

THESE FIRST LETTERS

SNEAK

Peek Look:

DECODABLE SERIES for Grades 3-12

"Truly enchanting... there's nothing like it."

~ Shira, MS teacher

Scope & Sequence

Book 1 - Short vowel sounds

Chapter 1: Short a, e, i

Chapter 2: Short o

Chapter 3: Short u

Book 2 - Consonant blends

Chapter 1: st, sp, sk, sm

Chapter 2: sc, sn, sw, sl

Chapter 3: pl, bl, gl, cl, fl

Chapter 4: cr, br, gr

Chapter 5: tr, dr, fr, pr

Book 3 - Digraphs

Chapter 1: Ch, Ph, Th, Tch

Chapter 2: Wh, Ck, Sh, Wr

Chapter 3: Ff, Ss, Kn, Ng

Chapter 4: Wr, Ll, Zz, Dge

Book 4 - Welded letters

Chapter 1: All, Am, An

Chapter 2: Ang, Ing, Ank, Ink

Chapter 3: Ong, Onk

Chapter 4: Ung, Unk

Book 5 - R-controlled words

Chapter 1: Ar, Er

Chapter 2: Ir

Chapter 3: Or

Chapter 4: Ur

Book 6 - Vowel teams

Chapter 1: Ai, Ay, Ea, Eigh, Ey

Chapter 2: Ee, Ea, Ey, Ei, Ie

Chapter 3: Ie, Igh

Chapter 4: Oa, Oe

Chapter 5: Ew, Ue, Eu

Chapter 6: Oi, Oy, Ou, Ow, Au, Aw, Oo

Book 7 - Hard & soft sounds

Chapter 1: Sounds of C

Chapter 2: Sounds of G

Chapter 3: Sounds of C & G

Chapter 4: Tricky "Y"

Book 8 - Magic E

Chapter 1: Magic E

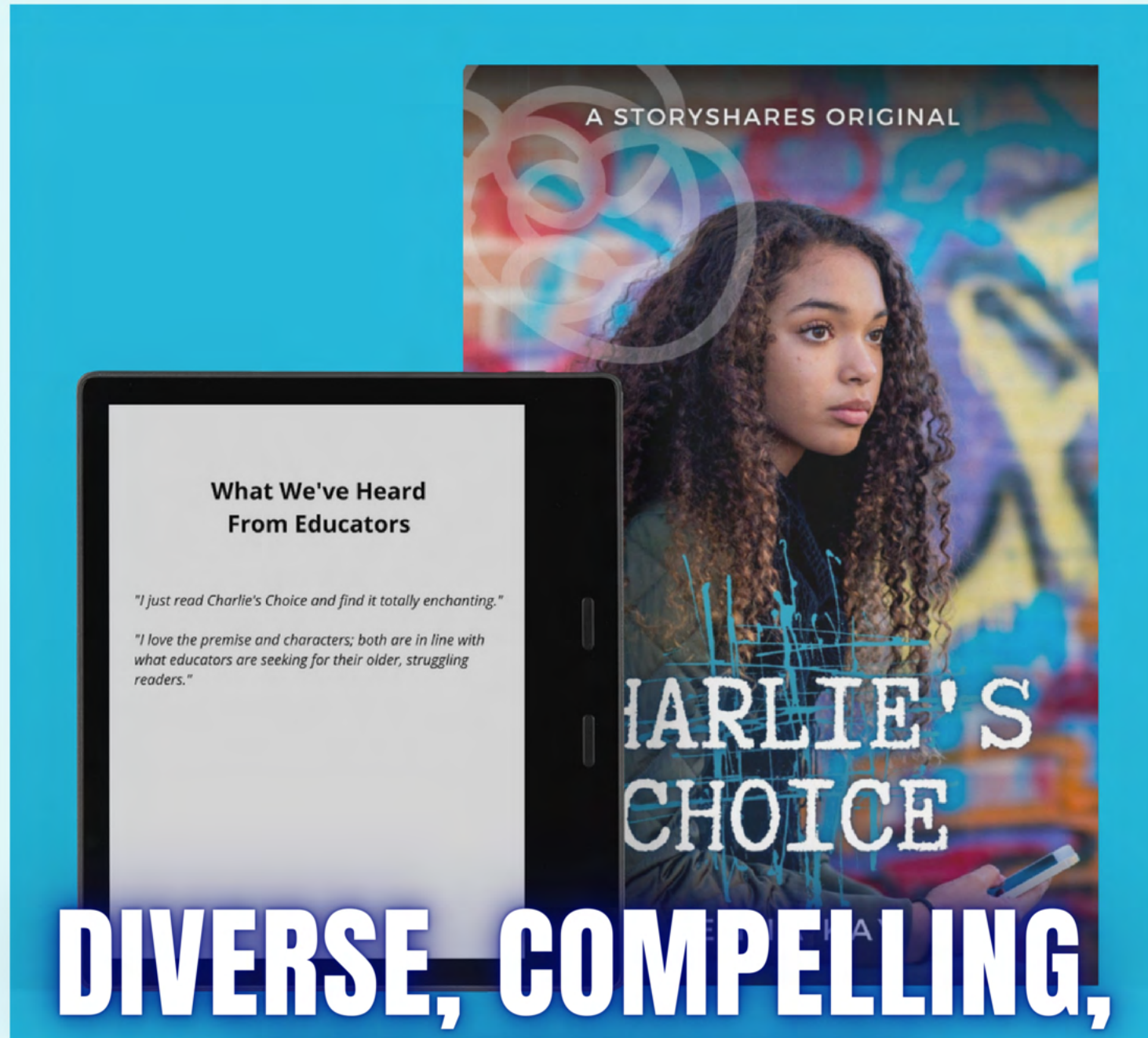
Chapter 2: Magic E

Chapter 3: Magic E

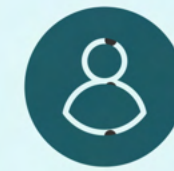
Chapter 4: Magic E



***These First Letters* is a collection of decodables comprised of 35 "chapters," which are grouped into 8 chapter books.**



**DIVERSE, COMPELLING,
AND ENGAGING**



Time spent with characters

This collection follows the overlapping storylines of 8 characters spanning the globe from the Pacific Northwest to Benin, Africa, written by authors who authentically represent the backgrounds and cultures of these characters.



Scope and sequence

The sequence of stories is aligned with a research-based skill progression, beginning with short vowel sound practice and developing through to a focus on the Magic "E," while repeating skills presented in earlier chapters for added practice.



Guidance and Support

Books will be paired with quick guides for teachers, including relevant word lists, ideas for extended practice, & checks for understanding.

What it is: a decodable chapter book series for developing readers in grades 4+

Why: Unlike typical decodables, the Storyshares series provides choices that meet readers at their individual intersections of reading ability *and* interest. Our titles are thoughtfully designed to be engaging for older, developing readers, through a new spin on:

- **Book Length**
- **Book Shape**
- **Themes**
- **Characters**
- **Pictures**
- **Imagery**



Features

- Controlled, Science of Reading-aligned chapter books for secondary students
- 6 x 9" paperbacks designed to look & feel like popular YA books
- Diverse, compelling, relatable characters
- Topics and themes built around young adult interests
- Photographs to aid comprehension
- Interdisciplinary texts and concepts
- Resources to guide & support classroom use

BOOK 1



Chapter 1



Chapter 2



Chapter 3



Chapter 4



FROM CASTS TO COMICS *by Cat Jenkins and James Quinton*

Told in alternating perspective across 4 chapters, book 1 introduces us to Max, a basketball player living in the Pacific Northwest, and Min, an avid reader living in Australia. Max is about to be kicked off his team for poor marks in English. His only hope? Take part in a letter exchange program for extra credit. He is connected with Min, who is part of the program because she loves to write and connect with new friends. They are opposite in every way, it seems, except for one. Both share a love of art, which gives Min a great idea. Maybe, just maybe, she can help Max to love reading by turning her letters to him into comics!

1

2

Max

"No basketb...


"No basketba...

"Your class m...
to get better,

Min sat at her desk.

Her hands tap-tap-tapped on the arms of her wheelchair.

It was Saturday. That meant her last chance to get mail for the week.



Page 1

Dear penpal,

My city has a history of ships, travel, and fishing.

In my city, I love basketball, and I have a dog with picture books.

I do not like basketball or school.




Dear Max,
My name is Min.
I live with my Ba and a lot of books.

Our family is from China but we live in Australia. I love reading, writing, and art.

I have a wheelchair. It gets me from spot to spot. There is red paint on the wheels. I did not mean to get paint on them. But I like it.

I liked your letter. And drawings. I hope you like mine too!

- Your pal, Min

Story Shares "Charlie's Choice" | Phonics Guide

digraph: / ch /

Charlie	cherry	scratched	chapstick
choice	cheese	charming	Gretchen
choose	chime	cheesy	chocolate
Chase	chortle	cheered	chin
Chuck	check	cheerful	churned
Rach	chew		

high frequency words

like	what	friends	smiled
it	that	couldn't	phone
was	and	clever	tried
my	with	sometimes	sprinkles
she	the		
said			

challenge words

@storyshares.org

 Look Inside Book 1

BOOK 2



Chapter 1



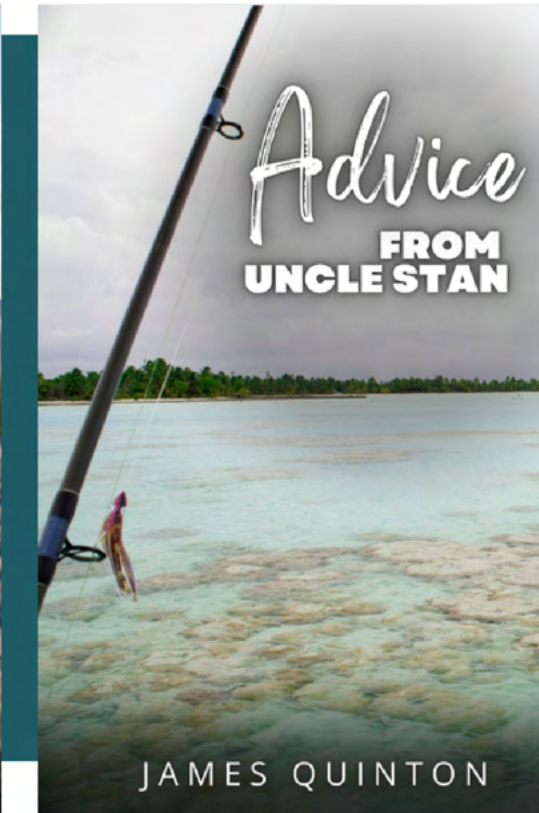
Chapter 2



Chapter 3



Chapter 4



Chapter 5

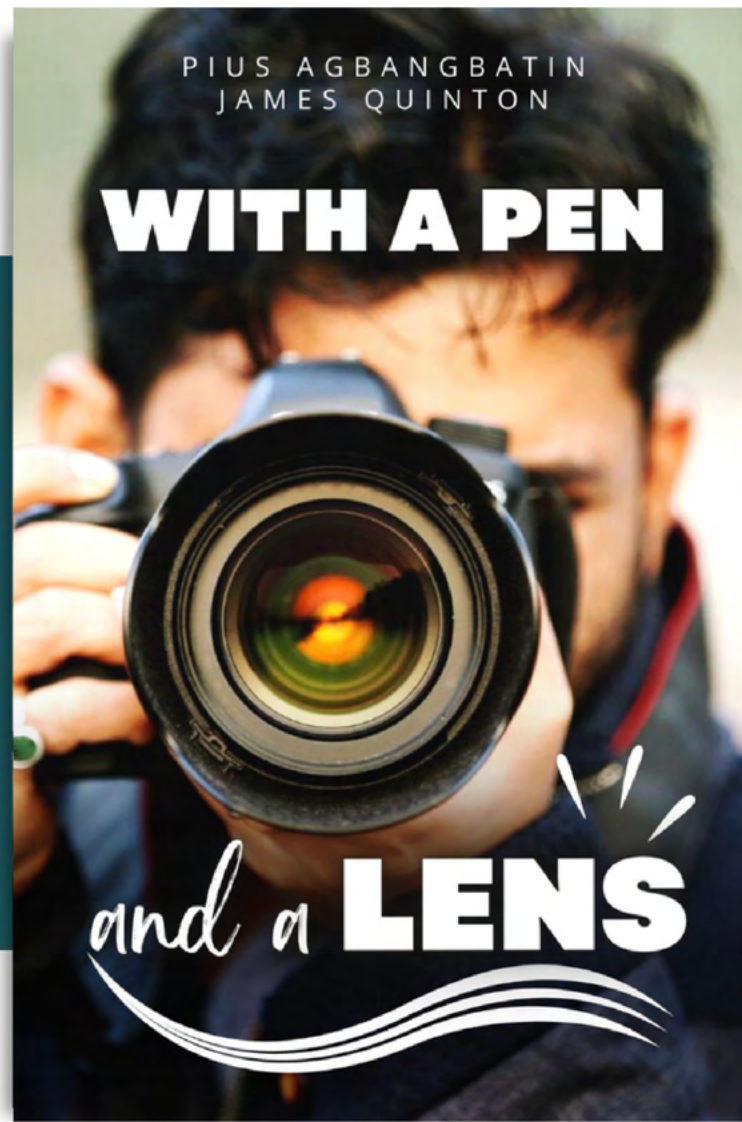


SEASHELLS, SPICE, & EVERYTHING NICE *by Jennie Ford and James Quinton*

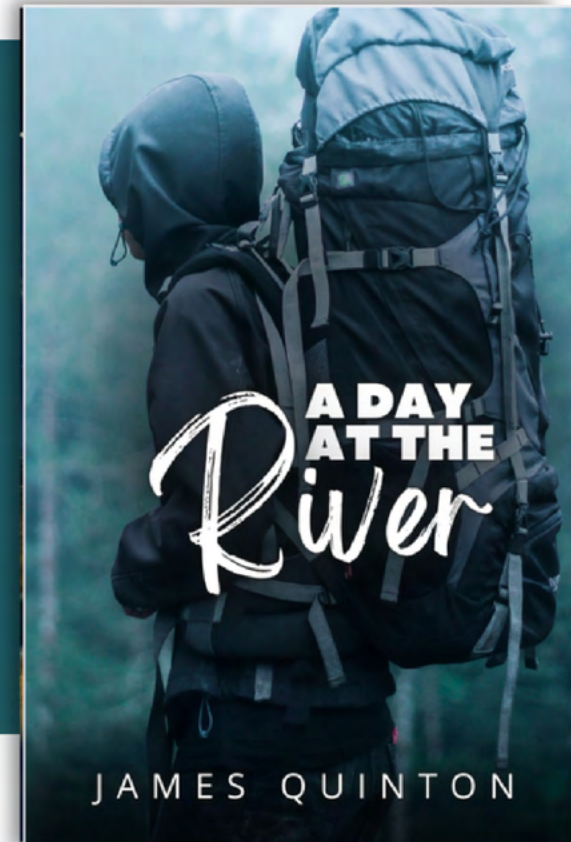
Told in alternating perspective across 5 chapters, book 2 introduces us to Sara, a shy, home-schooled middle schooler living in rural North Carolina, and Destiny, a middle grade YouTube sensation living in the Bahamas.

As with Max and Min, this relationship begins with a letter exchange program, but in addition to recipes, the two girls fast connect over cooking, sending recipes back and forth along with their letters, which contain details about their very different lives. Sara gains a lot of inspiration from Destiny and her YouTube channel, which is focused on clean beaches and sustainable fishing. When Sara visits the ocean for the first time to see what her friend loves so much, she finds herself wrapped up in the cause for marine conservation. Taking the stand to protect something great gives her a strength, a feeling of confidence, that she's never before experienced.

BOOK 3



Chapter 1



Chapter 2



Chapter 3



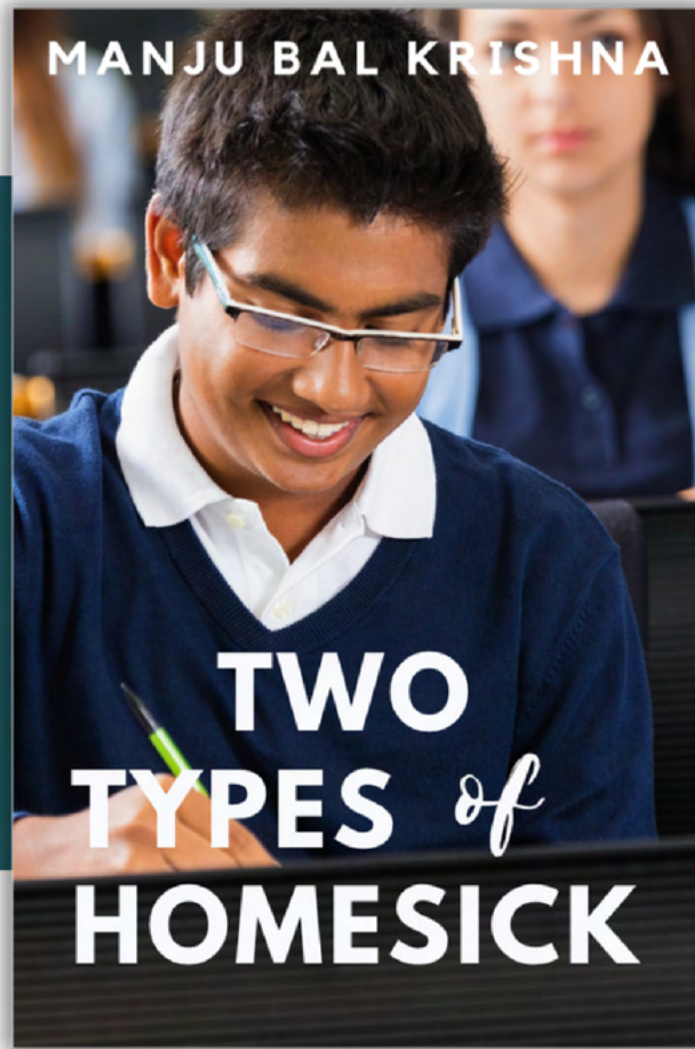
Chapter 4



WITH A PEN AND A LENS *by Pius Agbangbatin and James Quinton*

Told in alternating perspectives across 4 chapters, book 3 introduces us to two middle grade teens living on different continents who connect over their passions for raising awareness for environmental issues. Carlos is a young photographer using his skills to photo-document the world's most endangered rainforest in his home country of Ecuador. Whit is a tour guide who works on a popular whale-watching cruise off the coast of Benin, Africa. When not sharing fun facts about the local marine life, he is learning to track the migration and habits of an endangered species, the African manatee. Their relationship forms via social media but soon they are more deeply connected with one another and the rest of the world when both of them find their work selected for publishing in a major, international teen magazine.

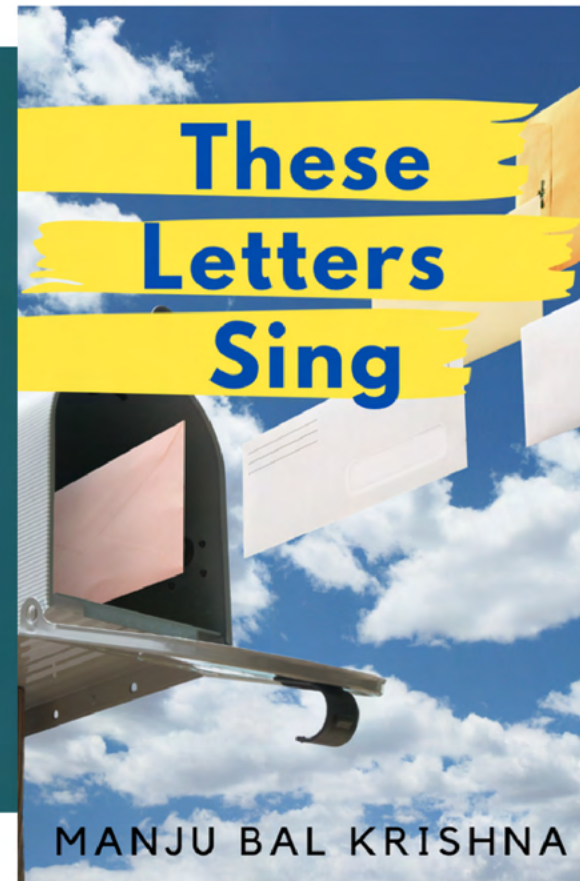
BOOK 4



Chapter 1



Chapter 2



Chapter 3



Chapter 4



TWO TYPES OF HOMESICK *by Manju Bal Krishna*

Told in alternating perspectives across 4 chapters, book 4 introduces us to Arin and Rakesh, two teens from India. Arin and Rakesh are best friends separated by a big move, but writing letters makes the distance between them feel a little shorter. Rakesh is daunted by the prospect of returning to school in India without his pal, and Arin feels like he is floating in a new culture, school, and community due to his family's move to the Pacific Northwest. Soon Rakesh realizes that one can be homesick for not just a place, but a person, and it doesn't take him long to understand that helping Arin to cure his homesickness may in turn be the solution for his own.

BOOK 5



Chapter 1



Chapter 2



Chapter 3



Chapter 4



COLORING THE WORLD *by Cat Jenkins, Ginger Tull, and Manju Bal Krishna*

Now that we've met all of our characters, it's time to pull them together!

In the Pacific Northwest corner of the world, basketball season is ending and Max's parents want him to choose an after-school activity that will keep him busy after classes. Inspired by the comics that Min has been sending him from Australia, he joins his school's art club, but fast comes to realize that the course is too strict. He wants to create comics to send back to Min, but his teacher wants him to focus on more traditional art forms. If there's no room for comics in art club, then Max'll just have to start his own club!

Meanwhile, Min wins a chance at her school to be part of a "Think Tank" - a program where students are asked to submit ideas for making student voices heard. Min immediately knows she needs Max's help. The comic books they've been creating for one another are the perfect project! Together and with new student Arin, they work to pull together teens from around the world and bring their stories alive with art.

BOOK 6



Chapter 1



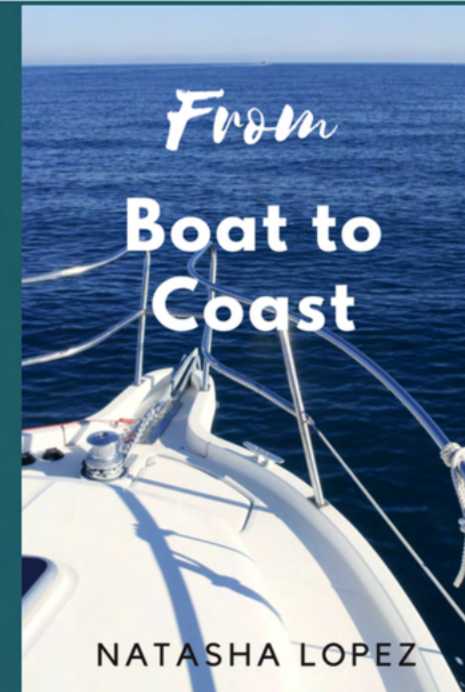
Chapter 2



Chapter 3



Chapter 4



Chapter 5



Chapter 6



CRAFTING A COMIC

*by Cat Jenkins, Kugu Soykan, Jennie Ford, Pius Agbangbatin,
Natasha Lopez & Manju Bal Krishna*

Min, Max, and Arin have put out a global call online for submissions. The request? For fellow teens to send them stories about what is most important to them in their corners of the world. It's not long before entries come spilling in. Each chapter of this book will share a different entry. From Whit, our whale-watching tour guide in Benin, to Carlos in the rainforest of Ecuador, to Sara in rural North Carolina, and more -- this project takes off like a snowball rolling down a hill.

BOOK 7



Chapter 1



Chapter 2



Chapter 3



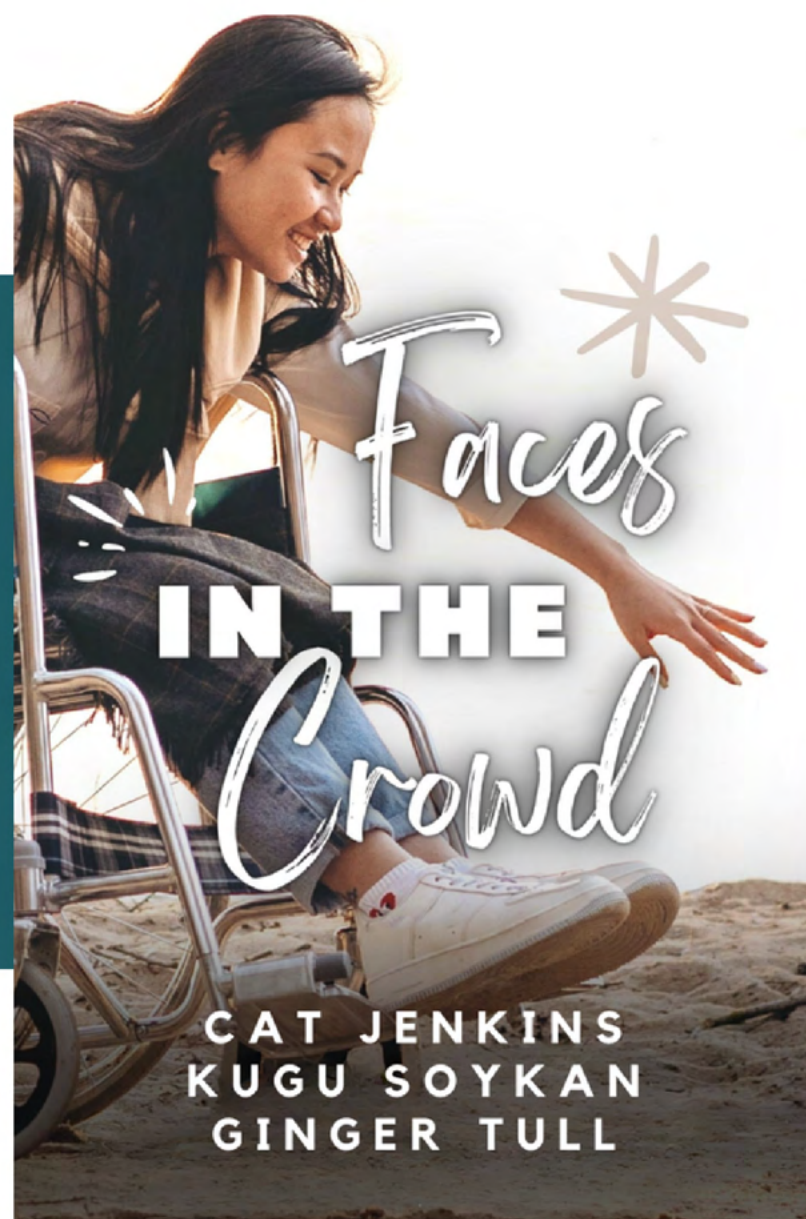
Chapter 4



GROUP CHAT, INK *by Jennie Ford, Cat Jenkins, and Gemma Weiss*

This collection of 4 chapters is told entirely in the form of a group chat. Now that Max, Min, and Arin have enough entries to begin pulling Min's Think Tank project together, they've decided that it would be useful (and fun!) to create an online meeting space for the students taking part in this project. Over these 4 chapter books, we dive deeper into the backgrounds, personalities, and passions of the characters making up this decodables series.

BOOK 8



Chapter 1



Chapter 2



Chapter 3



Chapter 4



FACES IN THE CROWD *by Cat Jenkins, Kugu Soykan, and Ginger Tull*

The results are in! Min has won the Think Tank! As she takes the stage to accept her award, she notices many familiar faces in the audience. Is that...Whit? And Destiny? Carlos? There's Arin and Rakesh! And Sara. And coming toward her on the stage is... Max! He's holding a letter he has written for her that shares some extra-exciting news for all of them.

BONUS: The final chapter of this book is designed to look and feel like the graphic novel that our characters have worked together to create. We're excited by the fact that readers will have followed our crew from the moment they begin to meet one another all the way through to being able to experience firsthand the outcome of their efforts.