



EXPLORERS IN CYBERSPACE-final copy

(1st-3rd Grade: Information Privacy and Inappropriate Content)

Written 7/20/2022 By M. Michele Phillips

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Character Breakdown

Booker	A young student on a quest for information RE: Lewis & Clark for a project that's due. He loves History.
Sophie:	His cousin – both are avid gamers. She is not yet a fan of history.
LOUISE Fontaine:	A young girl from the Lewis & Clark expedition who accompanied her trapper/guide father on the trek. She wore the disguise of a boy so they would allow her to go along.

Props Breakdown

Booker:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cell Phone ● History Book ● Tablet/device
Sophie:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tablet/device ● Cell Phone
LOUISE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vest ● Hat

Recognizing Inappropriate Content and Information Privacy

(The two kids are in Booker's Living room but Sophie is sitting at a desk looking at a tablet and Booker is reading a history book)

SOPHIE

(Facing the computer screen with a disgusted look. Speaking very dramatically)
I-Am-So-BORED! ARRRrrrggg! *(She plunks her head down on her crossed arms)*

BOOKER

(Sitting at a table or desk working on his computer. He finds what he wants and reacts triumphantly with an affirmative response. Then responding to Sophie)
Too bad. You're the one who wanted to come over.

SOPHIE

You said we were going to play Minecraft.

BOOKER.

Yeah, after I **finish** my project. You said you were gonna help me. And remember, we can't be online for hours at a time. Other people need to use this computer, ya' know. And we need to remember to take some breaks—except we need to get started first.

SOPHIE

I LIKE breaks—especially when it means we can play. And I don't know **anything** about Lewis & Clark. What is it – cough medicine? Furniture polish? A candy bar? Hey, I'd like some Lewis and Clark bars, please.

BOOKER

(Getting impatient) Alright! Look, can you just round up my Lincoln Logs? I need 'em for this project! They are the most like the real thing they used to build forts and cabins in those days.

SOPHIE

Where are they?

BOOKER

I think Efrem was playing with them. He can help you,

SOPHIE

I doubt a three year old is gonna be much help.

BOOKER

OK then, um, look for some dates on the screen—do you see the date they started their trip?

SOPHIE

(Looking at the computer screen) Hmm. Lewis and Clark. Looks like they lived about a million years ago. *(Sarcastic)*

BOOKER

Keep looking.

SOPHIE

Whatever. Oh, this might be it— one eight zero four ?

BOOKER

That's 1804. That's the year. Good job.

SOPHIE

(Intentionally teasing him) Were there still dinosaurs in 1804?

BOOKER

NO! C'mon.

SOPHIE

Well, what were they doing in **1804**?

BOOKER

Lewis and Clark? They were explorers. Do you know what those are?

SOPHIE

(Defensively) Do you?

BOOKER

Of course. Explorers travel to places nobody's been before or knows anything about. They look around, figure out what the land is like, what the people who live there are all about, they make maps so other people can get back to those places after they leave, stuff like that.

SOPHIE

Oh. SURRRRRE. Well, THAT sounds kinda' BORING to me.

BOOKER

It's anything **but** boring. Remember when we found that old cave at the lake with our parents and we went inside and checked everything out?

SOPHIE

Oh yeah! That was a blast.

BOOKER

Well, **we** were **exploring**. When it comes to the internet, we're like explorers

SOPHIE

Whatta you mean?

BOOKER

Do you know everything about computers and the internet?

SOPHIE

(Defensively) I know a lot.

BOOKER

Everything?

SOPHIE

(Reluctantly) No.

BOOKER

I don't either. So we're still finding out stuff—we're Explorers of the Internet.

SOPHIE

You mean we're like those guys?

BOOKER

Yeah. Like Lewis and Clark. They went to a north-west location in our country nobody in the east had ever been to. Lots of Native American tribes were the only people who lived there and knew anything about it. So anyway, Meriwether Lewis. . . .

SOPHIE

Stop, stop! Merriweather? That's somebody's real name? That's hilarious. How's the weather today? Oh you know, it's pretty . . . um, merry. "Merry Weather, everybody." *(Pondering for a*

second) Now that I think about it, your name is, well it's not funny, but it IS kinda weird . . .
Booker.

BOOKER

Sophie! It's never nice to ever make fun of anybody's name. Booker is an English name but it was also the name of Booker T. WASHINGTON who was a very great and famous man. He was born into slavery but wound up being an American teacher, writer, orator—

SOPHIE

Orator?

BOOKER

Somebody who gives speeches for a living. And he was an adviser to presidents. He was a man both my parents really admire. I'm proud to be named after him.

SOPHIE

Yeah, he sounds cool — and here's what I think he would want us to be doing right now—**playing MineCraft!** Like you promised. So hurry up with this project thing—we're running out of time and you promised we'd be playing.

BOOKER

Fine. (*Forging ahead*) Ya know, **MERRIWEATHER Lewis** was only 28 years old

SOPHIE

Woah, that sounds pretty old to me.

BOOKER

(*Continuing*) And **William Clark** was just 32 years old when they started.

SOPHIE

Way old! (Yawning) Ich. Look at all those words on the screen. I know, I know I can also watch some of this stuff on YouTube but you still have to write it down the facts so you don't forget 'em. That gives me a headache just thinking about it.. I just wish there was somebody, like a real **explorer** or just *somebody*, who could **tell us** about it

LOUISE

Perhaps there is. (*Appearing from behind a banner—a tomboyish girl in boys clothes, circa 1800*)

BOOKER

(*Startled*) What? Excuse me, do I—do we— know you?

LOUISE

Do you know LOUISE Fontaine? I was with the explorers, Lewis and Clark.

SOPHIE & BOOKER

You were?

LOUISE

Yes. And Who are YOU?

BOOKER

I'm Booker and this is my cousin, Sophie.

LOUISE

Bon! (*To them*) That means good. I'm French Canadian.

SOPHIE

How did you get here with us?

LOUISE

You wished for me, an explorer, to come help you—so I am here.

SOPHIE

From the internet?

LOUISE

Pardon?

SOPHIE

The computer?

LOUISE

I do not understand.

BOOKER

(Picking up the tablet and showing it to her) This is a tablet and it works like a computer.

LOUISE

(She shrugs her shoulders)

SOPHIE

Never mind that now. Did you really travel with Lewis & Clark.

LOUISE

Yes. My father called me Louis and I dressed like a boy so they would accept me as a member of the expedition. Ah, it was “c’est genial” (say-gene-yall). I had so much freedom girls did not have then. I could climb rocks, trees and mountains, ride horses, I learned to swim.

BOOKER

Did you camp every night? Hunt for food? Cook meals over a fire?

LOUISE

All of those—my father trapped the animals and we took turns cooking the food. But we had to be careful and look around, always, for poisonous snakes. Never mind bears, bobcats, wolves—There was danger everywhere you looked.

SOPHIE

Ya’ know what I really hate about camping? Bugs! Yuck!

LOUISE

Bugs?

BOOKER

She means insects!

LOUISE

Oh—on-sect. Zut Alors (Zoot-alor) –huge swarms of insect (on-sect) drive us mad every day when we are on rivers and lakes.

SOPHIE

What else did you do.

LOUISE

When I am not helping my father, I spend my time with our guide, Sacagawea (Sa-cog-a-way), the daughter of a Shishone Chief. And with her baby, Jean Baptiste (Zhon Bap-teest). Everyone in camp love that baby. Sa-cog-a-way—that one—ouf! She was brave and noble. She was only a few years older than me but she had more knowledge than almost all of the men. The explorers would have failed without her.

BOOKER

Why is that?

LOUISE

She saved our lives many times. Sacajawea (Sa-cog-a-way) did not read or write—but she knew **everything** about tracking, speaking the languages of many tribes and how to find food and survive in the wilderness. Just by being there she helped when Native American Tribes were unfriendly.

SOPHIE

Why wouldn't they be friendly?

BOOKER

Think about it—what if a bunch of people you didn't know just showed up one day and decided to camp in your backyard? And helped themselves to whatever of yours they wanted. Without asking permission. It would make anybody angry.

LOUISE

Once a boat tip over on a river that have all of the notes from the exploration in it. Sacagawea risk her life and save it all. Otherwise you would have no facts for your project, yes?

SOPHIE

Oh yeah. Your project. Do we **have** to work on it? I'd rather just listen to LOUISE.

BOOKER

Me too, but I've gotta get it done. (*He starts typing on the tablet and she comes over to see it*)

LOUISE

(*Pointing to the tablet*) What is this dispositive? (Dees-posa-teef)

BOOKER

Sorry?

LOUISE

This . . . (at a loss for words, pointing to it) device?

BOOKER

It's called a tablet . . . it's like a computer. It helps us learn, find out what's happening in the world right now, get information on subjects like history, communicate with people next door or even across the globe.

LOUISE

Such things are possible?

SOPHIE

Yes, in this Century. It **is** possible. Ask me a question you want an answer to.

LOUISE

(*Thinking*) What's the best way to cook rattlesnake?

SOPHIE

You ate rattle snake?

LOUISE

I've eaten it many times. We never seemed to run out of snakes on the trail. Poisonous snakes were only one of the dangers we face, but my father know how to make snake taste delicious.

SOPHIE

Wow. Now, for me to use this computer I first have to enter a password.

LOUISE

Oh. What is it.

SOPHIE

I'm the only one that's supposed to know it. Well, me and my parents are the only ones who know it.

LOUISE

I know about Passwords. If someone came to our camp late at night, they had to know the password or the guards would not let them in. It changed every day. It kept us safe from people who want to steal our supplies or the important notes the explorers write down everyday.

BOOKER

Our passwords do the same thing—keep out anybody who might be on the computer who isn't safe, who might want to steal our identities or our personal information.

SOPHIE

Here goes. *(She types in the question)* How-do-you-cook-rattlesnake? LOUISE, click on that little spyglass and the answer will appear.

LOUISE

It cannot be so—but I will do as you say. *(She pushes "enter" tentatively and backs away)*

SOPHIE

(Continuing to read) . . . Look, there's a Youtube video, too.

LOUISE

(She watches, amazed) These pictures that move—they tell the truth. That IS how it is done.

BOOKER

This device helps me create a school project like the one I have to hand in about Lewis & Clark. Let's go to Google.

LOUISE

How do we get to this Google— it is far?

BOOKER

(Laughing) It's a search engine **in** the computer.. It just means we can look things up quickly

LOUISE

This computer language—it is *bizarre!*

BOOKER

It sounds a little nutty to us too. Louise, come look at the screen. See all the options here about Meriwether Lewis. Here's one about his dog, called Sea Man, because he rescued people who fell overboard.

SOPHIE

Why didn't you tell me he had a dog. That's not boring. For a change.

BOOKER

Anyway, see all of those subjects that you can click on? But remember when you were talking about poisonous snakes? How you had to be careful, really watchful or you might step on one and get bitten? Well, the Internet has some of its own hidden dangers that people run into all the time. Like a screen freeze.

LOUISE

(Skeptical) It does not look so dangerous.

(Inappropriate Content and Information Privacy)

BOOKER

Wait a sec, sorry. *(He takes out his phone and looks at it)* It's Mom. I have to go help her bring in the groceries. Sophie, can you take over for a few minutes *(He exits)*

SOPHIE

(She watches him leave gleefully) Yay, Now we can play MineCraft, and forget about this project thing.

LOUISE

We will play a game?

BOOKER

(Calling from offstage with warning in his voice) Sophie!

SOPHIE

(Yelling off stage) OK, OK, we'll stick to your project. I guess we can't get into trouble if we do that!

BOOKER

(He comes back onstage) And don't just go clicking on every link you see. You know that sometimes they can take you to inappropriate websites. Or you could download a virus. Or

identity thieves could be just waiting for you to hand them all kinds of personal information without meaning to.

SOPHIE

BOOKER! Do you think I don't know all that stuff?

BOOKER

No, you do. It's just that sometimes you forget.

SOPHIE

I think **you forgot** to bring in the groceries. *(They do the eye-point at each other and he exits)*

Ooo. Louise, look at that link— *21 of The Scariest Looking Animals on Earth*—let's click on it

LOUISE

Scariest?

SOPHIE

You know, frightening! *(She makes a frightening face)*

LOUISE

This is part of the report?

SOPHIE

Well, no, but don't you want to see 'em? I do. *(she clicks on the link. An image of a Star Nosed Mole appears and both of them react audibly and in horror)* What is THAT? UGH! Oh my gosh, it's horrible.

LOUISE

Terrible (Tear-EEB-bleh.)

SOPHIE

It can't be real. I'm gonna have nightm . . .

BOOKER

(Returning) What's goin' on?

SOPHIE

Please— help—can you get rid of that, that . . .

BOOKER

(He reacts, then hits delete) You didn't stick to the project.

SOPHIE

We did, too. But then for one second I clicked on one tiny, interesting, little, extra link.

BOOKER

And that picture came up. I'm never gonna forget it, are you?

SOPHIE

(Shuddering) Never.

BOOKER

It's why they warn you not to click on every link you see, no matter how much you really want to . . .

SOPHIE

Alright, I get it! I should have stuck to the project. I'm sorry. REALLY sorry. Now can we show LOUISE MineCraft so I can get my mind off that picture?

BOOKER

Boy, you never give up! OK, Minecraft. It's a computer game, LOUISE. I'm gonna go finish bringing in the groceries, then *(He holds up the book)* get some more facts and look at some more pictures. *(He exits)*

LOUISE

We will play a game then?

SOPHIE

Yeah. It's a game where we can create different kinds of worlds in three-dimensions. We'll do the Survival version. Cause just like you had to on the trail, we have to find our own building supplies and food. And remember how you had to watch out for snakes and wolves and stuff like that? Well, we have to watch out for Creepers and Zombies—they're the dangerous ones.

LOUISE

(Thoroughly confused) So it is like chess, then?

SOPHIE

(At a loss) Kinda. But no. Chess is boring. MineCraft is exciting! You can play by yourself or you can play online with a bunch of people. But first **you** need a username—because nobody should use their real name.

LOUISE

Why?

SOPHIE

Because your real name is something you want to keep private when you're online—no matter what.

LOUISE

Why?

SOPHIE

Because it gives people an easy way to find out all about you. Where you live, where you go to school, your identity. That can be dangerous information online. How 'bout LOU1804 for your user name? I'm SOCK-u-ra. Who's playing right now? Nobody. Good. Let's do SkyBlock—it starts on a small floating island in mid air with one tree and a chest that's got a lava bucket with two ice to make a cobblestone generator, melon and pumpkin seeds, red and brown mushrooms, a bone, one loaf of bread, and a full set of leather armor. The goal is to build outward to find other Skyblock islands, and finally challenge the Ender dragon.

LOUISE

(Shaking her head, confused) You are the leader of this expedition.

SOPHIE

OK. let's sign in. *(She logs in—then is downcast)*. Oh, Loki IS online. Loki455. He's not the nicest. Oh well. *(Typing)* "Hi Loki."

LOKI/BOOKER

(Booker answering as Loki) "What's the deal, Shrimp? I mean *(With derision)* SOCK-u-ra. You know you can't compete with me in this game.

SOPHIE

I'm not trying to. I just want to show my friend SkyBlock.

LOKI/BOOKER

Sky Block? Lame!

SOPHIE

You don't have to play with us—you can go play on your own.

LOKI/BOOKER

Not if I wanna drive you crazy.

SOPHIE

Why do you want to?

LOKI/BOOKER

Because you're a pain. You talk too much and you're not good enough to play Minecraft. Go play *Crazy Cat Hair Salon*, or *Girl Dress Up* or *Princess Dentist*.

SOPHIE

I don't even know what those games are. And you **know** I'm good at Minecraft.

LOKI/BOOKER

Fine. We'll just take it offline. Me and a bunch of my friends would love to come over to see you. Maybe we'll walk you home after school. Maybe we'll invite ourselves inside your house and help ourselves to whatever we want.

SOPHIE

How can you do that? You don't know where I go to school or where I live.

LOKI/BOOKER

Not true. I know you go to Rutledge Elementary. That was easy, my cousin is in your grade. Your dog is a Beagle named Buddy, and your family lives on Cannon Street. You've even described your house once—light green with dark green shutters, right? The more pictures you post and information you put online helps me find out anything I want to about you—I just have to connect the dots. That's what happens when you talk about yourself too much and put too much personal information online. Watch your back, Shrimp. Oh and no matter what you build today, expect it to be all blown up when you come back tomorrow.

LOUISE

Sophie, what is going on here?

SOPHIE

Well, it's Loki—that's why I wasn't too happy to see he was playing the game right now. He's a bully.

LOUISE

I am familiar with bullies. There were many men on the expedition who were even worse than this boy. They hurt people. But no one likes to be abused or threatened or harmed.

SOPHIE

I feel like something bad is about to happen, just because he doesn't want me to play the game.

LOUISE

What will you do? My father always says to stay out of their way and to not give them an any excuse.

SOPHIE

Well, first I need to tell somebody older. (*Yelling into the next room*) Booker, can you come in here?

BOOKER

(Crossing in) Whatcha need?

SOPHIE

Can you read what Loki455 just wrote to me. (*He looks at the tablet*).

BOOKER

Hmmnn. I've gotta take a screenshot of this right now.. Then let's send it to my dad and your dad and **we** should make a copy. Louise, when you have a problem like this one online, the first thing to do is go to a trusted adult and let them know what's going on.

LOUISE just want you to think

A wise decision. That boy—he is angry. And maybe being bullied himself.

BOOKER

I think you're probably right, Louise. I'm calling my fath . . .Dad, hi--do you have a minute? Sophie has a problem with someone on MineCraft. I just sent you a screenshot. What should we do? Yeah I'll wait while you read it. (*Pausing to listen*). OK. We can do that. Thanks, Dad! (*He hangs up*)

SOPHIE

What do we do?

BOOKER

We've taken a screenshot that we can use for proof to show what he wrote. My Dad is gonna talk to yours about installing some parental controls so you'll feel safer. We can hit the *MineCraft Report Abuse Button* and Loki455 might get banned from the game. If things get worse our parents can go to the authorities who take care of these things. **Or** we can go right to Loki455 and see if **we** can get him to stop. OK, tell him that you have a screenshot of everything he just wrote. That you're happy to **share** that screenshot with a whole bunch of "people," including MineCraft--unless he wants to promise to leave you alone.

SOPHIE

That's a lot of words--can you please type it? (*Booker complies*) Thank you, Booker.

BOOKER

Hey look, Loki455 just sent a thumbs-up emoji and the word "promise." Looks like he got the message. I hope he did anyway. If not we have proof and our parents will help us. Hey Louise, I know all this is new to you and a lot of it is confusing, but did you learn anything about computer safety?

LOUISE

Everything is so new and I do not understand all the language, but the first thing I learn is you must always stop and think before you take any action. And that while sharing can be a good thing, sharing too much personal information on this device is not. Oh, and if you see something that doesn't seem right, it is always best to call a trusted adult for help.

BOOKER

That's incredible, Louise. And we learned a lot from you. Hold it a minute. (*Takes out his phone and reads text*) Oh, bummer. Mom needs the tablet now. But I'm not done with my project, and sorry Sophie, we'll have to play MineCraft some other time.

SOPHIE

That's OK. I think we need a break. Maybe we can get Louise to tell us more about Lewis & Clark and then you **could** finish your project. I promise I'll go look for the Lincoln Logs later.

BOOKER

Is that alright with you, Louise?

LOUISE

I would be agreeable.

BOOKER

But you're right, Sophie, we need a break. Let's go outside first and get some fresh air. Hey, we can teach our new friend some soccer moves.

LOUISE

If you speak of foot**ball**, perhaps I teach you a few things. I have played many times.

SOPHIE

Great, then it's you and me against Booker. Let's go. (*They all exit, ad libs aggressively*)