

# FREDDIE SPECTOR, FACT COLLECTOR



Illustrated by  
**ASHLEIGH BARTON PETER CHEONG**

**TEACHERS RESOURCES**

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**Teachers Resources by Robyn Sheahan-Bright**

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# INTRODUCTION

**Freddie Spector is an excitable eight-year-old boy who loves collecting facts on sticky notes and whose imagination lands him in some hilariously sticky situations.**

When Freddie's love of facts and his huge imagination come together, the results are unexpected and hilarious!

Each book features bite-sized facts as pop-outs, ensuring they will appeal to readers who preference non-fiction. Each book is a different adventure and theme, but explores the everyday life and trials of an eight-year-old boy.

Ashleigh Barton is a bestselling author with a growing profile. This is a fast-paced and funny new series, perfect for fans of Peter Helliar's *Frankie Fish* or Sally Rippin's *Polly and Buster* series of books, and Peter Cheong's illustrations perfectly complement these zany texts.

## BOOK 1 FREDDIE SPECTOR, FACT COLLECTOR: SPACE CADET

**Did you know that a bolt of lightning is five times hotter than the Sun? Or that slugs have four noses? How about that humans share 50 per cent of our DNA with bananas? Freddie Spector, the world's greatest fact collector, knows all these things and so much more.**

Freddie Spector loves collecting facts – about anything and everything. His latest obsession is space. It's all he talks about: stars, planets, galaxies, astronauts, space travel – and, of course UFOs and extraterrestrials. Freddie writes all his facts on sticky notes that his mum and big sister, Henrietta, keep finding in weird places – like in their sock drawers or their sandwiches.

But whenever Freddie collects facts on a topic, his very active imagination always gets involved too. And, after noticing some very suspicious goings-on, Freddie realises it's up to him to discover the answer to a burning question: could aliens have landed in his neighbourhood?

## BOOK 2 FREDDIE SPECTOR, FACT COLLECTOR: GO FOR GOLD

**Did you know that lawnmower racing is a sport? Or that cranberries bounce? How about that Gentoo penguins can bodysurf?**

Freddie Spector loves collecting facts – about anything and everything. At the moment he's obsessed with facts about sport. It's all he talks about: weird sports, Olympic sports, extreme sports, athletes and sporting history. He writes all his facts on sticky notes that his mum and big sister, Henrietta, keep finding in weird places – like in a cup of coffee or the shower.

But whenever Freddie collects facts on a topic, his very active imagination always gets involved too. And, when the medals for the school sports carnival go missing and the carnival is about to be cancelled, Freddie realises it's up to him to solve the mystery and save the day.

# BEFORE & AFTER READING THE SERIES

- Examine the covers of these two books in the series. What do they suggest about the series' themes?
- After you have read both titles, examine the covers again: what do they suggest to you now?
- After you have read both titles, read about the series in reviews and articles and use the notes below to examine the text more closely.

## THEMES & CURRICULUM TOPICS

### SPECIFIC TOPICS IN EACH BOOK

#### BOOK 1 FREDDIE SPECTOR, FACT COLLECTOR: SPACE CADET

*Topic:* Space Exploration

*Discussion Point:* Invite students to collect facts about space exploration, which is the topic in this book.

*Activity:* Use the sticky notes and other facts included in the book to test your students' memory of what they've read about related sub-topics in each chapter: A Big Bang (Not The Big Bang); Life on Other Planets; Starlight; The Speed of Light; Where Are They?; Animals in Space; Black Holes; Oobleck; Space Junk; The Far Side of the Moon; Comets and Asteroids; The International Space Station; Astronauts; One Small Step For Man; What Next? [See also **Worksheet 2.**]

*Discussion Point:* There are many sub-topics in this novel related to space, for example, Black Holes. What other sub-topics might have been included? Research that topic. [See also **Worksheet 4.**]

*Activity:* Make Aunty Lou 's RECIPE FOR OOBLECK (p 57).

*Discussion Point:* Freddie writes sticky notes about comets and asteroids (p 75). Discover some other fact about comets and asteroids.

*Activity:* Freddie lists 'Seven Things Freddie Spector Learned From a Real Astronaut' (pp 98–9) Discover some other facts about astronauts.

*Activity:* Freddie lists 'Ten Bonus Space Facts' (pp 106–7). Make your own list.

#### BOOK 2 FREDDIE SPECTOR, FACT COLLECTOR: GO FOR GOLD

*Topic:* Sport

*Discussion Point:* Invite students to collect facts about sport, which is the topic in this book.

*Activity:* Use the sticky notes and other facts included in the book to test your students' memory of what they've read about related sub-topics in each chapter: Sportsball; Fuel; Looking Good; Risky Business; Gold, Silver, Bronze; Playing Fields; Animals in Sport; Stranger Than Fiction; Fight Club; It Could be Worse; Rules; A New Tradition. [See **Worksheet 2.**]

*Discussion Point:* There are many sub-topics in this novel related to sport, for example, the Olympics. What other sub-topics might have been included? Research that topic. [See also **Worksheet 5.**]

*Activity:* Make MUM'S TOP SECRET ALL-THE-ENERGY-YOU-NEED-FOR-SPORTS SMOOTHIE RECIPE (p 20).

*Discussion Point:* Freddie lists some very unusual sports (pp 64–5). What other unusual sports have you discovered?

*Activity:* Freddie lists some 'Weird Sports Rules' (p 86). Discover some other strange sporting rules.

*Activity:* Freddie lists 'Ten Bonus Sports Facts' (pp 96–7). Make your own list.

## GENERAL STORY TOPICS (BOOKS 1 AND 2) IN RELATION TO CURRICULUM AREAS

Several themes relevant to curriculum topics (Humanities & Social Sciences (HASS), and English Language & Literacy) are common to the books in the series.

### HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES (HASS)

<<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/humanities-and-social-sciences/hass/>>

#### FACTS

*Discussion Point:* Collecting facts can be addictive. Freddie Spector is crazy about facts. In these two novels he focuses on space and sport. Ask students whether there is any topic that is a particular favourite of theirs? Then invite them to create a list of facts about it. [See also **Further Activities.**]

*Discussion Point:* The accuracy of 'facts' relies on research. Discuss with students the necessity to verify facts by comparing sources and authenticating them.

#### IMAGINATION

*Discussion Point:* Freddie not only loves facts – he loves to imagine things as well. And his imagination gets him into all sorts of exciting situations. What adventures have you imagined and have they had unexpected consequences?

#### FAMILIES

*Discussion Point:* Freddie is one of two children in a single-parent family. Mrs Anderson is a grandmother caring for a grandchild with her husband Mr Anderson. Aunty Lou doesn't make reference to a partner or children, but has a dog named Bowie. Discuss families and the different families which appear in this series.

#### SCHOOL

*Discussion Point:* Individual research into a particular topic is an aspect of any school curriculum that offers students useful learning experiences. What research projects have your students been involved in?

*Discussion Point:* What aspects of school life does this series reveal to the reader?

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERACY

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/english/>

### NARRATIVE PERSON, NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE & TENSE

*Discussion Point:* The stories are told in first person, present tense. How different might the narratives have been, if they had been written in third person?

### LITERARY DEVICES

*Activity:* Find examples of the use of literary devices in this series, using the table below to identify examples.

<b>Simile</b>	'It feels like a meteor shower is taking place in my stomach.' (Book 1: <i>Space Cadet</i> , p 74)
<b>Metaphors</b>	
<b>Personification</b>	
<b>Other</b>	

### HUMOUR

*Discussion Point:* Freddie's very active imagination sees him making wrong assumptions about the actions and motivations of others, often with very funny results.

*Activity:* Identify a section in either book in the series which you found particularly humorous.

### STRUCTURE

Structure can be analysed in terms of key narrative features used to engage the reader's attention and to shape the work:

a) *Strong beginnings and endings to chapters* are one way of structuring a narrative, for example:

**Book 1: *Space Cadet***

Beginning: 'What are you looking at?' (Chapter Five, p 29)

Ending: 'But let's get out of here.' (Chapter Three, p 21)

**Book 2: *Go for Gold***

Beginning: 'Finally, carnival day arrives.' (Chapter Eleven, p 84)

Ending: 'I'm going to tell Henrietta what I heard.' (Chapter Six, p 49)

Which other opening or closing sentence was particularly gripping, in your opinion?

b) *Suspense* is the key to any narrative's structure. Read and discuss the suspenseful aspects of each book. For example, 'red herrings' (clues that are intentionally misleading) are a common device in mysteries such as those included in this series.

### **Book 1: *Space Cadet***

*Discussion Point:* Freddie and Henrietta assume that the hole in the Andersons' backyard was created by aliens and that their behaviour is very odd. What other suspenseful details were included in this novel?

### **Book 2: *Go for Gold***

*Discussion Point:* Freddie wrongly jumps to the conclusion that Tobias is the thief: 'It's got to be him' (p 67). What other suspenseful details were included in this novel?

## **CHARACTERS**

Major characters are: Freddie Spector; his sister, Henrietta; his mother; his best friend, Theo Pappas; Freddie's Aunt Lou, their mother's best friend.

### **Book 1: *Space Cadet***

Minor characters who appear in *Space Cadet* (Book 1) include: Mr and Mrs Anderson, the Sectors' neighbours; Mr Lahoud, the newsagent; Mrs B, the librarian; Mr Singh, the principal; Tobias, Matilda, Zaeli, Ellie, Freddie's classmates; Lilly Jun, an astronaut.

### **Book 2: *Go for Gold***

Minor characters who appear in *Go for Gold* (Book 2) include: Mrs Freeman, a teacher; Melody Park, a student; Mr Singh, the principal; Mrs Jackson, the admin lady; Josie, a classmate; Mr Lahoud, the newsagent; Mrs B, the librarian; Tobias, Freddie's classmate.

*Discussion Point:* How would you describe Freddie's character? [See also **Worksheet 3.**]

*Discussion Point:* Who was your favourite character, and why?

*Discussion Point:* From your reading of the books, how would you describe Freddie's mother?

## **WRITING TASKS**

*Activity:* Write a diary entry by Henrietta about living with her brother, Freddie.

*Activity:* Write a letter to the Sectors from Aunt Lou, as if she is describing taking a holiday.

*Activity:* *Space Cadet* (Book 1) and *Go for Gold* (Book 2) are the first two in a series. Write a synopsis for a possible third book in which Freddie becomes obsessed with a new topic, and give the book a title.

*Activity:* Write an introductory chapter for the Book 3 you've described above.

*Activity:* Test your students' comprehension by asking questions about the characters in these two books.

## VISUAL LITERACY

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/visual-arts/>

**Discussion Point:** Examine the illustrations in this series which enhance the text. What is distinctive about Peter Cheong's work?

**Activity:** Design a new cover for either book in the series.

**Activity:** Design a cover for the third book you have imagined a synopsis for above.

**Activity:** Draw a scene featuring Freddie. [See **Worksheet 1.**]

## FURTHER QUOTES FOR DISCUSSION

### Book 1: *Space Cadet*

1. 'How am I supposed to be concentrating on times tables and adjectives when I know for a fact that there's an alien over the fence?' (p 17)
2. 'But maybe instead of worrying about asking a silly question, you could think about what you really, really want to know. Or what you could ask that only the astronaut could answer.' (p 44)
3. 'Given that no one knows anything about aliens at all, we don't know for sure that aliens eat humans. Or cats or dogs or budgerigars.' (p 72)
4. 'Becoming an astronaut can mean a lot of sacrifices.' (p 92)
5. 'This is what happens when you let your imagination run away with you,' (p 104).

### Book 2: *Go for Gold*

1. 'I'm never going to be an elite athlete and that's fine by me. No one can be good at everything.' (p 10)
2. 'The carnival being cancelled might be a good thing for me, but that doesn't mean it's a good thing for everyone else.' (p 45)
3. 'Freddie, I could stand here all day and tell you all the things we learn from fiction.' (p 62)
4. 'We don't need prizes to have winners. And the carnival is supposed to be *fun*. It doesn't matter if you're good at sports or not – it's about team spirit and having fun with your friends.' (p 75)
5. 'You don't always have to be the best to be the best.' (p 81)

## FURTHER ACTIVITIES

1. **Compare the books in this series to other junior fiction series.** [See **Bibliography.**]
2. **Design a poster** to advertise the series.



3. The **title of this series** refers to the central character. What other title might the series have had?
4. **Create a Fact Book** listing all the facts you have discovered about a favourite topic.
5. **Make a diorama** of Freddie in a spaceship.

## CONCLUSION

Freddie Spector is a lively hero and his antics are bound to entertain, as will his love of facts which will inspire young readers to pursue their own collections of facts.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Ashleigh Barton** is a children's author and copywriter. Before writing full time, she pursued her love of books (children's books especially) by working in some of Australia's biggest publishing houses, running marketing and publicity campaigns for globally renowned authors and illustrators. Ashleigh has previously published five successful and highly acclaimed picture books and a junior fiction series. She lives in Sydney with her husband, three children and their dog. <https://www.ashleighbarton.com/>

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Books have always been a vital part of **Peter Cheong's** life. Growing up reading Roald Dahl and having adventures with Calvin and Hobbes, Peter was heavily influenced by the way Quentin Blake and Bill Watterson brought stories to life. After spending several years in the Australian Army, Peter decided to pursue his dream of a career in books. He is the illustrator of *I'm a Hero Too*, *Nothing Alike* and Anh Do's *Pow Pow Pig* series, and has written and illustrated his own debut children's book, *Every Night at Midnight*. Peter lives in Perth (Whadjuk Country), Western Australia, with his very understanding wife and son and less understanding cat. <https://www.petercheong.com/>

# WORKSHEETS

## WORKSHEET 1 DRAWING ACTIVITY

Create a scene to accompany this sketch of Freddie Spector by Peter Cheong. [You might wish to enlarge to A3 to give you more space.]

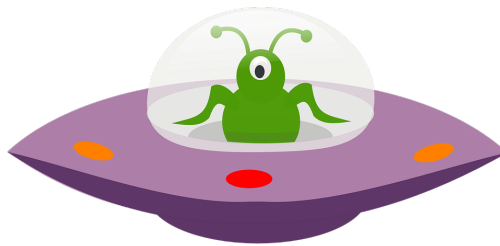


## WORKSHEET 2 QUIZZES

### BOOK 1

1. What is the difference between an asteroid and a comet?
2. What is the Fermi Paradox?
3. What is a Galaxy?
4. How big is the International Space Station (ISS)?
5. What is the aim of the Europa Clipper mission?

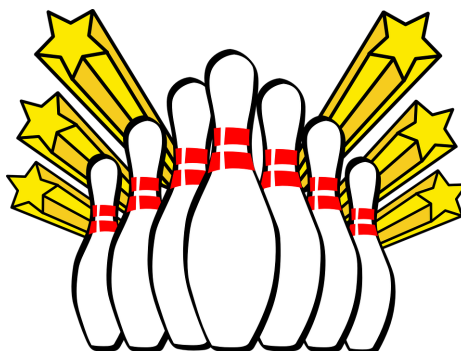
**Answers:** 1. An 'asteroid is made of rock and a comet is made of air and ice...' (p 12)  
2. Physicist, Enrico Fermi's research questioned as to 'why we've never seen any traces of alien life despite the size of the universe and the fact that it is highly likely that there are planets out there similar to Earth.' (p 32) 3. 'It's a group of stuff held together by gravity,' I say. 'Stars, planets, moons, comets, asteroids, black holes, dust, gas and dark matter.' (p 51) 4. 'As big as a football field,' (p 79). 5. The Europa Clipper mission 'is trying to find out if Europa – that's Jupiter's moon – can support life.' (p 105)



### BOOK 2

1. What is sportsball?
2. Where did the word 'leotards' come from?
3. What is the most dangerous sport in the world?
4. What is considered the world's oldest sport?
5. What popular type of clothing are you not allowed to wear on a golf course?

**Answers:** 1. 'It's what people call sport when they're clueless about it,' (p 5).  
2. Leotards 'were named after French acrobat and trapeze artist Jules Léotard.' (p 24) 3. 'BASE jumping is the most dangerous sport in the world.' (p 34) 4. 'Wrestling is considered the world's oldest sport.' (p 72) 5. 'You're not allowed to wear denim on a golf course.' (p 86)



## WORKSHEET 3 ACROSTIC POEM

Write an acrostic poem describing Freddie Specter.

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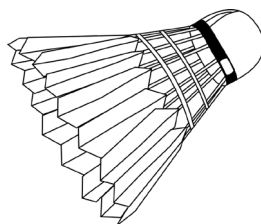
## WORKSHEET 4 SPACE FACTS

TOPIC	FACT
ASTEROID	
B	
C	
D	
E	
F	
G	
H	
I	
JUPITER	
K	
L	
MOON	
N	
O	
P	
Q	
R	
S	
T	
U	
V	
W	
X	
Y	
Z	



## WORKSHEET 5 SPORT FACTS

TOPIC	FACT
A	
B	
C	
D	
E	
FOOTBALL	
G	
H	
I	
J	
K	
L	
M	
N	
O	
PARKOUR	
Q	
R	
S	
TENNIS	
U	
V	
W	
X	
Y	
Z	



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- Barton, Ashleigh *Solomon Macaroni* series III. by Sarah Davis. University of Queensland Press.
- Branford, Anna *Violet Mackerel* III. by Sarah Davis. Walker Books Australia.
- Do, Anh *WeirDo* III. by Jules Faber. Scholastic.
- Do, Anh *Wolf Girl* III. by Lachlan Creagh and Jeremy Ley. Allen & Unwin.
- Do, Anh *Ninja Kid* III. by Jeremy Ley and Anton Emdin. Scholastic.
- Do, Anh *Pow Pow Pig* series III. by Peter Cheong. Allen & Unwin
- Godwin, Jane *The Isabelle Stories* series III. by Robin Cowcher. Lothian Children's Books
- Griffiths, Andy *The Treehouse* series III. by Terry Denton. Pan Macmillan.
- Harvey, Jacqueline *Clementine Rose* Random House.
- Harvey, Jacqueline *Alice-Miranda* Random House.
- Helliar, Peter *Frankie Fish* III. by Lesley Vamos. Hardie Grant Children's Publishing.
- Johnson, Rebecca *Juliet, Nearly a Vet* III. by Kyla May. Penguin.
- Kane, Kim *Ginger Green, Play Date Queen* III. by Jon Davis. Hardie Grant Egmont.
- Louise, Zanni *Tiggy and the Magic Paintbrush* III. by Gillian Flint. Bonnier Publishing.
- Murray, Martine *Henrietta* Allen & Unwin.
- Murrell, Belinda *Lulu Bell* III. by Serena Geddes. Random House.
- Poshoglian, Yvette *Ella and Olivia* III. by Danielle McDonald. Scholastic.
- Rippin, Sally *Billie B. Brown* III. by Aki Fukuoka. Hardie Grant Children's Publishing.
- Rippin, Sally *Polly and Buster* Hardie Grant Children's Publishing.
- Rippin, Sally *School of Monsters* III. by Chris Kennett. Hardie Grant Children's Publishing.

## WEBSITE TEACHING RESOURCES:

'How to Make a Diorama' *WikiHow*

<<https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Diorama>>

'How to Write an Acrostic Poem' *Kenn Nesbitt's Poetry4kids.com*

<https://poetry4kids.com/lessons/how-to-write-an-acrostic-poem/>



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE NOTES

**Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright AM** operates *justified text* writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. Her publications include *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia 1946–2005* (co-edited with Craig Munro) (UQP, 2006). In 2011 she was recipient of the CBCA (Qld) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award, in 2012, of the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award for Outstanding Services to Children's Literature, and in 2014, the QWC's Johnno Award. In 2021 she was appointed a member of the Order of Australia.