

Book Talk

PART ONE: Written Plan

Theme: Spies

Intended Audience: 8th grade Advanced Learners but Reluctant Readers BOYS

Books:

Coleman, Janet Wyman. 2006. *Secrets, Lies, Gizmos, and Spies: A History of Spies and Espionage*. New York: Abrams Books for Young Readers.

Cited in Wilson's Middle and Junior High School Core Collection.

Cited Vanca, Lynn. Grades 6-10. *School Library Journal*. February 2007, 53, no. 2: pg.133.

Higson, Charlie. 2006. *Blood Fever : A James Bond adventure* (Series: Young Bond ; bk. 2). New York : Hyperion Paperbacks for Children.

Cited in Wilson's Middle and Junior High School Core Collection.

Cited Humphrey, Corinda J. Grades 5-8. *School Library Journal*. June 2006. 52, no. 6: pg 158-159.

Horowitz, Anthony. *Stormbreaker*. New York : Puffin Books, 2002, c2000.

Cited Bryant, Lynn. Grades 5-9. *School Library Journal* June 1, 2001. 47, no. 6: pg 150.

Presentation Plan:

1. Introduce myself.
2. Attention Getter: Ask question: When you think of spies, who comes to mind? (looking for James Bond as response.)
3. Introduce first book – Blood Fever, a James Bond adventure when James is 13.
4. Transition #1: Why should James Bond be the only one to have a spy adventure?
5. Introduce 2nd book: Stormbreaker.
6. Transition #2: We have met two spies, James Bond in Blood Fever and Alex Rider in Stormbreaker. What do we really know about the world of spies?
7. Introduce Book #3: Secrets, Lies, Gizmos, and Spies.
8. Conclusion: Introduced 3 books on spying that I hope will interest you in reading real or fiction stories about spies.

PART TWO: Booktalk Narrative

Opener: I have some books I have read recently that I would like to share with you. But, first, let me ask you a question: When you think about spies, what spy comes to mind?

What if James Bond were a teenager?

Blood Fever by **Charlie Higson** is the second book in a series called Young Bond, a James Bond Adventure. In this adventure, we find James Bond as a 13 year old at Eton, an all boys school in England. Most of the boys there are wealthy or come from aristocratic families. James is there because his parents died when he was eleven and his Aunt Charmain is responsible for him. She is an anthropologist who travels the world studying different peoples and cultures, making it difficult to take care of him on a full-time basis. Being the adventure seeker he is, it isn't long before James becomes bored with the routine of school. James joins a secret club at school known as the Danger Society where the way to belong the boys have to sneak out at night to attend meetings, risking getting caught sneaking out as well as sneaking back in. It's during one of these times where he is leaving a Danger Society meeting that James gets lost and discovers some strange things. He hears men in an alley having a conversation in Latin. No one speaks in Latin and he knows this because he is taking Latin and picks up on only a few of their words. He also gets into a building and sees strange religious symbols. During the next few weeks at school, some of the mysterious people he came across who had spoken Latin that night or were connected to the building with the strange religious symbols keep showing up. What does all that mean? Not sure, James starts to wonder and tries to make connections. Meanwhile, James is James Bond. He finds himself behind the wheel of a super-slick, fast-paced car (even if he is underage). He also goes on a trip to a far off and exotic place, the small Italian island of Sardinia. Granted, the trip is only a field trip over summer break with two of his teachers and a handful of other boys to study and dig for archaeological ruins. Knowing that this sort of trip is not going to be all that exciting, James devises an escape plan. He has a much older cousin named Victor who lives on the coast of Sardinia that he has arranged in advance to go visit when he gets bored on the field trip. And, who wouldn't? It's extremely hot in Sardinia during the summer. Who would have picked such a time of the year for such a field trip? Was it intentional or just a means to keep the kids busy over summer break by crazy teachers? Even on his private beach on the coast of Sardinia, James still manages to get involved in spying, solving mysteries, and keeping himself from being killed on several occasions. How do the mysteries at school follow James to Sardinia? Are they connected? Read *Blood Fever* to find the answers and experience James Bond's life as a teenager.

Even though we all love a good Bond story, why should James Bond get all the adventure?

Another great spy adventure novel I would like to tell you about is:

Stormbreaker by Anthony Horowitz. Stormbreaker is the first novel in this spy adventure series where we meet Alex Rider. Alex is a fourteen year old orphan who lives in England with his uncle. In the very beginning, Alex is told by the police that his uncle was killed in a car accident from not wearing a seatbelt. Alex suspects he is being lied to. His uncle was a banker KNOWN to be extremely thorough and cautious at all times. It isn't like his uncle to not wear a seatbelt. Alex sets out to do some investigating on his own to find answers about what happened to his uncle which almost gets him killed. Alex learns that his uncle was not a banker, but a spy for MI-6, the British secret service. Not only does all of Alex's snooping around lead him to the truth it also lands him in the hands of the head of MI-6. What is to become of Alex now that he has no family and the head of the British secret service has control over Alex's fate? Alex is given a choice – finish your uncle's mission or be locked away in a boarding school until he was 21. What will Alex find out about the world of spies? Read Stormbreaker to find out. And, after reading Alex's introduction into the world of spies, if you are interested, read the rest of the Stormbreaker series.

The World of Spies is where we know James Bond lives and where Alex Rider in Stormbreaker is headed. But, what do we really know about spies and the art of spying?

Secrets, Lies, Gismos, and Spies: A History of Spies and Espionage by Janet Wyman Coleman is a non-fiction exploration of the spy world. Coleman tells you up front on the first page that: "In this book, you will read about believable and unbelievable spies, impressive weapons, classified operations and artful deceptions." The information is factual and tells true story after story about real spies. You'll see real photos. You will learn: who they were, what they did, what sort of equipment, gadgets, weapons, or tricks they used, and how their information helped or hurt the causes they believed in. After all, every spy has a reason he or she chooses to spy. Some are honorable like defeating the Nazis during World War II and ending the horror behind the treatment of the Jews. Some reasons are strictly selfish just for the money they are going to get. Some interesting facts include: the first book written on the art of spying was written by a Chinese general named Sun Tzu speculated to be written around the 5th Century BCE. Another is that in George Washington's day spying was considered ungentlemanly behavior, well of course, it was sneaky, yet George Washington himself became a spymaster. Invisible ink was called Jay's Sympathetic Stain and was developed in London and was used to defeat the British during the Revolutionary War. Did you know that spying goes as far back as the Old Testament in the Bible? Or that the Trojan Horse story is considered a spy story? Secrets, Lies, Gismos, and Spies by Janet Wyman Coleman won't tell you everything there is to know about spying, but you will get a lot of fascinating insight into the spy world. Sometimes, the truth is just as or even more exciting than fiction.

Again, here are three books (insert all 3 titles and authors) about spies and spying that I hope will interest you in reading about spy adventure.