

Grades 4  
and up

# A Guide to Using Multiplatform Books in the Classroom

Meets Common Core State Standards—SEE INSIDE



# About Multiplatform

Scholastic's multiplatform publishing program pairs high adventure middle grade book series with a technology component. The stories burst from the pages of the books and come alive online as readers become part of the action.

While multiplatform books can be read on their own for a complete and satisfying experience, readers can also deepen their engagement with the story by exploring the online components: games, quizzes, character interactions, forums, and more. Students at different skill levels with a variety of interests will be able to engage with the immersive series like the ones described in this guide.

## Multiplatform FAQs

### What materials make up the multiplatform experience?

All of these series incorporate storytelling across books, technology, and sometimes additional materials like cards and maps. While the story is told in the books and can be read on its own, readers can also enhance their interaction with the story through the multimedia elements. For instance, kids can read the book and then go interact with the characters in an online game.

### What will kids encounter online?

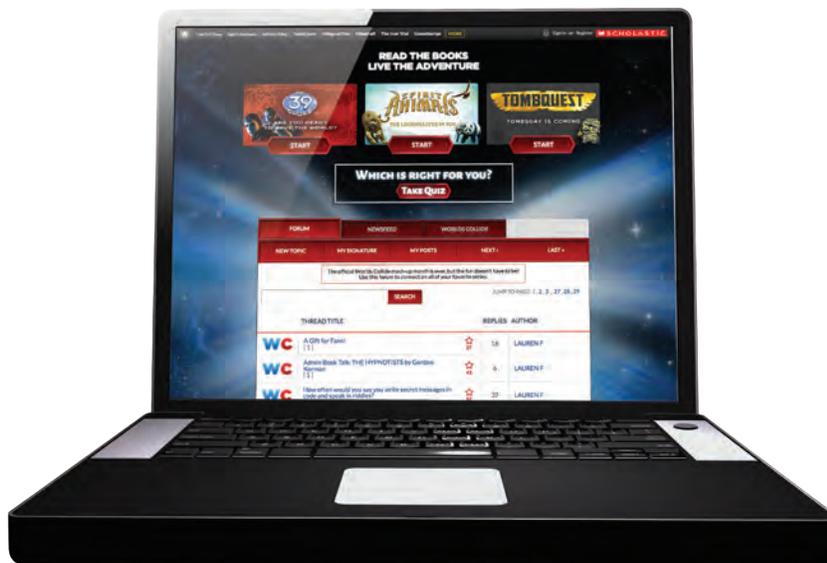
The online experience might be a game in which readers play alongside the characters, a message board where readers can write their own fan fiction (like the ones available through Scholastic at [scholastic.com/plus](http://scholastic.com/plus)), or even an app where kids can track the villains of the story.

### Do I need to know everything about the series before teaching it?

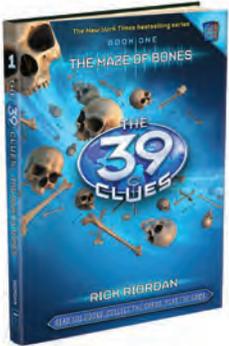
No. As a teacher or librarian, you can immerse yourself as much or as little into the series and multimedia components as you like. Multiplatform novels are about discovery, making predictions and inferences, and paying close attention to all of the clues surrounding the characters.

### Won't these books and games distract students from real learning?

Scholastic's multiplatform series were created with education and love of books in mind. Kids enjoy games and technology, and these series use that to hook their interest and get them reading. The books are written by some of the best and most popular authors writing today, and are packed with fun and exciting facts about history, geography, and more. Multiplatform series foster a love of knowledge, reading, and problem solving.



# About the Series



## The 39 Clues

**The Books:** Orphaned siblings Amy and Dan discover they are Cahills, members of the most powerful family history has ever known, and set off on a worldwide hunt to find 39 Clues that reveal the source of the family's strength.

**The Game:** Readers discover they are also Cahills and join the Clue hunt, collecting cards and completing missions that reveal Clues hidden all over the world.

**Educational Connection:** Integrate geography, history, and math into your curriculum, as students visit every continent and explore historical figures.



## Infinity Ring

**The Books:** When best friends Dak and Sera stumble upon the secret to time travel—The Infinity Ring—they're swept up in an adventure to set history back on course.

**The Game:** Readers join Dak and Sera on their mission to fix history by time traveling back to the French Revolution, feudal Japan, World War II, and more.

**Educational Connection:** History comes alive as students explore the past and the effect it has on the present world.

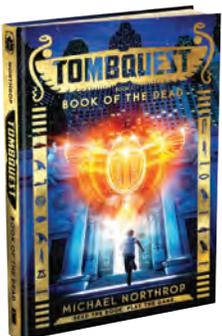


## Spirit Animals

**The Books:** In the world of Erdas, four children bond with Spirit Animals and must set out on a quest to save their lands from the evil Conquerors.

**The Game:** Readers discover they also have a spirit animal, and must complete online quests with their animal companions to help defeat the Conquerors.

**Educational Connection:** Your students will encounter a rich fantasy world while exploring universal themes like good versus evil, family, and sacrifice.



## TombQuest

**The Books:** An ancient Egyptian evil has awakened, and Alex and his best friend Ren must lay it to rest . . . before the afterlife comes for everyone.

**The Game:** Readers explore ancient Egyptian mythology as they build tombs, fill them with traps and treasure, and challenge their friends to break in!

**Educational Connection:** From deciphering secret hieroglyph messages hidden in the books to learning about artifacts such as the Book of the Dead, students dive into the fascinating world of ancient Egypt.

Visit [scholastic.com/plus](http://scholastic.com/plus) for full information about the books in each of these series.

# Getting Started

Use these strategies and prompts with any of the multiplatform books listed in this guide to engage your students and get them excited about reading and learning!

## Front Cover Mysteries

Make copies of each front cover of the novels, taking out each title. Have students work in small groups to come up with a title based solely on the cover, and then write prediction ideas around the cover. Point out to students that there are sometimes small “clues” in the background of covers to help us make inferences before reading. Are the students able to see any small details in the covers? Have groups share their ideas with each other to brainstorm and collaborate further on possible clues.

(CCRA.R.4, 7; W.1; SL.1, 2)

➔ Go to [scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform](https://www.scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform) to download the covers so you can print a large copy to share in your classroom!

📖 **Series Connection:** In *TombQuest*, there is a secret message hidden in code on the cover—see if students can decipher the clue using the hieroglyph alphabet inside the book!

## Writing Prompts

Pose writing prompts for students to get them excited for the series they’re reading. Students can share their ideas orally and comment on the responses of their peers, or you can have them go online at [scholastic.com/plus](https://www.scholastic.com/plus) to the moderated and safe reader forums available for each series. (CCRA.W.1, 3, 10)

➔ Go to [scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform](https://www.scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform) to download a onesheet with writing prompts, or make up your own!

📖 **Series Connection:** When reading *Spirit Animals*, ask students what they would want as their own spirit animal, and have them explain why they chose that animal and what features or traits they have in common. After the discussion, invite kids to go online at [scholastic.com/spiritanimals](https://www.scholastic.com/spiritanimals) and choose a spirit animal.

## Would You Rather?

The main characters in these series have to make major decisions at the beginning of each book. Pose “Would You Rather” questions to students to elicit response and reasoning ideas. Have students try to “convince” their peers about their viewpoints with strong support and arguments. (CCRA.W.1; SL.1)

➔ Go to [scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform](https://www.scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform) for a worksheet with sample “Would You Rather?” questions!

📖 **Series Connection:** After reading two or more *Infinity Ring* books, have students choose which location and time they’d rather travel to and defend their choice to a partner who chose differently.

## Keeping Company with the Authors

Create a library of books by authors who have contributed to *The 39 Clues*, *Infinity Ring*, or *Spirit Animals*. Discuss the advantages of having more than one author writing the books in a series. Ask your students how this might be challenging for the authors.

Bring multi-author storytelling to your classroom by having small groups tell a story together, either out loud or in writing. (CCRA.R.2, 3, 5, 6; W.3, 4, 10; SL.1, 2, 4)

➔ Go to [scholastic.com/plus](https://www.scholastic.com/plus) for a full listing of Scholastic’s multiplatform authors!

📖 **Series Connection:** Have your class create an “exquisite corpse,” a story written by multiple authors, one paragraph at a time, using characters or settings from *The 39 Clues*. Start the story by asking one student to write a paragraph, and then pass it to the next student. Each student should read what came before, but add their paragraph without consulting their peers. The last student writes the ending. Then read the story aloud, and have students discuss why they wrote what they did.



# It Begins with a Book!

Multiplatform novels offer readers a unique and immersive experience in reading. Here are some great strategies to encourage your students to dive into the books.

## Tracking and Pinning Facts

Put up a bulletin board in your classroom or library where readers can post their theories and ideas about what's happening in each series. Students can post online discoveries, hints for the games, book predictions, and nonfiction research to assist in unlocking different aspects of the stories. **(CCRA.R.1, 2, 3; W.1, 2, 8, 9; SL.1, 2)**

## Travel Guide Simulation Experience

Plan a simulation “travel trip” to follow characters into different settings and time periods throughout the books. Have students keep checkbooks and account ledgers of expenses during their travels. Students can also practice multiplication and division skills by exchanging money based on the characters’ travels. Have groups research settings and historical times and create a “travel brochure” and map of their chosen destination. Pose mathematical questions related to time zones as characters travel the world. **(CCRA.R.3; W.2, 7, 8; SL.1, 4, 5; Also meets CCSS math standards)**

 **Series Connection:** Chart Amy and Dan’s travels in the first 39 Clues series on a world map. Ask each student to pick a city and present fun facts about it to their peers.

## Reading Storyboards

Have students create movie-style storyboards to highlight the main ideas in each chapter of the book they are reading. Readers should choose two or three events from each chapter, and create comics depicting the events. Students can incorporate plot and character changes throughout the novel, as well as identifying the main ideas versus details in a story. **(CCRA.R.1, 2, 3; W.3, 6; SL.5)**

 Try using [www.storyboardthat.com](http://www.storyboardthat.com) for a great digital approach to storyboarding.

 **Series Connection:** Ask students to draw an intricate underground tomb filled with traps, like the Stung Man’s tomb in TombQuest. Then have them storyboard a scene that could take place in the tomb they’ve created.

## Shaping Your “Land”

The characters in Spirit Animals are from four distant and fictional lands. If your student could make up their own setting, what would it be like? Ask them to think about cultural norms, language, what the ecosystem is like, and who (and what!) are the inhabitants. Then have them design their own land in a full-page color illustration, and don’t let them forget to name it! **(CCRA.R.3; W.2, 6)**

 Here’s a fun website to generate fantasy names: [www.fantasynamegenerators.com](http://www.fantasynamegenerators.com).

 **Series Connection:** Ask your students to divide up into teams of five and create a travel poster for each continent in the Spirit Animals world of Erdas—Zhong, Eura, Nilo, Amaya, and Stetriol.

## Mirroring Mentor Texts

Multiplatform books make great mentor texts for the classroom and can display important traits of writing, such as ideas, organization, or voice. Ask kids to use colored Post-it® notes to identify examples of writing traits throughout the text. Then, take a closer look at each individual trait.

Divide your class into small groups to identify similarities and differences in the styles of the authors in each series. Ask students to look at how diction varies depending on which characters are narrating or speaking.

Finally, have students “mirror” what the series’ authors do, either by incorporating these traits into their own writing, or by imitating the style of a given author. **(CCRA.R.4, 5, 6, 9; W.3, 5; SL.1)**

 Visit [scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform](http://scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform) to see a webcast and find further activities and prompts to support the Traits of Writing.

 **Series Connection:** Brainstorm with students different types of tones (for example, playful, tense, comical, or pompous). Explain that The 39 Clues story is narrated from several different characters’ points of view. Dan and Amy, for instance, have very distinct personalities that tone helps to convey.

Read the first excerpt and brainstorm words to describe Dan’s tone. Do the same for Amy’s. Then discuss how the writer creates Dan’s nonchalance (slang, sarcasm, irreverence) and Amy’s anxiousness (short, earnest sentences; pauses).

# The Adventure Continues Online

Visit the series websites and use the prompts and activities below to enhance the reading experience for all students!

## A “Field Trip” to the Websites

Introduce the various online components of each multiplatform series during the school day! These interactive, safe, and fully moderated sites are educational and have a variety of activities to keep students engaged and reading. Each promotes problem solving, deductive reasoning, making inferences, and questioning through various research opportunities and games. Students can discuss books, write stories, and interact with the authors on the online forums.

Pair students or ask them to group up as “digital buddies” to explore the sites together, share revealed secrets, and work to conquer online challenges. Online “gamers” should keep a buddy journal to record their findings with their partner after each online experience.

**(CCRA.R.7; W.1, 2, 6, 7, 8; SL.1, 2)**

➡ Visit [scholastic.com/plus](https://www.scholastic.com/plus) for these sites!

📖 **Series Connection:** Send your students to the Infinity Ring game and back in time to Paris during the French Revolution. Have them challenge their friends to see who can complete the mission first.

## Go Global Online

Have students visit Scholastic’s moderated online community to share predictions, ideas, and clues with readers all over the world, and to write fan fiction. Begin by teaching appropriate digital citizenship norms before allowing students to post online. Readers will find themselves immersed in a large and vibrant community, all dedicated to unlocking “secrets” in the novels. With an authentic audience reading and responding to their thoughts, even your most reluctant writer will be extremely motivated! **(CCRA.R.7; W.1, 6, 7, 8; SL.1, 2, 3, 4)**

📖 **Series Connection:** Fans from around the world visit the multiplatform series forums to discuss the books, interact with authors, and share their own stories! Encourage your students to interact with the global community and make special note that sometimes even the characters post on the boards!

## Create a Classroom Community

The global community forums are a great way to discuss the books with a larger audience, but it is also a great idea to establish a classroom online community. Develop a classroom wiki for students to use while they’re reading. Include facts from the books, online components, and from additional online and print research. Moderate your classroom’s wiki and suggest ways to organize information, use technology, collaborate with partners, and problem solve.

Create a classroom blog where readers can discuss each series. Teachers can pose questions, but students will have plenty to talk about on their own! Here, students will make cross-curricular connections in an authentic and collaborative manner. By making this a social forum, student engagement will be at an all-time high.

**(CCRA.R.1, 2, 3, 7, 9; W.1, 2, 6, 7, 8; SL.1, 2, 5)**

➡ For more details on creating a class wiki, visit [scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform](https://www.scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform).

➡ Check out [kidblog.org](https://www.kidblog.org) for a student-friendly blog, and [edublog.org](https://www.edublog.org) for teacher/classroom blogsites.

📖 **Series Connection:** Ask your students to come up with a fun name for your online classroom community or blog! The 39 Clues fans may want to call it Cahill Command, or Spirit Animals fans might choose something like Greenhaven Castle.



Screenshot from the TombQuest game

# Connect with Tech Tools in Your Classroom

Incorporating technology in the classroom is important in developing students' twenty-first-century skills and helping them make connections for greater learning.

## Book Trailer

Have students work in small groups to write, practice, perform, and edit a movie trailer for one of the novels. Readers will have to decide what main events to feature in this trailer, but will also need to decide what to leave out in order not to reveal "too much" of the storyline.

Instead of a traditional book trailer, have students write, practice, and film a one-minute commercial or viral video to get readers excited about the book. This can be a news report or traditional commercial, but should be creative and interesting to watch!

(CCRA.R.1, 2, 3; W.2, 3, 6; SL.1, 4, 5)

**Series Connection:** Explore the series trailers located in our multiplatform video hub at [scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform](http://scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform). Notice how the Spirit Animals trailer is from the perspective of one of the main characters, while the TombQuest trailer uses a narrator to explain the story. Have kids critique the effectiveness of these trailers before writing their own movie trailer.

## Social Media Modeling

As a collage either on paper or in a program like PowerPoint or Word, have students create a social media profile page for a book character. Include photos cut from magazines or drawings, interests, a friend list, personal information ("outside" traits), and posts that this character would have shared with his/her "friends."

(CCRA.R.3; W.6)

**Series Connection:** Create a page for Alex from TombQuest—and make sure to include images of ancient Egyptian artifacts and links to articles about museums and archeological finds!

## Become an Expert

Ask students to choose one element of the story they would like to know more about. Then have them extend their knowledge by researching, organizing their information, and then creating a keynote presentation or podcast in order to teach the rest of the class about their "expert topic."

(CCRA.R.1, 2, 3, 7; W.2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; SL.4, 5)

➡ For more information on how to create a keynote presentation or podcast, visit [scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform](http://scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform).

📖 **Series Connection:** Get inspired by TombQuest and become an Egyptian expert! Michael Northrop loves ancient Egyptian history! Check out his FAST FACT videos at [scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform](http://scholastic.com/teachmultiplatform) to learn about the spells in the ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead.

## Messaging in Character

Students can assume a character role and exchange "text messages" with another student in character. How would the student's chosen character behave and respond to their partner's character? This is a great activity to work on voice and tone in writing!

(CCRA.R.3, 5; W.3, 6; SL.1)

➡ For examples of text message conversations, log in to the missions for The 39 Clues: Unstoppable at [scholastic.com/the39clues](http://scholastic.com/the39clues).

📖 **Series Connection:** Pair Riq from Infinity Ring and Abeke from Spirit Animals and see how their conversation might evolve! Would Riq want a Spirit Animal? Where and when might Abeke want to time travel to?



## Common Core Anchor Standards found in this guide

### Anchor Standards for Reading

#### Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

#### Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.5 Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9 Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

### Anchor Standards for Speaking & Listening

#### Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3 Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

#### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5 Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

### Anchor Standards for Writing

#### Text Types and Purposes:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

#### Production and Distribution of Writing:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

#### Research to Build and Present Knowledge:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

#### Range of Writing:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.



Photo Credit: Tim Holdsworth

### About the author of this discussion guide:

Mike Bentz has been teaching fourth, fifth, and sixth graders in Solana Beach, California, for seventeen years. Mike has worked with the multiplatform team at Scholastic since the birth of The 39 Clues, offering insight on various webcasts, teaching articles, and online blogs. Mike collaborated with authors Linda Sue Park, Gordon Korman, Peter Lerangis, and Ruth Culham at an International Reading Association conference in 2011, presenting on the use of the multiplatform series in conjunction with the "6+1 Traits of Writing."



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