



Teaching the Book

The Maze of Bones is the first book in the gripping adventure series, *The 39 Clues*. The series follows the exploits of Amy and Dan Cahill as they travel the world, encounter 500 years of history, and unravel a treacherous family mystery. This book provides an opportunity to discuss the genre of mystery, teach the skill of making inferences, and develop vocabulary related to suspense. Activities will engage students in magic box math, using Google Maps, and secret code writing.

Theme Focus: Mystery

Comprehension Focus: Make Inferences

Language Focus: Words of Mystery & Suspense

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rick Riordan is the author of *The 39 Clues Book 1: The Maze of Bones* as well as the architect of the story for the series. He is also the author of the #1 *New York Times* bestselling series, *Percy Jackson and the Olympians*, the *Kane Chronicles*, and *Heroes of Olympus*.

Riordan taught English and social studies for many years and drew on his teaching experience to construct his plots. As a teacher, he shared his passion for mythology with his students. His own son's learning challenges inspired him to create the *Percy Jackson* series about a twelve-year-old dyslexic boy who discovers he is the modern-day son of a Greek god. The overwhelming success of the series led Mr. Riordan to become a full-time writer. Riordan lives with his wife and two sons, Haley and Patrick. They have one dog, a Golden Labrador mix, and two black cats.

BOOK STATS

Grade Level Equivalent: 4–6

Ages: 8–10

Lexile Measure: 610L

Pages: 24

Guided Reading Level: R

Genre: Mystery and Suspense

Subject/Theme: Family, Survival, Adventure

Common Core Standards	Reading	Writing	Listening & Speaking	Language
Grade 4	RL.4.1, RL.4.3, RL.4.4, RL.4.6	W.4.3	SL.4.1	L.4.4, L.4.6
Grade 5	RL.5.1, RL.5.3, RL.5.4, RL.5.6	W.5.3	SL.5.1	L.5.4, L.5.6
Grade 6	RL.6.1, RL.6.4, RL.6.6	W.6.3	SL.6.1	L.6.4, L.6.6

OVERVIEW

Book Summary

Five minutes before she died, Grace Cahill, the rich and powerful matriarch of the Cahill family, changed her will. She left her heirs with an intriguing choice: accept a million dollars, or accept one Clue—the first of 39 Clues that could lead to riches and power beyond belief.

Amy and Dan Cahill, two young orphans adopted by Grace's daughter, are the last of the heirs to make the choice. When they decide to embark on the quest for the 39 Clues, they immediately become the targets of their competing relatives—Ian and Natalie Kabra, the Holt family, Alistair Oh, Irina Spasky, and Jonah Wizard.

Following a hunch, Amy and Dan venture into the basement library of Grace's mansion where they find an important lead. However, within minutes, the mansion explodes into flames, forcing Amy and Dan to flee for their lives. They survive to gather the necessary resources for their quest—money plus the company of their young au pair, Nellie. Their first destination is Philadelphia to investigate the life of Benjamin Franklin, a famous Cahill ancestor. Clues they find there send them off to Paris to track down the trail of the mystery.

While fending off their rapacious relatives, Amy and Dan finally find the maze of bones they are seeking—in the underground catacombs of Paris. Another lead sets them off on the next stage of their quest—Vienna, Austria.

STORIA ENRICHMENTS

This Storia e-book has the following enrichments to enhance students' comprehension of the book.

- Word Twister (2)
- Word Scramble (2)
- Do You Know?
- Who Said It?
- About You
- Collectible Cards



Get Ready to Read

Pre-Reading Activities

The Choice Which would you choose—one million dollars or the chance to gain incredible power and wealth? The characters in *The Maze of Bones* have to make this choice early in the book. Encourage students to discuss what their choice would be—and why. Ask them how much danger and risk they would be willing to face in order to gain incredible power and wealth.

Meet the Cahills Engage students and develop their background knowledge with this introduction to members of the Cahill family who are competing to find the 39 Clues. Go to <http://bit.ly/VpoMqT>. Display the bio cards for each of the Cahill characters in the book and read their vital statistics and information.

Vocabulary

Words of Mystery and Suspense Explain to students that a mystery writer uses words that add to a book's mood of danger and suspense. Ask students to watch for the following words as they read the book. Encourage them to look for clues in the text to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words and have them check the dictionary definitions. Suggest that they record other words of mystery and suspense as they read.

Use **Resource #1: Vocabulary Cards** on page 7 and distribute copies to students.

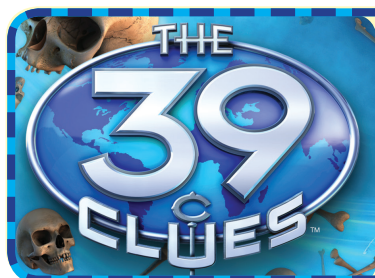
perilous (p. 1)	pseudonym (p. 52)
talisman (p. 2)	rendezvous (p. 85)
imposter (p. 5)	conspiracy (p. 129)
destiny (p. 18)	lethal (p. 166)



BIG QUESTION

Critical Thinking Ask students to think about this question as they read and be ready to answer it when they've finished the book. Write the question on chart paper or have students record it in their reading journals.

Do Dan and Amy Cahill have what it takes to find the 39 Clues?



READING REWARD

Students can use the following code to redeem a digital medal within the online game for The 39 Clues: 39ONSTORIA. Reward them with the code after they have completed reading the book.

As You Read

Reading the Book

Modeled Reading Read aloud the brief first chapter of the book, asking students to follow along. Then prompt them to ask questions about what you just read; for example: What children is Grace talking about? Why had she had so many close calls with death? Can William McIntyre be trusted? What does the new will say?

Independent Reading Assign students to read *The Maze of Bones* independently. Remind them to keep the Big Question in mind as they read.

Comprehension Focus

Make Inferences Amy and Dan Cahill rely on their ability to make inferences in order to find Clues, solve mysteries, and decide whom they can—and can't—trust. Explain to students that they can make inferences while they read by figuring out things that the author gives hints about, but doesn't directly state.

Use the graphic organizer on **Resource #2: Make Inferences** to model for students how to make inferences and provide supporting evidence. Project the page on a whiteboard or pass out copies to students.

Model: Let's look at an inference that Dan Cahill made in the first part of the book. He and Amy were in Grace's library, wondering if Grace had other books. Dan looked up at a crest that had letters on it that looked more worn than the others. Dan put together this clue with his previous knowledge that hiding places frequently have secret openings. He climbed up, touched the letters on the crest, and a secret door swung open. His inference led them to the next lead. You can do the same when you read a mystery.

Have students fill in the rest of the organizer with inferences based on text that gives hints but doesn't directly state something. Discuss students' answers and ask them to give evidence to support them.

After You Read

Questions to Discuss

Lead students in a discussion of these focus story elements.

1. Mystery Who do you think is the biggest threat to Amy and Dan in their search for the 39 Clues? Who do you think has the best chance of solving the mystery if it isn't Amy and Dan? (*Answers will vary.*)

2. Make Inferences Why do you think that Dan almost died to get his backpack out of the subway? What do you think happened to the backpack? Do you think Dan will ever get it back? (*Answers will vary.*)

3. Words of Mystery and Suspense Reread the description of the Catacombs on pages 170–171. What words help build a mood of mystery and suspense? (*Sample answers: skills, moldering, eerie, sockets, creaked.*)

WORDS TO KNOW

Words of Mystery and Suspense

Ask students to refer to the definitions they wrote on their vocabulary cards. Then ask the following questions to evaluate their understanding of the words' meanings.

1. How was Amy and Dan's visit to the Franklin Institute **perilous**?
2. When Grace Cahill was still alive, what did she predict that Amy's **destiny** would be?
3. Name someone in the book whom you suspect is an **imposter**.
4. What **rendezvous** did Amy and Dan have in Philadelphia?
5. What **lethal** situations did Amy and Dan face in Paris?

Ask students to pair/share with a partner, asking more questions based on other vocabulary words. Encourage them to give evidence from the book to support their answers.

Questions to Share

Encourage students to share their responses with a partner or small group.

1. Text to Self Would you still make the same choice you did before reading about taking the money or trying for incredible wealth and power? Explain why you've changed your mind or stayed with your original choice.

2. Text to World Think about famous people who are from your area or state. Which one of them do you think might be a Cahill? Where in your city or state might a Clue be hidden?

3. Text to Text Compare *The 39 Clues* to other mystery series you have read. How do other Amy and Dan Cahill compare with other young detectives or protagonists? How are the settings and action different?

Extension Activities

Reading/Writing Connection

Character's Viewpoint Most of the story is told through Amy and Dan Cahill's viewpoint. However, some chapters are told through the viewpoint

of other characters such as Irina Spasky or the Holts. Challenge students to "get inside the head" of a character in the book other than Amy and Dan; for example: Alistair Oh, Irina Spasky, or one of the Kabras. Ask students to choose a particular scene in the story and think about how another character would act, talk, and think. Have students title their writing with the setting, time, and character's name. After they write, ask students to read parts of their scene aloud and see if other students can guess whose viewpoint is featured.

Don't forget the



BIG QUESTION

Critical Thinking Give each student an opportunity to answer the big question. Encourage students to support their answers with details and evidence from the text. Remind them that there is no one right answer.

Do Dan and Amy Cahill have what it takes to find the 39 Clues?

Content Area Connections

Math Magic Boxes Benjamin Franklin was a writer, a scientist, a statesman, and an inventor. He also liked to play with numbers and created magic boxes, or magic squares. Challenge students to solve the magic square on page 173, filling in the missing numbers on the skulls.

Science Invisible Ink Invisible ink was used extensively during the Revolutionary War period, including by Benjamin Franklin. Students can make their own invisible ink from lemon juice or a baking soda solution. A heat source, such as an electric iron, will reveal the invisible ink on paper.

Social Studies Google Map the Adventure Amy and Dan Cahill visit several different sites in both Philadelphia and Paris. Ask students to track their adventures in either place on a map of the city. Help students locate street maps of Philadelphia or Paris on the Internet; if possible, use Google Maps and a whiteboard or smartboard to find major sites like Independence Hall or Sacré-Coeur.

Arts Design Your Own Crest Ask students to study the Cahill family crest pictured on page 45 and reread the text that explains each of the symbols. Then challenge them to create their own crest, using initials and symbols to represent important characteristics about themselves. Encourage partners to share their crests and try to guess what the symbols stand for.

BIG ACTIVITY

Send a Secret Message Assign students to write a message to Amy and Dan to warn them about William McIntyre. Then challenge them to create a code to write their message in to make it more secret and difficult to intercept. Make copies of **Resource #2** and distribute to students. Read the directions and answer questions to clarify the activity. Encourage students to exchange messages with a partner and to try to break each other's code.

READ MORE AND LEARN MORE

Use these books and other resources to expand your students' study of the book or theme.

Series Connections



The 39 Clues #2: One False Note

Gordon Korman

Ages: 8–12

Grades: 3–6

Lexile Level: 680L

Pages: 176

What's next for orphaned siblings Amy and Dan Cahill? In this installment, the scavenger hunt barrels from Paris to Vienna to the Austrian Alps and then on to Venice. Amy and Dan are still amazed to learn they're distantly related to Ben Franklin and Mozart. An even greater surprise is that the heroic siblings are ahead of everyone in the search for Clues! **Available as a Storia e-book**



The 39 Clues #3: The Sword Thief

Peter Lerangis

Ages: 8–12

Grades: 3–6

Lexile Level: 660L

Pages: 160

Amy and Dan Cahill's quest has led them to Japan, but now they are stalled and stumped. They may have to form an alliance with their uncle, Alistair Oh, a man who has already proven to be unworthy of their trust. But considering the rest of the treacherous Cahill clan, he may be the children's best choice. What should they do? One lesson Amy and Dan have to learn: Beware of everyone!

Available as a Storia e-book



The 39 Clues #4: Beyond the Grave

Jude Watson

Ages: 8–12

Grades: 3–6

Lexile Level: 550L

Pages: 192

The quest for the 39 Clues leads the young siblings to Egypt—where the stakes are high and the danger is even higher. At this point, Amy and Dan expect to be deceived by their uncles, aunts, and cousins . . . but by their beloved, trusted, and deceased grandmother, too? She's left a surprise message for the children, but Amy and Dan don't know if it will help them . . . or harm them.

Available as a Storia e-book

Other Resources

Check out the website that tells all you need to know about The 39 Clues series: <http://bit.ly/QVasIQ>.

Go to www.Scholastic.com/storia-corner to find PDF versions of the Storia teacher guides and links to purchase the related books.

Genre Connections



Alec Flint Mysteries #1: The Nina, the Pinta, and the Vanishing Treasure

Jill Santopolo

Age: 8–10

Grades: 2–5

Lexile Level: 740L

Pages: 192

Alec Flint dreams of becoming a great detective. He even sports a pair of super-sleuth pants full of pockets so he can carry his case-solving tools of the trade. When his police officer dad alerts him that a Christopher Columbus exhibit has been stolen from the museum, Alec teams up with his friend, Gina, to try and crack the case. **Available as a Storia e-book**



Cabin Creek Mysteries #1: The Secret of Robber's Cave

Kristiana Gregory

Ages: 8–10

Grades: 3–5

Lexile Level: 570L

Pages: 192

Before Jeff and David's father died, he warned them not to visit Lost Island. But the boys think solving this mystery will make them feel closer to their dad. The boys must use their wits and survival skills to stay safe. When their cousin Claire insists on being a part of the adventure, things get more complicated. What is the true story of this strange place? And does it have anything to do with the legend of Robber's Cave? **Available as a Storia e-book**

Theme Connections



Gregor the Overlander

Suzanne Collins

Ages: 10–14

Grades: 5–8

Lexile Level: 630L

Pages: 336

When Gregor finds his sister Boots climbing into an air vent, he chases after her, and they are sucked into a place known as Underland—a bizarre world with giant talking roaches, spiders, and rats, as well as purple-eyed humans. Exciting, gritty, and full of heart, this thrilling adventure story from the creator of The Hunger Games will delight fantasy buffs. **Available as a Storia e-book**



Guardians of Ga'hoole #1: The Capture

Kathryn Lasky

Ages: 8–12

Grades: 3–6

Lexile Level: 730L

Pages: 240

Soren, a baby barn owl, was hatched into a loving family, in a comfortable nest atop a glorious fir tree. But one day Soren fell—or was pushed—from his home. He was then bird-napped and flown to the St. Aegolius Academy for Orphaned Owls, a wicked, mind-manipulating school. This highly suspenseful fantasy kicks off the wildly popular adventure series written by award-winning author Kathryn Lasky. **Available as a Storia e-book**

perilous

talisman

imposter

destiny

pseudonym

rendezvous

conspiracy

lethal

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Maze of Bones

Make inferences based on hints in the text and your own prior experiences or knowledge.
Use your own example of text for #4.

TEXT	INFERENCE
1. “Dan had reached the crest, and he saw what to do. The letters were smudged darker than the rest of the stone, like they’d been touched many times.” (p. 46)	
2. “Amy sank to the floor, coughing and choking. All she could see was the oriental carpet—a parade of woven silk dragons. Dragons . . . like the one on Grace’s necklace. And they were all flying in the same direction, like they were leading the way. It was a crazy idea, but it was all she had.” (p. 57)	
3. “Their parents had gotten them passports right before they died, when Dan was four. Dan didn’t remember why. They’d never used them. Grace had insisted on renewing them last year, which had seemed kind of silly to Dan at the time. Now he wondered....” (p. 70)	
4.	