

Cowboys Vs. Chefs

Rocky Road's food festival is fast approaching and James is determined to win. That is until a gang of rowdy cowboys steal all the festival ingredients! James challenges their leader to a cooking duel but the stakes are high... Can James win against the fearsome cowboy leader and save the festival?

Book Band

Brown

This book is Brown Band/Level 12

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RRP £6.99
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'Cowboys Vs. Chefs'

An original concept by W. G. White

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Published by MAVERICK ARTS PUBLISHING LTD

Studio 11, City Business Centre, 6 Brighton Road,
Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5BB

© Maverick Arts Publishing Limited February 2022

+44 (0)1403 256941

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available at the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-84886-865-6

Maverick
publishing
www.maverickbooks.co.uk



This book is rated as: Brown Band (Guided Reading)

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Chapter 1

“There’s some garlic at the top of the hill, I promise!” said James as he climbed the steep hill. Behind him, his older brother Jeff huffed and puffed and grumbled. Jeff didn’t want to climb the hill. Jeff wanted to buy regular garlic from the regular green grocers.

James was always dragging him off on foraging trips, looking for wild ingredients to go into food in their restaurant. But Jeff didn’t think it was a good idea.

“No one forages for ingredients anymore, James,” Jeff protested. “It’s dangerous, dirty and much too sweaty.” He wiped the sweat off his head and grumbled some more.



But James didn't care. He knew that all the real chefs went foraging. Fresh ingredients were vital to a good meal, and you couldn't get fresher than plucking it straight from the soil.

"You want to win the competition at the food festival tomorrow, right?" James asked, smiling as he reached the top of the hill.

"I'm really not bothered," replied Jeff.

"Well I do. And we're missing the black garlic: Head Chef's secret ingredient."

"Head Chef? Just call her Nana, you weirdo."

James grinned back at his sweaty, red-faced brother. From here, he could see the entirety of Rocky Road; his food-obsessed town. With more restaurants than homes and more chefs than *anything*, Rocky Road was every food-lover's dream.

Running through the middle of it all was the busy high street, with a clock tower at the end. All the best restaurants were found there. But tomorrow, that high street would host Rocky Road's Annual Food Festival.

A food festival with a competition. A competition with a prize. A prize of a five-course meal at the restaurant owned by Mr Scrummy, the mayor of Rocky Road. James could think of nothing better.

"There!" James exclaimed, pointing to a lonely, dead tree ahead of them. James rushed over and dropped to the ground beneath the tree, brushing some of the tall grass aside. Jeff wheezed along behind him.

"I told you I'd find some." James grinned proudly, then carefully scooped the soil up around the wild garlic. This was a special, black garlic that's usually

made by cooking regular garlic over several weeks. It didn't grow naturally anywhere but here, in the sugar-sweetened hills of Rocky Road.

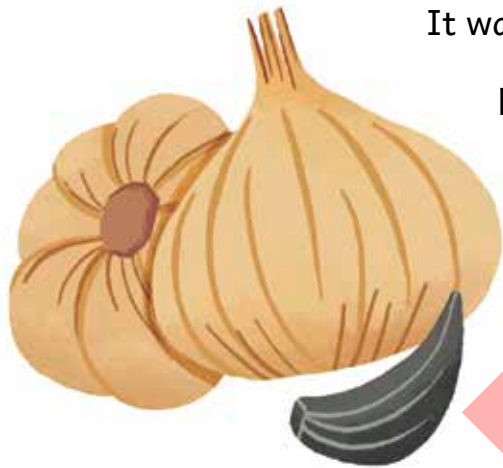
"Can we go now?" Jeff whined as James placed three whole garlic bulbs into his pocket. "We've still got to make the pasta, set up the stall, pre-dice the onions, and buy salt from Old Freda... I hate Old Freda."

"Yup, time to head back." James sniffed the garlic.

It was sweet and syrupy with hints of vinegar.

It was perfect.

Oh, they'd win tomorrow. James was certain.



Chapter 2

Next day, at the festival, there were stalls for every dish you could ever imagine. Perfect pizzas, colourful curries, beautiful burgers, saucy salads, luscious lasagnes, nourishing noodles, crispy chips, delicious desserts and many, many more.

James didn't know where to look. His eyes bulged and his mouth watered as he sniffed the tempting aromas. He dragged his feet as Jeff herded him through Rocky Road's busy high street towards their own stall.