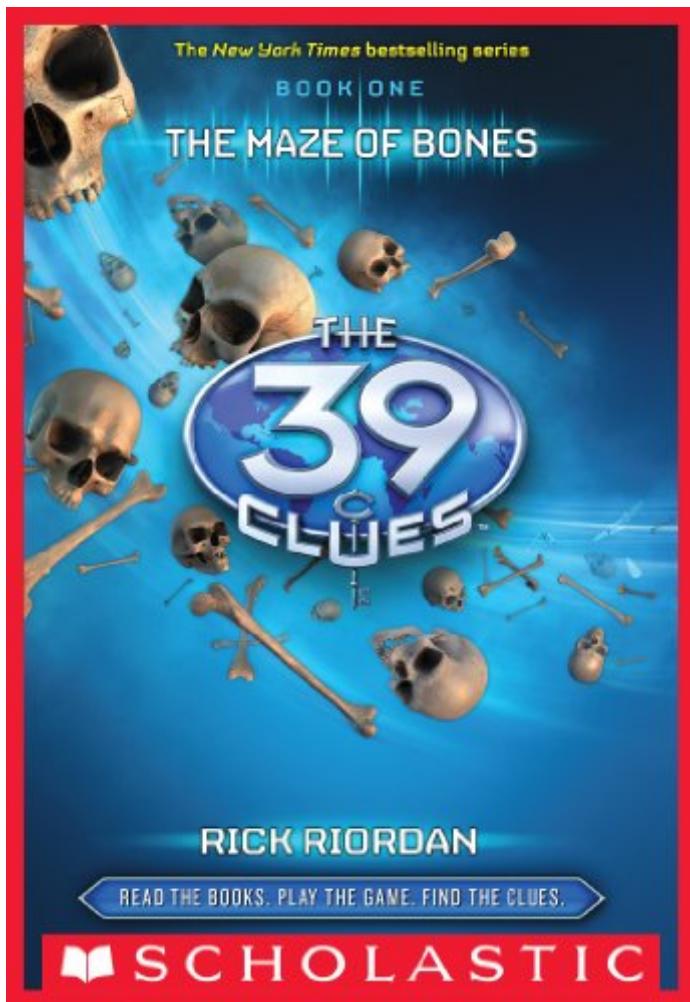


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The 39 Clues Book 1: The Maze Of Bones



Synopsis

The first book in the #1 bestselling phenomenon sends readers around the world on the hunt for the 39 Clues! Minutes before she died Grace Cahill changed her will, leaving her descendants an impossible decision: "You have a choice - one million dollars or a clue." Grace is the last matriarch of the Cahills, the world's most powerful family. Everyone from Napoleon to Houdini is related to the Cahills, yet the source of the family power is lost. 39 Clues hidden around the world will reveal the family's secret, but no one has been able to assemble them. Now the clues race is on, and young Amy and Dan must decide what's important: hunting clues or uncovering what REALLY happened to their parents.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

There's already a review that is negative about this series for being a blatant marketing scheme. While I was a bit put off at first by the whole book series/trading cards, now that we've bought the book and a few card packs, I'm a huge fan. Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson series helped ignite my 10-year old son's passion for reading. He's now half-way through Maze of Bones, and thoroughly enjoying it. He's noted on the calendar the date the next book will be released. I have to admit I'm

reviewing the book without having read it myself yet, but based on the number of times my son has read me excerpts, I'd say it is succeeding with the target audience. As for the trading cards, well, 10-year old boys love trading cards - Pokemon, Yu-gi-oh, and so on. These cards are different though. They have puzzles on them that the reader has to solve. They're not that tough - they seem simplistic to me as an adult - but for my son, they're challenging enough that he feels a sense of accomplishment when he solves them, but not so challenging that he's had to enlist parental help very often. The web site provides hints. We did have a problem entering one card. We sent e-mail to support and the problem was quickly fixed. I was pleased when my son noticed a clue hidden in the book. I believe the puzzles have him looking at the books much more analytically. I'm hoping (as is Scholastic) that by including different authors in the series, my son will be encouraged to read other books by these authors as well. I see this as a win-win situation. Anything that gets kids to read is OK by me. I think this is a brilliant marketing move on Scholastic's part. I try to teach my kids to be informed consumers, and understand when they are being manipulated.

I was reminded of both The Da Vinci Code and the Harry Potter books as I read Maze of Bones. First of all, it's an addictive read. Second, it is a mystery with multiple clues involving famous people, like Dan Brown's book. Last, like J.K. Rowling's famous books, it is about a group of people separated into four different branches, or houses; and about children saving the world. The plot involves the diverse, far-flung Cahill family, which has been the most powerful family in history. Anyone important in history was probably a Cahill, including Abraham Lincoln, Isaac Newton, Winston Churchill, Napoleon Bonaparte and, especially, Benjamin Franklin. The source of the Cahill's power has been lost over time. The 39 Clues is about the search for that source, by a group of Cahill relatives vying against each other to find the answer. The clues are found all over the world. Penniless orphans Amy and Dan Cahill enlist the help of their teenage au pair, Nellie, to find the solution to the mystery. The kids seem like real people, and you root for them against their mostly despicable relatives. Amy is a painfully shy, stuttering 14-year-old; Dan is a precocious 11-year-old who loves collecting things. Although they often fight, the siblings help each other during the many dangerous adventures collecting the clues.

Before I dive straight into the review, let me tell you where I'm coming from. I'm seventeen. I do realize that I'm outside of the intended age range of this book, but I read and enjoy many other children's series. Rick Riordan is one of my favorite authors, so my mother, out of the kindness of her heart, saw his name on the cover of The 39 Clues and decided to pick it up for me. The 39 Clues

is about the Cahill family. They're a big family. They're a very big family. They're so big, in fact, that every major person in history has been part of this family. I bet you never knew that Napoleon Bonaparte, Abraham Lincoln, and Benjamin Franklin were related. Oh, yeah, and they have family members all over the world, never mind that that it's impossible to have a Korean uncle, a British cousin, and a Russian...I don't even know what she is, without any of them being married/genetically related. Okay, clearly this is a work of fiction, so I'll just suspend my disbelief for a second. No problem. Let's continue. Grace Cahill, the head of the family (or so I believe, since it's never really explained), dies of cancer, and in her will she presents a challenge to all her relatives. They can either take the first of thirty-nine clues that will lead them to the source of the Cahill family's power, or they can take one million dollars and walk away. Enter Amy and Dan Cahill. Dan is a hyperactive, eleven-year-old math genius, and Amy is a timid, fourteen-year-old bibliophile. Amy and Dan decide to take up the challenge, despite the fact that they (a) have no money and (b) don't have permission from their guardian. However, they're not alone.

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