

A Teacher's Guide to the

# BOOK SCAVENGER SERIES

FOR  
USE WITH  
COMMON CORE  
STATE  
STANDARDS



## JENNIFER CHAMBLISS BERTMAN

is the author of the *New York Times* bestsellers *Book Scavenger* and *The Unbreakable Code*.

She holds an MFA in creative writing and worked in the publishing industry for fifteen years in a variety of roles ranging from being an intern for YM magazine to a production editor for college textbooks at McGraw-Hill. Born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, she now lives in Colorado.

This guide is aligned with Common Core Standards for grade 7 but can be applied to grades 3–8. To attain specific Common Core grade level standards for their classrooms and students, teachers are encouraged to adapt the activities listed in this guide to their classes' needs. You know your kids best!



## ABOUT THE BOOK

Twelve-year-old Emily is on the move again. Her family is relocating to San Francisco, home of her literary idol: Garrison Griswold, creator of Book Scavenger, a game where books are hidden and clues to find them are revealed through puzzles. Emily soon learns that Griswold has been attacked, derailing the launch of his epic new game. Then she and her friend James discover an odd clue, which eventually leads them to a valuable prize. But there are others on the hunt for this special prize, and Emily and James must race to solve the puzzles Griswold left behind before his attackers come after them.

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# PRE-READING ACTIVITY:

## Anticipation Guide

Fill out the following chart before beginning the novel. Then, discuss as pairs or in a whole class discussion.

STATEMENT:	AGREE:	DISAGREE:	EXPLANATION OR COMMENTARY:
Children should have a say in any move a family is considering.			
It would be exciting to move to a new state each school year.			
Cracking codes and ciphers is interesting and fun.			
Friendship is more important than a person's hobby or interest.			
When friends have the same interests there will never be a conflict.			

## Word Wonders

These twenty words all appear in chapter one of the novel:

Book	Scavenger	Cell	Streetcar	Library
Game	Imaginary	Commuting	Glasses	Scornful
Poe	Publisher	Gun	Improvised	Help!
Shot	Collapsed	<i>The Gold-Bug</i>	9-1-1	Launched
Treasure	Secrets	Desperately	Elaborate	Breathe
Rushed	Train	Moans	Rumbled	Stumbled

Provide one for each student in class and ask them to write a prediction about the book based on this single word. Then, allow students to pair up with someone from a different part of the classroom and compare their words and predictions. After comparing with their partners, they should make a new prediction. Then, as a pair, they should join with another pair and repeat the process. Do this once more until six students are in a group. Read aloud the first chapter and have students keep track of what was right about their group's predictions, and what was not. Discuss which words would've been the most helpful to have and why. You may want to project all the words onto the board and have students decide which six words would've created the best prediction. Then, have them discuss whether this technique improved their comprehension of the chapter or not and why.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe Garrison Griswold and what happened to him on his way to his new game. What were the men looking for?
2. What is unique about Emily's family life? Would you like this type of lifestyle or not? What are the pros and cons about it?
3. Compare and contrast the lives and family of James and Emily. Then, analyze the things that are most important to their friendship by putting a star next to the three you think are most important. Be prepared to defend your choices in discussion.

4. Explain how a magic square was used to solve the puzzle that James sent Emily. Then, discuss how a bucket became important to their friendship.
5. When Emily, Matthew, and James went on a *Book Scavenger* expedition, what did they find instead of *Tom Sawyer*? On the way home, what did Emily discover at the scene of Mr. Griswold's attack? Why do they end up running from the scene?
6. What other odd thing does Emily notice in the Poe story, especially for a new book? What about this is impossible to be a coincidence? When Emily logs on to the Book Scavenger site, what does she learn from the user named Raven? What's odd about this user's communications?
7. Explain the system that Emily and James use to be able to send secret messages to each other. What is the difference between a cipher and a code? How do they become important in Emily's new school life as well?
8. List everything that James and Emily learn at Bayside Press. Then, analyze and predict how important the details will be by putting them in order from most important to least. Be prepared to defend your choices with text evidence.
9. How does one clue just lead to another? Would you become frustrated by this process or find it fun?
10. Who are the antagonists of the story? How do they track Emily? What one detail does she reveal online through her profile that could bring the danger of these two men right to her door?
11. Why does Mr. Quisling believe that Emily should relinquish *The Gold-Bug*?
12. Explain how Emily has not been as good a friend to James as the other way around. Do you think this is because of her moving so much she hasn't learned how to be a true friend?
13. In the end, what do the kids discover? What do they learn about Griswold, Mr. Remora, Poe, and themselves?

CCSS.RL.7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

## COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

### Follow the Clues

Summarize the plot of the novel as it unfolds with the Book Scavenger game by filling out the following graphic organizer. The result also becomes the original clue in the following row. The key is included for teachers to help lead students through filling out the graphic organizer themselves. This also ends up being a good summary for the entire plot.

As you read the novel, fill out the missing elements in this chart to keep track of James and Emily's progress in Griswold's new game:

CLUE:	MISHAPS & MISUNDERSTANDINGS:	THE KEY TO THE CODE OR <u>HOW</u> THEY BREAK IT:	THE RESULT/NEXT CLUE:
1. The misspellings in the novel <i>The Gold-Bug</i> by Poe	* Not understanding the significance *Missing lots of letters the first time through	Comparing Griswold's copy to the one offered by Hollister	What the misspellings say:
2. The sentence:		Flyer that reads:	What they find:

CLUE:	MISHAPS & MISUNDERSTANDINGS:	THE KEY TO THE CODE OR <u>HOW</u> THEY BREAK IT:	THE RESULT/NEXT CLUE:
3.  (978) 067-9722	* #'s are not what they appear		
4.		Raven gives a clue:	
5. SCARAB		Raven gives another clue:	
6.			The ending:

## Answer Key

CLUE:	MISHAPS & MISUNDERSTANDINGS:	THE KEY TO THE CODE OR <u>HOW</u> THEY BREAK IT:	THE RESULT/NEXT CLUE:
1. The misspellings in the short story by Poe	* Not understanding significance *Missing lots of letters the first time through	Comparing Griswold's copy to the one offered by Hollister	A sentence. List it here: "For the most wild yet most homely narrative which I am about to pen, I neither expect nor solicit belief."
2. The sentence: "For the most wild yet most homely narrative which I am about to pen, I neither expect nor solicit belief."	*The Black Cat restaurant (wrong location)	Flyer posted: "Looking for a Black Cat?"	13 numbers
3. (978) 067-9722 X649	*Thinking it's a phone number *Math equation? Cipher?	It's an ISBN # (book code for selling)	<i>The Maltese Falcon</i> by Dashiell Hammet
4. <i>The Maltese Falcon</i>	*Animal connection? *Another code or starting over completely * Disagreement with James on solving it after chase	The clue on book scavenger hidden by Raven: "Where he finished writing this."	A new coded message in the paperback copy of <i>Maltese Falcon</i> , hidden inside a box that looked like a Raven.
5. Code (page 239 in paperback edition)	* Trying to break code by looking at common letters * Clue given by Raven on the <i>Book Scavenger</i> website "Charlie, Sally, Lucy" * James tells her it's PIGPEN	PIGPEN Key found online (p. 270 paperback)	Scarab
6. SCARAB	* Visit Mr. Remora and ask for book back *Create chaos and escape *End up on the tour van for FLUSH	Hidden message/ink in original book	Portsmouth Square, RLS
7. Portsmouth Square, RLS	*Find the Scarab on the monument to Robert Louis Stevenson	Realize the marker is a shovel	Dig up the treasure, an unpublished novel by Edgar Alan Poe. 10% proceeds will go to all three kids

CCSS.RL 7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

## Be a Word Scavenger!

Puzzle out the meanings of these words as they are used in context of the novel. Use what you know about the story and the clues dribbled through these sentences from chapter one to figure out what each means. Then, check your prediction with a reliable source.

1. “His partner was a bulldog of a man who moved as if his chest propelled him down the street instead of his legs.”

What do you think PROPELLED means by the way it's used in the sentence:	Dictionary check: the actual definition:

2. “the way that short man popped his knuckles and gave him a look that could only be described as *scornful* caused him to put up his guard.”

What do you think SCORNFUL means by the way it's used in the sentence:	Dictionary check: the actual definition:

3. “Taking advantage of their brief moment of strife, Mr. Griswold swung his walking stick and whacked Barry on the cheek, then pushed past him toward the entrance to the lower level.”

What do you think STRIFE means by the way it's used in the sentence:	Dictionary check: the actual definition:

4. “His cry echoed in the cavernous station.”

What do you think CAVERNOUS means by the way it's used in the sentence:	Dictionary check: the actual definition:

5. “I can't believe this!” Barry cried. “You have a gun? You *shot* him? That wasn't part of the plan.” Clyde shrugged. “I improvised.”

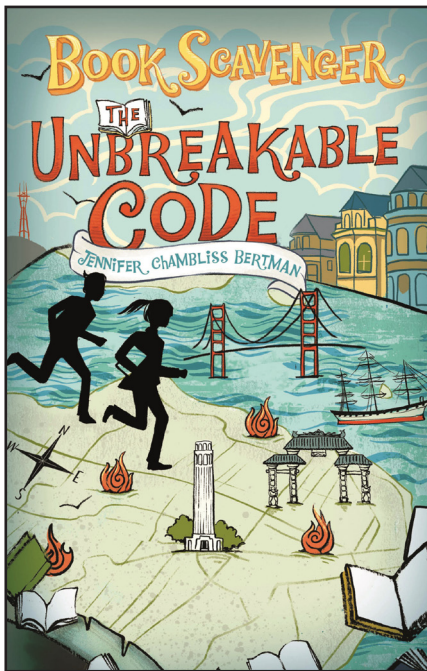
What do you think IMPROVISED means by the way it's used in the sentence:	Dictionary check: the actual definition:



Now, as you read the next two chapters, choose at least three words that are new to you and try to decipher their meanings. Then, check out the actual meaning in a reliable source.

A word that's new to you:	What you think it means:	Dictionary check:
1.		
2.		
3.		

CCSS.L.7.4.A Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.



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## ABOUT THE BOOK

Mr. Quisling is definitely up to something mysterious, and Emily and James are on high alert. First, there's the coded note he drops at a book event. Then they uncover a trail of encrypted messages in Mark Twain books hidden through Book Scavenger. What's most suspicious is that each hidden book triggers a fire. As the sleuthing friends dig deeper, they discover Mr. Quisling has been hunting a legendary historical puzzle: the unbreakable code. This new mystery is irresistible, but Emily and James can't ignore the signs that Mr. Quisling might be the arsonist. The clock is ticking as the fires multiply. Emily and James must race to crack the code of a lifetime.

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY: WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Use the chart to explore your opinions on the statements below. In pairs or as a class, discuss the results before beginning to read the novel. To make the discussion more interactive, hang the four opinions in each corner of the room and allow students to move between them, revealing their opinions without using their voices.

STATEMENT:	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	WHY I think this:
A villain or nemesis is important to any story.					
A friend who understands you is more important than lots of acquaintances.					
Ciphers, codes, and puzzles are awesome.					

STATEMENT:	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	WHY I think this:
Snooping is justified if it's for a good reason.					
Money or treasures should belong to the people who find it, not to the people who own the land.					

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In the beginning of the novel, what event has brought everyone together? What do most of the guests have in common? Summarize how to play the game.
2. Describe Mr. Quisling and his suspicious behavior. What do James and Emily suspect that he might be involved with? Why?
3. Explain the clues and how they solved the riddle about the *Niantic* step-by-step. Then, as a challenge, create your own substitution cipher.
4. Explain what the Phoenix is doing in the story. Who is this firebug trying to control? How does it add mystery and tension to the novel?
5. What were three important things James and Emily learned at the maritime museum? Put a star next to the one detail that you think will be most important to the mystery.
6. Compare Mr. Griswold from before his brutal attack to after it. What is the best way to help someone who has suffered a traumatic incident like this? How do James and Emily have continued contact with him?
7. Summarize the history and importance of the unbreakable code. Why has it been so difficult to solve? What do people believe is the reward for doing so? What is the curse associated with it?
8. What does Emily overhear from her parents that makes her worried about her future in San Francisco? How does she plan to help the situation?
9. Why do James and Emily take to following the moves of Mr. Quisling both online and in real life after school? What do they think he is after? What moves do they make to learn more about his role? Along the way, what discoveries do they make about the person baiting him in the game?
10. What happens during Emily's first day of helping out at Hollister's? What is suspicious about the event? Who does Emily believe may have been involved in the incident? Why?
11. How does Emily surprise herself and get involved with a school activity? What is her contribution to this event? How does it turn out and who does it inspire? Would you be willing to be a part of an event such as this? What does she learn about herself in the process?
12. What is the significance of the copies of *Tom Sawyer*? Why won't a single copy of the novel help crack the case? List the things that James and Emily learn about the quest that Mr. Quisling is on through the user named "Coolbrith." What do they do instead of talking to Mr. Quisling? When would you have turned to adult help?
13. What clue and connection did Emily realize to oust the true culprit of all the arson? What was that person's motive for doing so? What was the result of his actions and choices?

14. What event at school helped Emily realize there may be more to the historical code and map than meets the eye? How did she and James get the help of the librarian to confirm their suspicions? How did James put the pieces of the puzzle together? Why was it not what people expected from a code creator in the 1850s?
15. What was the resolution to the story? In other words, what did they find, where did they find it, and what was the ultimate reward? In the end, what happened to Hollister's bookstore and Emily's fear about moving? How were some of her suspicions wrong (but were actually good things)?

CCSS.RL.7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

## COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

### Vocabulary

Rate the following vocabulary words from the first ten chapters of the novel by how well you know them. The number in parentheses is the chapter where it appears. Then, choose ten words that are completely new to you and become a word expert on them by completing two of the vocabulary projects below.

WORD:	COMPLETELY NEW TO ME:	I'VE HEARD IT BEFORE:	I COULD DEFINE THIS IN MY OWN WORDS:	I COULD CREATE A SENTENCE SHOWING MY UNDERSTANDING OF THIS WORD:
Tranquil (2)				
Prominently (2)				
Animated (2)				
Perseverance (3)				
Recounted (3)				
Stoic (3)				
Unbeknownst (3)				
Prickled (4)				
Lingering (4)				
Scuttling (6)				
Remnant (6)				
Docent (6)				
Infrastructure (6)				
Deliberate (7)				
Perfunctory (8)				
Flourish (8)				
Invaluable (8)				
Flamboyant (8)				



WORD:	COMPLETELY NEW TO ME:	I'VE HEARD IT BEFORE:	I COULD DEFINE THIS IN MY OWN WORDS:	I COULD CREATE A SENTENCE SHOWING MY UNDERSTANDING OF THIS WORD:
Nonchalantly (9)				
Allegedly (9)				
Speculate (9)				
Sashayed (10)				
Juvenile (10)				
Painstaking (10)				
Scrutinizing (10)				
Distraction (10)				
Reassembling (10)				
Extricated (10)				
Salvaged (10)				

### Vocabulary Project Options:

<p><b>FLASH CARDS:</b> Create a set of flashcards to study the new set of words. You can do this electronically (with Quizlet or other free sites) or old-school with index cards. Be sure to include a definition in your own kid-friendly terms, synonyms and antonyms, and parts of speech.</p>	<p><b>WORD CIPHER:</b> Create a code and then translate each word (and a synonym) into it. Share the words with a friend and see if they can crack your code. If not, give them the key and let them decipher it.</p>	<p><b>WORD MYSTERY:</b> Write a mystery story using all ten of your words. You'll need to be creative to use them in a way that makes sense and keeps your story moving forward! You may want to plan out the beginning, middle, and end before you get started.</p>
<p><b>ETYMOLOGIES:</b> Research the original language that these words first appeared. Describe any changes in meaning over time and through various languages.</p>	<p><b>SYMBOL:</b> Design a symbol for each word that will help you remember the meaning. Be sure to use color!</p>	<p><b>ACROSTICS:</b> Create an acrostic that proves you understand the meanings of the words by using them in context.</p>

**CCSS.L.7.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.**

# SERIES PROJECTS

## Character Motivation

Character motivation is the reasoning behind a character's words, choices, and actions. Fill out the following chart based on the characters from the series. Be sure to find text evidence that proves your point!

CHARACTER:	PRIMARY MOTIVATION:	HOW THIS MOTIVATION IMPACTS THE PLOT OF THE NOVEL:	A KEY QUOTE THAT REVEALS THIS CHARACTER'S MOTIVATION:
Emily Crane			
James Lee			
Matthew Crane			
Mr. Quisling			
Mr. & Mrs. Crane			
Mr. Griswold			
The Phoenix (Book 2)			

CCSS.RL.7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

# RESEARCH TO BUILD AND PRESENT KNOWLEDGE

## Research Project

Research one of the related/mentioned titles or the author and fill out the graphic organizer. Then, of course, read it!

Encyclopedia Brown

Nancy Drew

The Maltese Falcon

Sherlock Holmes

The Gold-Bug

On the Road

Guinness World Records

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Tom Sawyer

The Gollywopper Games

The Tell-Tale Heart

Inkheart

Masquerade

Mysterious Messages

The Black Cat

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

Breaking the Maya Code

The Book of Codes: Understanding the World of Hidden Messages

Codebreaker

Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library

The Westing Game

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

Treasure Island

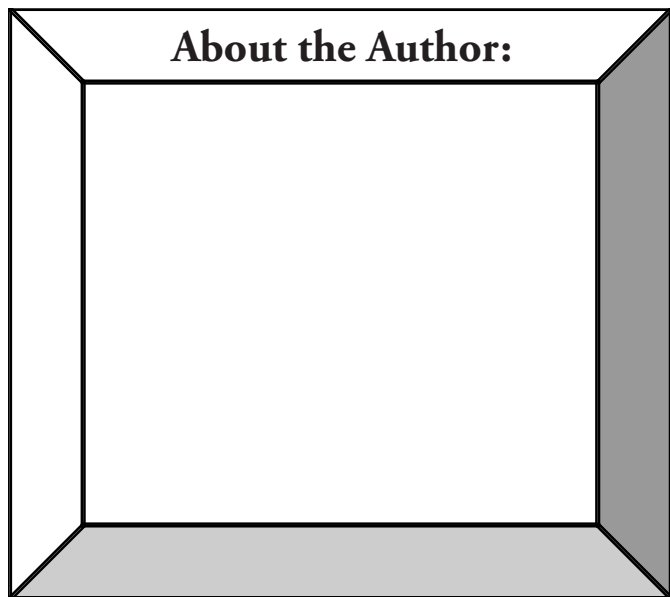
When You Reach Me

The Egypt Game

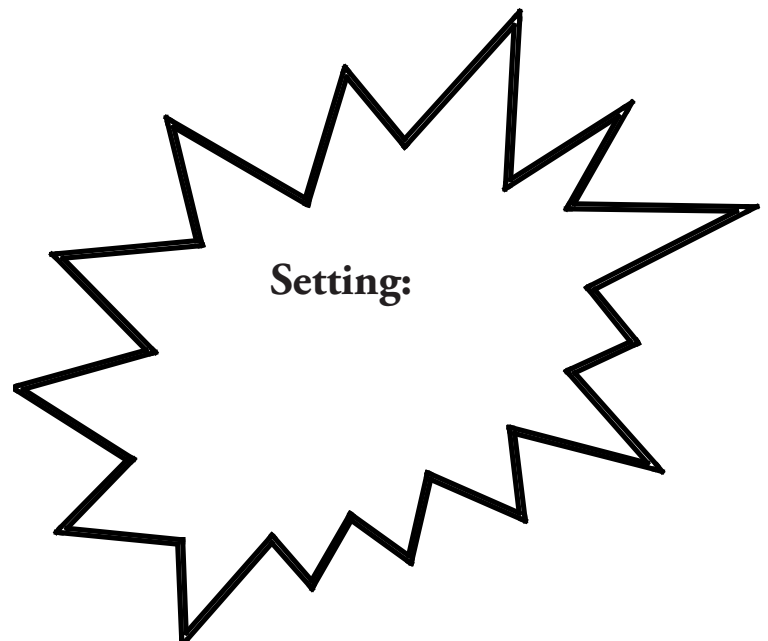
Rhyme Schemer

**Title:**

**About the Author:**



**Setting:**



## Three sentences to entice someone to read the story:

CCSS.W.7.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

## PROJECTS

### Make Your Own Invisible Ink Message

Squeeze juice from half a lemon into a small bowl. Add a bit of water and stir together.

After dipping the Q-tip in the lemon-juice ink, write your message on white paper. Allow to dry completely. Then, use heat (like a strong lightbulb or a warm iron, with the help of an adult) and hold the paper near until it heats up. The lemon juice will turn brown.

-OR-

Write a message using a white crayon on white paper.

To see the secret message, paint over the paper with watercolor or tempera paint.

### Book Scavenger Book Swap (Classroom or Schoolwide Project):

After reading the novel as a class or as a read-aloud, prepare for a scavenger hunt book swap with these easy steps:

1. Have students bring in a paperback book they'd like to trade. (If the scavenging is to include the outdoors, consider using zipped plastic bags to keep out moisture.) Students should write the title on a sticky note.
2. Hide books around the classroom (students can do so one at a time as they come in from lunch or recess while the other students read silently in the hallway with independent books and wait their turn).
3. Create codes and ciphers using examples from *Book Scavenger* and *The Unbreakable Code* for ideas/as mentor texts, and add to the sticky note with the book title.
4. Put all the codes on a bulletin board for kids to choose.
5. Have fun deciphering the codes and finding fresh reading material!
6. Watch out: kids will likely want to play again and again.

Tracie Vaughn, author and teacher, created this guide.