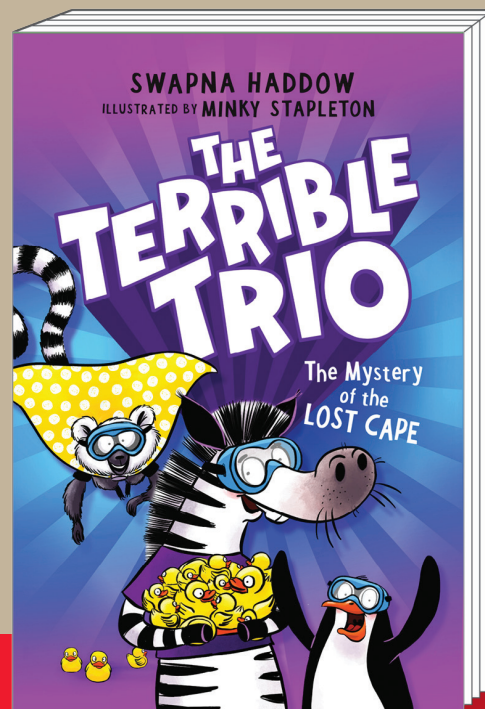


The Terrible Trio

The Mystery of the Lost Cape (Book 3)

By Swapna Haddow

Illustrated by Minky Stapleton



- Reading • Writing • Friendship • Teamwork
- Humour

Synopsis

Barry is going through the Lost Property box when he finds a cape. He decides to try it on and finds it gives him the ability to fly. He knows if he tells Zeb and Margarine, they will want it immediately, but Barry just wants one day as a flying lemur.

He soon gets addicted to the power and starts using it to save lives. When Zeb and Margarine tell him all about the breaking news story on TV of a masked crusader who has been saving the world in a mysterious cape, Barry feels really proud of himself.

But the cape-owner emu recognises his cape on TV and is on a hunt to find it. Zeb sees the cape in Barry's locker and recognises it from the posters he's seen. He wants to return it and collect the large reward.

He confronts Barry and they fight over the cape, causing it to rip. But when they try to put it back together it does not work anymore. Can Barry, Marge and Zeb work out what to do?

Of course, they can't. They throw the cape away and when it is discovered, with mac 'n' cheese stains, the Terrible Trio find themselves in a lot of trouble with the original cape-owner. It's up to them to convince the emu he doesn't need a cape to be the superhero he is.

About the Author

Swapna Haddow grew up in the UK and wrote her first book at age eight. She wishes she'd kept it, but it seemed like a good idea at the time to trade it for two stickers and a couple of marbles! Her first published book was the hilarious junior novel *Dave Pigeon*, which grew into a laugh-out-loud, award-winning series. She has since written many funny, colourful and much-loved picture books as well as further junior fiction series. Swapna loves to write stories filled with boisterous animals causing mayhem, with friendship and humour consistently at the heart of her work. Swapna now lives in Dunedin, New Zealand, with her husband, son and their dog. Her first homegrown tall tale with Scholastic New Zealand is *But Then ... the almost true story of an overdue book* followed by *Why Not ...? The almost true story of stuff that actually happened in a library*. This book is the third in the Terrible Trio series created with illustrator Minky Stapleton, which has already sold into more than twenty other countries.

About the Illustrator

Minky Stapleton is a multi-faceted illustrator with a range of styles, all with a dash of humour. An award-winning Art Director and Creative Director originally from Johannesburg, South Africa, Minky gave up advertising to follow her first love, illustration. She now resides in Auckland, New Zealand, where she balances illustration projects with running classes for kids on how to design scary monsters. Minky has illustrated many titles for Scholastic, from hilarious picture books to historical fiction and this high-energy, heavily illustrated junior fiction. She has also written and illustrated her own books, the very funny *Roo and Vladimir* and *Bubbles, the Zooting, Tooting Manatee*.

Writing and Illustration Style

The Terrible Trio: The Mystery of the Lost Cape is the third book in this successful graphic novel trilogy written for the 5+ age group. The author, Swapna Haddow, has written another fast-paced, hilarious tale in which she masterfully weaves her wicked sense of humour into her lively and lovable characters Barry, Marge and Zeb. This third instalment in the Terrible Trio series will have readers crying out for more from these unconventional superheroes who make mac 'n' cheese, handwriting and zebra crossings – and, of course, flying capes – super cool!

The text is presented in bite-sized chunks, ideal for reluctant or struggling readers. The dialogue text is written in the present tense. Some of the text is presented on angles and in a range of different typefaces and font sizes. Larger sizes are used for important parts of the dialogue.

Minky Stapleton's illustrations are the perfect accompaniment to Swapna's quirky text. Created in Adobe Photoshop and Procreate, the illustrations are black and white on all the interior pages and are packed full of humour and high jinks. The illustrations share equal presence with the words on every page. The synergy between the author and illustrator is a winning combination, and the series rightly deserves its spotlight on the world stage.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

Questioning is an important part of reading. It encourages the students to make inferences, predictions and clarifies their understanding of the characters and events in the story. It also helps them to draw on their own personal experiences. Use some of the following questions to help promote discussion. Allow time for the students to discuss some of the themes presented in the book, such as friendship and teamwork.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the front cover and read the blurb on the back cover.

- Why would a lost cape be a mystery?
- Why has the author put the word 'borrows' in single quote marks?
- How would a flying cape be handy for a superhero?
- Do you think Barry would tell the truth to his best friends, Zeb and Marge? Why or why not?
- What other words could replace 'SWISH-ZOOM'?

COMPREHENSION:

- Why do you think it might be a quiet day at the Superheroes Café? (p.3)
- If you were a superhero, who would you choose to rescue and how? (p.4)
- Look at pages 4–6. How do the body features of these rescuers help them?
- How would you feel if you were a not-in-high-demand superhero? (p.7)
- Why would a café have a dress-up box? (p.8)
- Have you ever found something that you had lost in a Lost Property box? How did you feel? (p.9)
- Would you like it if someone just 'borrowed' your lost property? Explain your answer. (p.10)
- Do you like dressing up? Why or why not? What is your favourite dress-up costume? (p.12)
- Look at the illustration on page 13 without reading the text at the top of the page. Do you know what Marge the penguin has on her head? Have you seen one before?
- Why is Barry the lemur getting so annoyed with his friends? (p.15)
- Was it sensible of Zeb to write his name on all his rubber ducks? Was it sensible though to keep losing them all? How could he stop that from happening? (p.20)
- Who would leave the old phone there? Why do you think Barry does not label the phone with an owner? (p.21)
- What do you think the spotty fabric is that Barry finds? (p.22)
- Are some of your clothes labelled? Why is it helpful to label clothes and other personal items? (p.23)
- Do you think Barry is going to keep the cloth or put it back? Why do you say that? (p.23)
- Why might Barry think the spotty fabric suits him? (p.23)
- Look at the word 'Waaaaah!' on page 24. Do you think this means Barry is surprised or enjoys it when the cape lifts him off the ground? Would you enjoy floating like that? Why or why not?



- Onomatopoeia is the formation of a word that sounds like what it describes. The word 'PLONK!' is an example of onomatopoeia, which is the sound that Barry makes as he hits the floor. What other onomatopoeic words could the author have used, such as 'Crash', 'Thud' and 'Bang'? (p.25)
- What would you do with a flying cape? (p.26)
- Why is Barry stuffing the flying cape into his locker? (p.28)
- Why does Barry think that 'Chick Chick' is a funny name for a rubber duck? (p.30)
- Why does Barry feel guilty when he takes the cape out of his locker? (p.38)
- Who do you think is the most responsible out of Barry, Zeb and Marge? Explain your answer. Are you the most responsible among your friends? Why or why not? (p.39)
- Barry learns to fly by trial and error. Have you learned a new skill in this way? How did it go? (pp.41–43)
- Look at the cobwebs on the rubber duck on page 43. What do the cobwebs suggest?
- Barry tries to convince himself that it's fine to use the cape. Why do you think he has changed his mind? (p.45)
- Barry lies to Marge and says he's popping out for some air. Do you think this is usual behaviour for Barry? Why or why not? (p.47)
- What do you think the commotion outside the bank might be about? (p.50)
- What do you think is causing the sound 'Owee-ooowee-oo'? (p.50)
- Barry stutters and says 'I-I-I suppose I am?' when he's asked if he's a superhero. Do you think Barry is convinced that he's a superhero? Explain your answer. (p.52)
- Does a cape make you a superhero or is it more about your personality? Why is Barry giving himself a pep talk at the bottom of page 53?
- When Barry clutches onto the pole, do you think he looks afraid or brave? Explain your answer. (p.54)
- One of the robbers has the superpower of remembering security safe combinations. What other superpowers could come in handy for those robbing a bank and trying to evade police? (p.55)
- Barry doesn't believe he can take on three wolves as they could overpower him. How do you think Barry could outsmart them? (pp.56–57)
- Barry's actual superpower is having very nice handwriting. What do you think he might do next? (p.58)
- When Barry goes into the café, Zeb and Marge look startled? Why do you think that is? (p.64)
- Why does Barry say 'Oh no' when he sees the bank vault heist on the TV news? (p.66)
- What do you think Zeb and Marge will think when they see the masked crusader in the cape up by the large sign? (p.67)
- When Marge yells 'The ice cream is all melted!', how do you think Barry feels at that moment? (p.69)
- Business is not doing well at the café. What do you think about Zeb and Marge's business ideas about selling masked crusader merchandise and mac 'n' cheese? Explain your answer. (p.75)
- Is Barry wise to go on one last flight? Will it hurt? Why or why not? (p.82)
- How does nice handwriting come in handy for the masked crusader? (p.84)
- Zeb is in the locker room looking for the goggles sign. What do you think he's going to find? (p.94)
- Do you think Zeb will click and figure out that Barry is the masked crusader? Why or why not? (p.95)
- On page 102, Zeb has a thought. What do you think that thought might be? (p.102)
- Do you think Zeb and Marge will be happy to read that missing cape article? Why or why not? (p.103)
- When the two articles are together, do you think Zeb and Marge will put two and two together and figure out what has happened? (p.105)
- Marge thinks they're going to be rich when they claim the \$50,000 reward. Do you think Marge realises about Barry's involvement yet? (p.106)
- Zeb and Marge plan what to do with the reward money. What would you spend it on? (p.108)
- If you were a superhero, is it possible to be in two places at once? Explain your answer. (p.111)
- Do you think Zeb and Marge will eventually figure out who the masked crusader is? Why or why not? (p.112)
- Why does Barry feel so bad that he's been using the cape when Zeb and Marge confront him? (p.114)
- Why do Zeb and Marge want Barry to sign their goggles? (p.118)
- What do you think Barry is thinking when he sees the SQ magazine cover? (p.124)
- Look at the illustrations on page 128. There's a lot of shoving going on. What could happen next? (p.128)
- When the cape rips, what would you do if you were the trio? (p.131)
- Have you ruined something that belongs to someone else? How did it make you feel? (p.136)
- Zeb wants to move countries and change his name to avoid facing up to Miss Emu. What drastic thing would you do to avoid dealing with Miss Emu? (p.136)
- Barry wants to take full responsibility for ruining the cape. What does this tell you about Barry? (p.139)
- Zeb says that the trio are in this together and that they would all take responsibility. What does this say about the trio's friendship? (p.140)



- How might Zeb be feeling in the illustration at the bottom of page 151? Do you think he believes he has got away with it? Explain your answer. (p.151)
- Why has Barry got that particular facial expression on the bottom of page 152? Why is it a bad idea that Barry has spoken up? Should he have just let Zeb do the talking? Why or why not? (p.152)
- Look what Zeb says on page 157. How does he sound? Have you ever talked too much or revealed too many things when you have been nervous or guilty of something? (p.157)
- Do you think Marge should think about what she says before she says it? Explain your answer. (p.158)
- Emu asks which of the trio is responsible. Who do you think is going to own up? (p.168)
- On page 169, there are no words. Do you think there needs to be words at all? How has the illustrator conveyed the feeling that the author wants here? (p.169)
- What do you think Barry is doing when he explains to Emu why he used the cape? How can flattery come in handy? (p.172)
- When Emu doesn't have the cape, she doesn't have any confidence in herself. What does confidence allow you to do? (pp.177–179)
- The three friends try to make Emu feel better, but what else are they doing in the process? (pp.180–182)
- What do you think about Barry's suggestion of writing a label for Emu's new cape? Is that a good use of Barry's superpower? Explain why or why not. (p.185)
- The trio celebrate for their safe bottoms when Emu leaves. How does teamwork help during tricky situations? (p.186)
- Do you think Barry is a natural entrepreneur? Entrepreneurs usually identify a problem and try to fix it with a product or a service. What problem does Barry identify? (p.187)
- Look at the illustration on page 191. What do you think Zeb has in the cardboard box that he wants labelling? (p.191)
- Why is Zeb a good first customer? Do you think Barry should offer him a discount because he's a friend? Why or why not? (p.192)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR ACTIVITIES

Activities

ACTIVITY 1: TO THE RESCUE

At the beginning of the story, all the superheroes are out doing rescues. The spoonbill has a wide, rounded beak that's useful for flipping turtles over, the giraffe's long neck is able to reach up to a great height and rescue little kittens and the snake uses its long, slender body to coil around some criminal capybaras and haul them to jail. Often superheroes use their bodies to help them. Imagine that you're a superhero dispatcher and that you have to assign certain superheroes to certain rescue jobs. Draw a superhero animal performing a rescue and write how his or her body helps with that. For instance, what might a rhinoceros use its large horn and strong legs to do, or how could an elephant use its trunk? Think about stopping a runaway train, or fixing a collapsed bridge, perhaps. Share your work with the rest of the class and then display it around the classroom.

ACTIVITY 2: COLOURFUL CAPE

The flying cape is made from spotty fabric. Imagine that you could design your own flying cape using different colours and patterns. Draw an outline of the flying cape on a large piece of paper. Decorate your cape using felt-tip pens or crayons. The circular fastener that holds the flying cape together at the neck could also have a fancy design, for instance, a dog superhero might have a fastener shaped like a bone. For a fun additional class activity, you could buy some inexpensive plain white or cream fabric, cut out a cape shape and decorate it. You could use fabric paints to draw directly onto the fabric or tie-dye the fabric and create a colourful cape. You could have one large fabric cape for the whole class or smaller capes for groups of students.

ACTIVITY 3: GOTCHA!

Barry writes a message on a large billboard that helps to get the wolf gang arrested. He writes 'The Wolf Gang Is Here!' on it. What would you write if you were Barry? For example, you might write 'Gotcha! The wolf bandits are hiding below.' Write your message on a piece of paper. Write it in the fanciest handwriting that you can do. Decorate your artwork to resemble a billboard. Alternatively, create a document file on your computer and place a free downloadable billboard graphic on it. Then type your message on top of the billboard graphic, choose some fancy lettering for your message and print your finished work onto A4 computer paper. Share your billboard creations with the rest of the class.

ACTIVITY 4: HELLO, MISS EMU

On page 107, Zeb calls Miss Emu and tells her that he and Marge have found her lost cape. The text on page 107 shows you Zeb's side of the conversation. Write what Miss Emu says during the conversation too. Work in pairs and read the entire phone conversation. One person can pretend to be Miss Emu and one can be Zeb. Then read your conversation to the rest of the class and see how many different versions there can be to a similar-themed conversation. For an additional activity, you could pretend that Marge has the telephone and is calling Miss Emu. Write what Marge's side of the conversation is.

ACTIVITY 5: MAGAZINE FAMOUS

The SQ magazine cover on page 124 has all the features of a great cover. It has the name of the magazine, a large cover image that gets the readers' attention, short and catchy headlines to ensure the readers want to find out more, quotes from the featured celebrity and a range of different typefaces. Design your own magazine cover, but this time feature Barry as the celebrity masked crusader. Think of a name for your magazine, such as Hero, or use SQ. What quote of Barry's will you feature? What will be your heading and subheading? Share your magazine cover designs with the rest of the class and then display them on a classroom wall.

ACTIVITY 6: BARRY'S LABELS

Barry starts a labelling service, but needs to design a label that suits his business. Draw a label like the ones on pages 188–189. Choose to do a label for a cape, a shield, a helmet, a wand or whatever. On one side of the label, write who the label is for, such as an Invisible Chameleon, a Time-Control Elephant, a Mind-Reading Octopus or a Magic Dog. Then, on the other side of the label, create some branding that suits Barry and that leaves space for the owner to write his or her name, address and phone number. Part of Barry's branding on the label could be his Barry's Label Service logo. Share your label with the rest of the class.

Written by Janine Scott