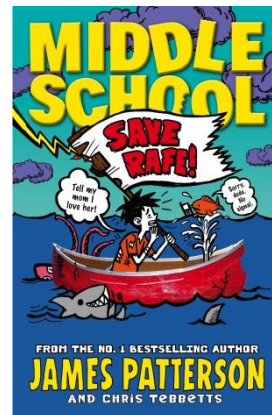
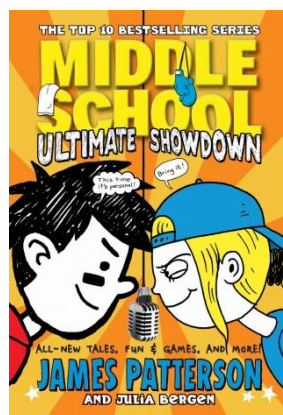
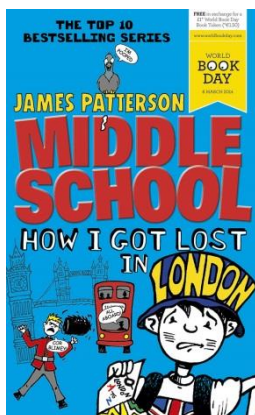
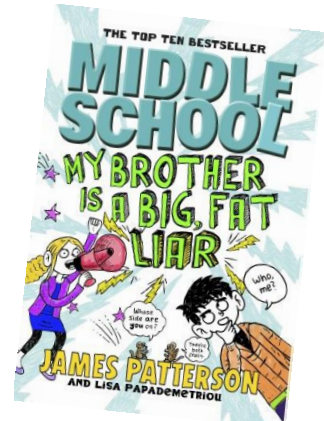
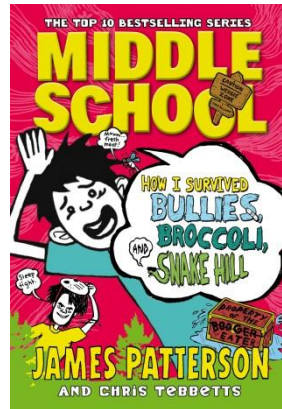
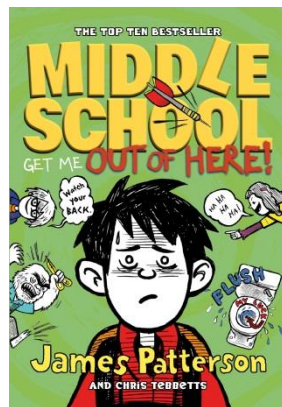
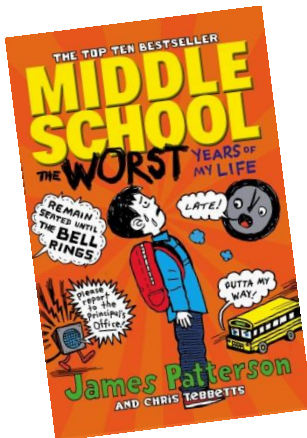


JAMES PATTERSON'S

MIDDLE SCHOOL

RESOURCE PACK





Pre-reading activities

Skim through the connections below before reading the Middle School books with your class.

English/Language Arts

In the two and a half years readers have known Rafe, he has matured and changed considerably. He has learned lessons about friendship, judging others too quickly, taking a stand for his beliefs, gaining trust, showing mutual respect, and other valuable lessons. Ask students to select one of the ways Rafe has matured and trace that lesson through the series, showing how people and situations led Rafe to a better way of handling himself. Students can convey the information through diary entries, letters to the people who prompted the change, essay format, or poetry, such as a poem for two voices.

Art

The illustrations in the Middle School series bring life to Rafe's and Georgia's stories. The illustrations tell a part of the stories that words cannot convey. Ask students to work with a partner to generate a list of Rafe's Top Ten (or so): Biggest Accomplishments from 7th grade, Worst Events at Camp Wannamorra, Reasons Georgia is a Pain (or Not), or another topic from one of the books in the Middle School series. Then have them illustrate each item, using the same kind of irony and humour Rafe uses in Chapter 4 of *Get Me Out of Here*. Display the Top Ten lists with illustrations in the classroom.



Maths

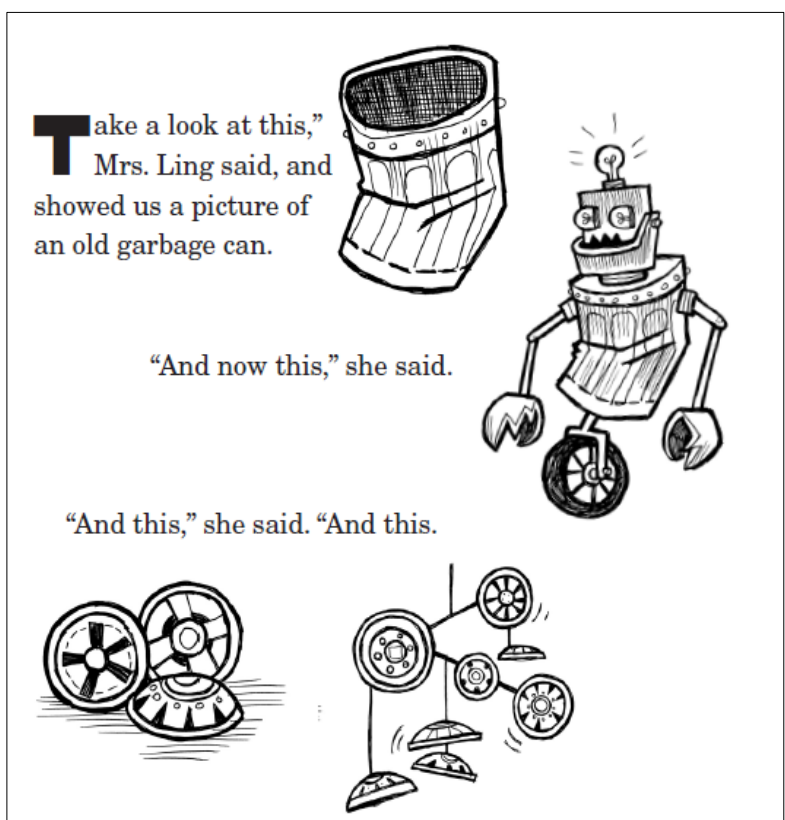
Rafe counts 112 rules in the Student Code of Conduct. Students can write a variety of maths problems using this and other facts from the book. For example, students can count the number of rules Rafe broke compared to the total number of rules to determine the percentage of rules he broke; students can also figure the average number of points Rafe made in a certain period of time or the average number of points per rule he broke. Ask each pair of students to write three word problems based on the factual information given to them in the book. Then have each pair exchange their problems with another group and solve the problems.

PSHE/Citizenship

1. Students at Hills Village Middle School and Cathedral School of the Arts, and even Camp Wannamorra, naturally migrate towards peers like themselves: students like Jeanne Galletta and Georgia who excel academically, Miller and Doolin who lead a band of troublemakers, athletes who play sports, and outsiders who are considered social misfits. These individual groups could be defined as cliques. Ask students to define the word clique and then make a list of the kinds of cliques they come across in their lives. Have students in small groups discuss the benefits and disadvantages of cliques in a school setting. Each group should then share the themes they discuss with the rest of the class.
2. With all the recent stories in the news about cyberbullying, could the fake web page that Zeke and Kenny posted in *Get Me Out of Here* using Rafe's name get them in serious trouble? Ask students to define the term cyberbullying, to investigate cyberbullying laws in the UK, to research the consequences of cyberbullying, to ascertain if there are school policies that protect students, and to find statistics and stories about actual cases. Then, armed with information, encourage students to initiate an information programme in their school and community.

Science

Increasingly, our planet is becoming polluted; our natural resources are being depleted. Ms. Ling's project in *Get Me Out of Here* provided a good exercise in making students aware of what they use and throw away. In small groups, ask students to investigate 'going green' and what that means for them or their family. Ask students to keep a list for a week of every item they use that becomes rubbish. Students may even choose to save their rubbish for a week, so they can see the volume and weight. By exploring the amount of waste students and their families produce each day, students can better understand the enormous impact of rubbish on the environment. After their lists are generated, and students become aware of how much rubbish they accumulate, ask students to brainstorm ways they can reduce, reuse and recycle. Have students investigate local recycling options (e.g. do other councils offer better schemes?) and make plans to initiate and operate a school recycling programme or improve on an existing programme.





Thematic Connections

Family Relationships

Whilst Rafe causes his mother considerable trouble, and Georgia rarely causes her mother any trouble at all, Rafe's mother remains supportive of both of her children. How does she influence Rafe's choices? How does she defend Georgia? What illustrates the mutual respect Rafe, Georgia and their mother show each other? How do Rafe and Georgia interact with each other? What role does Grandma Dotty play in the family?



Bullying

Rafe and Georgia are bullied by the Miller brothers, the Princess Patrol, Kenney and Zeke, and Doolin' and his wrecking crew. Chapter 55 in *The Worst Years of My Life* poses an interesting question: 'Is it still bullying if you're bullying the bully?' When does being mean go too far? What, if any, consequences do bullies suffer for their bullying tactics? How can adults help stop bullying? How do adults sometimes contribute to bullying?

Motivation

Rafe dreads going to middle school but, by implementing Operation R.A.F.E. and Operation: Get a Life!, he stays motivated to attend school even though his school work is below average and he is being bullied. Even at Camp Wannamorra, Rafe's life is miserable because of the actions of others. What occurs in each situation that finally motivates Rafe to step up and succeed? What motivates other characters to take action/change their actions? How does Rafe motivate others?

Friendship

Rafe is thrilled when Matty befriends him on his first day at art school, and Norman becomes his friend at camp. What do Matty and Norman teach Rafe about friendship? What does Rhonda teach Georgia about friendship? How does Jeanne prove to Rafe and Georgia that she is their friend? What are the characteristics of true friendship?

Peer Pressure

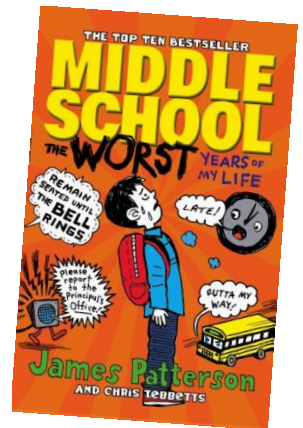
Everyone responds to peer pressure, at least occasionally, but some children are more likely to submit to negative peer pressure, while others are better able to resist and stand their ground. Rafe obviously responds to negative peer pressure and finds himself in trouble for the actions initiated by others. Ask students to discuss what factors influence students who conform to pressure, students who apply pressure, and students who stand their ground.



Discussion Questions

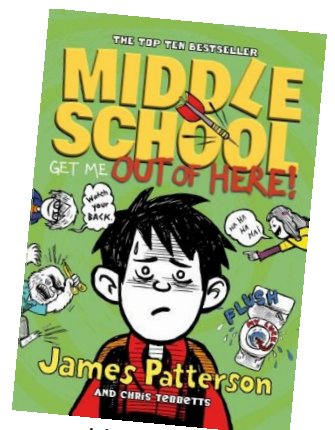
The worst years of My Life

1. One of Rafe's biggest challenges is the harassment of Miller the Killer. What could Rafe do to get on the good side of a kid who only has bad sides? What are some of the strategies Rafe employs? Why don't they work to help keep Miller off Rafe's back?
2. Rafe sees the Student Code of Conduct as a long list of all the ways he probably will get in trouble before the end of the school year (page 21). What other ways could he view the handbook? Why do students choose to or choose not to behave appropriately at school? What impact does a Student Code of Conduct have on student behaviour?
3. Why does Rafe risk telling Jeanne Galletta about Operation R.A.F.E.? What does he hope to gain by confiding in her?
4. How does Rafe break his no-hurt rule by his antics on Halloween? Whom does he hurt? What decision does he make as a result of the pain he inflicts?
5. What is Rafe's opinion of Mrs. Donatello? Why is Rafe wrong about Dragon Lady Donatello? How does he discover the error in his judgement?



Get Me Out of Here

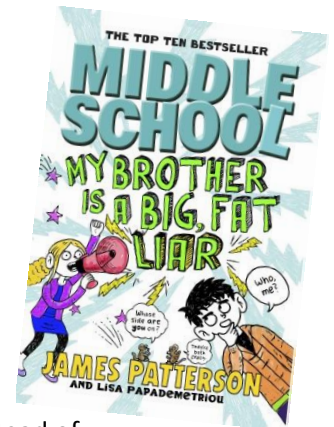
1. Leaving your home and moving means being the new kid in a school where you don't know anyone - always a difficult situation. How does Rafe adjust to his new school? What are Rafe's biggest fears about moving to the city? What are his biggest disappointments about leaving Hills Village?
2. Matty, Zeke and Kenny are all involved when Rafe gets busted for 'art-napping', but they do not come to his aid and Rafe does not tell on them. Why is Rafe so willing to take the fall and suffer the consequences for the school bullies and his troublemaking, so-called 'friend'? After losing his mother's trust, what does Rafe do to begin to earn her trust back?
3. When Rafe tells the truth about whose backpack held the stolen pen, Matty turns on him and, even worse, Matty uses private information Rafe shared in order to humiliate Rafe. What is Rafe's immediate response?



4. Going to Hills Village on a bus by himself demonstrates that Rafe has courage, even though he is running away from his problems. How does this mirror the constant irony of Rafe's life?
5. How does Rafe react to the news of his father's life and death? How will it help Rafe to know the truth about his dad? What role does Rafe's father's uncle play in Rafe discovering the truth about his dad?
6. How is moving back to Hills Village a positive move for everyone in Rafe's family? What do they learn from their time spent in the big city?

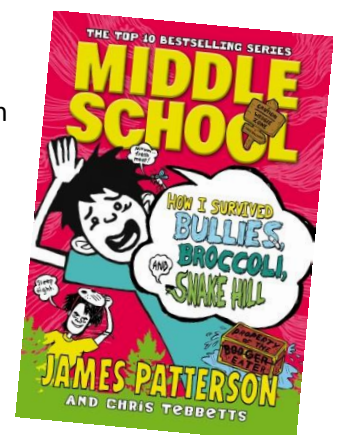
My Brother is a Big, Fat Liar

1. In this story, Rafe's sister Georgia suffers as a result of her brother's reputation. What steps does she take to overcome the teachers' negative attitudes towards her? What, if anything, changes as a result of her efforts?
2. Both the Princess Patrol and Mini-Miller are bullies. How do their bullying tactics differ? What effect does their bullying have on Georgia? How does she put a stop to the torment?
3. What happens that forces Georgia to acknowledge Rhonda as a friend instead of being embarrassed by her? How does Georgia's change of heart change her friendship with Rhonda?
4. Georgia and her friends from Airbrook Arts form a band, but Rafe says they stink. How do they improve from horrible screeching to an encore performance at the school dance? How does Rhonda contribute to the band's success?
5. What do Rafe and Georgia come to understand about each other and their relationship? What does Georgia learn about her family as a result of the discovery that she is adopted? How does her mother stand up for her at school?



How I Survived Bullies, Broccoli, and Snake Hill

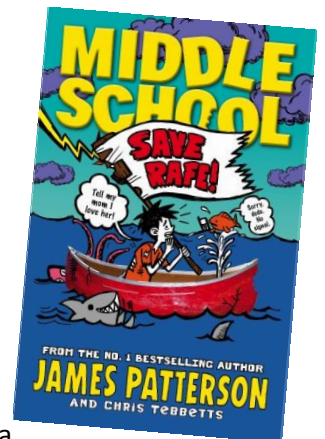
1. Rafe's problems seem to stay with him wherever he goes. What problems does Rafe have at Camp Wannamorra that he also had at both the schools he attended?
2. Rafe states on page 7, '... this was the Worst Summer of My Life. But it was also—weirdly—the best.' How was his summer the worst ever? How was it weirdly the best?
3. What connection does Rafe make with Norman, the Booger Eater? How does Rafe's first impression of Norman change? What does Rafe learn about himself as a result of his relationship with Norman?
4. What actions does Rafe take to make changes in 'the way it's always been' at Camp Wannamorra? What role do his fellow cabin-mates play in Rafe's attempts to make changes? How does Georgia help Rafe?



5. Why does Sherwood refuse to address the bullying issue, calling it 'all in fun' and 'razzing', instead of mean and cruel? How does Sherwood's refusal to deal with the problem backfire and cause more problems? How is Sherwood a bully?
6. How is Rafe the hero of Camp Wannamorra? Why doesn't he tell his mum or anyone else the truth about what really happened?

Save Rafe!

1. In chapter 2 Rafe's sister appears in his dream and lists all his 'colossal screw-ups'. How important is it to feel respected by your family? Are sibling relationships important? How do they change over time?
2. Imagine you are sent off on an adventure but you have no idea where you are going or what is in store. What skills do you think you would need to survive? What three objects would you take with you? Why?
3. In chapter 42 Rafe stands up to Carmen, the girl he has a crush on. Is it more difficult to stand up to people you admire? Make a list of the different ways of standing up for what you believe in: make a speech, write a letter...
4. The young people in The Program are called 'Cockroaches' by Sergeant Fish. Read page 247 - what do you learn about cockroaches that makes them special? Why do you think he calls the boys cockroaches?





Lesson 1:

Camp Wannamorra

Lesson objective: to understand the connotations of place names.

Lesson outcome: a leaflet describing an inventive summer camp.

Lead in questions:

1. What would be your ideal summer holiday?
2. What type of summer camp would you like to attend?
3. What is the worst summer holiday you could imagine?

Activity 1:

In chapter 3 Rafe and Georgia learn that there is something called 'Snake Hill' in Camp Wannamorra. Make a brainstorm of all the **connotations** that the name Snake Hill has. What emotions can you connect to it? What does it make you think of?

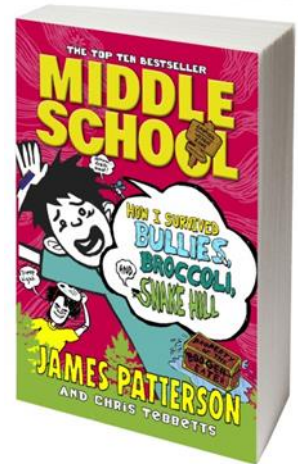
Activity 2:

Working in groups of three, design your very own summer camp. You need to decide if you want it to be a **positive** or a **negative** camp and think outside the box! Where would it be? What activities would you be made to do? Draw your camp and label it with creative place names.



Activity 3:

Make a leaflet to persuade others to come to your camp. Include lots of drawing, headings and quotes from kids who have attended before.





Lesson 2:

Dear Me

Lesson objective: to understand how to write an informal letter.

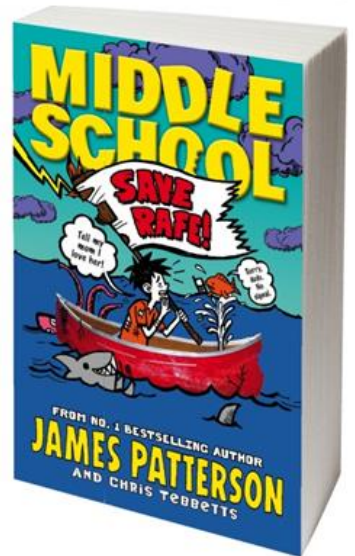
Lesson outcome: a letter to yourself.

Lead in questions:

1. Why is it important to think about the future?
2. What three goals do you want to have achieved by next year?

Activity 1:

One of the last things Rafe has to do in The Program in *Save Rafe!* is write a letter to himself, which is to be read in one year's time. Read Rafe's letter (below and on p. 241–242) and make a list of all the things Rafe wants for himself in the future. Work in pairs and discuss his choices – are they things for himself? Does he make any wishes for other people?



Activity 2:

Write your very own letter addressed to yourself, which can only be opened in a year. Think about **where** you want to be, **what** you want to have achieved and **how** you are going to do this. Just like Rafe, think about your friends and family too!

Activity 3:

Write your letter up in neat and give it a design that suits your personality. Be creative! You could include photos, drawing or even a map! Take your letter and hide it in a secret place, ready to be read in a year's time.

Dear Rafe-One-Year-from-Today,

Hi. How are you doing? How's life going in the future? Remember when you were sitting in the woods writing this? That probably seems like a long time ago, doesn't it? Not to me. I'm still stuck here. In fact, I wish I was you.

I mean, I know I am you, but just not yet. (Man, your head could explode thinking about this stuff!)

ANYWAY, I'm supposed to answer this one question: What do I want my life to be like one year from today? I don't know how much longer this solo thing is supposed to last, so I better come up with something quick. Okay, here's what I want:

One year from now, I want to be back in my regular life, but better. I know that means going to Hills Village Middle School, but if it makes Mom happy, then that's a good thing.

I want to be getting all As and Bs in school. Okay, maybe ~~one C~~ ^{two Cs three Cs,} tops. But no Ds and definitely no Fs.

I want to be making cool art. All the time.

And as long as I'm asking, I want Mom to sell at least ^{five} ~~one~~ of her own paintings. Maybe she could also meet some guy who will be nice to her and take her out for dinner sometime. But only if he's really nice.

Grandma Dotty deserves a boyfriend too, I guess, but that's just gross. So maybe she can win a trip to Hawaii or something.

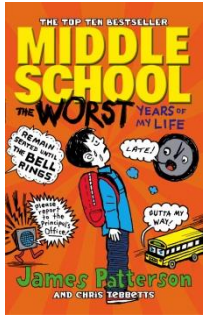
And Georgia's really smart, so she deserves to get a scholarship to any boarding school she wants. In any state she wants. Except for the one I live in.

Last (but this one's important), one year from today, I want to be thinking about how glad I am that I never, ever, **EVER** have to spend another week in the middle of nowhere with Sergeants Pittman and Fish, especially Fish, ever again.

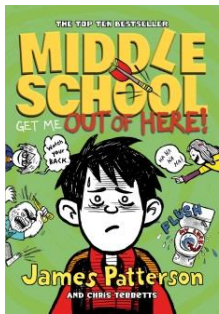
I guess that's it. See you in a year. Good luck!

self
Your ~~friend~~,
Rafe

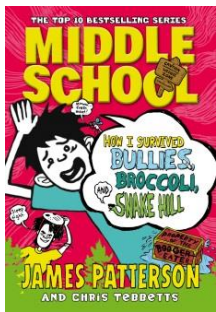
ABOUT THE BOOKS



Rafe Khatchadorian has enough problems at home without throwing his first year of middle school into the mix. Luckily, he's got an ace plan for the best year ever, if he can pull it off.



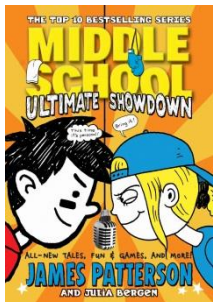
After sixth grade, the very worst year of his life, Rafe Khatchadorian thinks he has it made in seventh grade. He's been accepted to art school in the big city and imagines a math-and-history-free fun zone. *Wrong!*



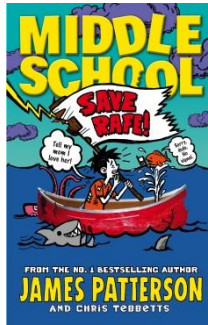
Rafe Khatchadorian is ready for a fun summer at camp – until he finds out it's a summer *school* camp!



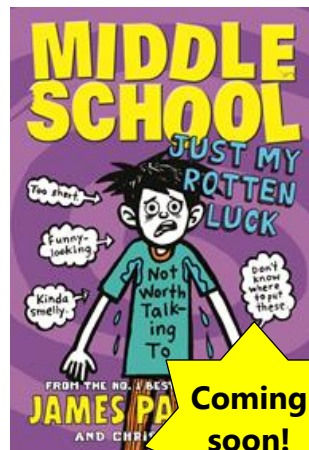
Georgia Khatchadorian plans to excel at Hills Village Middle School in all the places her troublemaking brother failed. Find out THE TRUTH about Rafe Khatchadorian's sister!



This interactive book features more than 80 hilarious anecdotes from duelling siblings Rafe and Georgia Khatchadorian – plus dozens of fun-filled activities!



After a rough summer, Rafe is heading back to the dreaded HVMS, as if that's not bad enough, he's going to be held back a year unless he can prove himself on an outdoor survival excursion!



Rafe's now being forced to take 'special' classes at HVMS... He also finds himself joining the school's football team – alongside his main tormenter, Miller the Killer! But Rafe has grand plans for a better year: starting with a super-secret art project that's sure to rock the school.

Coming soon!

ABOUT JAMES PATTERSON



JAMES PATTERSON is the internationally bestselling author of the highly praised Middle School books, *Homeroom Diaries*, *House of Robots*, *Kenny Wright: Superhero* and the *I Funny*, *Treasure Hunters*, *Confessions*, *Maximum Ride*, *Witch & Wizard* and *Daniel X* series. James Patterson has been the most borrowed author in UK libraries for the past eight years in a row and his books have sold more than 300 million copies worldwide, making him one of the biggest-selling authors of all time. He lives in Florida.

**JAMES PATTERSON
GETS KIDS READING**