

*The Mystery of the Missing Everything*

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After her half-baked debut performance last school year, Mary Todd Lincoln Middle School's own private investigator Bethesda Fielding, has returned at the announcement of the missing trophy. The trophy is Principal Van Vreeland pride and joy, and the repercussions Van Vreeland has laid down for the theft has sparked a school wide furor. She has canceled funding for all school-related activity, including the eighth graders' beloved Taproot Valley field trip. While Bethesda tests out her sleuthing tactics and Ms. Finkleman is called upon to try to placate the seething principal, Chester Hu takes a different approach. He decides to raise the money for the field trip by making an inspirational music video that features most of the eighth grade class. On the other hand, Bethesda finds herself going in circles following the clues she has accumulated from questioning the majority the school. Their anxiety heightens when Principal Van Vreeland tightens the noose, creating the unthinkable ghastly Week of a Thousand Quizzes. As the Taproot Valley field trip date looms closer and closer, Bethesda must achieve a spectacular breakthrough, and Chester's video needs to attract the eyes of more potential sponsors before their outdoors excursion is stripped from them for good.

*The Mystery of the Missing Everything* is a mystery novel with a wonderful conglomeration of silliness, action, and thrill, which is expressed through the characters and the plot. The changing perspectives and generally omniscient view emphasizes the mystery aspect of the book without revealing more than needed to pique the reader. Although the book is mostly told from Bethesda's point of view, the other characters' parts are seamlessly integrated into the story. Furthermore, the made-up words such as "skabimple" (meaning "this could have been bad but it's good"), and the flippancy of the actions intended to be serious define the book as a children's mystery while giving it a unique voice. The character's also have distinctive personalities, with the main characters paired up with those who seem to be polar opposites, yet still able to complement each other. Overall, with the interesting characters and numerous mysteries of all shapes and levels of puzzling, this book is a pleasure to read.

I would recommend this book to middle school students since the story has a playful action-seeking side and colorful sentences constructed from a wide array of words. However, for older people, this book would most likely be considered a light read- it does not contain the intensity and suspense that older people usually look for. Other books that readers will take to include *A Week in the Woods* by Andrew Clements, *Marvin Redpost: Why Pick on Me?* by Louis Sachar, *Hoot* by Carl Hiaasen, *Karen's Yoyo* by Ann. M. Martin, and *Sally's Bones* by MacKenzie Cadenhead.