



## Spy Camp

*Stuart Gibbs*

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In this follow-up to the Edgar-nominated *Spy School*, top-secret training continues into summer for aspiring spy Ben Ripley—and so does the danger.

Ben Ripley is a middle-schooler whose school is not exactly average—he's spent the last year training to be a top-level spy and dodging all sorts of associated danger. So now that summer's finally here, Ben would like to have some fun and relax. But that's not going to happen during required spy survival training at a rustic wilderness camp, where SPYDER, an enemy spy organization, has infiltrated the spies' ranks. Can Ben root out the enemy before it takes him out—for good?

## Spy Camp Details

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Author : Stuart Gibbs

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## From Reader Review Spy Camp for online ebook

### Ms. Yingling says

Looking forward to a summer at home after his event filled year in Spy School, Ben is dismayed to find that he only gets a weekend at home, and must go to a wilderness survival camp for the summer, along with his classmates. Also dismaying is a note from SPYDER. The group eventually demands that he join them or die, and they send Murray Hill, who is supposed to be incarcerated, to encourage him. Ben's a good guy, though, and doesn't even consider it. Things quickly go south when he is at camp, but he has the help of the brilliant and talented (not to mention pretty) Erica Hale. Her father, Alex, is assigned to keep Ben safe; it's just too bad that Erica is more equipped to deal with the situation than the acclaimed spy! When the bus they are on gets highjacked by SPYDER, Ben, Erica and Alex escape into the wilderness and decide to figure out whether Murray is really in the juvenile detention center. That's just their first mistake-- SPYDER is four or five steps ahead of them at every turn, and it's clear that they are not really after Ben. The romp continues with lots of twists and turns, as well as a stint in a Civil War reenactment. The group manages to save the day... for now.

Strengths: The first book has been popular in my library-- the covers are spot on for middle school. This book had all of the action and adventure of the first, awesome twists, and was somehow more believable than the first. A touch of goofiness, a hint of romance, but really good spy details. Enjoyed this very much, especially Erica's character.

Weaknesses: Found it slightly hard to believe that SPYDER had such a jump on Erica, and would have liked a tiny bit more of Ben's family, but this was good stuff.

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### Jase B says

12 year old Ben Ripley is spending the summer at *Spy Camp*, the top secret outdoor education facility of Ben's school. Instead of having a spy free vacation with his old friends and family, he has to the Wilderness Education Facility, or the WEF for short. Ben thought he was going to have a good time at *Spy Camp*, but after he got a secret letter from SPYDER, everything will change. SPYDER (read to find out) offered Ben to lend SPYDER his "special skill" or be killed. The first person he turns to is Erica Hale, Ben's secret crush, without her Ben's life would be fatal. I liked this book because of the thrill and mystery of the situation. I also really liked how there are multiple time where Ben is running for his life. What I didn't like about the book is that Ben has to lie about everything and most of the time the lies turn into a big mess. If you liked *Spy School* then you would like this book too. Read the book to find out more.

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### Ellie Emmelhainz says

LOVED THIS BOOK!!!!!! I can't believe that Joshua Hallal was alive! I figured out that Murray was apart of SPYDER before it was reviled in the book, but not in this book. It was more of a mystery and I really liked that.

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## Dolly says

This is the second book in the Spy School series by Stuart Gibbs. It begins at the end of the school year, as Ben expects to go home and enjoy his summer vacation.

Of course, nothing ever goes as he expects, and soon Ben is on his way to 'Happy Trails', a wilderness survival camp otherwise known as the CIA's summer school. And he immediately embarks on another adventure with his fellow student Erica Hale, trying to evade (and disrupt the plans of) the nefarious secret group, SPYDER.

With numerous plot twists, this book is even more engaging and entertaining than the first. The story is dramatic, but funny, too, and even though the story gets a bit silly, I really enjoyed it. Gibson Frazier does a great job narrating the audiobook and I love how he was able to manage performing the numerous character voices.

I love that the story is set in Virginia and parts of West Virginia, since we spend so much time going from one to the other. In fact, when the town of Wardensville, West Virginia was mentioned, I was very excited, since we pass through (and often stop) there very often.

interesting quotes (page numbers from paperback edition with ISBN13 978-1442457546):

*"I could imagine her as a kindergartener, making a high-tech raid on the family cookie jar."* (p. 19)

*"'You're only a first year!' Tina cried. 'And you're already getting death threats! Do you have any idea how lucky you are?'"* (p. 28)

*"Which meant they probably knew Alexander was as dangerous as a wet napkin."* (p. 81)

*"Erica sighed. 'Don't you ever get tired of being wrong?' she asked."* (p. 136)

*"A 'farb,' I'd learned from the sutler, was a reenactor who didn't strive for authenticity - for example, someone who had the good sense to wear nice, comfortable cotton underwear beneath his uniform."* (p. 230)

*"Apparently, it was common for children to participate in the Civil War, and thus, lots of fathers had brought their sons along for a fun family weekend of simulated violence and bloodshed."* (p. 230)

*"'We can't afford any screwups right now,' Cyrus told him. 'And no one screws up like you do.'"* (p. 234)

*"'You're a legend.' Then I lowered my voice to add, 'And legends, no matter how preposterous, are usually based on fact, right?'"* (p. 268)

new words: farb, sutler

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## Ruby says

awsome book

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### **Mike French says**

Another 5 star YA novel from Stuart Gibbs! This story is a continuation of Spy School, so you should read that one first. If you have YA readers in your house or you are young of heart this series is a MUST READ!

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### **carter Edwards says**

this book is great! Because there is a lot of fighting and lots of good detail.

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### **Maria says**

I read the book Spy Camp by Stuart Gibbs. I gave this book a 3 out of 5 stars for its interesting topic and its complex story line, but also for the kind of boring structure.

Ben Ripley is a teenager that does not have a normal life. His life has consisted of fighting crime and preparing to be a CIA agent. Yes, Ben is a spy. Ben goes to a super secret spy school that his friends and even his family know about. He has spent the last year training to be a top spy and on top of that having to fight off the evil agency of SPYDER. So when summer approaches he cannot wait to go see his family and friends for the whole summer, but he finds out that he has to go to a summer-spy-training camp to get ready for the top level. Ben is very sad that he won't be able to see his friends again but he is committed to being a spy. Ben later finds out that the evil agency SPYDER has been tracking him again and leaving him mysterious notes in his room he doesn't know what to do. His quest to find out what SPYDER wants with him and how he will shut down the evil organization is a mystery to Ben Ripley. But will he shut down SPYDER in time before he finds them, or will SPYDER capture Ben Ripley and turn him to the bad side?

Some of the main ideas within the book Spy Camp is that Ben tries to keep everyone in spy camp from figuring out that SPYDER is after him, engaging Erica Hale into helping him shut down SPYDER, and when all of his friends are taken away by the evil SPYDER. The main topic in this story is the trip Ben and Erica take together to find SPYDER's base and capture back all of Ben's friends. But in the story more towards the ending we start to see more and more characters come in and more of the action is towards the end of the book.

Some of the strengths I saw in this book was that the author did a really good job with describing the characters and their surroundings almost so that you felt like you were there and were experiencing it. Also the author did a really good job with making the story roll and keep on going so you weren't bored with it but you also weren't rushed to the point where you couldn't remember what was going on because there were too many things happening. Lastly I felt like the author did a awesome job with making the evil organization SPYDER complex. In some parts of the stories you were like 'okay SPYDER isn't really that bad and they aren't killing anyone or anything so maybe they are just trying to intimidate Ben,' but in other parts I felt like SPYDER was going to kill anyone and everyone in their path until they get what they want which was a really cool thing to feel.

However, there are a few weaknesses within the book that I thought really stood out to me and also thought

that maybe they would end up ruining the book in the end for me. One of the weaknesses I saw was that the book didn't really start getting epic until the end where Cyrus, Eric's grandfather came in. Which was kind of depressing to me because if the whole book was like the ending then it would be getting five stars not 3, but it really wasn't like that at all. Another thing is the organizational structure wasn't on point. Like I said it really didn't start getting interesting until the last few chapters which it's a let down for me because I like the climax's to be sort of in the middle and more towards the start of the story so it pulls me in and I want to keep reading it. Which is not really what this book made me do. Overall though this book really wasn't the worst book to read, it just wasn't one I really loved.

This book left me with a not so great impression just because it really didn't draw me in and sort of in the middle I was 200 pages in and nothing was really happening for me so I just kept reading it so I could get it over with which was probably not such a great thing to do, but in the end it ended up being okay. Just not great. I would recommend this book to a fourthgrader to be honest because it was below my reading level and it probably would have been more enjoyable for a kid that is younger.

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### **Michele says**

This is the second of three books Gibbs has written in his spy series featuring 13 year-old Benjamin Ripley. It's summer and Ben thought he would be hanging with his family and his best friend Mike, however the spy school and the super covert evil organization, SPYDER, had other plans. Ben suddenly finds himself the center of SPYDER's attention and where's a safe place to be when that happens? Why spy camp! Things quickly go south for Ben and spy student colleagues. He, Erica and superspy (not!) Alexander are thrown together and must deal and/or ignore some family dynamics and dysfunctions along the way.

Gibbs got everything right with book two. He had a good blend of characters and action that compliment a well planned plot. Again, he dissects the spy tropes we are all familiar with and playfully twists to work in a kid friendly environment that is cute, but not corny. It was definitely a fun read!

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### **Casseroll says**

Listening on audio is great. Interesting series. Entertaining and funny.

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### **Tommeh Bell says**

The Nitty Gritty: Ben "Smokescreen" Ripley has survived his first year at Spy School, a super secret facility tasked with educating America's future CIA operatives.

Smokescreen has planned a summer to end all summers. Basically he just wants to hang out with his best friend, play video games and dream about Erica Hale till his little heart bursts.

Too bad SPYDER is still trying to recruit Ben and he has to go to spy camp. The thought of spy camp doesn't not bode well for Ben, but he would rather be surrounded by woods, mosquitos and his fellow spies when SPYDER comes knocking. At least he knows Erica will be there to thwart their plans again, and maybe this time he can be rewarded with a rare Hale smile from the spy.

Opening Line: "On the very last day of school, my plans for a normal, uneventful summer were completely derailed by the delivery of two letters."

The Good: I love Ben. It's awesome being inside his head. To me he is the only "real" spy in this tale. Meaning he isn't very good at it. Which you would expect from a 13 year old! If this were a fantasy or even a sci-fi book I could maybe believe that 16 year olds could dismantle nukes in under 30 seconds, but this is just a middle grades book and it's hard for me to swallow sometimes. Maybe if these kids were Eureka experiments or something I could take it, but they aren't. Ben is just a regular kid that is scared of his own shadow half of the time. I like that.

Ben's growth from one book to the next is great. We might have expected him to give 007 a run for his money in Spy Camp, but instead he has improved a little bit. He's not ready for the CIA yet, but he is better than he was when we last saw him. His character development is great and believable.

I do like that we see a kink in Erica's armor. Even if it's so predictable my mom could have seen it coming. It's good to see her ruffled. It shows her age just a tad. That's a good thing.

The Bad: My suspension of belief is getting quite the workout with this series. Not only are we to believe that a group of kids make better spies than actual CIA agents, but we are also to believe that said kids are capable of repeatedly thwarting this evil organization again and again. something the actual CIA has failed to do for decades.

I am glad that one of the principles in this story is a girl. A girl no doubt that is hailed as the best spy at school. I just wish that she wasn't the typical warrior girl archetype. Erica Hale is a great spy, but that's all she really is. She doesn't have any friends, nor any functioning relationships. The men in her life are either paranoid to the point of keeping their distance, a evil double agent content on torturing her or a bumbling oaf that couldn't spy on his sleeping grandmother. Right now Erica seems flat. She isn't growing or learning a valuable lesson and this is the second book. There needs to be somewhere for her to go.

My Hope for the Series: Gibbs has grabbed my attention. I care what happens to Ben, but my feelings can go cold very quickly. I want him to get to the point in the next installment before my attention wanders.

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### **Jack says**

I loved this book very much. It has suspense, thrill and an element of surprise. With twists and turns around every corner so you better be ready for it! After school is out for the spies-in-training. Ben, expecting to see his family and friends back home, gets a rude awakening when he finds out that there is a "summer school" for spies. Meant for outdoor training, Ben must go instead of have the summer he planned. But this camp has also something unplanned. Starting with a contract from an unknown someone or something. Ben must find out who sent it, and why.

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### **Chiara says**

This is even better in terms of plots and spy mysteries.

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### **Jake Ruud says**

I think that there was a clear theme in this book. That theme was, never think that you are safe. We see countless times as Ben is attacked by SPYDER by surprise. We see how they are attacked while they are on a bus. You just never know when they won't be attacked.

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### **Trehson says**

This book was way more interesting than the previous book called Spy School. That's because it was a continuation to it , but this time it's not taking place at a school but at a camp. Some readers might say that's not that different because the only thing new is that it's taking place outside of school. As you know the last book ended with the main character Ben capturing the mole in spy school, Murray Hill, with the help of his friend/classmate Erica and then it ends. But, the new story picks up with Ben going to Spy Camp because everyone that attended spy school has to go. While he is there with all the other previous characters Ben finds a note from the school's enemy know as Spyder. The letter was mostly stating that they wanted him to join them because he has special abilities that they need from him.

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