

Young & Published

A Valley boy achieves a man's ambition

In some ways, Arriq Reams isn't like the average 13-year-old. He doesn't like candy all that much, he speaks with the maturity of a high school graduate and he's formed close relationships with many of his teachers.

What really sets Arriq apart is the fact that he published his first book at age 12. "I never thought I'd write a book that'd be published."

Arriq was introduced to independent book publisher Kas Winters when she spoke at a young author's day at his school, Ira A. Murphy Elementary in Peoria, Ariz. As a part of that presentation, he began writing in a small journal and completely filled the pages. When he filled up another book that would eventually become *Samuri!*, his teacher, Lisa Kluge, mailed it to Kas. "I was impressed with his grasp of language, the intricacy of the plot and the way he developed the timeline of the story," Kas says.

Arriq will never forget the day Mrs. Kluge told him his book was being published. "She scared me because she grabbed onto my arm, and I thought, "Oh, my God, what did I do?" " he says, wide eyed.

The story follows a young samurai named Flame on his journey of achievement, growth and development. The inspiration stemmed from Arriq's interest in Japanese action films like Jet Li's *Fearless*, *The Way of the Dragon* and *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

"Some of the stunts they do, like jumping from wall to wall, I find that fascinating," Arriq says. "I decided I could probably write a book on it or just write a short story that turned out to be 40 pages long, handwritten." He learned about writing from his grandmother, who taught him that art of grammar and how to put events in order. "Sometimes I come home and write and write," Arriq says. "I don't even know what I wrote until I'm finished and I'm reading it for grammar errors."

Arriq's friend and classmate Daniel Medina co-illustrated the 92-page paperback, which published on September 25. They're available online at

<http://www.winmarkcom.com> for \$12. All profits go to a college endowment fund for the two boys. Arriq hopes to use his portion to attend ASU, where he'll study journalism and creative writing.

Kas says *Samuri!* won't be available in bookstores because most charge handling fees and deal only with major distributors. The boys don't have a marketing budget to pay such costs. "There's plenty of competition from other books in a bookstore, so we're using more targeted ways of getting the word out to people," she says.

Arriq recently gave Kas a pile of tattered, handwritten pages that will eventually be types, designed and printed as the sequel to *Samuri!*. He hasn't yet decided on a title. The book should be published and available online within a year, which is about how long the first project took. A third book is already in the works.

"I'm actually relieved that the first book is done," Arriq says. "But it's a lot of fun, and I love doing it."

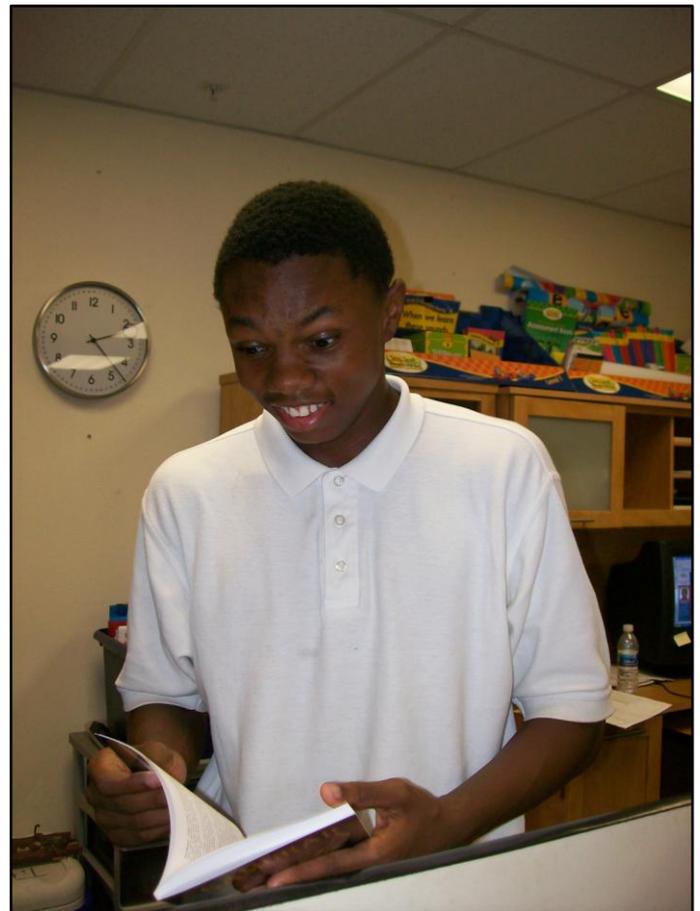


PHOTO BY KAS WINTERS

Arriq Reams seeing his book printed book for the first time at Ira A. Elementary School.