

# Teaching Notes & Resources

Key Stage 2

Themes: Grief | Humour | Graphic Novel

[Purchase A Tricky Kind of Magic](#)



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# About the book

Written and illustrated by Nigel Baines

Cooper is brilliant at magic tricks. Card tricks, clever illusions - he can do them all. His dad, also known as the Great Eduardo, taught him the tricks of the magical trade before he passed away. But the one thing Cooper can't do is see his dad again.

So when a talking rabbit appears from his dad's top hat, and reveals there is a place where Cooper might find him, he jumps at the chance. Magic is about believing the impossible, after all. And Cooper desperately wants to believe that he can see his dad once more.

But what - and who - is waiting for them in the land where magic goes wrong?

Filled with filled with humour and emotion, this is an action-packed graphic novel about finding magic when you need it the most.

## Discussion questions

- Do you know any magic tricks?
- Why do you think Cooper gets angry at his mum and Tori?
- What would you take with you if you were going on a journey?
- Cooper's mum does yoga to help her mental health, can you think of any other ways you can help your mental health?
- Does Rori remind you of anyone?

## Activity 1:

### How to draw a graphic novel

In this activity, author and illustrator, Nigel Baines, shares his tips for drawing a graphic novel. Read along and then have a go yourself in activity 2!



**1** Draw out your 8 page comic on 8 sheets of A4 paper. Fill up the page and make sure the words are nice and large. Remember to do a cover as one of the 8!

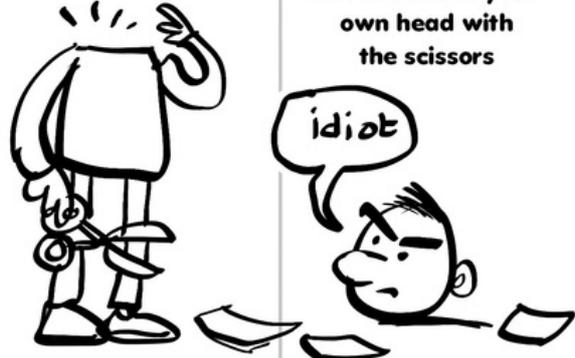
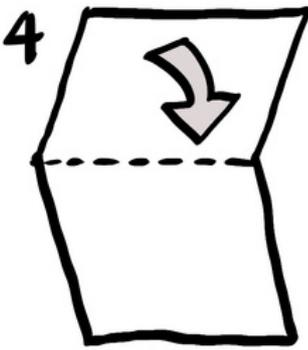


**2** Reduce on a photocopier by 50% Or scan them in and print them out at 50% It's easier to draw big and reduce things and it makes any wobbly lines look less wobbly!



**3** Cut each page out

being careful not to remove your own head with the scissors

Take another sheet of A4 and fold it in half lengthways...

and make this concentrated face!



**5**



then fold that in half again from left to right

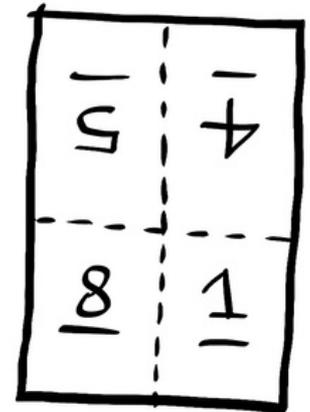
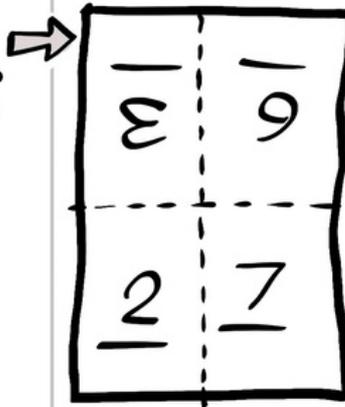


**6** Now, very lightly in pencil, number the pages from 1 to 8. If you put a line under each number that will help later.



**7** Open out the pages and you will have this. If you don't have this go back to step three and check you haven't accidentally cut off your head.

Notice how some pages are upside down and the cover (page 1) is next to the back cover (page 8)



**8** You can now lightly stick in your cut out pages that you reduced earlier. They only have to be lightly stuck, a piece of tape will do. Make sure the pages are the same way up as the number!!

You will now have a Master Copy. Use this to make a double sided photocopy from. 1...10 or 100!

angry over-worked photocopier

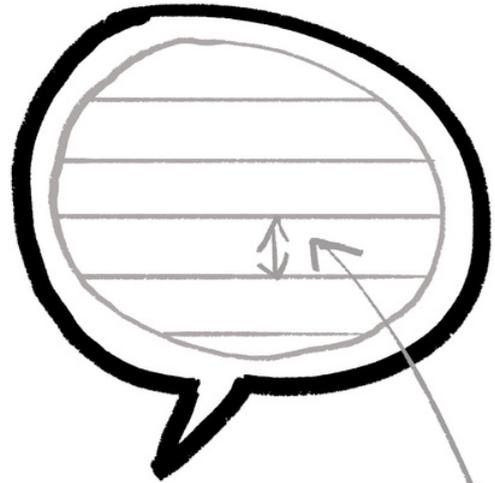



when you get your print. Fold it as above and trim off the top with scissors so the pages will open.

and hey presto... you're a comic maker!!

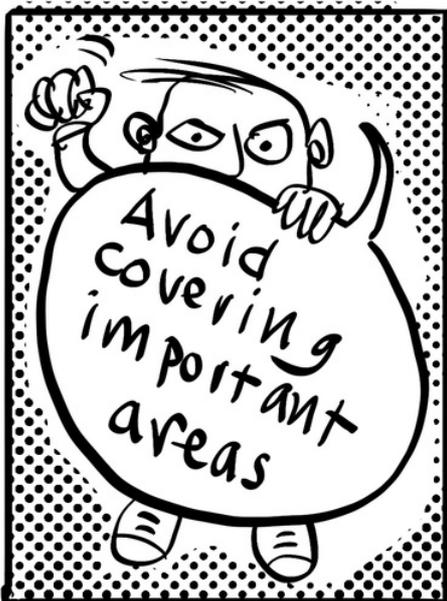



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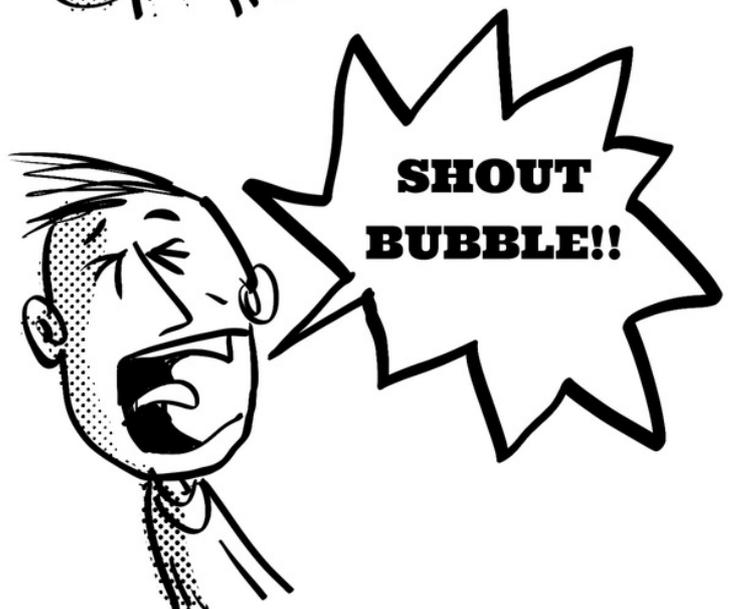
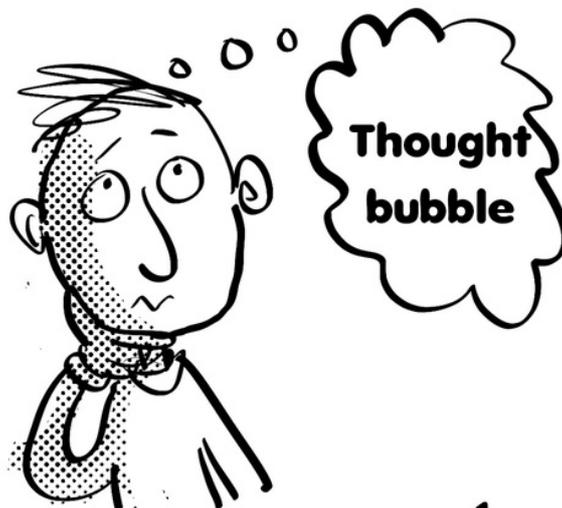


Draw a pencil line inside your bubble to make sure you don't put words too close to the actual bubble. With the same pencil and a ruler, make some lines for your words to go on. Make sure they are far enough apart for your handwriting.

Practice doing your handwriting as you'd like it in your bubbles and then draw a line along the bottom of the letters, measure the gap and use that in your bubbles.



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**People don't always  
speak in one long lump  
like me! They stop. And think.  
And you can break up the  
speech bubble to do this...**

**like this**

**And  
don't  
forget**

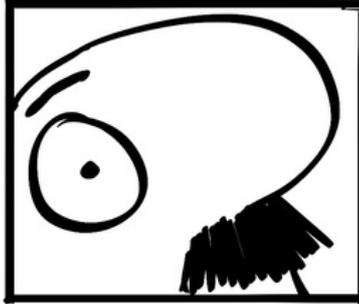
**In a comic it  
is easier to  
read when people  
take it in turns  
to speak**



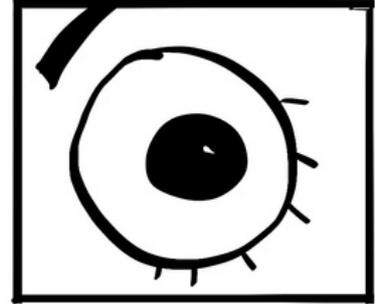
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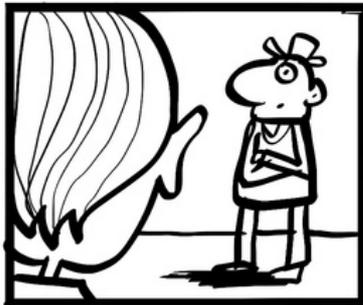
Perspective. Imagine all the lines of the buildings going backwards to one point



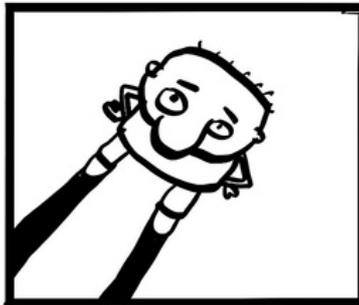
Close up



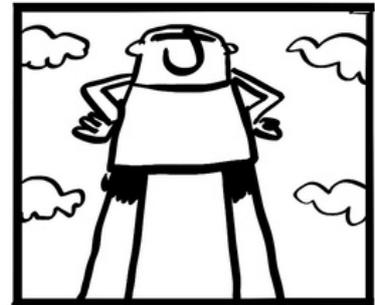
**REALLY Close up!**



You can draw things as though you were looking over someone's shoulder



Or from high up above. Look how the perspective makes the legs shorter. This is a good view to make someone look lonely



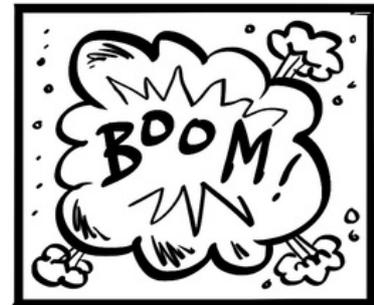
If you look from below it makes ordinary people look powerful and tall



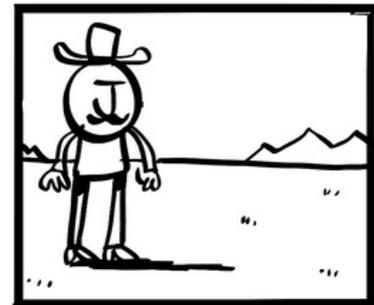
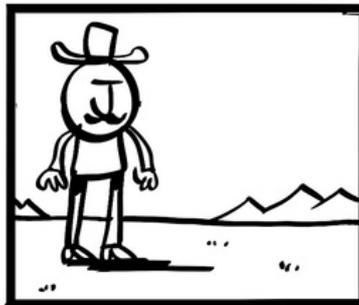
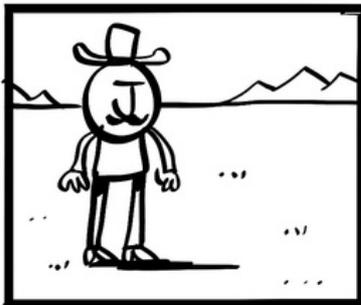
You can use perspective to show something coming right out of the drawing at you



If people are jumping or running try to exaggerate it. Use whizz lines and other things like a hat falling off



There are no sounds in comics...so you have to make the reader imagine them!



See how you can put the horizon line in different places. Having it high up or low down can make it more interesting. Look as well at how having the man on one side of the picture is more interesting than just having him in the middle

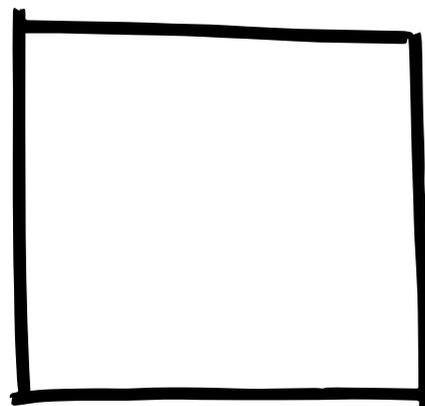
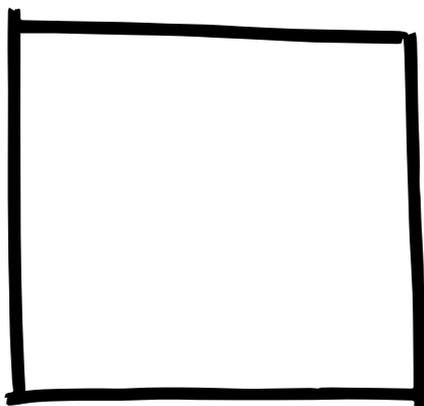
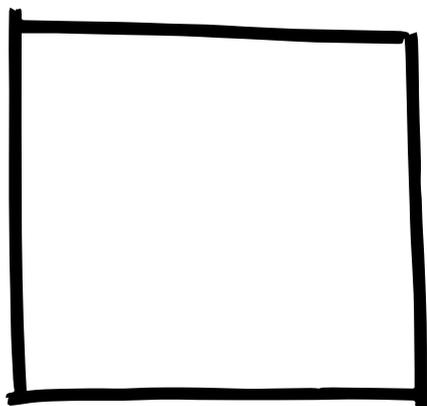
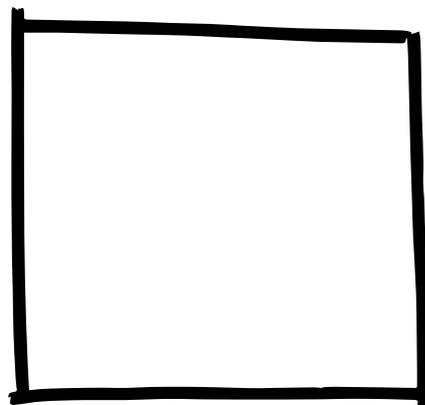
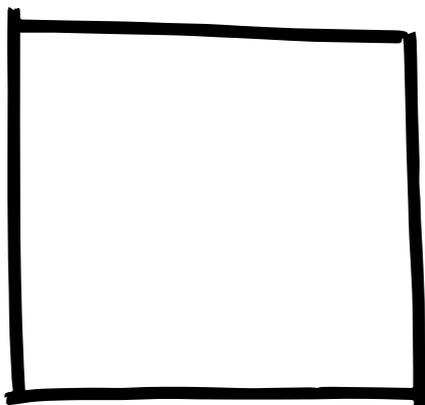
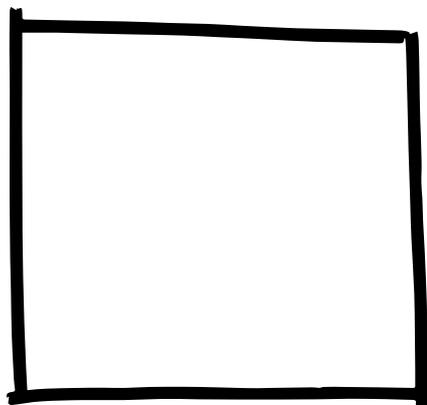
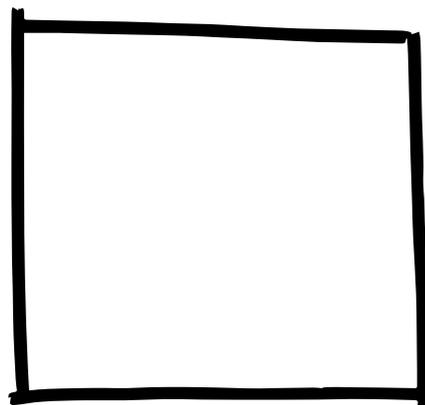
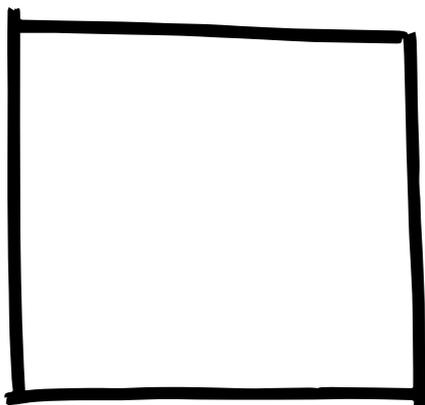
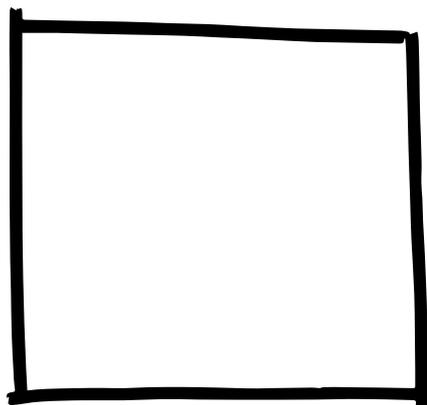
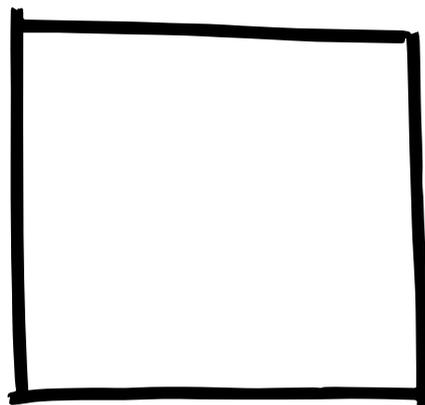
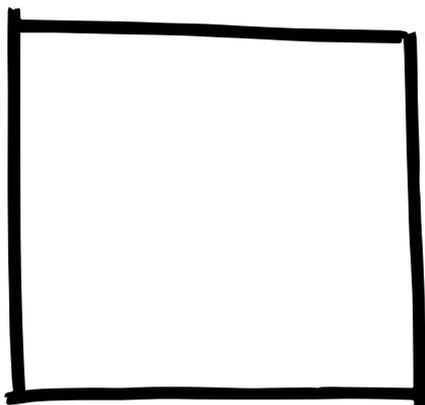
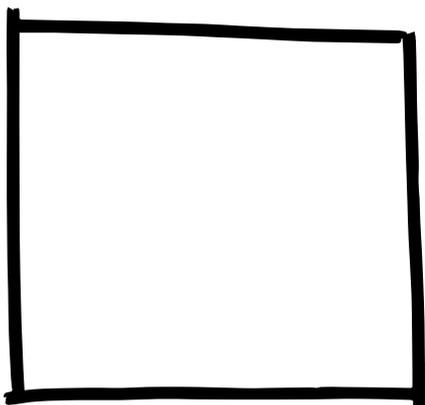


# Activity 2:

## Draw your own comic

It's time for you to have a go at drawing your own comic book. On page 175 (below), the author has summarised the whole story in one page. Draw your own summary of *A Tricky Kind of Magic* in one page.





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# Activity 3:

## Memory Jars

Look at page 43 from *A Tricky Kind of Magic* (below). The author has used drawings and speech bubbles to show that Cooper is feeling overwhelmed with worries and responsibilities and is angry.

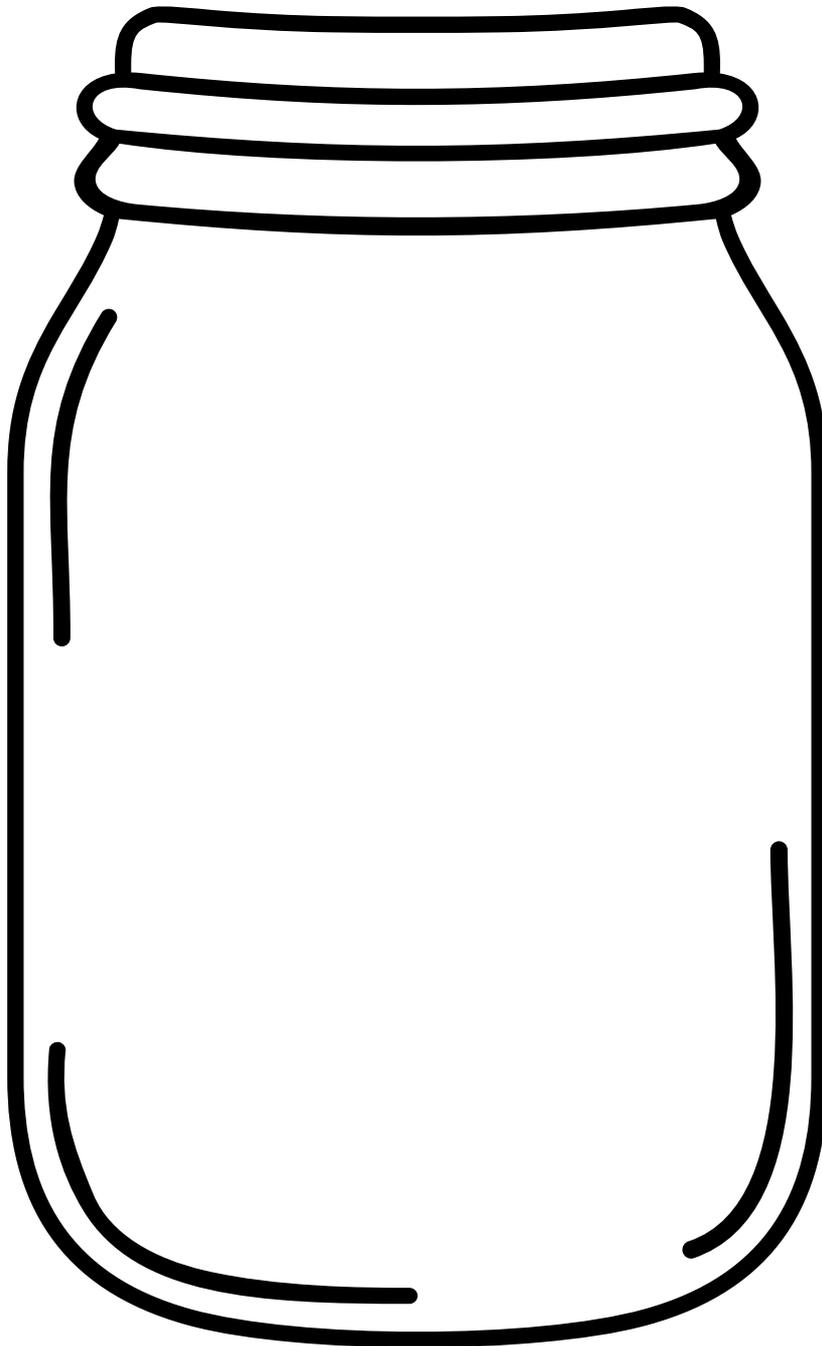


There are commonly thought to be 5 stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

Can you think of times in the book when Cooper shows these feelings? Write them down below:

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance

Sometimes it can help to remember the people we've lost. Can you think of some memories that Cooper could put in a memory jar to help him remember his Dad and share his memories with his younger brother?



# Activity 4:

## Learn a magic trick

On page 5 and 6, Cooper shows his brother how to do a magic trick. Follow Cooper's instructions below and see if you can trick the person sitting next to you!

