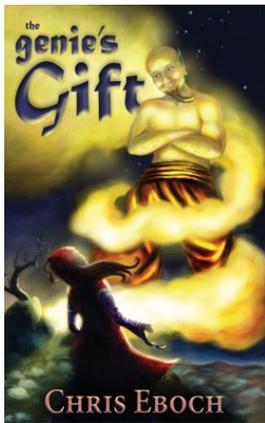


The Genie's Gift



Thirteen-year-old Anise, shy and timid, dreads marrying the man her father chooses for her. Her aunt tells her about the Genie Shakayak, the giver of the Gift of Sweet Speech. He lives high atop Mount Quaf, many weeks' journey across a barren desert. The way is barred by a dozen dangers and trials. But those few who cross the desert and defeat the guardians of the mountain receive their reward. From that day forward, their words drip like honey from their lips, charming all who hear them, and no one can deny them anything they ask.

Anise is determined to find the genie and ask for the gift, so she can control her own future. But the way is barred by a series of challenges, both ordinary and magical. Anise can't even speak in front of strangers. How will she get past a deadly ghoul, a sorceress who turns people to stone, and mysterious sea monsters? Will she ever reach the top of Mount Quaf—and if she does, can she convince the Genie to give her the gift?

The Genie's Gift is a lighthearted action novel set in the Middle East of the 15th century. It draws on the fantastic creatures and culture of *The Arabian Nights (One Thousand and One Nights)*.

As students read this book they should think about overcoming fears and what it means to be brave.

Book Stats

Grade Level Equivalent: 3-6 **Ages:** 7-12
Genre: Historical Fantasy **Pages:** 158
Themes: bravery, friendship, overcoming challenges

About the Author

Chris Eboch writes fiction and nonfiction for all ages, with over 40 published books for children. Learn more at www.chriseboch.com or [sign up for her newsletter: http://eepurl.com/8MQmX](http://eepurl.com/8MQmX).

Chris has several other books suitable for ages nine and up. *The Eyes of Pharaoh* is an action-packed mystery set in ancient Egypt. In *The Well of Sacrifice*, a Mayan girl in ninth-century Guatemala rebels against the High Priest who sacrifices anyone challenging his power.

The Haunted series features a brother and sister who travel with a ghost hunter TV show. *The Ghost on the Stairs* is set at a Colorado hotel haunted by a ghost bride from the 1880s. *The Riverboat Phantom* features a steamboat pilot still trying to prevent a long-ago disaster. In *The Knight in the Shadows*, a Renaissance French squire protects a sword on display at a New York City museum. These books do not have to be read in order.

Jesse Owens: Young Record Breaker and *Milton Hershey: Young Chocolatier* are inspirational biographies in Simon & Schuster's Childhood of Famous Americans series, written under the name M.M. Eboch. Jesse Owens will appeal to young athletes, while Milton Hershey's story will resonate with kids who struggle in school, as Milton did. These are full-length books at a middle grade interest level, but written at a third-grade reading level.

Chris's writing craft books include *You Can Write for Children: How to Write Great Stories, Articles, and Books for Kids and Teenagers*, and *Advanced Plotting*.

Teaching *The Genie's Gift*

Common Core Standards	Reading and Literature	Writing	Speaking and Listening	Language
Grade 3	3.1, 3.6	3.1, 3.7, 3.8	3.1	3.1, 3.2
Grade 4	4.3, 4.6	4.1, 4.7, 4.8	4.1	4.1, 4.2, 4.3
Grade 5	5.1, 5.3, 5.6	5.1, 5.7, 5.8	5.1	5.1, 5.2, 5.3
Grade 6	6.3, 6.6	6.1, 6.7, 6.8	6.1	6.1, 6.2, 6.3

Discussion Question

What is historical fiction? What is fantasy? How can this book be both? Is a book like this a useful way to learn history? Why or why not? Which parts of the book are most likely true, and which parts are made up? How can you tell?

Character Study (RL 3.3, 4.3, 5.1, 5.3)

A **character trait** is a word that describes a character. A physical or **external trait** describes what the character looks like on the outside, but an **internal trait** focuses on a **character's** personality.

A good reader identifies a character's internal traits by noticing what the character does, says, and thinks. As your students read, have them keep track of how Anise demonstrates her traits throughout the book (Resource 1). They can then **Prove a Trait** (Resource 2) by finding a trait that is demonstrated in more than one way by the character.

Character Change (RL 3.3, 4.3, 5.1)

A character's traits change as they face life's lessons. How does Anise change in this story? Was it the change she'd hoped to achieve? Did it happen the way she thought it might?

Compare and Contrast (RL 5.3)

Anise and Cassim react differently to meeting the "beautiful woman" in chapter 6, and they react differently after the truth about her is revealed. Analyze their different reactions to the same situation. Why do they react differently? How would you react if you were there?

Viewpoint (RL.3.6, 4.6, 5.6)

What was the point of view of the story? How did this narration influence how events were described?

Take a Trip (W 3.8, 4.8, 5.8)

The Genie's Gift is a fantasy story, with several made-up or mythological cities. However Baghdad (first mentioned on page 39) and Constantinople (now called Istanbul, first mentioned on page 44) are real. Find these cities on a map and you will have some idea of the region where Anise had her adventures. Research these places. What were they like during the Ottoman Empire, when the story is set? What are they like today?

Persuasive Speech or Writing Projects (W 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1)

Imagine that you are Anise, trying to convince the king that you should not marry his daughter. You do not want to offend him. What do you say?

Imagine that you are Anise and have returned home after this adventure. Now you must face your father again. What do you say to convince him to let you determine your own future?

Narrative Writing (W 3.3, 4.3, 5.3)

Critique *The Genie's Gift*. What did you like about it? What did you dislike? What would you have changed? Who were your favorite characters?

In mythology, genies (or djinn) are said to grant wishes. If you met a genie, what would you wish for? Write a persuasive letter to convince the Genie to grant your wish.

Imagine that instead you have met a genie who wants to kill you. Write a letter to persuade the genie that you should be allowed to live.

Team Projects (W 3.7, 4.7, 5.7, 6.7)

1. Work in small groups. You are anthropologists, looking for data about the Ottoman Empire, when *The Genie's Gift* is set. First brainstorm a list of topics.

Sample list of topics:

Foods and food preparation

Local animals and birds

Magical creatures

Art and decorative items

Clothing and jewelry

Trade items and practices

Methods of travel

Then make lists of items for each topic, using *The Genie's Gift* and other books about this time period.

The Ottoman Empire was one of the most powerful states in the world during the 15th and 16th centuries. What was happening in other parts of the world at that time? Make a comparative timeline.

The Ottoman Empire lasted until 1922. Investigate what happened to finally bring down the empire.

Art Projects

Anise gets to ride on a mechanical flying horse. If you could make a magical machine, what would you make? Draw the machine and write a description of how it works.

In chapter 22, Anise sees statues that are people turned to stone. Draw pictures of people made into statues. Use photographs for reference.

Draw a comic based on a scene from *The Genie's Gift*. See the list of Theater Projects for ideas.

Study the descriptions of clothing in chapter 1. Draw some of the outfits. Do an Internet search for "clothing in the Ottoman Empire" for help.

Theater Projects

Let groups of students choose scenes from the book to act out. Some possible scenes:

The food fight in chapter 1

The meeting and battle with the she-ghoul in chapters 6 and 7

The fight to save the bird from the wolves in chapters 14 and 15

Anise's attempt to save the Princess in chapters 17 and 18

Anise's meeting with the genie in the bottle in chapters 28 and 29

Consider having a party and inviting parents. The students can display their art projects and act out their theater scenes. Encourage them to bring food to share based on authentic food from the time.

Suggestions?

If you have any suggestions for activities that could be added, or if you have tried something with your class that you'd like to share, contact the author at chriseboch@members.authorsguild.net. You can also download lesson plans for some of the author's other books at her website, on the "for teachers" page: <http://www.chriseboch.com/events.htm>. Lesson plans are available for *The Well of Sacrifice* and *The Eyes of Pharaoh*. This page also has information about school visits and Skype visits by the author.

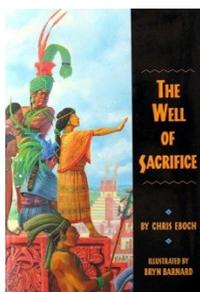


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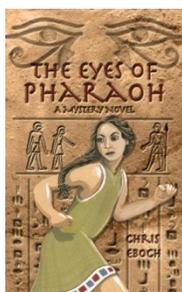
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Chris Eboch has several other books suitable for ages nine and up. Learn more at www.chriseboch.com or [sign up for her newsletter: http://eepurl.com/8MQmX](http://eepurl.com/8MQmX)



In *The Well of Sacrifice*, a Mayan girl in ninth-century Guatemala rebels against the High Priest who sacrifices anyone challenging his power.

Kirkus Reviews called *The Well of Sacrifice*, "[An] engrossing first novel.... Eboch crafts an exciting narrative with a richly textured depiction of ancient Mayan society.... The novel shines not only for a faithful recreation of an unfamiliar, ancient world, but also for the introduction of a brave, likable and determined heroine."



The Eyes of Pharaoh, set in Egypt in 1177 BC, brings an ancient world to life. When Reya hints that Egypt is in danger from foreign nomads, Seshta and Horus don't take him seriously. How could anyone challenge Egypt? Then Reya disappears. To save their friend, Seshta and Horus spy on merchants, soldiers, and royalty, and start to suspect even The Eyes of Pharaoh, the powerful head of the secret police. Will Seshta and Horus escape the traps set for them, rescue Reya, and stop the plot against Egypt in time?

Readers agree: "Mid School students and their teachers will love this fast paced mystery that has so much history and culture hidden in plain sight..."

"*The Eyes of Pharaoh* delivers what I expect from author Chris Eboch – exciting action with interesting characters, a brisk plot line and historically-accurate details of the book's setting. The concepts of loyalty and friendship are as relevant today as they would have been to the main characters in this book despite the thousands+ years difference in time. Another good read from a solid author."

Record of Internal Character Traits

Page #	What the character did/said/thought	What it means
p. 3	Aunt Farasha asks Anise, "What's life without risk?" Safe, Anise thought....	This makes me think that Anise is <u>cautious</u> because she does not see risk as exciting.
p. 13-14	When Anise's father yells at her for the food fight, she cannot speak.	This makes me think that Anise is <u>timid</u> because she can't speak when she's upset.
		This makes me think

Name: _____ Date: _____

Resource 1 Cont.

Record of _____'s Internal Character Traits

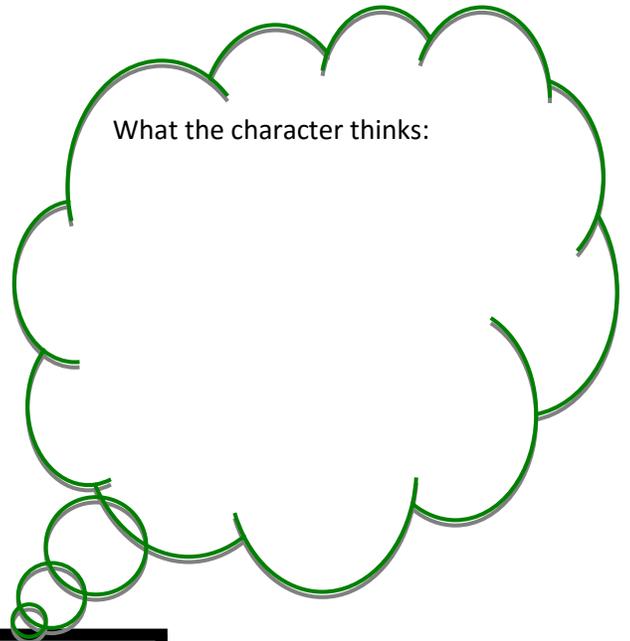
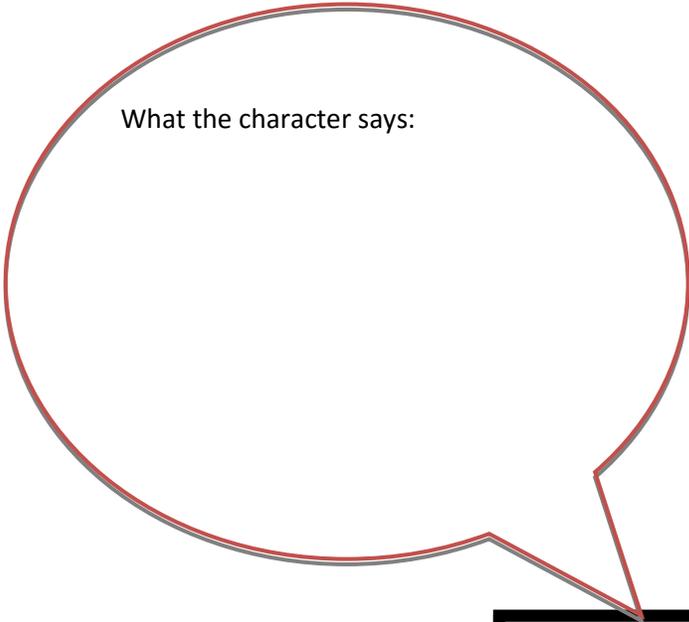
Page #	What the character did/said/thought	What it means
		This makes me think

Name: _____

Date: _____

Resource 2

Prove A Trait



Character Trait

