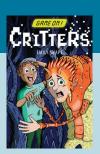**Title:** Game On - Critters

Author & Illustrator: Emily Snape

ISBN: 9781922539984 | **Publication date:** Sept 2024 | **Audience age:** 8-12 years (Middle-Grade Fiction)

Key Curriculum Areas: English, Science/STEM, Mathematics, Digital Technologies, Drama, Visual Art

SYNOPSIS:

Gaming-obsessed brothers Max and Liam are back, and they're in for another adventure of CATASTROPHIC proportions. It all goes wrong when a rogue app transforms them from human boys into fleas, and it only gets worse from there. The speed a cheetah can run and the acidity of pigeon poo have never been more important. A laugh out loud, fast-paced adventure full of comic-style illustrations that bring the action to life and will absorb even the most reluctant of readers.

THEMES:

• Fantasy • Comedy • Adventure • Self-belief • Sibling/family relationships and dynamics • Animal facts

SELLING POINTS:

- Full of comic-style illustrations, varied formatting and fast-paced action that will absorb even the most reluctant of readers.
- A video-gaming inspired story that literally brings gaming to life, perfect for kids who would usually rather be sitting in front of a screen than reading.
- Explores family dynamics in an upbeat, light-hearted way, featuring a portrayal of a blended family.
- Full of fun animal trivia to inspire an interest in animals and nature.

AUTHOR MOTIVATION:

My sons were both reluctant readers and that made me want to write books that they wouldn't be able to resist reading! Reading should be a pleasure and my aim is to write books that pull you in and hook you from the start. Hopefully, then you can't help being moved by the characters as they grow and develop. I love comedy in books, but funny books also have to have heart, believable characters, and a great plot that keeps you reading till the very end.

AUTHOR BACKGROUND:

Emily Snape is a children's author and illustrator living in London. Her work has appeared online, on television (for Nickelodeon and the BBC), in shops and even on buses! She loves coffee and notebooks, and has three cheeky children, Leo, Fin and Flo who keep her on her toes and give her lots of inspiration for stories.
Emily loves to mix real life with a twist of fantasy, throwing everyday emotions and events up in the air and allowing us to consider them from another angle. Her previous books include Fergus the Furball, a funny tale for independent readers, and board books for younger readers. These include An Alphabet of Hugs, and Hey! Look at you...On the Move and Hey! Look at you...In the Jungle.

INTERVIEW

What is the inspiration for this story?

I asked my son, Fin, what would be the most exciting gaming/real world challenge Max and Liam could be thrown into next and he suggested a game where they are transformed into animals with different abilities and challenges. I loved the idea they have to start tiny and grow in size as they level up, and working out what dangers each animal might face. Fin is also obsessed with giving me really tricky Would you Rather? challenges so that inspired that element of the book.

What was the most rewarding part of this project?

It is always when people enjoy the books! I really love it when someone is inspired to write their own story when reading something I've written.

What was the most challenging part of this project?

Keeping to the deadlines!

TEACHER ACTIVITIES/NOTES:

Activities are linked to the Australian Curriculum.

BEFORE READING

- For students who have read Book 1 – *Game On: Shrinkle*, and Book 2 – *Game On: Glitched,* discuss the themes and main idea behind the stories. Recap the 5Ws + H through a list, chart or mind map.
- Following on from the previous books, what might happen in the next story?
- Look at the cover of Game On: Critters. What does the cover tell you about this adventure? Does it entice you to find out? Why or why not?
- Considering the image on the cover, does this give any clues as to a setting and challenges the boys might face in their next game?
- Read the blurb. Discuss.

CHAPTER 1:

Plot tension:

Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E4LE03) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LE03)

Opening line – *"Would you rather wear underpants THREE sizes too big or shoes THREE times too small?"* (p.2)

Closing line – *"Eventually, I dragged myself to the kitchen in slow motion, trying not to exert any more energy that I had to, and served Dec his cat-mush."* (p.8)

- How does the opening line hook you in? Why does the question, 'Would you rather…' pique your interest? How does the author intend for readers to feel and think about?
- As a literacy strategy, how does asking a question as the opening line engage its readers?
- How does this opening line implore you to find out more?
- What impression does the closing paragraph leave the reader? In what ways does it encourage the reader to keep reading?

Vocabulary:

Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA10) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08)

'intense', 'evacuate', 'terrorizing', 'censored', 'swelteringly'

- Discuss and write down the meanings of the vocabulary terms. Write them in your own sentences.

Literary Technique - Hyperbole:

Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E3LE04) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E4LE04)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE02) (AC9E5LE03) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E6LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05)

"So hot: the bread is basically toasted when you open the packet… chickens are probably laying omelettes." (p.7)

Hyperbole is an exaggerated statement, not meant to be literal, and used in emotive / emphasised situations or dialogue.

- Highlight the parts of the statement that are not meant to be taken literally or are used as an emotive, exaggerated statement.
- How does this language create a greater impact on the reader? Re-write this sentence using less emotive terms and compare its effectiveness. For example, *'…the bread felt warm…',* or *'…chickens are laying hot eggs.'*
- Write down some other humorous sentences about how extreme heat can affect something (bread, sprinklers, eggs, etc), using the hyperbole strategy.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:

- What do you think of Max's reasoning regarding the squirrel versus fish proposition? Do you agree? Why or why not?
- What do you think Max is referring to when he says that he has experienced things no person could ever know?
- Highlight the parts of the chapter where Max is 'exaggerating' his feelings or thoughts. Do you think he is 'overreacting', or does he have a right to feel this way?
- What do you like about the illustration? Do you feel it portrays the same level of energy and humour as in the text?
- What role do you think Dec might play in this book?

CHAPTER 2:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA06) (AC9E3LA07) (AC9E3LA08) (AC9E4LA11) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LA06)

'brainwashed', 'dislocated', 'embroidered' , 'annihilating'

- Write down the definitions of these verbs (action words). Write each term in a sentence.

Literary Technique: Show, Don't Tell
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E3LE04) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E4LE04) (AC9E3LE05) (AC9E4LE05)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE02) (AC9E5LE03) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E6LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05)

"I gave Larry a really intense death stare, hoping somehow I'd acquired magical powers and I could fry his head off with laser beams shot from my eyes." (p.12)

- How does the language used 'show' the reader how the character is feeling, rather than simply 'telling' us? What words show how Max feels about Larry? How is this more effective than writing, 'Max felt angry with Larry.'? Write another sentence 'showing' a character feeling resentful or anger towards someone else. Try to use humour and exaggeration to make the sentence more interesting.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- What is the problem Max is having in this chapter?
- Do you think his 'avoidance strategy' to stay away from Josh is helpful – in the short term and in the long term? What could he do differently instead?
- Should he tell his Mum? What kind of complications might Max be worried about if he does so? How does he feel about the relationship between his Mum and Larry?
- The history joke uses a humour technique called a 'pun'. Discuss and brainstorm your own history puns.
- List the animal facts you've learned in this chapter. Do you agree that animals have an easier life than humans?

CHAPTER 3:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA07) (AC9E3LA08) (AC9E4LA08) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08) (AC9E6LA06)

'wearily', 'intently', 'unnecessarily', 'frantically', 'earnestly', 'catastrophically', 'blindingly'

- Write down the definitions of the above <u>adverbs</u> (describing an action). Use each one in a sentence to describe 'how' Max is behaving or the actions of the scene.

Literary Technique: Hyperbole
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E3LE04) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E4LE04)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE02) (AC9E5LE03) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E6LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05)

"My brother's become obsessed with some 'Would you rather?' app and he must have asked me at least fifty thousand questions so far this week." (p.22)

'Would you rather ONLY eat chocolate for one year or not be able to eat chocolate AT ALL for one year?' (p.23)

Hyperbole is an exaggerated statement, not meant to be literal, and used in emotive / emphasised situations or dialogue. The 'Would you rather...' game uses prompts to pose a decision between two options that are usually extremes, and could be considered exaggerated statements like hyperbole.

- Highlight the parts of the statements that are not meant to be taken literally or used as an emotive, exaggerated statement.
- How does this language create a greater impact on the reader? Re-write the first sentence or a 'would you rather' question using less emotive terms and compare its effectiveness. For example, *'... he asked me lots of questions this week.', 'Would you rather eat chocolate or eat sweets for one year?'*

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
Sibling relationship

Max says, *"I groaned. Mum was going to have to PAY me hard cash if she wanted me to spend time with my extremely irritating younger brother. Lately, he's been beating his own record for MABITW (Most Annoying Brother In The World)."* (p.21-22)

- What does this paragraph tell you about Max's relationship with Liam? How does Max view Liam as someone he can get along with? Do you consider Max's label of 'Most Annoying Brother In The World to be a real or made up thing? How do you know? Do you think his opinion of Liam might change throughout the book? Why or why not?
- Do you think Max reaction and action towards Liam's interruption and hence, losing the game was justified?
- What do you think is happening to Max?

CHAPTER 4:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA10) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08)

'grotesque', 'nightmarish', 'bristly', 'spindly', 'gruesome', 'carnivorous'

- Write down the definitions of the above adjectives (describing words). Use each one in a sentence to describe a particular personality trait or characteristic of a character or object.

Literary Technique: Similes –
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E3LE04) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E4LE04) (AC9E3LE05) (AC9E4LE05)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE02) (AC9E5LE03) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E6LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05)

"I was now a flea as small as a grain of rice." (p.38)

A simile is a figure of speech comparing one thing with another of a different kind, using words such as 'like', 'so', 'as' than'.

- Thinking about the above simile, write your own to show how small Max is. For example, *'...as small as...'* or *'...smaller than...'*
- Illustrate your sentence.

Literary Technique: Visual Imagery
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E3LE04) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E4LE04)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE02) (AC9E5LE03) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E6LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05)

"It had a reddish shell, black, beady eyes and thick, bristly hair. Six spindly legs too thin for its round body protruded nightmarishly from a scaly torso. On its face, spikes bulged over a tube where its mouth should have been — which narrowed to a gruesome, piercing needle point. At the very end, it dripped oozing yellow drool." (p.33)

- Imagine this scene in your mind. Highlight the specific parts of the language and the adjectives used that show the reader what the creature looks like, and also what impression it gives.
- Write about Max and Liam as fleas (or another critter) using visual imagery techniques for a partner to illustrate.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- What has happened to the boys in this chapter?
- What do you infer about what each Max and Liam have learned from previous experiences?
- What challenged might they face now? How do you think they might resolve this problem?
- Do you think Max can overcome his lack of confidence in the real world?

CHAPTER 5:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA06) (AC9E3LA07) (AC9E3LA08) (AC9E4LA11) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LA06)

'catapulted', 'chuckled', 'eradicating', 'plummeting'

- Write the definitions for the vocabulary terms. Discuss that these are <u>verbs</u> to describe a specific action or feeling. Brainstorm and list <u>synonyms</u> and <u>shades of meaning</u> for these verbs.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- Why do you think Liam disappeared? Where might he be?
- List three facts you learned about fleas.
- What does Shrinkle's cat mean when he references 'AI' and 'algorithms'? What do you think the cat wants the boys to achieve?
- What do you think the answer is to the True or False question: 'Can fleas can jump two hundred times their own height?'

CHAPTER 6:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA10) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08)

'sensation', 'sulking', 'intently', 'violently', 'desperately'

- Discuss the definitions of the terms above. Find more in the chapter or add your own vocabulary terms that relate to the feelings and behaviours of the characters.

Literary Technique: Metaphors
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E3LE04) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E4LE04) (AC9E3LE05) (AC9E4LE05)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE02) (AC9E5LE03) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E6LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05)

"Suddenly I caught my horrifying reflection on the screen. I don't quite know how to describe the chilling sensation of seeing myself as a flea. A bit like … using a cheese grater on your tongue then pouring lemonade into the cuts, or taking a massive bite of muffin before you realize it is full of live, squirming maggots." (p.59).

A metaphor is a figure of speech to represent an object or action symbolic of something else.
Max describes seeing himself as a flea like the uncomfortable or painful experience of pouring something acidic on cuts, or something completely disgusting like a mouthful of squirming maggots.

- How do these sentiments symbolise both the literal sense and the metaphorical sense in terms of how Max perceives himself?
- Write another metaphor to describe Max's experience of feeling pained or disgusted by himself as a flea. Be creative!

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- How does Max feel about his treatment towards Liam prior to losing him, and when he thought something terrible had happened? What words could you use to describe these feelings? (ie. regret, sympathy, sorrow, panic, etc)
- What do you think of Max's actions upon finding Dec, the cat, under the bed?
- Is Max responsible for Liam?
- What might happen next?

CHAPTER 7:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA07) (AC9E3LA08) (AC9E4LA08) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08) (AC9E6LA06)

'freaking out', 'yelped', 'snarled', 'glared'

- Discuss the meanings of these <u>emotive verbs</u>. Write all of these in a sentence or short story, and illustrate. Find more emotive verbs or phrases in the text.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- Were you correct with the answer to the True/False question?
- Find the similes on page 77. Draw pictures the way you imagine Max will look as he transforms into a mouse.
- What kind of humour or comedy is linked to the 'slipping on a banana peel'? (slapstick). Find out what this means and give other examples from your research.
- What sorts of challenges might the brothers face as mice?

CHAPTER 8:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LY09) (AC9E3LY10) (AC9E3LY11) (AC9E4LY09) (AC9E4LY10)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LY08) (AC9E5LY09) (AC9E5LY10) (AC9E6LY08) (AC9E6LY09)

'mouse', 'horrendous', 'nervously', 'anxiously', 'ridiculous'

- Identify the common spelling pattern ('ou') in the terms above. Break down the words into sounds or syllables. Say the words out loud to hear the phonetic differences. List other words with similar spelling or phoneme patterns. For example, the 'ou' sound can also be spelt with the digraph 'ow'.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- Identify at least two problems the boys are facing in this chapter.
- What scenarios can you imagine happening next?

CHAPTER 9:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA06) (AC9E3LA07) (AC9E3LA08) (AC9E3LA09) (AC9E4LA08) (AC9E4LA09) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA06) (AC9E5LA08) (AC9E6LA06)

'scrambled', 'nervously', 'scampered', 'frantically', 'skirting', 'floorboards', 'squinted', 'furry', 'cautiously', 'whiskers', 'squeaky', 'soggy'

- With a partner, sort the vocabulary terms into the following categories: <u>nouns</u>, <u>verbs</u>, <u>adjectives</u>, <u>adverbs</u>. Add more interesting words to these lists from this chapter.

Literary Technique: Onomatopoeia
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA09) (AC9E4LA10) (AC9E4LE02) (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E3LE04) (AC9E4LE04)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08) (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE02) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E6LE04)

"Boof!" (p.96)

"He fell dramatically to the floor with a CRASH!" (p.103)

Onomatopoeia are words that represent, and imitate a sound.

- Highlight the onomatopoeia in the above lines. How does the author use this device to add an impact to the story?
- Make a list of onomatopoeia from this chapter. Some include, *beating, panting, gulped, squeaked, drip, whirring, hissed, Arggghhh!,* etc. Can you find any more?
- Draw a scene or a series of scenes including word sounds to represent the action.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- Find all the <u>similes</u> in this chapter.
- What are some of the benefits and disadvantages of being a mouse for the boys? Write these in a <u>Venn Diagram</u>.
- What did Max find out about Larry? Why do you think Liam didn't want to tell Max?
- Do you think Mum and Larry seeing mice (the boys) in the house will be a good or bad thing? Why?

CHAPTER 10:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA10) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08) (AC9E6LA06)

'heroic', 'anxiously', 'clambered', 'sinister', 'whooped'

- Write these terms all in one or two related sentences or in a short story.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- What does Max mean by, *'My mind felt as if the entire **content of TikTok had been dumped into my brain.** It was a total blur of reels, sounds, smells and emotions'?*
- TEACHER What are the main challenges he is trying to navigate? (Larry moving in on Max's birthday, Josh being a bully, Liam not telling him the secret, etc)
- Do you think Max's feelings are justified?
- Do you think it was fair and/or right for Max to choose pigeon over penguin? Why or why not? For what reasons?

CHAPTER 11:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: ([AC9E3LY12](#)) ([AC9E4LY11](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([AC9E5LY08](#)) ([AC9E6LY09](#))

'**knot**', as in *"My stomach instantly tied itself into a <u>knot</u>."* (p.119)

'**fair**', as in *"'But that's not <u>fair</u>,' I cried."* (p.120)

'**plane**', as in *"The entire aeroplane was rocking around in the sky like a giant toddler had grabbed hold of it and was playing <u>plane</u> wars."* (p.124)

'**two**', '**too**', '**to**'

These terms are <u>homophones</u> (words that share the same pronunciation but have different spelling and meanings).

- Write the matching homophones for the above terms, and use them in your own sentences that make sense with the correct spelling. Can you find more homophones in the text, or add your own to a list?
- Create a graphic showing the differences between homonyms, homophones and homographs, and students provide examples of each.

Literary Technique: Metaphors –
Years 3 & 4 English: ([AC9E3LE03](#)) ([AC9E3LE04](#)) ([AC9E4LE03](#)) ([AC9E4LE04](#)) ([AC9E3LE05](#)) ([AC9E4LE05](#))
Years 5 & 6 English: ([AC9E6LA08](#)) ([AC9E5LE02](#)) ([AC9E5LE03](#)) ([AC9E5LE04](#)) ([AC9E6LE04](#)) ([AC9E5LE05](#)) ([AC9E6LE05](#))

"My stomach instantly tied itself into a <u>knot</u>." (p.119)

A metaphor is a figure of speech to represent an object or action symbolic of something else.
The above metaphor refers to the feeling of dread or nervousness, not to be taken literally.

- Write another metaphor that describes this feeling, being aware of a physical body response such as 'knees shaking', 'head spinning', 'heart dropped into stomach', etc. Be creative with your metaphor!

Literary Technique: Allusion –
Years 3 & 4 English: ([AC9E3LE03](#)) ([AC9E3LE04](#)) ([AC9E4LE03](#)) ([AC9E4LE04](#)) ([AC9E3LE05](#)) ([AC9E4LE05](#))
Years 5 & 6 English: ([AC9E6LA08](#)) ([AC9E5LE02](#)) ([AC9E5LE03](#)) ([AC9E5LE04](#)) ([AC9E6LE04](#)) ([AC9E5LE05](#)) ([AC9E6LE05](#))

An allusion is an indirect reference to another figure, event, place, or work of art that exists outside the story. Allusions are made to famous subjects so that they don't need explanation—the reader should already understand the reference.

- Referring to the phrase, ***"KEEP THE CHANGE, YA FILTHY ANIMAL!"*** (p.126) – where have you seen or heard this phrase? Why do you think the author has used this phrase in this particular story?
- Can you name some of the other popular brands / franchises / famous references that have been mentioned throughout the whole book so far?

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- How is Max feeling about his past behaviour towards Liam?
- How do you feel about Liam's actions in this chapter? Write some positive words about Liam.
- How would you describe Max and Liam's different personalities and approaches to their fears or being challenged? With a partner, complete a <u>Y-Chart</u> for each character in a 'flying' situation. Include the headings; Looks Like, Feels Like, Sounds Like.
- What do you think will happen next? Has this chapter ending left you on a cliffhanger?

CHAPTER 12:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA07) (AC9E3LA08) (AC9E4LA08) (AC9E4LA11) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08) (AC9E6LA06)

'surveyed', 'sauntered', 'defeated'

- Write the definitions for the vocabulary terms. Discuss that these are <u>verbs</u> to describe a specific action. Brainstorm and list <u>synonyms</u> and <u>antonyms</u> for these verbs.

Literary Technique: Idioms –
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E3LE04) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E4LE04) (AC9E3LE05) (AC9E4LE05)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE02) (AC9E5LE03) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E6LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05)

"Like in an old-school-style animation, my entire life flashed before my eyes …" (p.132)

- What is an idiom? What does the *'my entire life flashed before my eyes'* idiom mean? (ie. A summary of your life's memories flashes before your eyes in a moment of impending death)
- Brainstorm other ways to describe this idiom.
- What are some other idioms you know involving danger or near-death experiences? For example, 'at death's door', 'fading away', 'one foot in the grave', 'brush with death', etc.
- Make your own meme with your favourite saying and an image to match/contrast.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- What is meant by the phrase, *'a la carte pigeon'* (p.131)?
- What parts of this chapter did you find humorous, suspenseful, scary, exciting, exhilarating?
- Do you agree that pigeons are pests? Why or why not?
- What do you think might have happened to Liam?
- What might happen next? Do you think Max is in real danger?

CHAPTER 13:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA06) (AC9E3LA07) (AC9E3LA08) (AC9E3LA09) (AC9E4LA08) (AC9E4LA09)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LY08) (AC9E6LY09)

'nosedived', 'sparrowhawk', 'eyelids', 'freefall', 'breakfast', 'open-mouthed'

- Notice that these terms are <u>compound words</u> (a series of two or more words that collectively form a single word). Break these into two words to write an equation. For example, 'nose' + 'dived' = 'nosedived'. Write down other compound words including 'nose' (eg. *bullnose, tubenose, brownnose, nosebleed, nosepiece*). Find other compound words in the text.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- Describe how you felt about the scene with Asher finding Max as a pigeon.
- Describe how you feel about Josh and his actions.
- Describe what emotions and behaviours you see in the illustration.
- Describe how you think Max might have changed in his confidence and with his role as big brother throughout the story so far. What did he sacrifice in order to help Liam?
- How might the brothers escape from the glue traps?

CHAPTER 14:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA07) (AC9E3LA08) (AC9E4LA08) (AC9E4LA06) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08) (AC9E6LA06) (AC9E5LA05) (AC9E6LA05)

'admitted', 'gawped', 'celebrate', 'stunned'

- Discuss the meanings of these emotive verbs. Write each of these in a compound or complex sentence, making sure to use the correct tense.

For example, 'admitted', 'gawped' and 'stunned' are past tense (eg. Max gawped at Liam in a stunned silence, after he found out about Mum and Larry's plans.) and 'celebrate' is present tense (eg. Max wants to celebrate finding Liam alive, which is a massive relief.)

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- What did you learn about Max and Liam's relationship in this chapter? How have they shown effective communication and 'trust'? Do you think Max will be more open about his feelings from now on?
- Do you have empathy for Josh and his own situation? Why or why not?
- What have you learned about pigeons? Complete a KWHL Chart (What I Know, What I Want to Learn, How I Will Find Out, What I Have Learned), or write an information report about the facts with pictures.
- How will the boys get out of this 'sticky' mess?

CHAPTER 15:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA07) (AC9E3LA08) (AC9E4LA08) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08) (AC9E6LA06)

'forceful', 'hysterical', 'instinctive', 'anxious', 'horrendous', 'wicked'

- Turn these terms into adverbs (describing an action) and place them in appropriate sentences relevant to the scenarios in the book. For example, 'The phone screen glitched and then Shrinkle's cat appeared, smiling wickedly.'
- Make a list of more adverbs or find some in the text.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- Was the solution to being stuck in the glue tape what you had expected? How so?
- What did you think of Max's reaction to discovering that Liam had lost the phone? How would he have reacted earlier in the book?
- How has Liam showed mathematical and technological skills? How do you think he handled the final dilemma? Which of Shrinkle's cat's options would you have chosen, and why?

CHAPTER 16:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA10) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08)

'velvety', 'muscly', 'massive', 'white'

- Use each of the above adjectives (describing words) in a sentence or two to describe the appearance of the boys as cheetahs.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- Write an imaginative account of how you might feel as a cheetah. Use descriptive and figurative language.

- What do you think of the way Asher and Abs stood up to Josh? How does this show loyalty to their friend Max?
- Do you agree that it's more important that Max's friends stood up for him, rather than what Josh said about him? How do you think this will help Max in the future? Do you think things might change for Josh in the future?
- Does this chapter ending implore you to read on?

CHAPTER 17:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA10) | Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08)

'smugly', *'flustered'*, *'splotches'*, *'survival'*, *'slender'*

- Discuss the definitions of the terms above. Find more in the chapter or add your own vocabulary terms that relate to the feelings, behaviours and appearances of the characters.

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- Find and make a table or graph detailing each animal's stats, including: Strength, Agility, Speed and Survival Rating for the flea, mouse, pigeon and cheetah.
- Did you know that cheetahs have around two thousand spots? What's your favourite fact about cheetahs?
- Which of the five animals (including tortoise) do you know most about, or want to know more about? Create a digital presentation about one of these animals.
- Do you think Max's perception of being called a tortoise might change after this scene? Why?
- List all the emotions listed or described in this chapter. What metaphor does Max used to describe his relief at being human again?
- What do you think will be the consequences and impact on their family due to the fire in their flat? Can they save Dec?

CHAPTER 18:

Vocabulary:
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA06) (AC9E3LA07) (AC9E3LA08) (AC9E3LA09) (AC9E4LA08) (AC9E4LA09)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA06) (AC9E5LA08) (AC9E6LA06)

'solemnly', *'carefully'*, *'importantly'*

- Use each of these adverbs in a complex sentence.
- Write down the base word (an adjective) for each term. (solemnly – solemn, carefully – careful, importantly – important).

Discussion Questions and Comprehension:
- Find and list the literary techniques used in this chapter, and give evidence with an example. These might include: hyperbole, metaphors, similes, idioms, visual imagery, allusion, show don't tell, onomatopoeia, and any others you can discover.
- What major plot points did you find out / were resolved in this final chapter? These can relate to:
    - The relationship between Max and Liam
    - How Max feels about Larry
    - How Max feels about Josh
    - The outcome of the fire (and Dec)
    - The reason behind the secret
    - Mum's concern for Max, and Max's realisation of what's most important.
- How do you feel about the conclusion of the story? Has it left you wanting more?

Further Discussion Questions:

Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA04) (AC9E4LA07) (AC9E3LE01) (AC9E3LE02) (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E3LE04) (AC9E4LE02) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E4LE04) (AC9E3LE05) (AC9E4LE05) (AC9E3LY02) (AC9E4LY02) (AC9E3LY05) (AC9E4LY05)

Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E6LA02) (AC9E5LA04) (AC9E6LA03) (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE02) (AC9E6LE02) (AC9E5LE03) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E6LE03) (AC9E6LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05) (AC9E6LY01) (AC9E5LY02) (AC9E6LY02) (AC9E5LY03) (AC9E5LY05) (AC9E6LY05)

- What are the main themes of the story? What important messages does the author intend to portray?
- Was Josh the enemy in the story? How did he create challenges for Max and Liam? What about Larry? Did Max see him as a threat? What did he come to realise about Larry in the end? How did Liam show his acceptance of Larry? (He wore the cap, mentioned that Mum was happy)
- What did you learn about Max and Liam's friends in the story, Asher and Abs?
- What was significant about the animal facts and stats? How did this help you, as a reader, to stay engaged with the story?
- How did Max behave or react to difficult situations as a result of being preyed upon as an animal?
- How did his experiences help him through his difficult or negative feelings and attitude towards Liam, Larry and Josh? How did Max's thoughts and confidence in himself change from the beginning to the end of the story? How did the game help Max overcome his own doubts and fears?
- How did Max's feelings about his Mum dating Larry change by the end of the story? Why do you think he didn't like the thought of Larry moving in? What did he realise was more important? How did he come to this realisation?
- What did you learn about teamwork? What were the best examples of teamwork in the story? How did the brothers build their relationship and achieve their goals by working together?
- What do you think of Liam's abilities to navigate different apps on the phone? How is learning a variety of skills (technology, maths, science, etc) important in real life situations? Do you think Max's 'obsession' with video games is healthy? Why or why not?
- How do you think the game was created? What do you know about programming or writing data?
- What did you learn about gaming and/or computers?
- How do the different games, Shrinkle, Glitched, and Critters compare? What aspects were similar and what were different? Do you think the cat's riddles were easier or harder this time? Complete a three-way Venn Diagram to show the differences and similarities between the three games.
- What do you like about the illustrations and graphics throughout the book? How do they portray the worlds and different creatures the boys found themselves in? How do they convey humour and emotions? What kind of style or artistic media do you think the author-illustrator has used, and is this suitable for the nature of this story?
- Were there any particular formatting techniques used that helped you follow the story effectively? For example, the changing alarm notifications at each chapter introduction, the decreasing heath points and stats tables, the dot points, bold and enlarged lettering, and so on?
- Did you find the dialogue between the characters realistic? Why or why not?
- What aspects of the story did you find the most humorous? Why?
- Do you have a favourite scene from the story? Why this one?
- Do you like studying animal biology? Did the Critters app and Max's fun facts help you to understand and enjoy learning about different animals?
- Would you play Critters? How would you approach each challenge? Did you find the 'Would you rather' scenarios difficult to choose from? Brainstorm some ideas for your own version of Critters.
- What do you think will happen after this story ends? Do you think the boys might play this game again and choose the other option from the 'Would you rather' questions? Do you think there will be a fourth game?
- How important is screen time to you? Discuss why screen time should be limited or not, and what would be a reasonable amount of time on devices in your household. Has your view changed over time?

CHARACTERS:

Max
Liam, younger brother
Mum
Clio, baby sister
Larry
Josh
Declan, next door's cat
Asher
Abs
Other supporting characters

- Who is your favourite character? Why?
- Who is your least favourite character? Why?

Character Analysis

Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LE01) (AC9E3LE02) (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E3LE05) (AC9E4LE05)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA08) (AC9E5LE03) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05)

Use the following acronym (STEAL) to identify features of one of the characters from *Game On: Critters*. Find parts of the text to show the way they **S**peak, **T**hink, **E**ffect on others, **A**ct and **L**ook.

Speech – what does the character say? How do they speak?

Thought – what are the character's thoughts and feelings?

Effect on others – how do people react to the character?

Actions – what does the character do?

Looks – what does the character look like?

1. Choose a character to create a character profile page, including a name, picture, adjectives / descriptive language to describe their appearance, personality traits, interests, dislikes, and so on.

2. Use the STEAL method to develop your own character when writing a narrative.

Structure Format / Writing Style:

Writing style: Fantasy genre
The fantasy genre is revealed in the third chapter, when Max throws the phone at the wall and they suddenly begin to transform into fleas to play the game.

"As it smashed into the wall, there was a thunderous crackle and flashes of blindingly bright, neon-blue light beamed from the phone screen. Then my muscles began to tense up all at the same time and the room started to go out of focus. 'What's going on?' I shrieked at Liam, as I felt myself falling off the chair. I clenched my eyes shut. It felt like my very ATOMS were being shaken up and somehow... rearranging ... ***What was happening?"*** (p.27 - 28).

Is virtual reality possible? Yes. Could the science of rearranging someone's molecules or atoms into an animal possible? No. Discuss how games, books and movies use elements of 'reality' to create 'fantasy' worlds. Can you think of any other stories about people transforming into something or someone else? What part of this fantasy concept do you enjoy the most?

Structure Format
The beginning and ending of each chapter keep the reader engaged throughout, with rising action and emotive language. For example:

Beginning: *"'This is horrendous!' I cried as Liam squealed with excitement and ran around in loops, his tail flicking behind him."* (Ch.8, p.82).

Ending: *"'Liam? Liam!' I cried, but before I could stop him, he had scuttled off towards my bedroom door and disappeared."* (Ch.8, p.89).

- How does the 'hook' of the opening and closing lines of a chapter assist in structuring a narrative?

The author has included stats pages at various intervals for easy navigation throughout the text and to give reference to the points and ratings that Max and Liam need to refer to when answering the cat's True/False questions. For example:

"MOUSE
Strength: 61/100
Agility: 99/100
Speed:74/100
Survival rating: 36/100
Health points: 100/100" (p.88-89)

- In what types of texts have you seen stat (statistics) pages used? (Information texts/reports, procedural texts, product reviews, etc)
- What is the purpose of utilising statistics in these texts? (They help keep the information clear, credible and straight forward)

ACTIVITIES:

ENGLISH

Narrative writing
Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA03) (AC9E3LA04) (AC9E4LA03) (AC9E4LA04) (AC9E4LA09) (AC9E4LA12) (AC9E4LE02) (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E3LE05) (AC9E4LE05) (AC9E3LY06) (AC9E3LY07) (AC9E4LY06) (AC9E4LY07)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA04) (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05) (AC9E5LY03) (AC9E5LY06) (AC9E5LY07) (AC9E6LY06) (AC9E6LY07)

Use the building blocks of writing to create great pieces of writing.
Reference: www.sevenstepswriting.com/what-are-the-seven-steps

Step 1: *Plan for Success* – brainstorm ideas, concepts, themes and plotlines.

Step 2: *Sizzling Starts* – start at an exciting moment to grab the reader's attention.

Step 3: *Tightening Tension* – create tension and drama with a problem, build up momentum so the strongest challenge comes last, then the character can triumph in the end.

Step 4: *Dynamic Dialogue* – get to know your characters as they talk, walk and even stalk. Quotes from experts or celebrities can be powerful.

Step 5: *Show, Don't Tell* – use the characters actions to show the reader their personality and feelings.

Step 6: *Ban the Boring* – ban boring events like bed, breakfast, bus trips. Make sure each sentence is engaging and important to the story.

Step 7: *Exciting Endings* – the end should have a punchline, like a joke. It could be a call to action, plot twist or leave the reader with a question and a lasting impression.

- **Idea 1:** Write a narrative with yourself in Max and Liam's place. Invent some 'would you rather' and 'true/false' questions that will help you achieve goals as different critters. Where would the challenge take place? What would be the ultimate mission? What animals and facts will you include, and what other characters and challenges will you face? How would you work together with a partner in the game?
  Students also consider how to tighten the plot tension, create an exciting climax and satisfying ending. Include a range of literary devices, humour and figurative / descriptive language. Re-read, edit and share.
- **Idea 2:** Write another sequel for the Game On series. What would the game's world look like this time? Will there be new riddles or trivia questions to solve? What happens in this adventure?

Creative Writing: Trivia Game Plan

Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA03) (AC9E3LA04) (AC9E4LA03) (AC9E4LA04) (AC9E4LA09) (AC9E4LA12) (AC9E4LE02) (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E3LE05) (AC9E4LE05) (AC9E3LY06) (AC9E3LY07) (AC9E4LY06) (AC9E4LY07)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA04) (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05) (AC9E5LY03) (AC9E5LY06) (AC9E5LY07) (AC9E6LY06) (AC9E6LY07)

- Students can brainstorm different ideas for a new online game or app based on animal trivia and 'Would you rather' questions. What are the instructions and rules, and what is the purpose of the game? Students can work in small groups to plan each part of the game, including characters, obstacles, prizes, scenery, goals, and so on.
- The completed article should include the 5W+H (who, what, when, where, why, how), with an enticing introduction about the features and purpose of the game, dot points to clarify rules and guidelines, and a conclusion to sum it up and what the players will get out of the game. Students should use interesting language (maybe even some jokes and silly conundrums), and drawings or graphics to support the text.

Persuasive Text

Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA03) (AC9E3LA04) (AC9E4LA03) (AC9E4LA04) (AC9E4LA09) (AC9E4LA12) (AC9E4LE02) (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E3LE05) (AC9E4LE05) (AC9E3LY06) (AC9E3LY07) (AC9E4LY06) (AC9E4LY07)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA04) (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05) (AC9E5LY03) (AC9E5LY06) (AC9E5LY07) (AC9E6LY06) (AC9E6LY07)

"Animals have it SO easy, I thought, bitterly. No one tells them what to do. They just live life how they want." (p.17)

"If I got asked ONE more, then I was going to seriously FLIP out. And I'd clearly told Liam that yesterday evening, as popcorn tumbled down his forehead. I shouldn't be held responsible for my actions. Any judge and jury would understand." (p.23)

- Students write a persuasive article to argue, for or against, on the topic of either; 'Animals have it SO easy', or 'I shouldn't always be held responsible for my actions'. They need to include an introductory paragraph with their opinion, supporting arguments and a conclusion to sum up their reasoning.
- Alternatively, students could consider writing about the benefits and/or disadvantages of screen time/video games, particularly with reference to social, emotional and physical health.

ENGLISH AND SCIENCE

Information Report

Years 3 & 4 English: (AC9E3LA03) (AC9E3LA04) (AC9E4LA03) (AC9E4LA04) (AC9E4LA09) (AC9E4LA12) (AC9E4LE02) (AC9E3LE03) (AC9E4LE03) (AC9E3LE05) (AC9E4LE05) (AC9E3LY06) (AC9E3LY07) (AC9E4LY06) (AC9E4LY07)
Years 3 & 4 Science – Biological sciences: (AC9S3U01) (AC9S4U01) (AC9S3I01) (AC9S4I01) (AC9S3I04) (AC9S4I04) (AC9S3I06) (AC9S4I06)
Years 5 & 6 English: (AC9E5LA04) (AC9E6LA08) (AC9E5LE04) (AC9E5LE05) (AC9E6LE05) (AC9E5LY03) (AC9E5LY06) (AC9E5LY07) (AC9E6LY06) (AC9E6LY07)
Years 5 & 6 Science – Biological sciences: (AC9S5U01) (AC9S6U01) (AC9S5H02) (AC9S6H02) (AC9S5I01) (AC9S6I01) (AC9S5I04) (AC9S6I04) (AC9S5I06) (AC9S6I06)

- Students sort the animals listed in the book into categories: Insects, Rodents, Birds, Mammals, Reptiles. Can they add more creatures to these lists? Can they add more classification categories (eg. Fish, Amphibians)
- Students choose a critter or animal to research and write an information report or create a digital presentation about. The report needs to include:
  - a title
  - introduction or classification / scientific name
  - several sub-headings including interesting facts such as appearance, habitat, life cycle, food, fun facts or statistics, etc.
  - conclusion, or references.

The information could be presented as a written format, 3D display, oral or dramatic show, or as a technically advanced digital presentation (or a combination of both).

SCIENCE / STEAM

Years 3 & 4 Science – Physical sciences: (AC9S4U03) (AC9S3H01) (AC9S4H01) (AC9S3H02) (AC9S4H02) (AC9S3I01) (AC9S4I01) (AC9S3I02) (AC9S4I03) (AC9S3I04) (AC9S4I04) (AC9S3I05) (AC9S4I05) (AC9S3I06) (AC9S4I06)

Years 5 & 6 Science – Physical sciences: (AC9S6H02) (AC9S5I01) (AC9S5I02) (AC9S6I03) (AC9S5I04) (AC9S6I04) (AC9S5I05) (AC9S6I05) (AC9S5I06) (AC9S6I06)

Years 3 & 4 Mathematics - Measurement: (AC9M3M01) (AC9M3M02) (AC9M3M03) (AC9M4M01) (AC9M4M03)

Years 5 & 6 Mathematics - Measurement: (AC9M5M01) (AC9M6M01) (AC9M6M02)

Learn about <u>speed, acceleration, motion and velocity </u>through some engaging activities, including:

- testing force and motion with toy cars
- understanding how to calculate speed with the distance/time formula
- take 'speed' challenges by racing others through walking forwards, walking backwards, speed walking, running, hopping, long jump, etc.
- recording results in graphs, interpreting and communicating the data.

Resources can be found and adapted at: 25 Speed Activities for Middle School - Teaching Expertise

Watch a video about speed at: What is Speed | Science for Kids (youtube.com)

DRAMA ACTIVITIES

Exploring Tone in Dialogues / Script Writing

Years 3 & 4 Drama: (AC9ADR4E01) (AC9ADR4D01) (AC9ADR4C01) (AC9ADR4P01)

Years 5 & 6 Drama: (AC9ADR6E01) (AC9ADR6D01) (AC9ADR6C01) (AC9ADR6P01)

- Choose a scene of dialogue between Max and Liam from *Game On: Critters*.
1. Read the speech with a partner, making sure to use an expressive tone of voice.
2. Read the speech again, this time change the tone in your voice (eg. from upbeat to dramatic, or from genuine to sarcastic). How does this change the 'feel' of the story?
3. Re-write the dialogue with a different tone. How will you re-phrase their words?

Game On: Critters Theatre Show

Years 3 & 4 Drama: (AC9ADR4E01) (AC9ADR4D01) (AC9ADR4C01) (AC9ADR4P01)

Years 5 & 6 Drama: (AC9ADR6E01) (AC9ADR6D01) (AC9ADR6C01) (AC9ADR6P01)

- In groups, students create a 5 – 10 minute 're-telling' or theatre show of their favourite / most significant parts of the book. They can wear or produce their own props and costumes. Focus on demonstrating emotion. Will they use any special effects, music, imagery, etc to accompany their performance?

Stand Up Comedy Show

Years 3 & 4 Drama: (AC9ADR4E01) (AC9ADR4D01) (AC9ADR4C01) (AC9ADR4P01)

Years 5 & 6 Drama: (AC9ADR6E01) (AC9ADR6D01) (AC9ADR6C01) (AC9ADR6P01)

- Students might like to write and perform a comedy act, referencing a similar humour as in the book, or involving the audience with 'Would you rather' questions or True / False problems to solve.

VISUAL ARTS / DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES ACTIVITY

Digital Animal Graphics

Years 3 & 4 Art: (AC9AVA4E01) (AC9AVA4D01) (AC9AVA4C01) (AC9AVA4P01) | Years 5 & 6 Art: (AC9AVA6E01) (AC9AVA6D01) (AC9AVA6C01) (AC9AVA6P01)

Years 3 & 4 Digital Technologies: (AC9TDI4K01) (AC9TDI4P02) (AC9TDI4P03) (AC9TDI4P06)

Years 5 & 6 Digital Technologies: (AC9TDI6K01) (AC9TDI6P03) (AC9TDI6P04) (AC9TDI6P07) (AC9TDI6P08)

- Experiment with digital technologies, such as Paint, Photoshop, Sketchbook, Procreate, etc, to explore the writing / painting implements and to create a scene of a significant moment as one of the animal transformations from the book.
- Experiment with the use of light and shade, and perspective. What art techniques and small details will add interest and variety to your image?
- Explore other artworks and graphics for inspiration.

Guerilla (not Gorilla) Art

Years 3 & 4 Art: ([AC9AVA4E01](#)) ([AC9AVA4D01](#)) ([AC9AVA4C01](#)) ([AC9AVA4P01](#)) | Years 5 & 6 Art: ([AC9AVA6E01](#)) ([AC9AVA6D01](#)) ([AC9AVA6C01](#)) ([AC9AVA6P01](#))

Guerilla Art is: 'The production of guerrilla art is focused on cause and effect, not the material piece itself. It aims to produce an effect within the minds of those people who live within the environment being altered. It does not necessarily aim to produce meaningful art in itself.'

- Students consider several factors in creating street art (can be done on the schoolgrounds with chalk or media of your choosing):
    - How the art fits in to the surface or environment it is applied. Eg. around a drain, taps, pipe, trees, or other man-made or natural structure.
    - How the art will have a positive impact on its viewers. Eg. anti-bullying or anti-animal cruelty message.
    - How they will incorporate an animal/s in the art.
    - How they will share their designs with others and gather feedback on its effectiveness.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Years 3 & 4 Digital Technologies: ([AC9TDI4K01](#)) ([AC9TDI4K02](#)) ([AC9TDI4P01](#)) ([AC9TDI4P02](#)) ([AC9TDI4P03](#)) ([AC9TDI4K03](#)) ([AC9TDI4P04](#)) ([AC9TDI4P05](#)) ([AC9TDI4P06](#)) ([AC9TDI4P07](#))
Years 5 & 6 Digital Technologies: ([AC9TDI6K01](#)) ([AC9TDI6K02](#)) ([AC9TDI6P01](#)) ([AC9TDI6P02](#)) ([AC9TDI6P03](#)) ([AC9TDI6P04](#)) ([AC9TDI6P05](#)) ([AC9TDI6P06](#)) ([AC9TDI6P07](#)) ([AC9TDI6P08](#))

Coding tells a computer program how to function. Programming languages like JavaScript, Python, C++, and HTML, are used by computer scientists to build games and websites.

Information about the benefits of learning to code and links to various programs can be found here:
[Basic Coding & Computer Programming for Kids | ComputerScience.org](#)

A popular coding app for children in the primary years is [Scratch](#).

Coding is explained in this video:
[(9) Coding for Kids Explained | What is Coding | Why is Coding Important - YouTube](#)

Comparison Texts

- *Diary of a Roblox Pro* (series), Scholastic. Similar theme: Computer game adventures.
- *Deltora Quest* (series) by Emily Rodda, Scholastic. Similar theme: Brainteasers, puzzles, clues and mysteries must be solved by the adventurers to fulfil the quest.
- The *Gamers* trilogy by George Ivanoff, Ford Street Publishing. Similar theme: A series of science fiction, action/adventure, computer gaming novels. They follow the adventures of Tark and Zyra, two computer game characters who think they are real people.

ALSO IN THIS SERIES

Game On: Shrinkle
GAME ON SERIES, BOOK 1
Emily Snape

When rebellious Liam starts playing 'Shrinkle' on his babysitter's phone, the app shrinks Liam and his brother Max to the size of a minifigure! Their safe home has suddenly become a treacherous landscape. Can they escape before the phone goes flat!

THEMES: GAMING, RIDDLES, SIBLING RILVARY, PROBLEM SOLVING, HUMOUR

9781922539397 | Paperback with Flaps | 210 x 135 mm | 8¼ x 5¼ in | 184 pp

Game On: Glitched
GAME ON SERIES, BOOK 2
Emily Snape

In Game On: Glitched, Max and is brother Liam take a trip through time. History comes alive but to return home they must work together to solve some historical riddles.

THEMES: GAMING, RIDDLES, SIBLING RILVARY, PROBLEM SOLVING, HISTORY
9781922539410 | Paperback with Flaps | 210 x 135 mm | 8¼ x 5¼ in | 224 pp

MORE MIDDLE-GRADE FICTION

Ruby and the Pen
THE PEN SERIES, BOOK 1
David Lawrence & Cherie Dignam

Ruby and the Pen is the story of a 12-year-old, cartoon-drawing girl who buys a pen from a mysterious market stall. She soon learns that the pen has a magical power: whatever she draws, happens! Soon, Ruby has problems galore and one big question to be answered - should she fix all of her problems with the stroke of a pen?

THEMES: DRAWING, ENVIRONMENT, PERSONAL ETHICS, FAMILY BREAKDOWN, RESPONSIBILITY
9781922539380 | Paperback with Flaps | 210 x 135 mm | 8¼ x 5¼ in | 280 pp

Xander and the Pen
THE PEN SERIES, BOOK 2
David Lawrence & Cherie Dignam

Xander and the Pen tells the story of Xander, a boy who loves to draw superheroes. One day, Xander buys a magical pen. But can he handle the pen's power?

THEMES: DRAWING, ENVIRONMENT, PERSONAL ETHICS, FAMILY BREAKDOWN, RESPONSIBILITY

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