

Sample of Cover and Selected Pages

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CODE READER™

Making Difficult Words Easy

Code Reader Books provide codes with “sound keys” to help read difficult words. For example, a word that may be difficult to read is “unicorn,” so it might be followed by a code like this: unicorn (*YOO-nih-korn*). By providing codes with phonetic sound keys, Code Reader Books make reading easier and more enjoyable.

Examples of Code Reader™ Keys

Long a sound (as in make):

a (*with a silent e*) or **ay**

Examples: able (*AY-bul*); break (*brake*)

Short i sound (as in sit): **i** or **ih**

Examples: myth (*mith*); mission (*MIH-shun*)

Long i sound (as in by):

i (*with a silent e*) or **y**

Examples: might (*mite*); bicycle (*BY-sih-kul*)

Keys for the long o sound (as in hope):

o (*with a silent e*) or **oh**

Examples: molten (*MOLE-ten*); ocean (*OH-shen*)

Codes use dashes between syllables (*SIH-luh-buls*), and stressed syllables have capital letters.

To see more Code Reader sound keys, see page 42.



Terror at the Insect Museum

Aline Charlebois

TREASURE **BAY**

Terror at the Insect Museum

A Code Reader™ Book
Blue Series

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Patent Pending.

Code Reader books are designed using an innovative system of methods to create and include phonetic codes to enhance the readability of text.

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Chapter 1

The Waiting Was Over!

There was a buzz of excitement in the air. The day of our trip to the insect museum (*myoo-ZEE-um*) had arrived! The entire school was going there for the day. All the students (*STOO-dents*) in our class were excited, me included. Everyone had their ID card in case of emergency (*ee-MER-jen-see*). We had our lunches and everything else we needed for the day in our backpacks. The school bus was outside, and the driver was waiting for us.

Our teacher had been very clear: we couldn't go to the insect museum, also called an insectarium (*in-sek-TAIR-ee-um*), if we didn't know anything about insects.

So, for more than a month, we had been doing all sorts of research (*REE-surch*) about insects and spiders.

Everyone had to choose their own minibeast (*MIN-ee-BEEST*) and study it, so we could tell each other all about the insects. We had also used the project (*PRAH-jekt*) to practice our drawing in art class. We had drawn our critters in exact detail. Then, after doing our research, everyone had presented their example to the class.

My brother had been the first to go: "I've chosen the Goliath (*guh-LY-eth*) bird-eating spider, Anna's favorite spider."

Ha, ha, Ben. Very funny. He knows I'm scared to death of those creepy little things, and he thinks it's funny. Obviously (*OB-vee-us-lee*), he hadn't chosen just any spider. He'd chosen the biggest spider in the world.

The Goliath bird-eater is a tarantula (*tuh-RAN-chuh-luh*) spider that can grow up to twelve inches wide!! That's as big as a very large plate! It can weigh up to six ounces, which is as heavy as a big apple. It's definitely not what I would call a "mini" beast.

My brother went on, watching me out of the corner

of his eye, “The Goliath bird-eating spider isn’t picky. These hairy tarantulas will eat anything, but they prefer to sink their teeth into mice, birds, and even geckos (*GEK-ohz*).”

Some of our classmates seemed amazed, but others looked a bit disgusted. I couldn’t bear to imagine a poor little mouse being eaten by that killer of small animals. I certainly (*SUR-ten-lee*) wouldn’t want to feel its hairy feet walking on me! It was the stuff of nightmares.

Then it was my turn: “My presentation (*prez-en-TAY-shun*) is about stick insects. They are really strange insects that look like tree branches. Still, they’re not completely safe. They don’t bite, but they can cause injury with their spiky (*SPIKE-ee*) legs. Unlike the Goliath bird-eating spider, stick insects are vegetarian (*vej-eh-TAIR-ee-en*).”

For the most part, listening to each other’s presentations had made us even more excited about our trip to the insectarium. That is, until it was Nathan’s (*NAY-thunz*) turn. When he told us about the insect he’d chosen, I got chills. . . .

“Hello everyone! This is an Amazonian (*AM-uh-ZOH-nee-en*) giant centipede (*SEN-tih-peed*). It can grow to nearly twelve inches long.”

You should have seen his drawing! It showed an absolutely (*ab-suh-LOOT-lee*) horrible animal with forty-two pointed, sticky legs, each with a sharp claw at the end. Nathan went into great detail about his insect.

“If one of these centipedes grabs onto you, it’s almost impossible to get it off. It has a very hard shell, so it’s also difficult to squash, even if you stand on it. It eats small animals, and sometimes other centipedes.”

By the time Nathan had finished his presentation, it was lunchtime. But I wasn’t really hungry anymore. Seeing all those bugs had made me feel a bit sick. I wondered (*WUN-durd*) how I would manage at the insectarium. The idea of seeing all those insects up close was starting to scare me.



Chapter 2

A Suspect in Our Sights

The drive from school to the insectarium must have been about forty minutes long. Laura (*LOR-uh*) sat next to me on the bus. Simon (*SY-mun*) sat with my brother, a few seats away from us. Everyone had a buddy except Nathan—before we left, he had asked to be allowed (*uh-LOWD*) to sit by himself. Our teacher couldn't see any reason why not.

“Whether you're sitting by yourself or next to someone else, the school trip rules are the same for everyone,” she said, raising an eyebrow.

Nathan grinned. “No problem, Mrs. (*MIS-sez*) Martin. You have nothing to worry (*WUR-ree*) about with me.”

Nathan didn't exactly have an angelic (*an-JEL-ik*) reputation (*reh-pyoo-TAY-shun*). In fact, quite the opposite (*AH-puh-sit*). He always had a nasty idea up his sleeve. Once, he had caused a flood in the restroom by blocking the drains in the sinks with paper towels and then turning on the water. It had taken the janitor ages to clean it all up. Another time, he set a fire in a wastepaper basket. The fire alarm had gone off, and all the students had to get out of the school building (*BILD-ing*) and wait for the firefighters to arrive.

There was also the time he hid our whole class's jackets. We had to search every nook and cranny of the school to find them all. I didn't think today would be any different. A school trip was the perfect time for one of his nasty tricks. Before we left, I had seen him put something shiny in his backpack. I was sure he was up to something.

So, I kept an eye on him during the drive there. What was he planning?—I couldn't stop thinking about it. I didn't want him to ruin (*ROO-in*) our trip. Around ten minutes after we'd left, he got up out of his seat.

He walked toward (*tword*) our teacher, who was sitting on the front seat. I couldn't hear what he said to her. But I saw Mrs. Martin give him a hard look. She told him to go back to his seat. Nathan didn't argue (*AR-gyoo*).

As he was walking back, one of the bus's wheels went through a hole in the road. It made all of us bounce in our seats. Some students screamed, some laughed. While everyone was distracted, Nathan dropped plastic insects on the floor. Then he went back to his seat and waited.

Less than two minutes later, students were screaming and lifting their feet off the floor. Mrs. Martin stood up right away to see what was going on. She looked toward Nathan, who was pretending to be busy looking out the window. Our teacher immediately (*im-MEE-dee-yet-lee*) picked up the one of the fake bugs. "They're only plastic! Calm (*kom or kolm*) down!"

When we arrived at the insectarium, she reminded us of the rules. Nathan was ignoring her. His head was buried in his backpack, clearly looking for something. Then I saw him put the small, shiny thing I'd seen earlier

into his pants pocket. I wondered what it was. I decided to mention it to my brother and my friends, Laura and Simon. Then the four of us could keep an eye on Nathan.