

JUST CALL ME SPAGHETTI-HOOP BOY



Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy

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By Lara Williamson

This is the story of eleven year old Adam Butters, an adopted child living happily within a loving family. The most important things in his life are his mum and dad but every birthday he feels that a little bit of him is missing. He loves comics, especially superhero comics.

However things at home are worrying – his mum is stressed and weepy and, after overhearing his parents talking, he thinks that someone new is coming into the family to replace him. So he sets out to find his real mother.

When he discovers his birth name was Ace he is inspired to be a superhero himself. He wants to save lives, help people, and make everyone happy. He thinks this will stop his adoptive mum being sad and make his birth mum want him again. But it's not the easiest of superhero missions, and a painful discovery makes Adam realise you don't have to be super to be a hero...

Lara Williamson tells Adam's story sensitively and thoughtfully, and with humour and hope. It's an absorbing read upwards and will help to develop children's empathy – their ability to understand and share the feelings of others.

These resources, with ideas for discussion and activities, link with key learning points in the national curriculum programme of study for English KS2, supporting the reading, writing and spoken word aims of the curriculum. They cover themes from the book and include information about the contemporary adoption process.

Contents

- *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy*: about the book and the author (**Page 2**)
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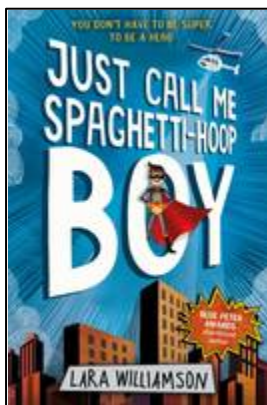
About the author

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Lara's debut novel, *A Boy Called Hope* has been shortlisted for lots of prizes, including the Waterstones Children's Book Prize and the IBW Book Award, and won the Sheffield Children's Book Award 2015 and the Salford Children's Book Award 2016. Her second novel, *The Boy Who Sailed the Ocean in an Armchair*, was shortlisted for the Blue Peter Book Awards and nominated for the Carnegie Medal. Lara was born and studied in Northern Ireland, before moving to London. She loves tap-dancing, daydreaming, eating chips, wearing glitter and writing. Not necessarily in that order. Visit www.larawilliamson.com to find out more.

About the book



9781474921305 | PB £6.99 | 9+ | What the author says:

"Most of my inspiration is from families and how they come in all shapes and sizes. I'm always trying to show that no family is 'ordinary' because behind closed doors every single person in every single family is 'extraordinary'. They've all got their own dreams and wishes and that's the true magic in each story, including *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy*. I write about relationships mainly and I think we're all interested in those. Mostly I explore themes that can affect families: loss of a loved one, rejection, disappointment, separation from a parent, illness but they're balanced with other things that surround

families like love, acceptance, connection with a parent, happiness and contentment. Another important message in *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy* is how being who you are is quite enough. And it is."

Watch the *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy* trailer: www.usborne.com/spaghetthoopboy

@LaraWilliamson

www.larawilliamson.com

#spaghetthoopboy

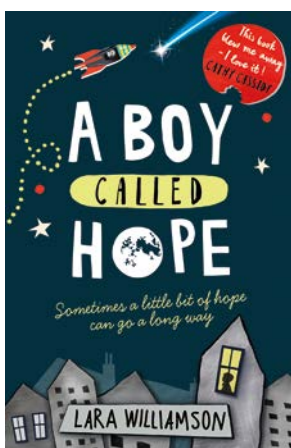


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Other books by Lara

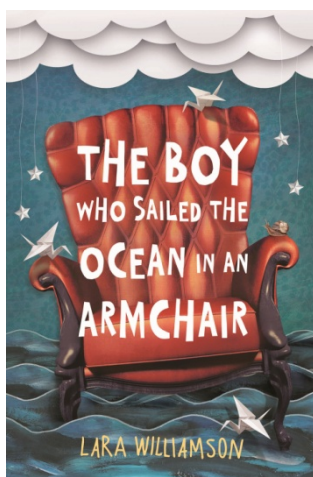
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9781474922920 | PB £6.99 | 9+

I'm Dan Hope and deep inside my head I keep a list of things I want to come true. For example, I want my sister, Ninja Grace, to go to university at the North Pole and only come back once a year. I want to help Sherlock Holmes solve his most daring mystery yet. And if it could be a zombie mystery, all the more exciting. I want to be the first eleven-year-old to land on the moon. I want my dog to stop eating the planets and throwing them up on the carpet. And finally, the biggest dream of all, I want my dad to love me.

This is Lara's first novel. It was shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Prize 2015 and the Independent Booksellers' Week Award 2014.



9781409576327 | PB £6.99 | 9+

Becket Rumsey is all at sea. His dad has run away with him and his brother Billy, in the middle of the night. And they've left everything behind, including their almost-mum Pearl. Becket has no idea what's going on - it's a mystery. So with the help of Billy and a snail called Brian, Becket sets out on a journey of discovery. It's not plain sailing but then what journeys ever are? An extraordinary story of courage, dreams and finding your way, this book was shortlisted for the Blue Peter Book Awards 2016.

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Notes for Teachers and Reading Group Leaders

Page | 4 **Linking with the National Curriculum**

English programme of study KS2

Overview

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

Aims

The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

The National Curriculum explicitly emphasises **reading for pleasure**, saying that

'Reading ... feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure house of wonder and joy for curious young minds'.

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Art and Design

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Art, craft and design embody some of the highest forms of human creativity. A high-quality art and design education should engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design.

Aims

The national curriculum for art and design aims to ensure that all pupils produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences.

Key stage 2

Pupils should be taught to develop their techniques, including their control and their use of materials, with creativity, experimentation and an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design.

Here are discussion and activity ideas, and suggestions for more reading, all linked to the story and themes in ***Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy*** to inspire and encourage children's **reading**, their **empathy** and **creativity**, and their **reading for pleasure**.

Booktalking

Introducing and reading the book

Set the scene, and read aloud the first chapter to introduce the book.

Then read this book all the way through, either reading aloud to everyone together, or letting each pupil read and experience the book for themselves.

At the end allow some time for pupils to reflect on the story and think about their responses to it.

Talking about the book: some booktalk questions

Ask everyone to share their first responses to this book. This could be with the whole class – or children could discuss in small groups, and then share key feelings and questions with everyone.

Explain that there are no right or wrong answers – everyone will all have their own feelings and opinions about the book, and the things they like, or don't like.

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Example discussion questions:

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- How did you feel when reading this book? And when you'd finished it?
- Which parts of the story do you remember most?
- Did you skip any parts? Which ones?
- Was there anything that took you by surprise?
- Were there any parts you didn't make sense of?
- Did any parts make you laugh/cry? Which parts?
- What was the thing you most liked finding out from the book?
- What kind of a book did you think it was going to be?
- Did you feel swept up by this story, all the time wanting to know what happened next?
- Did you stop and start, or did you want to read it all through in one go?
- Are there parts you want to read over again?
- Does the story work for you? What does the book say to you?
- Has reading the book changed or affected you? At the end of the story did you feel as if you'd shared a real experience?
- Have you read any other books by this author? What did you think about them? How do they compare for you with *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy*?

Discussion Ideas

All of Lara Williamson's books are about **families**, **friendship**, and **hopes, dreams and wishes**. Look at each of these themes in turn. Talk about them and collect examples of how they are explored in *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy* – and when you have read more of Lara's books compare how they are treated in these books too.

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Families

Page | 7 *"Families are confusing" says Tiny Eric, nodding sagely." (p167)*

Families can be described as groups of people who care for each other; all families are different. *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy* is about Adam, who is adopted, in *A Boy Called Hope* we meet Dan, whose dad has left his family to live with a new partner, and in *The Boy Who Sailed the Ocean in an Armchair* Becket's mother has died giving birth to his brother Billy.

Have a discussion exploring family as a theme. On a flip chart collect all the words you can think of to do with families - e.g. birth, adoptive, step, foster, single parent, divorce, brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins etc. This will help pupils to visualise the diversity of families and the concept of the family "unit".

In the **ADOPTION** section below you'll find several more family-themed activities with tips on running them with your class or group - **Page 20**.

Hopes, Dreams and Wishes

"I used to wish on birthday candles..."

"Did any come true?"

... "Not yet, but they will." (p184)

Talk about making wishes – and then hoping they will come true, and facing up to when they don't. What are the things which Adam hopes and wishes for?

"And I saw a million stars blinking across the night sky and they were like all my birthday candles put together and I imagined blowing them out and making a wish... I saw stars that went on for ever and lit up the darkness and it felt like anything was possible." (p109)

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Friendship

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“You were the best friend I ever had.” (p316)

Talk about Adam’s friendship with Tiny Eric, and Eric’s support and understanding in helping Adam look for his birth mother, despite his own worries and distress about the split in his family.

- What are the clues about Eric’s feelings?
- Adam fails to pick up on them, why do you think this is?
- Who gradually becomes Adam’s friend after Eric has left?
- How do you see this friendship developing through the story?

“Mum says he’s a very busy magic dog, and I might have to prepare for the day when he’ll go. But Mum promises he won’t leave till we’re all happy.” (p77)

Adam’s sister Velvet has an invisible pet dog. Why does the family behave as if the dog is real? What important part does Sausage Roll play in this story?

We often have imaginary friends or pets, especially when we’re young. Why do you think this is? Ask children if they remember having them, and to share any stories about them! Which animal book character would your class choose to be an imaginary pet – and why? In *The Boy Who sailed the Ocean in an Armchair* Becket’s brother Billy has a real snail as a pet, who is also a kind of imaginary friend.

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Adam's Feelings

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"I want to be normal and things to be perfect. I wanted to find the missing part of my life...but will I always feel like there's a hole inside me?" (p278)

- At the beginning of the book how does Adam feel about his family and about being adopted?
- Adam loves comics and their stories of superheroes. What does he have in common with both Superman and the Zorbitans?
- What triggers him to do something about finding out more about himself?
- What are the things that his parents say and do which then make him anxious?
- Look at all the 'clues' (e.g. the 'jellybean'; newspaper cutting about 'rehoming') What does Adam think they mean – but what do they really mean?
- Why does he want to be a superhero?
- Why does he decide to search for his birth mother? And why do you think he doesn't ask his parents about her and more about his birth?
- ***And then slowly I start to think about all the things my mum is now and that I hope my real mother could be...(p45)*** What does this tell you about what he really feels?
- How does he feel when he finds his birth mother?
- How does he react when he realises she doesn't want him?
- ***I punched dad like he was a supervillain. I pinched him hard and I hurt Mum with words and I threw away the watch that was supposed to remind me of the family and then I ran away. (p270)*** Why does Adam behave like this?
- What is the symbol which Adam uses to describe that 'tiny bit of you' that is missing? At the end of the book what does his sister Minnie give to him which represents that missing bit?
- What does Adam decide a superhero really is?

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Adam's Bobble Hat

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“I’ve been wearing a bobble hat since I was little and I love it. Mum says it’s my security blanket” (p28)

Adam wears his bobble hat all the time. Talk together about all the instances this hat turns up in the story and make a list of them on a flip chart – e.g. a present when he was a baby; the times he ‘hides’ in it; giving it to his mother; a new hat. Then look at your list: what does each ‘bobble hat’ episode tell us about Adam and how he is feeling at that stage of the story?

A Different Name

“But Ace...could I really be an Ace?” (p12)

Adam discovers that his birth mother gave him the name ‘Ace’, which inspires him to become a superhero and make everyone happy.

Discuss how a different name could make you feel like a different person who could do different things? What name would your pupils choose?

Eventually Adam decides that Spaghetti-Hoop Boy is a pretty good name.

Superheroes

“Everyone loves a superhero, because they’re excellent.” (p14)

Get together a collection of stories about superheroes – see ‘Further Reading’ for ideas. Talk about everyone’s favourites, make a list of them all, and say what is special about each of them.

See also ‘Scrambled Superheroes’ in the [Activities for Children](#) below – **Page 25**.

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Superhero Powers and Characteristics

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“Next morning I’m on the case writing notes about all the characteristics an excellent superhero should possess” (p17)

- 1) *Superpowers*
- 2) *Courage*
- 3) *Being a clever clogs (that’s what Grandma calls it)*
- 4) *Being honest and kind*
- 5) *Being special*
- 6) *A mission*

Ask everyone to think what kinds of skills and powers a superhero might need. Collect everyone’s ideas and talk about what these skills could be useful for. Try the ‘Superhero Skills’ quiz and ‘Be a superhero’ in the [Activities for Children](#) section below - **Page 25**.

Which character in this book would you most like to have as your friend?

Talk about the main characters in the book – you could use the ‘Who says what?’ activity from the [Activities for Children](#) section to start this off – **Page 27**.

Ask children to vote for their favourite and say why they’d like them as a friend. What did they think about The Beast as they read the story? Did they think this character was a boy or a girl?

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Funny Punning Names!

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A **pun** is a play on words and Lara Williamson has great fun in her stories making puns on the names of shops. Puns like this get people to notice shops more and remember them.

Give this list to your pupils to guess what the puns are based on.

Name of shop	Type of business	What's the pun?!
<i>In Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy</i>		
Surelock Homes		
Good Buy Mr Chips		
Lettuce Eat		
<i>In A Boy Called Hope</i>		
The Frying Squad		
<i>In The Boy Who sailed the Ocean in an Armchair</i>		
Crops and Bobbers		
The Codfather		

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Activity Ideas

Page | 13 LANGUAGE/Writing ACTIVITY

Creating the characters in a story

"I'm Adam Butters and I love comics... I like sunshine, my old teddy bear, rolling down hills and eating spaghetti hoops..." (p5)

In this story we quickly get to know quite a bit about Adam, the main character, because he tells us. By listing the things which he likes we start to get a picture of what sort of person he is.

This is a great way to start to shape up a character when writing a story: once you know key things about them you can build on this and imagine how he or she might act and react in different situations.

Lara Williamson uses lists of likes and dislikes to create the characters in her books. Have a look at <http://larawilliamson.com/characters.html> where she talks about her three main characters Dan, Becket and Adam.

Ask your class/group to write their own lists about themselves, with a column for likes and one for dislikes.

Ask them to swap them round and read out someone else's list – and ask everyone to guess who it is!

Here is a template for children to use when thinking about their characters.

CHARACTER TEMPLATE

Name of character	
Age	
Looks: e.g. height, hair, eyes	
A special thing about him/her	
Where he/she lives	
Who he/she lives with	
Best friends	
Likes	
Dislikes	
Favourite things to do	
Favourite books and book characters	
Favourite clothes	
Hopes, dreams, wishes	

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Beginnings and endings

Look at the first and last sentences of *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy* and talk about how they get you thinking and feeling.

“I’m Adam Butters and I love comics... I like sunshine, my old teddy bear, rolling down hills and eating spaghetti hoops...” (p5)

The opening sentences of a book are really important – they have to catch your attention and get you wanting to read more.

“I’m Adam Butters and I love comics.

But most of all I love living here with my family and there isn’t anywhere else in the universe I’d rather be.” (p322)

And the final lines can do several things: they may leave you with more to imagine about what could happen next, they may bring you a real surprise, they may leave you with feelings of hope, or comfort - or happy ever after!

“He was a beautiful butterfly” (The Very Hungry Caterpillar/Eric Carle)

“His supper was waiting for him and it was still hot” (Where the Wild Things Are/Maurice Sendak)

Have a look at the first and last lines of some favourite books and talk about how they work for you.

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Chapters – Kapow!

The story of *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy* is divided into 28 chapters, each one headed with a zappy comic book action-sound!

Talk about why we have chapters in a book: your reasons could include

- It gives a chance to stop and think about what has been happening in the story and what might happen next
- It offers useful pauses when you have to put the book down to do something else

Look at how the author ends each chapter – sometimes emphasising the mood of the chapter, sometimes leading in to the next chapter, or sometimes with a cliff-hanger.

Chapter Headings



Sounds and pictures!

Make a list together of the chapter headings in this story. Then make large cardboard cut-outs of all these sounds, with shapes like this.

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 create a comic strip or comic book.

Whamo! Invent your own Pow! Whamo! words. See this activity in the children's activities section below - **Page 27**.

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Similes

In her books the author often uses **similes** to make vivid descriptions by comparing things, often introducing the comparison with 'like' or 'as'.

e.g. *"My last hope has melted away like a Malteser on a tongue..."* (p204)

When we imagine a melting Malteser we can really understand how Adam's hopes have completely disappeared.

Adam uses lots of similes as he tells his story. Look out for them through the book – here are a two more examples:

"There's a thunderous crack outside and it sounds like biting into a chocolate-coated icecream" (p12)

"The words 'Did you love me?' continue to bubble and melt inside my mind like molten cheese under the grill..." (p82)

And here are some of Adam's similes with the first part or second part removed. Ask your pupils to complete the sentences to create their own similes.

..... is **as blank as snow without a footprint** (p8)

I'm as miserable as

I'm as..... as a Bigfoot with a sore toe (p21)

..... is **as much use as a chocolate kettle** (p53)

I can smell Mum's perfume and it is warm and comforting like

.....**is warm and comforting like the smell of baking bread** (p89)

I'm as angry as.....

I'm as as a bumble-bee trapped in a jar... (p91)

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Tell people about *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy!*

When your class or group has read this book they could create a presentation together to tell their friends or other classes in the schools all about it and get them reading and enjoying it too.

This could be an **audio or video podcast** recorded using a phone - or they could create a **PowerPoint** slideshow.

Libraries

“...there are lots of books...comfy chairs... (a room with) documents...shelves spilling over with newspapers... desks with banks of computers” (p150)

Adam’s teacher takes his class to the library to use newspaper files and archive files to do some research for their family trees.

What is your library like? You could arrange a class visit to your local library to get to know more about what it has to offer. Get children to look around the shelves and choose three books, and explain their choices to each other. These could be:

- a) a story they would recommend to a friend
- b) a non-fiction book about a favourite subject
- c) a picture book they could share with a toddler

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Art Activity

“I’m Adam Butters and I love comics.” (p5)

“What we read in comics gives us hope... We can live out our dreams... We can be special, braver than ever...” (p97 – Frosty the Fearless speaking at the ComicCon)

Creating your own comic strip or book

Do this in small groups, working out the ideas, characters and storyline together, and then sharing out the illustrations. Tips for your pupils:

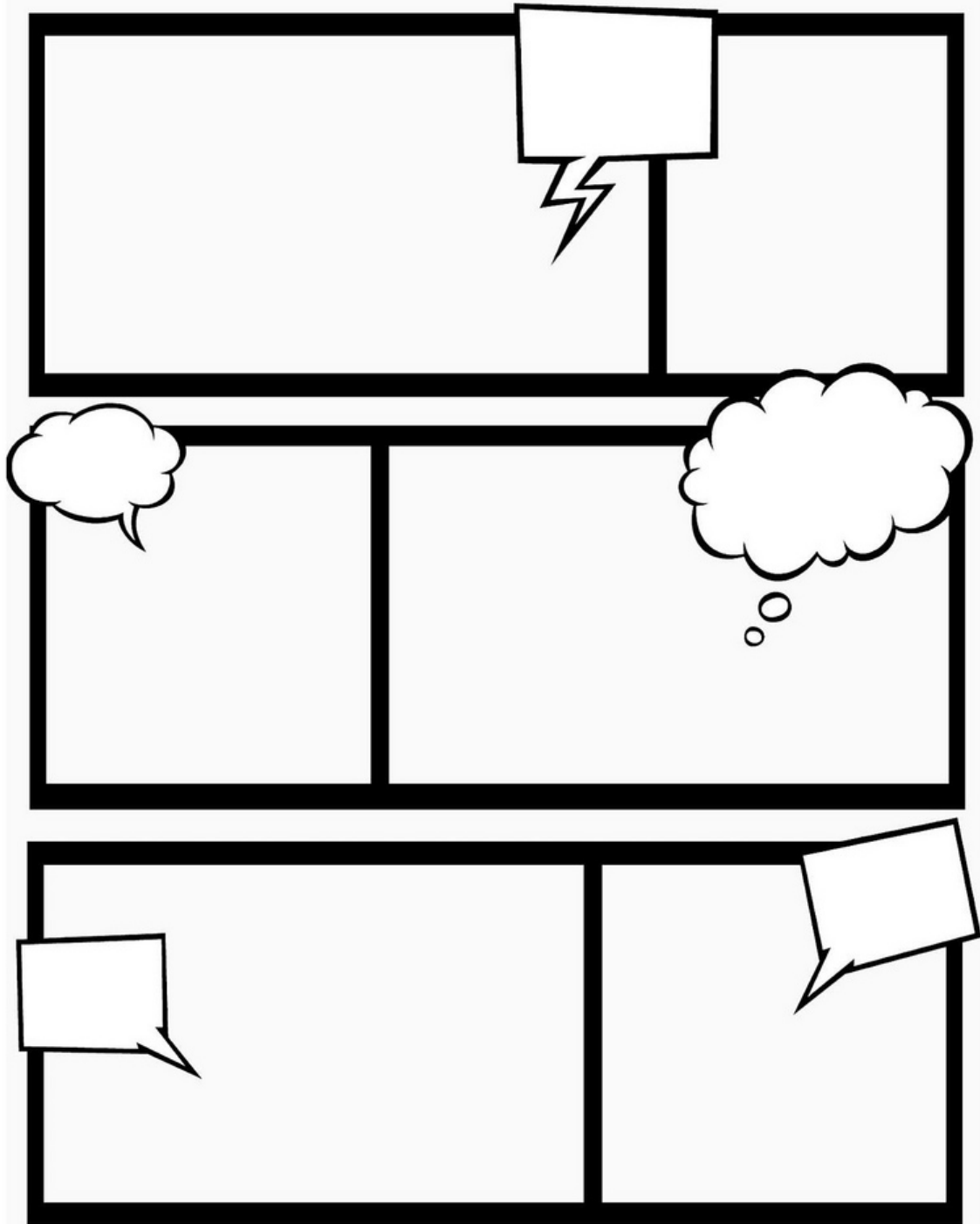
- Choose a simple storyline – eg. a fairy story, a dream you’ve had, or maybe a day at school!
- Decide how you want to present it – eg. with speech bubbles, or pictures without words; pages divided into strips across or down; colour or black & white
- Plot your story – do a storyboard or plan. You can use the template below.
- Think about your characters. Don’t have too many, and do a first page with them all on. Choose something simple to identify each one – e.g. a cape, a hat, a big nose, frizzy hair
- What sound effects will you have? How will you show them on the page?

Have a look at ***Write and Draw Your Own Comics*** (by Louie Stowell & Jess Bradley, published by Usborne)

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ACTIVITIES ON THE THEME OF 'FAMILIES' - WITH REFERENCE TO ADOPTION

Here are some activity ideas on the theme of 'families', together with some notes for running these activities sensitively, with consideration of the different kinds of family circumstances.

Guidance notes for running family-themed activities

- Consider the different types of family which children may have – e.g. birth, adoptive, foster, step, single-parent.
- Be aware that adopted children may not have information about their birth family, or may have difficult memories – for example around abuse or neglect.
- Some children may have family problems – such as those which Tiny Eric is experiencing with his parents separating because his dad has met someone else.
"The tree looks okay but on the inside it isn't" (p252)
- If you ask children to bring in pictures of themselves, give them the choice of pictures taken at any age, not just baby photos; you could ask them to bring in holiday pictures, or photos of themselves doing a favourite activity.
- If you do a family tree project, have a framework that encompasses all a child's families (step, birth, adoptive etc) – you could portray the family as a tree with the child as the tree trunk, or as a wheel with the child at the centre.
- If you are asking children to write about 'My Life', give a choice of title, such as 'When I was younger', 'The past year', or 'A special person/event in my life.'

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THE ADOPTION PROCESS IN THE UK

These basic key points about adoption may give you useful background for your discussions with your class or reading group. See the government website on adoption <https://www.gov.uk/child-adoption/overview> and also www.corambaaf.org.uk - the website for the CoramBaaf Adoption and Fostering Academy, the leading membership organisation dedicated to improving outcomes for children and young people in care by supporting the agencies and professionals who work with them.

Who can adopt? You can adopt if you're aged 21 and over, and single, married, in a civil partnership, an unmarried couple (same sex and opposite sex) or the partner of the child's parent.

Who to approach? An adoption agency that's part of your local council, or a voluntary adoption agency.

The adoption process: This normally takes about 6 months and includes preparation, checks, and assessment for whether you are suitable to adopt a child. Children are matched with prospective parents – this could be an open day where children play and prospective parents get to meet them.

Adoption court order: Once the child has lived with you for 10 weeks or more you can apply for an adoption court order to make the adoption legal. You get an adoption certificate which replaces the original certificate. The date the order is granted often becomes an annual 'adoption day' celebration, like a birthday, by the child and his/her adoptive family.

Contact with birth family: This is kept where possible. When a child is adopted the social worker writes a 'Later Life Letter' for the child, giving an explanation of why he/she was adopted and the reasons and actions that led up to this decision being made. This letter is usually shared with the child at around 10-12 years of age.

Diary/Life book: This is often called 'My Book About Me'. It's started by their social worker and given to the child's new parents, and then the child is encouraged to carry on with it as he/she grows up. See <http://corambaaf.org.uk/bookshop/my-life-and-me>

Access to birth documents: Adopted children can apply to see their birth certificate when they are 18. In *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy* Adam does have this information but this is not usually the case. However wherever possible and appropriate the adoption process does enable children to have information about their birth and birth family.

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Family Tree Project

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Talk about a Family Tree – explain that this is a plan which shows how members of a family are connected to each other.

Ask children to make lists of who could go on their family tree – maybe they could talk about and research this at home with their families. They could also include close family friends or ‘adopted’ aunts, uncles etc.

As explained above, adopted children are often given a Life Letter with information about their birth family – and are also often in contact with them. They are also encouraged to draw their own family tree, maybe showing themselves as the trunk and members of their birth and adoptive families on different branches of the tree.

In *Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy* Adam’s teacher gets the class to create a very individual family tree project:

Yesterday my school teacher, Mrs Chatterjee, came up with the bright idea that we should make our family trees for a project. It made me remember I’m adopted... Mrs Chatterjee said this project would help us discover lots of new things about ourselves and our loved ones...(p6)

She is calling this project the Forest For Ever project...this is a great opportunity to find out about the past and the present and prepare for the future. (pp42-43)

You may want to follow some of the activities involved in Adam’s school project e.g.

- Writing a letter to someone on your family tree (p80)
- Writing a newspaper headline highlighting a special person or event in your family (p111)
- Make model trees and hang tags on the tree representing what you’ve discovered about family member(s) (p42)

In this story Adam’s class creates a ‘Forest For Ever’ with their trees – and by showing their affection for their classmate Tiny Eric they also show that a family is much wider than the basic family unit.

‘I want to sort out Tiny Eric’s tree. It can survive and be okay. It just needs some love.’ (p257)



A Memory Box

*Mum says 'It's a memory box. It's a place to store the things that are important to you...'
I lift the lid and inside is my birth certificate, one tiny white bobble hat that Minnie gave
me as a baby and a photograph of the family flying a kite...
There's something else in the box – a tiny photo, and Mum says it's of Grandad
Fred.(p302)*

Adopted children are often given, or encouraged to have a memory box, adding special items and pictures as they grow up. Ask children what they would put in their box and why—maybe they have one already?

Strength Cards for Kids

The adoption organisation CoramBAAF publishes *Strength Cards for Kids*. This is a simple card set designed to help primary school-aged children to identify, name and celebrate their strengths, qualities and abilities – e.g. 'I am a good friend', 'I am good fun', 'I will try new things.'

The cards are full colour, with illustration and humour, and can be used by parents, carers and adults working with children to help build their self-esteem.

Adam's Strength Cards: being a superhero in real life

Make a list together of all the strengths, qualities and abilities which you know Adam has, from reading his story, and then create a set of Strength Cards for him.

Write each strength on a different card, together with an example which backs it up.

e.g. **I care about people** - I was very worried when I realised my mum was upset about something; **I think outside the box...**

JUST CALL ME SPAGHETTI-HOOP BOY



ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy Word search

Here are some of the characters and special things from this story – can you find them all? Look for them in the squares: across, down, up, and from right to left.

If you do this word search in class or with your reading group you could check out with each other about who the different characters are, and how the special things fit into the story.

ADAM MINNIE VELVET TINY ERIC SAUSAGE ROLL ACE

COMICS SUPERHERO SPAGHETTI HOOPS RAINBOW JELLY BEAN

FAMILIES WISH KITE PEGASUS PARK

W	I	S	H	K	I	T	E	X	Q	W	Z	B	J	X	Z
Z	P	P	X	Q	B	I	F	A	M	I	L	I	E	S	J
A	V	J	W	Z	X	N	Q	J	X	Q	K	P	L	P	F
D	X	W	Q	R	F	Y	Z	W	Z	W	Q	J	L	K	L
A	F	J	Z	A	T	E	V	L	E	V	Z	F	Y	X	L
M	I	N	N	I	E	R	W	Z	V	P	F	K	B	J	O
Y	X	F	K	N	P	I	X	P	Q	F	J	Q	E	F	R
Z	W	J	P	B	W	C	O	M	I	C	S	S	A	X	E
V	M	Q	W	O	X	Z	E	Q	W	Z	V	D	N	H	G
P	A	R	K	W	Q	E	X	Z	F	Q	J	Z	F	G	A
E	Z	J	Z	X	W	C	Z	J	F	W	X	P	K	Z	S
G	Q	X	F	J	X	A	K	Q	W	Z	J	V	X	J	U
A	W	P	T	Z	F	Z	Q	J	F	G	X	W	J	Q	A
S	F	S	P	O	O	H	I	T	T	E	H	G	A	P	S
U	G	W	J	Q	F	X	K	F	Z	P	Z	B	F	X	J
S	U	P	E	R	H	E	R	O	Q	J	X	P	Z	B	F



Scrambled Superheroes

Page | 25 These superhero names have all been scrambled up! (Superheroines too!)

Can you unscramble them to see who is here? If you need help, their real names are below.

ZAT ROBIN CINDER HILL BIKE TAP CAVERN MAIL NAME
SPUR

WE RANDOM WON RENT GLEANER ITS BEE CHILDREN A MAC TOWN

ROY WON BED NEW OR EVIL DR HOW RON MAIN

ANSWERS

DR WHO ZORBITAN CAPTAIN MARVEL THE INCREDIBLES

GREEN LANTERN CATWOMAN WONDER WOMAN BOY WONDER

SUPERMAN WOLVERINEIRON MAN INCREDIBLE HULK

What is your special superhero skill?!

Try this quiz to see what kind of superhero you would be – brave, bright, persistent? Or well up in the superhero fashion stakes?!

Answer a), b), c) or d) for each question – then look below to see how you score.

1. *A cat looks as if it's stuck at the top of a tree – what do you do?*

- a) You're scared of heights but you climb to the top of the tree and save the cat
- b) You stay at the foot of the tree saying 'Here kitty kitty' and eventually the cat comes down to you
- c) You call the fire service
- d) You tighten your belt and get a ladder



2. An old man lives on his own next door and looks rather lonely – what do you do?

- a) You're shy about talking with people you've only just met but you go ahead and get chatting
- b) You listen to him telling you lots of stories about when he was young
- c) You ask him what he's interested in and find ways of getting him more involved in things – e.g. books, internet, clubs
- d) You think he may laugh at your tights but that could be a way to get the conversation going!

3. Your teacher sets you some homework which you find very difficult – how do you deal with this?

- a) You do what you can and tell the teacher it was too difficult for you
- b) You keep calm and keep trying till eventually you get the hang of it.
- c) You look for a helpful website, or for someone to explain it to you
- d) You put on your tights and decide that going out to save the world is more important than doing your homework.

4. You're enjoying a day on the beach and you see a shark out to sea, its fin glistening in the sun – how do you react?

- a) You plunge into the water and warn all the swimmers to get to safety
- b) You are thrilled and sit and watch the shark swimming across the bay
- c) You recognise it as a basking shark and watch as it swims far out, keeping its distance from swimmers
- d) You go in the sea but stay clear of the shark. You get your tights wet.

5. You're on the bus going to school; the lady next to you doesn't have enough money for her fare – and you only have your own fare. Can you help?

- a) You ask people on the bus if anyone can help and give or lend some money
- b) You give her your fare money and get off the bus and walk the rest of the way to school
- c) You talk with the driver and persuade him to let her travel on the bus
- d) You are wearing your superhero tights which give you the power to swoop the lady into the air and fly her home – no need to go on the bus!

JUST CALL ME SPAGHETTI-HOOP BOY



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Answers:

Mostly a)s: Courage is your main superhero skill – but sometimes you need to think before you dash into action: climbing a tree or swimming into shark-infested water can be risky!

Mostly b)s: Patience looks to be your special strength – patience plus persistence can be really useful when the going is tough.

Mostly c)s: As Adam’s Gran would say, you are a bit of a clever clogs!

Mostly d)s: Well done! You have the ability to keep your tights up – Superman would be proud of you!

JUST CALL ME SPAGHETTI-HOOP BOY



Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy: Who says what?

Can you match these quotations from the book with the characters who said them?

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Adam Mum Dad Minnie Velvet Tiny Eric Mrs Chatterjee The Beast

<p>A. <i>I held you in my hands but really I held you in my heart.</i></p>	
<p>B. <i>Sausage Roll says thank you for remembering his birthday.</i></p>	
<p>C. <i>My uncle repairs watches and sells batteries and second-hand jewellery. He's got a shop on Brolly Way, so that's who made me an authority. (on watches)</i></p>	
<p>D. <i>It was selfish but I wanted you to stay and I was scared your real family would be better than ours. I even imagined you'd get a new sister who'd be so much nicer than me.</i></p>	
<p>E. <i>You want good luck?... You've come to the right place.</i></p>	
<p>F. <i>No, I haven't got twenty eight fully correct maths homework exercises in my possession. But I have secured us a front page article in the 'Pegasus Park Packet.'</i></p>	
<p>G. <i>What I don't know about heroes you could write on the back of a key that would fit the lock in a doll's house.</i></p>	
<p>H. <i>I'm a superhero because I'm me. We all might look ordinary but we're not, we're extraordinary.</i></p>	

JUST CALL ME SPAGHETTI-HOOP BOY



A Letter to Eric - One Year On

Page | 29 At the end of the book Adam writes a letter to his friend Tiny Eric, who has moved to Poland, telling him how he misses him and how he wishes he'd spent more time with him and noticed his problems.

Eric had realised that Adam was already a superhero – we all are when we believe in ourselves and who we really are.

Look ahead a year and imagine that you are Adam, writing another letter to Eric, telling him about all the things that that he has been doing since Eric left.

There's quite a bit to update him on – getting to know The Beast, starting at secondary school, his family and Dog Star, comics.

Perhaps he has a new favourite food! Or his family might have moved house? He may have some great books to recommend.

How do you think he is feeling about things now?

You could start your letter like this:

Address.....

Date.....

Dear Eric

I hope you're well settled in Poland now, at your school and with your family, and that you've made some good friends.

Lots of things have happened here in the past year but we still think about you, and I wanted to write and tell you about things. As I said before, you were the best friend I ever had...



You Are A Superhero!


Page | 30 *You don't have to be a hero to be super. You just have to be you. (p294)*

But what if you were a comic book superhero?!

Or creating a new superhero character!

You'll need to look the part – and 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. Starfire – or 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? How about Raven or Tornado?
Design a logo 	Go for something simple and easily recognisable – eg. a particular letter, or shape.
What's your special weapon?	Green Lantern, for example, has a power ring, Spiderman has web-shooters, and Wonder Woman has a lasso of truth.
Any other 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?

JUST CALL ME SPAGHETTI-HOOP BOY



When you've planned your superhero character you can draw it here – labelling all those special superhero powers and gadgets!

Superhero name.....

Logo:

A large empty rectangular box for drawing and labelling the superhero character.

JUST CALL ME SPAGHETTI-HOOP BOY



Suggestions for further reading

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AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER	ISBN
Orphans and adopted children			
Frances Hodgson Burnett	<i>The Secret Garden</i>	Vintage	978-0099572954
C. S. Lewis	<i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> (LW favourite book)	HarperCollins	978-0007323128
Hilary McKay	<i>Saffy's Angel</i>	Hodder	978-0340989043
Kate Maryon	<i>A Sea of Stars</i>	HarperCollins	978-0007464647
L. M. Montgomery & Sophie Allsopp	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>	Usborne	978-1409598671
Lemony Snicket	<i>The Bad Beginning: a Series of Unfortunate Events</i>	Egmont	978-1405266062
Noel Streatfeild	<i>Ballet Shoes</i>	Puffin	978-0141359809
Jacqueline Wilson	<i>The Story of Tracy Beaker</i>	Yearling	978-0440867579
Being a (super)hero – and superskills			
David Baddiel & Jim Field	<i>The Person Controller</i>	HarperCollins	978-0007554546
Steve Barlow & Steve Skidmore	<i>Action Dogs: Ocean of Peril</i>	Usborne	978-1409520191
Cece Bell	<i>El Deafo</i>	Amulet Books	978-1419712173
Frank Cottrell Boyce	<i>The Astounding Broccoli Boy</i>	Macmillan	978-0330440875
Michael Foreman	<i>Newspaper Boy and Origami Girl</i>	Andersen	978-1849395199
Richard Horne & Helen Szirtes	<i>101 Things to Do to Become a Superhero... (or Evil Genius)</i>	Bloomsbury	978-1408802571
Sarah Lean	<i>Hero</i>	HarperCollins	978-0007512249

JUST CALL ME SPAGHETTI-HOOP BOY



Alan MacDonald & Nigel Baines	<i>Superhero School</i>	Bloomsbury	978-1408825235
David Solomons	<i>My Brother is a Superhero</i>	Nosy Crow	978-0857634795
Forrest Wilson & David McKee	<i>Super Gran</i>	Andersen	978-1783444588
A comic, some comic books – and books on making comics			
	<i>The Phoenix Comic</i> www.thephoenixcomic.co.uk		
Steve Cole	<i>Magic Ink</i>	Simon & Schuster	978-0857078704
Goscinnny & Uderzo	<i>Asterix the Gaul</i>	Orion	978-0752866055
Hergé	<i>The Black Island: Adventures of Tintin</i>	Egmont	978-1405206181
Lincoln Peirce	<i>Big Nate and the Revenge of the Cream Puffs</i>	Andrews McMeel	978-1449462284
Louie Stowell & Jess Bradley	<i>Write and Draw Your Own Comics</i>	Usborne	978-1409564256

Some useful books about adoption:

***Picnic in the Park* Joe Griffiths & Tony Pilgrim BAAF 978-1905664085**

This tells the story of Jason’s birthday picnic and his guests. In so doing, it introduces children to a range of family structures, including two- and one-parent families; adoptive and foster families; gay and lesbian families; and step-families. It also shows a diverse range of adults and children.

***Life Story work: What it is and what it means* Shaila Shah BAAF 978-1903699508**

***My Life and Me* Jean Camis BAAF 978-1903699003**

JUST CALL ME SPAGHETTI-HOOP BOY



Wordsearch Answer:

W	I	S	H	K	I	T	E	X	Q	W	Z	B	J	X	Z
Z	P	P	X	Q	B	I	F	A	M	I	L	I	E	S	J
A	V	J	W	Z	X	N	Q	J	X	Q	K	P	L	P	F
D	X	W	Q	R	F	Y	Z	W	Z	W	Q	J	L	K	L
A	F	J	Z	A	T	E	V	L	E	V	Z	F	Y	X	L
M	I	N	N	I	E	R	W	Z	V	P	F	K	B	J	O
Y	X	F	K	N	P	I	X	P	Q	F	J	Q	E	F	R
Z	W	J	P	B	W	C	O	M	I	C	S	S	A	X	E
V	M	Q	W	O	X	Z	E	Q	W	Z	V	D	N	H	G
P	A	R	K	W	Q	E	X	Z	F	Q	J	Z	F	G	A
E	Z	J	Z	X	W	C	Z	J	F	W	X	P	K	Z	S
G	Q	X	F	J	X	A	K	Q	W	Z	J	V	X	J	U
A	W	P	T	Z	F	Z	Q	J	F	G	X	W	J	Q	A
S	F	S	P	O	O	H	I	T	T	E	H	G	A	P	S
U	G	W	J	Q	F	X	K	F	Z	P	Z	B	F	X	J
S	U	P	E	R	H	E	R	O	Q	J	X	P	Z	B	F

JUST CALL ME SPAGHETTI-HOOP BOY



Funny punning

Name of shop	Type of business	What's the pun?!
<i>In Just Call Me Spaghetti-Hoop Boy</i>		
Surelock Homes	Key cutting	Sherlock Holmes
Good Buy Mr Chips	Fish & chips	<i>Goodbye Mr Chips</i> – a film and book (by James Hilton)
Lettuce Eat	Food store	Play on the words 'let us eat'
<i>In A Boy Called Hope</i>		
The Frying Squad	Fish and chips	Play on words – police Flying Squad
<i>In The Boy Who sailed the Ocean in an Armchair</i>		
Crops and Bobbers	Hairdressers	Cops and robbers!
The Codfather	Fish and chips	Film: <i>The Godfather</i>

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Who Says What?

- A. Mum
- B. Velvet
- C. The Beast
- D. Minnie
- E. Eric
- F. Mrs Chatterjee
- G. Dad
- H. Adam