

THE Valentines

ACTIVITY PACK For ages 13+

PERFECT FOR: Exploring the pros and cons of being famous, family bonds, considering points of view and shifting perspective, creating empathy, studying the use of idioms, authentic characterisation and comedy.

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE: storyboarding, script writing, comic twists, role play interviews, movie trailers, character arc graphs, letter writing, writing in role, postcards, writing to persuade.



HAPPY GIRL *Lucky*

THE Valentines

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS For students aged 13+

1. What impression do you get of Hope from the first chapter? Why do you get this impression?
2. In Chapter 3, how does the author want you to feel about the Valentine children's mother? How does she treat her children and her 'role' in life?
3. What aspects of scripts are shown in the book? Why do you think the theme of scripts runs throughout the story? What does this tell you about how Hope feels about her life?
4. How is Hope different to the rest of her siblings? What is her relationship with each of them?
5. Why do you think Hope keeps getting idioms and words wrong? What is the author trying to suggest about her character?
6. Why do the Valentines insist on waiting until Hope is 16 before she is allowed in the public eye? What do you think their reasons for this are? Is this fair?



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7. What kind of person is Dame Valentine? Is she a likeable character? Why/why not?
8. In Chapters 32–40 how have Jamie's motives and personality changed from earlier on in the book? Why do you think this is? What do you predict is going to happen to his and Hope's relationship?
9. How have the voices in Hope's head shifted in Chapter 47? Why do you think they are the voices of her siblings and not her imaginary friends?
10. What role has Roz inadvertently taken for Hope? Why do you think this is? What is her relationship with Hope's father?
11. In Chapter 50, Hope discusses how she treats her life like a movie. What do you think are her motives behind treating her life in this way? Is she truly happy?
12. How have the characters of Hope and Jamie shifted in Chapters 51 and 52? Why do you think that Hope has suddenly gained a new perspective?



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SUGGESTED ACTIVITY 1 For students aged 13+

DURING READING: IDIOMS

- Throughout the book, Hope comically keeps getting idioms and sayings incorrect. What do you think this says about the type of character she is? Why does the author, Holly Smale, choose to do this?
- As you read, make a note of all the times Hope gets an idiom or saying wrong.
- Find the correct version of each idiom or saying that you have identified, making a note of what they really mean.
- Using one of the famous idioms that you have found, create a storyboard outlining your ideas for your own short story. How can you create a comic twist in your story – perhaps by making your main character get the idiom wrong?



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SUGGESTED ACTIVITY 2 For students aged 13+

DURING READING: SIBLINGS

- In groups, share information about each other's siblings. What are the benefits of having siblings? What are the drawbacks?
- Create a table with four columns: one for each of the four Valentine siblings.
- As the book is being read, add information that you have learned about these characters at key points in the plot.
- What are the main challenges faced by each of the characters?
- Analyse the differences and similarities between these characters in how they cope with the situations explored in the book. How are these characters connected? Do you see any similarities between their relationships and the relationships that you have with your own siblings?
- Carry out role-play interviews with each of the characters at the key points that you have identified throughout the story.



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SUGGESTED ACTIVITY 3 For students aged 13+

AFTER READING: THE MOVIE OF YOUR LIFE

- Scripts feature heavily in the book. Discuss in pairs why you think this might be.
- Choose a scene from the book to rewrite as a script, making sure to include all of the correct script-writing features.
- In groups or pairs, use your script to accurately portray the chosen scene and the characters' thoughts, feelings and emotions throughout.
- Incorporate stage directions that include use of props, lighting, costumes and sound effects. Perform your scripts to the class!
- As an extension, consider what your life would be like as a movie. Create a trailer for the 'Movie Of Your Life'.



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SUGGESTED ACTIVITY 4 For students aged 13+

AFTER READING: FROM BEGINNING TO END

- In pairs, discuss how the central character of Hope has changed from the beginning to the end of the story. Make a note of your ideas – you could even draw them as a character arc graph.
- Write a letter in role as Hope at the end of the story addressed to Hope at the beginning of the story.
- In the book, she says herself that she has grown to be 'obviously much wiser and more mature'. In light of this statement, what advice would she give to the old Hope, given her new perspective on life?
- Make sure to include some incorrect idioms or sayings to truly get in-role as Hope!



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SUGGESTED ACTIVITY 5 For students aged 13+

AFTER READING: PERSPECTIVES ON A POSTCARD

- Jamie is 'a character with two sides' in this story. Do you agree with this statement? Discuss with a partner.
- Write a postcard in role as Jamie addressed to Hope at the beginning of their relationship.
- Then, write one in role as Jamie in the latter half of the book.
- How do your two different versions of Jamie speak to Hope? How do they sound different from each other?
- When you have written your postcards in role as the two different Jamies, swap them with a classmate and ask him/her to identify which is which!

