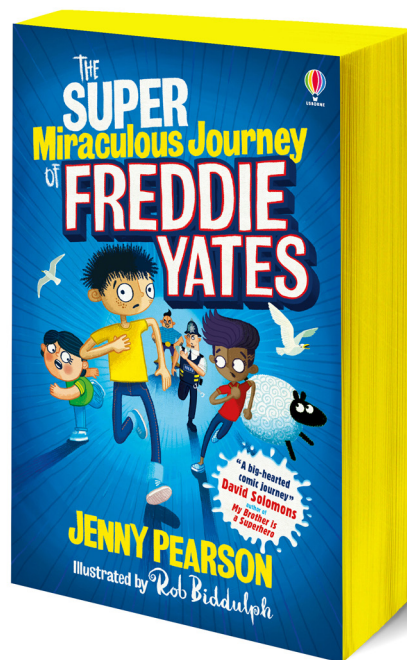


# THE SUPER Miraculous Journey of FREDDIE YATES



Freddie Yates likes facts. Just not the one staring him in the face — that his secret plan is not, in fact, secret. Because Freddie's journey wasn't meant to involve Big Trev and the onioneating competition or the loo-exploding pear-and-potato turnovers. And Freddie definitely didn't expect to end up, with his two best friends, on national television in a Supergirl costume. But journeys never take you where you think they will. And for Freddie, that fact might just have to be enough...

## Activity One – REPORTING FOR THE BARRY GAZETTE

Extract from *The Super Miraculous Journey of Freddie Yates*, pages 88 – 93

### **This is where we all eat raw onions. Spoiler alert: they taste rank!**

I'm not a huge fan of vegetables, so chomping through an onion was always going to be a challenge. I ate raw onion once before by accident. It was hiding in a plate of scampi. It was red and I didn't know what it was. It ruined my trip to Harvester and I vowed never to eat raw onion again. But there I was, on a stage in Wales, facing a glistening white orb. I was prepared to try — for the bus fare to get me to St David's final resting place. And hopefully to Alan Froggley.

Keith gave the command. "Competitors, raise your onions."

Ben bashed his onion into mine and said, "Cheers."

I swallowed hard. My mouth knew what was coming because it began to fill with saliva.

Keith bowed at all us competitors, turned to face the audience and bellowed, "Eat."

Nobody moved in case they'd misheard.

Keith said, "Well, what are you waiting for? Eat!" And then did another little toot on his trumpet.

We were off!

I took a breath, closed my eyes and sank my teeth into the onion. For a split second it was okay. In fact, the first crunch was quite satisfying. But as I began to chew, my nose got very hot and my tongue began to tingle. And then my tongue began to throb. My lips pulsated. I began to sweat. My vision became blurred because my eyes streamed. Then my nose started torn. Saliva pooled out the side of my mouth. My whole body was leaking.

It is a well-known fact that the average human child's body is sixty-five per cent water. I reckon halfway through my first mouthful of onion, I was down to under thirty-five per cent.

Another well-known fact is that raw onion is rank.

I wasn't the only one in onion-hell — Ben was struggling too. Like me, he was a snorting, dribbling, crying mess. His eyes were bloodshot and his face was bright red. He gave me a look of such desperation that I wanted to tell him it was okay, he'd tried and he could stop if he wanted to. Charlie was faring much better. He was ploughing through his onion like it was a Terry's Chocolate Orange. He had this look of utter determination in his eyes. He really wanted the win. And I wanted it too. More for him than the money.

I glanced around at the other competitors. Ben and I, at only two bites in, were well out of the running. It was now between Charlie, a tangerine-orange, crinkly-faced woman with toilet roll stuffed up each nostril and a very slim man in a shiny green jacket.

They all had very different techniques. Charlie was going for the chomp and chew. The orange-skinned lady was nibbling it very quickly and spinning it around in her hands like a corn on the cob. The slim man put the whole thing in his mouth at once and was working his way through it. He looked like a snake swallowing an egg.

Anyway, it was all very close. Charlie and the orange lady — who I now know is called Clementine! — raised their hands and opened their mouths almost at the same time to show they had finished. If I'm honest, I think she might have clinched it. Snaky-slim man finished a fraction after them both.

Keith blew on his trumpet and Ben and I dropped our half-eaten onions down on our plates and groaned. My belly was already complaining about the evilness I was making it digest. The lady in the tear gas T-shirt hurried onto the stage and whispered in Keith's ear — when I say whisper, it was a shouty sort of angry whisper so everyone on the stage could just about hear what she was saying. I think she said, "We can't have another draw — not after the largest onion competition. We need a winner." She glared at Keith and jabbed her finger at her clipboard, then she looked over at Charlie and Clementine and raised her eyebrows very meaningfully.

Keith must have got the message because he nodded somewhat solemnly, then announced to the crowd: "It was a closely fought battle here today at Barry's 114th Onion-Eating Competition. A very well done to all the competitors...but there can only be one winner."

Charlie wiped his mouth on his T-shirt and gave the orange lady a sideways look. He must have been thinking the same as me — she'd got in there before him. The fifty quid didn't look like it would be coming to us. This was completely disappointing.

"There has been another disqualification." Keith tugged at his collar and waited for the gasps and grumbles from the crowd to die down. "According to rule sixteen, section 1.2a, contestants may not use any of the following: goggles or masks to cover the eyes, pegs or clips on the nose, or any material inserted into one or both nostrils."

Clementine tried discreetly to remove the bog roll stuffed up her nose, but she was onstage in front of the whole of Barry. It wasn't going to go unnoticed.

"This means I am pleased to announce that" — Keith checked the piece of paper that he'd been handed — "Charlie Anderson is the 114th winner of Barry's Onion-Eating Competition."

This was completely the opposite of disappointing.

I'm not keen on rules, but rule sixteen, section 1.2a, is a particularly good one. In fact, in that moment, it was my favourite rule of all time.

Charlie looked like he couldn't believe it at first.

Ben had to say, "Charlie, mate, you did it — you won."

His whole face stretched into this huge smile. He punched the air, put his T-shirt over his head and started running around the stage like he'd just scored the winning goal in the World Cup final.

To be fair to him, the people of Barry were cheering like it was the World Cup final.

Afterwards he said to me, "I never thought I'd find out what winning felt like."

## Task One

Imagine that you are a journalist for the Barry Gazette newspaper. Based on the onion-eating competition, plan an article that will appear on the front page of the newspaper. Use the extract to help you write in as much detail as possible, try to include some facts but you can also stretch the truth a bit too!

**WHERE — does the story take place? How would you describe the setting?**

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**WHEN — did the event(s) happen? What time of day? In what order?**

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**WHO — was there? Who is the main focus of your story?**

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**WHAT — happened? What are the main details and incidents in the story?**

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**HOW — did it happen? What are the facts?**

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## Task Two

You are now going to use your planning sheet to write up your article for the Barry Gazette in full, including as much detail as possible. If you haven't already covered this in your plan, make sure to include:

- A headline as well as strapline/tag line
- The sketch or a photograph to go with your story
- Some quotes from people at the event(s)

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[illegible][illegible]

## Activity Two – WHAT MAKES A SUPERHERO?

Extract from *The Super Miraculous Journey of Freddie Yates*, pages 180–184

We lay on the grass, looking up at the clouds, and tried to think of a super-plan — but before we could come up with anything, the shop owner burst through the door, shouting and pointing his stubby little finger at us. “It is you, isn’t it? The outfits — they’re the same. It’s you, I know it is!”

We turned around to check if he was talking to somebody behind us, but we were the only people around.

Charlie swallowed the last of his Crunchie. “What do you mean, its you?”

The shopkeeper was jumping from foot to foot, his face flushed pink. “Come in and see. Come quick!”

We followed him back into the shop. He pointed at the TV screen and clapped his podgy hands together. “See, it is you, isn’t it?”

I froze.

He was right. It was us. On South Wales Today. Sitting on top of Albert.

“When you came in here I didn’t know you were genuine superheroes. I thought you were just kids in costumes.”

I was barely listening, because PC Mike had appeared on the screen. A woman in a bright blue suit and fluffy hair like a cloud held a microphone underneath his huge smiling mouth.

“I’m here with Mike Griffiths, the journalist who broke this miraculous good-news story. How many hits have you had since you put the story on Twitter?”

“Just over half a million in a few hours.”

“Half a million!” I shouted. It was hard to believe news had travelled so quickly, but the internet is a powerful thing. We later discovered the fluffy-hair woman was PC Mike’s second cousin. She just happened to be filming a scout group’s sponsored silence in a village a couple of miles away. Apparently it hadn’t made great TV, so when PC Mike contacted her, she was round to his in a flash, asking him questions like, “What do you think it is about this super-trio that has captured the country’s imagination?”

“So much, Carys. Firstly, their bravery. The picture shows only one of the attackers, but they were outnumbered by ten to three — it’s a miracle really —”

This was the first of PC Mike’s humungous whoppers. As if there were even ten other people in Gileston.

“Secondly, they seemed to possess a superhuman strength—”

I mean...what?! The lies just seemed to trip off his tongue.

“And thirdly, they appeared out of nowhere and then vanished just as quickly.”

Nothing about that bike ride felt quick.

“So we have no idea who these have-a-go heroes are?”

I held my breath.

“I believe one of them goes by the name of Charlie Ow. That’s all I have.”

“Thank you. Mike.” Fluffy-hair woman turned to face the camera. “I think we can all sleep better in our beds knowing there are some real-life superheroes out there protecting us.

If you see them, please let us know. We'd love to talk to them! Now back to the studio."

We stood staring at the screen while the weatherman told us it was going to remain hot and sunny with a small chance of superhero showers.

The flash of a camera snapped me out of my trance.

Dazzled, I said, "What are you doing, Mr Shopkeeper, sir?"

"I'm tweeting this photo to South Wales Today. Real superheroes in my shop — think what it will do for business." He disappeared behind the counter.

My instincts told me this was not a good idea, so I dashed after him shouting, "We're not real superheroes, honest."

"Yes, you are."

"No, we're not!"

"If Carys Griffiths from South Wales Today says you are, and I say you are, then you are, okay?"

It wasn't okay because it wasn't the truth, but I had a feeling that he wasn't too bothered about that.

## Task One

Dress up and act out this extract in groups, taking the following parts:

Freddie, Charlie and Ben (dressed as superheroes)

The Shopkeeper

Carys Griffiths (TV interviewer/journalist)

PC Mike Griffiths

Afterwards, discuss and note down the superhero qualities that PC Mike reports to that the boys show.

Who is your favourite superhero and why? Write a summary of how your favourite superhero shows his superhero powers?