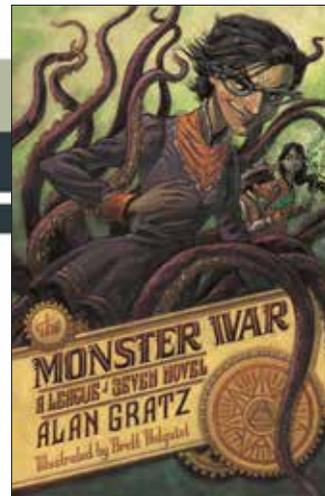
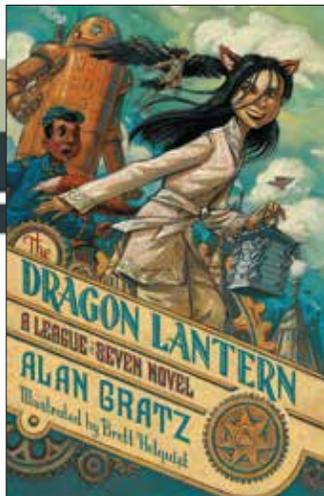
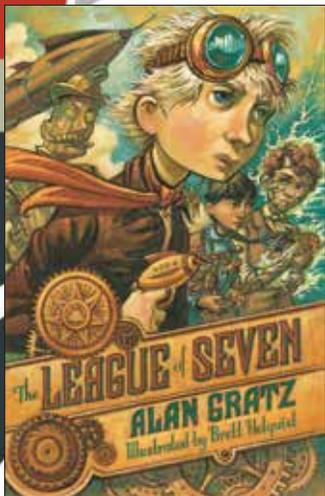


Starscape

Teacher's Guide



series

THE LEAGUE OF SEVEN

Alan Gratz

About this guide

The questions and activities that follow are intended to enhance your reading of Alan Gratz's *The League of Seven* novels. The guide has been developed in alignment with the Common Core State Standards; however please feel free to adapt this content to suit the needs and interests of your students or reading group participants.



Alan Gratz is the author of many books for children and teens, including *Samurai Shortstop*, an ALA Top Ten Book for Young Adults. He began writing *The League of Seven* series by listing all the things that ten-year-old Alan would have thought

were awesome, including brass goggles, airships, tentacled monsters, brains in jars, windup robots, secret societies, and super powers. (In fact, he still thinks all those things are awesome.) He lives in North Carolina with his wife and daughter.

About this series

In an alternate 1875 America electricity is forbidden, Native Americans and Yankees are united, and eldritch evil lurks in the shadows. Young Archie Dent is convinced that he and his friends are the members of a new League of Seven, a group of heroes who come together to fight the Mangleborn whenever the monsters arise to destroy humanity. The action-packed, alternative history fantasy series by acclaimed author Alan Gratz includes *The League of Seven*, *The Dragon Lantern*, and *The Monster War*.

A SIBA Young Adult Book Award Winner (2015)

A North Carolina Elementary Battle of the Books List Selection (2016-2017)

"Archie leads a vividly drawn and diverse ensemble... Gratz has plenty of fun with his alternate history."

—Kirkus Reviews on *The Dragon Lantern*

"[A]n imaginative world with appeal far beyond its immediate middle-grade market."

—Publishers Weekly on *The League of Seven*



Ages 9-13 ★ Grades 4-8

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THE LEAGUE OF SEVEN

BEFORE READING THE BOOK: Writing & Discussion Activities

The pre-reading activities below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards: (W.4-8.3) (SL.4-8.1, 3)

- 1) Ask each student to write about a time when s/he felt that a parent or other adult was treating them too much like “a little kid.” What was the situation? In what way did they feel they were being treated childishly? What was the result? Describe the way in which they would have preferred to be treated. How do they imagine the outcome of the situation would have been different had they been treated in this way?
- 2) Invite students to discuss their experiences belonging to clubs or teams. What are the purposes and goals of these groups? How did they gain entry to these groups (e.g., sign up, try out)? How do group members work together? Are their groups successful in reaching their objectives? What groups do they see in the adult world (e.g., political parties, community organizations, book clubs)? In what ways do they see these groups as similar to, or different from, the groups to which school-age people belong?

Writing & Discussion Activities

The discussion questions below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards: (SL.4-8.1, 3, 4) (SL.6-8.2, 3) (RL.4-8.1, 2, 3) (RH.4-8.6)

- 1) The first chapter of *The League of Seven* introduces the “Tik Tok servant” Mr. Rivets. Describe the relationship between Archie and Mr. Rivets. Consider the high-tech devices you own or use. How might they be similar to and/or different from Mr. Rivets?
- 2) What do you think the author means when he writes “People didn’t want to know there really were monsters in the world” (p. 12)? What kind of monsters does he mean? Do you think this statement holds true in our own world, too?
- 3) Explain the difference between “Mangleborn” and “Manglespawn.” What types of creatures are the black bugs that attach themselves to Mr. and Mrs. Dent and

other Septemberists?

- 4) Why do Archie and Mr. Rivets set the *Hesperus* on a course to Florida? What situation does Archie discover when he arrives? With what important people is he imprisoned?
- 5) En route to New Rome with Hachi and Fergus, the group stops to see the newly-widowed Mrs. Henhawk. What promises are made and/or revealed in the course of this visit?
- 6) What animals are represented in Hachi’s set of “clockwork gizmos”? Compare Hachi’s five animals and their abilities to the seven abilities required of various League members as they have formed through history. In what other ways are the mechanical animals important to the story, both technically and symbolically?
- 7) New Rome seems to be an alternate history version of New York City. What features of the real city are recognizable in Archie’s descriptions? What are the most significant differences between “New Rome” and the real New York?
- 8) Before Archie begins to understand his own role in the newly-forming League, he is already the keeper of the “true” history of the world and the person who shares legends and stories previously unknown to (or misunderstood by) Hachi and Fergus. Describe one or more of these stories, how it was originally understood by Archie’s companions, and what is important about them learning the truth in the course of the novel.
- 9) Who is Mr. Tesla and how do Archie, Hachi, and Fergus find him? What does he reveal to them about the threat posed by Edison? How does the scene in Tesla’s workshop show the dueling positive and negative elements of technological advancement? Can you apply your observations to a recent technological innovation in our own world?
- 10) Is the Great Bear’s pelt truly invulnerable? Explain your answer.
- 11) What is Hachi’s “mantra” as depicted in chapter 22? How might it relate to the concept behind the League? What does the mantra reveal to readers about Hachi’s character and her motives?
- 12) Where is Lady Josephine’s Academy? How is this location the scene of both a great deception and a great revelation?
- 13) On page 291, Ms. Ambrose bids her student farewell, saying, “I pray you find peace, Hachi—but I can at least rest well in the knowledge that you have found good friends.” How might this be a wish you could make for yourself or offer to



someone in your own life? Is there “peace” to be found in the League of Seven? Why or why not?

- 14) How do nursery rhymes relate to the Septemberists’ mission? Has reading this novel made you reconsider folktales and legends you have been told? Explain your answer.
- 15) How do the three friends defeat the Swarm Queen? By what betrayals is Archie tempted?
- 16) What does Archie learn about his relationship to his parents at the end of the story? How might this change his understanding of the words “family” and “friends”? What might you say to him to help him cope with his new insights?
- 17) If Archie is the strongman/shadow figure, Hachi the warrior/fighter and Fergus the tinker/maker, what other roles remain to be filled to form a new League of Seven? What do you hope will happen in the next installment of the novel?

RESEARCH & WRITING PROJECTS

The research and writing activities below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards: (L.4-8.4) (RL.5-8.4) (RL.5-6.5) (RL.6-8.6) (RL.4-8.7) (SL.4-8.1, 3) (W.4-8.2, 7) (WHST 6-8.6)

- 1) Go to the library or online to learn more about the literary subgenre of steampunk. Find at least three sources for your information. Use your research to create an informative poster that includes a definition of steampunk, a short history of the origin of the genre, and a list of some famous steampunk novels and/or movies.
- 2) The setting of a novel can loosely be defined as the time and place in which the story unfolds. In *The League of Seven*, the setting is an alternate history wherein some major world events took different turns—and yielded different outcomes—than they did in readers’ reality. Alone or in small groups, identify events, geographical names, inventions, and historical figures that are represented differently in the novel than they are in your history books. Create a booklet entitled “A Guide to the Alternate History of *The League of Seven*,” including maps; alternative biographies of historical figures, nations, and Native American tribal groups; short descriptions of specialized technologies, means of transportation and other elements that are familiar yet different from the reality of the reader’s world.
- 3) Go to the library or online to learn about ways the number seven, featured in the novel’s title, has significance in

many cultures. Consider researching the legendary Irish warrior Cuchulain, the Seven Gods of Good Fortune in Japanese mythology, or the biblical account of seven days of creation. With classmates or friends, create a mural, large mobile, or sculpture depicting the significance of seven across cultures and times.

- 4) Go to the library or online to research the sources of one or more past League of Seven members to which Archie refers throughout the novel, such as Heracles, Hippolyta, Theseus, or Wayland [the] Smith. Write a one-page report comparing the history of this character as found in your research with the portrayal of the character in the novel.
- 5) “Square cogs” and “clinker” are just two of the many slang expressions specific to the world of *The League of Seven*. Make a set of at least a dozen flash cards featuring unusual terms from the novel. Test the “League” vocabulary of friends or classmates by quizzing them with the flashcards.
- 6) Create a PowerPoint or other multimedia presentation describing the origins of the League of Seven; the specific roles its members fill; the various individuals who filled these roles in the past; and the responsibilities of the Septemberists to the League.
- 7) Read a biography of Thomas Edison and/or Nicola Tesla. Then, prepare a brief oral report about their lives, relationship, and contributions to science, followed by an explanation of how these legendary thinkers of our history were changed in the alternate world of *The League of Seven*.
- 8) Imagine you are Mr. or Mrs. Dent (Archie’s dad or mom) before the attack of the Manglespawn bugs, working on propaganda to keep the public safe. Create a colorful, annotated poster to help ordinary people remember why “lektricity” is dangerous.
- 9) Imagine you are one of a handful of Septemberists who has not fallen victim to the Swarm Queen’s mind-controlling neck bugs. Write a letter to “Any Healthy Septemberist Out There,” describing your understanding of what the bugs are doing and how they might be stopped. Include at least two black-and-white sketches with your letter.
- 10) If you could travel to the world of *The League of Seven*, what place would you most like to see or which invention would you most like to use? Would you stop in New Rome or Brasil? Would you ship yourself somewhere via pneumatic post? Create an outline-style travel itinerary for a visit to this alternate world. Share and compare your itinerary with those of friends or classmates.



- 11) In the character of Fergus or Hachi, write at least four journal entries, including one recounting your first meeting with Archie; one discussing your life before joining the battle against Edison; one in which you consider whether Archie's revelations about the Septemberists and the League of Seven are true; and one in which you ponder what will happen to you and your new friends after the final scene of the novel.
- 12) In the character of Archie, write a journal entry reflecting on your recent adventures and describing your struggles with your newly-discovered identities as an adopted child, as a possible Manglespawn, and, perhaps worst of all, as the "shadow" member of a new League of Seven.
- 13) Using information from the novel, create a logo and slogan for the new LEAGUE OF SEVEN of which Archie, Hachi, and Fergus are all a part. And/or write a HELP WANTED advertisement describing the "open positions" in the new League and the abilities these jobs will require.
- 14) Author Alan Gratz commented that he began writing *The League of Seven* by "listing all the things that ten-year-old Alan would have thought were awesome..." What do you think is awesome? Make a list of at least a dozen objects, images, place names, and phrases that pique your interest. Inspired by this list, write a 1-3 paragraph story idea, and a suggested title and genre (such as steampunk, fantasy, picture book, or graphic novel) you feel would best suit your concept.

Lexile: 740L
AR Level: 4.8 MG

AR Points: 12.0
AR Quiz #: 170904 EN

THE DRAGON LANTERN

BEFORE READING

THE BOOK:

Writing & Discussion Activities

The pre-reading activities below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards: W.4-8.3; SL.4-8.1, 3

- 1) Ask each student to reflect on a skill or talent they possess. Are they proud of this ability? Why or why not? How does this ability affect the student's daily life, friendships, future plans, and dreams? After reflection, ask each student to write a short essay describing a quality or talent he or she would like to have and why.

- 2) Invite students to define the word "hero." Do they know any heroes in their school or community? Can they list some heroes from history, fiction, film, and/or television? What qualities make these people heroes? Are heroes all good or all bad? What kinds of heroes does the world need today?

Writing & Discussion Activities

The discussion questions below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards: (SL.4-8.1, 3, 4) (SL.6-8.2, 3) (RL.4-8.1, 2, 3) (RH.4-8.6)

- 1) The first words of *The Dragon Lantern* are "Archie Dent dangled from a rope..." What ideas or images does this line bring to your mind? In what ways is Archie dangling both physically and emotionally?
- 2) What is the relationship between Fergus and Hachi? How does Archie feel about this relationship?
- 3) Who is Cahokia Man? What is a Mangleborn? Who or what are "Mangleborn," "Manglespawn," the "Septemberist Society," and the "League of Seven," and how do these groups relate to each other?
- 4) Throughout the novel, Archie is struggling to adjust to some difficult truths about his identity. What are these truths? How does this make him feel less connected to Fergus and Hachi and, possibly, more empathetic toward Cahokia Man?
- 5) Early in the novel, Archie reflects on the story of Cahokia Man, noting "The story of course, like most stories...had been rewritten over the centuries, in part because people forgot, and in part because people wanted to forget." (p. 20) Why do people want to forget? Have you ever had an experience you wanted to forget? Do you think it is right to try to do so? Explain your answer.
- 6) On page 68, Clyde gives Archie some advice about being different: "Whatever it is you're embarrassed about, whatever it is you wish was normal, embrace it. Own it. Because that's what makes you special. And being special is way better than being normal, no matter what the cost." What does it mean to be special? Do you agree or disagree with Clyde's statement? Why or why not?
- 7) Why does Archie part ways with Hachi and Fergus? Do you think this is a good decision? Is it a necessary decision?
- 8) Compare Archie's main objective with Hachi's? In what ways are these objectives similar? What are both characters really



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seeking?

- 9) Describe the Voodoo world Hachi and Fergus encounter in Louisiana. How is this similar to, and different from, the wild western.
- 10) What is “gris-gris”? How does Marie Laveau react when Fergus declines to call his building abilities magic?
- 11) Name at least three ways in which it is important that Hachi is now head of the Emartha Machine Man Company.
- 12) What is a FreeTok? What changes does Archie see in Mr. Rivets when they are reunited in Chapter 16? Do you think the outlaw Tok Jesse James is right to compare the lives of Tik Toks to lives of slaves? Explain your answer.
- 13) What roles does “lektricity” play in the story?
- 14) What does Sings-in-the-Night, the bird girl, reveal about the use of the Dragon Lantern? About the League of Seven? Whose frightening true identity does she reveal in Chapter 20?
- 15) As the dangers mount, in what ways do Archie, Hachi, and Fergus wish they were still together as a team? How do they defeat their foes nonetheless?
- 16) On page 228, Sings-in-the-Night bemoans her strange body, and Archie comforts her saying, “Having bird legs or stone skin doesn’t make you a monster.... It’s what you do that makes you good or bad.” How does Archie struggle to believe his own statement as he continues his quest for the Dragon Lantern?
- 17) In Chapter 29, what persuasions does Mrs. Moffett use to convince Archie and his friends to join her Shadow League? How does Archie feel the darkness to which Mrs. Moffett refers as the Mangleborn beneath Alcatraz awakens? How do Clyde and Kitsune react to Archie’s behavior?
- 18) What is the relationship between the Daimyo of Ametokai and the Daimyo Under the City? Compare this relationship to the relationship between Archie and the Jandal a Haad.
- 19) How does the Dragon Lantern work? Should it ever be used?
- 20) How was Archie made? How does this connect Mrs. Moffett to Madame Blavatsky? What do these discoveries lead Hachi and Archie to realize? In the final chapters of the novel, which characters ask for forgiveness? Which characters need or want forgiveness? Explain your answers.
- 21) What is a human being?

- 22) Can *The Dragon Lantern* be read as a story about how people face the reality of who they really are—and how they can separate their history and origins from the person they are today? If so, what lessons might this novel offer readers about identity?

RESEARCH & WRITING PROJECTS

The research and writing activities below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards: (L.4-8.4) (RL.5-8.4) (RL.5-6.5) (RL.6-8.6) (RL.4-8.7) (SL.4-8.1, 3) (W.4-8.2, 7) (WHST 6-8.6)

- 1) Go to the library or online to learn more about the literary subgenre of steampunk. Find at least three sources for your information. Use your research to create an informative poster that includes a definition of steampunk, a short history of the origin of the genre, and a list of some famous steampunk novels and/or movies.
- 2) In steampunk novels, famous historical figures often interact with fictional characters. *The Dragon Lantern* features General George Custer. Learn more about Custer’s life and times, then write a short essay explaining why you think author Alan Gratz chose to use this character to tell the story of Archie and his friends’ pursuit of the Dragon Lantern.
- 3) Several Native American tribes are referenced in the novel, as they are in the first League of Seven book. In real American history, these tribes had tragic relocation experiences as the American government set them on the “Trail of Tears.” Research the “Trail of Tears” and then create an annotated map (with dates) showing how at least five tribes were affected by the “Trail of Tears.”
- 4) A. Go to the library or online to find a definition of “Colossus.” Learn about things that have been named Colossus through history, such as the Colossus of Rhodes, the Colossus computer, or the Colossus character in the Marvel Comics universe. Use PowerPoint or other multi-media software to create a presentation entitled, “Colossus: Ideas, Images, and History” to share with friends or classmates.
B. Using pencils, pen-and-ink, or even 3-dimensional arts media, create a drawing or model of Colossus based on details found in the novel.
- 5) A. Many characters whom Hachi and Fergus meet in Louisiana are true figures from history. Go to the library or online and use research skills to identify at least three characters from the Louisiana-based chapters of the



novel who were not simply invented by the author. If desired, continue your search for real historical figures in the story. Keep track of them in a notebook.

B. Use your research as the base for a card game:

Write each character name on a separate index card. On the reverse side, write "F" for fictional or "R" for real historical figure along with 2-3 facts about this individual. Take turns holding up cards to see if friends or classmates can tell the fictional from the real and what they know about the real people.

- 6) In the character of Kitsune, write at least four journal entries, including one recounting your transformation into a fox girl, one explaining your complicated behavior toward Archie and his friends, one describing your decision to join forces with Archie, and one exploring your feelings toward "Mrs. Moffett" and what you may understand about her that the other League members do not.
- 7) Create a chart comparing Buster, Mr. Rivets, Philomena Moffett, and Kistune in terms of their machine, human, spirit, and animal qualities. Based on your chart, write a MANIFESTO (a declaration of your guidelines and goals) explaining how all creatures of the earth should be treated. Read your manifesto aloud to friends or classmates.
- 8) Create an illustrated booklet entitled, "A Reader's Guide to the Heroes of the League of Seven." Make a page for each League member, noting his or her physical appearance, what you know of their history and powers, and how they contribute to the group. Leave two blank pages for future League members to be discovered in novels-to-come!
- 9) Role-play a conversation between Archie, Hachi, Fergus, Clyde, and Kitsune in which each discusses why he or she agreed to be part of the League of Seven and their feelings about the group.
- 10) Help Archie and his friends find their next League member by creating an early chapter for the next League of Seven novel. Select your favorite historical time and place and then research at least two real people, events, or important objects from this time to include in your chapter. Invent and name a new fictional League member and decide what abilities he or she will have. Write a 3-6 page chapter in which Archie or Hachi meets this new League member.
- 11) In the last century, philosopher and essayist George Santayana (1863-1952) wrote: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

How does this relate to Archie's observation that people sometimes "want to forget" horrible experiences? Is forgetting dangerous? Write an essay explaining how Santayana's quotation can be understood in terms of the novel.

Lexile: 780L
AR Level: 5.1 MG

AR Points: 13.0
AR Quiz #: 175174 EN

THE MONSTER WAR

BEFORE READING

THE BOOK:

Writing & Discussion

Activities

The pre-reading activities below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards: L.5-8.5, L.9-10.5; SL.5-8.1, SL.9-10.1; W.5-8.1-2, W.9-10.1-2.

- 1) Read aloud these opening lines from the three League of Seven stories:

"The secret entrance to the headquarters of the Septemberist Society could only be reached by submarine."

—*The League of Seven*

"Archie Dent dangled from a rope twenty thousand feet in the air watching the blue ribbon of the Mississippi spin far, far below him."

—*The Dragon Lantern*

"The chain that shackled Archie Dent to the boy beside him rattled as the steamwagon bounced down a rutted road, and they swayed into each other."

—*The Monster War*

Point out features in these texts which suggest that the League of Seven stories do not occur in a real time and place. What expectations do these opening sentences set up for the stories to come?

- 2) *The Monster War* is set in an alternate 19th century America. "Alternate histories" are works of fiction in which recognizable historical figures have experiences different than those recorded in history books, and notable events have different outcomes. Alternate histories beget the question: Is history inevitable? Consider current problems, such as gun violence in America or global warming, and discuss what you have read in newspapers or online resources covering the ongoing debates as to how these problems should



be handled. Informed by your class discussion and current events research, write a short essay addressing the question: “Are historical events inevitable? Why or why not? And, if not, how can individuals have an impact on the history of their world?”

Writing & Discussion Activities

The discussion questions below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards: RL.5-8.1-5; RL.9-10.1-5; SL.5-8.1, 3; SL.9-10.1, 3.

- 1) In the opening chapters of the novel, Archie has been tricked into a captive situation by Mr. Rivets. Why does he resist helping the kidnapped children? What fears does he have about himself?
- 2) What does Archie come to realize about Gonzalo and Senor X in Chapter 5? Do these realizations change his relationships to these characters? Do these new insights affect your reader’s perspective on Gonzalo and his “weapon”?
- 3) What is “lektricity” and why is it dangerous? How might you respond to Hachi’s words on page 114: “Isn’t everybody who messes with lektricity a madman?”
- 4) Archie and his friends find Martine both amazing and frustrating, especially in instances such as their argument over whether a “knot’s a knot” on page 63. Does Martine remind you of anyone from real life, film, or television? In our world, might she be considered non-neurotypical or autistic? Why might this be important to the story?
- 5) What is a “proper League of Seven”? Who comprises the League? List the names of *The Monster War* characters who are members of the League and the roles they play. (Hint: Reread Chapter 10.)
- 6) Recount at least two instances in which League members must persuade others that (a) they need to be saved and/or (b) the League of Seven, young and strange as they appear, can save them. What do you think is important about this recurring dynamic?
- 7) What is the relationship between Mangleborn and subterranean oil? What other resources, landmarks, or other “ordinary” things readers take for granted, or believe they understand, in their world are, in the story, the result of actions by—or reactions to—Mangleborn?
- 8) On page 186, Kitsune says, “It’s funny how fear makes you do things you never thought you could do.” Do you agree? Can you recall a time in your own life where fear impacted your actions? How might this help you better understand the motivations of characters in *The Monster War*?
- 9) In the first chapter of the novel, Archie tells Gonzalo that he doesn’t have any parents, “which was true and wasn’t true.” As you read the novel, how many ways might you interpret or understand this early observation?
- 10) Who is Philomena Moffett and why is the League so intent on achieving her capture? How does this goal require the League members to divide and how do they do so? Compare and contrast the ways the League teams defeat the Mangleborn they encounter.
- 11) Throughout the novel, human characters, such as Hachi and Fergus, human-like (or partially human) characters, such as Archie and Martine, and technology-based characters such as Mr. Rivets and Senor X, interact. How might readers see *The Monster War* as a story about the limits of the way ordinary human beings can understand history? What insight and value might artificial intelligence or other types of perception lend to our world view and to keeping peace in the future?
- 12) Describe the relationships between Archie and his friends as the story progresses. What forms the core connection between each of these characters? Do you think the other League members fear Archie “most” (p. 224)? Why or why not?
- 13) On page 234, Hachi tells Archie that his “weakness” is his human brain. Do you agree? Is this a weakness? What do you think the author is trying to show about humanity’s relationship to technology and to the powers of nature and the planet on which we live?
- 14) On page 263, Archie observes that, “There didn’t seem to be a great deal of difference sometimes between the Mangleborn and the heroes who fought them...” If this is the case, how might you define the difference between a villain and a hero?
- 15) Why does Archie feel sorry for Philomena Moffett? How can he relate especially well to Moffett? Why do you think Hachi, who has had to forgive Archie for so much, seems to be the friend who most empathizes and most helps Archie see the differences between himself and Philomena?
- 16) At the close of the novel, what does the League come to realize about the Septemberists and their own role in history? How do they decide to change the future? To what risks might they be subjecting the world by deciding to make this change?
- 17) Early in the novel, Hachi tells Archie, “You have to live a life worthy of a hundred lives. You have to fight for all the people who died to create you” (p. 89). How



might this be viewed as a central theme of the novel? Do you find this instruction be valuable to readers today and/or to your own life? Explain your answers.

RESEARCH & WRITING PROJECTS

The research and writing activities below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards: RL.5-8.1-5; RL.9-10.1-5; SL.5-8.4-6; SL.9-10.4-6; W.8.1-4, W.8.7-8; W.9-10.1-4, W.9-10.7-8.

JOURNAL

Archie often feels like an outcast, although he is also an integral part of the League. From the perspective of Gonzalo, Hachi, Fergus, or another character, write at least three journal entries, including one reflecting on your history with Archie, one considering your feelings about being part of the League of Seven and its mission, and one discussing both the dangers and values of befriending Archie Dent.

BIOGRAPHY

From Harriet Tubman to General Grant to Jesse James, Alan Gratz brings real historical figures to life in fictional ways throughout his story. Go to the library or online to discover the real identities of these historical figures. Create a "Biographical Guide to *The Monster War*," identifying at least five historical characters with facts about their real contributions to history and brief explanations of why you believe the author chose to include them his novel.

DESIGN

Select a scene in which Archie and/or his League friends encounter a Mangleborn creature. Study the text for clues to the creature's appearance. Then, using a computer design program or traditional art materials, create a portrait of your selected Mangleborn. If desired, create a larger display of portraits made by friends and classmates.

SYNESTHETIZE

Martine senses relationships between letters and colors which might, in our world, be interpreted as a form of synesthesia. Learn about the concept of synesthesia. Discover famous synesthetes from the worlds of art and literature. Imagine that you are a character in *The Monster War*. Using your research, write a speech in which you explain Martine's unusual perceptions, and their potential value, to the other members of the League.

MYTHOLOGIZE

Go to the library or online to learn about the legend of Uktena. Review chapter 23, in which Senor X describes First Men who were "...the first to understand that everything that happens...will happen again and again, like a snake eating its own tail." What is the relationship

between Uktena and this observation? Write a short essay answering this question and explaining why the snake image recurs in discussions of this topic.

RHYME WITH SCIENCE

What is the relationship between Humpty Dumpty and the Second Law of Thermodynamics? Go to the library or online to find the answer to this question. Is Archie's existence as the Jandal a Haad connected to this nursery rhyme-scientific theory metaphor and, if so, how? Share your answers via a poster, PowerPoint, or other visual presentation.

ADDRESS YOUR CLASS

Go to the library or online to learn the true history of the Gettysburg address. Read it aloud in your class. Discuss how the address changes for the events and characters of the League of Seven world, and how its message remains valuable to readers in both contexts.

ROLE-PLAY

Archie struggles with his role in the League because he feels different, unworthy, and like an outsider. Have you ever felt this way in your own life? When and how? Invite a friend or classmate to play the character of Archie. Role-play a conversation between "Archie" and yourself in which you share your own perspectives on feeling different and brainstorm ways to handle these feelings.

WRITE A SEQUEL

The Monster War is an alternate history, mixing historical facts and real people with fictional characters and outcomes, particularly 19th century American history and Native American legends. Go to the library or online to learn about a famous Native American from this period who has not already appeared in a League of Seven book. As author Alan Gratz fictionally turns Jesse James from outlaw to hero, what "alteration" would you make to your historical character, and how might you connect him or her to members of the League to begin a new book in the series? What title would you give the book? Write 2-3 paragraphs describing your ideas, followed by an outline of the first 5-10 chapters of the story.

REFLECT & CELEBRATE

On page 280, Hachi tells Archie that "...only you can make yourself a monster." Create a poem, set of song lyrics, or visual art composition interpreting this statement as it might apply to the lives of people throughout literature, history, and even yourself.

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