

KOFI and the SECRET RADIO STATION

RESOURCES PACK



About the book

His whole world was the sound of the speakers, the records, and the fun he was having in this place that he never even knew existed. He looked up as he came to the end of the verse and Linton was giving him the thumbs up. Kofi's grin stretched from ear to ear.

Kofi has discovered a secret radio station in a place no one will ever look. It doesn't take him long to think he can make something out of it. He and Shanice get a load of kids interested in taking part and having their moment on Clipper FM . . . But when the radio station vanishes overnight and one of Kofi's friends is accused of stealing, then the whole beautiful plan starts to fall apart . . .

Can Kofi and his best mate Kelvin unravel the mystery, stay out of trouble and do their homework – all without mum and dad spotting anything – before teatime?

Kofi and the Secret Radio Station is the second music-making adventure in Jeffrey Boakye's debut fiction series.

About the author

Jeffrey Boakye is an author, broadcaster, educator and journalist with a particular interest in issues surrounding race, masculinity, education and popular culture. Originally from Brixton in London, Jeffrey has taught secondary school English for fifteen years. He is a senior teaching fellow at the University of Manchester and has been awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Leicester.

Jeffrey's books include: *Hold Tight: Black Masculinity, Millennials and the Meaning of Grime*; *Black, Listed: Black British Culture Explored*; *What is Masculinity? Why Does it Matter? And Other Big Questions*; *Musical Truth: A Musical Journey Through Modern Black Britain*; and *I Heard What You Said*. He is also the co-presenter of BBC Radio 4's double award-winning *Add to Playlist*. Jeffrey now lives in Yorkshire with his wife and two sons.



A letter from Jeffrey Boakye

Hello!

First things first – Kofi is BACK! As you can see, I’m so excited for the publication of *Kofi and the Secret Radio Station*, following up on his first big adventure, *Kofi and the Rap Battle Summer*.

So what’s new?

There are three words that describe this book really well, and they all start with ‘M’: *Music*, *Mischief* and *Mystery*. If you’ve spent any time with Kofi at all, you’ll know that his mind is like a spinning firework of creativity, always looking out for opportunities to make a little money and have a lot of fun, and of course, his best friend Kelvin is right there by his side, equipped with his amazing memory and his incredible rapping skills.

There’s a lot to discover in this book. Hidden pasts, new friends, family fun, old secrets and big shocks, all set to a soundtrack of music that Kofi, Kelvin, Leroy and his friends at school love so much. When I sat down to write this one, I wanted to make it big and exciting – to expand Kofi’s world and take the reader (that’s you) on a journey. I also wanted to have even more music and rapping than in the first book, so get ready for some serious bars all the way through.

But more than that, I wanted to shape a story of a boy growing up through a magical childhood, even though everything I’ve written is super realistic. Set in 1995, this book takes us back almost thirty years to a time of no internet, no mobile phones, and no social media, where you had to buy magazines and record songs off the radio on to cassette tapes.

Radio. That’s where the magic begins. The sound of bass drifting through the estate . . . A secret world, ready to explore . . . A mysterious new guide for Kofi and his friends . . . I remember, as a kid myself, tuning through the radio stations to see what I might find and hearing all sorts of music, sometimes from radio stations only a few miles from where I lived. The radio was where you enjoyed music and made connections. It was where my sisters and I would go to hear the latest tunes from America, the Caribbean, Africa, or other parts of the UK. It was a whole world.

That’s what *Kofi and the Secret Radio Station* is all about, and I can’t wait to see what you make of it. I’m so proud of this book and I know it will leave people laughing, gasping, rapping and maybe even wiping a tear or two from their eyes. Yes, it’s that deep!

Thank you so much for reading this far. Make sure to pick up a copy when it lands – you won’t be disappointed. In the words of Kofi himself: Trust me.

Until next time,

Jeffrey Boakye

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before reading

Take a look at the book title and cover. What do you think the book will be about?

Do you ever listen to the radio? If so, which radio stations or shows?

What sort of music do you most enjoy listening to?

Have you ever written a song of your own?

Kofi and the Secret Radio Station is the second book in a series. Have you read the first book *Kofi and the Rap Battle Summer* before?

After reading

Did the book match up to what you expected? Were there any surprises?

What was your favourite moment in the story?

Did you have a favourite character? Why did you like them?

Kofi comes up with a lot of money-making schemes, but they often end in disaster. Why do you think that is?

Would you want to perform live on air if you found a secret radio station? Why or why not?

Can you remember any specific songs or musicians that are mentioned in the book? Have you listened to any of them before?

The book is set in the 1990s. What differences did you notice between then and now? How has technology changed?

Do you think there was any moral to the story in *Kofi and the Secret Radio Station*?

Have you learned anything new about the world after reading this book?

CHARACTER PROFILES

What do you remember about the characters in *Kofi and the Secret Radio Station*? Write out five facts about each of the following:

- Kofi
- Kelvin
- Gloria
- Emmanuel
- Shanice
- T
- Leroy
- Kofi's mum
- Kofi's dad
- Uncle Delroy
- Linton
- Mr Thompson

EXPLORE FURTHER

How does radio work, and how has it changed since it was first invented? Look up the science of sound and find out more about how we hear, record and use radio waves to transmit it.

When Kofi is watching *The Chart Show* on page 77, the book says that 'if you were lucky, you might get some hip-hop, R & B, reggae, house or soul: black music that you didn't hear much on the radio'. What can you find out about the history of these music genres? Who are some of the famous black musicians behind them?

Make your own secret radio station. Using a computer and microphone or the recording app on a smartphone, have a go at recording your own welcome message. Which ten songs would you choose for your playlist?