

Middle Grade Mania

ACTIVITY KIT

BOOKS FOR READERS in grades 3–6 play such a crucial role in helping kids bridge from early chapter books to YA. It's vital to nurture that love of reading through these critical years to help kids develop ever more sophisticated language skills and to blossom into lifelong readers.

Use the materials in this kit to celebrate reading
and encourage your reading maniacs
to stay crazy for books!

www.hmhbooks.com/middlegrademia

Houghton
Mifflin
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Activities

★ Smackdown!

In the spirit of WrestleMania, host a Reading Smackdown! Challenge another class to a reading contest. How many books can your students read and report on in a month versus the other class? When the month is over, have each class vote to select one title from all the books reported on for the entire class to read. Each class then presents their book through skits, artwork, videos, and the like to an impartial judge—perhaps the school principal or librarian. The judge, who has already read both books, selects the best presentation as the winner.

★ Word of Mouth

Create a “This Reader Recommends” display on a bulletin board in your classroom or library. Whenever a student loves a book, have him/her fill out a recommendation card you can post in a public space to encourage other kids to give the book a try.

★ Jacket Gallery

As students finish books, have them create their own cover illustration depicting a particular character or scene. Be sure to have them include the title and the author’s name within the new cover design. Display the new book covers on a bulletin board or in a reading corner.

★ Book Mobile

Have students create a mobile for a favorite book. Use two pencils as the mobile framework—position them in an X, with one pencil on top of the other, and tape them in place. Wrap a string or piece of yarn from which to hang the mobile around the intersection of the two pencils, with a long length extending from the top. Create two-sided illustrations of characters and events and key elements from the story on cardstock and hang them from the pencil frame. Be sure to include the book’s title and author on one hanging element. Display the mobiles around the classroom or library.

★ Opening Lines

Books often begin with provocative, compelling openings to hook the reader from the very first page:

On the Saturday morning that I almost triggered the end of the world, I woke up early.

—*Game Over*, Pete Watson by Joe Schreiber

“State your name.”

“Eddie Red.”

The officer looks up at me and frowns. “State your real name. For the police report.”

—*Eddie Red, Undercover* by Marcia Wells

Jessie slipped her fingers along the inside of her closet doorjamb until she found the secret key.

—*The Magic Trap* by Jacqueline Davies

Encourage your students to keep a journal of first lines from books to inspire them in their own creative writing endeavors.

★ Character Quilt

Pass an 8.5-by-8.5-inch square piece of construction paper to each student. Have each child draw a portrait of a favorite book character on his/her square using crayons, markers, or paint. Be sure to include the character’s name and the book title on each square. Arrange the squares in a quilt pattern on a bulletin board or wall.

This reader recommends . . .

BOOK TITLE _____

AUTHOR _____

RECOMMENDED BY _____

GRADE _____

Plot summary/characters:

What I liked about the book:



This reader recommends . . .

BOOK TITLE _____

AUTHOR _____

RECOMMENDED BY _____

GRADE _____

Plot summary/characters:

What I liked about the book:



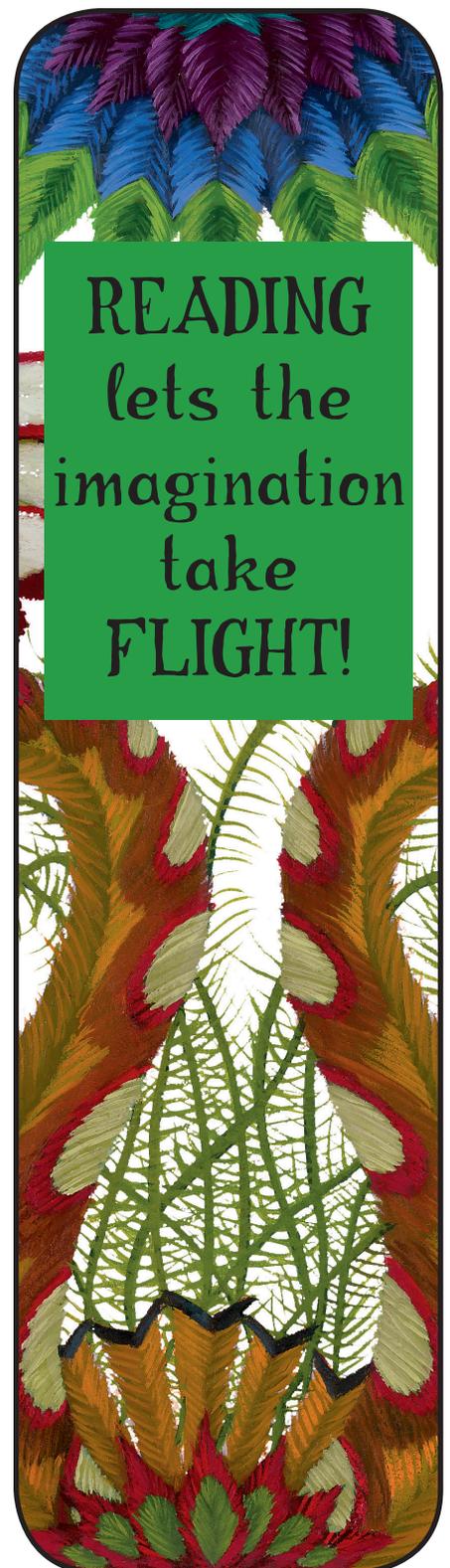
Bookmarks



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Illustrations copyright © 2014 by Andy Rash from *Game Over*, Pete Watson. All rights reserved.

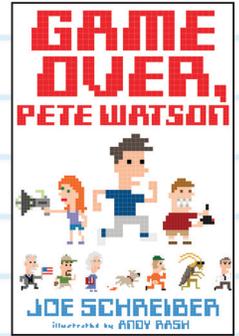


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Secret Message

When Pete Watson and his super-spy dad find themselves trapped in a video game, they communicate with each other in a way that the bad guys can't figure out. Can you? Solve the message below, and then write a note to a friend using the same secret system.

**SDRAWKCAB KLAT DAD
SIH DNA ETEP!**



**Game Over,
Pete Watson**

BY

**Joe
Schreiber**

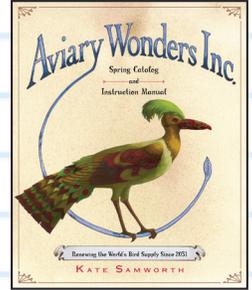
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Answer key follows, or can be found at hmhbooks.com/middlegrademania/resources.html.

Feather Design

Aviary Wonders Inc. has been renewing the world's depleted bird supply since 2031. With so many species gone, building your very own bird is fun! You get to choose the body type, legs and feet, beak style, tail, and wings. And because you're such a loyal customer, here's a special invitation to update the Aviary Wonders Inc. catalog by designing two new feather options! Draw your feathers in the catalog page below. Be sure to give each style a name and describe the color palette for our customers.



**Aviary
Wonders Inc.**
**Spring
Catalog and
Instruction
Manual**

**BY
Kate
Samworth**

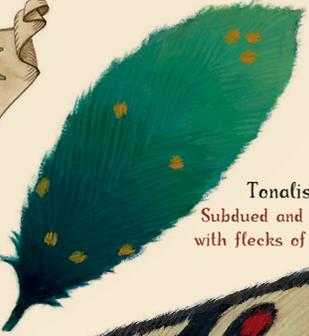
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Old Master:
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and greens of fall



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Color Palettes



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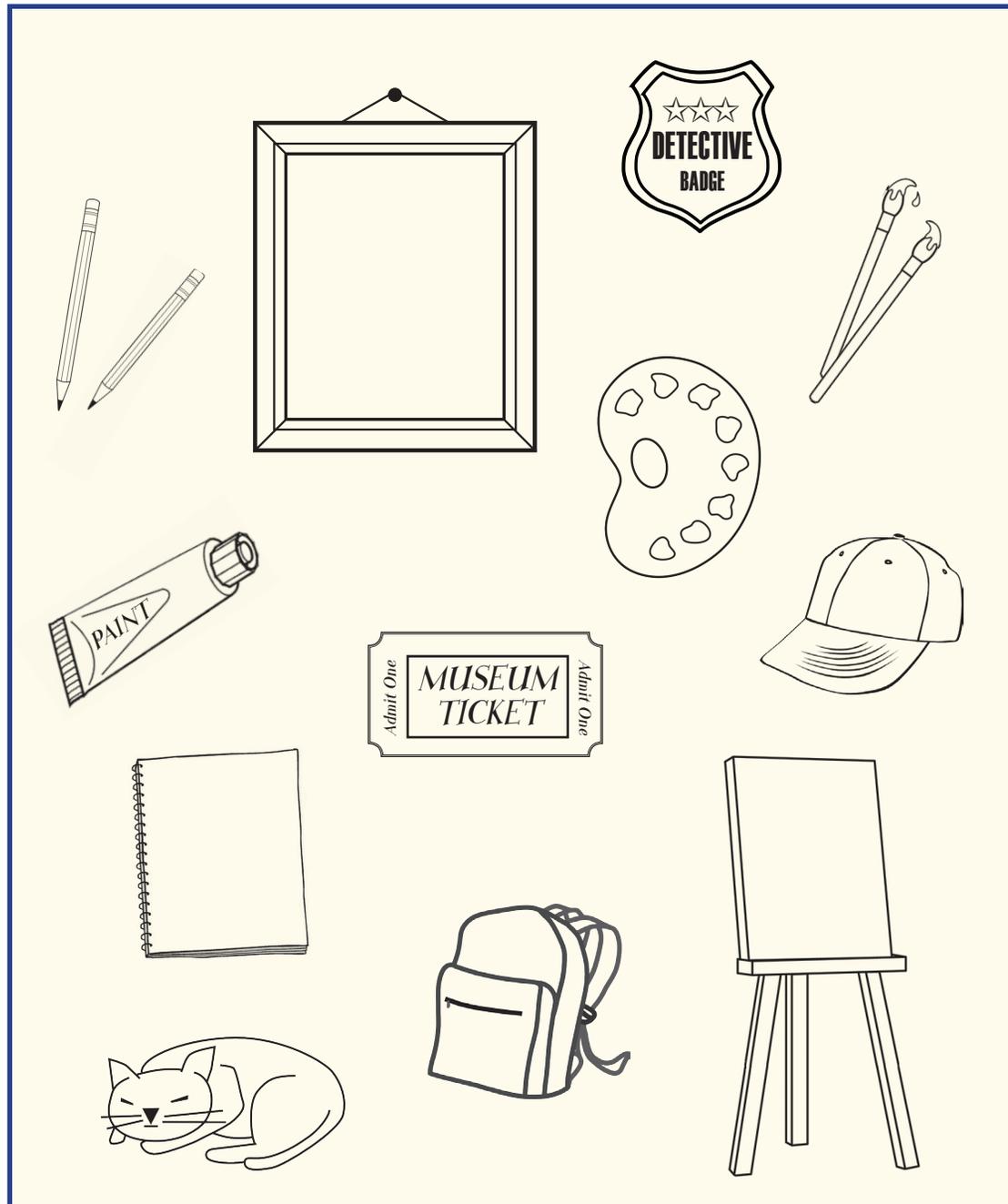


Minimalist:
Red, white, black,
and bold

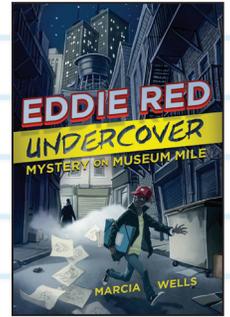


Test Your Memory

Sixth-grader Edmund Xavier Lonrot, code name Eddie Red, has a photographic memory and a prodigious talent for drawing anything he sees. Eddie is the NYPD's secret weapon when they try to break up a ring of art thieves stalking New York's Museum Mile. How photographic is your memory? Have a friend watch the clock as you study the images below for sixty seconds. When the time is up, flip this paper over and recreate the images as you remember them. If drawing is not your thing, list the images on the back of this sheet. Can you remember them all? No peeking!



(Note: For the memory test to work best, print this page on card stock.)



**Eddie Red,
Undercover
Mystery on
Museum Mile**
BY
**Marcia
Wells**

978-0-544-23833-6 hardcover
978-0-544-28972-7 ebook



Magician-Speak

Evan Treski loves magic. He and his sister, Jessie, plan to sell tickets and host their very own magic show. The world of magic has its own unique vocabulary. Match the terms below with their correct definitions. Learn one of the tricks explained in *The Magic Trap* and put on a show for your friends!

Term

Definition

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Illusion | A. In sleight of hand, to get rid of an object secretly. |
| | B. To secretly exchange one object for another. |
| 2. Sleight of hand | C. Making something appear unexpectedly, as if out of nowhere. |
| | D. A technique in which a magician makes a showy, flashy gesture (also called a flourish) in order to misdirect the audience so they won't notice what the magician is really doing. |
| 3. Switch | E. Something that seems to be one thing when it is really another; a magic trick. |
| | F. A specially prepared object or device that makes an illusion work; one example is a rabbit box. |
| 4. Exaggeration | G. A trick performed with the hands, requiring quickness and skill, such as making a coin appear or disappear; also called legerdemain or prestidigitation |
| | H. A special kind of trick in which the magician cuts, rips, or breaks something into pieces (a string, a card, a stick) and then makes it whole again. |
| 5. Gimmick | I. A magician's continuous talk during a performance that lulls an audience so they won't notice something that's happening onstage. |
| | J. A technique whereby a magician confuses his audience, often with rapid patter and flourishes, so that they don't notice a gimmick or sleight. |
| 6. Ditch | |
| | |
| 7. Patter | |
| | |
| 8. Disorientation | |
| | |
| 9. Torn and Restored, or TnR | |
| | |
| 10. Conjuring | |



The Magic Trap

BY

Jacqueline
Davies

978-0-544-05289-5 hardcover
978-0-544-30143-6 ebook



Answer key follows, or can be found at hmhbooks.com/middlegrademania/resources.html.

Basketball Word Scramble

Josh and his twin brother, Jordan, are kings on the court, with crossovers that make even the toughest ballers cry. But Josh has more than hoops in his blood—he's got a river of rhymes flowing through him. Unscramble the basketball-related words below. Take the letters that appear in the circles and unscramble them to discover a secret message from Josh.

SEROOSRVC



DBREIBL



WIHSS



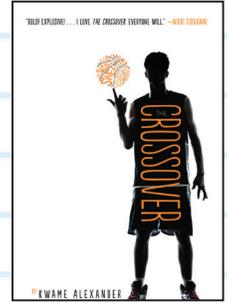
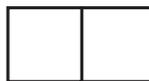
PUMJ SOHT



FEER OHRWT



OHOP



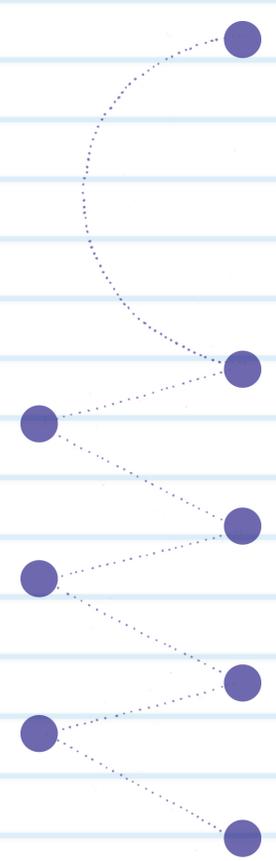
The Crossover

BY

Kwame

Alexander

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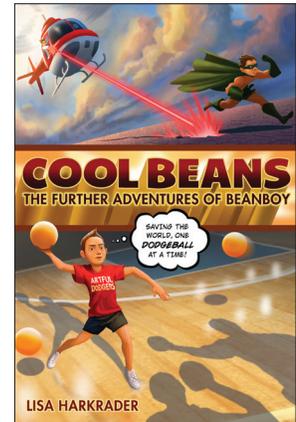
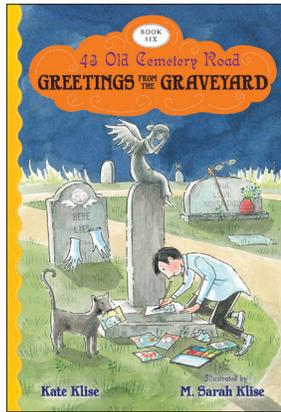
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by Lisa Harkrader

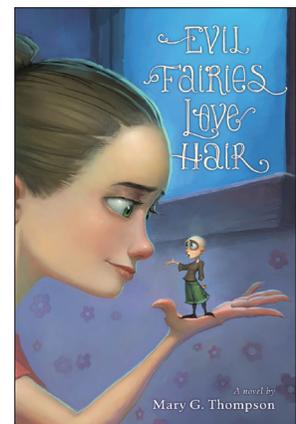
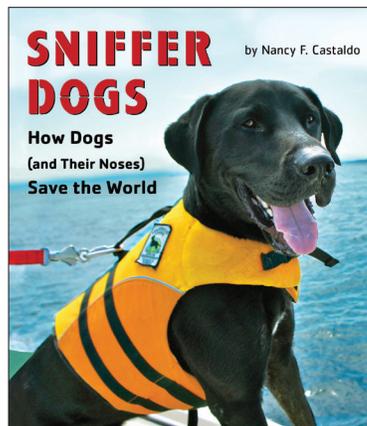
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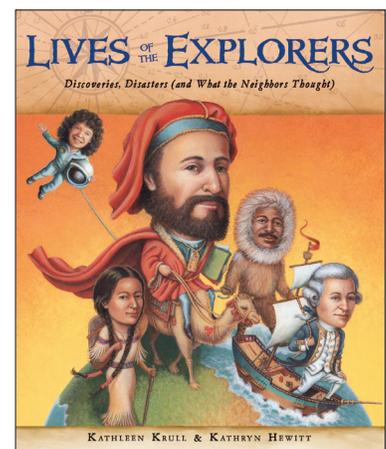
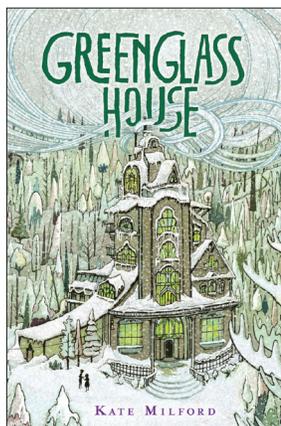
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Answer Key

Secret Message *Game Over, Pete Watson*

Answer: Pete and his dad talk backwards!

Magician-Speak *The Magic Trap*

Answer key: 1. E; 2. G; 3. B; 4. D; 5. F; 6. A; 7. I; 8. J; 9. H; 10. C

Basketball Word Scramble *The Crossover*

C R O S S O V E R

D R I B B L E

S W I S H

J U M P

S H O T

F R E E

T H R O W

H O O P

P O E T R Y I S C O O L !