



**All the Wonderful Things**



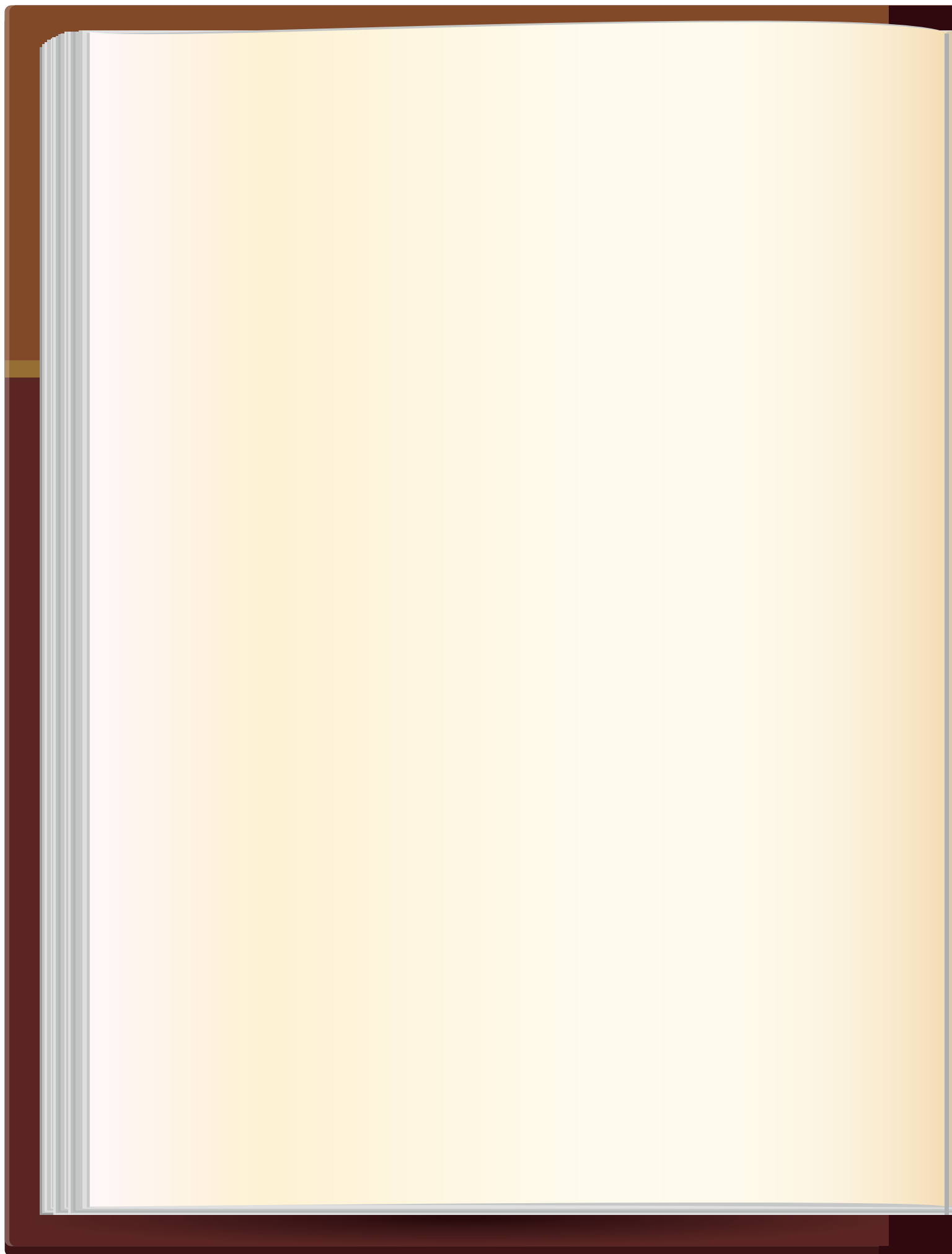
**Mad Fad Memorabilia**



**Put the Spinners Down, Slime is Here!**

# Reading Booklet

**Key Stage 2 English Reading Booklet – Set A**



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# All the Wonderful Things

Peter whined and complained all the way home after school. He complained about having to wear his raincoat (too tight), he complained about having to walk through puddles (too dirty), he complained about his day (too boring) but most of all, he complained about how his friends all had Pickeez and he didn't.

Pickeez were the latest craze to sweep through the school. They were small, colourful plastic characters which came with a special collector card. Everyone in Peter's class had a collection already. George had twenty AND a rare golden Pickeez. They were the best ones to get. If you came to school holding a golden Pickeez, everyone wanted to see it. Peter thought George was a spoilt show-off and walked away every time he came close.

Peter's mother listened to his complaints and sighed. She thought about the boxes and boxes of toys in his room – all the crazes and fads he'd absolutely 'had to have'. After what felt like five minutes of obsession with a set of football cards or a plastic spinner, he'd get fed up and move on to the next 'big' thing. She felt sad that Peter seemed to feel he was being badly treated simply because she refused to buy yet more little plastic toys which would surely only end up the way of all the others – either stuffed in a box, under his bed or strewn across his bedroom floor.

Once home, Peter sulked in his room until dinner time. When his mum called him down to eat, he made a lot of exaggerated sighs and huffs, slid off the bed where he had been lying and stomped down the stairs.

After a very subdued meal, Peter's mother asked him to help tidy up the dishes.

"Why can't Charlie do it?" he demanded.

"Because Charlie is only one and he can't walk yet. He'd find it very difficult to carry things to the sink!" Mum replied.

"If I do it, will you buy me some Pickeez?"

"Oh Peter, if only you'd..."

But Peter cut across her, shouting "FORGET IT!" as he slammed the dishes down and stormed back to his room.

Mum chose to ignore Peter's outburst, and cleared the dishes in silence, with only Charlie's cooing and babbling for company.

Peter found getting through the next day at school extremely hard. He felt jealous and angry whenever he saw anyone with some Pickeez in their hands. He avoided all his friends at break time as they compared and boasted about their latest Pickeez acquisitions.

Peter found a quiet spot on a bench in the corner of the yard and sat down, dejected and full of self-pity. After a few moments, he realised someone else had come to sit next to him. Looking up, he saw it was the new boy in their class. Peter felt a little ashamed that he couldn't remember the boy's name.

"Hello Peter, I'm Mohammed," said the boy.

Peter remembered his mum telling him about the newcomers to the school – some children of a refugee family who had travelled a long way, through many dangers, to safety in this country. Peter decided to ask Mohammed to his house for tea.

Once the arrangements had been made by their respective parents, the boys walked back to Peter's house together. As soon as they'd hung up their coats and peeled off their shoes, they ran upstairs to Peter's room to play. Peter threw himself down on the floor to play with his Lego. Mohammed took in the room around him, crammed with boxes of toys, bookshelves full of books and piles of computer games in dusty heaps around the room.

"What's up?" said Peter.

"You have so much stuff! What a mess!" laughed Mohammed, picking up a forgotten pile of football cards from last season which Peter had badgered and begged for. "How do you ever find anything?"

Peter looked around his room and slowly took in all the wonderful things in it. He thought about all the times he had begged and demanded things from his mother, making her feel bad if she dared to say no to him. He considered the situation his new friend was in, all the terrible things he must have seen and how he had fled his own country with little more than a small bagful of belongings.

Suddenly, Peter realised something....





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# MAD FAD MEMORABILIA

## Fads, Crazes and Trends over Time

There have been many fads over the years, some more mad than others. From flappers and flagpole sitting in the 1920s to dance marathons and zoot suits in the 1930s, fads and crazes have always had a place in life.

From the 1950s onwards, crazes really took off with the invention of the hula hoop and later, the adoption of bellbottomed trousers and towering platform shoes, lava lamps and mysterious mood rings. The 1980s and 1990s were just as prolific with the frustration of the Rubik's Cube, the dawn of Beanie Babies and the fascination with MySpace.

More recent fads include planking, selfies and fidget spinners. It's impossible to tell what will be next. Who knows what our future fads will be?

Here, we take a whistle-stop look at fads in fashion, fads in kids' toys, and fads that are just plain crazy!

Read on to find out more about some of the more unusual fads from modern history.

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### ***Fashion***

**Maybe more than any other type of fad, fashions often have a short-term – but striking – impact.**

#### ***Bellbottoms***

Bellbottomed trousers became a fashion staple of hip and happening society in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Bellbottoms are trousers that flare widely at the bottom. They were originally designed for the navy, with the loose bottom of the trouser ensuring that sailors could quickly remove their boots when needed.

They were usually made from denim and were incredibly popular. They were not, however, available everywhere so some creative fashion-followers adapted their own, standard jeans by cutting the leg seam and adding a triangular panel of different fabric.

When popular celebrities of the day such as Elvis Presley began to wear this style of trouser, the trend was quickly taken up by young people, who viewed them as a fashionable contrast to the straight-legged and more conservative trousers worn by the older generation.



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### ***Leisure Suits***

A leisure suit is a casual suit, usually associated with the suit style of the 1970s. But the introduction of a trousers-and-jacket set that was more comfortable and intended for casual occasions, or no occasion at all, actually came well before the disco era.

A 'lounge suit' can be traced back to the mid-1800s in Britain. This was basically a less-structured, more casual daytime suit, where the jacket and trousers were made from different fabrics.

The more modern leisure suit dates back to the 1920s, following the austerity of the First World War. The roaring '20s brought a much more youthful look and feel, with women in boyish 'flapper' attire and men in loose-fitting suits that were sometimes known as 'sack suits'.

In the 1950s, and with the introduction of a new clothing fabric called polyester, the leisure suit really began to take off. By the 1970s, it was the staple costume of any self-respecting disco dude, often with bellbottomed trousers, pastel colours and occasionally a pattern.

They were a short-term fashion – by the 1980s, the suits had almost entirely lost their appeal.



## ***Toys***

**From a simple hoop or ball and cup in Victorian times, to high-tech virtual reality headsets today, the ways children are entertained and amused has changed enormously over the centuries.**

### ***Cabbage Patch Kids***

In the 1980s, Cabbage Patch Kids became one of the hugest toy success stories of the decade. With their chubby faces, squashy arms and tiny, close-set eyes, the dolls were a dramatic departure from the run-of-the-mill sweet baby doll. The manufacturing process meant that each Cabbage Patch Kid was very slightly different from every other one.

Originally the invention of 21-year-old Xavier Roberts, a sculptor, the dolls were created as part of an art exhibit. Roberts got his assistants to present the dolls for 'adoption' rather than for sale, each doll coming with its own individual name and birth certificate. This unusual approach to marketing worked, as sales across the world sky-rocketed.

At the height of their popularity, such was demand for the dolls that shops had to hold lotteries to choose people at random who could buy them. Sales grew dramatically from \$60 million in their first year to more than \$600 million in 1985.



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### ***Frisbees***

The ever-popular Frisbee is a plastic disc, usually 20–25 cm in diameter. Players throw and catch the Frisbee, which spins through the air. Frisbees are a popular outdoor game and can commonly be seen on beaches in the summer.

The Frisbee craze hit the United States in the 1950s. Some stories suggest that the origin of the Frisbee lies with the Frisbie Baking Company in Bridgeport, Connecticut, USA, where pie pans had reportedly been thrown around by employees during their breaks, since the late 1930s.

Fred Morrison and his friend, Warren Franscioni, perfected the Frisbee in 1948 and created their company, which patented it and began Frisbee production. Prototypes were made of metal but the version developed for the public was made of plastic. As this was happening around the time of the famous Roswell incident and the UFO hysteria which subsequently followed, they called the new toy a 'Flyin-Saucer' and it was an instant and long-lasting hit.



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## ***Just Crazy!***

**Some fads just defy explanation! One such fad from the early twentieth century was flagpole sitting.**

### ***Flagpole Sitting***

Flagpole sitting certainly comes under the heading of 'more unusual fads'. Alvin 'Shipwreck' Kelly worked as a professional stuntman in Hollywood, California, and in 1924, as a result of a dare from a friend, he attempted to sit on a flagpole. He stayed sitting on the pole for 13 hours and 13 minutes, and thereby gained the interest of the world.

Within weeks, hundreds of people were flagpole sitting. One man set a record by sitting for 12 days, then another broke the record by sitting for 21 days. The public were fascinated and huge crowds would gather to watch the latest person to have a go. In 1929, Kelly decided to reclaim the record for flagpole sitting, and in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Kelly sat on a flagpole for 49 days in front of an audience of 20,000.

By late 1929, the craze had all but died out.





# Put the Spinners Down, **SLIME** is Here!

*The next 'big thing' has arrived... and this one might stick!*

Put aside the loom bands and fidget spinners: a new trend is taking over, and it probably isn't what you'd expect. SLIME has arrived, hitting schools across the globe, a sticky, gooey alternative to the play-dough we all knew as children.

Made from simple ingredients such as water, glue and food colouring, slime has quickly become so popular that many shops are beginning to sell out of the necessary ingredients.

Chloe Smith, an 11-year-old and newly-converted homemade slime addict, said, "Slime is brill! It's gooey, sticky and lots of fun to play with." Chloe has personalised her favourite slime recipe, using food colouring and even



*Pupils Chloe Smith and Matilda Hilson show off the latest global craze of slime-making*



little sequins for extra sparkle. She admits to spending a great deal of time and energy experimenting with ingredients to perfect her recipes but also acknowledges the mess she creates when she is concocting.

“It’s fun to make but you can sometimes get it too sticky, too stretchy or too crumbly,” she explained.

It would appear that there is a wealth of science behind the texture and consistency, but that in itself is not the major draw of this emerging phenomenon.



*Slime can be personalised with glitter and food colouring*

Matilda Hilson, a high school pupil, has been in the commercial slime business for a few months. She astutely spotted a gap in the market and now sells her slime at school, letting other pupils ‘try before they buy’. This apparent altruism is, in fact, purely a marketing ploy designed to maximise sales of her product.



Amanda Hilson, Matilda's mum, at first loved the trend.

"I was enthusiastic because I was so pleased to see Matilda doing something creative instead of messing around with her phone."

"But it soon started to take over the place," she said. "I spend time every day cleaning the table and floors because everything has bits of slime on it."

It seems parents aren't the only ones opposed to slime.

Whilst Chloe said she uses slime to help her concentration levels in class, some teachers have banned it from the classroom. The logistics of managing a class who are manipulating a blob of slimy matter has proved a step too far.

"Our priority is teaching the children. Slime distracts them from the lesson," said Jason Cole, a head teacher. "The pupils need to stay focused."

Chloe argues that it actually helps her to focus. "The teachers think it's a distraction, but it lets me focus and stops me getting stressed."

There have been concerns about the safety of homemade slime, because of the use of borax, also known as sodium borate, which some children are adding to recipes. There have been reports of this ingredient causing burns to the skin. Lisa Hepplestone, a Leicester-based scientist, said the danger is over-exaggerated.

"I actually let my own kids make slime and play with it," she said, "but I'd definitely advise against using borax. It's also important to keep it away from young children, as it should not be put near the mouth."

Enjoying the wave-crest of yet another obsessive kid-craze, ready-made slime manufacturers will soon be scrambling to be the most prominent brand on toy shop shelves.