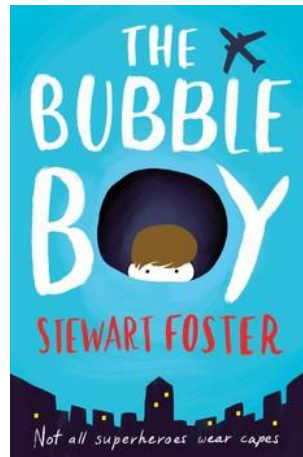


The Bubble Boy by Stewart Foster

Questions for discussion and activities to
extend the reading experience

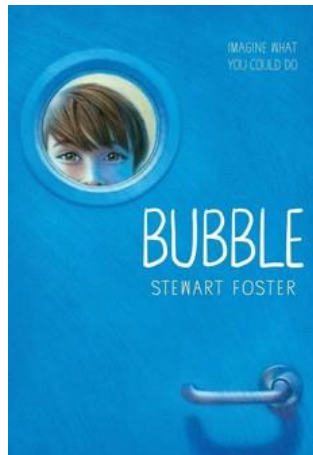
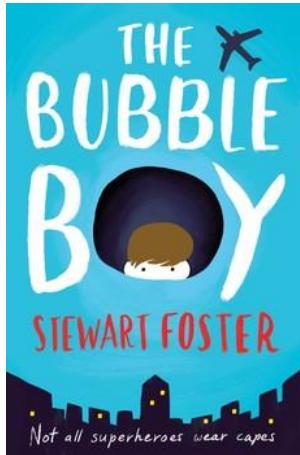


1. **Brilliant book chat** p.2
Design a cover, write a blurb, review the book, ask the author
2. **Super-duper Superheroes** p.3 & 4
Talk about everyday superheroes, discuss gender stereotypes, take a superhero quiz
3. **Cracking Characters** p.5
Write a character profile, letter and diary entry
4. **Out of the Bubble** p.6
Read for empathy, explore your senses
5. **The Bubble Boy Forum** p.7
Write and respond to messages
6. **Super Science - Amazing Art - Terrific Technology** p.7
Design a suit for The Bubble Boy
7. **Emotive Maths** p.7
Plot a mood graph
8. **Success is Tweet!** p.8
Share your Bubble Boy activities and see what other readers have been up to

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1. Brilliant book chat

- Compare these different covers for *The Bubble Boy*.
Which do you prefer and why?



- Find out who designed and illustrated the UK book cover – have they worked on any other books you have read?
- Design a new cover and write your own *blurb* for the book.
Make sure you don't include any 'spoilers'!
- Describe *The Bubble Boy* story in 5 words to summarise it for a friend.
- In one word say how you feel after reading Joe's story.
- Write a book review and share it with your friends – did you like the same or different things about the story?
- Think of 3 questions you would like to ask author *Stewart Foster* about *The Bubble Boy*?

The Bubble Boy by Stewart Foster

2. Super-duper Superheroes

I'm Spider-Man, Thor and Iron Man. I'm all the superheroes rolled into one.

'Not all superheroes wear capes' is written on the cover of The Bubble Boy.

- What do you think this means?

Nurses, police officers, fire fighters, soldiers and teachers are all examples of 'everyday' superheroes.

- Do you know anyone who is an everyday superhero?
- What do they do that makes them a hero and who do they do it for?

Gender stereotypes

Discuss these questions with your friends:

- Are some of these everyday superhero jobs better suited to boys?
- Are there jobs that only girls should do?

In The Bubble Boy, Joe has two male nurses: Greg and Amir.

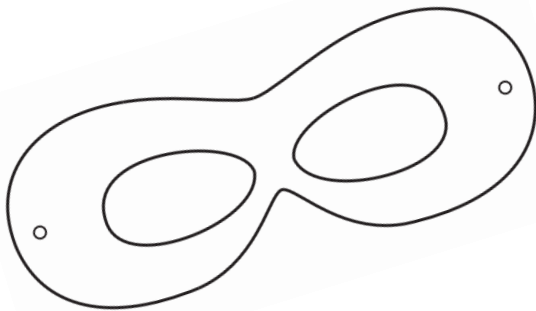
In 2017, just 10.8% of registered nurses in the UK were male (according to the Nursing & Midwifery Council).

- Are you surprised by this? Why?

The Bubble Boy by Stewart Foster

Joe's favourite superhero is Spider-Man.

- Which superhero would you most like to be and why?
- What superhero powers would you most like to have and why?
- Design a superhero mask or cape and give yourself a superhero name.



Superhero Quiz

- Can you guess the superhero from their description?

A crusader with no cape. A suit of red and a scientific mind. They also have a passion for photography.

An Amazonian Princess with a golden lasso. The daughter of Zeus and a fearless crusader of justice.

An excellent engineer whose friend knows only three words. Stripy and furry - but don't let that fool you into thinking he's cuddly!

This character has hair streaked with white and can take powers, strengths and memories from anyone they touch.

- Write your own superhero character descriptions and see if your friends can guess who they are.

The Bubble Boy by Stewart Foster

3. Cracking Characters

The new nurse started yesterday. He doesn't talk to me much. All I know is his name is Amir and that he's come to England from India.

- What do you learn about Amir? Write a character profile for him.

Beth squeezes me very gently - any tighter and she would bruise me. I'm glad that she's not afraid to touch me.

- Write a letter to Joe from his sister, Beth that shows how she feels about his condition and her thoughts on leaving him when she has to go away to Edinburgh.

'It's okay,' Greg says. 'I've got him...I've got you mate.' He pulls my head close against his chest.

- Why do you think Greg calls all his patients 'mate'?
- Write an entry in Greg's diary for the day Joe sees the news about Henry.

'I like dreams,' he says. 'Everyone should have them. They pictures we paint in the dark. You're a superhero in your dreams. I'm an alien in mine.'

- Why do you think Joe sometimes dreams he is a superhero?
- If Amir is crazy, Greg is caring and Beth is kind, which adjectives would you use to describe Joe and why?

The Bubble Boy by Stewart Foster

4. Out of the Bubble

In chapters 20 and 21, Amir arranges for Joe to experience some time 'outside his Bubble'.

- What do you notice about the image for these two chapter headings compared to the ones for the other chapters?

Amir takes Joe to see the stars in the night sky and the planes at the airport.

- Plot their journey from the hospital to the airport on a map.
- Investigate some alternative transport options to make the journey in case Amir's car breaks down!
- Imagine you are Joe - write a letter to your sister, Beth, to explain what happened when you left the hospital with Amir. Write about the things you saw, touched, smelled, heard and how that made you feel. (When he's outside, Joe's gloves, boots and helmet prevent him from experiencing how things feel directly. But there are indirect examples, such as walking on small stones which he can feel through his boots).
- Where would you take Joe and why?

I would love to go to KFC. I've only ever seen it on films or sometimes I've seen the red boxes blowing down the street. I don't know what it tastes like. Greg told me it's greasy and smells of sawdust, but that doesn't help because I don't know what sawdust smells like.

- Write a postcard to Joe to tell him what you did during your school holiday or at the weekend - help him see the World through your eyes. It could be as simple as walking on the beach, or playing football in the park, but try and describe what you could touch, smell, taste, hear and see.



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5. BBC Bubble Boy Forum

Joe receives messages on the 'BBC Bubble Boy Forum' from people who have seen a documentary about him.

- Write a short message to Joe – tell him something about yourself and ask him 2 questions. Swap your message with someone else and answer each other's questions as though you were Joe.

6. Super Science – Amazing Art – Terrific Technology

Joe's nurse, Amir, creates him a special suit to wear so he can go outside. Joe's friend Henry has a special protective suit designed by NASA.

Design a suit for the Bubble Boy.

- What is the purpose of the suit?
- What special features does it need? (air-tight, germ-blocking, lightweight...)
- Investigate what materials might be suitable and why.
- Think about what accessories are needed and why: gloves, boots, helmet...
- Which suit was better – Joe's or Henry's? Explain your answer.

7. Emotive Maths

I've been crying all night. I've been crying so much that my eyes are aching and my cheeks are sore.

- Using the chart, create a 'Mood Graph' to plot Joe's emotions through the story.

Heart rate: 79 Body temp.: 37.3C Room temp.: 18C Humidity: 7% Air Purity: 98%

- Look at the statistics on page 9 about Joe's health and the environment he's in. Find more of these lists in the book, then plot some of the data on a graph and describe what you notice about how Joe's state of health changes. What events influence these changes?

The Bubble Boy by Stewart Foster

8. Success is Tweet!

Here are some creative displays spotted on Twitter

Please share your Bubble Boy activities, displays, comments and questions with me - I love reading them! @stewfoster1

