

THE MISSING GUARDIAN

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Educator's Guide

Seth Reid didn't mean to run away with a shapeshifter.

When he lost his Dad one year ago, Seth's world fell apart. On the verge of pushing the rest of his family away, he meets Belvedere, a quirky shapeshifter, who seeks help to eliminate a dark infection that threatens the Four Worlds of Life.

But when the guardian of the world of air and wind goes missing, everything falls apart. Seth is pulled into the Void, where he meets a dark figure who's determined to become one with Seth.

On an adventure filled with dragons, elemental crystals, and an unknown prophecy lost over time, Seth questions his ability to help. And the more his doubts grow, the stronger the dark infection becomes. Will his bond with his siblings be enough to stop the infection?

And if Seth succeeds, will he finally be able to move past his father's death?



Table of Contents

Contents

CHAPTER 1	3
CHAPTER 2	4
CHAPTER 3, 4 & 5	5
CHAPTER 6	6
CHAPTER 7, 8 & 9	7
CHAPTER 10 & 11	8
CHAPTER 12	9
CHAPTER 13, 14, 15 & 16	10
CHAPTER 17, 18 & 19	11
CHAPTER 20, 21 & 22	12
CHAPTER 23 & 24	13
CHAPTER 25 & 26	14
CONTACT THE AUTHOR	15

CHAPTER 1

Reading Response Questions: (Main Character – a.k.a. Protagonist)

1. Who is the protagonist? What have you learned about him in Chapter One?
 - Seth Reid is the main character.
 - He is a twelve-and-a-half year old boy who likes to snowboard.
 - His father passed away over one year ago.
 - Seth has an older brother Jared, and an older sister, Marin
 - He has a cat named Colonel Whiskers
 - Seth has a short-temper
2. Make a prediction about what will happen next and why?
3. Compare and contrast Seth and his older sister Marin.

Chapter Activities:

1. A *Cinquain* is a 5 line stanza that does not need to rhyme. Create a cinquain about your favourite character (eg. Seth):

Seth	(Line 1 = 1 word)
Grumpy boy	(Line 2 = 2 words)
Twelve Years Old	(Line 3 = 3 words)
He Likes to Snowboard	(Line 4 = 4 words)
Brother	(Line 5 = 1 word)

2. Illustrate a picture of what the beginning of the story looks like.

Online Discussion:

Go onto www.melaniemcfarlane.com and review the Book Trailer and Teaser. Who are the characters in the teaser? What's the difference between the two videos? Which do you prefer and why?

CHAPTER 2

Reading Response Questions: (Point of View):

1. Who is telling the story? Do you know what point of view it is being told through?
 - Seth – 3rd person point of view
2. How would the story be different from First Person Point of View?
 - “I” instead of “he” – you would be inside of Seth’s mind
3. How does the point of view affect how you think about the characters?
 - You see it through Seth’s eyes – his opinions affect how people are shown

Chapter Activities:

1. In a short comic strip, show how point of view would change the story.
2. Write out the difference characteristics you have learned about Belvedere. Draw a picture of what you think a shapeshifter would look like, one from Chapter 1’s descriptions and one from Chapter 2.

Online Discussion:

Compare and contrast Belvedere and his sister Tulia. How are they similar to Seth and Marin’s relationship? What *roles* do Seth and Belvedere play as siblings, and what *rules* could they learn to use to get along better with their sisters?

CHAPTERS 3, 4 & 5

Reading Response Questions:

1. Describe the Numinous. What are their special abilities?
2. How are the Numinous, in Chapter 3, different from the Darkness Seth meets up with in Chapter 4?
3. How is the Court of Earth different from the Temple of the Numinous?

Chapter Activities:

1. There are two different types of travel between the Four Worlds: *Leaping* and *Peripheral Flight*. Write a manual and/or draw a diagram of how each is accomplished to explain to someone who has never heard of either.
2. We have been introduced to two types of dragons. One is a Skye dragon, and the other is a dragon from the Court of Earth. Compare and contrast these two dragons by their descriptions.

Online Discussion:

When it comes to flight, Canada was the leader of air travel at one time. Research the Avro Arrow online and discuss how air travel is the “Dragon” travel of our time.

CHAPTER 6

Reading Response Questions:

1. A lot of characters have been introduced at this point in the book. Flip to the back of the book to locate the glossary. Do you find this helpful to sort out all the characters, or do you need it?
2. Each of the board members has a different characteristic. Some are quieter than others. Compare and contrast two board members, and discuss their relation to one another.
3. If you could be any one character in the book, which one would you be and why?

Chapter Activities:

1. Choose your favourite character and create a Character Map. An author can use Character Maps to develop a character before writing their novel. Check out this Character Map created by Jennifer Bardsley, young adult author of the Blank Slate Series:
<http://jenniferbardsley.net/tag/character-maps/>
2. Who is one of your favourite main characters from another book? Write a dialogue between Seth and this character, where that character is giving Seth advice on how to get through the challenges he is facing in his adventure.

Online Discussion:

Visit google translate online, and enter some of the characters names from the glossary. Find out which culture the words come from and what their meanings are. For example: you may notice the Board Members names are related to their element. You can also use google translate to provide you with the pronunciation of some of the different names.

CHAPTERS 7, 8 & 9

Reading Response Questions:

1. Plot consists of exposition (information), complication (mini-problems), climax (decision/action to solve the ultimate problem), and resolution (events that finish the story). Discuss the *exposition* to this point and any *complications* that have developed.
2. Write one page on how the problem with the Ilma has been resolved. Did the children solve the riddle? Was this too hard, too easy, or just right? What's left to do?
3. Birds are a symbol of hope and goodness (<http://www.animal-symbols.com/bird-symbol.html>). Write a few paragraphs about how the bird inside the Ilma is symbolic, both before and after its transformation.

Chapter Activities:

1. Pretend you are a guardian-in-training. Draw a diagram of what the Ilma and Ventus look like inside the Crystal Room. Label each crystal and write a list of the characteristics for each.
2. Discuss the plot for these three chapters. Map out the introduction and follow it to the climax, back down to the outcome.

Online Discussion:

The best way to learn about symbolism is to read old fables. Go online to <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/stories/aesop/antgrasshopper/story/> and discuss how the ant and grasshopper are symbolic in this story due to their insect traits.

CHAPTERS 10 & 11

Reading Response Questions:

1. The setting of the story can change from scene to scene. List which locations you have visited in the story up to this point. Why has each been important to visit?
2. Compare and contrast the City of Boreas to the Temple of the Numinous. Why do you think two halves of one world can be so close, yet so different?
3. What questions do you have at this point in the book? What do you think will happen next?

Chapter Activities:

1. Draw a map of the Four Worlds and the Void. Don't forget to include the characteristics of each world. Remember, Boreas is half air and half wind, and Madidus is half ice and half water.
2. Draw a diagram of Boreas, as if it was cut in half. Show the Underground City of Boreas and how it is linked to the Temple of the Numinous. Make sure to label any important landmarks along the way.

Online Discussion:

Go online and review a map of your city or town. Fill out a setting form based on locations you visited in the last month. Make sure to fill in the details so a reader would understand why you went to these places and anything special about them.

CHAPTER 12

Reading Response Questions:

1. Compare and contrast the tumultuous relationships with the board members, in comparison to Seth and his relationships with his siblings, Jared and Marin.
2. Write one page, summarizing the story up to this point.
3. What parts of the story can you relate to in your own personal relationships with family and friends?

Chapter Activities:

1. Draw a diagram of all the board members and how they relate to their worlds/crystals, as if it was a family tree. Note next to each Crystal, the name of the guardians (as many as you've learned at this point). Here's an example for Boreas:



Online Discussion:

Research businesses and how their Board of Directors are set up? Write one page on how this is similar to the Board Members of the Four Worlds and what is different.

CHAPTERS 13, 14, 15 & 16

Reading Response Questions:

1. Night dragons are introduced as another sort of travel. Compare and contrast Night Dragons to Giant Eagles. Which mode of travel would you prefer?
2. The ME are yet another set of siblings who do not get along. Discuss the theme of sibling relationships and how it has been prevalent throughout the novel. (ie. Seth and his siblings, Belvedere and Tulia, the Board Members, the ME).
3. The library has proven to be a source of information about all things past and in the future. If you were Seth, Jared, and Marin, what would you want to find out in the library? Would it be something about the past or something about the future?

Chapter Activities:

1. Draw a diagram of the indexor. Label the parts and write up a one paragraph summary of its purpose and how to use it.
2. How do you look up books in your library? Write one page comparing and contrasting the library of the ME to your school library.

Online Discussion:

Go online and research either eagles or bats. What is it that makes each creature special?

CHAPTERS 17, 18 & 19

Reading Response Questions:

1. The antagonist (a.k.a. the bad guy) is the main character who has conflict with the main character. Discuss who the antagonist was before we reached these chapters and how that has changed now.
2. Characterize Lotus. What has driven him to change from a good guy to a bad guy? How has this change affected people close to him, such as Belvedere?
3. How is Lotus similar to the Darkness? What does he have to do with the Darkness?

Chapter Activities:

1. Do a character comparison chart. Compare and contrast Lotus to one of your favourite bad guys from another book or movie.
2. Do a character comparison chart between Seth and Lotus. How are they the same? How are they different?

Online Discussion:

Go online to <http://www.watchmojo.com/index.php?id=12807> to review the video: Top 10 Bad Guys Gone Good in Movies. Review the video beforehand to determine its appropriateness for your classroom.

CHAPTERS 20, 21 & 22

Reading Response Questions:

1. Compare and contrast the children's experience with saving the wind crystal (Ventus) to what the air crystal (Ilma) was like. Was the Ventus a more difficult challenge?
2. What things did Seth accomplish alone in this challenge? Do you feel it is important for Seth to be able to do things on his own? Why or why not?
3. What symbolism does the talisman represent for Seth? He considers a number of ideas; do you think any of these could be true? Why or why not?

Chapter Activities:

1. Create a fact/opinion sheet based on what Seth has accomplished to this point in the novel. Sort out, what are actual facts that the novel has shown you, and what are opinions you've developed based on what you've read in the novel.
2. Do a five senses exercise to interpret how these action chapters affected your senses by using descriptive words. Make sure to include specific sentences to back up your answers.

Online Discussion:

Wikipedia is a great online source to find opinions and facts, but it can be hard to differentiate the two. Go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_%28fiction%29 and review this Wikipedia page on *action fiction*. Differentiate which information is opinion and which is fact. Pay close attention to the references section at the bottom. Wikipedia pages are not used as valid references in any academic paper.

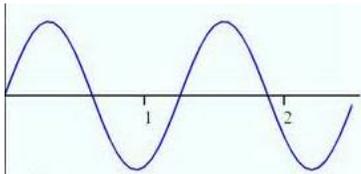
CHAPTERS 23, 24 & 25

Reading Response Questions:

1. Here we enter the climax of the plot. Remember, the climax is when it is time to solve the ultimate problem. Discuss how this is carried out.
2. Pacing is the rhythm of the novel—it is the separation between action scenes or scenes of emotional impact (peaks) and informative scenes full of detail and description (valleys). Pacing can also be carried out within a chapter. Choose your favourite chapter and discuss how it was paced, indicating which sections change the pace.
3. How does Lotus use the wind element to his advantage?

Chapter Activities:

1. Draw a number line across the center of a page from number 1-26, representing each chapter. Draw a second line at the top and label it *conflict scenes*, and a third line at the bottom and label it *informative scenes*. Using your pen, chart out which chapters contain *peaks* (conflict/emotion) and which chapters contain *valleys* (information/detail), by drawing a wave on the paper through each chapter



2. Complete a character feeling chart based on these climatic chapters. Which characters are feeling which emotions and why. Use specific sentence examples in your answers.

Online Discussion:

Go back to www.melaniemcfarlane.com and rewatch the book trailer and teaser. Do you feel the music that builds matches the final battle well? Discuss how music can be used in film to increase anticipation of the climax of a story.

CHAPTERS 26 & 27

Reading Response Questions:

1. Discuss the resolution portion of plot. How is the problem solved? How has Seth changed from the beginning of the book to the end?
2. Now that you have finished the book, discuss the cover of the book. Which scene do you think it came from? Is it appropriate? Why or why not?
3. Why did the author write the book? Provide sections of the book to solidify your position.

Chapter Activities:

1. Write a sales pitch on the novel. What were your favourite parts? Why should other people read it?
2. Create a drawing of the end of the book and compare it to your middle and ending. In doing so, explain how the characters or situation in your drawing has changed at the end of the book.

Online Discussion:

Go online and review the author's Goodreads and Amazon pages. A great way to support an author is to write a review on each of these. As a class create a review and enter it on each of these pages with your rating.

Goodreads: <https://www.goodreads.com/melaniemcfarlane>

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Melanie-McFarlane/e/B00O6YBK3M>

CONTACT THE AUTHOR

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