

Secret Coders

Gene Luen Yang

Reviewed by: Anika 17

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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Hopper isn't quite ready to transfer to Stately Academy and she thinks the school looks absolutely haunted. On her first day, Hopper gets made fun of and her classes aren't really the best, getting her off to a rough start. But there's something about her new school that Hopper just can't put her finger on. The owls have strange eyes, there's a locked building, and so much more. The school is simply full of puzzles and mysteries! Hopper gains her confidence when she starts to solve them with her new friend, Eni. And using their coding skills, they set out together to discover and find out the secrets that lie within Stately Academy.

Secret Coders is a fun educational read that has a strong basis in computer programming. There definitely was a lot of time and care put into stylistic choices within the art. The pixels and greens pay homage to the older computers of the past, which really gives it a nice touch. Gene Luen Yang takes great care in introducing basic coding concepts in an easy to understand format. There are little coding exercises woven throughout the novel and even a website at the end to check out with more fun and games! The story has a number of engaging characters that will be sure to keep younger readers interested. And despite being rather a short novel, Secret Coders manages to include character development, which is aided by the diverse cast of characters. All in all, Secret Coders makes for a quick and easy painless read that'll leave readers wanting more.

Secret Coders is an all around child friendly novel that encourages readers to explore programming. The only thing to be wary of would likely be the intense interactions in the story, most of which are minor arguments/fights. Not much gore or romance to be found, honestly. There isn't any vulgar language as well, which is a plus. For these reasons, I would recommend this novel for readers 8 years and up. Secret Coders would make a great gift for students in elementary school and middle school.

Recommended Titles:

Paths & Portals by Gene Luen Yang (Secret Coders #2)

Secrets & Sequences by Gene Luen Yang (Secret Coders #3)

Avatar: The Last Airbender: North and South, Part 1 by Gene Luen Yang(North and South, #1)

Boxers by Gene Luen Yang (Boxers & Saints #1)

Robots & Repeats by Gene Luen Yang (Boxers & Saints #2)