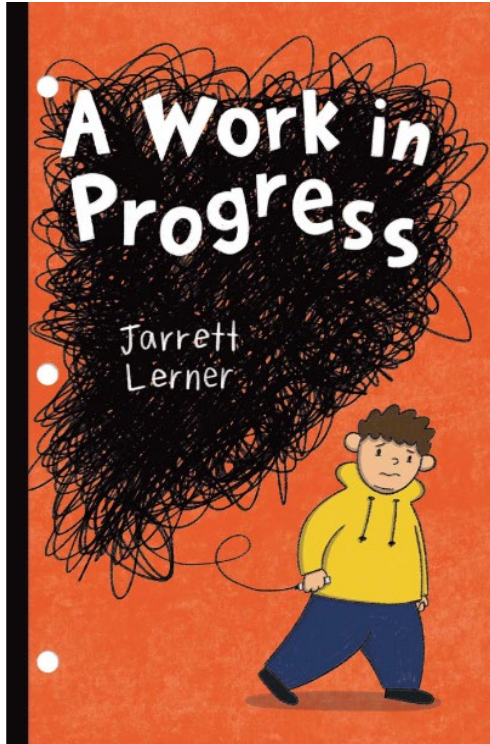


A Work in Progress

By Jarrett Lerner



Will is the only round kid in a school full of thin ones., so he hides...in baggy jeans and oversized hoodies, in the back row during class, and anywhere but the cafeteria during lunch. But shame isn't the only feeling that dominates Will's life. He's also got a crush on a girl named Jules who he knows he doesn't have a chance with, because of his size—but he can't help wondering *what if?*

Will's best shot at attracting Jules's attention is by slaying the Will Monster inside him by changing his eating habits and getting more exercise. But the results are either frustratingly slow or infuriatingly unsuccessful, and Will's shame begins to morph into self-loathing.

As he resorts to increasingly drastic measures to transform his appearance, Will meets skateboarder Markus, who helps him see his body and all it contains as an ever-evolving work in progress.

AR (Level / Pts): 3.8/2.0 pts.

Electronic Copy Availability: ebook and audiobook available

Author on the Internet:

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- X: Jarrett Lerner (@Jarrett_Lerner)
- <https://www.youtube.com/@JarrettLernerBooks>

Items to use in a library display:

- Hoodie
- Composition books
- Pencils/charcoal
- Skateboard

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- What does “halfway to angry” mean to you? Will uses the phrase “halfway to angry.” What does that mean to you? How can you be halfway to an emotion? Have you ever been halfway to angry?
- Have you ever experienced a moment where someone said something mean to you in front of other people? What was that like? How did it make you feel? Have you ever seen this happen to someone else?
- Will said he learned how to hide in plain sight. How do you think kids hide in plain sight? What does that look like? Why do you think someone would want to hide?
- In school, there’s a lot of discussion about bullying and what that looks like and what the process is to report it. Will says he became his own bully. Why do you think it’s so easy to see the worst in ourselves? What should we do about it when we become our own bully? Do you think schools should offer resources to stop self-bullying as well?
- Will says that for years he’d been living like he was as good as anyone else—eating lunch in public, raising his hand in class, etc. Why would his size impact whether he could participate in class? Why would he suddenly feel like he’s not allowed or qualified to learn and to respond to class questions?

Additional questions in: <https://jarrettlerner.files.wordpress.com/2023/05/a-work-in-progress-educators-guide.pdf>

First Line of the Book:

- *“I always think back to fourth grade...I was minding my business hanging out in the hallway with Dave and Andrew and Devin when I felt a tap on my shoulder.”*

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- *Mirror Image: How Guys See Themselves* by Adam Woog
- *You Are Enough: Your Guide to Body Image and Eating Disorder Recovery* by Jen Petro-Roy
- *An Unloved Guy’s Guide: How to Deal* by John Logan

What to Read Next:

- *The Labors of Hercules Beal* by Gary D. Schmidt
- *Starfish* by Lisa Fipps
- *Hands* by Torrey Maldonado

Name that Book:

- “All this stuff about how any kid can start one and they can be about anything. Mom decided that I should start a drawing club.” p. 91

- “As soon as she said it, the girl’s friend—she got it, she knew, she understood and then she giggled and said, ‘the bowl of snot. I’d definitely take the bowl of snot.’” p. 109
- “I bet you could eat a whole bathtub full of mayonnaise. Just slurp it up with a straw. Wouldn’t that be nice.” 149
- “We’re going to make a deal okay? I’m gonna teach you how to skate and you’ll show me how to draw. And don’t say you can’t.”p. 313
- “And a part of me wants to go on standing there a little longer, wants to ask her about her favorite books and about what sketchbooks she uses and where she gets her pencils and markers and if she prefers drawing with one over the other.” p.347

Content Questions:

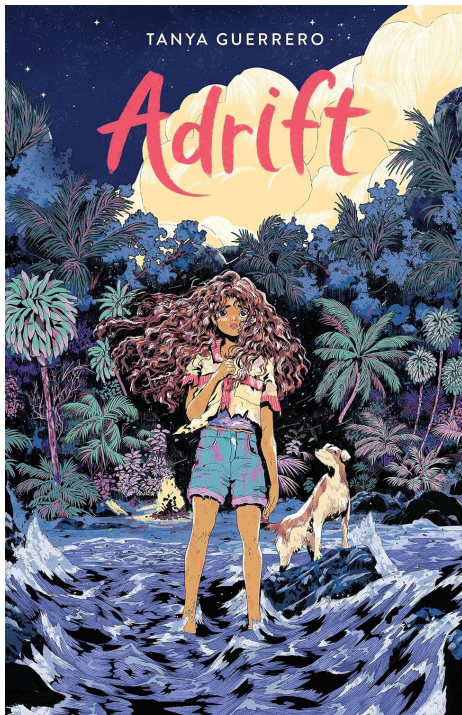
- In the beginning of the book, what does Nick always do after school?
 - Eat or stop at the store and buy food
- How does Nick deal with his overeating?
 - He eats the same thing as his mom, and then starts to skip meals
- What does Markus offer Nick?
 - His friendship, trading skateboarding lessons for drawing lessons

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- Chicken, rice, and broccoli
- Pizza

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- Pick a problem/challenge that you have faced and create a comic strip or doodle that documents it



Adrift

By Tanya Guerrero

Annotation: Cousins Coral and Isa are so close that they're practically siblings; When Coral and her parents leave on a months-long sea voyage amid the islands of Indonesia, Isa is devastated that they'll be kept apart, and the two vow to write to each other no matter what. Then the unthinkable happens when Coral and her parents leave on a months long sea voyage. Their boat capsizes at sea, where her parents vanish. Washed up on a deserted island, alone and wracked by grief, she must find the strength within to survive, and find her way back home. Meanwhile, Isa is still on Pebble Island, the only one holding out hope that her beloved cousin is still alive.

AR (Level / Pts): 6.0

Lexile: 690L

Electronic Copy Availability: Available as an E-Book and Audiobook

Author on the Internet:

- **Website:** <https://www.tanyaguerrero.com/>
- **Instagram:** @tanyaguerreroauthor
- **Twitter/X:** @guerrerotanya

Items to use in a library display:

- Coral's Survival Kit contents (Straw water filter, protein bars, energy gels, travel size first aid kit, mini sewing kit, flashlight, matches, notebook, pen, poncho)
- Seashells
- Sand
- Coconut husks
- Map
- Star/constellation map

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

1. How does the novel "Adrift" explore Coral's journey of self-discovery and resilience in the face of loss and adversity?
2. Discuss the significance of the ocean and sailing in Coral's life. How do these elements symbolize her internal struggles and quest for finding her place in the world?
3. Life on the island alone was difficult and dangerous for Coral. What do you think kept her from giving up?

First Line of the Book:

- "The lobsters were all dead."

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- Lost in the Pacific, 1942: Not a Drop to Drink by Tod Olson
- Off Grid Kid: Survival Skills For Life: An Interactive Outdoor Survival Guide For Kids on Making Fire, Building Shelters, Foraging Wild Food and Improving Mindset
- Wilderness Survival Guide for Kids: How to Build a Fire, Perform First Aid, Build Shelter, Forage for Food, Find Water, and Everything Else You Need to Know to Survive in the Outdoors

What to Read Next:

- Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell
- Stranded by Jeff Probst
- The Raft S.A Bodeen
- Could You Escape a Deserted Island?: An Interactive Survival Adventure (You Choose: Can You Escape?)

Sequels / Companion Title(s) by this author:

- N/A

Name that Book:

- “I looked all around, my eyes still stinging from the salt water.” (Page 19)
- “I exhaled in frustration. It seemed my only option was brute force.” (Page 63)
- “The contents of the bowl were gobbled up, and next to it was the corpse of a large black bird.” (Page 116)
- “I lifted the postcard up in front of my face and blew on the words as if I were blowing on a dandelion.” (Page 206)
- “I stood. My body complained, creaking with every tiny movement. Even my head wouldn’t shut up. The questions kept barging into my consciousness.” (Page 241)

Content Questions:

- What are some of the ways that Bambi helps Coral survive while on the island?
 - Bambi brings her dead animals to help feed her, leads her to fresh water, and gives her companionship.
- How do Coral and Bambi get rescued from the island?
 - A small boat with a dead body in it washes to shore. She decides to take the boat to explore other islands, but the boat starts sinking. She is rescued by a boat right before she and Bambi drown.
- How does Coral know so many survival skills?
 - Her dad taught her when she was younger.
- Why are Coral and Isa known as the star sisters?
 - Because their mothers’ maiden name Bituin meant star is Tagalog.
- How do Coral and Isa stay “connected” while apart?
 - They write letters to each other, even though they can’t send them.

Food / Menu Suggestions:

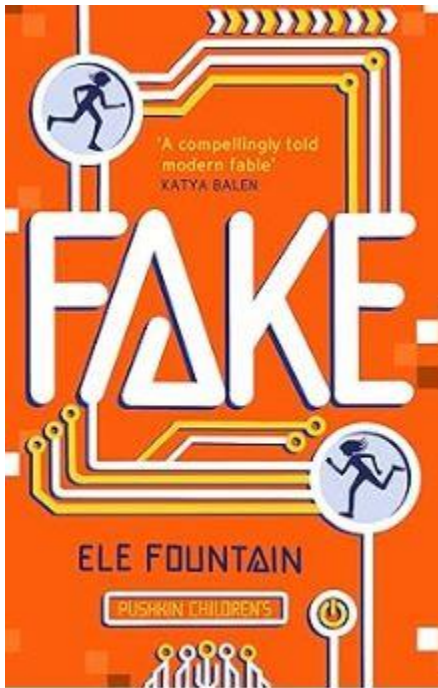
- Coconut milk
- Seafood
- Rice dishes
- Fish tacos
- Filipino food
- Bakery items

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- **Boat Building Challenge:** Participants can design and build miniature boats using various materials such as plastic bottles, cardboard, straws, and tape. The challenge could be to see whose boat can hold the most weight or float for the longest time.
- **Marine Life Sculptures:** Using clay or modeling dough, participants can create sculptures of marine animals or plants that are significant to the story of "Adrift." This challenge encourages creativity and artistic expression inspired by the ocean environment.
- **Navigation and Mapping Challenge:** Participants can design and create navigational tools such as compasses or maps to help guide them through a simulated journey at sea. This challenge can incorporate elements of geography, problem-solving, and critical thinking.
- **Message in a Bottle Challenge:** Participants can write messages or create artworks to go inside a bottle and then seal them. This challenge can prompt discussions about communication, connection, and the theme of hope in the novel.
- **Survival Kit Creation:** Participants can design and assemble their own survival kits containing essential items for surviving in a challenging environment, similar to the characters in "Adrift." This challenge encourages resourcefulness and practical thinking.

- Ocean Pollution Cleanup: Participants can engage in a hands-on activity to simulate cleaning up ocean pollution using recyclable materials or by sorting different types of waste. This challenge raises awareness about environmental issues and the importance of conservation.

Fake Ele Fountain



Imagine a world where your only friends are virtual, and big tech companies control access to food, healthcare and leisure. This is Jess's world.

But when she turns fourteen, Jess can go to school with other children for the first time. Most of them hate the 'real' world, but Jess begins to question whether the digital world is 'perfect' after all.

Back home, her sister Chloe's life-saving medication is getting ever more expensive. Determined to help, Jess risks everything by using skills forbidden in the cyber-world, only to stumble on something explosive. Something that will turn her whole world upside down.

It's up to Jess to figure out exactly what is real, and what is fake – Chloe's survival depends on it.

AR (Level / Pts): 4.1 / 700 lexile level

Electronic Copy Availability: ebook

Author on the Internet:

- Website: <https://elefountainpen.com/>
- [Ele Fountain \(@EleFountain\) / X](#)

Items to use in a library display:

- Pill bottle
- smartwatch
- Trunk
- Beeswax candles
- A violin

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- Jess quickly realizes that she and her fellow students come from very different backgrounds. Explain how they are different.
- Have you ever participated in live-learning (virtual school)? How is it different from tradition in person learning?
- What are the pros and cons of the virtual world? How do algorithms that track our spending and searches impact our lives?

First Line of the Book:

- “Shirts?” “Yes.” “Socks?” “Yes.” “Pants!”

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- 20 Makey Makey projects for the evil genius by by Colleen Graves, Aaron Graves
- Cyberspies : inside the world of hacking, online privacy, and cyberterrorism by Michael Miller
- Past Pandemics and COVID-19 by Walt K. Moon

What to Read Next:

- The Limit by Kristen Landon
- Randoms by David Liss
- Forgotten City by Michael Ford
- Cleo Porter and the Body Electric by Jake Burt

Other Titles by this author:

- Storm Child
- Wild
- Melt
- Boy 87
- Lost

Name that Book:

- “Keeping a pet. That’s an offence, Miss Chloe. I hope you like prison food.”pg 20
- “Be bold. Question everything. Don’t forget to brush your teeth.” pg 26
- “She teaches kids who don’t want to live-learn. She has her own school.” pg 93

- “I don’t know anyone who lives like my family does, surviving on what they produce. Perhaps other families can simply afford to pay whatever it costs.” pg 103
- “The night I hacked the pharma system, I altered the tag on Dad’s name.” pg 165
- “I guess change doesn't have to start big. Because small things grow. But it can only begin, if you want to make it happen.” pg 255

Content Questions:

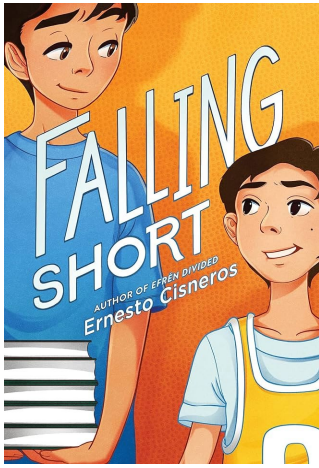
- What does Finn give to Chloe to keep her from moping around after they leave for school? A treasure hunt, some puzzles and a secret code- a cypher to send messages to each other. Pg 19
- What does Miss Singer want Jess to do ? Compose a duet for Jessica and Jack to play on their violins for a competition. Pg 112-113
- What was Violet’s connection to JP? Violet is Jess’ cyber-minder and she goes by the name of JP. JP was creating hacks to sharpen Jess’ hacking skills. Pg 205

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- Scrambled egg in a bun
- Garden vegetables

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- Cypher - create cyphers and make up messages to decode
- Puzzle books
- Have patterns to create knitted animals
- Create instruments using household items
- Create food or flower container gardens
- There are tons of drones in this book used for a variety of tasks. Come up with your own kind of drone, what it would be used for, and then design/build it with whatever supplies available (building materials, found objects, digitally using TinkerCad or Minecraft, etc.)



Falling Short

By Ernesto Cisneros

Annotation:

Isaac and Marco already know sixth grade is going to change their lives, but it won't change things at home—not without each other's help.

This year, star basketball player Isaac plans on finally keeping up with his schoolwork. Better grades will surely stop Isaac's parents from arguing all the time. Meanwhile, straight-A Marco vows to finally win his father's approval by earning a spot on the school's basketball team.

But will their friendship and support for each other be enough to keep the two boys from falling short of their dreams?

AR (Level / Pts): Book Level - 4.7/Points- 7/Quiz Number 514934

Electronic Copy/Audio Book Availability: Available through Kindle, Libby, and Hoopla

Author on the Internet:

- Website: <https://www.ernestocisneros.com/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ernestocisneros.author>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/cisne.writes/>
- Twitter: https://twitter.com/Author_Cisneros

Items to use in a library display:

- Basketball and a mini Hoop
- Nurse's pass
- Finger Splint or Athletic Tape
- Math textbook and homework

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- [Discussion Guide](#)

First Line of the Book:

- "Marco's repeated tapping on my window sounds like Morse code - really, really loud Morse code."

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- *Muggsy: My Life from a Kid in the Projects to the Godfather of Small Ball* by Tyrone Bogues
- *Basketball: How It Works* (The Science of Sports; Sports Illustrated Kids) by Suzanne Slade

What to Read Next:

- *Crossover* by Kwame Alexander
- *Travel Team* by Mike Lupica
- *Stanford Wong Flunks Big Time* by Lisa Yee
- *Lizzy Legend* by Matthew Ross Smith
- *Power Forward* by Hena Khan

Sequels / Companion Title(s) by this author:

- *Efrén Divided* by Ernesto Cisneros

Name that Book:

- Talk about being a disappointment. pg. 13
- Suddenly I'm feeling pretty stupid - like this table might be a bit too smart for someone like me. pg. 42
- From all the running and shoving I'm seeing, there are just too many aggressives and semi-aggressives to even count. pg.82
- Nope, these mac n' cheese bites are hard as a rock and just as tasty. pg 161
- Apologizing isn't an easy thing to do. pg 203

Content Questions:

- What kind of backpack does Marco use? Why?
- Who is Marco's math teacher? Why does Marco like him so much?
- Why is Isaac worried about his father picking him up from the nurse's office?

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- Mac 'n cheese bites
- Fresh squeezed orange juice, deli cut bacon, buttermilk pancakes
- Burnt toast and soggy oatmeal

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- Marco applied his analytic brain to improve his basketball skills. Design a training regimen for Marco to help him make the team! Identify basketball skills Marco needs to improve to make the team. Research specific drills and exercises to help him improve areas of basketball he is weak in and to play to his strengths. Use your video editing skills to film a video that Marco could add to his watch list with tips and tricks for improving his game.
- Marco felt unsafe getting changed in the locker room. Brainstorm and design prototypes to make the locker room feel safer for kids who want to participate in sports but are not confident about the way their bodies look.

Girl in White

By Lindsay Currie



Annotation:

Mallory hasn't quite adapted to life in her new town of Eastport yet. Maybe it's because everyone is obsessed with keeping the town's reputation as the most cursed town in the US.

And thanks to the nightmares she's had since arriving, Mallory hardly sleeps. Combined with the unsettling sensation of being watched, she's quickly becoming convinced there's more to her town. Something darker.

When Mallory has a terrifying encounter with the same old woman from her dreams, she knows she has to do something--but what? With Eastport gearing up to celebrate the anniversary of their first recorded legend Mallory is forced to investigate the one legend she's always secretly been afraid of . . . Sweet Molly.

AR (Level / Pts): 4.2 / 9 pts

Electronic Copy Availability: Ebook and audiobook available

Author on the Internet:

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Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/lindsaycurrie/?hl=en>

X: <https://twitter.com/lindsaycurrie>

Items to use in a library display:

- Camera
- Compass
- Converse shoes
- Lighthouse
- Halloween decorations - plastic cauldrons, spiders, graveyards

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

1. How does Mallory's initial reluctance towards Eastport shape her perception of the people and events around her, and how does this evolve throughout the story?
2. How does the title connect to the story? If you were to give it another title, what would it be?

3. How does the character remind you of yourself or someone you know?
4. Discussion Guide from Sourcebooks:
https://www.lindsaycurrie.com/files/ugd/c47227_f78e2c77258e44e6bdbe9b75a5575537.pdf

First Line of the Book:

“Sweet Molly once lived in Eastport
Sweet Molly once loved the sea
Sweet Molly lost Liam to the shadows
Now Sweet Molly is coming for ye...”

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- *Haunted ships and lighthouses* by Thomas Kingsley Troupe
- *Haunted towns* by Kenny Abdo

What to Read Next:

- *The Girl in the Locked Room* by Mary Downing Hahn
- *Scratch Scratch* by Lindsay Currie
- *It Found Us* by Lindsay Currie

Name that Book:

- “Black and orange ribbons are wound around light posts, and gauzy ghosts hang from the tree branches.” p. 17
- “The actor playing William creeps around the tombstones, pausing now and again to throw light-up necklaces and candy to the crowd.” p. 76-77
- “The calm before the storm. They talked about it during the movie. It’s the period of time right before a huge storm hits where everything is still. Sometimes it’s so peaceful that it fools people into thinking the storm isn’t coming, and they don’t prepare.” p. 124
- “My newish pink-and-green Converse are already speckled with dirty water. I’m beginning to think I should’ve started collecting backpacks or makeup instead of shoes.” p. 129
- “Within moments, everything is swallowed by a cloud of darkness. The wind kicks up the ocean, turning the waves into a froth of whitecaps.” p. 216
- “Just when I think she doesn’t see us, her head swiftly turns. The orbs of her eyes aren’t black this time but white, glowing like we’re her target.” p. 260

Content Questions:

Q: What is different about Mallory’s parents’ restaurant?

A: It is a themed spooky restaurant backing up to a cemetery.

Q: What did Mallory notice about the holes she dug in the ground?

A: They spelled out a word: STOP

Q: What happened to Molly’s brother?

A: He was lost at sea.

Q: What do Joshua and Mallory have in common?

A: They are both outsiders experiencing the same haunting dreams.

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- Biscuits shaped like tombstones (“Boneyard Biscuits”)
- Chocolate pudding (“Put It in Formaldehyde Pudding”)
- Scrambled eggs (“Six Feet Under Scrambled Eggs”)
- Penne pasta with red sauce, onion, and red pepper flakes (“Poltergeist Penne”)

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

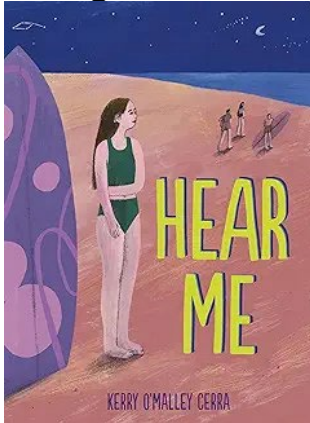
- Research quaint harbor towns. How do they compare to Eastport?
- Build a lighthouse: <https://www.bakerross.co.uk/craft-ideas/kids/seasons/summer-seasons/paper-cup-lighthouses/>
- Invent your own spooky legend or ghost story set in Eastport. Write a short story or create an illustrated storybook detailing the legend, its origins, and its impact on the town.

Hear Me

By Kerry O'Malley Cerra (author)

Annotation:

A year after being diagnosed with hearing loss, twelve-year-old Rayne is doing her best to live a “normal” life and act like nothing has changed.



AR (Level / Pts): Lexile level 660

Electronic Copy Availability: Yes. Kindle and Audible books available

Author on the Internet:

- Website: <https://www.facebook.com/kerryomalleycerra>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/kerryomalleycerra>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/kerryomalleycerra/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/KerryOCerra>

Items to use in a library display:

- Surfboard
- Hearing aids
- Pictures or cochlear implant information
- Map of Florida with places from book highlighted

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- How are you “different” from your peers?
- What learning obstacles have you had to overcome?
- What can you do to make others feel more comfortable with their issues?
- [Click here for a list of discussion questions from author](#)

First Line of the Book:

- “I climb inside the box of shame.”

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- **Hearing (Susan Gray) 2009**
- **Hearing (Laurence Pringle) 2000**
- **Cochlear implant basics (Richard Pocker) 2021**
- **Journal for kids with Cochlear implants (DD creative press) 2023**

What to Read Next:

- **Hear me: Breaking the rules series book 2 (HR Hobbs) 2018**
- **Believe (Julie Mathison) 2020**
- **New Kid (Jerry Craft) 2019**

Sequels / Companion Title(s) by this author:

- **Just a Drop of water 2016**
- **Make a little wave (Coming October 2024)**

Name that Book:

- **When all this testing started two years ago, I hardly had any loss at all. (pg 10)**
- **And I meet all the criteria. Except that they want kids up to age ten. (pg 71)**
- **Because people assume I'm not smart when I answer the wrong things. (pg 161)**
- **I write, Poll: are you happy you got implants or not? (pg 196)**
- **Tears fall with every step that leads me farther away from what was my last hope. My last chance. (pg 251)**
- **He climbs on the opposite end of my board and faces me, our feet gripping the sand with our toes to steady us. (pg 310)**
- **Finally, I can just be me. (pg 318)**

Content Questions:

- **Why were Rayne's parents pushing her to get cochlear implants?**
 - **Because they were afraid she was falling behind in school due to her hearing loss. They wanted her to have a more "normal" life.**

Why did Rayne run away?

So that she could speak with Dr. Brandt about joining the study event though she didn't qualify. She wanted to show that she was mature enough to make her own decisions.

At the end of the book, what did Rayne's family and friends do to help support her decision?

Her parents canceled the surgery for now, allowed her to go to the school for the deaf, and they all learned sign language so they could communicate better as her hearing got worse.

Food / Menu Suggestions:

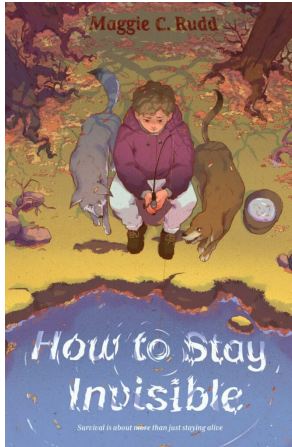
- Key lime pie (Florida)
- Picnic food (from the beach picnic)
- Comfort food (from the diner)
- French Toast and hot chocolate (from the diner)
-

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- Design a surfboard
- Learn sign language/ be able to sign a presentation
- Create a plan that could be used to help people with hearing loss feel more included
- Put noise canceling headphones on and experience what it is like with no hearing for a certain amount of time.
-

How to Stay Invisible

By Maggie C. Rudd



Annotation: Twelve-year-old Raymond Hurley has never had a place to call home. His free-wheeling parents move their family from town to town, and he's living in a trailer in a brand-new state when one day, they just up and abandon him. All alone with nothing but a duffle bag full of clothes and his reliable pup, Rosie, he is forced to live in the woods behind his middle school. With a fishing pole in hand and survival guide checked out from the library, Raymond scrapes by and doesn't tell anyone his secret. This isn't the first time he's had to rely on himself. However, when winter days get colder and finding food becomes nearly impossible, Raymond makes new friends, including a curious coyote, in unexpected places. Soon, he learns that his fate will depend not just on his wilderness skills, but on the people and animals he chooses to trust."

AR (Level / Pts): Request Submitted for AR

Lexile: 730

Electronic Copy Availability: Yes

Author on the Internet:

Website: <https://www.maggierudd.com/>

Items to use in a library display:

- Batteries with gum foil
- [Kids Survival Skills Book](#)
- A piece of bread so students can observe overtime as food becomes inedible.
- A piece of fruit in a clear container to watch.

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- Raymond's English teacher asks a question of the day, " If you could have anything in the world that you wanted, what would it be? How would you answer that question?"

- How do you think you would survive living in the woods over a holiday?
- Have you ever found yourself in a position where you felt you had to defend a friend against bullies?

First Line of the Book:

- “At 4:36 in the afternoon, Raymond Hurley sat waiting in the front office of River Mill Middle School.”

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- *The Finest Hours (Young Readers Edition): The True Story of a Heroic Sea Rescue* by Michael J. Tougias & Casey Sherman
- *Alone* by Megan E. Freeman

What to Read Next:

- *How to Steal a Dog* By Barbara O'Connor
- *Hatchet* By Gary Paulsen
- *My Side of the Mountain* By Jean Craighead George

Name that Book:

- “ “Maybe I just missed them.” he said. That had to be it.”
- “Shoot, if I had an extra five dollars, I wouldn’t be giving it to you. No offense. O’ course”
- “They seemed to understand each other without speaking.”
- “ Within minutes, Raymond heard sirens and then two police cars were pulling into the school parking lot.”
- “*There are worse things than being alone*, Raymond thought.”

Content Questions:

- Why do you think Raymond says “ this felt different” about sleeping in the woods at the end of chapter?
 - His parents were gone now, he didn’t have anywhere else to go.
- How does Harlin say the race cars get to the track in Hillsborough that is deep in the woods? “
 - By helicopter
- What is Raymond’s dog's name?
 - Rosie

- What item was Raymond trying to win at the WinterJamboree Bingo game?
 - A sleeping bag
- If you are hiding why would you not want to use wet sticks to make a fire?
 - It makes a lot of smoke

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- Potato Chip sandwiches
- Have cans of food with-out labels and have students guess what is in there and say whether they would eat the contents or not (sight unseen)

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- I'm going to give you a little cache of items to build or create as many things as you can that you think would be beneficial if you found yourself alone in the woods.
- Design something that can keep you dry in the rain

Kelcie Murphy and the Academy for the Unbreakable Arts

By Erika Lewis



Annotation: The Otherworld is at war. The Academy for the Unbreakable Arts trains warriors. And Kelcie Murphy—a foster child raised in the human world—is dying to attend.

A place at AUA means meeting Scáthach, the legendary trainer of Celtic heroes. It means learning to fight with a sword. It means harnessing her hidden powers and—most importantly—finding out who her parents are, and why they abandoned her in Boston Harbor eight years ago.

When Kelcie tests into the school, she learns that she's a Saiga, one of the most ancient beings in the Otherworld. Secretive, shunned, and possessed of imposing elemental powers, the Saiga are also kin to the Otherworld's most infamous traitor.

But Kelcie is a survivor, and she'll do whatever it takes to find her parents and her place in their world. Even if that means making a few enemies.

AR (Level / Pts): Request Submitted for AR - No Lexile Level found

Electronic Copy Availability: Yes

Author on the Internet:

- Website: <https://www.erikalewis.com/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheErikaLewis>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/erikaelylewis/>
- TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@erikalewisauthor>

Items to use in a library display:

- Middle school students seem to love to draw eyes - have descriptions of the 4 Fianna, their characteristics and eye color associated with them. Have students draw and or color different eyes and say what Den they would live in.
- Create models of legendary creatures found in the Glossary of the book.
- Have students create an abyss either on paper or a 3-D model of what they think it would look like.

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- Have students think about a time in their lives when they have needed to work as a team.
- Have students think about a time when they wanted to give up, but didn't.
- If you could have a superpower connected to an element what would you choose?
- Kelcie was accused of stealing. Have you ever been accused of something you didn't do?
- Celtic Mythology

First Line of the Book:

“There were no seismic quakes, horrendous storms. Nothing suspicious at all to warn Kelcie Murphy that she was about to unleash the greatest evil the world has ever known.”

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- *Ireland's Immortals: A History of the Gods of Irish Myth* by Mark Williams
- *The Celtic Myths: A Guide to the Ancient Gods and Legends* by Miranda Aldhouse-Green
- *Celtic Mythology for Kids: Tales of Selkies, Giants, and the Sea* by Chris Pinard

What to Read Next:

- *FIREBORN* by Aisling Fowler: Fireborn is an epic quest, perfect for fans of the *His Dark Materials* and *The School for Good and Evil* series, that will spin readers into a magical world like no other—and introduce them to an unforgettable new heroine named Twelve
- *The Charmed Children of Rookskill Castle*, Janet Fox: Why do the castle's walls seem to have a mind of their own? When Kat's classmates begin to vanish, one by one, she must face the truth about what the castle actually harbors--and what Lady Eleanor is--before it's too late.
- *Artemis Fowl*, Eoin Colfer: Twelve-year-old Artemis is a millionaire, a genius-and above all, a criminal mastermind. But Artemis doesn't know what he's taken on when he kidnaps a fairy. These aren't the fairies of the bedtime stories-they're dangerous!

Companion Title(s) by this author:

- Kelcie Murphy and the Hunt for the Heart of Danu
- Kelcie Murphy and the Race for the Reapers Key

Name that Book:

- “Kelcie nearly tripped at the word *kingdom*. It conjured medieval images of King Arthur and Camelot. “I’m from Boston, Massachusetts, in the US.” (pg 30)
- “Horses can smell fear and you reek of it.” (pg 45)
- “*Academy for the unbreakable Arts, only those who relish danger and despair for the rest of their lives may apply*” (pg 172)
- “She dropped them on the ground letting them burn, guarding them until they were ash.” (pg 200)
- “Oh yeah. If we get out of this alive, Rowen is going to kill you,” Brona said. (pg 275)

Content Questions:

- Who is Lady Windbag after? (16) The heir.
- What’s the Abyss?(14) The only ones who know are the gods and goddesses, who will never willingly divulge the events of the darkest night that turned the waters of the largest river in the Otherworld into an unending jail. A vortex of nothing.
- What is special about the eye color of the Saigas?(8) Saigas’ eye color can change and if they have the pulse element they can spark all four elements.
- Do you think Kelcie should listen to her father and leave the Academy? (9) No

Food / Menu Suggestions:

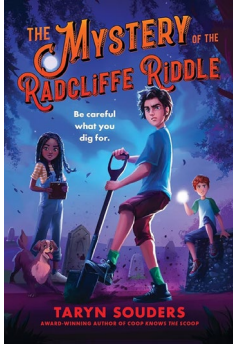
- Soda Bread
- Irish Stew
- Bacon and Cabbage

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- Designs that use the elements Fire, Water, Earth and Air (maybe not Fire)
- Build a fortress that can withstand the wind of a blow dryer on medium.
- Build a fortress that can withstand being dunked in water.

The Mystery of Radcliffe Riddle

By Taryn Souders



Annotation: When Grady and his dad learn the town oddball, Eudora “Kooky” Klinch left something for them in her will, they can only imagine what it might be. When it turns out it’s an old piece of embroidery, they are bitterly disappointed. But it comes with a note saying, “This is no ordinary piece of needlework. It’s a treasure map. Riddles and Clues. To the victor go the riches.” Grady’s dad dismisses it, but Grady thinks this could be the chance of a lifetime.

But when someone tries to break into Grady’s house one night, and then the local antiques expert who examined the tapestry later dies, Grady realizes that he’s not the only one who wants the treasure. There’s more at risk than he bargained for, and solving this mystery just got a lot more dangerous.

AR (Level / Pts): **AR quiz requested 2.24.24**

Electronic Copy Availability: yes, ebook and audible

Author on the Internet:

- Website: <https://tarynsouders.com/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/taryn.souders/>
- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/taryn_souders/
- X: @Taryn Souders - Middle Grade Author

Items to use in a library display:

- Cross stitch sampler
- Book on codes or code breaking
- Faux gravestone

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- Eudora Klinch is the town eccentric who is rumored to have hidden treasure. When she passes away, Grady and his dad learn that they are related to her and she gave them a cross stitch sampler. Have you ever been given something you didn’t want?
- Grady swapped the original sampler out of the frame to protect it. Have you ever hidden anything in plain sight to keep it away from a sibling?
- Author Discussion Guide—[MysteryOfTheRadcliffeRiddle-DiscussionGuide.pdf](#)

First Line of the Book:

- **“EUDORA KLINCH DIED.”**

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- **Breaking the Code with Cryptology by Jane Levy**
- **Code Breaking Puzzles for Kids: 50 fun code puzzles for junior code crackers aged 8-12 by Dan Moore**
- **Animal Minis Cross Stitch: Counted Pattern Book for Beginners and Kids | Fast and Easy by Maggie Smith**

What to Read Next:

- **Coop Knows the Scoop by Taryn Souders**
- **Treasure Hunters by James Patterson**
- **The Unbreakable Code by Jennifer Chambliss Bertman**
- **The Secret Letters by Margaret Peterson Haddix**
- **Treasure Tracks by S.A. Rodriguez**

Sequels / Companion Title(s) by this author:

None

Name that Book:

- **If hope was a thing with feathers—like that Emily Dickinson poem that had been Mama’s favorite—mine had a broken wing. Page 3**
- **I was toast. No, scratch that. Worse than toast. I was grits—the instant kind without cheese. Pg 85**
- **“I wish more kids took an interest in their family history. There’s so much we can learn from our ancestors. Pg 99**
- **Library doesn’t open for another hour. Pg 205**
- **My mockingbird had been quiet the last couple of days, and every once in a while, I could swear I heard a little canary singing. Pg 269**

Content Questions

- **Grady and his dad inherited a cross stitch sampler from Eudora Klinch. Who inherited her house?
Her cats**
- **What evidence was left behind when someone tried to break into Grady’s house?
A fingernail**
- **What is the name of the local antique shop?
The Hairless Monkey**

- **Before she retired to digging in her garden, what did Eudora Clinch do for a living?**
A historian

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- **Fried Chicken**
- **Dirt–vanilla pudding cups, crushed oreo crumbles and gummy worms**
- **Muffins**

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- **Cross stitch fabric, patterns and threads**
- **Challenge the students to decipher a coded message**
- **Bingo**
- **Scavenger hunt**
- **From Author: [MysteryOfTheRadcliffeRiddle-ActivityKit\(FINAL\)2.pdf](#)**

New Dragon City

By Mari Mancusi (author)

Annotation:

A high-stakes, action-packed adventure about friendship, survival, and fighting for ones you love, perfect for fans of *Wings of Fire* and *How to Train Your Dragon*.



AR (Level / Pts):

Electronic Copy Availability: Yes. Kindle and Audible available

Author on the Internet:

- Website: <http://www.marimancusi.com/books.html>
- Facebook: [@Mari Mancusi](#)
- Instagram: [@Mari Mancusi](#)
- Twitter: [@Mari Mancusi](#)

Items to use in a library display:

- Map of NYC
- Any type of Dragon (plastic, stuffed animal, etc.)
- Canned food supplies, ration foods, etc.
- Legos to build models of NYC

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- What items would you bring with you if you needed to go to an underground bunker?
- Do you think Noah should have gone to the underground bunker?
- Do you have any pets? Have you spent time training them?
- Do you think Noah's dad was over-reacting with his hatred of the dragons and the other survivor group? Why or why not?
- Have you ever felt a connection to an animal in the wild?
- Would you rather live with Noah's dad's group or mom's group? Why?
- Have you ever been to NYC? What did you think of it?
- What types of "natural healing products" have you heard of or used instead of medication?
- What would you miss the most if you lived in a post-apocalypse world?
- What skills do you think helped Noah survive?
- Do you think you could train a dragon?

First Line of the Book:

- The library? Again? Really?

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- Kids Travel guide to New York City (Shiela Leon) 2018
- Weird but True New York City (National Geographic) 2021
- Architecture for kids: Skill building activities for future architects (Mark Moreno, Siena Moreno) 2021
- Dragons, the myths, the legends and the lore (Doug Niles)2013
- Dragons, Legends and lore of dinosaurs (Laura Welch, Bodie Hodge) 2011

What to Read Next:

- Daybreak on Raven Island (Fleur Bradley)
- Dragon Ops (Mari Mancusi)
- The Dragon Healer (Tiani Davids)
- A Rovers Story (Jasmine Warga)

Sequels / Companion Title(s) by this author:

- Dragon Ops (Mari Mancusi)
- The Scorched Series (Mari Mancusi)

Name that Book:

- “Agreed. We’ll start packing immediately. We’ll head down tonight.” (pg.22)
- Her mother had taken off early that morning with several other members of their herd. (pg 104)
- This place was amazing. So much better than what we had in Midtown with the others. (pg. 199)
- “The only good monster is a dead monster.” (pg 247)
- The wind rushed at my face, bringing tears to my eyes, as we shot up into the sky like a rocket, the tall buildings falling away beneath me as we rose higher and higher until we were above them all and they looked like little toys. (pg 279)
- I set the book down on the stoop, reaching out to pet my dragon on the snout. (pg 337)
- She caught the apple, took a bite, then grinned. (pg 343)

Content Questions:

- What was the main problem between Noah’s mom and dad?
 - Noah’s dad hated the dragons and his mom ran off with a group (cult) that was trying to protect and live with the dragons.

- **How did Noah's father make a turn around in his healing process?**
 - They had tried several types of medicines and it was not looking good for Noah's dad. However, Noah had a dragon lick his dad's wounds and he was healed almost instantly.
- **How did Noah help his mom's group make better connections with their dragons?**
 - Noah taught his mom's group how the dragons who were bonded could even let you fly on them and they had the power of the dragons who could speak to each other to help the group.

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- Canned food
- Rations
- Freeze dried food
- Gator bites
-

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- Create a 3D model of NYC from the book
- Create a model of an underground bunker
- Create a model of a dragon using recycled materials
-

Over and Out

By Jenni L. Walsh



Annotation: Sophie has spent her entire life behind the Berlin Wall, guarded by land mines, towers, and attack dogs. A science lover, Sophie dreams of becoming an inventor... but that's unlikely in East Berlin, where the Stasi, the secret police, are always watching.

Though she tries to avoid their notice, when her beloved neighbor is arrested, Sophie is called to her principal's office. There, a young Stasi officer asks Sophie if she'll spy on her neighbor after she is released. Sophie doesn't want to agree, but in reality has no choice: The Stasi threaten to bring her mother, who has a disability from post-polio syndrome, to an institution if Sophie does not comply.

Sophie is backed into a corner, until she finds out, for the first time, that she has family on the other side of the Wall, in the West. This could be what she needs to attempt an escape with her mother to freedom -- if she can invent her way out.

AR (Level / Pts): 3.9/8.0

Electronic Copy Availability: ebook

Author on the Internet:

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- **Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/jennilwalsh/>
- **Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/jennilwalsh>

Items to use in a library display:

- **Box of found items like books, pictures**
- **Fishing line, arrow, keys**

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- **Monika was assigned a job as a pharmacist. She had wanted to be a teacher and was disappointed. What profession would you like to be doing when you are older?**

- Herr Becker's flaw was that he underestimated Sophie this enabled her to escape. Talk about a time when someone underestimated you or you underestimated someone.
- Sophie and Katarina have to be very careful how and who they talk to about the escape plan. If you were in that situation, who would you trust with the knowledge of your escape plan?

First Line of the Book:

- There are books beneath my floorboards.

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- The Cold War (Step Into History) by Otfinoski, Steven
- The Cold War by Simon Adams
- Fallout: spies, superbombs, and the ultimate Cold War showdown by Steve Sheinkin

What to Read Next:

- A Night Divided by Jennifer A. Nielsen
- Cloud and Wallfish by Anne Nesbet
- This is Just a Test by Madelyn Rosenberg

Sequels / Companion Title(s) by this author:

- I am Defiance by Jenni L. Walsh (Prequel)

Name that Book:

- We both remembered the go-cart design we'd designed and built...that lost a wheel halfway down the hill. Pg 1
- I study my family tree again. "It's a start. Thank you for their names. I can't believe I have three cousins." pg 82
- I'm in a pickle. A big, smelly one. Pg 151
- His mustache looks oddly crooked, like it's been pasted on and not grown. Pg 20
- Yes, let's go home. A new future awaits me. Pg 337

Content Questions:

- Name some ideas that Katarina and Sophie brainstormed to escape. Catapult, zipline,
- How did Katarina and Sophie plan to get the cable the thirty meters across the boundary? Katarina would use an arrow.
- How do Sophie and her mother get enough keys to the Ministry building? They melt zinc and put it in a silicone cast.
- Six people were able to escape. Was Monika one of them?

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- **Black Forest cake**
- **Pretzels**
- **Coca-cola**

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- **Storyboard an escape plan to flee East Germany.**
- **Have students make their own way to escape out of recycled material. Then test how well it would work.**

Ride On

By Faith Erin Hicks

Annotation:



"Victoria has always loved horses. But riding in competitions is high stakes, high stress, and shockingly expensive. And even though Victoria's best friend Taylor loves competing, Victoria has lost her taste for it. After a heartbreaking fight with Taylor, Victoria needs a new start--at a new stables. A place where she doesn't have to worry about anything other than riding. No competition, no drama, no friends. Just horses. Edgewood Stables seems ideal. There are plenty of horses to ride, and Victoria is perfectly happy giving the other riders the cold shoulder. But can she truly be happy with no friends?"-

Lexile:

AR (Level / Pts): 3.1/1

Electronic Copy Availability: Kindle

Author on the Internet:

- Website: <https://www.fatherinhicks.com/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/FaithErinHicks>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/fatherinhicks/>

Items to use in a library display:

- Hay bale
- Horse figures
- Horseshoes

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- What do you think about Victoria wanting to give up on friends because of her experiences at Waverly Stables?
- If you were Victoria, would have been willing to go to the Waverly Schooling Show to support your new friend?
- At the end of the book, when Victoria saw her old friend Taylor at the schooling show, what did you think about how Taylor responded to Victoria being excited about the new *Beyond the Galaxy* show?

First Line of the Book:

- "So glad summer is over"

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- *Eyewitness Horse* by DK Knowledge

What to Read Next:

- *Roller Girl* by Victoria Jamieson
- *7 Good Reasons Not to Grow Up* by Jimmy Gownley
- *Cub* by Cynthia Copeland

Other Books by this Author:

- *One Year at Ellsmere*
- *Nameless City* series

Name that Book:

- “It’s not fair I have to be as perfect as you are!” page 162.
- “I am a human, your, uh, queenliness, but some of our crew are from beyond the stars.” page 213
- “Winning a ribbon doesn’t make a ride perfect.” page 181

Content Questions:

- Why did Norrie not like Victoria when she arrived at the stables?
 - She was from the fancy stable, and when Norrie tried to give her the benefit of the doubt and welcomed her, she was not interested in being friends.
- Why does Victoria switch from Waverly Stables to Edgewood Stables?
 - She was tired of the high pressure to win horse shows, and just wanted to ride and have fun, and also have time for other things in her life. Her friend only wanted to compete and win.
- Why is Norrie so stressed about school?
 - Her parents insist that school comes first, so she will not be allowed to ride if her grades go down; she also feels a lot of pressure because her older brother is good at school.
- What ends up happening when Victoria goes back to Waverly Stables?
 - She enters the show, and gets in her own head and makes the horse mess up, but she’s okay with it because she learned something.
 - Victoria sees her old friend Taylor, and finds out she hasn’t changed at all.

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- Raw carrot slices (a horse’s favorite crunchy snack)
- Apples (a horse’s favorite sweet treat)
- Popcorn (like from the *Beyond the Galaxy* watch party)

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- Design a horse jumping arena that would give the riders from the book a good challenge.
- Design a costume that would fit in the *Beyond the Galaxy* series.
 - Best design could be created by a group of students (fabric, paper, etc)

Roll for Initiative

By Jaime Formato

Annotation:



Perfect for fans of Dungeons & Dragons, Raina Telgemeier, and Jessica Kim, a heartfelt coming-of-age middle grade novel about finding your voice and believing in your best geeky self.

Riley Henderson has never taken a bus to school in her entire life. Or made an afterschool snack, or finished her homework on her own, or--ewww--done her own laundry. That's what her older brother Devin was for.

But now Devin's gone. He's off in California attending a fancy college gaming program while Riley is stuck alone in Florida with her mom. That is, until a cool nerd named Lucy gives Riley no choice but to get over her shyness and fear of rejection and become friends. The best part is . . . both girls are into Dungeons & Dragons. In fact, playing D&D was something Riley and Devin used to do together, with Devin as the dungeon master, guiding Riley

through his intricately planned campaigns. So, of course, Riley is more than a little nervous when Lucy suggests that she run a campaign for them. For the chance at a friend, though, she's willing to give it a shot. Soon, their party grows and with the help of her new D&D friends, Riley discovers that not only can she function without Devin, she kind of likes it. She figures out that bus thing, totes the clothes down to the laundry room and sets up her D&D campaigns right there on the slightly suspect folding table, makes her own snacks and dinner-- the whole deal. But when Devin runs into trouble with his program and returns home, it's pretty clear, even to Riley, that since he can't navigate his own life, he's going to live Riley's for her. Now she has to help Devin go back to college and prove to her mom that she can take care of herself . . . all before the upcoming Winter-Con.

Lexile:

AR (Level / Pts):

Electronic Copy Availability: Kindle, Audible, ebook

Author on the Internet:

- Website: <https://www.jaimeformato.com/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/jaimeformato>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/jaimeformato/>

Items to use in a library display:

- Dice (variety of sizes, including D20)
- Little dice bags
- D&D Guidebooks
- Maps for campaigns
- Laundry basket/Washing Machines/Dryers (for where they played)

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- If you were to create a D&D character for yourself, what would you create? What would you name your character?
- When Devin comes home and is the DM for the group, why do you think he struggled with it so much? What would you have done if you were one of the group?
- Do you think you would rather be the DM and run the game, or would you rather be a player in the adventuring party? Why?
- As they are playing D&D, Devin insists on everyone playing by the rules, no exceptions, and Riley and her friends believe that you should be having fun more than following the rules. Which side are you on?

First Line of the Book:

- "I am never going to make it home."

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- *Dungeons & Dragons Young Adventurer's Guides (1-8)* by Jim Zub
- *Dungeons & Dragons Pocket Expert* by Stacy King

What to Read Next:

- *D&D Dungeon Club 1: Roll Call* by Molly Knox Ostertag
- *Sunny Rolls the Dice* by Jennifer L. Holm

Other Books by this Author:**Name that Book:**

- "Sure you can. What you *can't* do is go to school tomorrow smelling like a sasquatch." page 55.
- "You can't leave me all alone on Thanksgiving! It's a family day." page 165.
- "I wish he was as worried about my feelings as he was about how many Cokes I drank!" page 208

Content Questions:

- Why had Riley never taken the bus home from school before?
 - Riley's brother, Devin, had always driven her home from school, but he went to California for college, so she must take the bus.

- Why did Riley's friends like it better when she is the DM versus when her brother, Devin, is the DM?
 - He insists on following the rules, and the girls are more about having fun.
- Why was Devin able to come back home while he was in college?
 - He became overwhelmed with school, and worried that he wasn't good enough for UCA, and that he was disappointing everyone.

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- Mac and cheese (meal she makes with her mother)
- Cupcakes (like they have to celebrate the birthday of their characters)
- Lasagna and garlic bread (the meal Jen's mom served)

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- Create your character, using a character creation sheet and dice for rolling stats
- Bring your character to life by illustrating them
- Create an outfit that your character would wear for yourself.
- Ideas/resources directly from the author:
<https://www.jaimeformato.com/resources>

Ruby Code

By Jessica Khoury



Annotation:

Bullied at school and home, Ash finds respite from his unhappy life in virtual reality games. One night, he spends his meager savings to help a homeless man, who thanks him with a copy of an old fantasy role-playing game called *The Glass Realm*. Inside the game, Ash discovers a sentient AI named Ruby. Originally built as a weapon, Ruby's developer stole her and hid her away, hoping to keep her safe. Now Ash and Ruby are both caught in a deadly game that blurs the lines between real and virtual. If they lose this game, they might just doom the world

AR (Level / Pts): **May have to use Lexile levels**

Electronic Copy Availability: **ebook and audiobook available**

Author on the Internet:

- Website: <https://www.jessicakhoury.com/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/authorjessicakhoury/>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/authorjess>

Items to use in a library display:

- VR headsets
- Copy of old role-playing video games
- Technology (keyboard, screen, etc.)
- Toy sword/bucket

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- How does Ash remind you of yourself or someone you know? What characteristics does he have that make him a good gamer? A good friend?
- How would you describe the world that Ash lives in? What other books or movies does it remind you of?
- At what point in the book did you decide whether or not you liked Ash or Ruby? Why?
- How does Ash and Ruby change throughout the story? What events cause them to change?
- What “human” characteristics does Ruby acquire/possess? What makes her relatable to Ash? To you? What character traits would you assign to each of them?
- What positive aspects of artificial intelligence (AI) does Ruby highlight? What are some negative aspects? How are they personified in Matthew Hague?
- What do you think AI means for your future?

First Line of the Book:

- *“Every good quest begins with a setback.”*

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- *Fantastic Worlds: The Inspiring Truth behind Popular Role-Playing Games* by Thomas Kingsley Troupe
- *Code your own Games: 20 Games to Create with Scratch* by Max Wainewrig
- *A Beginner’s Projects in Coding: Have Fun Using Scratch and Python* by Marc Scott
- *Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Humanity* by Lisa Idzikowski
- *Max Axiom and the Society of Super Scientists: The World of Artificial Intelligence* by Carol Kim

What to Read Next:

- *The Six* by Mark Alpert
- *Insignia* by S.J. Kincaid
- *Dragon Ops* by Mari Mancusi
- *The Eye of Minds* by James Dashner (YA)

Name that Book:

- *“Well, they could be a slaving gobspider and I’d still be glad to see them, just because it’s something different. Something not in the routine.”* p. 20
- *“I told you I was more of a stealth guy. Well stealth and archery. And some paladin skills, but only for the armor buffs. I prefer to fight from a distance.”*p.61
- *“The idea of two worlds makes sense, even though it shouldn’t. But what does it all mean? Who am I? How did I get here?”* p.85
- *“I’m the person who created you. You are the crowning achievement of my career, and my entire reason for existing. But there was trouble....Some bad people wanted to use you for bad things.”* p.113
- *“Everything goes dark, but through the metal walls, we can hear the screams of engines and alarms. The garbage drone lumbers into the air, hauling us higher and higher, ad the sounds begin to fade.”* p. 279

Content Questions

- What characteristic does Ruby possess that helps her decide to access her memories after Owen Locke offers her memories back?
 - Curiosity, being alive and being able to create herself
- Who is Matthew Hague?
 - Owen Locke’s former roommate, director of Syntheos, the one who wants to weaponize the 794 program (Ruby), the one who authorized the elimination of Owen Locke, and chases Ash and Hakeem.
- What gifts does Ruby leave for Ash at the end of the story?
 - Releases evidence about Luke’s financial dealings
 - Creates a relative who leaves his mom money
 - Ruby the cat
 - An expensive VR kit

Food / Menu Suggestions:

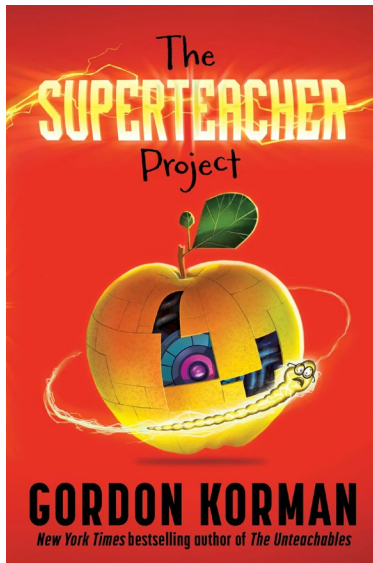
- Baklava
- A glass of milk
- Tacos

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- Create your own role-playing game
- Participate in Hour of Code or create projects via Code.org
- Create an AI avatar for Ruby, for yourself (Canva)

The Superteacher Project

By Gordon Korman



Annotation:

Oliver Zahn, spitball champion and self-declared rule-wrecker of Brightling Middle School, is not a fan of his new homeroom teacher, Mr. Aidact. The guy is sort of stiff, never cracks a smile, and refers to them as “pupils.” The worst part is he catches Oliver before he can pull any of his signature pranks! It’s time for Oliver and his best friend, Nathan, to show the new teacher who’s boss.

But as the weeks go by, they start to realize that Mr. Aidact is not what they expected. He has an uncanny ability to remember song lyrics or trivia. When the girls’ field hockey team needs a new coach, he suddenly turns out to be an expert. He never complains when other teachers unload work on him—even when it’s lunchroom duty and overseeing detention. Against all odds, Mr. Aidact starts to

become the most popular teacher at Brightling.

Still, Oliver and Nathan know that something is fishy. They’re determined to get to the bottom of the mystery: What’s the deal with Mr. Aidact?

AR (Level / Pts): 5.2 / 9 pts.

Electronic Copy Availability: Ebook and audiobook available

Author on the Internet:

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Items to use in a library display:

- Field hockey stick
- Briefcase
- Screwdriver
- Apple
- Big Wheel (trike)

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:

- What would a superteacher look like in your school?
- Oliver rants about all of the silly rules that the school has. Have you ever heard of a silly rule that you think should be broken or removed? What was it?

- Questions for Group Discussion from Balzer + Bray:
<https://b0f646cfbd7462424f7a-f9758a43fb7c33cc8adda0fd36101899.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/teaching-guides/TG-9780063032798.pdf>

First Line of the Book:

“Consider the spitball.”

Nonfiction Companion Title(s):

- *Robots and drones : past, present, and future* by Mairghread Scott
- *Max Axiom and the Society of Super Scientists: The world of artificial intelligence* by Carol Kim

What to Read Next:

- *The Ruby Code* by Jessica Khoury
- *Geeks, Girls, and Secret Identities* by Mike Jung
- *Operation Do Over* by Gordon Korman
- *Mixed Up* by Gordon Korman
- *Under Their Skin* by Margaret Peterson Haddix
- *Fuzzy* by Tom Angleberger

Name that Book:

- “He isn’t smiling, but he doesn’t look miserable, like anyone else would if they found themselves caught in a downpour. It’s as if he doesn’t even know he’s waterlogged.” p. 49-50
- “A couple of minutes ago, we were two Grim Reapers at a school dance. Now we’re Batman and Lulu-Squidward - and the school hall is 100 percent empty and 100 percent ours” p. 78-79
- “Just because we stink and our coach is perched on the roof of a bus doesn’t mean we’re a joke” p. 108
- “Dave & Buster’s employees are beginning to look worried. If this keeps up, they’ll be cleaned out of prizes by closing time.” p. 181
- “We need a big crowd for a big distraction. But no parents. This is kids only. Nobody over fourteen is allowed to know about it. And remember: game time is nine a.m. sharp.” p. 249

Content Questions:

Q: What gets broken and then stolen the night of the trike prank?

A: The winning girls field hockey trophy.

Q: How do Oliver and Nathan discover Mr. Aidact is not human?

A: They follow him to his apartment and spy on him through the window while Mr. Perkins is working on him. (Chapter 16)

Q: Why doesn't Mr. Aidact want to leave before the Department of Education comes after him on Saturday?

A: The state championship game for field hockey is on Saturday, and he is adamant that his pupils come first. (Chapter 28-29)

Food / Menu Suggestions:

- Granola Bars
- Apple

Maker / Design Challenge Suggestions:

- DIY Tabletop Hockey <https://inthebagkidscrafts.com/hockey-craft-for-kids/>
- Use Lego Mindstorms or <https://www.tinkercad.com/> to design your own robot.
What task should it do?