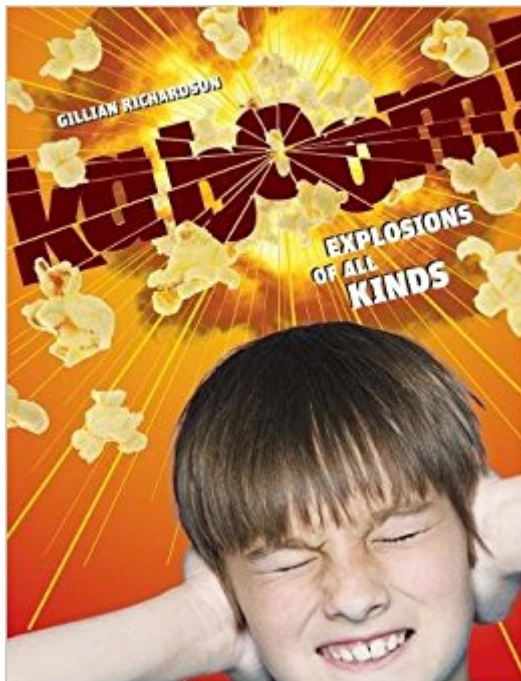


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Kaboom!: Explosions Of All Kinds



Synopsis

Who knew that some insects can create explosions to get food? Or that fireworks were once used to fight wars? Explosions are all around us, from the Big Bang that created the universe to the pop of a seedpod, from solar flares to the explosive gases lurking in a coal mine. Full of fun facts, dramatic images and highlights of momentous blasts in history—including the infamous Halifax explosion of 1917; Kaboom! examines an astonishing variety of explosions and the science behind them. Many remarkable blasts are a result of human ingenuity, from carving the faces of four American presidents into a wall of granite on Mount Rushmore, to the development of asthma inhalers based on a beetle's explosive pulses to scare predators. The many exciting guises of explosions are revealed ways both engrossing and surprising.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 5 — With comic-style sound-effect headings and fact boxes galore, Kaboom! highlights the supercharged of the natural and manmade worlds, from astronomy, geology, biology, herbology, and entomology to chemistry, mechanics, pyrotechnics, and art. Text is broken into asymmetrical panels for bite-size explanations. Some explosions are captured in sequence and detail with historical and high-speed photography and illustrations in comic-style panel frames. Though the subjects, especially flatulence, will interest younger students, the vocabulary and background knowledge more typical of middle schoolers is required for full appreciation, especially for the astronomy explosions. Kaboom! is an engrossing attention-getter, effectively tapping the sensationalism of all types of blasts. —S. McClendon, Friends School

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Packed with information and illustrated with many color photos, this book looks at the causes and effects of explosions. Richardson divides the subject into explosions occurring naturally (volcanoes, supernovas, geysers, and the occasional exploding animal) and those engineered by people. Five of the six chapters end with "interludes," two to four-page sections exploring a specific example of the topic. For example, the chapter "Destructive Explosions" presents gunpowder, dynamite, and bombs, with an interlude on the 1917 Halifax explosion, while "Constructive Explosions" discusses the explosive clearing of a waterway, the use of explosives in building demolition, and the internal combustion engine, with an interlude on the use of dynamite at Mount Rushmore. The presentation concludes with a selected source bibliography and a recommended reading list. Fun for browsing and useful for the odd report. Grades 4-7.

--Carolyn Phelan

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