

‘Cosmic’ by Frank Cotrell Boyce

‘Cosmic’ is a super book to read in upper juniors. The genre is contemporary comedy with a touch of science-fiction. I have read this to complement a Space topic (Y5 Science).

The plot centres around 12 year old Liam Digby, who - because of his height and premature facial hair - is often mistaken for an adult. There are both benefits as well as disadvantages to this: Liam gets to test drive a Porsche, is allowed to get on ‘adult’ rides at theme parks, and has fun pretending to be a supply teacher (School of Rock, style). However, it also creates problems, and unreasonable expectations and it’s not unusual for Liam to hear the words: “A big guy like you, you should know better”.

Liam manages to win a competition to visit Infinity Park in China, masquerading as an adult and father to his celebrity-obsessed friend Florida Kirby. They end up in space, with four other children, via a rocket ride called ‘The Infinite Possibility’.

A good way to hook your readers in, is with the following link to BBC ‘Bringing Books To Life’: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b036f8g5>

The book not only explores concepts such as gravity, space exploration and modern history, but also, and perhaps more importantly, examines the intricacies of relationships between parents, in particular, fathers and their children.

Then there are the children themselves. The winners of the Infinity Park competition and their parents are hilariously depicted (reminiscent of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory). There’s the wonderful blend of comedy and pathos in the character of Florida: “Ohmygod, the Earth has gone! What have you done with the Earthyoudiot!”

Finally, without spoiling the outcome, it’s wonderful to witness the youngsters triumphing at the end – in a truly COSMIC way!

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