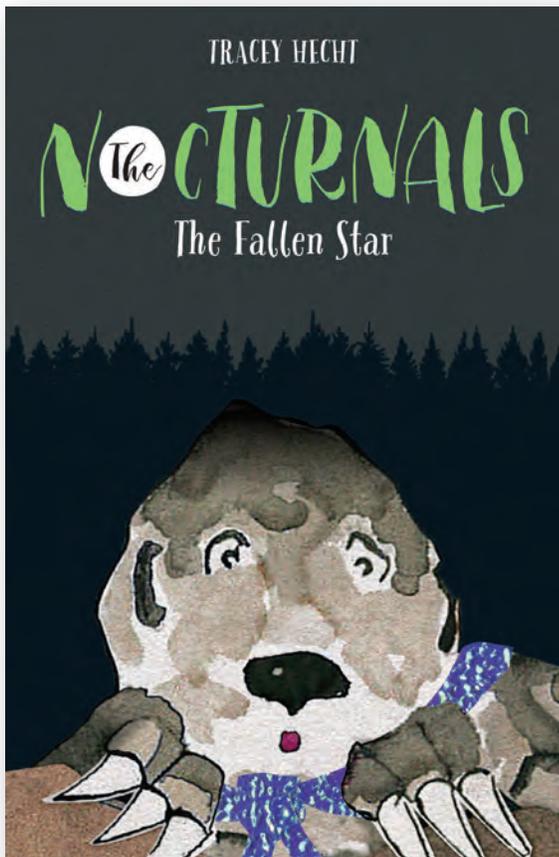


# EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

The Nocturnals: *The Fallen Star*

By  
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with illustrations by  
**KATE LIEBMAN**



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## About The Book

In *The Fallen Star*, Dawn, Tobin and Bismark awaken one evening to disaster: all the forest's pomelos have been mysteriously poisoned and animals are falling ill. They set out to investigate and encounter a mysterious aye-aye who blames monsters from the moon. The Nocturnal Brigade suspects a more earthly explanation and must race to find answers, before it's too late.

Common Core State Standards addressed by the discussion questions and activities in this guide are noted throughout. For more information on the Common Core, visit [corestandards.org](http://corestandards.org).

## A Flabbergastifying Adventure Under the Stars!

### Series Overview

The Nocturnals series features three unlikely friends: Dawn, a serious fox, Tobin, a sweet pangolin and Bismark, the loud mouthed, pint sized sugar glider. The stories all play out in their nighttime world with teamwork, friendship and humor in every adventure.

### Bonus Educational Material

Download additional Common Core Language Arts and Next Generation Science guides at [www.nocturnalsworld.com/resources/](http://www.nocturnalsworld.com/resources/)

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## I. Pre-Reading Activity

Explain to students that there are four types of conflicts in novels: Person against Person; Person against Self; Person against Nature; and, Person against Society. Read aloud the following sentence from Chapter One: “As he (Tobin) started to rise, something twinkling in the distance caught his attention” (p. 13). Then have students write a paragraph that suggests the type of conflict in the novel. Allow time in class for them to share their thoughts.

**Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 3-5.1; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 3-5.1, L 3-5.2; Knowledge of Language L. 3-5.3.**

## II. Classroom Discussion

Review the definition of “brigade.” How does it imply a group on a mission? What is the symbolism of the snakeskin cape that the Brigade wears? Discuss how the other animals react to the cape.

Fear is an underlying theme in the book. Explain how Tobin reacts when he is frightened. What about the other animals? Dawn is usually the calm one. Describe the times that Dawn displays fear. How does

Tobin use his defense to get the Brigade out of danger?

Dawn is alarmed when she sees the fallen star. Explain the difference in alarm and fear. Cite times in the novel that other animals in the Brigade are alarmed.

How is Dawn the most sensible member of the Brigade? Discuss her decision-making process. Cite

evidence that Bismark jumps to conclusions. How does he complicate the mission?

Bismark says, “Everyone knows you can’t trust anything that isn’t perfect. That’s why I only trust myself” (p. 57). No one is perfect. Describe Bismark’s imperfections. Why doesn’t Bismark trust the woylies? Debate whether the Brigade trusts one another. How does teamwork require trust?

At what point is it obvious that the Brigade is faced with solving another mystery? Debate whether they plan their mission, or react as new clues develop. Why do they think star creatures have invaded them? Explain how Dawn makes a connection between the poisoned fruit and the disappearance of the blue flowers?

The Brigade is said to be “brave in challenges.” What challenges do they face as they set out to solve the mystery of the fallen star?

Bismark wants to abandon the mission after the Brigade detects “something gritty and hot hanging in the air” (p. 26). Debate whether Bismark is frightened, or uninterested.

The pomelo fruit is attacked. Explain Dawn’s warning not to eat the fruit. Tobin knows that he should tell his friends that he tasted the fruit. Why does he keep it to himself? How does he try to convince himself that he is okay? What leads to Tobin’s confession? Explain Bismark’s reaction to Tobin’s news. How does Tobin’s illness make Dawn more determined to solve the mystery?

Bismark wants to engage in battle. What is Dawn’s plan? Why does Tobin side with Dawn? How does Dawn’s plan lead to a satisfying conclusion?



Aye-Aye Iris, a lemur, knows the secret of the fallen star. Explain her warning: “You shall know when you see the glow. Beware of the glow” (p. 39). How does knowing the secret make Aye-Aye Iris feel important? At what point is it obvious that she is the villain?

Discuss the purpose of the magic berry that Bismark has in his possession. Why is he conflicted about when to use it?

The Nocturnal Brigade rescues animals in need of help. Which animals do they rescue in *The Fallen Star*? Explain how these animals were victims of Iris.

Dawn tells Aye-Aye Iris, “It’s our differences that make us unique.” (p. 191) Discuss the physical and personality differences of each member of the Brigade. How do their differences contribute to a stronger Brigade? What are Aye-Aye Iris’s differences? Debate whether she can learn to live harmoniously among the other animals.

The climax of a novel is the turning point in the plot. What is the climax of *The Fallen Star*?

**Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Key Ideas & Details RL. 3-5.1, RL. 3-5.3; Craft & Structure RL. 3-5.4, RL. 3-5.5, RL. 3-5.6; Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RL. 3-5; Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration SL. 3-5.1, SL 3-5.3; Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas SL. 3-5.6; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 3-5.1; Knowledge of Language L. 3-5.3.**



### III. Curriculum Connections

Have students return to the Pre-Reading Activity. Think about the conflict that they predicted. Then have them consider the type of conflict(s) after reading the novel. Write a paper that makes the case that there is more than one type of conflict in *The Fallen Star*. Cite specific evidence from the text to support ideas.



**Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Key Ideas & Details RL. 4-5.1; Craft & Structure RL. 3-5.5; Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 3-5.1; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 3-5.1, L 3-5.2; Knowledge of Language L. 3-5.3.**

Discuss the moral of the story. Then use books in the library or sites on the Internet to find another fable that might relate an appropriate lesson to Aye-Aye Iris. Write a one-page paper that explains the fable choice and the message that it sends.

**Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RL. 3-5.9; Writing: Text Types & Purposes 3-5.1; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 3-5.1, L 3-5.2; Knowledge of Language L. 3-5.3.**

Make a list of the various animals introduced in *The Fallen Star*. Have students use books in the library, or sites on the Internet to identify the unique qualities of each animal. Then write and illustrate a short entry for a science encyclopedia about each animal. Cite sources used.

**Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 3-5.2; Research to Build & Present Knowledge W. 3-5.7, W. 3-5.8.**

*The exercise below has a corresponding activity sheet to share with your students on page five.*

Tobin suggests that the Nocturnal Brigade make a wish on the fallen star. Have students select one member of the Brigade and write about a wish they may make on a star at the beginning of the novel, and another at the conclusion. Consider the personality traits of the animal when determining the wishes.

**Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Key & Details RL. 3-5.3; Text Types & Purposes W. 3-5.3; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 3-5.1, L 3-5.2: Knowledge of Language L. 3-5.3.**

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Think about the humor in the novel. Is it revealed in plot, character, or dialogue? Create a one-frame cartoon about an especially funny scene in the novel. Write one sentence that best describes the cartoon.

**Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Craft & Structure RL. 3-5.5; Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 3-5.2; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 3-5.1, L 3-5.2: Knowledge of Language L. 3-5.3.**

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## IV. Vocabulary/Use of Language

The language in the novel isn't difficult, but students should be encouraged to jot down unfamiliar words and try to define them from context. Such words may include: *quivered* (p. 9), *illuminated* (p. 13), *banter* (p. 22), *bounty* (p. 22), *bulbous* (p. 23), *lustrous* (p. 26), *retch* (p. 27), *careened* (p. 27), *fiend* (p. 34), *crescent* (p. 45), *succulent* (p. 47), *intensity* (p. 64), *repetitive* (p. 74), *transfixed* (p. 78), *diabolical* (p. 77), *despair* (p. 80), *obliged* (p. 91), *covering* (p. 93), *repulsive* (p. 98), *monotone* (p. 101), *malodorous* (p. 106), *seismic* (p. 109), *atrocious* (p. 117), *luminescent* (p. 122), *barren* (p. 132), *melee* (p. 133), *miniscule* (p. 137), *malice* (p. 155), *oblivion* (p. 173), *servile* (p. 173), *demented* (p. 179), *defiant* (p. 185), and *sinister* (p. 188).

Encourage students to use a dictionary to check their definitions. How well did they do?

**Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L 3-5.4.**

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The discussion questions and activities in this guide were written by Pat Scales, Children's Literature Consultant and retired school librarian.

# Wish Upon The Fallen Star

Tobin suggests that the Nocturnal Brigade make a wish on the fallen star. Select one member of the Brigade and write about a wish they may make on a star at the beginning of the novel, and another at the conclusion. Consider the personality traits of the animal when determining the wishes.

The character I selected is \_\_\_\_\_.



A wish \_\_\_\_\_ may have made at the beginning of the novel.

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A wish \_\_\_\_\_ may have made at the end of the novel.

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