

ACTIVITIES & DISCUSSION

Use *The 39 Clues: The Maze of Bones* by Rick Riordan to model reading comprehension strategies and engage in writing activities!

Step 1: Begin the Hunt!

Go to www.scholastic.com/39clues and click on "Educator Materials."

Hook your students with an exciting video clip of Rick Riordan discussing *The 39 Clues*. Then listen as David Pittu reads chapters one and two of *The Maze of Bones* from Scholastic Audio.

Or invite a mystery reader—a parent, the principal, or a local celebrity—into the class to read the first two chapters aloud.

Step 2: Create an Investigation Journal

Have students create their own Investigation Journal, using a notebook or binder, to keep track of ideas and clues, write responses to discussion questions, ponder vocabulary words, and make connections to aid comprehension. Students can personalize the cover of their journal with pictures of famous people and places they would like to visit.

Step 3: Read Chapters 1 & 2

Activate prior knowledge to make connections to the text

Discuss the following questions as a group, and/or have students write their thoughts in their journals.

1. What does power mean to you? What could make you the most powerful person in the world?
2. If you could be related to one famous person, who would it be?
3. One million dollars or a clue—which would you choose?

Step 4: Read Chapters 3 & 4

Making inferences to build comprehension

Good readers draw conclusions based upon their own background knowledge and clues in the text. Discuss these questions or have students write answers in their journals.

1. Mr. McIntyre told the heirs that the prize would make the winners the most powerful beings on earth. I wonder what the prize could be.
2. I wonder why there are exactly 39 clues.
3. Amy and Dan were given a warning: beware of the Madrigals. I wonder what the Madrigals are and why they must beware of them.

Step 5: Read Chapters 5–7

Synthesize—combine what you've read with your own existing ideas to form new ideas.

Compare and contrast the teams competing to win the 39 clues: Amy and Dan, the Kabras, the Starlings, Jonah Wizard, the Holts, Alistair Oh, and Irina Spasky. What advantages does each of them have? What are their weaknesses?

Step 6: Read Chapters 8–10

Ask questions—before, during, and after reading—to better understand the author and the meaning of the text.

Encourage your students to ask questions like:

1. What do I think will happen to Dan and Amy? Will the Luciens eliminate them?
2. What have I learned about Ben Franklin? What did he invent? What else do I want to know about him?
3. What predictions can I make? Do I think they will find the answer to the clue in Philadelphia?

Have your students make predictions about the book's ending—then later, see who guessed correctly!

Step 7: Read Chapters 11–14

Visualize—create pictures in your mind while you read.

Ask your students what they see, smell, feel, and taste while reading.

1. What did Amy look like after the flight to Paris?
2. What did it sound like to be mobbed by paparazzi?
3. What do you think Jonah Wizard's fashion line looks like?
4. Dan dreams about crème glâcee. What do you think it is, and what does it taste like?

In their journals, have students draw their most vivid scene/character/setting from these chapters, then compare their ideas with a partner to see the differences and similarities.

Step 8: Read Chapters 15–17

Finding the main idea

Looking for the big idea in a book helps readers determine importance while they are reading. In textbooks, the main ideas are often announced in boldface words and titles, but in literature, students may need to hunt for clues to find the main themes of the book.

One theme of this book is talent. The historical relatives of the Cahills are talented. The team members are talented. Dan and Amy don't think they are talented, yet everyone is out to get them. What are their talents, and how are their talents linked to the other theme of the book—power?

Step 9: Read Chapters 18–20

Putting the clues together—reading comprehension

Your class is now armed with some powerful information to solve the 39 clues. They've learned what good readers do to comprehend a story. Now review with your class their investigation journals. What predictions were accurate? What questions can they now answer? What new thoughts do they have?

OTHER ACTIVITIES

I Wish I'd Thought of That!

Benjamin Franklin was naturally curious and liked to learn how things work. Introduce students to these fun facts about Franklin:

- He got tired of switching between two pairs of glasses—one for reading and one for distance. So he cut each pair in half to create the bifocal lens.
- He wanted to swim faster so he created swim fins.
- He wanted to reach a high shelf so he invented a long reach device.

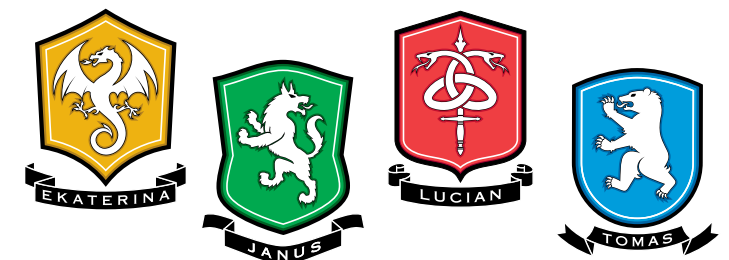
Ask students what they wish was easier in their lives. Then have them create an idea for their own invention and sketch their design.

Multi-Author Stories—A Fun Writing Activity

Each book in the 39 Clues series is written by a different author. Have students explore this process through cooperative writing.

First, have a class discussion to outline an idea for a story. Then have each student write their opening paragraph, then pass their paper to the next person to write the next paragraph. Continue until the work is complete. To make the exercise more unpredictable, after each paragraph papers can be shuffled and passed randomly to the next author. Finally, share/compare/discuss all the stories. Are they similar or very different? Why?

Understand Symbols and Crests—then Design Your Own Crest



The four branches of the Cahill family use symbols to represent themselves. What do these symbols mean?

Have students find out which branch of the Cahill family they are in when they log on to www.the39clues.com.

Share familiar symbols such as the McDonald's arch, the Nike swoosh, the Olympic rings, etc. Why do people and corporations use symbols? Discuss other symbols such as your state's seal.

On the back cover of their journals, have the students design their own crest using symbols that they feel represent them.

www.the39clues.com

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