

FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION.



VOYAGERS

ATTENTION

Includes **STEM** Connections and
Common Core Standards Correlations

EDUCATORS' GUIDE



EARTH IS IN DANGER.

Stunning new data reveals that widespread use of fossil fuels is sending Earth past a point of no return. If a new energy source isn't discovered soon, Earth will go dark.



STEAM 6000 ▶
Onboard Systems Droid

But **PROJECT ALPHA** may save us all.

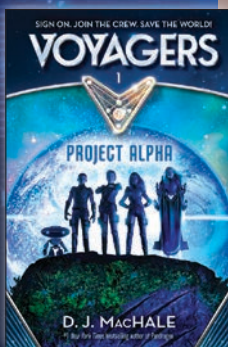
It's a high-stakes competition that will award four children the coveted assignment to journey into the far reaches of space, to retrieve natural elements on six different planets.

MILLIONS HAVE ENTERED.

EIGHT FINALISTS ARE BEING CHOSEN.

Only four will win the chance to voyage to the end of the galaxy and back.

INTRODUCING
a multiplatform series that is part sci-fi, part eco-mystery, and all action-adventure.



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by D. J. MacHale

Available 9/1/15

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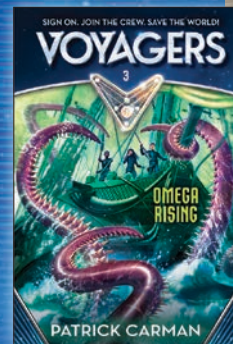
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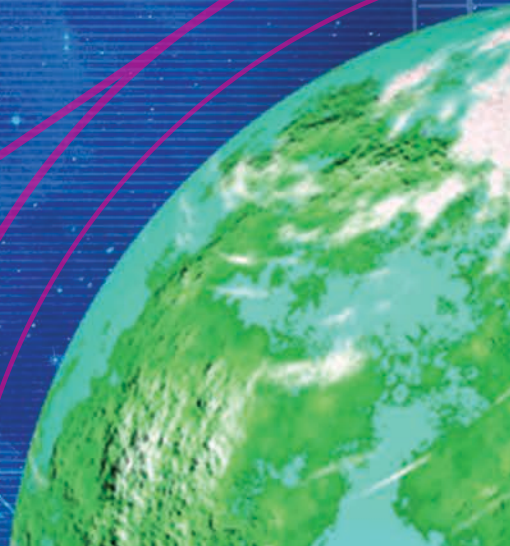
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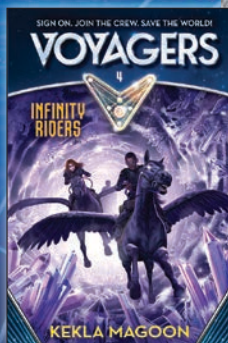
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ABOUT THIS EDUCATORS' GUIDE

5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Blastoff! Voyagers is an exciting new series sure to ignite enthusiasm for reading and books in your learners. Use this guide to bring that enthusiasm into the classroom and beyond.

Lessons include interdisciplinary activities that offer you an opportunity to involve your teaching colleagues and extend beyond Language Arts-focused learning. This cross-curricular approach highlights work in mathematics, social studies, and science classes. NASA-inspired STEM activities provide hands-on, project-learning opportunities that encourage readers to connect and engage in a future of possibilities to explore our world and beyond!

Use this guide to teach the following Common Core Standards:

Reading Literature:

Key Ideas and Details R.L.4.1–4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4., 6.1–6.3.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas R.L.4.7, 4.9, 5.7, 5.9.

Speaking and Listening:

Comprehension and Collaboration R.L.4.1, 4.3, 5.1, 5.3; S.L.6.1–6.3, W.4.4, 5.4, 6.4.

VOYAGERS THROUGH WRITING AND RESEARCH

The following questions may be utilized throughout the study of *Voyagers* as reflective writing prompts, or they can be used as targeted questions for discussion and contemplation.

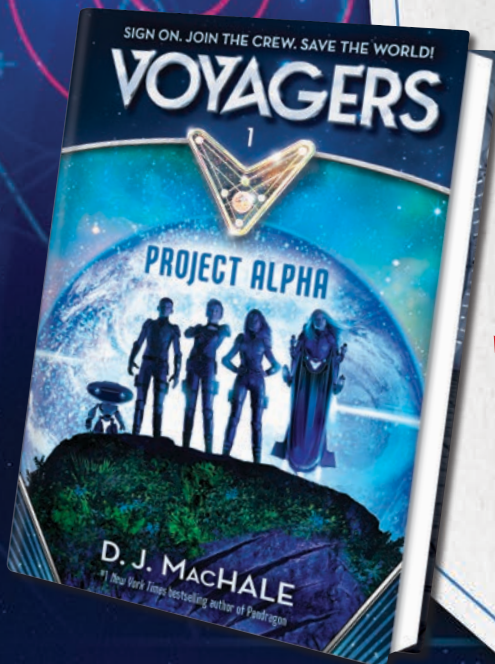
VOYAGERS



D. J. MacHale

PROJECT ALPHA

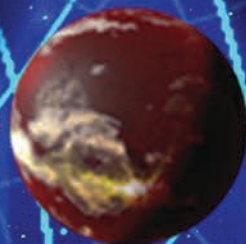
- ▶ In *Project Alpha*, readers learn that the future is in peril: Earth is about to go dark, and without a new power source, life as we know it is over. What can be inferred about the possible causes of these conditions?
- ▶ In your opinion, what makes the global competition to find the Voyagers so unique? If you had an opportunity to participate, would you be interested? Why or why not?
- ▶ As they move through a challenge and he senses they are in danger, Dash tells Anna, "We should stay close," and she replies, "I'm fine on my own." Based on this initial interaction, what is your immediate impression of Dash? What about Anna? Do these remain consistent throughout the novel?
- ▶ When faced with what seems to be a carnivorous dinosaur interested in harming the two of them, Dash suggests, "Maybe it can be distracted. Let's work together." In what ways does this statement again offer evidence of Dash's character?
- ▶ After Dash's mother looks out their window, observing the abandoned cars and considering their current status of limited gas, electricity, Internet, and phone services, she states, "I can't get used to this. When the lights go out, it's like the world dies." Consider the new mandatory government program to conserve energy. What makes it so challenging? If you were forced to live in similar conditions, which restriction would you find most difficult? Why?
- ▶ Describe Shawn Phillips, Project Alpha's leader. What makes his role as leader of this project seem unusual?
- ▶ Besides Dash and Anna, describe the other six finalists of the Project Alpha competition. Who do you find most interesting? Engaging? Annoying? Who do you predict will be the best leaders of the group?
- ▶ Phillips states, "Project Alpha will send a team of four into deep space to find the Source and bring it back to Earth. Simple as that. You're competing for the chance to be on the team that keeps the Earth from going dark." In what ways is this opportunity life-changing? What are the primary motivations for these contestants?
- ▶ Why is Project Alpha unwilling to share the location of the Source with others? Do you think they are right to choose to keep this information to themselves? Why or why not?
- ▶ Upon arrival at Base Ten, the training/competition facility, Phillips asks the eight finalists, "How badly do you want it?" From your brief introduction to the contestants, do you believe they each want it for the same reason? Why or why not?
- ▶ After being questioned about his motivation, Dash replies, "I'm not scared about the mission. What scares me is a world without power. Money won't matter much if we all get sent back to the Stone Age." If you were in Dash's shoes, do you think you'd have a similar outlook? Why or why not?
- ▶ Ravi suggests that the boys should work together as a team to eliminate the girls. How do Dash and Gabriel show that they are not interested in an all-boy allegiance? In what ways do we see Gabriel and Carly and Dash and Piper bonding?
- ▶ Using the phrase "In this story, bravery means . . ." discuss the characters you believe exhibit the greatest bravery in *Project Alpha*. Explain your choices.
- ▶ Consider Dash's mission motto—"Failure is not an option." Do you agree? Do you believe Dash will make a strong leader for the Alphas? Using textual examples, explain your position.
- ▶ After being hijacked on their way home, Anna, Ravi, Nico, and Siena meet their captor, who tells them, "I'm the man who is going to give you a second chance. If you're smart enough to take it." What is it about their particular skills that make them seem like the perfect crew for his mission?



Robin Wasserman

GAME OF FLAMES

- ▶ Considering the ending of *Project Alpha*, what do you predict is in store for Dash, Piper, Carly, and Gabriel in *Game of Flames*? What role will Anna, Ravi, Nico, and Siena play?
- ▶ At the opening of *Game of Flames*, readers are reminded that Team Alpha had successfully retrieved a tooth from a gigantic Raptogon to be crushed into Rapident Powder. Why is the retrieval of this and the other five elements so critically important?
- ▶ After the Voyagers' successful departure with the tooth, readers discover that they are being watched and followed by a boy whose mission is to ensure their failure. What does he hope to gain from such a mission?
- ▶ Consider the name given to Team Alpha's ship; do you think *Cloud Leopard* is an appropriate one? If you had the opportunity to name the ship, what would you have chosen? Why?
- ▶ Consider the jobs of the crew — Piper, the ship's medic; Carly, the science and tech officer; Gabriel, the navigator and pilot. If given the opportunity to serve on Team Alpha, which of these jobs would you be most qualified to do and why? In considering Dash's role, why is it important for him to know everything the crew members do?
- ▶ What are Piper's feelings about being selected for the mission? How does being selected help to ease Piper's pain over not being able to walk? Why does she stand out to those selecting the team?
- ▶ How do the Alphas react when they discover there's another ship in their vicinity? What makes this realization so troublesome? In what ways does this knowledge increase the pressure on them to complete their mission successfully?
- ▶ How do Dash and his team feel when they learn that the *Light Blade*, the second ship, is staffed with the four nonselected contestants from the Project Alpha competition? Why is the knowledge that Anna, Ravi, Nico, and Siena have teamed up against them so challenging?
- ▶ After the discovery that the *Light Blade* contains a crew member that looks exactly like Chris, Carly states, "There's another ship following us through space, and they've got their own you, and you don't think that matters?" Why do you think Chris is so dismissive of this detail?
- ▶ Consider Dash's secret regarding the effects of Gamma Speed on kids older than twelve when the mission launches. Do you believe Chris's knowledge of it puts Dash in danger? How does Chris's serum protect both him and Dash?
- ▶ When Carly suggests that she stay on board and have Piper go down to do the fieldwork, Dash tells her, "I don't like it. We planned all this out ahead of time for a reason. You make changes at the last minute, you get sloppy." As the mission leader, do you think Dash has a legitimate reason to get frustrated with Carly? Why is Carly so fearful of telling her team that she's afraid to leave their ship?
- ▶ When Anna's team suggests that they consider Dash's offer to team up to complete their missions, she refuses and tells her group, "Competition brings out the best in people." Do you agree? Why or why not?
- ▶ In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges faced by the team while on Meta Prime? Will interacting in that world likely change them for future expeditions? How does learning the truth about Chris's identity completely change the dynamics of the mission?
- ▶ Colin is Chris's clone. How are the two similar (besides physical attributes) and how are they different?
- ▶ As *Game of Flames* closes with Chris considering his secret plan, predict what challenges the *Cloud Leopard* crew will face in the next installment of Voyagers.



INTERDISCIPLINARY INVESTIGATIONS AND STEM-FOCUSED

Measuring Math Asteroid Challenge

During the Project Alpha mission, the team needs to accurately calculate the distance of asteroids to keep the *Cloud Leopard* out of harm's way. Use the following activity to assist the team.

Access "Leftovers from Planet Building: Asteroids" at www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/files/YOSS_Act_6.pdf.

Solve the math problems in this section of the "Year of the Solar System" Guide. Begin by measuring images and then using proportions to determine sizes and distances of asteroids. After completing your calculations, pair with a partner to share your findings before preparing a report to share with the Project Alpha Team.

Investigating Matter: Growing Space Crystals

Adapted from NASA lesson

www.nasa.gov/pdf/626225main_ISS_LABS_Guide.pdf.

Objective

Investigate how crystals form when materials change from their liquid to their solid state

Challenge

Like the scientists who work on the International Space Station, you are a scientist working in the laboratory of the *Cloud Leopard* assigned to help ISS scientists and scientists on Earth design a new medicine.

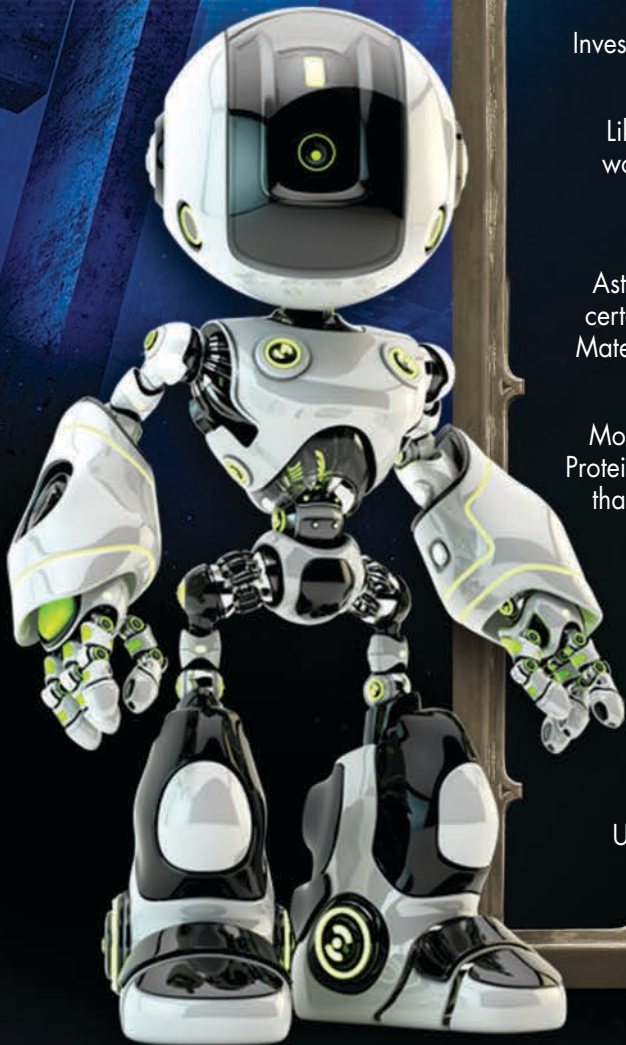
Background

Astronauts on the ISS get to do a lot of science experiments growing crystals. When certain materials freeze from a liquid to a solid, their special growth patterns appear. Materials that group together in a repeated pattern are called crystals. You see crystals every day, such as salt, sugar, gemstones, and some medicine!

Most new medicines are designed by scientists using special crystals called proteins. Proteins play a key role in the living world around us. They are important building blocks that are used by human and animal cells. Knowing exactly how these protein crystals are shaped helps scientists design new medicines to combat diseases.

Growing some protein crystals here on Earth can be extremely difficult, or even impossible, because gravity causes the delicate crystals to grow with imperfections (defects). Studying crystals in space, where gravity doesn't get in the way, allows space scientists to grow big, almost-perfect crystals! Scientists on the space station are helping to find out how to grow the best quality crystals with protein crystals, like insulin (used to help people with diabetes). Bigger and better protein crystals made in space are a fantastic opportunity to design new medicines in the future.

Use the worksheets on page 31 and 32 of the NASA guide mentioned above to manage and evaluate crystal growth.



ACTIVITIES



Space Exploration

Over the past fifty years, federal funding for space exploration has waned, and some believe it's no longer a necessary expense. Taking what you've already learned from the possibility of space exploration in the *Voyagers* books, research how the space program was funded in the past and how it is now funded, examine its current goals and objectives, and look at information on space exploration plans for the future. While the *Voyagers* series is fiction, some of the ideas presented are working projects. Reflect on all you have learned about the possibility of space exploration, and consider your support for developing a program that would allow for a mission similar to Project Alpha in the future. Then write a persuasive paper that shares your position. Alternatively, prepare a speech designed to convince others of your view and present it to your classmates.

Examining Personal Growth

Over the course of *Project Alpha* and *Games of Flames*, readers see Dash face multiple challenges that help him mature and grow. In a journal entry, write about a single experience that made you stronger and wiser in some way. Perhaps you struggled through a difficult task or helped a friend with a problem. What did this experience teach you? Be sure to offer specific details about the experience.

Alternative Energy

Dash and the other members of the Project Alpha team are called upon to assemble elements that will replenish the Earth's resources. Consider what is currently being done to help our planet utilize resources. Look up information about alternative energy in the library and online. Be sure to consider different types of alternative resources, and be sure to look specifically at projects spearheaded by kids like you. Gather and share your findings in a digital product of your choosing.

Project Alpha Application

In *Project Alpha*, readers learn that kids all over the world compete for a place on the crew. What makes one of these spots so coveted? Do you think you'd have what it takes to be on the team? Write a letter to the Project Alpha selection team detailing your qualifications for this endeavor. Consider what you know about the character qualities of the crew members—in what ways are you like them? Be sure to provide specific examples of why you fit the profile.



VoyagersHQ.com



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This guide was created by Dr. Rose Brock, an assistant professor at Sam Houston State University. Dr. Brock holds a PhD in Library Science, specializing in children's and young adult literature.
Random House Children's Books ▼ School and Library Marketing ▼ 1745 Broadway ▼ New York, NY 10019 ▼ 7/15