



Reading Spies with Maz Evans

EXTRA RESOURCE FOR
VIDEO 1:
SPYING IS IN OUR BLOOD

www.maz.world
[@maryaliceevans](https://twitter.com/maryaliceevans)

CREATED BY: Shapes for Schools



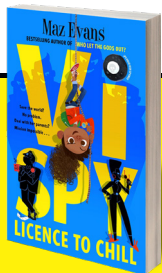
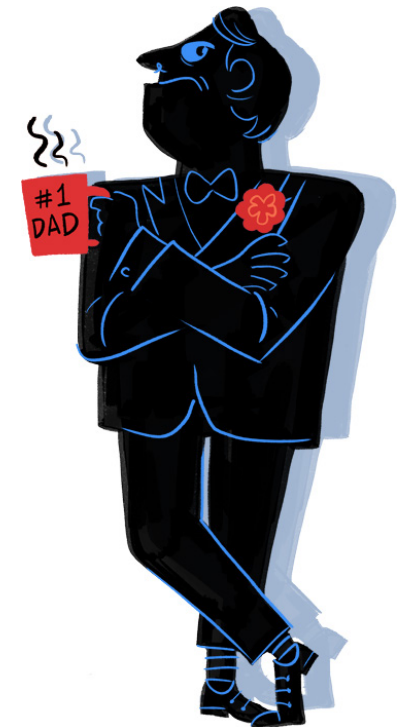
chickenhousebooks.com

Rimmington Hall challenge: My Spy File

First up! Young Reading Spies should create their very own Spy Files. The Spy File is a top secret file in which Reading Spies need to store all of their work on this very important case ...

- For the purposes of this mission, design your very own Spy File in order to store all of the information that you gather.
- Design your Spy File according to your own style and interests. What colours will you use? What images, shapes and fonts? Perhaps you might want to cleverly *disguise* your file, to throw any nasty villains off the scent?
- Consider whether you include your name on your Spy File cover, or whether you want to use an alias.

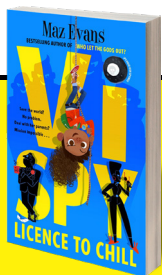
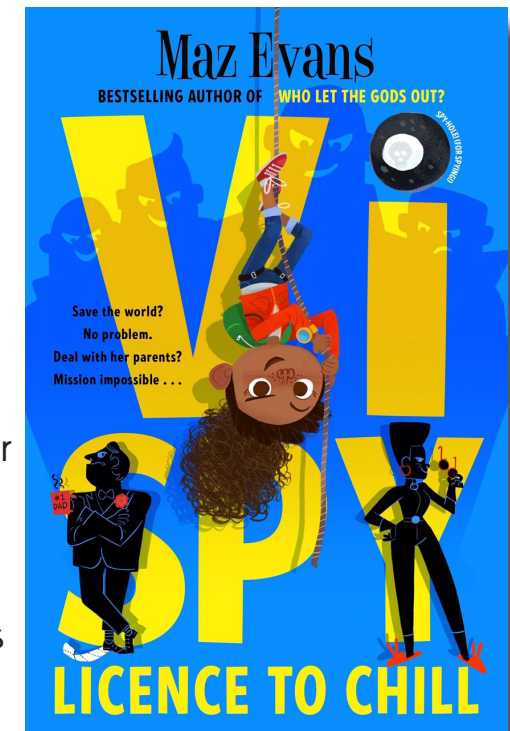
SPY KIT: the Spy File cover template!



Getting into the Case: Cover Clues!

Before getting into any actual reading, take a look at the cover of VI SPY: LICENCE TO CHILL and see if there are any important clues about the story ...

- Who do you think the main character might be, judging from the cover?
- What is the main character doing? What does this tell you about her?
- Who else can you see in the cover?
- Can you spot a clue on the mug in one of the characters' left hands?
- What about the shadowy figures in the background, who might they be?
- Can you see any words on the cover that give you clues about the story or the characters?
- Create a thought bubble for each of the three main characters on the cover. Write down what you think they might be thinking and give reasons for what you've written.



Top Secret Extract



Time to read along with Maz! This extract is taken from Chapter 1 of VI SPY: LICENCE TO CHILL.

'Well, thank heavens it's finally out in the open,' said Nan. 'Now Vi can go to Rimmington Hall.'

'What's that?' Vi asked.

'Rimmington Hall Espionage Academy,' said Nan with a twinkle. 'Secondary school for spies. To get in, you need to complete a successful mission. Your mother saved seven hostages from a bank raid when she was your age, using only a catapult and a Barbie doll. All the greats go to Rimmington Hall.'

'Spy school - that sounds awesome,' Vi enthused. 'How do you get a mission?'

'You need to find one,' Nan whispered gleefully.

'No!' snapped Easter. 'Vi is going to St Michael's Comprehensive. Not ... that place.'

'Don't be absurd,' scoffed Indy. 'Valentine comes from a long line of great spies, going right back to the days of the underground railroad in nineteenth century America. Mother Sunday spied undercover as a nurse in World War One. My mother, Christmas Day, used her singing career to spy all over Europe in World War Two. I was the first black woman to be recruited by SPIDER, you were the youngest. Spying is in our blood. However hard *some of us* try to deny it—'

'No!' Easter interrupted. 'I am sick of explaining this to you, Mum! That life is over!'

'None of my business,' said Nan breezily, going back to her crossword. 'I'll keep my opinions to myself.'

'I'm telling you, I'm done!' Easter insisted.

'Denial,' Nan said.

'It's NOT denial!' Easter barked.

'It is,' Nan replied, with a wicked twinkle in her eye. 'Fifteen across, "a statement that something is not true".'

Nan was the only person who dared to speak to Mum like this. Vi loved it.

'Choice,' said Nan, squinting at the crossword. 'Five down, "the right or ability to make up one's own mind".'

'I am just trying to keep you safe, sweetheart,' Easter said more gently, holding Vi's hand. 'You are my everything. One day you'll understand ...'

'Impossible,' said Nan. 'Eleven across, "not able to occur, exist or be done".'

'... and going to Rimmington Hall would set you on a path that, trust me, you don't want to follow,' Easter continued.

'Destiny,' Nan announced, looking straight at Easter. 'Sixteen down, "the events that will necessarily happen to a person or events in the future".'

'It's not happening!' said Easter decisively. 'Valentine will not be a spy!'

'Idiot,' said Nan.

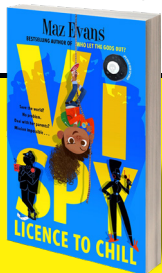
'Will you put that crossword down?' Easter snapped, snatching the paper from her mother's hand.

'That one wasn't in the crossword,' smiled Indy, winking at Vi.

'I'm trying to save her life,' Easter whispered.

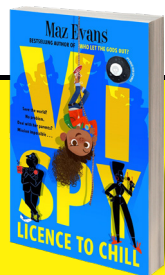
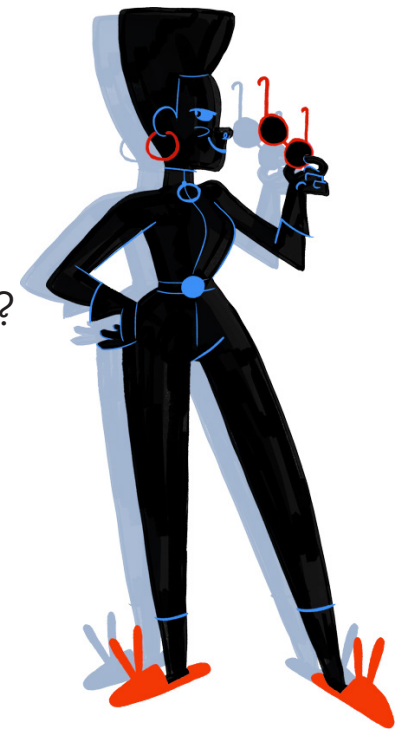
'Then you need to let her have one,' Indy whispered back.

There was a tense silence. Vi considered doing her homework. After all, she'd need to work hard if she was going to Rimmington Hall. And she **was** going to Rimmington Hall.



I Spy: Extra Reading Clues and Questions

1. What does Vi need to do to get into Rimmington Hall?
2. Which of Vi's family members are mentioned in the extract?
3. How does Vi's Mum, Easter, feel in the extract? How can you tell?
4. What can you tell about Nan's personality from how she behaves here?
5. How does Vi feel about going to Rimmington Hall? How do you know?



Maz's Mission: Spy Families



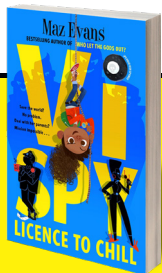
In the extract, Nan says that spying is 'in our blood'. But what does she mean?

Note to teachers: please review or adapt this activity according to the needs of the pupils in your group.

- Read the extract again and draw Vi's family tree. Remember, everyone has a different family and a different family tree. Some of us, like Vi, have divorced parents; some of us think of our grandparents as our parents; some of us have no siblings; some of us have two mums; some of us have no mum. Families come in all shapes and sizes. But what can you *predict* about the story from Vi's family tree?
- Think about your own friends and family. Do you think there are any spies in there? If so, what are their undercover names and missions?
- Create your own Spy Family Tree. Give each of your friends or family members an undercover name. What special skills do they have?



SPY KIT: the Spy Family Tree template!



Extra Mission: What *is* a Spy?

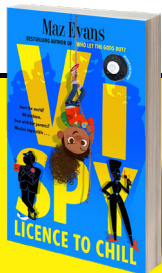


Use the Spy Criteria below to get Reading Spies thinking about what it means to be a spy and what skills it takes!

What is a spy? What does the job *really* involve? In pairs, discuss the following spy skills. Rate yourself from 1-5 (where 1 is not good and 5 is excellent), for each skill:

- Close observation of people or events
- Finding out other people's, rivals' or organizations' secrets
- Keeping secrets
- Gathering information
- Making inferences
- Connecting the dots
- Remembering important facts and clues
- Being able to spot a baddie!

In the video, Maz says that her Spy Skill would be her brilliant hearing. What would yours be? Come up with your very own Spy Skill – you can write it down, draw it, or act it out. Make sure that you give a reason for choosing your special skill.





Don't forget to add all of your work to your special TOP SECRET Reading Spy File. Make sure that you keep everything safe in preparation for all of your future spy missions.

Good luck! I'm looking forward to seeing you again soon, and remember, as VI would say ... keep spying, but stay CHILL.

Over and out, spies!

Maz

