



George's Secret Key to the Universe

George's Dad is an ardent environmentalist. In fact, both his parents are convinced that modern inventions of science and technology have caused a lot of damage on the earth. They are committed to the cause of saving the planet. They use a bicycle instead of a car. There is a ban on TV and computers in their house. They don't buy things like bread and biscuits. They eat only vegetarian and home cooked food. They even use candles to light the house to avoid using electricity. Poor George has to suffer a lot of jeering and ridicule from his friends because of all this.

Actually, George doesn't think that either the TV or the computer is a bad thing. He has tried to tell his parents that it's possible to save the earth using the computers and the internet. But no! In their house, there can't be ANY discussion on that issue. George always likes to know 'why'. But who is to answer his questions? His parents think that he is still too young to understand global issues.

One day, however, George unexpectedly acquires a new friend and next door neighbour – Annie. Annie's father Eric is a brilliant scientist and ever willing to answer all of George's questions. Eric has built a super super intelligent computer named Cosmos. Cosmos has incredible powers. It can literally open windows on the universe and take you to any planet, star, comet and even to a black hole! And of course Cosmos can also bring you back from there. However, Cosmos depends entirely on the information that is fed into it by people

like Eric who do the research and thinking that can make Cosmos work.

Science can be used for a good cause and a group of good scientists like Eric have vowed to use it for people's welfare. Unfortunately, there is one odd angry scientist who wants to use science for his own selfish motives. He is planning to steal Cosmos and all of Eric's research so that he can establish his own rule on another planet. It so happens that only George can do something to overcome the wicked plans of the nasty scientist. If you want to know what adventures he undertakes and what strategies he has to use to stop the power hungry scientist, you have to read the novel, 'George's Secret Key to the Universe'.

The author of this wonderful adventure is Lucy Hawking. The story of the novel is imaginary but it also includes plenty of charts, photographs, boxes that give you hard facts about our solar system, galaxies, space and the whole universe. This information

has been presented in a very simple, easy to understand manner by none other than Stephen Hawking, who is said to be one of the greatest scientists of our times. His achievements are all the more astounding as he is a victim of many physical ailments. He has to use a wheelchair to move about and uses a computerised voice system in order to 'speak'. The story of Stephen Hawking's triumph over his physical disabilities is itself an inspiring adventure.

The book includes very attractive and expressive sketches drawn by Garry Parsons.

It is true that the excessive use of science and technology can give rise to certain problems. But turning away from technology is not the solution. That is why the Hawkings have given an important message in this book – More research, more studies and a commitment to use them not for selfish gains but for the welfare of the entire living world!

Things to do :

• Activity

Write a short book review of any one of your favourite books. Your review should include the following things.

- * Title of the book
- * Name of the author/ authors
- * Name of the illustrator (artist)
- * The central idea of the book (what the book is about)
- * The important characters in the book and what they do
- * What you like about the book
- * Why you want others to read the book/ what you learn from the book