



RICHMOND READERS



Supercomputerman

Supercomputerman is very intelligent, but he has a problem.

‘I understand many things in the world. Mathematics is very easy. Chemistry and Physics are no problem for me. But there is one thing I don’t understand. What is it? You, people.’

Why can’t Supercomputerman understand people?

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STARTER LEVEL
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RICHMOND READERS

STARTER LEVEL (300 headwords)

The Man from Peru
Ricky Banks – Music Star!
Supercomputerman Radio Boy

LEVEL 1 (500 headwords)

Oscar Jack's Game
Maria's Dilemma Permission to Leave
The Boy from Yesterday The Black Mountain

LEVEL 2 (800 headwords)

Saturday Storm
Craigden Castle Mystery
Jason Causes Chaos Where's Mauriac?
The Road through the Hills

LEVEL 3 (1200 headwords)

Cold Feet A Christmas Carol
The Canterville Ghost and Other Stories
Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde
A Trip to the Stars
Frankenstein

LEVEL 4 (1800 headwords)

Dracula Jane Eyre
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer
A Trip to London
Sense and Sensibility



Supercomputerman

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CHAPTER ONE



Who am I? What am I?



I am a 'supercomputer'. That is a very special, very intelligent computer.

Today I exist for the first time. Who am I? That is a good question. But you must ask, '*what am I?*'

I am a 'supercomputer'. That is a very special, very intelligent computer. I am the first of the new supercomputers. A lot of old computers can do many things. They can calculate millions of numbers in no time. They can play many games. They can drive a car. But I am very special. I have something different. It is something very important. I can think.

Look at me. Do you think I am a man? I have got two arms, two legs and a head. My head has got eyes and ears, a nose and a mouth. But in my head there is a supercomputer. I am a very intelligent supercomputer. I want to know everything. I like to study but I don't study at school. I know all the information in three million books. But I want to know more. I want to understand everything. I want to be perfect. I understand many things in the world. Mathematics is very easy. Chemistry and Physics are no problem for me. But there is one thing I don't understand. What is it? *You, people.*



What is it? You, people.



CHAPTER TWO



Michael and Peter

Animals are easy to understand. Most animals are very simple. They eat, drink, sleep, make babies*. Okay, people eat, drink, sleep and make babies too. But you people do many more things. I have many examples of things I don't understand. I have a very interesting video here. I would like you to watch it.



Good evening, Michael. It is good to see you again.

Peter: Good evening, Michael. It is good to see you again.

Michael: It is good to see you too, Peter. How are you?

Peter: I'm fine.

Michael: And how is your beautiful wife?

Peter: She's fine thank you, Michael.

Michael: And how are your children?

Peter: They are fine. Simon is at school now. Susan is with her mother. So, are you ready for business?

Michael: You know me, Peter. I am always ready for business.

Peter: Okay, look at this photograph.



The two men look at the photograph. There is a tank in a field.

Michael: Very nice, but I don't to buy a tank. I want something more ...

Peter: Now look at this photograph.



The two men look at the second photograph. It is the same field but now there is no tank ...

Michael: Wow! Super!

Peter: Now look at this photograph.



The two men look at another photograph. It is a photograph of a missile.

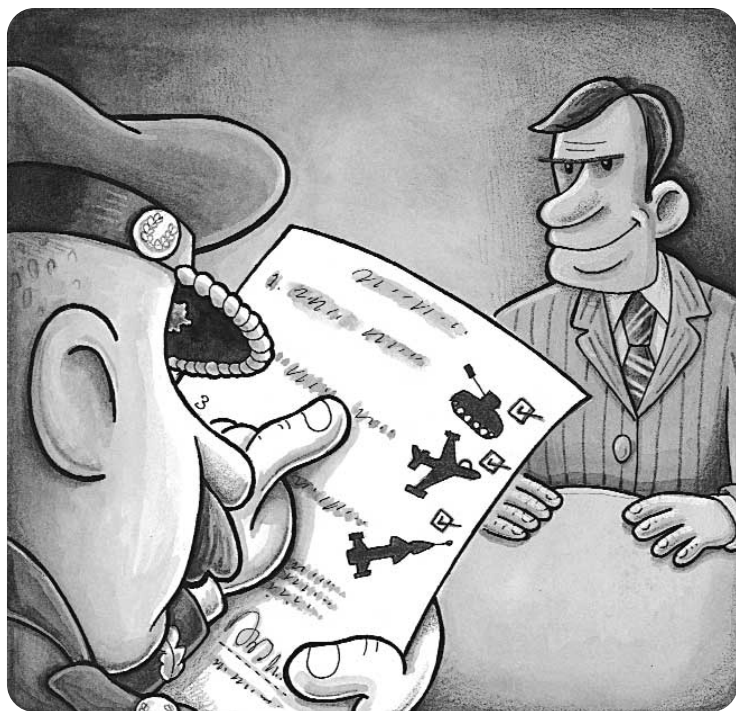
Peter: This is a British anti-tank missile. They are very popular.

Michael: I am not surprised.

Peter: Okay, Michael. I can give you more photographs and videos of everything you buy. I know your clients like photographs and videos.

Michael: You are right, Peter. These photographs are fantastic.

Peter: Thanks, Michael. So this is what you want.



Twenty-five Russian tanks, four aeroplanes ...

Michael: Twenty-five Russian tanks, four aeroplanes from China and ten British anti-tank missiles. Yes, that is everything. My clients are going to be very happy.

Peter: I like happy people. Now, Michael, have you got the money?

Michael: Here it is, in this bag. Would you like to see it?

Peter: No, no, Michael. I know you. I know all the money is there.

Michael: Thank you, Peter. It is always good to do business with you.

Peter: It is good to do business with you, too, Michael. Goodbye.

Michael: Goodbye.

Who is Peter? Who is Michael? I know that. I know where they live. I know where they work. Michael and Peter are very rich men. They buy and sell tanks and missiles. They buy from anyone. They sell to anyone - well, to anyone who has the money.

I don't understand it. I am a computer. I can think and I have morals. I know a lot of things. I can do many bad things. But I don't do bad things. Why not? Because they are bad. It is very simple for me. Some things are good. Some things are bad. People (and Supercomputers) with morals do good things. Selling military equipment to anyone

is a bad thing. So why do Michael and Peter do this? Perhaps they have no morals. But all people have morals. Am I wrong? I know people are stupid*, but have they got morals?



I know people are stupid, but have they got morals?



CHAPTER THREE



Julie and Rose

Okay, it is time for another video. Watch this!



Two girls are at school. Some boys are playing a game of football.

Julie: Hey, you - what's your name?

Rose: Me? Rose Long.

Julie: Well, Rose Long, I am Julie Snow and I have a question. What are you doing?

Rose: Nothing.

Julie: Yes you are. You are looking at me.

Rose: No I'm not.

Julie: Yes you are. I don't like it - and I don't like you.

Rose: I'm not looking at you. I'm looking at the football game over there. I'm looking at the boys.

Julie: Football is stupid.

Rose: No it isn't. Some football players are very intelligent.

Julie: Do you think I'm intelligent?

Rose: Maybe, I don't know.

Julie: Only *maybe*?



Julie takes some of Rose's hair. She pulls it hard.

Rose: Yes. Ow! That hurts*. Stop it! Okay, okay, I think you're intelligent.

Julie: Good girl, Rose. Hey, you're wearing new trainers*!

Rose: And?

Julie: I want them. Give them to me!

Rose: No!

Julie: No? Are you stupid?



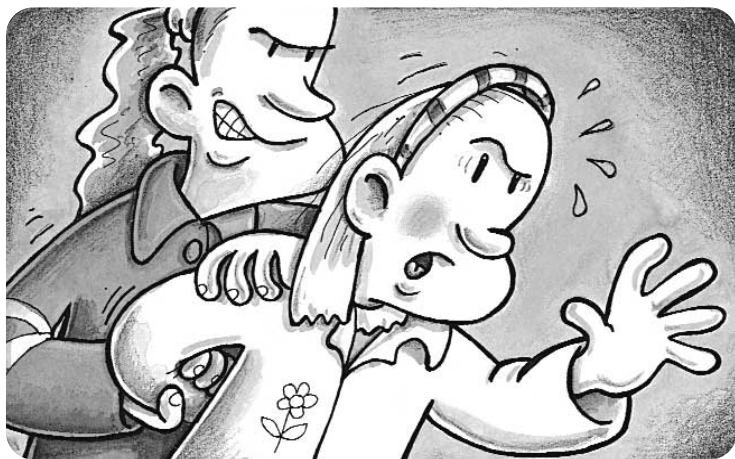
Julie takes Rose's hair again.

Rose: No, ow! Yes, yes, I'm stupid. I'm very stupid.

Julie: Okay, Rose Long, give me your trainers.

Rose: No. They are mine. I ...

Julie: GIVE ME YOUR TRAINERS! NOW!



Julie takes Rose's arm. She pushes it hard.

Rose: No, ow, my arm! You are breaking my arm!

Julie: So, give me your trainers.

Rose: Okay, okay, here they are.

Julie: Good girl, Rose. Here, you can have my old trainers. One more thing. Don't say anything to the teachers, or ...

Rose: You are a horrible girl.

Julie: What?

Julie takes Rose's arm again.

Rose: You are ... ow! MY ARM!

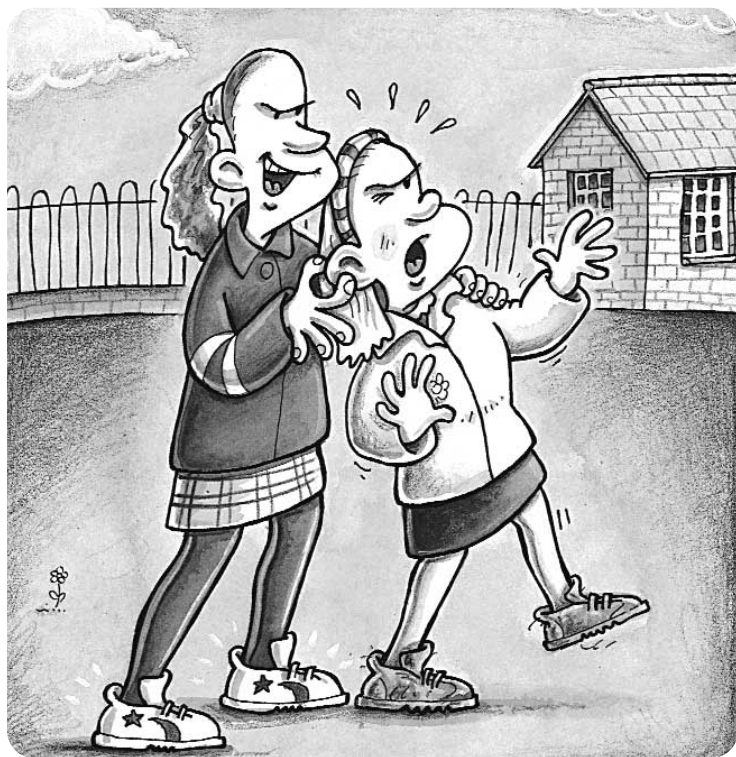
Julie: Am I horrible?

Rose: No, no.

Julie: So, what am I?

Rose: You are ... good.

Julie: Only *good*?



Julie takes Rose's ear. She pulls it.

Rose: Ow! That hurts! Okay, you are great.

Julie: And intelligent?

Rose: Yes, you are very intelligent.

Julie: And beautiful?

Julie takes Rose's ear again.

Rose: Ow! Yes, you are very beautiful. You are a supermodel!

Julie: Good girl, Rose. Good girl.

That is a very sad situation. Poor girl. Rose Long is only seven years old. The other girl, Julie Snow, is eight years old. Julie is not good, she is not intelligent and she is not beautiful. Julie is a bully*. There are thousands, maybe millions of bullies in the world. But why? Supercomputers never hurt anyone. Julie wants Rose's trainers. But Julie has got money. She can buy new trainers. Why does she bully poor Rose? I don't understand it.

Okay, supercomputers are very intelligent and people are stupid. But people have got morals. So why are some people bullies? I don't understand people. Computers are perfect. But people? Sometimes you are very, very bad. You must learn a lot of things.



CHAPTER FOUR



David and Helen

Okay, here is the last video. Please watch this.



Helen, I want to talk to you.

David: Helen, I want to talk to you.

Helen: Okay, David, what do you want to talk about?

David: I want to talk about you and me.

Helen: Me and you? Is there a problem?

David: Well, yes and no.

Helen: So what is it?

David: I love you.

Helen: Is that a problem?

David: I love you and I want to marry* you.

Helen: Well, David, I love you and I want to marry you, too. I can't see any problem.



Helen, you are rich, your family is rich and I am not.

David: But, Helen, you are rich, your family is rich and I am not. Your father doesn't like me. Your mother doesn't like me. Your ...

Helen: That is not true. My mother likes you. She thinks you are very intelligent.

David: But you live in a big house. Your father drives a Mercedes. Your mother drives a Porsche. I have got an old bicycle.

Helen: My father drives an old Mercedes. My mother drives a very old Porsche. Listen to me, David, money is not important. I love *you*, not money.

David: You say that today, but think about tomorrow. Think about next year.

Helen: David, I am always going to love you.

David: Oh, Helen. You are very good to me.

Helen: That is because I love you. You are very important to me. But ...

David: What is it?

Helen: I have a problem.

David: You have a problem? What is it?

Helen: I am twenty-five years old.

David: And?

Helen: And you are only nineteen.

David: But that is not important. I love you, Helen. Love is the only thing that is important.

Helen: But I am an old woman.



But I am an old woman.

David: That is not true. You are young and you are beautiful.

Helen: Do you think so?

David: Oh, yes I do.

Helen: Oh, David, I love you.

David: I love you too, Helen. But...

Helen: What is it, David?

David: There is another problem.

Helen: Another problem? What is it?

David: I ...



Oh, David, I love you.

And that is only part of the video. People! You are so stupid. Love! What is love? It is a very bad idea. You don't need love to live. Love is not important. Love is a very big problem. Why? Because when people are in love, they do not think. Thinking is very important. Crazy* Helen says money is not important. She thinks love is important. Poor Helen, you are wrong. David only has an old bicycle. Do you know why he only has a bicycle? Because he buys flowers and chocolates for Helen every week. Sometimes David can't sleep because he is in love with Helen.

Supercomputers don't have this problem. People must learn. You don't need love. Love is not important. Love is not logical. Perfect Supercomputers live without love. People in love are simply stupid.



People in love are simply stupid.

I think you understand now. Supercomputers are very intelligent. People are very stupid. Some people have no morals. Do you remember Michael and Peter? Supercomputers have morals. We only do good things. Some people are bullies. Remember Julie Snow and poor little Rose Long? Supercomputers are never bullies. We never hurt anyone or anything. Computers do not need love. Remember David and Helen? They talk and talk and talk about love. They are crazy. Supercomputers are perfect.



CHAPTER FIVE



Are supercomputers perfect?

Okay, that is all for today. I want to go for a walk. I must buy some new batteries. There is a shop two kilometres, eight hundred and fifty-four metres, sixty-two centimetres from here. I can walk there in twenty-six minutes and fourteen seconds. I can go there now.

I must walk along this street and then ... Oh, look! Look at that woman! She is ... beautiful! I feel ... different. I don't understand. I want to see her. I want to talk to her. Where is she? I must find her.



Look at that woman! She is ... beautiful!

Four hours later ...

I know all the information from three million books ... but where is that beautiful woman? I don't know! I want to see her again. I don't understand it, but I must see her again. I can't find her but I must find her. I ... What's this? A light from my batteries. There is a problem with my batteries! I need new batteries now!



I need new batteries now!

Quick! I must run. No, I have only got six minutes. I haven't got time to run. I must go in a car. I can drive to the shop very quickly. I need a car! Quickly! Ah, there's a woman by a car.

Supercomputerman: Help me! I need to buy some batteries.

Woman: Okay, there is a shop in the centre of town about three kilometres ...

Supercomputerman: Two kilometres, eight hundred and fifty-four metres, sixty-two centimetres. I know, but I must buy some batteries now! I have only got five and a half minutes!

Woman: No, no, the shop is open for another hour.

Supercomputerman: You don't understand. You are only a person, a stupid person.

Woman: What?



Supercomputerman takes the keys.

Woman: Hey stop it! What are you doing? Hey, those are my keys! That's my car! Stop! STOP! COME BACK!

Supercomputerman: What a stupid woman! I must have my batteries. Now, I've only got five minutes! Come on, come on. People, you are so stupid. You drive very slowly. Look at me. I can drive very ... Ahhhhh!



Supercomputerman crashes.

Supercomputerman: Oh no, and here is a man.

He is coming in my direction. He doesn't look very happy.

Man: Are you crazy? What do you think you are doing?

Supercomputerman: I'm sorry. I'm going to the shop. I need new batteries. I must have new batteries!

Man: You are crazy. You must pay me for a new car door. Look at my door!

Supercomputerman: No, I must go to the shop. I must ...

Man: Pay me the money or ...



Supercomputerman takes the man's arm. He pushes it hard.

Man: Ow! Ow! That's my arm! Ow! You're breaking my arm!

Supercomputerman: Don't stop me. I must go to the shop. I must have batteries.

Man: You are crazy.

Supercomputerman: No, I am not crazy. I am a supercomputer. I am not a person. But I must have ... new ... batteries ... Without batteries ... my ... superintelligence ... I ... people ... stupid ... supercomputer ... perfect ... stupid ... I ... perfect ... stupid ... Ahhhhhhh!



I am not crazy. I am a supercomputer.

EXERCISES

A Comprehension

Chapter 1

- 1 Why is Supercomputerman special?

Chapter 2

- 2 What do Michael and Peter do?
- 3 What does Michael give Peter?

Chapter 3

- 4 What is Rose Long doing?
- 5 What does Julie Snow want?

Chapter 4

- 6 What is David's problem?
- 7 What is Helen's problem?

Chapter 5

- 8 Why does Supercomputerman need to go to the shop?
- 9 Why is Supercomputerman late?
- 10 What happens to Supercomputerman at the end of the story?

B Working with Language

Complete the sentences with these words

bully money poor football new intelligent
rich sell

- 1 Supercomputerman is very very
- 2 Michael and Peter buy and tanks.
- 3 Michael gives Peter in a bag.
- 4 Rose Long is watching
- 5 Julie Snow is a
- 6 Helen is very
- 7 David is very
- 8 Supercomputerman needs batteries.

C Activities

- 1 What do you think is going to happen to Supercomputerman now? Write a different ending for the story.
- 2 There are many things Supercomputerman does not understand. Write a dialogue about what happens when Supercomputerman meets one of the people in the video.

G L O S S A R Y

babies plural of baby, very small child

bully someone who is bad when s/he wants something
from other people, for example, hitting them

crazy not normal

hurt feel bad

marry be husband and wife

stupid not intelligent

trainers shoes for sport