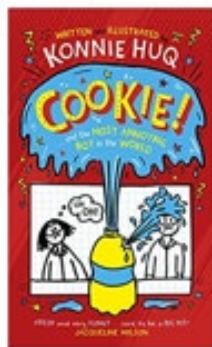




Tricks and jokes

Chatterbooks activity pack



Reading and activity ideas for your Chatterbooks group

Tricks and jokes

About this pack

In this Chatterbooks activity pack you'll find some great suggestions for funny books to explore, read and enjoy together. Inspired by Lily the Frog from the Summer Reading Challenge's [Silly Squad](#), this pack will focus on her favourite things, jokes and tricks. We hope you enjoy the books as well as the discussion and activity ideas, and further reading suggestions.

This pack is brought to you by **The Reading Agency** and their **Summer Reading Challenge** programme.

The Reading Agency has run Chatterbooks, the UK's largest network of children's reading groups, since 2001. Reading for pleasure has more impact on children's success than education or social class; Chatterbooks groups, which are run in libraries and schools, help children develop a lifelong reading habit. Chatterbooks is a flexible model that can be used with children from 4 to 12, for all different abilities and in targeted or mixed groups. Find out more at: www.readinggroups.org/chatterbooks

You can buy Chatterbooks packs in The Reading Agency shop:

<https://shop.readingagency.org.uk/collections/children>

You can find hundreds of free resources for children on the Chatterbooks resources page:

<https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/?programme=chat>

The Reading Agency is a national charity that tackles life's big challenges through the proven power of reading. We work closely with partners to develop and deliver programmes for people of all ages and backgrounds. The Reading Agency is funded by Arts Council England.

www.readingagency.org.uk

The **Summer Reading Challenge**, presented by The Reading Agency, is delivered in partnership with public libraries and funded by Arts Council England. The Challenge encourages children aged 4 to 11 to enjoy the benefits of reading for pleasure over the summer holidays, providing lots of fun and enjoyment as well as helping to prevent the summer reading 'dip'.

<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/about-the-challenge>

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[Tips for your Chatterbooks session](#)

Talking about the books: some book-talk questions

Read the first chapter or a brief extract of a book aloud and get everyone to share their first responses. This could be with the whole group or class – or children could discuss in small groups, and then share feelings and questions with everyone.

Ask lots of open questions to get people talking and encourage discussion about feelings and responses to each story, the characters, and the way the stories are told; some have illustrations linking in with the text while others scatter additional facts and figures throughout the story.

Have a good to-ing and fro-ing discussion – everyone will have their own feelings and opinions about the book, and the things they like, or don't like!

Here are some questions to get you going:

- What did you like about the book/s?
- Was there anything that you didn't like?
- What three words would you use to describe the book?
- Was there anything that puzzled you?
- Was there anything that surprised you?
- Who are your favourite characters? What did you like most about them?
- How would you describe these books to a friend?
- What did you think about the beginning – did the way the book started get you interested?

You'll find some more book suggestions at the end of this pack.

Have sheets of flip chart paper and pens handy for collecting everyone's thoughts and ideas.

Joke number 1

What do Paddington Bear and Winnie the Pooh pack on their holidays?

Punchline: The bear essentials

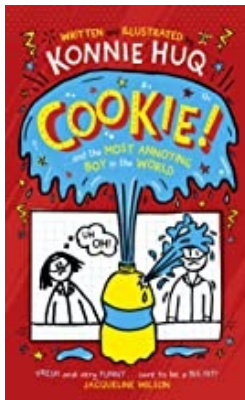
(Joke by Joe King in *The Funniest Animal Joke Book Ever*)

Trick number 1

1. Think of a whole number below 10.
2. Double that number.
3. Add six to that number.
4. Divide that number 2.
5. Now take away from that answer the original number you thought of.

The answer should be 3!

Books



Cookie and the Most Annoying Boy in the World by Konnie Huq Piccadilly Press, 978-1848128828

Cookie's life is basically over.

Her best friend in the whole world is moving to Solihull because one of her dads has a new job there. Solihull?! Where even is that?! Cookie begs her parents for a pet to fill the void but they have given her an absolute NO. It would be way too expensive and way way too messy.

But Cookie has never been a fan of the word 'no' so she visits the pet shop anyway and sets her heart on the sweetest cutest kitteniest kitten ever: Bluey. But then...DISASTER! The most ANNOYING boy she's ever met in her entire nine years goes into the pet shop, buys Bluey and renames her Nigel! And then he joins her year at school! And if that wasn't bad enough, he moves in next door to her. AAAAGGGGHHHHH!

But it's not all bad...Cookie gets the chance to go on her favourite TV show, Brainbusters. It's only a chance though - she'll have to win the school science competition first. It shouldn't be too hard...all she has to do is keep her head down, and not get too over-excited.

Unfortunately, that's not Cookie's strong point...

Discussion

Cookie loves science and even builds her own 'non-edible Solar System'. If you were to make a non-edible Solar System what would you use? Can you think of any funny things that could happen if you were to create a non-edible solar system or other invention?

Activity

In *Cookie*, Konnie Huq uses funny drawings to help tell the story. Other books that do this are *Tom Gates* and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*.

Using the funny stories from the discussion, draw a short comic strip to enhance the story.

You can find a comic strip template here: <https://www.teachingideas.co.uk/art/comic-strip-templates>

Joke number 2

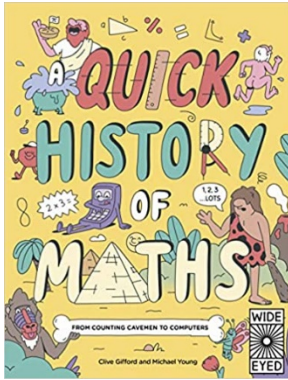
What did the frog say when he went to the library?

Punchline: Readdit, readdit, readdit

Joke number 3

Why did the child eat their homework?

Punchline: Because the teacher told them it was a piece of cake.



A Quick History of Maths: From Counting Cavemen to Big Data
by Clive Gifford and Michael Young
Wide Eyed Editions, 978-0711249011

Maths + history + jokes - boring bits = A Quick History of Maths. This book begins around 43,000 years ago with a notched baboon leg, the Lebombo bone (the very first mathematical object in the world) and rushes us past Hindu numerals and the invention of zero, via Pythagoras, Pascal and probability, right up to the present day, with big data and the maths that rules our digital lives. Geometri-cool!

Discussion

What were the most fun facts you discovered in the book? Each child can write down their favourite fact on a post-it notes to create an interactive display that can be added to.

Activity

There are lots of fun maths tricks that you can do with the children here:

<https://parenting.firstcry.com/articles/15-easy-maths-tricks-for-kids-to-boost-calculation-skills/>.

The children can then try each trick and vote which was their favourite. They can then share their favourite trick with their parents/carers.

Trick number 2

Quick drawing tricks

There are 12 drawing tricks that you could show to children so that they can enjoy. You can watch the video here: <https://youtu.be/H2RSctI6GnE>.



Holiday Ha Ha Ha! by Simon & Schuster UK
Simon and Schuster Children's, 978-1471146220

Get ready to laugh your summer socks off with this collection of hilarious short stories – from disastrous car journeys to super-powered grannies to gruesomely funny ghost hunters there's something for everyone in this side-splitting anthology! Featuring a stellar line-up of much-loved authors including Steve Cole, David Solomons, Joanna Nadin, Jeremy Strong, William Sutcliffe, Steven Butler, Candy Harper and Jonathan Meres.

Discussion

Talk about all the different things which make people laugh.

Think about different kinds of funny things:

Jokes

Puns

Silly songs

The kinds of situations which can make us laugh.

Think about:

Unexpected situations

Laughing with people

Funny animal videos

Activity

Only joking!

Get together a collection of joke books and look at all the different kinds of jokes – e.g.: Riddles; Knock-knock; Elephant jokes; Shaggy dog stories...

Choose a theme and get everyone to look for a joke on this theme – or they may know one already, or can make some up!

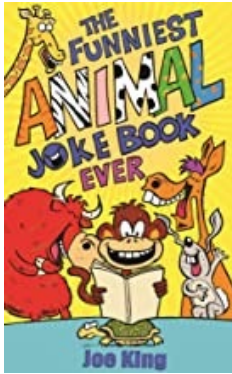
Get people to practise telling their joke to a partner - then have a joke-telling session together – see which jokes make most people laugh.

Or get in pairs and choose a number of your favourite jokes to create a comedy routine together.

Joke number 4

What do you call a sleeping bull?

Punchline: A bull-dozer.



The Funniest Animal Joke Book Ever by Joe King
Andersen Press, 978-1783442331

You'll fall out of your tree laughing at these hilarious animal jokes! What is black, white and red all over? A sunburnt penguin! What do you call a pig who knows karate? Porkchop! What do you call an elephant in a phone booth? Stuck!

Discussion

A pun is a joke that makes a play on words, typically by using words that sound similar but have different meanings. It can also use different meanings of the same word to make the saying funny.

- What do you call an alligator in a vest? An investigator!
- How do turtles talk to each other? By using shell phones!
- Why are teddy bears never hungry? They are always stuffed!
- Why did the spider go to the computer? To check his web site.
- Why do fish live in salt water? Because pepper makes them sneeze!

Can the group think of any puns?

Activity

Collect knock-knock jokes! Make up some of your own!

Here are a couple to give you an idea of the 'knock-knock' formula:

Knock! Knock!

Who's there?

Barbie.

Barbie who?

Barbiecue.

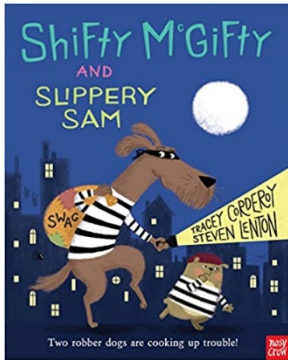
Knock knock

Who's there

Boo

Boo who

There's no need to cry, it was only a joke!



Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam by Tracey Corderoy and Steven Lenton
Nosy Crow, 978-0857631466

Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam are the world's most useless burglars, and their new master plan for a robbery is going hopelessly wrong! Will their neighbours catch them red-handed?

Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam are two hapless robber dogs who can never seem to fill their swag bags. They've tried the bank, the bookshop, the bike shop . . . and even a plot to rob their neighbours is foiled! But when they decide on a career change and open up a café they realize that, although crime doesn't pay, cupcakes certainly do! Join the fun in this hilarious rhyming picture book adventure.

Discussion

Mischief

Dictionary definition: 'To play pranks or cause embarrassment; Causing minor trouble or disturbance; Activity that playfully causes petty annoyance'

Other words with a similar meaning: hoaxer, practical joker, prankster.

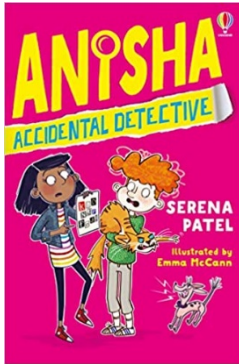
When do you get up to mischief? When is mischief funny? When might it be ok even if not funny? Do you play tricks on your friends and family?

Collect examples of mischievous characters in books and stories – e.g.:

- *The Witches*
- *George with his medicine*
- *Mr Fox*
- *Dirty Bertie*
- *Horrid Henry*
- *Dennis and Gnasher from The Beano*
- *Pippi Longstocking*

Activity

Read an extract of *Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam* but hide the cover of the book. What do they think will be on the cover? Tell the children that they are going to be book illustrators and design the cover for *Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam*. Once they have finished show them the jacket of the book. Hold a table top gallery where the children put their drawings on the table and they then they all walk around the table and look at each other's art work.



Anisha, Accidental Detective by Serena Patel and Emma McCann
Usborne, 978-1474959520

Anisha is all set to be a (reluctant) bridesmaid at Aunty Bindi's wedding...until a secret ransom note arrives. Bindi's groom has been kidnapped and will only be released IF THE WEDDING IS CALLED OFF! With best friend Milo, mischievous Granny Jas, a runaway lobster, a kitten-loving giant, and some super skills of logic and observation, it's up to Anisha Mistry to find her uncle, before the big family wedding of the year becomes a big disaster.

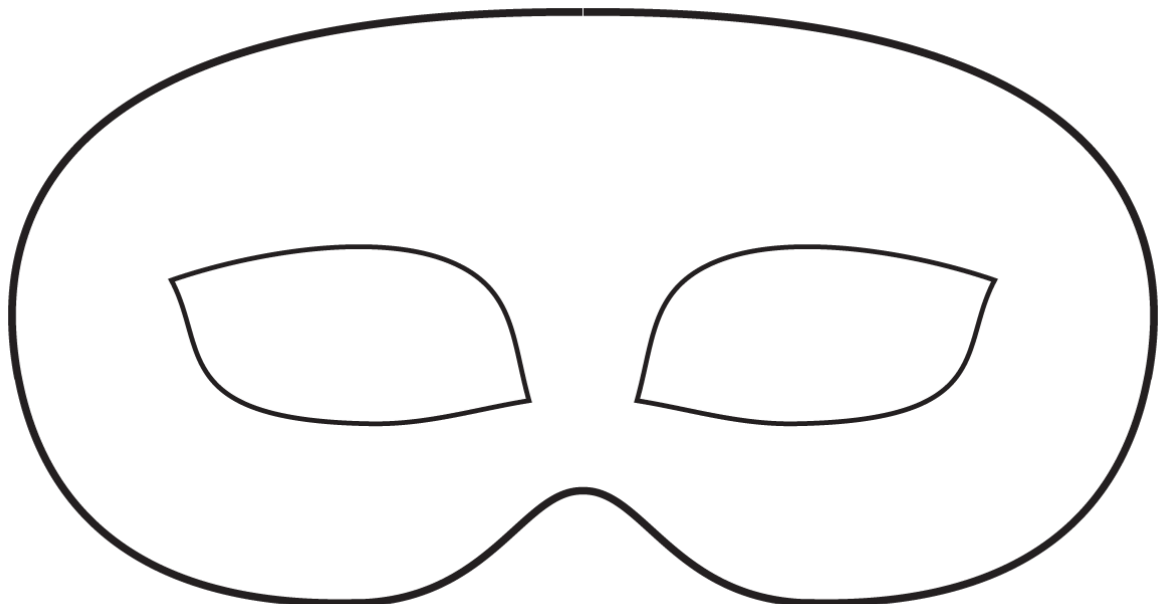
Discussion

Anisha's family help to create a lot of the humour in the story. If you think about your family what things do they do that make you laugh? Have you got any silly stories about your family and things that have happened to them?

Activity

Pretend that you are a detective and you need to disguise yourself. Create your disguise using the printable face template. You can download a version here:

<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/49469295891868313/>.



Joke number 5

Why do giraffes have long necks?

Punchline: Because their feet smell!

Joke number 6

What is a rabbit's favourite treat?

Punchline: Lolli-hops!

More funny and silly book suggestions



The [Silly Squad Book Collection](#) is full of seriously funny books! Every book has been specially chosen by children and librarians for everybody taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge to enjoy.

If you're looking for some Silly Squad inspiration, check out these reads:

[Picture Books](#) – illustrated books, perfect for reading aloud

[Early Reader Books](#) – shorter stories, perfect for emerging readers

[Middle Grade Books](#) – longer chapter books, perfect for confident readers

You can find out more on the Summer Reading Challenge website:

<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/>