

Is It a Book? A Game?

There's significant buzz in Scholastic's booth (3439) about Infinity Ring, a multiauthor, alternate history time travel series set to launch on August 28 with James Dashner's *A Mutiny in Time*, which has an announced 500,000-copy first printing. The middle-grade series

has an online game component (available on the Web, smart-phones, and tablets) featuring immersive 3-D gaming technology, and each book is packaged with a collectible map that includes a code to unlock content in the game. Dashner created the story arc for the series and will also write its final installment, due out in March 2014. Carrie Ryan, Lisa McMann, Matt de la Peña, Matthew J. Kirby, and Jennifer A. Nielsen will also contribute Infinity Ring installments, having launched the 39 Clues in 2008. Integrating books, collectible cards, and an online game, that series (along with its follow-up, the 39 Clues: Cahills vs. Vespers) has upward of 11 million copies in print worldwide, and the online game has attracted more than 1.7 million registered users.

"Infinity Ring's gaming component is groundbreaking in that you're fully immersed in this 3-D environment," explains David Levithan, Scholastic's publisher and editorial director. "This technology didn't exist when we created the online element of the 39 Clues. The role-playing is incredible. Kids literally walk through history and interact with it."

Dashner, who notes he is "a huge history buff" and was "beyond ecstatic" to be asked to be the architect of Infinity Ring, agrees. "The series' meshing of book and game is brilliant," he says. "I think we're going to capture a lot of kids who may think they don't like reading. Of course kids who love to read will find the books appealing, and the game will be a bonus to them. Reluctant readers will be so



ments.

Infinity Ring focuses on two best friends who discover the key to time travel—a device known as the Infinity Ring—and are swept into a centuries-long war over the fate of humankind. Recruited by the Hystorians, a secret society dating back to

Aristotle, the kids learn

that history has gone disastrously off course, and they must travel back to various eras to fix the "Great Breaks." The tie-in online game enables readers to play the role of one of the main characters as they interact with a host of historical figures—among them Alexander the Great, Christopher Columbus, Louis XVI, Dolley Madison, and Harriet Tubman—while completing their missions.

Scholastic has a solid record with innovative multiplatform publishing—the demos blew me away—that they may well turn to the books to make the whole experience complete. I think the books will help them realize that reading can be fun."

Scholastic has a robust marketing plan in place for Infinity Ring, including TV, in-theater, and online advertising; distribution of educator materials to schools and libraries; and a retail floor display. Dashner will promote the series on an author tour in the fall and will make appearances at Comic-Con and other major festivals.

Dashner will sign ARCs of *A Mutiny in Time* tomorrow, 4–5 p.m., at Table 16 in the autographing area. He and Levithan will participate in tomorrow's program "Beyond the Book: Multi-Platform Books to Ignite Reading and Thinking," to be held noon–12:30 p.m. on the Uptown Authors Stage. Visitors to Scholastic's booth can view an Infinity Ring sizzle and pick up ARCs of the launch title, as well as Infinity ring lenticular stickers and embossed posters.

—Sally Lodge