The Secret Sheriff of Sixth Grade
Jordan Sonnenblick

GENRE: Humor, Realistic Fiction, Family Life, Bullying

BOOK SUMMARY
Maverick misses his deceased father and values the plastic sheriff’s badge his dad bought him on their last day together. The sheriff’s star gives him strength to deal with school bullies, his mom’s drinking, and her long line of loser boyfriends. His three-legged hamster companion, Freddy, whom he’s allergic to, helps him also.

BOOK TALK
Maverick’s toy sheriff’s badge gives him the strength to stand up to the bullies of sixth grade. The badge reminds him of his late father and helps him deal with bullies, his mom’s drinking, her frequent unemployment, and her long line of loser boyfriends.

LINKS TO HELPFUL WEBSITES
- Author: https://www.jordansonnenblick.com/
- Author reads “Cheese Tool” scene from book: https://youtu.be/lQ5-aJO5wKI
- Interview with the author: https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/authors/interviews/article/15218-children-s-bookshelf-talks-with-jordan-sonnenblick.html
- TeachingBooks.net through INSPIRE: https://www.teachingbooks.net/ql9aucn

MAKERSPACE ACTIVITY
Create a decorative sheriff’s badge.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. What are some of the challenges Maverick is coping with? What coping skills does he use? Who are some of the adults in his life who are supportive, and how do they help him?
2. What does it mean to Maverick to be a hero?
3. Discuss the quote, “Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.” (p. 67) Give examples from the book of first impressions and how they might be misleading.

IF YOU ENJOYED THIS BOOK, YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE
- Revenge of the Green Banana, by Jim Murphy
- The Secret Life of Lincoln Jones, by Wendelin Van Draanen

Resource page created by 2019-20 YOUNG HOOSIER BOOK AWARD committee member:
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