

# I am number four vs. maximum ride

Business



I am Number 4 by Pittacus Lore (aka James Frey and Jobie Hughes) and the Maximum Ride series by James Patterson, which includes the books The Angel Experiment, School's Out- Forever, Saving the World and Other Extreme Sports, The Final Warning, Max, Fang, and Angel, are fantastic books. They have similarities and differences, but Maximum Ride is definitely better. The comic relief in both books is exceptional.

They have excellent character description, but the authors of each book do it very differently. The point of view and the way the story is told also sets the books apart. Maximum Ride is undoubtedly the better of the two, but both are very well written and have good plot lines. There is a lot of humor in both books, but overall, the jokes in Maximum Ride are more amusing. The main character in Maximum Ride, Max, has a sense of humor that is typically sarcastic, while John, the protagonist in I am Number Four is usually more ironic.

In the Maximum Ride series, most of the humor comes from things Max is thinking, while in I am Number Four, almost all of the funny lines are spoken. Reading Max's jokes in Maximum Ride will make readers laugh, because she is so witty and has great comebacks. The attempts at humor in I am Number Four, on the other hand, are rarely cause for a smile. But, even so, the books are similar in that there is lots of this comic relief. They need it too, because otherwise they would just be an exhausting string of exciting battles and characters struggling to survive against terrible odds.

The humor is mainly what makes Maximum Ride such a fun read, and what keeps the almost non-stop action I am Number Four from being too

overwhelming. The descriptions of the characters are another way that the books are not similar, and not just because of the different characters. In *Maximum Ride*, the author goes into great detail about all of the characters. From reading all seven books, readers know pretty much everything there is to know about Max's physical appearance; she is 14 years old at the beginning of the series, 5' 8", and blonde, for starters. *I am Number Four*, in contrast, has very little physical description of John. He is an alien from another planet, and readers are told that he looks completely human.

Another example of the sparse character description in *I am Number Four* is Henri. He is also an alien, and came to Earth with John to serve as his guardian and protector. The following paragraph from the book is the only description of Henri in the book. " He is fifty years old, which means he was forty when we arrived. Being his age made for a harder transition.

He still speaks with a strong Loric accent that is often mistaken for French. It was a good alibi in the beginning, so he named himself Henri, and he has stuck with it ever since, just changing his last name to match mine." (*I am Number Four*: pages 24-25). There is nothing to help a reader picture what Henri really looks like. This means that every reader will picture him differently.

The same thing applies for John, who has the same, or even less, description of his outward appearance. The style in *Maximum Ride* makes it easier to picture the characters the way the author imagined them. In *I am Number Four*, most characters can be easily seen in one's mind, but not the two main characters, including the narrator, John. Both books are written in the first

person, so they have lots of description of the personality and thoughts of the main characters. Max's commentary is much less serious than John's and more aimed at the reader, which can be seen by the author's use the word "you".

John's narrations, on the other hand, are very purposeful and unbiased. He gets right to the point and doesn't speak directly to the reader. John really tells things like they are. The way Max tells the story and describes the events and her reactions to them is much more fun and entertaining, while it still gets the point across. Ultimately, both I am Number Four and Maximum Ride are enjoyable books. They are funny, have good character descriptions, and great narration.

Those elements are done differently by the separate authors, James Patterson and Pittacus Lore. While the books are both very good, Maximum Ride is undoubtedly the better of the two. The comic relief is funnier, the physical description of the main characters makes them easy to imagine, and the narration is more interesting. They have their similarities and their differences, but the biggest similarity is that they are truly fantastic books.