

Chicken Hill by Beccy Blake

Teachers Resource Pack for students Age 7+

This resource pack provides discussion questions, creative activities and writing tasks to support teaching the *Chicken Hill* series.

It supports learning in English, Art and Design, Geography (map work) and spoken language.

Read this series for the following **THEMES:**

- ✓ Imagination and creativity
- ✓ Setting and world-building
- ✓ Graphic novel features
- ✓ Invention and problem-solving
- ✓ Humour and teamwork

Author Bio

Beccy Blake has always loved drawing and writing about silly things and weird stuff. She went to art college in Newcastle, UK, and got a degree in illustration and design. Since then, she has continued to do illustration as well as animation work. *Chicken Hill* is the first in her debut graphic novel series.

Synopsis

Chicken Hill: Attack of the Zombie Cactus is a graphic novel by Beccy Blake, which features three short stories. The stories are set in Chicken Hill, a mysterious town where people's pets can talk. Each story features Ferdy, a young inventor, and his pet pug Gripper and pet cat Tink. The three stories are called Alien Invasion, Attack of the Zombie Cactus, and King Frog.

In *Attack of the Zombie Cactus*, Ferdy and friends travel to Mexico, where they battle an army of zombie cactuses.

In *Alien Invasion*, Gripper discovers and is abducted by aliens, and Ferdy and Tink have to try and get her home.

In *King Frog*, Ferdy discovers an underwater kingdom ruled over by the mean King Frog.

Themes of *Attack of the Zombie Cactus*

- Humour
- Co-operation
- Community
- Pet-care

Before Reading

Cover Detectives

Look at the cover for the first book in the Chicken Hill series: *Attack of the Zombie Cactus*.

1. What do you notice first?

Write a word or a sentence to describe the cover.

2. Does this series look funny?

- Yes
- No
- A bit!

What makes it look funny?

3. Who do you think might be an important character in the Chicken Hill series?

I think it is: _____

Because:

Title Teasers

There are three stories inside Chicken Hill Book #1. Look at the titles of the stories:

1. Alien Invasion!
2. Attack of the Zombie Cactus
3. King Frog

Which do you think might be ...

The most EXCITING?

The most SILLY?

The most MYSTERIOUS?

60-Second Prediction!

I think this series will be about ...

Activity One – The Chicken Hill Map

Task One: Map Explorers

Look closely at the map at the beginning of *Chicken Hill: Attack of the Zombie Cactus*.

What Can You Spot?

Talk to your partner:

- What place looks the STRANGEST?
 - Why does it look strange?
 - What might happen there?
- What place looks normal ... but might be hiding a BIG secret?
- Can you match the stories to the places?
 - 'Alien Invasion' might happen at ...
 - 'Zombie Cactus' might happen at ...
 - 'King Frog' might happen at ...

What Kind of Town Is Chicken Hill?

Circle one:

- Calm and quiet
- A little bit weird
- Completely bonkers!
- Full of secrets

Secret Map Symbols

The map has special symbols. These tell us where strange things happen!

Look for places with:

Strange sightings
Mythical cryptoids (mystery creatures!)
Teleportals to other worlds
Freaky events
Epic expeditions

Can you find any?

Choose one and answer: I think this symbol is here because ...

Task Two: Design Your Own Map

Step One: Draw Your Area

You can make up your own area, or choose:

- Your school
- Your street
- Your park
- Your house

Step Two: Add a Map Key

You must add:

one strange sighting
one mythical creature
one teleportal
one freaky event
one epic expedition place

Challenge!

Finish this sentence:

The strangest thing that ever happened here was ...

Activity Two – How Do Comic Books Work?

These books are **graphic novels**. This means they tell stories using **pictures AND words** together!

Let's find out how it works ...

Task One: Comic Match-Up

Do your own research to match the comic word to the correct meaning below!

The Comic Words

1. Panels
2. Gutters
3. Speech bubbles
4. Thought bubbles
5. Captions
6. Sound effects

What They Mean

- A. Big noisy words like BANG! SPLAT! ZOOM!
- B. The boxes that show one part of the story.
- C. Where a character's talking words go.
- D. The white space between the boxes. Your brain fills in what happens there!
- E. Little boxes that give extra information about the story.
- F. Where we can see what a character is thinking.

Task Two: Find Examples

Look at a page from the book.

Can you find:

- A sound effect?
- A speech bubble?
- A character making a funny face?
- Action lines?

Activity Three – Create a New Chicken Hill Adventure

Are you ready to cause some chaos of your own? First ... you need your story ingredients!

Task One: Create a new Chicken Hill story.

Step One: Choose your story ingredients

Pick ONE from each column or make up your own combinations.

Where is it happening?	Who is in it?	What goes wrong?
A floating junkyard in SPACE	A Chief Inventor	Every gadget turns on at the same time!
A secret tunnel under the school	A Sleepy Cat	Gravity stops working!
A haunted theme park	A Mystic Guru Bunny	Everyone's voices get swapped!
The top of a giant statue	A Gentle Giant Friend	A machine predicts disasters ... but gets them wrong!
A laboratory under the pond	An Expert Escapologist	Everything turns into jelly at sunset!

Step Two: Plan your mayhem

Title: _____

The Beginning

It was a perfectly normal day in _____
until ...

(What changed? What went wrong?)

The Problem!

Suddenly ...

(What happens? Is it loud? Sticky? Floating? Exploding?)

Things Get Worse ...

Things got worse when ...

The Invention Moment (if you want!)

Luckily ...

OR

Unfortunately ...

(Did the invention save the day ... or make it worse?)

How Does It End?

Choose one:

- Accidental success
- Cliffhanger (uh oh ... to be continued!)
- Total disaster
- Unexpected hero saves the day

Write your ending:

Step Three: Choose how to create it!

Option A: Write your story (1–2 pages)

Option B: Draw it as a six-panel comic

Option C: Design the next Chicken Hill book cover!

Reflection:

Talk with a partner:

- What did you enjoy most about reading Chicken Hill?
- Which character should come back in the next book?
- What new invention could appear next?