



## Behind the Scenes

### Dear Book Club Host:

It's time for a meeting of The 39 Clues Book Club! New club members will want to check out the **Establish Your Cahill Stronghold** introductory theme materials. And if your club has just finished reading one of The 39 Clues books, you can go to the book overview tab for book-specific activities.

This month, we're pleased to offer the ultimate treat for fans: an exclusive **Behind the Scenes** peek at the creation of The 39 Clues books and online games! Your club members will get unprecedented access to insider tips and never-before-seen content from the authors, designers, editors, and game developers behind the international bestselling The 39 Clues series. Best of all, they will get hands-on experience writing, editing, designing, and creating games!

#### Activity 1: Be the Author Challenge: Create a Cahill

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Photocopy the **Be the Author Challenge: Create a Cahill** handout, making one copy for each club member. 2) Have pens or pencils for everyone present.

This activity can be done individually or in pairs.

For this challenge, club members will get to see what it's like to be an author by creating their own The 39 Clues character!

Distribute the **Be the Author Challenge: Create a Cahill** handout and read the instructions aloud to the group. Be sure to point out the tip from author Linda Sue Park at the bottom of the handout. As club members work, be ready to prompt them with suggestions for names, home cities, family branches, possible secrets their character could be hiding, and how their character would fit into The 39 Clues world.

Afterwards, you can invite club members to read aloud the descriptions of their new characters and imagine ways that their characters might interact.

#### Activity 2: Be the Designer Challenge: Create a Cool Cover

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Photocopy the **Be the Designer Challenge: Create a Cool Cover (A)** and **(B)** handouts, making one copy of each handout for every club member. 2) Have plenty of colored pencils, markers, glue or tape, and other art supplies. 3) If possible, have a complete set of The 39 Clues series available. 4) Have a pair of scissors available.

Distribute the **Be the Designer Challenge: Create a Cool Cover (A)** handout and discuss how the cover design of *Trust No One* evolved from start to finish. Then, distribute the **Be the Designer Challenge: Create a Cool Cover (B)** handout and read the introduction aloud to the group. Be sure to point club members to the helpful tip from the designer before everyone gets started. Hand out art supplies as needed. Allow club members to look at the covers of other books in The 39 Clues series and use them as inspiration when brainstorming their own cover design ideas.

Afterwards, invite club members to present their new covers to the group. Ask club members to explain their thinking behind their own design decisions.

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### Activity 3: Be the Editor Challenge: Punch Up the Passage!

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Photocopy the **Be the Editor Challenge: Punch Up the Passage!** handout, making one copy for each club member. 2) You might want to have copies of *The 39 Clues: Cahills vs. Vespers Book One: The Medusa Plot* available so that club members can compare their versions to the actual finished passage.

This activity can be done individually or in pairs.

Distribute the **Be the Editor Challenge: Punch Up the Passage!** handout. Read the introduction aloud to the group, making sure to point out the tip from The 39 Clues editor at the bottom of the page. Be ready to help club members brainstorm lists of exciting verbs, adverbs, and adjectives.

Once club members have edited the passage, you can read the actual version of the passage (from page 131 of *The Medusa Plot*) aloud:

“We’ve made our decision,” Amy told him. “We’re going to sell you the statue.” She shrugged out of her backpack and reached inside.

The collector’s anticipation turned to bewilderment when she came up with what looked like a lollipop. “Is this a joke?”

Amy broke the stick detonator off Sinead’s smoke bomb and threw both pieces to the floor. The fog was dense and instantaneous.

Tobin cried out in shock. Amy grabbed Dan’s shoulders and dragged the two of them down to the cool marble. The Cahills pulled the breathing filters from their pockets and covered their noses. Tobin took one whiff of the knockout gas and collapsed beside them. A thump from across the room indicated that the security guard was also unconscious.

“Stay low!” Amy hissed. “I don’t know how much we can trust these masks!”

The two crawled to the large Renoir painting and began to haul on the heavy frame. It wouldn’t budge. Amy felt a stab of fear. What if they were wrong?

### Activity 4: Be the Game Developer Challenge: Go on a Clue Hunt

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Print out one copy each of the **Be the Game Developer Challenge: Go on a Clue Hunt (A)** and **(B)** handouts. 2) Read the **Be the Game Developer Challenge: Go on a Clue Hunt (A)** handout and follow the instructions at the top of the page. When you’ve finished creating and writing out your coded clues, hand-copy them to the **Be the Game Developer Challenge: Go on a Clue Hunt (B)** handout. 3) Photocopy the **Be the Game Developer Challenge: Go on a Clue Hunt (B)** handout (with coded clues filled in), making enough copies for each club member. 4) Have pens or pencils for everyone present.

This activity can be done in teams of two or more people.

Codes are an important part of The 39 Clues world. They are hidden in the books, on the cards, and in the games. For this activity, club members will get a chance to test their code-cracking and clue-hunting skills to see what it’s like to be a game developer for The 39 Clues.

Distribute the **Be the Game Developer Challenge: Go on a Clue Hunt (B)** handout and read the introduction aloud to the group. Direct club members to take a look at the tip from The 39 Clues game developer at the bottom of the page. When both teams are ready, let them get to work to decode the clues and search for the secret message!

—The 39 Clues Book Club

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Behind the Scenes

## Be the Author Challenge: Create a Cahill

### Directions:

To be a successful The 39 Clues author, creating a compelling character is key. Characters are complex; both positive and negative traits can make up a personality. Dan, for instance, has a photographic memory, but he's also hindered by his asthma.

Here's your chance to invent a new character to add to The 39 Clues universe. By answering the following questions, you can get a sense of how much fun (and how challenging) it can be to bring new personalities to life.

What is your character's name? \_\_\_\_\_

Where does your character live? \_\_\_\_\_

What does your character look like? \_\_\_\_\_

Is this new character a Cahill, a Vesper, or a member of a family we haven't met yet?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Which branch of that family is your character from? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your character's personal history? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are your character's strengths and weaknesses? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What secret is your character hiding? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Meet the Author!

**Name:** Linda Sue Park

**Branch:** Lucian

**Job:** The 39 Clues Author of *Storm Warning* and *Trust No One*

**Favorite Part of The 39 Clues:** The travel! I love to experience new places, so it's really fun for me to read and write about all the cool places Amy and Dan get to visit.

**Tip from the Author:** Character development is one of my favorite parts of writing a story. I want readers to get to know the characters the same way they get to know people in real life: by seeing what they do, and hearing what they say.

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# THE 39 CLUES BOOK CLUB

Behind the Scenes

## Be the Designer: Create a Cool Cover (A)

**TOP SECRET:** Here are some examples of confidential, unapproved cover art for the latest The 39 Clues book, *Trust No One*, that was never supposed to be seen outside of our editorial offices! As you can see, the covers evolve, but in the end, the design fits the story perfectly!



Cover Concept A



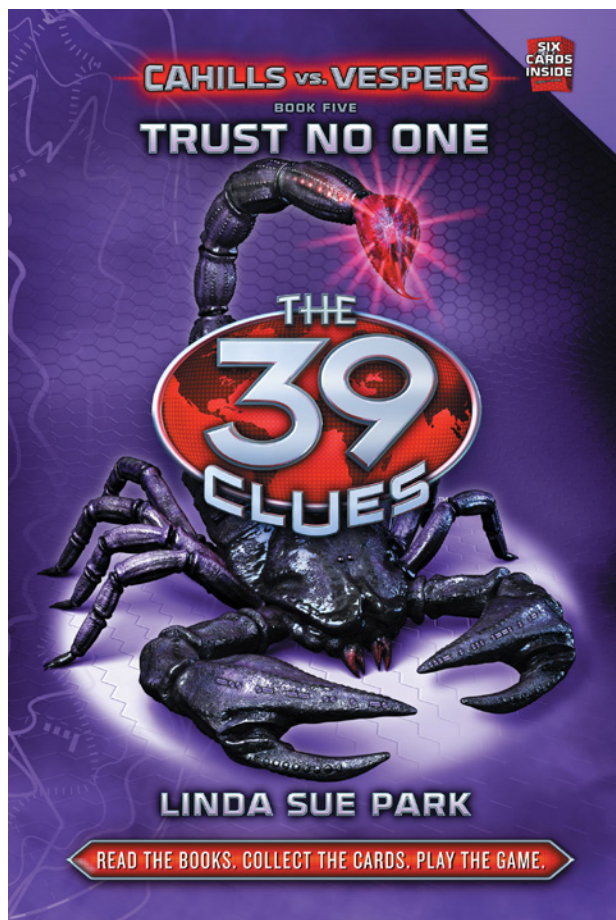
Cover Concept B



Cover Concept C



Cover Concept D



Final Cover

### Meet the Designer!

**Name:** Keirsten Geise

**Branch:** Ekaterina

**Job:** The 39 Clues Designer

**Favorite Part of The 39 Clues:** The cards. Especially Cat Burglar (card 140).

**Tip from the Designer:** When choosing art for the cover, it's not always easy to find something that relates to the text, fits the space, and can be easily identified. For example, in book five, we decided to feature a scorpion since the book is set in the rainforest of Brazil. But a plain old scorpion won't do for The 39 Clues, so we added a glowing red tail and carved codes into its claws!

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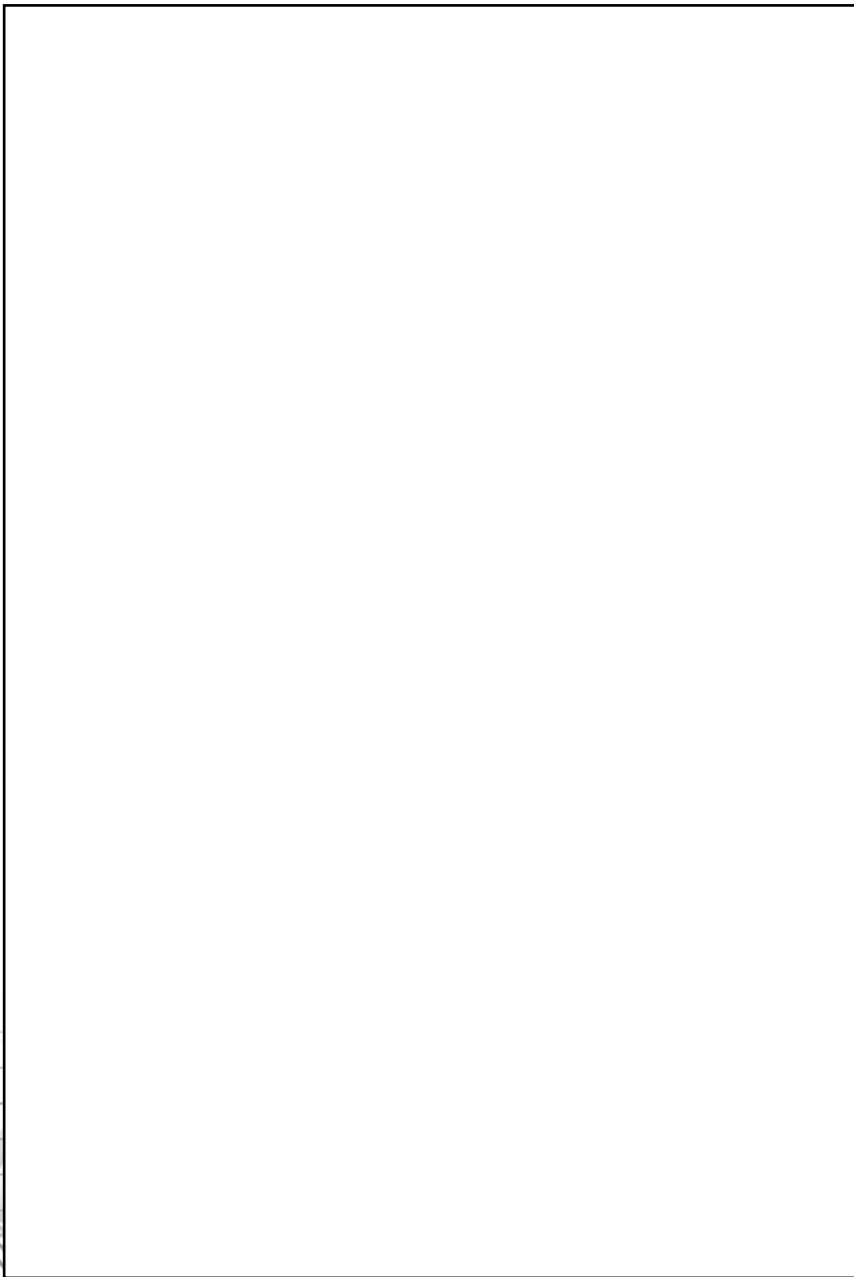


Behind the Scenes

## Be the Designer: Create a Cool Cover (B)

What's your favorite The 39 Clues book? This is your opportunity to redo the cover. Your design can be inspired by anything you want: an exciting location from the story, the object of Amy and Dan's quest, or your favorite character!

Draw your ideal cover in the space below, then cut out The 39 Clues logo and place it wherever you like!



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## Be the Editor Challenge: Punch Up the Passage!

After turning in a draft of a manuscript, the editor can recommend ways to make sentences more powerful or exciting. Read the following passage. Can you come up with more descriptive words and phrases to replace the underlined words and phrases? Write them in the corresponding spaces numbered below.

“We’ve made our decision,” Amy told him. “We’re going to sell you the statue.” She took off (1) her backpack and reached inside.

The collector was surprised (2) when she came up with what looked like a lollipop. “Is this a joke?”

Amy broke the stick detonator off Sinead’s smoke bomb and threw both pieces to the floor. The fog was bad and spread quickly (3).

Tobin cried out in shock. Amy took (4) Dan’s shoulder and brought (5) the two of them down to the floor (6). The Cahills pulled the breathing filters from their pockets and covered their noses. Tobin smelled (7) the knockout gas and fell (8) beside them. A sound (9) from across the room indicated that the security guard was also unconscious.

“Stay low!” Amy said (10). “I don’t know how much we can trust these masks!”

The two moved (11) to the large Renoir painting and began to haul on the heavy frame. It wouldn’t budge. Amy felt a moment (12) of fear. What if they were wrong?

- |          |          |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 5. _____ | 9. _____  |
| 2. _____ | 6. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 7. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 8. _____ | 12. _____ |

### Meet the Editor!

**Name:** Rachel Griffiths

**Branch:** Lucian

**Job:** The 39 Clues Editor

**Favorite Part of The 39 Clues:** The books, of course, but also the message boards. I’m a sucker for your stories.

**Tip from the Editor:** As an editor, a good fast pace is part of what I look for in a 39 Clues manuscript. When I read, I pay attention to how I’m feeling. Does my attention start to wander in certain parts of the story? Instead of thinking about what Dan is doing, do I start to think about what’s for lunch? If so, that tells me that the section I’m reading might need a faster pace.

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## Behind the Scenes

# Be the Game Developer Challenge: Go on a Clue Hunt (A)

### Host Instructions:

First, cut out the secret message below and hide it somewhere in your meeting space. Then, come up with three clues that will help guide club members to the hiding spot. Clues can be simple and direct (e.g., At back of the room; Near the window; Under a desk). Next, use the Atbash Cipher Key below to convert your clues into code. Write out your coded clues in the spaces below, and copy them to the **Be the Game Developer Challenge: Go on a Clue Hunt (B)** handout. Be sure to fill in the coded clues on the handout before distributing to club members.

### ATBASH CIPHER KEY

In this code, the letters of the alphabet are reversed.  
(e.g., A stands for Z, B stands for Y, and so on.)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Z	Y	X	W	V	U	T	S	R	Q	P	O	N	M	L	K	J	I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A

Clue #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Coded: \_\_\_\_\_

Clue #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Coded: \_\_\_\_\_

Clue #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Coded: \_\_\_\_\_

**Secret Message:**  
Reagan Holt's favorite One Direction member is Niall.

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Behind the Scenes

## Be the Game Developer Challenge: Go on a Clue Hunt (B)

When it comes to creating the world of The 39 Clues, writing the books is only half the fun. You also get to create the mind-boggling games that complete the experience. To be a game developer for The 39 Clues, you have to know how to create codes and crack them too. Now put your own code-cracking and clue-hunting skills to the test!

**THIS JUST IN:** A top-secret message is hidden somewhere in this room. Three coded clues will help lead you to the message, but to find out what the clues say, you'll have to use the Atbash Cipher Key to decode them first!

### ATBASH CIPHER KEY

In this code, the letters of the alphabet are reversed.  
(e.g., A stands for Z, B stands for Y, and so on.)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Z	Y	X	W	V	U	T	S	R	Q	P	O	N	M	L	K	J	I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A

Clue #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Decoded: \_\_\_\_\_

Clue #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Decoded: \_\_\_\_\_

Clue #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Decoded: \_\_\_\_\_

Congratulations! You've deciphered the Clues. Now it's time to hunt for the secret message. Good luck!

### Meet the Game Developer!

**Name:** Len Forgione

**Branch:** Ekaterina

**Job:** The 39 Clues Game Developer

**Favorite Part of The 39 Clues:** Seeing the story take shape as it moves from books to online.

**Tip from the Game Developer:** If you really love games, and you'd like to work on them someday, I recommend playing lots of different game genres (naturally) and reading lots of great stories. Story and design are equally important parts of a good game.

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