

THE NIGHT BUS HERO

ONJALI Q. RAUF

EXTRACTS AND NOTES FOR **KS2 TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS**

Suitable for: Ages 9–11

Explore themes of: • Bullying • Homelessness • Kindness • Being a Hero

Subject Checklist: • Literacy • Art, Design & Technology • PSHE • Citizenship

CONTENTS

- EXTRACT 1 *Bullying (taken from Chapter 2 – The Trolley-Man)*

Objectives: Discuss the problem of bullying and what you can do to stop it; design an Anti-Bullying Poster to be put on display.

- EXTRACT 2 *Homelessness (taken from Chapter 2 – The Trolley-Man)*

Objectives: Learn about the issue of homelessness; explore how Hector's attitude towards homelessness changes throughout the text.

- EXTRACT 3 *Kindness (taken from Chapter 14 – The Kitchen of Soup)*

Objectives: Understand the importance of being kind; create your own 'Kind Hand' and plan 3 random acts of kindness.

- EXTRACT 4 *Being a Hero (taken from Chapter 21 – The Night Bus Hero's New Bench)*

Objectives: Consider what makes someone a real-life hero; design a comic book strip telling the story of *The Night Bus Hero*.



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ABOUT THE BOOK

'The boy's an absolute menace.'

'He's a bully. A lost cause!'

'Why can't he be more like his sister?'

I've been getting into trouble for as long I can remember. Usually I don't mind 'cos some of my best, most brilliant ideas have come from sitting in detention.

But recently it feels like no one believes me about anything - even when I'm telling the truth! And it's only gotten worse since I played a prank on the old man who lives in the park.

Everyone thinks I'm just a bully. They don't believe I could be a hero.

But I'm going to prove them all wrong...

EXTRACT 1 BULLYING (Taken from Chapter Two – The Trolley-Man)

Will's OK though. He's funny, and he's always helping me spot teacher's pets and brainacs and show-offs and anyone who has more money than is healthy for them. He's bigger and taller than me, so when we walk around together, everyone knows it's us right away. His hair is bright yellow and straight and sticks up like straw from a scarecrow's head. It makes him look like a bit of a mad scientist. My straight brown hair just flops over my face and halfway over my eyes as if it's too lazy to do anything, so I don't look like a mad anything.

'Go on!' urged Katie, poking me with her elbow and pointing at Felix and his group of tiny friends. 'I dare you to.'

I glanced round at Mrs Simpson who was standing by the gates just ten steps away from us, talking to some parents. It's always tricky beating someone up at home time. If a parent catches you even Mr Lancaster gets into trouble, and that means getting detention until he retires.



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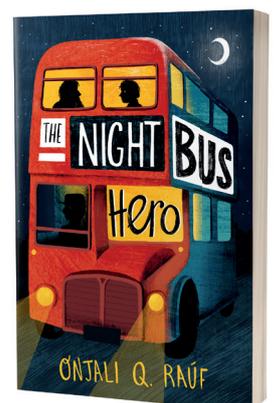
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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is bullying? Can you write a definition?
- Who do Hector, Will, and Katie bully? Give some examples from the text.
- Why do you think their classmates might be scared of them?
- Why do you think people bully each other? Explain your ideas.
- What should you do if you or someone else is being bullied?

ACTIVITY: ANTI-BULLYING POSTER

- One of the hardest things about being bullied is that it can make people very lonely. It's really important to spread awareness about bullying and to make sure your school and all its students do everything possible to prevent it happening.
- Start off by working with a partner to fill in the table below, trying to give at least 2 examples for each type of bullying. [Note: one example has been included to help you]. This activity will encourage you to think about the different types of bullying that exist and what you and your schoolmates can do to support each other and stand up to bullies.
- Use this table and your discussions to create an anti-bullying poster. Make your poster colourful and eye-catching and display them around the school so that other students can learn about this important topic.
- In your poster you may like to include:
 - a definition of what bullying is
 - why bullying is a big problem
 - why bullying needs to stop
 - how to recognise if someone is being bullied
 - how you and others can help each other to put a stop to it



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Type of bullying	Examples of bullying behaviour	How might this make someone feel?	What can you or your school do to help?
Physical – using bodies and actions to bully	<i>-stealing another kid's lunch money</i>	<i>-helpless and hungry</i>	<i>-report it to a teacher and sit with the student who is feeling sad</i>
Verbal – using words and sounds to bully			
Psychological – using other unkind behaviours to bully			
Cyberbullying – using social media or technology to bully			

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EXTRACT 2 HOMELESSNESS (Taken from Chapter Two – The Trolley-Man)

We reached the top of the hill where an old bench stood beneath the oak trees, and that's when I spotted him: the old man. I'd seen him there before, lots of times, sitting on the bench next to a trolley piled high with rubbish. He was in his usual long, old, crumpled black coat that looked as if it had been pulled out from a bin, and was wearing the bright yellow woolly hat he always had on his head, even in summer. And without even trying, I had the most genius idea that had ever been born. In fact, it was so genius and so out-of-the-box and so unexpected, that I knew it would be enough to make Will and Katie shut up once and for all!

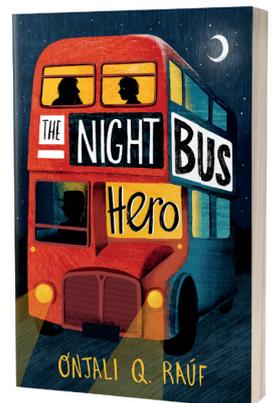
I stopped walking, which made Will and Katie automatically stop too. Will looked at me blankly but Katie's eyebrows immediately jumped up as if to say, 'Yeah? And what?'

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does it mean to be homeless? Do different forms of homelessness exist?
- How is Thomas described in the extract? Give examples.
- Why does Hector and his friends treat Thomas badly? What views about homeless people do they hold?
- Do homeless people live in your village, town, or city? Where have you seen them?
- How do you think it might feel to be homeless? What worries might you have?

ACTIVITY: CHANGING ATTITUDES TOWARDS HOMELESSNESS

- Over the course of the story, Hector's attitude towards homeless people changes. As a class, discuss what Hector thinks about homeless people at the beginning of the text, i.e. What words does he use to talk about them? What opinions does he hold? How does he treat them? Where have his opinions come from?
- Then, in small groups, look back over later encounters Hector has with homeless people in the story. For each one of Hector's encounters, write down in the speech bubble below how each experience transforms his attitude and behaviour towards homelessness and homeless people.



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ENCOUNTER 1:

He leaned forwards and I took a step backwards.

'You better never touch any of us with your foot again, yeah? We might be sleeping rough, but we're not here to be treated rough. If you try it again, you might not get your foot back. Got that?'

I looked down at my right foot and quickly nodded.

'Off with ya, then.'

'Th-thanks,' I said.

'That's "Thanks, Sam",' said the man, narrowing his eyes again.

'My name's Sam.'

ENCOUNTER 2:

'Oh, yeah! Just coming to kick one of my babies for a bet? Or spit on me? Don't think I don't know your lot. Always harassing me after school. Now you've got to harass me at the weekends too, eh?'

'No – no – I just –'

'Well, I won't take it no more! I've had enough of you lot!'

I didn't know how to prove that I wasn't one of the kids she was talking about. Then I remembered that whenever Dad saw a homeless person on the street, he always offered them a sandwich or a coffee, which made them thank him loads.

ENCOUNTER 3:

Above the photo, were the words:

UK DRIVING LICENCE

1. Chilvers
2. Thomas Benjamin, Dr
3. 01/01/1976 UNITED KINGDOM

Opposite it, underneath another cracked bit of clear plastic, was an old photo that looked as if it had been folded and unfolded at least a thousand times. It showed a woman with short red hair, kissing a baby's bald head. The baby was laughing at the camera with both its hands in its mouth.

'Who are they?' I asked, pointing to the woman and the baby.

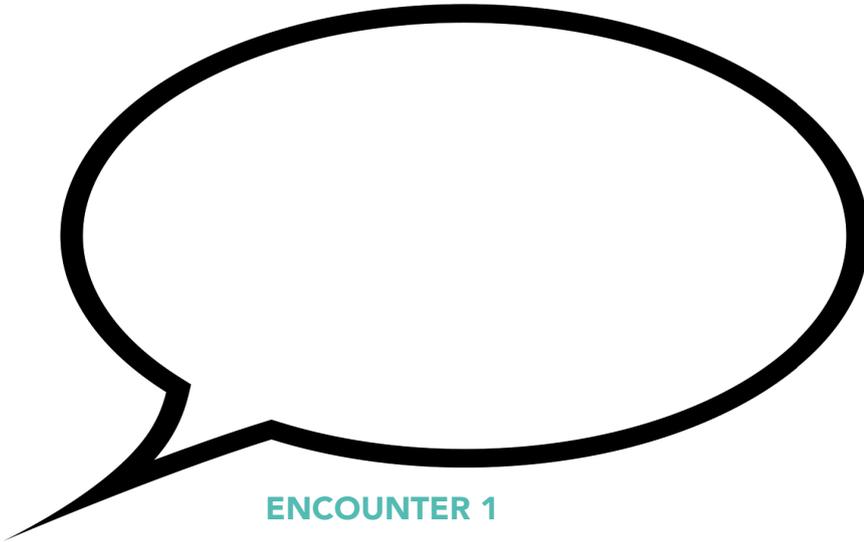
'My two reasons. I would rather live on the streets and have them be proud of me, than ever live the life of a thief,' said Thomas. Snatching his wallet out of my hand, he gently put it back in the pocket inside his coat.



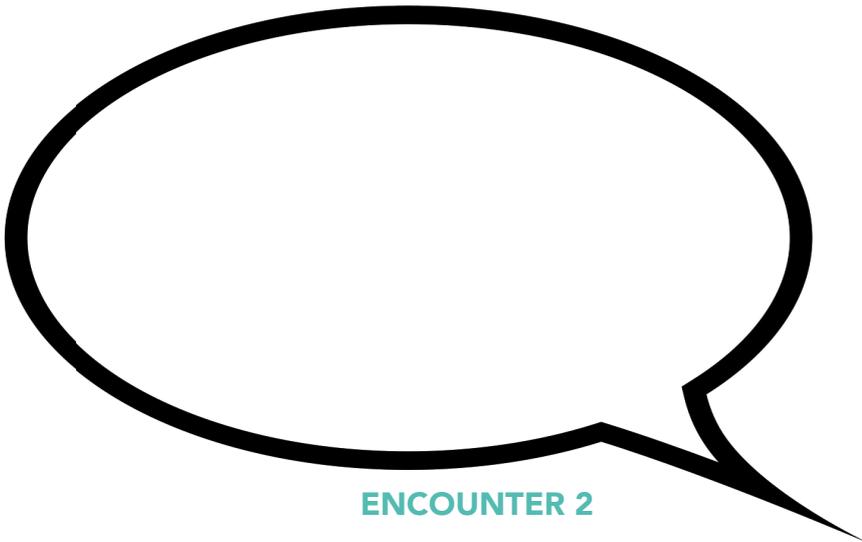
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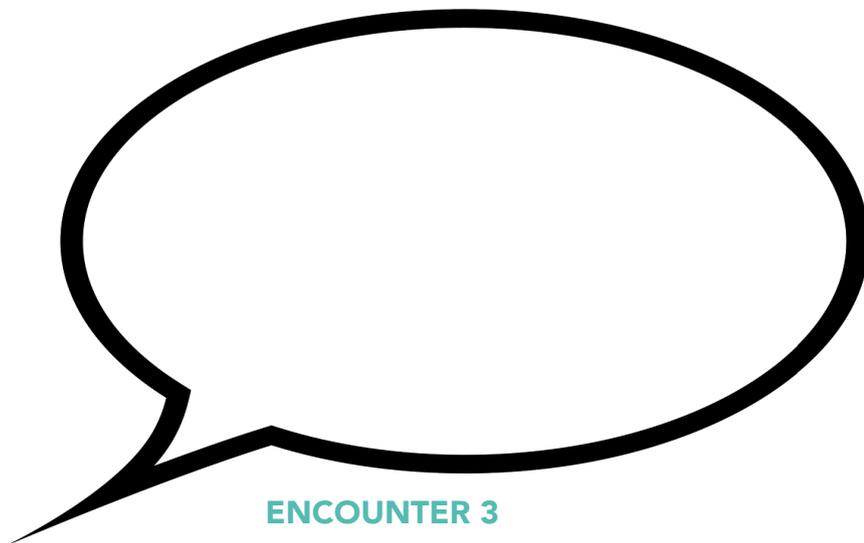
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ENCOUNTER 1



ENCOUNTER 2



ENCOUNTER 3



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EXTRACT 3 KINDNESS (Taken from Chapter Fourteen – The Kitchen of Soup)

Walking through the huge wooden doors, I entered a hall full of tables and chairs and people in coats chatting and drinking tea from paper cups. The room smelled of wet dog and tangy old fruit so much that I felt as if I could taste it. I pinched my nose closed and scanned the room for Mei-Li. I spotted her heading to the back of the hall, waving at people as she walked by. 'Ah, it's a good day when Mei-Li's around,' called out a man in a bright purple coat, giving her a thumbs up.

Mei-Li gave him one back but she didn't stop.

'Mei-Li!' I cried out. She ignored me and kept walking.

'Hey, Mei-Li, tell your dad to put some spice in the food,' joked a woman with wild blonde hair who was holding a cup of tea. Her eyes looked both young and old at the same time and she was carrying a big plastic bag on her arm that was so muddy and tattered it looked as if it had just been dug out of the ground.

'Will do,' said Mei-Li, still moving.

'Hey Mei-Li – stop!' I yelled, pushing past everyone to try and get to her.

'Mei-Li, got any of my favourite cookies today?' asked a man with huge brown ropes of twisted hair.

'I'll ask, I promise,' shouted back Mei-Li.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How do Mei-Li and Hector behave differently in in the Soup Kitchen?
- How do Mei-Li and the other volunteers show kindness in this extract?
- Does Hector begin to treat others with more kindness throughout the story? Give examples.
- Why is it important to treat others how you would like to be treated?
- Can you think of a time you showed a family member, friend, or a stranger kindness recently?

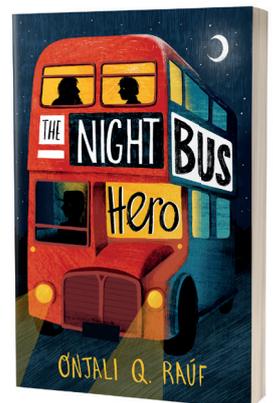
ACTIVITY: KIND HANDS

- Being kind costs absolutely nothing and makes other people feel good! On your tables, discuss together:

- Can you think of a time someone was kind to you recently?
- What did they do or say?
- How did this make you feel?
- Have you ever heard the term 'random act of kindness' before? What does it mean?

- Then, on the hand template, think of different actions and things you can say to show kindness to other people. Write down one for each letter of the word 'kindness'. Decorate your hand and make it colourful. Below it, note down 3 random acts of kindness that you are going to perform over the next week.

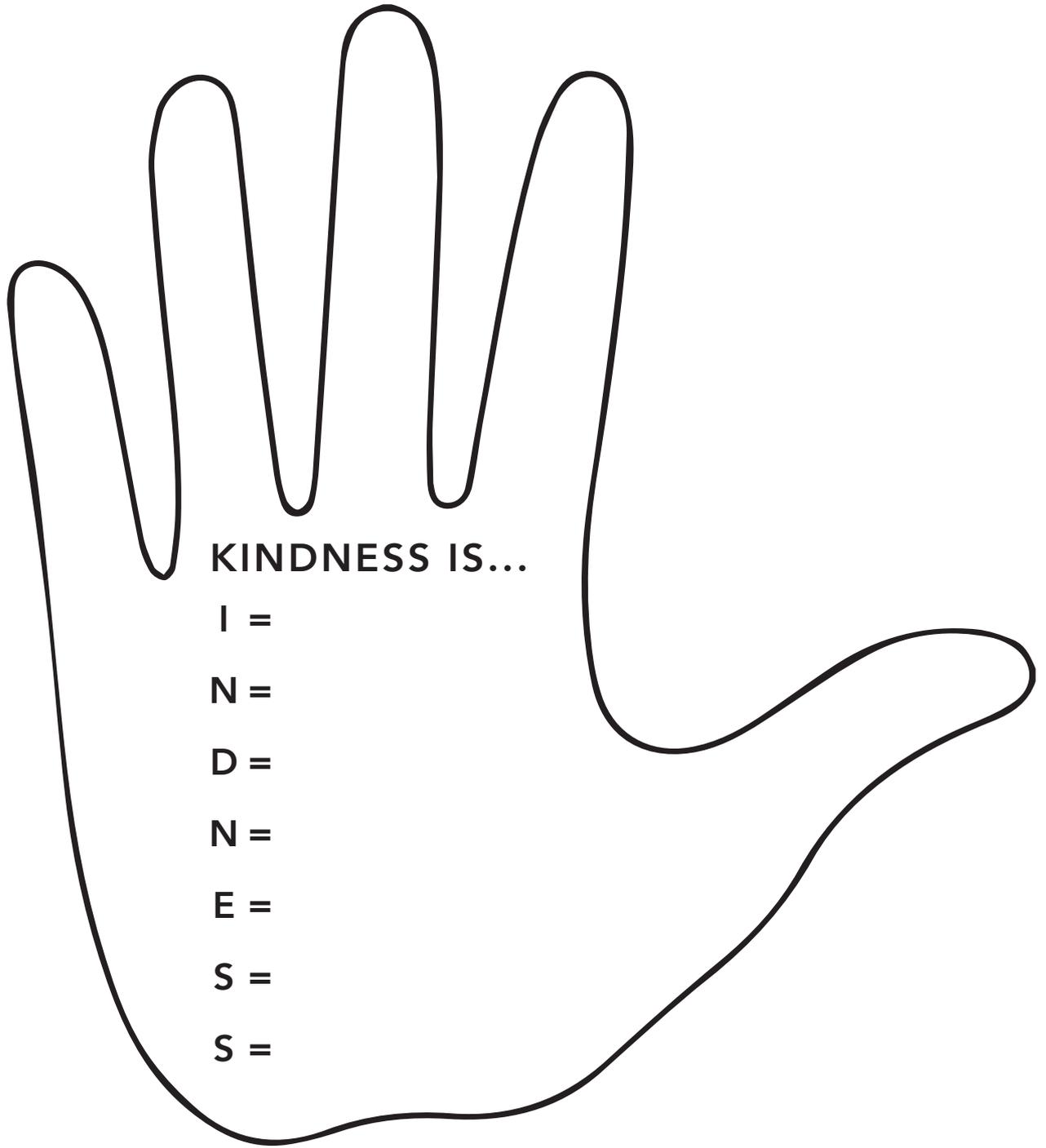
- Share your Kind Hands together on your tables and next week, feedback on how your made somebody's day better with one of your acts of kindness!



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KINDNESS IS...

I =

N =

D =

N =

E =

S =

S =

RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS 1

RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS 2

RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS 3

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EXTRACT 4 BEING A HERO (Taken from Chapter 21 – The Night Bus Hero's New Bench)

But of course, I didn't give ALL of my money away. I'm not that good. Even though Will and Katie now think I've gone over to the dark side and am way too good to be friends with them anymore. I still have loads saved for sweets and chocolates and glitter pens for Hercules. And some extra strong pimple cream for Helen. Not to mention art supplies, so I can draw more comics too. Mrs Vergara says that since I'm spending more time drawing now than chasing kids in the playground, the school might enter me for that drawing prize next year.

Thomas says I should draw a comic about our adventure and saving all the treasures of London. It won't be like a normal comic book with superheroes who have special powers and stuff. But I think a night bus rider called Thomas, a real-life Catwoman, the biggest teacher's pet on the planet and a bully-who-isn't-a-bully-anymore might just be cool enough to be heroes too.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What makes someone a hero? Who is a hero in your eyes?
- How does Hector redeem himself and help catch the thieves?
- Who is to blame for the crimes taking place across London and why?
- Who else could be described as heroes in the story? Explain your ideas.
- How has Hector changed over the course of the text? Who has helped him?

ACTIVITY: HEROES COMIC STRIP

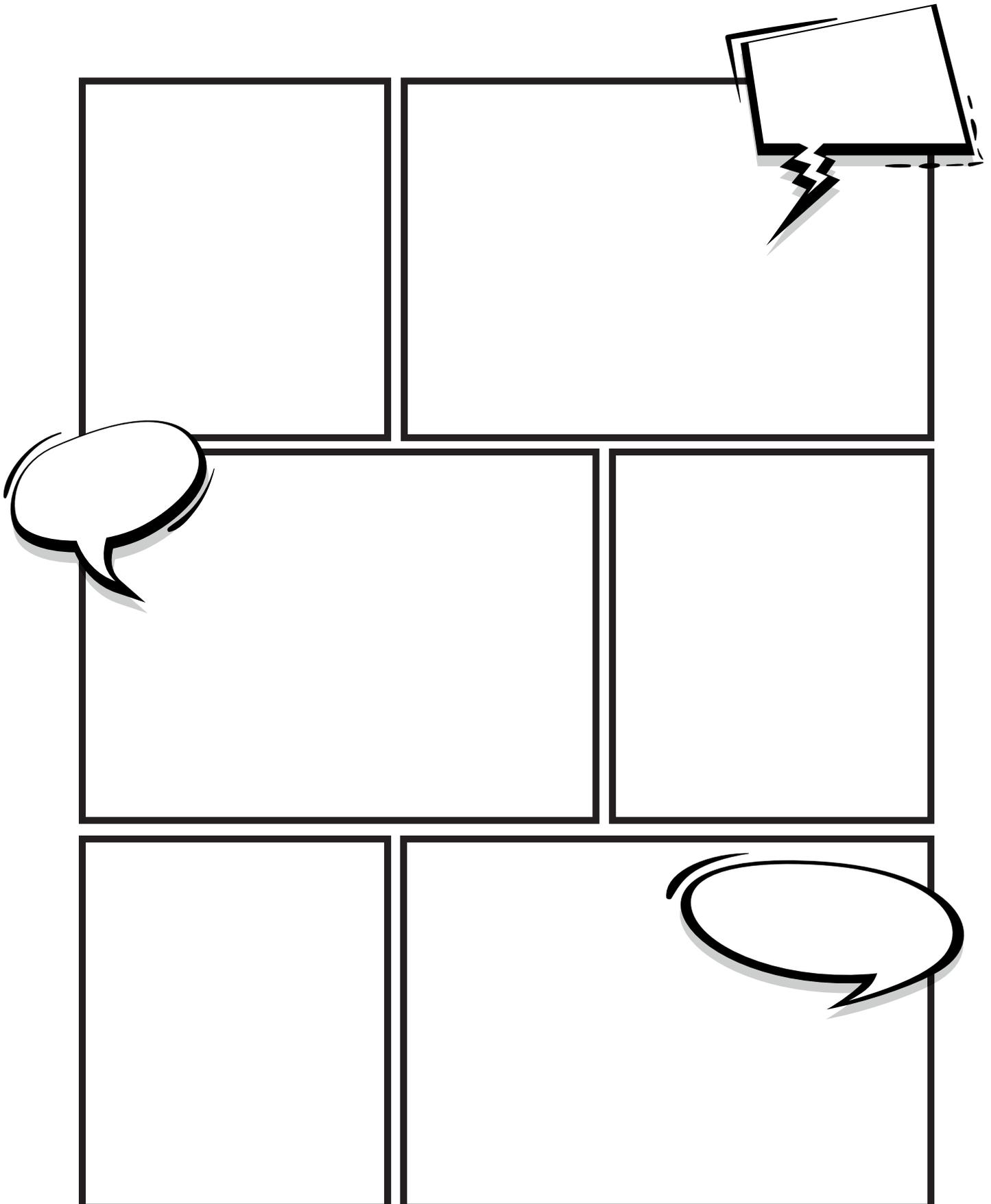
- At the end of the text, Hector reflects on the fact that his adventure hasn't been about, 'superheroes who have special powers and stuff'. As a class discuss: what does Hector mean by this? Why don't you need superpowers to be a real-life hero?
- Imagining you are Hector, take Thomas's advice and create a comic book strip about the exciting events of the story. Begin by thinking about:
 - Which main incidents from the story would you like to include?
 - Which characters should be in your comic?
 - How do you picture these characters in your mind?
 - What speech or dialogue between characters would you like to add?
- Use the comic strip template to tell the story of The Night Bus Hero including lots of colour. Take your work home and summarise to a family member what the text is about and what you have learned in your lessons.



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These teacher resources have been prepared by J. Baldwin from SHAPES for Schools.