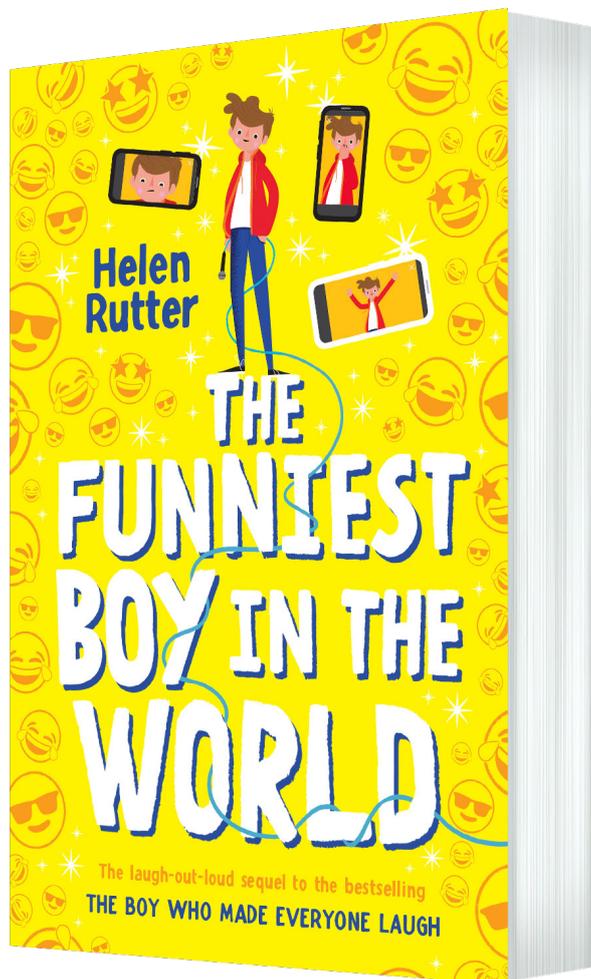


The LAUGH-OUT-LOUD sequel to  
The Boy Who Made Everyone Laugh

# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## TEACHING RESOURCES



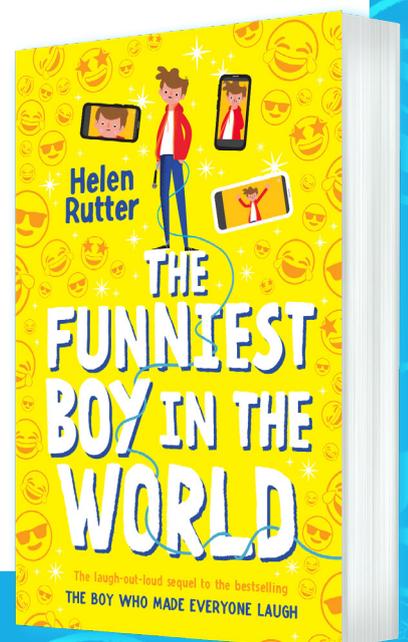
Text © Helen Rutter, 2023. Illustrations © Andrew Bannecker, 2023.

# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

The LAUGH-OUT-LOUD sequel to  
The Boy Who Made Everyone Laugh

## CONTENTS

- Pg 03 *The Funniest Boy in the World* Year 5 Lesson Plan
- Pg 06 Resource Sheet 1: Billy on TV
- Pg 08 Resource Sheet 2: Keep it Kind
- 
- Pg 09 *The Funniest Boy in the World* Year 6 Lesson Plan
- Pg 11 Resource Sheet 1: Talk About
- Pg 12 Resource Sheet 2: Backdrop Design
- Pg 13 Resource Sheet 3: Comedy Review
- 
- Pg 14 Year 5 and 6 Curriculum Links



# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Year 5 Lesson Plan

### Objectives

- To explore a recent decade before the existence of social media and think about how the story would have differed had it been set in that time.
- To discuss the importance of kindness when using social media.

### Outcomes

- Children will re-write part of the story as though it has been set in a time before social media existed.
- Children will write a set of rules in the form of a poster to encourage kindness when using social media.

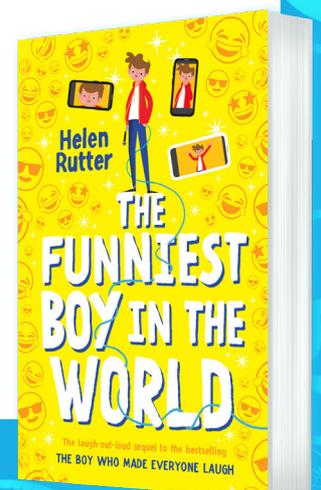
### Resources

- *The Funniest Boy in the World* by Helen Rutter
- Video clips of Saturday morning TV shows for children (1970s, 80s or 90s)
- Photographs of magazines for children and teens (1970s, 80s or 90s)
- *Resource Sheet 1: Billy on TV*
- *Resource Sheet 2: Keep it Kind*

### Lead in

After sharing the book with your class, revisit pages 160-161 where some of the social media comments about the video clip posted of Billy by Leo are shown. Discuss how Billy feels about the video clip and the comments it has generated. Follow this by revisiting the part of the story (pages 227-228) where Skyla calls Billy to remind him of her important day and his promise to help her pack when she moves out of her foster home. Discuss why Billy isn't listening properly to Skyla. What thoughts are going through Billy's mind? How are the likes and dislikes affecting Billy? The likes and positive comments on social media make Billy happy, excited and proud, he might feel like he's floating on air. However, in contrast, the negative comments might make Billy feel sad, deflated, insecure, anxious or angry, he might feel like his world has come crashing down to the ground. Discuss the roller-coaster of emotions that Billy might be experiencing, one minute he's up and the next he's down, all because of the tap of a stranger's phone or a comment made by a stranger.

*Continued...*



# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Year 5 Lesson Plan CONT.

### Task

Explain to the class that they are going to look at the theme ‘back in time’. They will explore what life was like just a few decades ago (before smart phones and social media platforms such as Instagram existed). As a teacher, depending on your age, you may be able to share your own experiences. Children could also be encouraged to ask some family members about what they remember from their childhood/teenage years.

For example, a teacher who was a teenager of the 1980s might show a video clip of a celebrity being interviewed on ‘Saturday Superstore’ and how some children had the opportunity to ‘phone-in’ and talk to a famous person such as a popstar or actor. Explain that many children would have ‘tried’ to be part of a phone-in, but it would be a ‘lucky few’ that actually got to talk on the show. Explain that there was a standard to follow where viewers would be expected to talk politely to a celebrity and if they started to insult the person, their phone call would probably be cut-off immediately and the TV hosts would move swiftly on to the next caller, probably trying their best to pretend that it hadn’t happened.

As well as Saturday morning television shows, another way teenagers in recent decades could voice their opinions about celebrities would be through teen magazines which were the way many teenagers stayed up to date with their favourite celebrities. Magazines such as ‘Smash-Hits’ and ‘Look-In’ were designed to promote popstars to young people and encourage them to go out and buy their latest albums. There would be a page in the magazine dedicated to readers’ letters about celebrities, and it would be possible for a reader to criticise a famous person. Readers who disagreed with this letter could write counter-letters and voice their opinion, but it would be unlikely that their letters would be published too. The magazine wouldn’t want a regular slot where readers were arguing with each other by letter, that would certainly spoil the positive vibe of the magazine.

Using **Resource Sheet 1: Billy on TV**, ask the children to create a back-in-time teen magazine-style picture story with captions and speech bubbles showing:

- Billy finding out he is going to be on Saturday morning television with Leo (Think about how he’d have been contacted: by letter, by landline phone call, etc.)
- Leo and Billy on the show.
- Billy’s feedback during the show (there might have been a phone-in).
- Billy’s feedback\* after the show... from the public, from his friends and from Leo.

\*Remind the children that there would have been no online social media, no text messages, no phone to buzz in Billy’s pocket as he’s walking down the street.

*Continued...*



# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Year 5 Lesson Plan CONT.

Here are some examples:

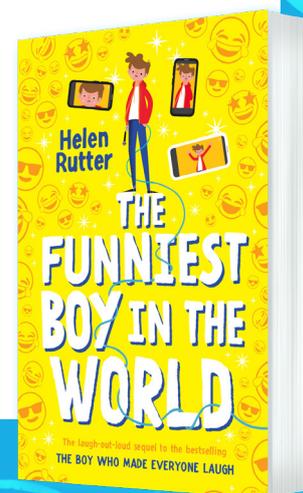
- Same day feedback – the news on television or radio, a landline phone call, seeing Billy in person.
- Next day feedback – the newspapers, a letter in the post.
- A week or so later – Teen magazine, the magazine supplement to a Sunday newspaper.

### Plenary

Ask the children to compare their ‘back-in-time’ versions of the story with the book set in the present day, and discuss whether 1970s, 80s or 90s were kinder? Make a list of the positives and negatives for now and then and compare them to decide which experience would have been kinder to Billy. Would Billy be the character he is now had he not experienced the negativity from social media? Would fame have found him in a decade of the past?

### Extension

This book brings so much opportunity for discussion about the harmful effects that social media can have on young people. Ask the children to suggest a set of rules to keep their mental health safe, both now and as they enter their teens in a few years’ time. Using **Resource Sheet 2: Keep it Kind**, each child can design a poster to encourage kindness on social media showing a simple set of rules to remember and follow.



# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Resource Sheet 1: Billy on TV

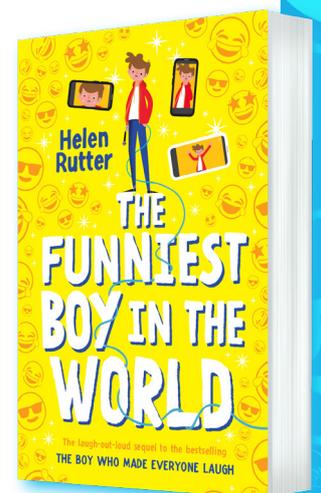
Take the story 'back in time' and make a teen magazine-style picture-story using illustrations, speech bubbles, thought clouds\* and captions to re-tell the parts where:

- Billy finds out he's going to be on a Saturday morning children's programme
- His experience on the TV programme
- Billy's feedback from friends, family and complete strangers

\*Remember to explain Billy's thoughts to show how he feels throughout this part of the story

---

*Resource continues on next page...*



# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Resource Sheet 1: Billy on TV


# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Resource Sheet 2: Keep it Kind!

Design a poster to remind people about the importance of being kind to everyone on social media.



# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Year 6 Lesson Plan

### Objectives

- To explore everyday situations that can be funny to talk about.
- To explore the importance of positive feedback and how to offer it in the form of a review.

### Outcomes

- Children will create a backdrop design to reflect a funny theme they imagine Billy talking about in the future.
- Children will write a review of a stand-up show they imagine Billy performing in the future.

### Resources

- *The Funniest Boy in the World* by Helen Rutter
- *Resource Sheet 1: Talk About*
- *Resource Sheet 2: Backdrop Design*
- *Resource Sheet 3: Comedy Review*

### Lead in

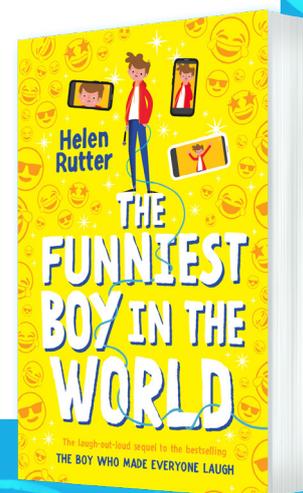
Revisit some parts of the story where Skyla's drawings are mentioned, such as on page 49 where the image of a cartoon version of Billy wrapped up in a huge snake comes up on to the whiteboard. What impact does Skyla's artwork have on Billy's performances? Why is it so important to Billy to use them? What do the children imagine Skyla's artwork to be like?

### Task

Explain to the children that they are going to imagine that Billy is going to do a comedy tour. Do they think he would have continued with his stand-up comedy throughout his high school years, or do they think he would have taken a break to concentrate on his school work and 'being a kid'? The children may need to decide whether this will be Billy a year after the story or a more 'grown-up' Billy.

Explain to the children that when famous comedians tour the country with their stand-up shows, they often have a 'backdrop'. This is usually a huge screen at the back of the stage with the title of the tour and a picture, often of the comedian, that relates to the title or theme of the show. It might be possible to show photographs of comedians performing on stage in front of the backdrop of their tour.

*Continued...*



# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Year 6 Lesson Plan CONT.

Ask the children to think again about ‘future Billy’ and to imagine him as a successful comedian touring theatres and arenas. What do they think Billy will talk about in his stand-up show? Will he have picked up his well-loved joke books again or will he be talking about ‘the funny things in life’ (both real and made-up)? Ask the children to mindmap their ideas in small groups and to suggest what the theme of his show might be. **Resource Sheet 1: Talk About...** can be enlarged for children to record their ideas.

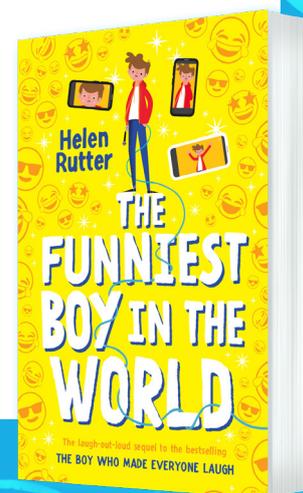
Collect the ideas from the children to make an ideas bank – this can be used as inspiration for some amazing artwork. Show the children some examples of comedians’ tour names and ask the children to think what Billy’s tour might be called (connecting it to the theme of the show). The children can use **Resource Sheet 2: Backdrop Design** to practise their ideas and designs before drawing and painting them on large pieces of paper. This can be done through many different forms of collage or painting techniques.

### Plenary

Encourage the children to showcase their artwork by explaining the theme they think Billy might have chosen for his stand-up show and even thinking about some of the funny things he might have said. Encourage the children to give positive feedback to each other’s artwork and ideas, reinforcing the message of the book about the harmful effects of negative comments.

### Extension

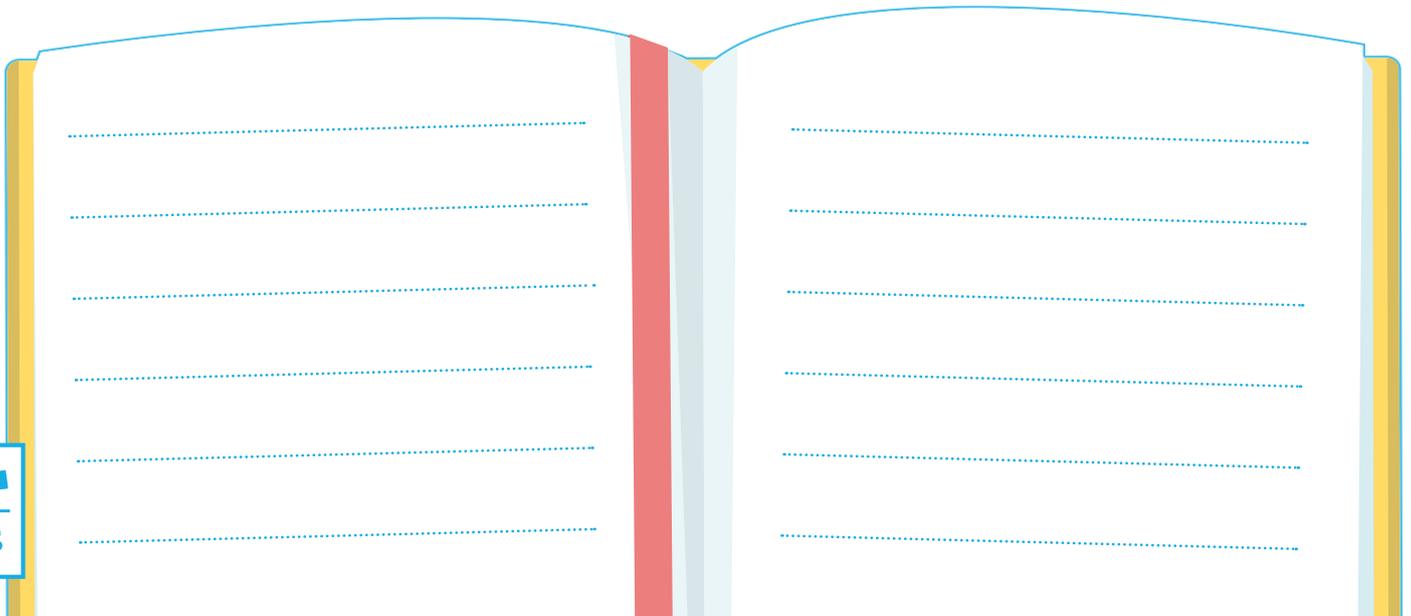
Ask the children to imagine that they have attended the opening show of Billy’s comedy tour. Ask them to write a review using **Resource Sheet 3: Comedy Review**. Discuss the different platforms on which a review can be written, such as an official review for a newspaper or theatre review website or an informal review in the form of a comment that anyone can write on a social media platform like Instagram or Facebook. Discuss the impact that a review can have on the performer and ask the children to choose their words with that in mind. If there is a criticism to be made, then it is ‘kinder’ to balance it with some positive feedback too.



# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Resource Sheet 1: Talk About...

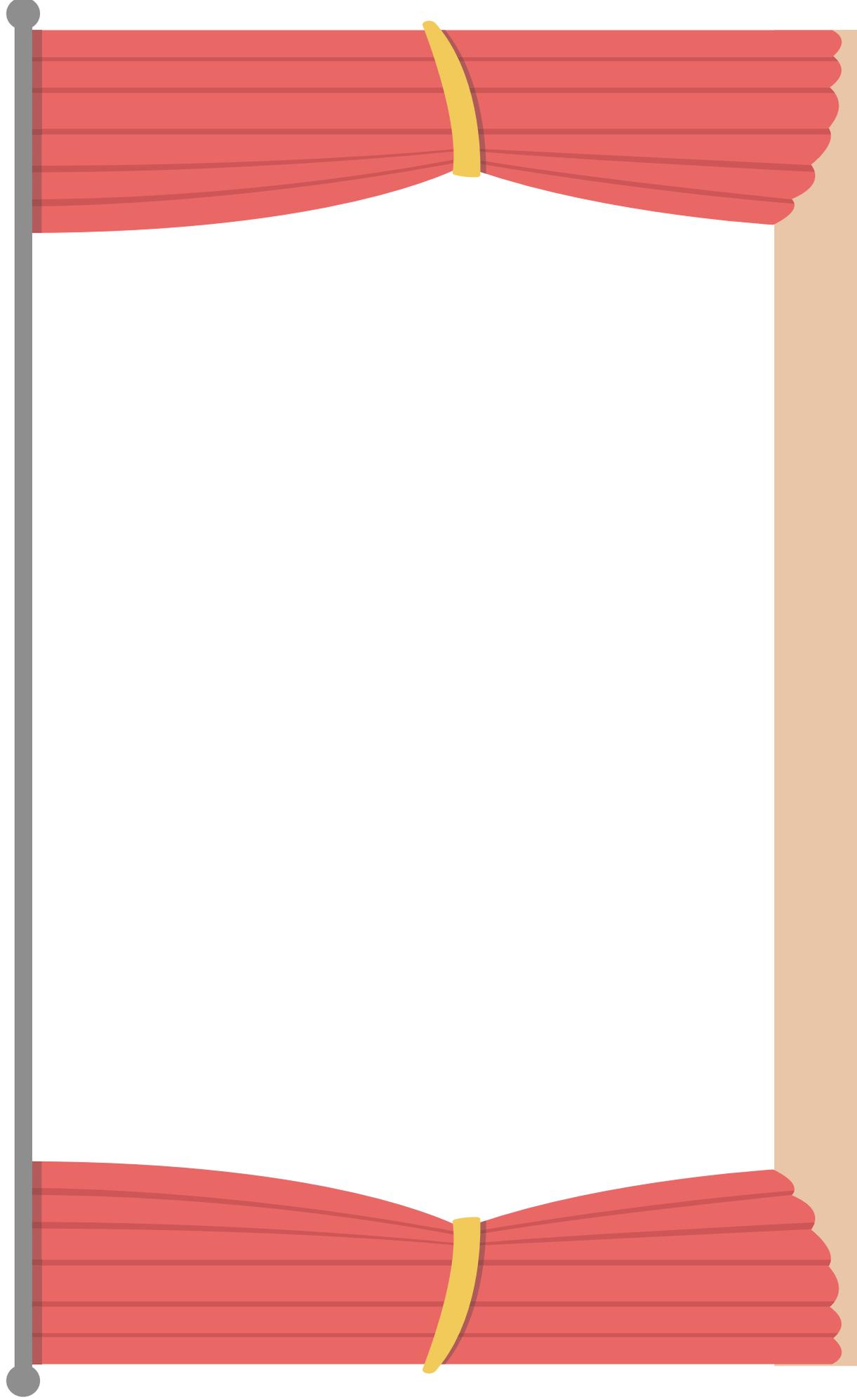
Imagine that Billy Plimpton is starring in his own stand-up comedy tour in the future. Write down some funny themes that Billy might talk about (and if you can't resist it, throw in a bad 'dad joke' for good measure).



# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Resource Sheet 2: Backdrop design

Imagine that Billy Plimpton is starring in his own stand-up comedy tour.  
Design a backdrop for the stage that reflects what the name and theme might be.



# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Resource Sheet 3: Comedy Review

Imagine that you have just watched Billy Plimpton's very first stand-up comedy show. Write a review, briefly explaining what the show was about and what went well. You can offer constructive criticism but make sure it balanced with positive feedback.



### BILLY PLIMPTON'S COMEDY SHOW!



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing a review.

# THE FUNNIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

## Year 5 and 6 Curriculum Links

**UKS2 English – Pupils should be taught to:**

### **Reading: comprehension**

- maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read
- discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader
- distinguish between statements of fact and opinion
- retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction
- participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously

### **Writing: composition**

- Proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors

### **Writing: handwriting**

- Write legibly, fluently... choosing the writing implement that is best suited for the task

### **KS2 PSHE (from the PSHE Association Programme of Study)**

**Pupils should have the opportunity to learn:**

#### **Respecting self and others**

R24. how to listen to other people and play and work cooperatively

R31. to recognise the importance of self-respect and how this can affect their thoughts and feelings about themselves; that everyone, including them, should expect to be treated politely and with respect by others (including when online and/or anonymous) in school and in wider society; strategies to improve or support courteous, respectful relationships

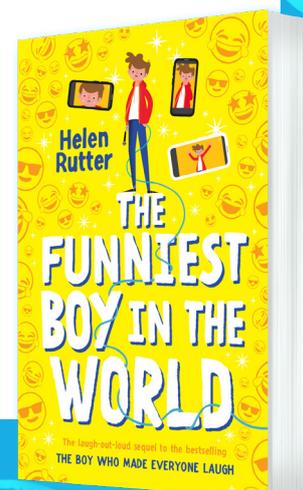
R32. about respecting the differences and similarities between people and recognising what they have in common with others e.g. physically, in personality or background

R33. to listen and respond respectfully to a wide range of people

#### **Key Stage 2 Art**

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.

Pupils should be taught to improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials (for example: pencil, charcoal, paint, clay).





Looking for more  
resources like this?  
Join the Scholastic  
**Resource Bank**  
today!

Discover over 10,000 quality educational  
resources for Early Years and Primary,  
including:

- 
- Lesson plans
  - Teaching ideas
  - Planning and assessment tools
  - Activity sheets
  - Videos
  - And **much more!**



Over  
**10,000**  
educational  
resources!



**Unlimited**  
access  
from just  
**£1.25**  
per month\*

Become a member for **FREE** or get  
**unlimited access** from as little as **£1.25 per month!**

Join now at  
[www.resource-bank.scholastic.co.uk](http://www.resource-bank.scholastic.co.uk)