

Adventure in Sierra Leone
or
Rebel Diamonds

A Phineas J. Clooney Adventure

Book 2

By
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To Mom and Dad – for letting the
adventures happen.

For updates on the next Phineas adventure, plus adventures only available online,
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The things that happen in this book happen in a country far, far away. They don't happen here because we are a free nation with laws to protect our people. Unfortunately, other people, in other countries, are not so lucky. Hopefully, after you read it, you will realize that the bad that happen in the world can be changed if each ONE of us does our part to make a difference.

Chapter 1

I'm Phineas J. Clooney and I'm going to be a rescue aid worker. It doesn't pay as well as the astronaut gig, but I think it suits my personality better. See, I want to save the world and what better way of saving the world than by one person at a time? I'm actually starting now. My friends and I started this group a few years ago called: The Explorers. We explore ways to help out in our community. We do everything from March of Dimes, AIDS and cancer walks to helping out with the kids at the children's home to delivering groceries to shut-ins to visiting with and reading to people who live in Eastwood Senior Citizen Center. The list goes on and on.

This summer was especially cool, because we had help from the neighborhood bullies Justin and Taylor. At first, it was a nightmare. See, they were only helping because they lost the Great Go-Cart Race, but once they got into the way it feels to actually think of people other than themselves – they completely changed. Talk about a major attitude overhaul.

We worked like an absolutely unstoppable machine. We worked straight through summer and delivered more groceries than ever before. We also raised tons of money by having car washes and soda sales for our big toy shopping spree in December. We buy toys throughout the year, wrap them up and bring them to the big holiday party they have at the children's home in December. Giving is my favorite part.

Katie, my best friend, and I equally founded The Explorers. Other Explorer members include: Jeff Vargo, who's a year older and thinks he knows everything; Jessica Moran, Jeff's best friend and my other next door neighbor; Sarah and Stacia Vargo (Jeff's sisters who are my age), Jimmy Nichols who is kind of a pain but Jeff likes him, and Joely Martin, the most beautiful girl at Eastwood.

We seem like a weird and different mix of kids. We are, but we have all been living on the same street for, like, ever and that has made for some pretty heavy bonding.

The Explorers were formed for three reasons: one to help people (like I said before) two, for adventures, we live in a small town and adventure is a requirement to ward off the blahs and, three, to combat Taylor Anderson and Justin Andrews. Taylor and Justin are in Jeff's class and the bullies of the school. They turned out to

be okay though and may earn permanent Explorer status yet. I guess reason number three doesn't exist anymore...not that it's a bad thing.

Anyway, today is my birthday...only I'm kind of bummed because my Grandfather Clooney can't make it. This is the first time ever. Grandpa Clooney lives in Massachusetts and owns the oldest candy factory in the United States. The candy factory is on a list of historical landmarks and was even used as a hospital in both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Even though he couldn't make it he sent me a present. I'd rather have Grandpa and no present, but this particular present is rather intriguing – intriguing is a fancy smancy word I just learned for mysterious – and this box would certainly qualify as mysterious! I think I can hear it humming.

My present came brightly wrapped and with instructions that I could only open it in the presence of two other Explorers. No one else! This is why I am, not so patiently, sitting on my bed, staring at my present, waiting for Katie and Jeff to arrive. I chose Katie and Jeff because, well Katie is my best friend and Jeff is my second best friend. Also, I sort of have a tiny bit of a crush on Jeff. Of course, I would positively die if anyone, even Katie, knew about it. So there you go. Katie and Jeff. Jeff and Katie...*late* Jeff and Katie.

My thoughts are interrupted by a rap at my window. It is Katie and Jeff...finally.

"I thought the cake wasn't until six. What gives?" Jeff asks as he hurdles the ridge to my second story window. Jeff never just enters a room – he bounces.

"This better be important. It's cutting into crucial gift buying time," Katie smiles.

"Why don't you already have my gift?" I tease my best friend.

"Because you are absolutely impossible to shop for," she smiles as Jeff picks up my brightly colored box.

"So this is the big surprise." He shakes the box and tosses it to me. "I wonder what it is?"

I briefed them both over the phone, and now I tear into it. "Ok, Grandpa...here we go." I open the wrapping to reveal a silver box.

"It looks like a hand held computer," Katie says.

“It does. Cool,” I say opening the box, “I wonder what the big deal about opening it is?” I pick up the computer and it starts to rumble. It sounds like it is clearing its throat.

“Whoa...” Jeff says as he moves in closer to get a better look. “That’s the big deal. It’s alive.”

“Don’t be silly Jeff,” Katie adds, “it can’t be alive.” Grandpa’s picture comes on the screen. “Wow! I guess it is kind of alive.”

“Grandpa!” I screech excitedly.

“Happy Birthday, Phineas. Sorry, I couldn’t be there in person.” My grandpa smiles. His picture is crystal clear and in color.

“Wow, Grandpa...this is too awesome!” I say.

“Just wait and you will really know awesome. Put me on the desk Phineas and the three of you sit down. I assume Jeff is there somewhere.”

Jeff comes into view and waves.

“Ah, there he is...hello Jeff.” Grandpa squints like he can actually see through the computer.

“How’d you know Jeff was here, Grandpa?” I ask.

“Who else would you pick, Phineas, besides Miss Katie and Master Jeff?”

I shrug. “You’ve got a point there.”

“Now, the three of you sit right in front of the monitor so I can see you. See the blue lens?” We all squint closer to see what Grandpa is talking about. “That’s the camera.”

“Way cool!”

“Now, stand back.” Grandpa says. “And hold on to your hats.”

We stand back and instantaneously Grandpa is in the room with us. No smoke, no mirrors, no loud ka-boom and no LIE...Grandpa materializes just like that. None of us can speak. My grandfather just laughs and pulls me in for a hug. “Phineas, my girl, welcome to the next age of modems.”

“Holy cow!” Jeff says as he touches my grandpa to make certain that he’s real. “You beamed yourself to us!”

“Wow!” Katie says softly as she also touches grandpa. “A human fax.”

“Wait until I tell the others,” Jeff says with eyes still as big as saucers, “they’ll completely flip!”

“Hold on there Jeff my boy. There’ll be no telling others. Only you three,” Grandpa says as he sits on my bed. “Gather round girls and boys I’ve got some explaining to do.”

“No, really, Grandpa...how’d you get here? The closet? Under the bed?” I ask, too stunned to believe that he could actually transport himself via modem.

“There’s a lot about me that you don’t know children. There’s a lot I’m not certain that you are ready to hear, but they think you are, so here goes.”

Chapter 1

Comprehension Questions:

1. What does Phineas J. Clooney want to be when she grows up?
2. Who is Phineas waiting for?
3. Why is she waiting?

Draw a storyboard of four pictures that describe what happened in Chapter 1.
Make sure they are in order.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Chapter 1 Rebel Diamonds

As you are reading Chapter 1 find ten words you do not know and write their definitions below.

Word	Definition

Name: _____

Date: _____

Rebel Diamonds - Chapter 1

Name and draw characters from the story in column 1. In column 2 write three character traits for each character.

Name and draw character	Write three character traits, or personality details, that describe each character.
Draw & Name Character	_____ _____ _____
Draw & Name Character	_____ _____ _____
Draw & Name Character	_____ _____ _____

Chapter 2

“It all started,” Grandpa begins, “when your great, great, great, great, great, great Grandpa Clooney started the Clooney Candy Factory as a front for pre-Revolutionary war era spies.”

“The Candy Factory was a front for spies? Beyond cool,” Jeff says.

“Still is...only the spy game has changed a bit in the past few years,” Grandpa adds.

“Grandpa,” I say beginning to understand, “you mean to tell me that you are a spy?”

“Like all the Clooneys were before me,” Grandpa says proudly. “We’ve worked for the government of this United States before there was a government here to work for.”

“And, Dad?” I ask not really believing that my father could actually be a spy. Grandpa...maybe...he’s the type...adventurous, spontaneously, meticulous and always off to some exotic location...but Dad...he’s so...normal.

“Your father was one of the best but he quit to coach soccer when you joined AYSO.” Grandpa shakes his head. “A great loss,” he pauses and looks at us closely. “Anyway, as I said, the spy game has changed and it is about to involve all of you...if you are willing.”

“Us? Spies? Again...way cool!” Katie, my shy best friend, says.

“You hate adventure,” I say looking at Katie, “if there was a caption in the yearbook that read ‘least likely to be a spy’ your picture would be right above it!”

Grandpa pats Katie’s leg. “It’s always the shy ones Phin, they’re the best.”

“So when’s our first assignment?” Katie asks.

Jeff picks up the handheld computer. “Do we get to use the modem?”

Grandpa takes the computer. “Let’s not get ahead of ourselves. We’ve got a lot of work to do.”

Chapter 3

We each take turns “moding” ourselves to the candy factory. It’s really very easy. Push the icon shaped like a map, type in your location and poof...you’re there...literally. It happens so fast that it doesn’t even hurt. It gets Katie a little motion sick but other than that...nothing.

When we are all at the candy factory grandpa leads us to a huge briefing room and begins explaining.

“As I said before,” Grandpa starts, “the spy game has changed over the past few years. The days of James Bond fighting the evil “Red” empire that was the USSR is over.”

“What’s the USSR?” Jeff asks.

“The USSR was a huge country made up of Russia and a lot of those other little Eastern European countries. It was under Communist rule for a long time. The United States and the USSR basically divided up the world. Some countries were behind the “Red” iron curtain and others were free, like us,” Katie impresses us with her historical knowledge.

Grandpa smiles at Katie. “Very good Katie. The spy game was big then – with both powers, superpowers we called them, capable of leveling the earth with nuclear weaponry, each side needed to know what was going on with the other so spying was big business – big and dangerous business. But, sadly, nothing lasts. It was so much easier to fight an evil that was imaginary...”

“But communism isn’t imaginary – it existed and the world was a frightening place from what I read.” Katie interrupts.

“Yes and no Katie. While communism was real – the threat was a game. Neither the U.S. nor the Soviet Union – another name for the USSR – ever intended to breach the face-off. Just two big bullies showing their muscles so the other would not get to crazy. The world today is a different place and the real enemy harder to identify and much more dangerous. That is why we have been instructed to shift our efforts and concentrate on more on the human rights violations around the world. Find equity – find peace.”

“We sound perfect,” I smile excitedly.

“So they think,” my grandfather refers to this “they” again, “but I’m not so sure. You are so young.”

“Who is ‘they’ and what exactly do these ‘they’ people want us to do?” I ask.

“They’ are on a need to know basis and I’m getting to your assignment,” Grandpa squeezes me to him. He smells like a mixture of Old Spice and candy. “As you are probably aware the world is not such a nice place for lots of people, lots of children, to live.”

“It’s horrible,” Katie says, “children working in factories, fighting in wars, abducted, sold into slavery or worse!” Abducted is one of Katie’s college words that means stolen or kidnapped and I don’t know where she gets this slavery thing. Didn’t slavery go out with Abe Lincoln?

“Exactly, that’s where we come in,” Grandpa continues, “we are on a mission to promote and secure global tolerance and ‘they’ feel that the only way in to achieve this is through the children of the world. By educating the children of the world on issues of basic human rights and freedom, by teaching them tolerance and showing them that we are all, indeed, created equal, ‘they’ feel that global peace can finally be achieved. Basically, we are teaching the leaders of tomorrow to know and understand each other. Hopefully, by personally knowing and knowing about people and places, outside of the sheltered box we live in, tolerance and therefore peace can more easily be attained.”

“Like that’ll ever happen,” Jeff says. “Even if we all, us kids I mean, become educated and join forces – we won’t have any real power until we are older, and by then it may be too late. Besides, there are only three of us.”

“Your mission is to bring together more than three. You are to transmodulate, via modem, to designated countries and rescue children in crisis. These children will be transmodulated back here and work with you three by serving on the new *International Coalition of Children for Peace*. This council will act as a junior United Nations if you will. A global body to obtain, monitor and insure tolerance and peace by making people aware of global issues and advocating the governments of the world for change.”

By global issues I’m pretty sure that Grandpa is talking about the way the world is now and all of the bad things in that go on in it. It’s amazing that he and

'they' feel that we, kids of all people, are capable of something so grand. But why not? Grown-ups have been trying to achieve the peace and humanity thing for what?...ever...and it really isn't working. I think their problem, the grown-ups I mean, is that they can't see peace or progress unless they change all of the other people into mini versions of themselves.

I think I speak for most kids when I say that I don't want people to be me...I just want them to share their ice cream and be nice to me. If I want this to happen – I know that I have to be nice to them first.

As Grandpa keeps talking I realize that 'they' think that kids can succeed because we are not demanding anything immediate and that we will be more comfortable letting the people of other countries live the way they want to. What do I care how they live and work – as long as it is fair for all of citizens who live in these countries and no one gets hurt.

This sounds like a pretty big order to fill...but I'm ready. By the gleam in Jeff's eyes and the smile on Katie's entire face – I think that they are ready too.

In less than an hour we are briefed and learning about a small country in Africa called Sierra Leone – famous for diamond mines and civilian mutilation. A civilian is a person who does not work for the government or is not in the army. I am a civilian and so are my family members, my friends and all of my classmates. Mutilation is when someone is hurt, like getting an arm cut off, on purpose, by another person.

No lie! This happens there!

"The women and children have it the worst," Grandpa says. "There are groups of soldiers that feel that the only way to win respect, or at least get the people to fear them, is to make examples of one or two citizens by cutting off their arms and legs if they show opposition." Opposition means that they disagree – like opposite. "I recently met one young man who tried to stop a group of rebel soldiers from stealing his little sister. This poor boy didn't have a right arm. It was cut off and tied to a stake and displayed in the center of his village as a message to his people...try to take what we want and we will cut off your arms so you can't take anything anymore."

Chapter 2 and 3

Comprehension questions. Please answer the following questions using complete sentences:

1. Where are Phineas and her friends going?
2. Where does Grandpa Clooney work?
3. Where was the USSR?

Draw a storyboard of four pictures that describe what happened in Chapter 1. Make sure they are in order.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Chapter 2 and 3 Rebel Diamonds

As you are reading Chapter 2 and 3 find ten words you do not know and write their definitions below.

Word	Definition

Chapter 4

Sierra Leone does not sound like a happy place to be...but that is where the new branch of the Explorers are about to go.

Sierra Leone is in Africa and Africa sits like an ice cream cone in the ocean with most of the rocky road (my favorite) stacked on the left hand side. Sierra Leone is at the drip point – left bottom – of where the ice cream meets the cone. It is between Guinea and Liberia. Grandpa says that Liberia's last president left a huge mess in both countries – his and Sierra Leone. See, he is from Liberia, but went to college here in the United States but then took his education back to his own country and used his skills and powers of manipulation to rob Sierra Leone out of blood diamonds.

Sierra Leone is rich with diamonds mines and the people are so poor that it's way easy to steal from them. It's very sad. He's stealing from his own people! Both countries were set up by ex-slaves from the United States. People who wanted to go back to Africa and have a fresh start. Somewhere along the way – something went way wrong.

Grandpa says his western education is helping the situation there stay bad. I can't believe that he lived here, went to school here, and can treat people so horribly. This president of an African country was educated here and all he learned was greed! Here! In the US!

I'm amazed by this college thing. Think about it. It means that you or I could sit at a table with him and talk about McDonald's or TV or video games or movies. It means that he's been in a grocery store and a mall...maybe even Disneyland...but that he would still cut your throat to make a buck or get some power. Did he learn that here?

And check this out: he was overthrown and had to move to a different country – but that doesn't stop him. He is still causing havoc and must be stopped.

Grandpa says his type are the hardest people to deal with – ones who you can understand and share things with...but who are so totally different on the inside. "The more a person knows about a place – the easier it is for him to get inside and hurt them. But remember children, he is an exception. Know that in Africa or America, Europe or Asia – anywhere and everywhere you go – there are good and bad

people and sometimes it is hard to tell which is which. Now it's our job to bring some of the good ones together to make a difference and you three are my front line."

So there sits this little country, called Sierra Leone, that has supplied and still supplies much of the free world with those little precious clear stones we are all so fond of – yep -- diamonds. But this ex-president of Liberia – who still profits from the diamonds – at least I believe he does – is only one of the evil-doers.

There is also this company, a big huge company, which continues to run major diamond mines through these bad people, even though they know this stuff still goes on. I guess they figure that since it can get diamonds cheap and make tons of money on the backs of poor, frightened people, why not continue to do business with vicious leaders and even rebels.

This company doesn't even mine all of the diamonds to sell. They mine them and keep them in big vaults so that other people can't mine them and drive the prices down. See, if there is a lot of something – say Coca-Cola – it doesn't cost that much to get a bottle or a can...but what if they stopped making Coke everywhere but in your hometown. It would be really expensive because there wouldn't be enough to go around. That's how it is with the diamonds. Keep the numbers down and the interest in diamond jewelry up – and you can charge what you want.

Anyway, in Sierra Leone, some of the "bad guys" were lead by a man who used to be a cameraman for a news station. No lie. Foday Sankoh and his RUF. RUF stand for Revolutionary United Front. They are an army of men and boys who have taken over the country and rule by terrorizing the people. Terrorizing the people means that they don't really have real power and that they have to bully everyone into doing what they want. And what they want is for people to quietly slave away in the diamond mines and give all of the money to the RUF – after it is filtered through Liberia and a couple of other places. And, boy are they bullies! Nothing like how Justin and Taylor used to call us names and steal our lunches. These bullies quiet the poor people in Sierra Leone by cutting off their arms and legs. Truly and literally (literally is my new word that means that I am not exaggerating and that something really happens)...truly and literally, they cut of people's arms and legs and not just army people but regular people like kids and teachers and store workers.

There is supposed to be a new government in Sierra Leone now who put the RUF out of business. Foday was even arrested and then he died. Only, even as we speak, someone is being trained to take over where he left off. Foday was an arm and leg whacker – goodness only knows what the next guy will do. The RUF technically doesn't exist anymore, but soldiers with RUF ties still “guard” the diamond mines, hide in the wilderness and attack people. Basically, they steal from anybody they encounter and don't care who they chop up in the process.

It is so bad over there that a few years ago the United States government and others pulled out all of the diplomats (a diplomat is a person from one country who lives in another country and makes sure that people from his or her original country are safe and protected – kind of like a big brother or sister acts when you need protection). Lucky for us – the diplomats are back. Only grandpa says that won't do us any good – because neither we nor our organization exists.

What this means for us, Katie, Jeff and me, is that we are on our own. On our own in a country where we will be physical and cultural strangers. Luckily, our transmodulation devise is also a translator, although Grandpa says that many Sierra Leoneans speak English.

Our mission is to find an orphaned eleven-year-old girl named Saramba who is forced to work in these diamond mines. The soldier groups working for the diamond company think that children make perfect workers because they are small, easy to boss around and work hard if pushed. They are also easily threatened and expendable. Expendable means no one would really care if these kids disappeared or died. This is the saddest thing I have ever heard. Everyone should be missed by someone.

Saramba's father was a police officer from Jabwema Fiama, Kono, Sierra Leone. In February 1998, he made his family run away from their home after the RUF attacked their town. They lived in the forest for two days before they were captured. Their captors killed Saramba's parents, her brother was enslaved and Saramba, who was only a toddler – was sold to a diamond mine to be a future slave.

When she was old enough to work her employers purposely broke one of her legs so she could not run away and forced her to work in the diamond mines. Forced her to work with a broken leg! I fall down and bump my knee or my toe and

my mom fusses all over me. I lay on the couch and am waited on for hours – sometimes days. When I hurt my leg crashing my go-cart last spring – I got a new video game system and was laid up for weeks eating ice cream and sipping Icees.

I don't know what I would do if something like that happened to me. But you know what? When it happened to Saramba, it may have hurt her heart and body, but it did not hurt her spirit. She didn't give up!

Children in Sierra Leone have a hard time studying. If they are “workers”, like Saramba, they are lucky to get any education at all. Not even that stops some of them. After working twelve hours digging for diamonds she sneaks into a dark room, behind an old store, where an old school teacher tries to educate the children of the mines. They only have books and magazines that are left over from before the RUF was around. They have no light so they can only study until the sun goes down, or by candlelight – which I can't imagine is so very good for their eyes.

Saramba is my age, yet I can't even dream of living like she has. When Katie and I crashed the go-cart we to stay in the forest for one night and I thought I would never get home. I was so afraid. Imagine how afraid you would be if you had no home to go to. Or how afraid you would be if the people who where making you work broke your leg to scare you and to make sure that you couldn't leave...to make sure that you'd stay and keep working. And then imagine that no one knows you exist.

“The government in place now is trying to sanitize the diamond business, but they are too poor and it is too corrupt. The legitimate mines operate under a set of standards and laws...then there are the ghost mines – the illegitimate remnants of the RUF. No one controls them...heck, kids, no one can even get close to them.” Grandpa looks sad. “But we are going to try. We have to try.” His voice trails off and I think about the poor people who work in these mines and then about the people in my own country.

Sometimes people say bad things about where we live – the United States I mean. Gosh, could anyone want to live anywhere else? We are so lucky to be free to do and say what we want...okay, well there are moms and dads to deal with...but, man! I'll try never to complain again.

That is I will never complain again if I make it out of Sierra Leone alive.

I am laying in bed, staring at the ceiling, excited and scared stiff about our mission tomorrow. It sounded so simple when we were safe with Grandpa in the candy factory. Transmodulate to a country thousands of miles away, find a girl and bring her back home with us.

I guess I figured it would be like walking through my neighborhood filled with trees and picket fences and dogs and kids riding bikes. After our “briefing” and then reading about Sierra Leone on the Internet – I’m terrified. The country is not technically at war anymore, but it is still a pretty awful place to be. People are poor and only live to be about 45-years-old. Grandpa says that here in the US we live to be about 80 or even 90-years-old. Think about it...what if your parents were never going to get as old as your grandparents?

The good news is that the civil war in this African country is technically over and hundreds of people who had to leave the country are starting to return. The bad news is that the place is still a mess and unsafe for kids like Saramba to live. That’s why we are going to get her. Plus, we need her for the new group of kids to save the world that Grandpa is setting up. I think we’ll all be Explorers – International Explorers.

You know how when you think about something...like your house or your neighborhood or summer vacation...you picture it as shadowed or bright? Well, I picture the things in my life as bright. There have been very few shadow days, but not many. Most of my life has been in Technicolor – until now. The darkest shadow I have ever seen in my mind is tomorrow and I’m not sure if I’m light enough to face it – even if Katie and Jeff are with me.

Chapter 2 and 3

Comprehension questions. Please answer the following questions using complete sentences:

1. Where are Phineas and her friends going?
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3. Where was the USSR?

Draw a storyboard of four pictures that describe what happened in Chapter 1. Make sure they are in order.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Chapter 4 Rebel Diamonds

As you are reading Chapter 4 write down ten new things you read about that are new. In other words, write down ten things you read about that you did not already know. Don't forget to use complete sentences.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Chapter 5

It is precisely three minutes after five p.m. and Jeff and Katie are late. This does not make me happy. Obviously they don't realize that we are under a time limit here. We have only ten hours to transmodulate to Sierra Leone, find a girl we have never met, from a picture that is two years old, and bring her back to the United States with us.

A rapping on my window breaks my thoughts. I check my backpack, for like the twelfth time, as Katie and Jeff are climbing through my window.

Jeff bounces in first. "I am so ready Phinny! Let's be outta here."

Katie looks like she is about to get sick.

"Hey guys. You're late!" I say. "Passport, check. Travel visa, check. Bug spray, check. Money, check. Water, check. Lucky rabbit's foot. Check. Chococaranutamal candy bar, check."

Katie pulls out the list Grandpa gave her when he gave us our passports and visas. "I don't have Chococaranutamal on my list," she says.

"I improvised," I smile at my best friend, "top drawer...help yourself."

Katie and Jeff raid my candy stash and we put on our backpacks.

"Where is the belt, holder-thingy for the transmodulator?" Jeff asks as we center ourselves by the window for our trip.

I lift up my sweatshirt and show him the, not-so-stylish, belt Grandpa said I have to wear at all times when traveling. See, if the transmodulator is not attached to me – at all times – I won't be able to escape if we get into trouble. This is the only way my parents agreed to let me take on such a tough...and I must say...dangerous...mission! Jeff and Katie each have a tiny remote devise that will transmodulate them whenever I push the little blue bottom. We have an extra remote for Saramba. The transmodulator can also transport up to three people if they are touching it – but that might not always be practical.

Say, for instance, I'm getting shot at and Jeff has been captured by angry preventers of peace and Katie is hiding so she won't get captured...well, if I push the button, good for me, but my friends spend the next twenty years in some dirty foreign jail...or worse! So, we have these remotes as our safety net. Funny, but they do not make me feel so very safe now and we haven't even left yet.

Another thing that does not make me feel safe is the loss of power. What if we are in the middle of the African rain forest, snakes are crawling through the trees, bad people are on our trail and the cell phone thing happens...you know – the “can you hear me now” thing? when there is no signal. What if we get a no signal?

I’m not really sure if that can happen. Grandpa’s voice breaks my thoughts as the transmodulator rumbles to life.

“Good morning travelers! Ready for your first journey?” I can tell my Grandpa is trying to sound less nervous than he is.

“Absolutely,” smiles Jeff.

Katie hugs her backpack straps tightly to her. “As ready as I’ll ever be,” she sighs.

“Grandpa...just the person I need to talk to. Can this transmodulator lose power like a cell phone and leave us stranded in the middle of nowhere never to be seen or heard from again by any of our loved ones?”

Grandpa chuckles. “No Phineas. It runs on a special bacterium powered battery that cannot discharge.”

“What’s a bacterium battery?” Jeff asks grabbing the handheld transmodulator and spinning Grandpa around to look for a battery opening.

“Hey, turn me back around and I’ll explain.” Back in position, Grandpa continues. “There are certain strains of bacterium that cannot easily be destroyed and they multiply at such as rapid rate that, if one harvests the energy they produce when multiplying, an entire device, a computer in this instance, can be powered for life as they continually regenerate in the contained environment of their casing.”

“Huh?” Jeff looks confused.

“He said,” Katie explains to Jeff, “that the transmodulator is powered by bacteria.”

“So it’s sick,” Jeff chuckles at his little joke.

He can be such a boy.

“Yes,” I add, “and it can’t get better.” He can be so not funny.

“Well, children I wish you luck. I am confident that you will be successful. Just push the red button if you need me Phineas and I’ll be right with you!” Grandpa says.

“Bye, Grandpa! I love you.” I say as Grandpa fades to grey.

“Bye, kids. Bye, Phineas. I love you too.” And he’s out.

I grab my backpack. My friends do the same. I touch the transmodulator. Katie touches the transmodulator. Jeff touches the transmodulator. I look at Katie and then at Jeff, hold my breath, close my eyes and push the blue button.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Rebel Diamonds: Chapter 5

Please write a paragraph describing what you read so far in Chapters 1-5.

In the beginning	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
After that	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Later	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Just when	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Finally	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Chapter 6

We land exactly where the transmodulator is programmed. The screen says we are in the “eastern provinces”. Diamond central! Numbers blink on the bottom: geographic coordinates 8 30 N, 11 30 W. Mental note: pay more attention in Mr. Felding’s geography class; because I have absolutely no idea what these numbers are supposed to mean. Probably latitude and longitude – but I’m really just guessing.

I look around slowly. We are in a dark, dense, green forest. I can tell that it is a rain forest. I look up and see the canopy that covers the top. I do remember studying about the rain forest and the canopy. It is so thick that the sun can barely peek through. The radiant rays that do get through look like laser tag streams that can’t reach us.

I look at Katie and then at Jeff.

“I guess we’re here.” Jeff sounds less sure of himself than I’ve ever heard him sound before.

“I think I’m going to be sick.” Katie pushed her glasses up and wipes her eyes.

“Do you want to rest a minute?” I ask my green friend.

“Let’s just find Saramba and get outta here.” Katie says walking to a rough path that seems to lead towards light.

I follow Katie. Jeff follows me. The dark and dense forest opens to some pretty bare land. It looks like cow pasture in late spring. This is not at all what I expected.

And the air. I have never really thought about air before, but now I can’t help it. It smells funny here. Sweet – but bitter too. Like nose drops after you’ve taken cough medicine.

“Where does Sam say we are supposed to go?” Katie asks.

“Sam?” I have no idea what my best friend is talking about.

“I’m tried of saying transmodulation, so I named the transmodulation device Sam.”

“I like it.” I smile at Katie who is not so green anymore.

I am beginning to relax. Maybe Sierra Leone is a bright spot after all. It looks so normal. It even feels normal – thick hot, sweaty Disney World normal – but still normal.

I'm not really sure why I expected it to feel and be so different. Trees and dirt and grass and ground are trees and dirt and grass and ground no matter where you look at them. Plus, the sky we are under and the sun that's shining on me are the same sun and sky that shine on me in Eastwood.

"We need to head out of this grove. We should go through that field and into the next section of trees. I guess it's a jungle. The little Sam map makes it look pretty thick."

I show my friends the 3-D map of where we are. Jeff points to a long blue line that curves along the green and brown patches on the screen.

"Look," he says squinting at the map, "we are here and need to be there. This river the... Sewa River...will lead us right to Saramba."

Katie shakes her head. "But it takes us across these high and low flat things with no trees to hide behind. Doesn't look very safe. Phineas, is right Jeff. We need to stay under as much cover as possible. We are three white kids in new American clothes traveling by foot through Africa."

I clear my throat and point to the hole in Jeff's sweatshirt.

"Ok, relatively new. Anyway, we are three white kids wandering around in a country that is pretty much black. Don't you think we'd be noticed a little?" Katie finishes.

Once again, my best friend adds a bit of logic that no one else had thought of.

"But if we don't follow the river we'll get lost," Jeff states. "No offense to your girl scouting skills, but you two couldn't even find your way out of the Eastwood woods when the go-cart crashed – let alone locate a diamond mine in a foreign country."

Katie fixes her ponytail. "That's because we didn't have a compass." Katie takes out a compass. "We need to go southwest through the forest."

"Yea, I think so too," I back Katie. "Besides, it's more of a straight line. We would probably get there quicker."

"Two to one – let's go." Katie is off.

It's only been an hour and we are at the edge of our green, viney protection and looking smack into the center of a village. At least I think it's a village.

To be honest I expected grass or vine huts surrounded by beautiful trees and flowers – streams rushing by and the soft smell of flowers in the air. Guess I was wrong.

Chapter 7

This village is made up of thin board box-room-houses and lean-tos – like the ones we saw when we studied Native Americans – only the Native American homes looked much sturdier. Nothing is straight either – the walls I mean. Even what looks like a deserted gas station, right out of a 1930’s movie, is tilted and looks as if it will fall if the breeze blows hard enough.

There aren’t very many people hanging around either. The only one I really notice is a boy about my age. If he lived in Eastwood, I bet he would be in my class. Only he’d have to lose the gun he is carrying. They frown on that sort of thing at my school.

No lie. A kid my age is lugging around a gun – not a good thing. This kid is dressed in jeans and a black or dark blue t-shirt that has the arms torn out and he is carrying a big gun. Not ordinary big but huge big. I’m no gun expert, but my guess is that this thing could do some major damage.

Suddenly, those shadows are over Sierra Leone again. Suddenly, the trees and ground and grass don’t look like they do at home anymore. Suddenly, the thick air makes it hard to breathe. To quote Dorothy... “we are definitely NOT in Kansas anymore”...we’re not even on the same planet as Kansas anymore.

I look at Jeff and then at Katie. Both seem to be staring at the same kid – or maybe his gun. Then it hits me. If we can see him so clearly – he can see us. And he does.

Before I even know what is happening – like fast motion and slow motion all at the same time – we are surrounded by an odd mixture of men and boys – none of whom look all that happy to see us. Some are dressed like the first kid, some in army clothes – but all are accessorized with big guns.

I can’t breath. I can’t think. Katie and Jeff both grab onto me and just as I am about to hit Sam, the transmodulator, the original kid reaches up and yanks it off of my belt. The others grab our backpacks and then our arms. Our chance of survival vanishes with the transmodulator.

I am being dragged by this group of men towards the village.

“What is in the bags?”

“Wait until we get them inside.”

“What are you doing here?”

“Who are you?”

Their words float through my mind, but my voice will not work. They are speaking English, but I barely understand them. Not because they are talking funny but because there is a humming in my ears that’s getting louder by the second. I have never been so afraid in all of my life and if they do not kill me I promise never to do anything bad ever again! The kid carrying Sam, the trans-modulator, is carelessly tossing it into the air.

If only I can break free and grab it. I could push the blue bottom and the remote red one and we’d be safe.

The darkness of the room we are thrown into hurts my eyes. For a second I am blinded. The room smells dusty and dirty – like a public restroom in a subway station, or like a stairway in a parking garage. The floor that I land on...hard...is made of packed dirt.

“I think we’re in big trouble,” Jeff whispers.

“I saw them ditch our stuff in a closet in the hallway.” Katie whispers close to my ear.

“What hallway?” How did she see a hallway when I was blinded when we entered the room?

“Silence,” a tall man says as he slams the door.

I don’t move for what seems like a very long time. I can’t really believe what is happening. I mean, yesterday I was a kid with a birthday and a list of ‘to do’s’ a mile long. And I can guarantee that none of those ‘to do’s’ was to get captured while in a foreign country looking for a stranger.

Then I notice that we are not alone.

“I didn’t know anybody brought kids,” says a voice in the corner. “Are you with the rescue aid workers, too?”

“No missionaries,” Katie says. “Our parents are missionaries.”

I look at Katie quizzically. How in the world did she think of missionaries so fast? Sometimes she amazes me.

“Missionaries?” Jeff whispers.

Katie shoots him a dirty look and mumbles. "They always take kids."

"I see," says the young man.

He and a woman, probably a little younger than my mom, are sitting in the corner. They have British accents.

"We got separated," Katie says.

"This is no place for children," the woman says actually to herself. "We are rescue aid workers. I'm Diana and this is Nate."

"I'm Katie." Katie extends her hand and I am again amazed at how my best friend is always the calm one in a pinch. You'd think that my shy Katie would be the one to buckle under pressure – but never. "This is Phineas and Jeff."

We exchange hellos and Diana smiles.

"They don't usually hold people for very long, but don't let them know that you are missionaries," she says.

"Don't say anything if you can help it. Let them think you are with us and you should be ok." Nate smiles too. Only his smile is weak and unconvincing – like none of us is going to be ok.

"Why can't they know we are missionaries?" Katie asks.

Like it matters! I think. We aren't.

"Because if you are rescue aid workers they need you to keep bringing in food, clothing and medicine and chances are they will let you go so the aid doesn't stop," Diana says.

"Missionaries, they find annoying and expendable." Nate uses Katie's college word and I understand it. "There is a growing Muslim contingent in this country and they are not open to religious freedom."

"How long have you been here?" Jeff asks.

"Since yesterday," Diana says.

"I'm thirsty," says Katie.

"This isn't exactly the Hyatt. We haven't had food or water since we got here." Nate leans against a rough, brown wall.

Jeff digs around in his pocket and pulls out one of my Chococaranutamal candy bar and some Twizzlers and offers them to Nate and Diana. "They're a little melted, but I'm sure they are still good."

Nate reaches for them, but Diana stops him. “Nate! You can’t take food from these children. They’ll need it more than us if we have to stay here.”

“No, please,” Katie says, “eat it.”

The rescue aid workers take the candy, but I could tell they felt bad about it.

As Nate is finishing the last bite of his Chococaranutamal candy bar a sudden burst of light fills the room and the door opens with a loud bang. Two different guys enter...different guys...same guns.

Neither speaks. One grabs Diana, pulls her to her feet and begins to drag her out of the room. Nate jumps him from behind and all heck breaks loose. Diana’s screaming, Nate’s yelling “NO!” and whaling on both men and the big guys are beating him off with the butts of their guns.

“Phinny,” Jeff speaks quietly and nods to the door.

I nod to Katie and we run for it – out the open door, into the hallway and out another open door. The guys who captured us are sitting under a tree to the right of the building playing cards, but none of them are looking as we run left and down an alley.

An old lady motions us down another alley. We stop dead at the bank of the Sewa River. Another old lady motions to a flat boat. We climb in and push off.

“Thank you,” I mouth.

“Go *wit* God,” the lady mouths back. I stare at her for a long time as Jeff and Katie paddle us away from the shore and down the current. Her eyes are sad and empty. She helped us, but there was no light inside of her. You know when you look into someone’s eyes and you can see a sparkle of who they are and how they are feeling. Not hers. Hers are just empty.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Rebel Diamonds – Chapters 6 and 7 Storyboard

Draw a storyboard of six pictures that describe what happened in Chapters 6 and 7. Make sure they are in order.

Chapter 8

“Oh...my...gosh!!” I say stunned. I can’t believe what we just did.

“What?” Katie spins around – alarmed more by the tone of my voice than my non-descriptive words.

“Our stuff! We left our stuff.” Words flow from my mouth and into the air, but I don’t even recognize my voice. Times the fear I felt in the dark room by like a thousand and that is how I am feeling right now.

“We are so in big trouble.” Jeff puts down his paddle and sits beside me.

Katie sits too. “Not really. All we have to do is find Saramba and get back to Freetown. There’s an American Embassy there, I think, or at least a British Embassy. We’ll be safe and they’ll get us home.”

“How do you know this stuff?” Jeff asks looking at Katie in awe.

“Oh, is that all we have to do!” I say sarcastically. “Katie, Freetown is miles northwest of here...wherever here is. Our maps and compass and transmodulation devise is back at that village.”

“Maybe we can find some rescue aid workers. They’ll help us out.” Katie is trying to remain positive.

“What are we going to say? We were wondering around this lovely African country and got separated from our handheld computer that can beam us home. Will you please help us get back?” Jeff does not appear to be remaining as calm as Katie is.

“I think we need to go back,” I say biting my tongue at the thought, “maybe when it’s dark or something.”

Our conversation pauses as we catch sight of a sign that reads *Kovore Farm*.

“Phineas, isn’t that what your Grandfather said we were supposed to be looking for?” Katie asks.

“I think so.” I grab a paddle off the floor of the boat. “Let’s bank the boat.”

We turn the boat towards the shore. When the water is shallow enough Jeff jumps off and pulls us the rest of the way out of the murky water. We hide the boat as best we can and stare up at the flat, stacked ground that looks like it extends

forever into the sky. Hard, level expanses of dirt are bumped with giant mounds of golden-amber ground. They are left over from the diamond mining, I guess.

I pull Saramba's picture from my pocket. "Let's just see if we can find her and then try to go back for our stuff."

Jeff starts to protest, but Katie jumps to my defense, "Phineas is right. We're here and we have a job to do. Let's just get the girl and then go back for the transmodulator."

The sun is beginning to set. The sky looks like it is on fire. The sun seems to be melting into the ground oozing yellow, orange and pink sludge across the African horizon. Africa! I am in Africa with my two best friends! Not real! Way not real! But it is real. As real as those two rescue workers back in that village. I hope they will be okay and that we'll see them again to thank them for helping us.

In the distance, I faintly hear the light grinding of dirt and the sloshing of water. It is methodical and slow. It must be shoveling and panning in water, I realize, only I don't know how or why I am processing this information.

I'm tired and I'm scared, but most of all, I just want my mom or dad and the warmth of my house and the safety of my United States. I use those thoughts as strength, take a deep breath and start walking towards the noise.

A few bushes are spread out over the step-like land. There aren't many, but enough to hide behind as we continue towards the noise.

"It's almost dark," Katie whispers. I'm not sure why she's whispering. We seem miles from anyone. "Maybe we should wait to go in. I mean...finding Saramba in the dark seems safer than trampling around in broad daylight."

"Good point," Jeff says. "I'm starving!"

"Me too," I whine. "Try not to think about it."

We stop at the edge of the next step and I notice a group of people – back down the steps but way right – under a cluster of white, canopy like tents.

I nod towards them. "Who do you think they are?"

Katie and Jeff look in the direction I am pointing.

"I can't make out guns," Jeff says.

"We are way to far away to figure that they are unarmed," Katie states.

"Look!" I point to the blatant red cross on the top of the white canopies.

“Red Cross!” Katie whispers.

“Or stolen tents,” Jeff adds.

“I don’t think so.” I squint to get a better look in the fading sun. “Those yellow boxes. Remember, we saw on the news how food, medicine and stuff like that is left or dropped in yellow boxes.”

“Actually I do remember that,” Jeff says.

“I bet they are Nate and Diana’s group.” Katie remarks and starts heading towards them.

“Wait!” I call after my friend. “Let’s go from bush to bush. Just to be safe.”

One bush – safe. Two bush – safe. Red-bush – safe. Blue bush – safe. Dr. Seuss makes me feel better.

“It’s Red Cross,” I whisper.

“Or some other rescue aid group.” Katie whispers back.

Rescue aid workers -- my new “when I grow up” profession. Only I’m kind of doing that now, I think. I turn to go to the next bush...the last bush and it hits me square in the eyes...the gray barrel of another big gun.

“Diana!” I hear Katie yell. My fearless friend runs past the men and their guns and flies into Diana’s arms. “You’re okay!”

I think Katie is crying and I really think that it’s not because Diana’s okay, I mean sure she cares, but because she maybe thinks that she’s okay. I, personally, am feeling funny about this whole thing.

“It’s all right guys,” Diana waves her arms and calls the guns off. “They’re missionary kids.”

As we walk to their tents, I notice that Diana is bruised and limping.

“How’d you get away?” I ask. Diana looks at me. Her eyes are sad. I read about what they do to women before they release them and wish I hadn’t asked that question.

“They let us go.” Nate comes from under the canopy and ruffles my hair. “Here you go sport.” He hands Jeff a candy bar in a shiny gold wrapper. “It’s a Crunchy. The best candy bar you’ll ever have.” A Crunchy is an Irish candy bar made by Cadbury. It is honeycomb and more than yummy and delicious combined.

“Thanks!” Jeff devours it as he follows us under the canopy.

Diana gives us a tour of their supplies. I was right. The yellow boxes are food packages. They also have medicine and first aid supplies.

“But are you safe here?” I ask as we sit down and are served some kind of mush with brown sugar on it.

“What about the men and the guns and the diamond mine?” Jeff asks as he examines the empty, foreign candy wrapper.

“What do you know about the diamond mine?” Nate asks. He has a funny look on his face like something is wrong with us knowing about the mine. My gut is telling me that these are not ordinary rescue aid workers.

“Oh, just that my dad...” I begin.

“The head minister of our group,” Katie interrupts.

“Okay...my dad the head minister of our group said that the diamond mines in this area are still under the control of the R...”

“The bad guys,” Katie interrupts again and I realize that she must have the same weird feeling I had earlier and she doesn’t want me to say too much.

“We’re talking really bad,” I say.

“One of the reasons we came all the way out here is to find the daughter of one of our Sierra Leonean ministers who was taken and we think forced to work in the mines.” Katie says. “Show her the picture Phineas.”

I take out the picture and hand it to Diana. She hands it to Nate.

“How do they not know you are here?” Jeff asks.

“They do know we’re here,” Nate answers. “They rely on our food and medical supplies. See, kids, the situation here is quite unsteady. While this mine is technically under the control of the government, as all of the mines now are, some of the ‘bad people’,” Nate smiles at Katie, “as Katie so perfectly put it, are still mining them because more of their ‘bad people’ friends have been appointed to work in the government.”

“Like all those old soldiers?” Jeff asks.

“Exactly,” Nate says. “Now, if you are finished there I’ll take you down to see the mine.”

“How is that safe?” I ask.

“We have an interesting relationship with those men with the guns.” Diana says. “See, they need our supplies and the government wants us here so they have to be careful.”

“Although they don’t have a problem roughing us up a bit.” Nate rubs a bump on his head.

“We do have to be careful. They kidnap us...have even killed rescue workers...to remind us that they are still in charge.” Diana adds.

“Nice people,” I say.

“I’d love to see the mine,” Jeff seems genuinely excited.

“I’m tired,” Katie nods to me, “Phineas why don’t we stay here and take a nap. Besides, I’d like to be here if our parents show up.”

I agree with Katie, because I know she’s up to something.

“If they are not here by tomorrow,” Diana reassures, “we’ll get you to the Embassy in Freetown.”

“Sure you don’t all want to come?” Nate asks again.

“Take Jeff. I’ll show the girls where they can rest.” Diana leads us to cots lined along the wall.

I watch Jeff wind down a trail towards the sound of the digging shovels. I’m more than a little nervous about separating, but at this point, I don’t think we have much choice.

“Diana,” I ask as she settles us in, “why do rescue aid workers have guns?”

Katie shoots me a dirty look. Diana’s eyes grow dark. Maybe I asked the wrong question.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Chapter 8 Rebel Diamonds

As you are reading Chapter 8 find ten words you do not know and write their definitions below. If you can not find ten words in Chapter 8, you may go as far back as Chapter 6.

Word	Definition

Name: _____

Date: _____

Rebel Diamonds - Chapter 8

Name and draw characters from the story in column 1. In column 2 write three character traits for each character.

Name and draw character	Write three character traits, or personality details, that describe each character.
Draw & Name Character	_____ _____ _____
Draw & Name Character	_____ _____ _____
Draw & Name Character	_____ _____ _____

Chapter 9

Diana patiently explains the way of the new Sierra Leone to Katie and me.

It seems that rescue aid workers are always terrorized and even having guns doesn't necessarily help. Like how she and Nate had to stay the night, without food or water or a bathroom, in that dark room, so that this group of aid people would know who was in charge.

It's just like bullying. These guys think they have to be mean so that the other people will think they are cool and in charge.

I guess Diana and Nate and these guys are on the up and up. At first, I thought that maybe they were diamond smugglers or counter operatives, you know spies for both sides, but I think they just kind of have to be tough and carry guns to survive out here.

Maybe I should re-think this rescue aid worker thing. The cots we are napping on are way uncomfortable. The mush was horrible – thought I will not complain because I was so hungry I would have eaten just about anything – and, well, to be perfectly honest – I'm not so big on guns.

"Katie," I turn over and look at my buddy.

"Yea?" She turns towards me.

"Do you trust these people?" I ask.

"I suppose," she says, "I wasn't sure at first, but think about the kind of person who would have the guts to go to a foreign country – where lots of people...lots of gun carrying people...don't want you to be and then try to help them out. They have to be tough. Gosh, look at where they sleep."

"Maybe I won't be a rescue aid worker after all," I sigh.

"Phineas, I think your Grandpa has way other plans," Katie says.

"You know we have to go back for the transmodulator," I say.

"I know."

"Do you think it's still there?"

"If we go back tonight, maybe. I bet there is a major black market on goods though. We can wait too long," Katie says.

We read about the black market in Social Studies. It's not really a market or store but like a group of people who sell illegal or stolen things and then sell them to other people.

I must have fallen asleep because the next thing I remember is hearing Jeff's voice come up the trail. Katie and I spring from the cots to meet them at the canopy entrance.

"Did you see Saramba?" I ask.

"No, but wow...what a production," Jeff says. He looks pretty amazed at his recent experience.

"Jeff was a bit unnerved by the process," Nate pats Jeff on the back.

"I don't know. I expected them to have big machines and caves and dig like in gold mines and stuff. They use shovels and gold pans. The mine is just a pit they've made and they keep digging in it to get these rocks out," Jeff says.

"Did you see any diamonds?" Katie asks.

"They're rocks! Ugly, dirty rocks." Jeff shakes his head.

Nate and Diana and some of the others laugh.

"Rough diamonds are nothing to look at," Diana says. "They have to be cut and polished."

Nate and Diana busy themselves on a laptop and Katie and Jeff and I are all together and alone for the first time since we arrived at this camp.

"You didn't see Saramba?" I ask.

"No, but I saw the lean-to, room thingy where she and the other children go to study after they work. They go during dinner, but I think it's where that lady teaches them."

"Could you find it again...on your own...without Nate?" Katie asks.

"Yea, it's on this side of their camp," Jeff says. "You guys have to see the mine when they are working. Hundreds of kids and men and women – old, young – doesn't matter – digging with shovels – bent over scraping around in the dirt and others sledging through water with rusty old pans. Some of them as bad as your Grandfather said they'd be Phineas. And the whole place is surrounded by men with guns."

“Wow,” I say – hardly able to imagine such a production. Now I wish I had gone to see.

“These aid people bring food into the mine for the workers at sundown. Maybe we can find Saramba then,” Jeff says.

“You know,” I say, “I’ve been thinking... what if Saramba doesn’t want to come back with us? I mean we are total strangers.”

“Trust me,” Jeff shakes his head, “she’d rather do just about anything than what I saw those poor people do. One guy was beaten unconscious while we watched, because he stopped digging to take, like, a sliver out of his finger.” Jeff sighs, his eyes wander to the mine and a foreign, dark shadow overtakes the blue of his eyes. “We find her – she’ll come.”

Name: _____ Date: _____

**Chapter 9: Rebel Diamonds
Main Ideas**

Just using Chapter 9: In the first column list the main ideas. In the second column list 2 or 3 details that support the main idea. In column three draw a picture illustrating the main idea.

Main Idea	Three Details	Illustration
Main Idea 1:	Details for main idea 1.	Drawings or problem sample to go with main idea 1.
Main Idea 2:	Details for main idea 2.	Drawings or problem sample to go with main idea 2.
Main Idea 3:	Details for main idea 3.	Drawings or problem sample to go with main idea 3.
Concluding idea:		

Chapter 10

Looking down at the mine I understand what Jeff was talking about. It's not elaborate or glamorous or even remotely cool. It really is nothing but a hole. A dirty, filthy hole filled with rocks and dirt and dust and water. The people Jeff described are gone, except for the gun guys on the rim above the hole.

Off to one side of the pit is a gigantic pile of shovels. Two men in jeans and white shirts are inspecting a pile of rocks as they drink from what looks like unlabeled wine bottles.

"Those must be the diamonds," I whisper to Katie.

She nods.

Jeff points to the lean to. "That's the place."

"Hey Diana?" I call.

She turns and smiles at me.

"Can we bring the boxes to the kids?" I ask casually...probably too casually.

Diana lags behind the others to walk with us. She thinks about my question and then answers it with one of her own. "To look for your friend?"

"Would it be ok?" I ask again.

She smiles softly, like a mom would smile and suddenly I miss my mom a whole bunch. It's not like it's been that long since I was home, only a few hours really. On the other hand, it's been five years! Or so it feels.

"Yes, but I'll come with you," she says.

For some reason I trust her more than before. For some reason I don't really think that she's a spy person for both sides.

"Nate," Diana grabs some boxes and motions us to do the same, "we are going bring the children their rations."

Nate nods and continues down the path to a glowing campfire.

We enter the lean-to and the room silences. The old lady sitting in front of several kids, most about my age or younger, nods and smiles an empty smile. You know the kind of smile that doesn't go past your face and into your eyes? That kind of smile is an epidemic here.

Diana puts her boxes down on a rickety table. We do the same. The lady with the shallow smile begins talking again and the kids listen intently. I take out my picture and compare it to the sitting children. I instantly recognize Saramba sitting on the ground with the group.

My heart starts beating really fast. I am getting excited. The night before Disneyland, or just scored a soccer goal, excited. As Katie helps Diana set up the food and Jeff stands watch at the door, I make my way over to Saramba.

I sit next to her, but she doesn't look at me.

"Hi," I whisper.

She turns her head slightly towards me, but doesn't smile and doesn't talk.

"Excuse me Julianda," Diana speaks to the old women, "but would the children like to eat?"

Julianda nods and the children move towards the table. Saramba remains.

"I'm Phineas. I can't explain now, but I am going to help you get out of here," I say.

"I have no where to go," Saramba replies.

"I know," I say. "I know about your parents being killed when you left the Kono District and I know you had to hide in the jungle. I also know that you are smart and hate working in the mines. My friends and I were sent to help you if you let us."

For the first time she looks at me full in the face.

"I can't explain to you now, but we'd like to get you out of here. We'd like to take you home with us," I say.

"Home?" Saramba's accent is thick, but her English is perfect.

"To where we live, the United States," I smile.

A light dances across her eyes, but goes away quickly. It's as if she can't imagine even believing that she could possibly be rescued.

"Really," I say.

"To the land of golden streets and bridges?" she says.

"Something like that," I say. "See that boy by the door? Wander towards him and do what he says."

I eye Katie and she smiles as Saramba does what I say. Getting out of the door is easy...the room is relatively dark and there is much activity with the delivery

of food, so we are not noticed as we, one by one, slip away into the night. Only, for some reason I can't breathe again...for some reason I feel like a rope is cinching around my neck choking me.

The path back to the rescue aid workers camp is dark and we have a difficult time as we silently follow Jeff back to the canopies.

I hear footsteps behind us as we pass the workers. I am afraid to look back. Jeff is going to the river and we silently follow. The footsteps follow too.

Jeff's stance is determined, so I figure he has a plan and keep following him. I hope he has a plan. I certainly don't have one and I don't hear a word from Katie.

The footsteps are gaining on us, but I can't bring myself to look back. Like when you're a kid and you're in bed and you know that if you open your eyes you're going to see the boogie man – so you keep them closed and pray that you fall asleep and sleep until it's light, because then, when it is light, he'll be gone. That's how I feel now.

Name: _____ Date: _____

**Chapter 10: Rebel Diamonds
Verbs**

A verb is a word that shows action. In the sentence below, the word “ran” tells what Jeff and Katie did. It shows action.

Example: Jeff and Katie *ran* for cover.

Instruction: In the boxes below, please list ten verbs from Chapter 10 and use them in your own sentence.

Verb	Write you own sentence using the verb to the left.

Chapter 11

The raft boat we rode the river on is still hidden where Jeff left it. I look up at the sky. I have never seen it so dark. There is a moon and stars to break the hard blackness of the African night, but no lights from street lamps, no windows glowing brightly...nothing. It's darker than camping. It's darker than a rainstorm at night. It's deepest, darkest Africa dark.

A chill runs through me. The warm day has been replaced by a night that bites with an icy breeze.

We are on the river now – paddling upstream. Saramba speaks softly. “You are taking me to the United States – really?”

Katie smiles. “If we get back, you get back.”

“We'll get back,” I reassure. I'm not so sure that we truly will, but I sound convincing. I look at Jeff, “I assume we are going back for the transmodulator.”

“Somehow I think it will be easier than the Embassy in Freetown,” Jeff says.

“Saramba, I know this is probably really weird for you, but I'll explain it all when we are safe,” I say.

“Nothing has been normal since the soldiers came. If I am being kidnapped – I have been kidnapped before. If you are kidnappers – this is the first time I haven't been beaten, or worse. But if you are not kidnappers, may I know all of your names?”

Oh my, gosh! I've been so stressed and out of sorts that I never even introduced her to Katie and Jeff.

“I'm so sorry. I forgot. Like I said, I'm Phineas. This is Katie and this is Jeff.”

Katie and Jeff say hi and Saramba smiles shyly.

Jeff turns the raft towards the shore. I see a tiny glow, a light of some kind. Since we didn't pass any other villages on the river, I reason with myself – this has got to be where our stuff is.

We dock the raft. The thick air smells different, like camping. It's not sweaty anymore. I look up and the stars are gone. A gentle rain begins to fall. As we make our way up to the village, the rain falls harder and harder until we can barely see the path ahead.

The ground is easily saturated and grows slushy under our feet. It rains so hard that the dirt can't hold all of the water, thus giant puddles form everywhere.

As we approach the building where we were held hostage, I can only see one gun guy in front of the door and he isn't even paying attention. Instead of guarding his post, he is rocking back on a folding chair with his eyes closed. He looks like he's sleeping, but I can't really tell.

"You guys wait here," I whisper. "It'll be easier for one person to sneak in."

"Are you sure you don't want me to go?" Jeff asks.

"No, I'll be fine." I say – really wishing my pride would let me let Jeff go, because I'm scared out of my pants.

"Look over there," Katie points to the building. "See, there's a crack where one board is on top of the other."

I squint to see where she's pointing.

"You can fit in there. If nobody is inside you'll be safe."

"You had to say if."

Katie shrugs.

My feet begin to walk towards the haphazard building. I can't breathe again. I hear someone walking behind me. I turn, but my friends are not moving. It sounds like it did when we were back at the diamond mine.

I motion for my friends to join me. My gut says that we should all stay together.

A noise from the rickety building draws all of our attention.

"It's Nate," Katie whispers.

She's right. Nate walks out of the building. He cautiously looks at the sleeping man.

Something moves behind us and the man stirs. He sees Nate and turns his gun on him.

I turn to run back to the alley where we were hiding, but am pulled into the bushes. A hand covers my mouth and I am forced to the ground. I struggle. I will not be taken again, I think. I bite the hand and open my eyes. It's Diana!

"Shhh!" She motions the others to join us. "Is this what you are looking for?"

She has the transmodulator.

“Sam!” Katie reaches for it, but Diana pushes her away – into us.

Katie lands on top of Jeff who falls on me. Diana grabs Saramba and literally throws her on top of me. Before I know what is happening, Sam is thrust into my hand and the blue button is pushed.

Chapter 12

“Grandpa!” I shout and run into his waiting arms.

He holds me tight.

I turn and there are my friends. Katie is green and Jeff is smiling...stunned but smiling. Saramba looks like she has seen a ghost and there is Diana.

I look back at my Grandpa.

“Did you think I’d send you on your first mission alone? You’re my favorite grand- daughter,” Grandpa laughs.

“I’m you’re only granddaughter,” I say

“They didn’t even need me,” Diana says.

Replaying it all in my mind – we did need her.

I smile my think you. Diana smiles back.

“Now the fun part,” Diana sounds sarcastic, “the debriefing.”

“Can I shower first?” Katie asks.

“Ah, it won’t take that long,” Grandpa leads us into his office.

Diana is smiling like she knows something.

This is going to take forever, I think.

I look at Saramba, who my Grandfather has taken by the arm. “We have some explaining to do young lady. But first...” he opens the door to his candy sample room, “let’s have a treat!”

Name: _____ Date: _____

About Phineas J. Clooney Adventures in Sierra Leone: Rebel Diamonds
In my Opinion

INSTRUCTIONS: Use the space below to tell what you think about the story.

<p><i>What is your favorite part of the story?</i></p> <p>Details why...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.
<p><i>Who is your favorite character in the story?</i></p> <p>Details why...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.
<p><i>What is the main problem in the story?</i></p> <p>Details...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.
<p><i>What is the solution to the problem?</i></p> <p>Details...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.

**THE TOP SECRET FILES
OF
PHINEAS J. CLOONEY**

TOPIC – SIERRA LEONE

PROCEED WITH CAUTION

Chapter 14

Stop! Don't go back and make sure that you didn't skip Chapter 13. You didn't. There isn't a Chapter 13...just like there is no 13th floor at Wayside School. (If you have no idea what I'm talking about...you are "way" missing out and need to go get one of Louis Sachar's Wayside School books for some "way" cool adventures!). See, this is the last chapter of this book...and you can't end on 13...you just can't...not that Phineas J. Clooney is superstitious or anything...it's just better to be safe than sorry.

Back to Sierra Leone...

Sierra Leone is a third world country with a developing economy. This means that they don't make a lot of money – between \$150 to \$200 per person, per year. Yep, that's what I said, less than \$200 per person per year. Their minimum wage (the least you are supposed to pay a person legally) is about \$14.00 per week! I make that much per hour when I babysit!

Besides making no money, the country has a lot of debt. In case you don't know, debt is means that you borrowed money and have to pay it back. Back in 2002, the World Bank, I'm not sure it's an actual bank with ATM's and accounts and stuff, but it is a bank that is way powerful and controls a lot of the progress and lack of progress, in tons of countries...anyway, back in 2002, the World Bank promised that it would forgive 80% of the debt Sierra Leone owes. 80%! That's pretty significant. Eighty percent is like \$950 million dollars...that's about how much our US Congress has appropriated to advertise for "healthy living" in the United States. Appropriated means money that they set aside to use for a specific purpose. So, basically the money we'll use to advertise carrots and walking could pretty much wipe out the debt of an entire country and save tons of lives.

Now, I'm not suggesting that we are responsible for paying for the entire world...we aren't...but we are kind of like the big brother of the world, and I know that my big brother watches out for me and bails me out of trouble if I need it. Well, they need it. They need it big time, and I do believe that it is up to us to help them.

The World Bank is doing their part, at least on paper, and I think we should do our part too. We should do our part, and then make sure that the government of Sierra Leone has conditions they have to fulfill in order to have the debt forgiven.

Actually, the World Bank has set such conditions. These conditions include: helping to end poverty, good plan, trying to get other organizations to relieve some of the debt they owe other people, okay, Visa's helping out...MasterCard should too...so to speak, and keep a stable and growing economy. This last one means that they should, probably, get all the control back from any bad person left over from the civil war days and not elect or appoint any more of these people into the government.

I personally think a condition we should set is that the people in the Sierra Leone government and the people in private business should stop stealing the natural resources out of their poor country and start doing something to help the water and trees and food production...and I don't even want to start on the diamond thing! That could be a whole 'nuther book.

Okay, I'm diverting...I guess that that's my little spiel on debt relief. If you want to learn more about it...or find out how you can help end world poverty...go to www.one.org.

Why is this important, you ask...I'll tell you why: Because debt relief is tied to poverty and poverty means that lots of people get sick and die because they don't have money for even the most basic things...like food or clean water. Can you believe, in our world today, a child dies every three seconds because he or she gets a treatable disease, but can't get help because of extreme poverty!

I, Phineas J. Clooney, will not stand for that! I, Phineas J. Clooney, will write to our President and Congress and wear my white One band and tell all of my family and friends that we can make a difference...one person at a time!

Name: _____ Date: _____

A Pound a Day

Supplies you will need for this project:

- Grocery store newspaper ads
- Paper and pencil

List everything you ate yesterday:

Breakfast	
Lunch	
Dinner	
Snacks	

Look through the ads, or brainstorm with your parents or teachers, the cost of the items listed above.

	List food items	List total cost
Breakfast		
Lunch		
Dinner		
Snacks		

Now, looking through the same ads – create menus of breakfast, lunch and dinner – that cost a total of 1 pound or less.

	List food items	List total cost
Breakfast		
Lunch		
Dinner		
Snacks		

A Pound a Day Discussion Questions

Either in small groups or as a whole class discuss answer the following questions:

1. How easy would it be to feed yourself for less than a pound a day?
2. How would it be if you had to feed your whole family?
3. How much do you spend on items that you take for granted?
4. List things or items that you take for granted?
5. Brainstorm ways that we can help end extreme poverty.

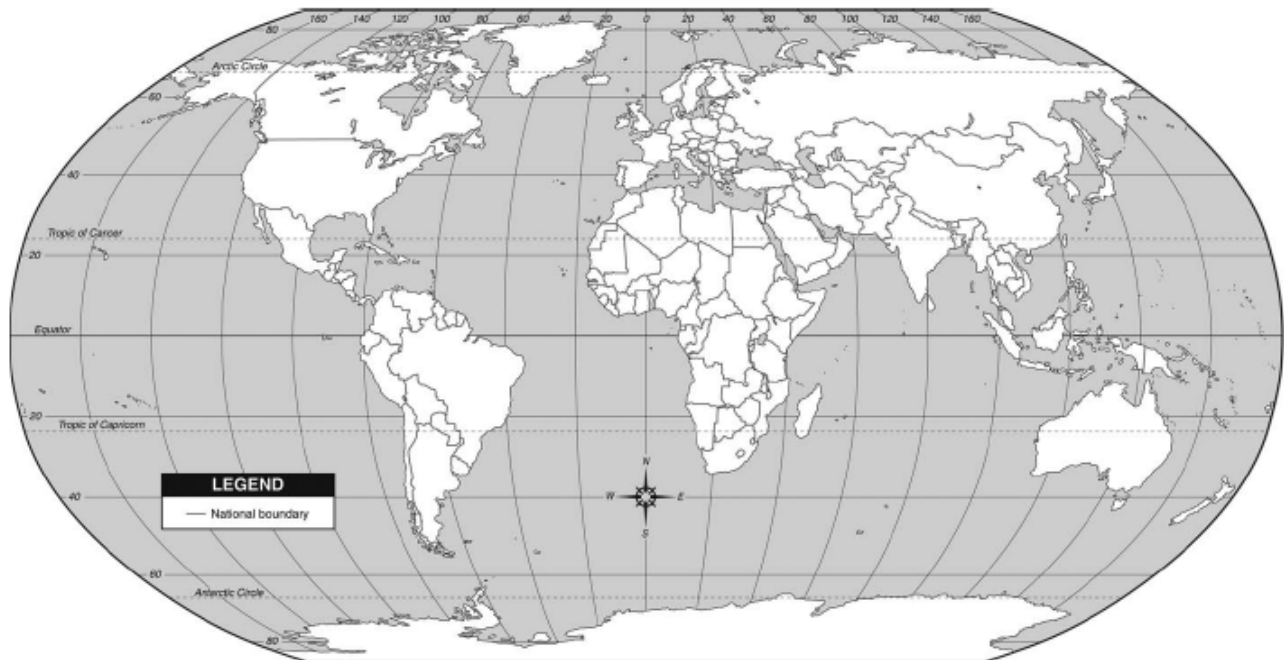
Name: _____ Date: _____

Map It

On the map on the following page:

1. Put an x on Sierra Leone
2. Circle the country where you live
3. Draw a line from your country to Sierra Leone
4. List the countries, oceans, rivers, etc. that you pass through:

World: Countries



Where Child Soldiers Are Being Used

Using an Atlas and a blank world map color in the countries that use child soldiers. Use a different color for each type of militia where child soldiers are involved. Some countries use child soldiers in all three categories, layer the country with the three different colors.

Countries Where Child Soldiers Exist	Children are serving in government militaries	Children are serving in paramilitaries (Police)	Children are serving in opposition forces
Algeria		X	X
Afghanistan	X	X	x
Angola	X		X
Burundi	X		X
Chad	X		
Colombia		X	X
Democratic Republic of the Congo	X		X
East Timor		X	X
Eritrea	X		
Ethiopia	X		
India		X	X
Indonesia		X	X
Iran	X	X	
Iraq	X	X	
Israel and the Occupied Territories	X	X	X
Lebanon			X
Mexico		X	X
Myanmar	X		X
Nepal			X
Pakistan			X
Papau New Guniea			x
Philippines			X
Peru		X	
Rawanda	X	X	
Republic of the Congo	X		X
Russian Federation		X	
Sierra Leone	X	X	X
Solomon Islands			X
Sri Lanka			X
Somalia	X	X	X
Sudan	X	X	X
Tajikistan			X
Turkey		X	
Uganda	X	X	
Uzbekistan			X
Yugoslavia		X	X

World: Countries

