***The Eureka Key***

***(Secrets of the Seven series Book 1)***

By Sarah L. Thomson

### Annotation:

When middle school puzzle master Sam and history wiz Martina win a contest for a summer trip across the US, they discover they've been drafted into something vastly more extraordinary. Joining another kid on the trip, Theo, a descendant of George Washington himself, they must follow clues to find seven keys left behind by the Founding Fathers. Together the keys unlock Benjamin Franklin's greatest invention--a secret weapon intended to defend the country. Each key is hidden in a unique location around the U.S., protected with puzzles, riddles, and traps. This has kept the weapon safe . . . until now!

**Book Talk:**

Do you like mystery? Adventure? Solving puzzles? Add a little history and you get *The Eureka Key,* book 1 in the Secrets of the Seven series*.* If you liked the National Treasure movies, you’ll enjoy this series which follows, Sam the puzzle-solver extraordinaire, and Martina the walking history encyclopedia, as they discover that their cross country trek courtesy of the American Dream contest is more than they bargained for. Join them as they join Theo, a descendant of Founding Father, George Washington, to solve challenging puzzles and escape deadly traps in a race against time and villians to find the Eureka Key. Along the way they’ll find clues to historic sites across the U.S. where the Founding Fathers have hidden the keys leading to Ben Franklin’s ultimate weapon which will save the country. Who will get there first?

### Author on the:

* Website: slthomson@earthlink.net
* Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Sarah-L-Thomson-129943300446576/

### Items to use in a library display:

* Map of the U.S. with Death Valley highlighted
* <http://www.sarahlthomson.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Secret_Puzzles_v3.pdf>
* Pictures of the Founding Fathers
* Ben Franklin’s 13 virtues
* skeleton key
* magic squares

**Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics:**

* Explain the mysterious and suspicious behavior surrounding the American Dream contest. How has this increased the conflict in the story?
* Did you expect the tourist ( Aloha-Shirt Guy) to be a threat? What clues may have led you to believe so?
* What does Sam have to do in order to save himself and his friends from the water?
* Summarize what Theo explains to Martina and Sam about the trip.
* What is the Eureka Key?
* Where are the kids off to next? How did they figure it out?

**First Line of the Book:**

* “Sam’s eyes were on the clock: 9:54.”

**Non-Fiction Companion Title(s):**

* *Thomas Jefferson: President & Philosopher* by Sarah L. Thomson

**What to Read Next:**

* *The Eagle’s Quill* (Secrets of the Seven Book 2)
* *The* *Ring of Honor* (Secrets of the Seven Book 3)
* *Framed* by James Ponti

# *Brainwashed: Crime Travelers Spy School Mystery & International Adventure Series Book 1* by Paul Aertker

Other Books by this Author:

* *Deadly Flowers: A Ninja’s Tale*
* *Deadly Wish: A Ninja’s Journey*
* *The Secret of the Rose*
* *Mercy: The Last New England Vampire*

Additional Resources

* Music:
* Poetry:
* Art/craft activity:
* Reader’s Theater script:
* Interview with the author:
* Book Study:
* Lesson ideas: http://secretsoftheseven.com/SecretsoftheSeven-EurekaKey.pdf

**Name that Book:**

* “Every time he had gotten in trouble, he’d watched the prinicipal type in her password to access his records. He’d never been able to see the keyboard-but he had heard the keystrokes. Seven of them.” HB pg 8
* “He hadn’t even been on this trip a day, and he’d already had a brush with death. On the other hand, he had also landed a plane, which- though terrifying- was pretty awesome. All in all, it kind of evened out.” HB pg 51
* “It must have been more than a hundred degrees out in that desert, but somehow, Sam still felt a chill run down his back. He’d never even seen a real gun before-much less had one pointed at him.” HBpg 68
* “Though your constitution may be hale, your quest shall build a mighty thirst. If you wish to enter my oasis, you must first look to the first.” HB Pg 98