

THE
CAPYBARA GUARDIANS

THE
COLD FIRE
BLOSSOM

An adventure series by **MARC FINKS**



FUN FUN FUN
ACTIVITY GUIDE

VOCABULARY

Chapters 1 - 2

Wetlands

A place where the land is covered by water, like a swamp.

Minnow

A very small fish.

Squabble

A noisy argument

Slope

The side of a mountain

Ledge

A narrow shelf of rock.

The Coldfire Blossom

I	T	I	T	E	I	O	C	A	R	L	O	S	S
I	I	W	O	O	M	J	A	G	U	A	R	A	A
C	R	A	E	G	R	C	G	I	Q	L	G	D	G
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L	P	U	I	B	L	R	B	N	E	P	O	L	S
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E	I	L	N	T	O	I	N	B	U	R	C	A	P
L	O	I	D	W	O	N	N	I	M	A	A	E	J

MOUNTAIN
BLOSSOM
WETLANDS
TAPIR
CAMILA
CARLOS
PUMA
GOATS
COLDFIRE
MINNOW
SLOPE
LEDGE
SQUABBLE
SPIRIT
JAGUAR

COMPREHENSION

Prologue and Chapter 1 - "An Old Friend"

1. Who is on the cloud and what does he offer Carlos and Camila?

2. Who is Barry?

3. Why do you think Carlos is worried about crossing the desert again?

Chapter 2 - "The Strange Mountain"

1. What is strange about the mountain?

- A) It's too cold.
- B) It's too warm.
- C) It's too wet.

2. The whistle is made from ice. (True/False)

3. Who did Nimbus suggest Carlos and Camila talk to?

ACTIVITY

These native animals are all mentioned in this book. Can you identify them?



I am a _____

Mountain Goat:
I have strong hooves for climbing steep slopes! I'll eat almost anything, even the yuckiest plants.



I am a _____

Tapir:
I look like a pig with a long snout! I use my nose to find tasty plants in the rainforest.



I am a _____

Condor:
I'm a huge bird with an enormous wingspan! I soar high above the mountains, seeing everything below.



I am a _____

Jaguar:
I'm a powerful spotted cat from the jungle! I'm great at climbing trees and swimming.



I am a _____

Puma:
I'm also called a mountain lion! I have a tawny coat and I'm a skilled hunter in rocky areas.



I am a _____

Spectacled Bear:
I'm the only bear in South America! I have light markings around my eyes that look like glasses.

BONUS ACTIVITY

Can you draw a detailed map showing how to get from the wetlands to the mountain?



WRITING

Dear Diary:

Imagine you are one of the mountain goats leaving your home. Write a diary entry expressing your feelings about the changes in your environment and your decision to leave.

The writing area consists of 10 sets of horizontal lines. Each set includes a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line, providing a guide for letter height and placement.

VOCABULARY

Chapters 3-4

Bleat

The cry of a sheep, goat, or calf.

Snarled

To growl angrily while showing teeth.

Lumbered

Moved in a slow, heavy, awkward way.

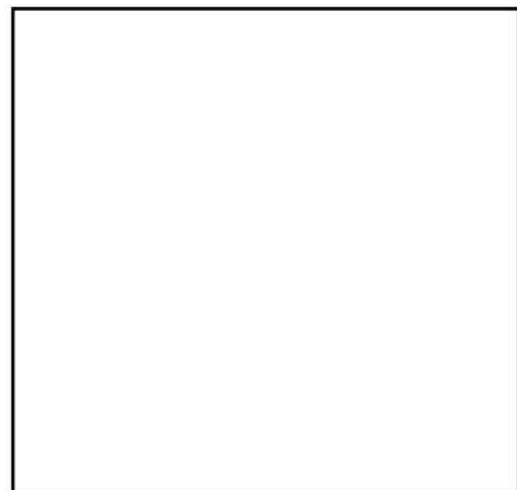
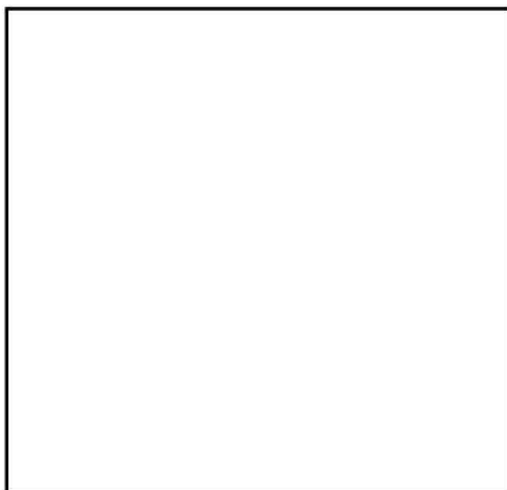
Snout

The projecting nose and mouth of an animal.

Fierce

Having or displaying an intense or ferocious aggressiveness.

Draw a comic where 3 of the words are used/drawn in the story somewhere. Label each word and draw an arrow to it.



COMPREHENSION

Chapter 3 - "Goats, Tapirs, and Jaguars!"

1. Why are the animals arguing with each other?
 - A) They're fighting over food.
 - B) They're in each other's territories.
 - C) They're scared and confused by the changes in their environment.
2. Carlos uses the map to stop the animals from fighting.
(True / False)
3. What new animals do Carlos and Camila meet in this chapter?

Chapter 4 - "Laughter Breaks the Ice"

1. Carlos and Camila think the other capybaras are being wasteful with water. (True / False)
2. Why do the tapir and the goats start arguing about how tough and hairy they are, and how wonderful the other animal is?
3. What do you think is happening to the disappearing oases?

ACTIVITY

Spot the Differences

Can you spot the FIVE differences between the two pictures?



Can you name the five things you found here?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

WRITING

Recipe for Harmony:

Write a recipe for turning enemies into friends, inspired by how the animals stop fighting. What are the "ingredients" needed? (Laughter? Understanding?)
What are the steps to follow?

Recipe for Harmony:

Handwriting practice area with multiple sets of three horizontal lines (top solid blue, middle dashed blue, bottom solid red) for writing.

BONUS WRITING

Story Summary:

Can you draw sequence puzzle for the story so far?

Story Sequencing Worksheet

First

Next

Then

After that

Finally

VOCABULARY

Chapters 5-6

Squeak

A short, high-pitched sound or cry.

Bristle

When hair or fur stand upright away from the skin in fear or anger.

Trembling

Shaking or quivering, typically as a result of anxiety, excitement, or frailty.

Gust

A sudden strong rush of wind.

Huddle

Crowd together; nestle closely.

Draw a line to connect each word to its synonym.

(A synonym is word that has the same meaning)

1. Squeak

A. Stand up

2. Bristle

B. Wind

3. Trembling

C. Threatening

4. Gust

D. Chirp

5. Huddle

E. Shaking

COMPREHENSION

Chapter 5 - "The Chinchilla's Secret"

1. Where is the Coldfire Blossom located?

- A) In the wetlands
- B) High up on the mountain
- C) In the desert

2. What is the Coldfire Blossom, according to the chinchilla?

3. The chinchilla is afraid to tell the other animals about the Coldfire Blossom. (True/False)

Chapter 6 - "The Song of the Mountain"

1. What is the final piece of the puzzle that Carlos and Camila figure out about the mountain's "birth"?

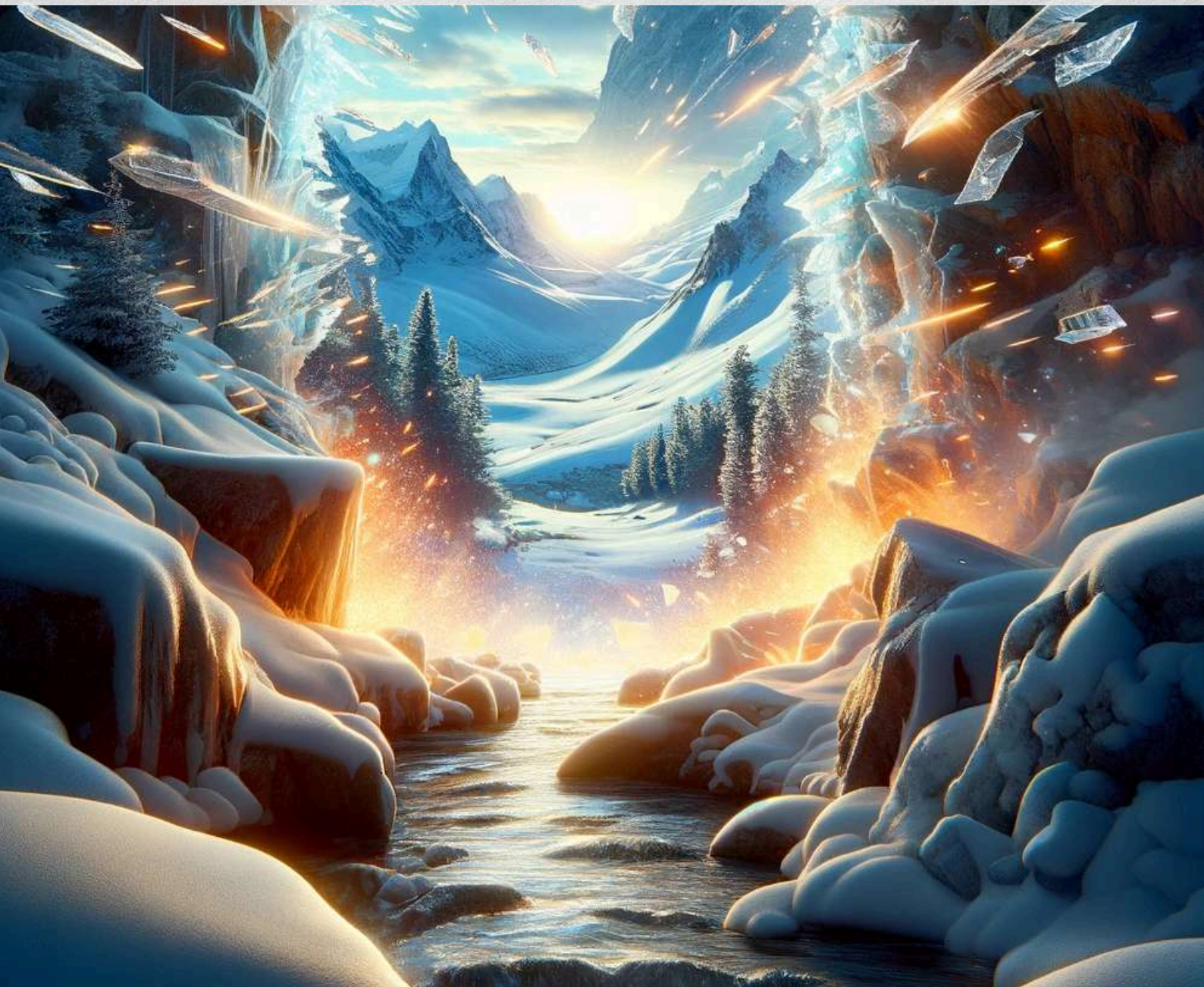
- A) Mountains are born from clouds
- B) Mountains start as hot magma
- C) Mountains are carved by glaciers

2. The icicles in the cavern make music when they touch. (True/False)

3. Why is it important that Carlos and Camila understand the mountain better?

ACTIVITY

Can you build a music box made with different “icicles”? What could you use as icicles that could make different sounds? Share an image with us !



WRITING

Character Swap

Rewrite a scene from these chapters, but change the personality of one character. For example, what if the mountain spirit was excited and hopeful instead of sad?

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines: a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line.

VOCABULARY

Chapters 7-8

Canyon

A deep gorge, typically one with a river flowing through it.

Shimmer

Shine with a soft, slightly wavering light.

Plink

A short, sharp, ringing sound, as of a liquid falling in drops.

Chime

A melodious, ringing sound

Rumble

A deep, resonant sound.

Draw your best image for 4 of the words

COMPREHENSION

Chapter 7 - "The Invisible Wall"

1. The mountain spirit is immediately willing to let Carlos and Camila pass.
(True / False)

2. What phrase do Carlos and Camila shout to try to break the barrier?

- A) "Open sesame".
- B) "Harmony binds"
- C) "Unity protects"

3. Why do you think the phrase alone isn't enough to break the barrier?

Chapter 8 - "Harmony Binds"

1. What happens when all the animals say their special words together?

- A) Nothing changes
- B) The wall becomes visible
- C) The wall explodes into pieces of light

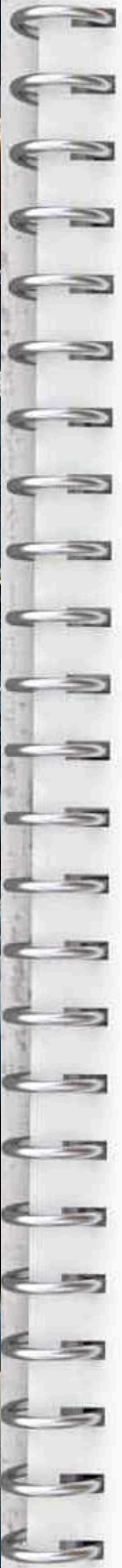
2. How does the cooperation of different animals demonstrate the theme of the chapter?

3. The mountain spirit is surprised to see rainforest and mountain animals working together. (True / False)

ACTIVITY

Character Creation

Can you draw the Mountain Spirit? What do you think he looks like? What colors is he?



WRITING

Unity Acrostic Poem

Write an acrostic poem using the word "HARMONY".

Each line should relate to how the animals work together in the story. Use the first letter to start each sentence

H

A

R

M

O

N

Y

VOCABULARY

Chapters 9-10

Cultivate

Prepare and use land for crops or gardening.

Sizzle

Make a hissing sound when frying or cooking.

Nurture

Care for and encourage the growth or development of.

Pounce

Spring or swoop suddenly so as to catch prey.

Flicker

Shine unsteadily; waver.

Can you figure out which word goes in each sentence?

1. Which word describes what a candle does?

2. Which word is a sound in the kitchen?

3. Which word describes what a farmer does?

4. Which word describes what a kitten does?

5. Which word describes what parents do?

COMPREHENSION

Chapter 9 - "Lilly's Story"

1. What happens when Lilly steps over the edge of the canyon?

2. What does Lilly remember about the Coldfire Blossom?

- A) It's a poisonous plant
- B) It's a glowing blue flower that can help the mountain
- C) It's a myth that doesn't really exist

3. Why do you think Lilly decides to approach the group of animals despite her fear?

Chapter 10 - "Lilly's Story, Part 2"

1. Where does Lilly find her family?

- A) They've left the mountain
- B) In a tunnel leading down the mountain
- C) At the top of the mountain

2. Who does Lilly ride on when she returns to her new friends?

- A) The puma
- B) The jaguar
- C) The tapir

3. How does Lilly's bravery inspire the other animals? What does this say about leadership?

ACTIVITY

Can you plant your own “Coldfire Blossom”?

Materials Needed

- Small pot or recycled container (like a yogurt cup with holes poked in the bottom)
- Potting soil
- Seeds (choose from options below)
- Water
- Optional: Blue food coloring, glow-in-the-dark paint

Seed Options

1. **Fast-growing, cold-resistant plants like:**
 - Spinach
 - Kale
 - Pansies
 - Snapdragons
2. **For a more magical effect, consider white flowering plants like:**
 - White marigolds
 - White petunias
 - Alyssum

Instructions

1. **Prepare Your "Mountain":** Fill your pot with potting soil, leaving about an inch at the top. This represents the mountain from our story.
2. **Plant the "Coldfire Blossom":** Make a small hole in the soil and place 2-3 seeds inside. Cover gently with soil.
3. **The Magic Touch:** If using white flowers, add a drop of blue food coloring to your watering can. This will give your flowers a slight blue tint as they grow. Alternatively, you can paint the pot with glow-in-the-dark paint to make it "glow" like the Coldfire Blossom.
4. **Care and Observation:** Place your pot in a sunny spot and water regularly. Keep a "Mountain Journal" to track your plant's growth and any changes you observe.
5. **Reflect and Connect:** As your plant grows, discuss how it relates to the story. How does caring for this plant remind you of the animals working together to save the mountain?

WRITING

Predator's Guide to Gardening:

Create a humorous how-to guide for predators learning to nurture plants. Include tips, common mistakes, and "testimonials" from Luna and Santiago.

Handwriting practice area with 10 sets of lines. Each set consists of a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line.

VOCABULARY

Chapters 11-12

Swoop

Move rapidly downwards through the air.

Flourish

Grow or develop in a healthy or vigorous way.

Sprout

Begin to grow; shoot up.

Tentacle

A slender, flexible limb or appendage of an animal, used for grasping or moving.

Scamper

Run with quick, light steps, especially through fear or excitement

Can you figure out which word goes in each sentence?

1. Tiny green leaves began to _____ from the seedling after just a few days,
2. The children _____ across the playground during recess.
3. The curious octopus extended its _____ to explore the colorful coral reef.
4. Despite the harsh conditions, the small plant managed to _____ in the rocky soil.
5. The eagle _____ through the air as it hunted for prey.

COMPREHENSION

Chapter 11 - "Lost in the Blizzard"

1. How do the others discover the hidden ice bridge?

- A) They use magic to reveal it
- B) They brush snow off it
- C) They melt the ice around it

2. What new challenge do they face after Lilly leads them across the chasm?

3. The mountain spirit appears again after they cross the bridge.
(True / False)

Chapter 12 - "Together We Flourish"

1. What do you think made Bracken the happiest in this chapter?

2. What skills/talents do the goats and tapir each have to help find the Coldfire Blossom?

3. How do the animals figure out which flower is the Coldfire Blossom?

- A) By its color.
- B) By smelling and tasting different flowers
- C) By following a map

WRITING

Disgusting Flowers!

The goats had to eat a lot of disgusting flowers. Can you describe some more horrible tastes they experienced that we didn't get to read about? What did the flowers look like? What did they taste like?!?

VOCABULARY

Chapters 13-14

Mist

A cloud of tiny water droplets suspended in the air

Swirl

Move in a twisting or spiraling pattern.

Ripple

A small wave or series of waves on the surface of water.

Crackle

Make a succession of short, sharp snapping noises.

Shatter

Break or cause to break suddenly and violently into pieces.

Can you figure out which word goes in each sentence?

1. The campfire logs began to _____ as the flames consumed them.
2. A gentle breeze caused the water's surface to _____ in the moonlight.
3. The delicate glass vase fell to the floor and _____ into tiny pieces.
4. Early morning _____ covered the valley, making it hard to see.
5. The leaves began to _____ in the air as the wind picked up.

COMPREHENSION

Chapter 13 - "Finding the Blossom"

1. How does Bracken help find the Coldfire Blossom?

- A) He uses his keen eyesight
- B) He follows a map
- C) He uses his sense of smell

2. What appears after they eat the Coldfire Blossom?

3. The Coldfire Blossom tastes terrible when they finally find it.
(True / False)

Chapter 14 - "Nurture Life"

1. What challenge do Luna and Santiago face while trying to grow the seed?

- A) Extreme cold
- B) Animals trying to eat the seed
- C) Lack of sunlight

2. What did you like best about this chapter? Why?

3. How does this experience change Luna and Santiago's perspective on their roles in nature?

WRITING

Next Adventure Pitch

Pretend you're Carlos and Camila pitching ideas for your next adventure to Luna and Santiago. Write a persuasive paragraph about where you want to go next and why they should come!

The writing area consists of ten sets of primary-ruled lines. Each set includes a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line. The background features a vibrant tropical scene with a waterfall on the left and a large, bright orange flower on the right.

ACTIVITY

Luna and Santiago

Can you create a Luna and Santiago comic strip?

Title: _____

By: _____

VOCABULARY

Chapters 15-17

Furnace

A device or enclosed area for producing very high temperatures.

Scurry

Move quickly and awkwardly.

Terrifying

Very scary

Burst

Break open or apart suddenly and violently.

Shards

Sharp fragments of a brittle material, especially glass or rocks

Draw a line to connect each word to its antonym.

(An antonym is word that has the opposite meaning)

1. Furnace

A. Walk

2. Scurry

B. Friendly

3. Terrifying

C. Whole

4. Burst

D. Freezer

5. Shards

E. Mend or fix

COMPREHENSION

Chapter 15 - "Planting the Seed"

1. What happens when they plant the seed and water it?
 - A) Nothing at first
 - B) It immediately grows into a full plant
 - C) A tiny green sprout appears quickly
2. The big cats, Luna and Santiago, are natural predators. How does their gentle handling of the Coldfire Blossom seed show character growth? What does this say about the ability to change?

3. The Coldfire Blossom grows slowly like a normal plant. (True / False)

Chapter 16 - "Unity Protects"

1. Which pair of animals working together is your favorite? Why?
2. The mountain spirit says it hasn't learned anything new from watching the animals. (True/ False)
3. The title of this chapter is "Unity Protects." How do the events in this chapter illustrate this concept?

WRITING

Book 6 – The River of Shadows

What do you think will happen in the next book? Why is the river disappearing in the Amazon? Write a paragraph predicting what you think/hope will happen.



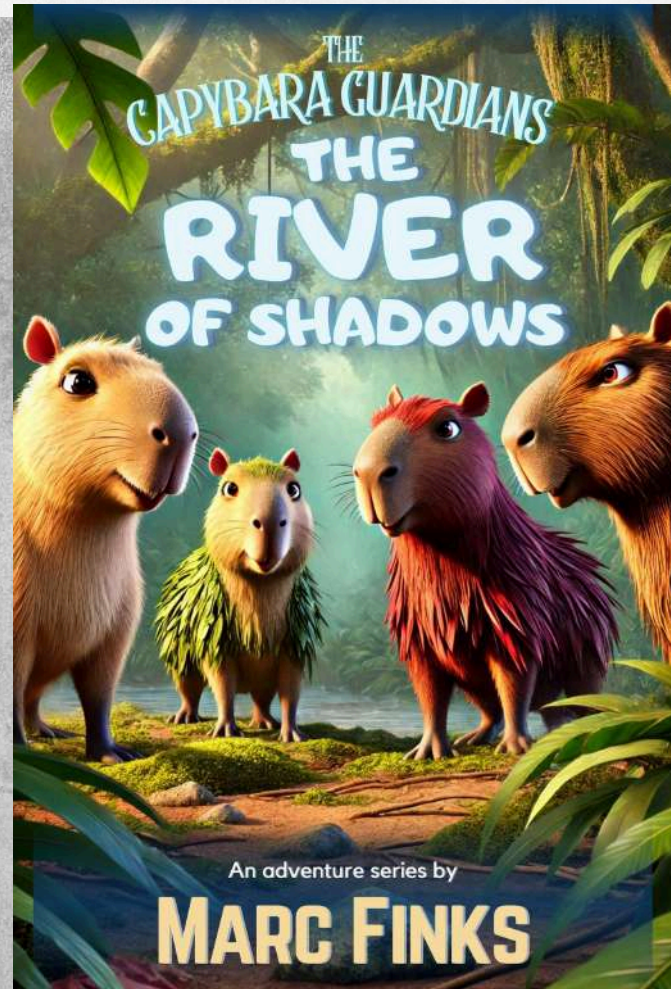
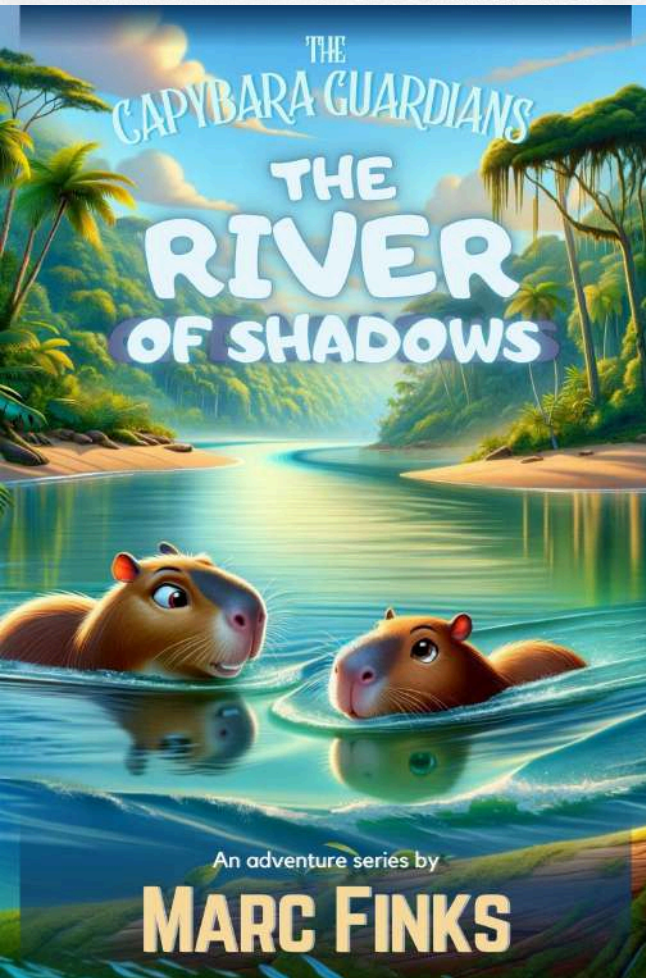
ACTIVITY

Matching the Characters

How well do you know the characters? Can you match them with what they've done?
Draw a line connecting them.

- Carlos and Camila
- Bracken
- Huff and Guff
- Lilly
- Santiago
- Luna
- Mountain Spirit
- Whispering Wraith
- Queen of the Mountain
- Planted the evil flowers
- Made friends for the first time
- Learned that they can't do everything by themselves
- Realized that we can all change and become better
- Used their stomachs to save the mountain
- Let a chinchilla ride on his head
- Showed what true leadership means

SEE YOU IN BOOK 6!



**Special Sneak Peek
of Books 7 and 8**

