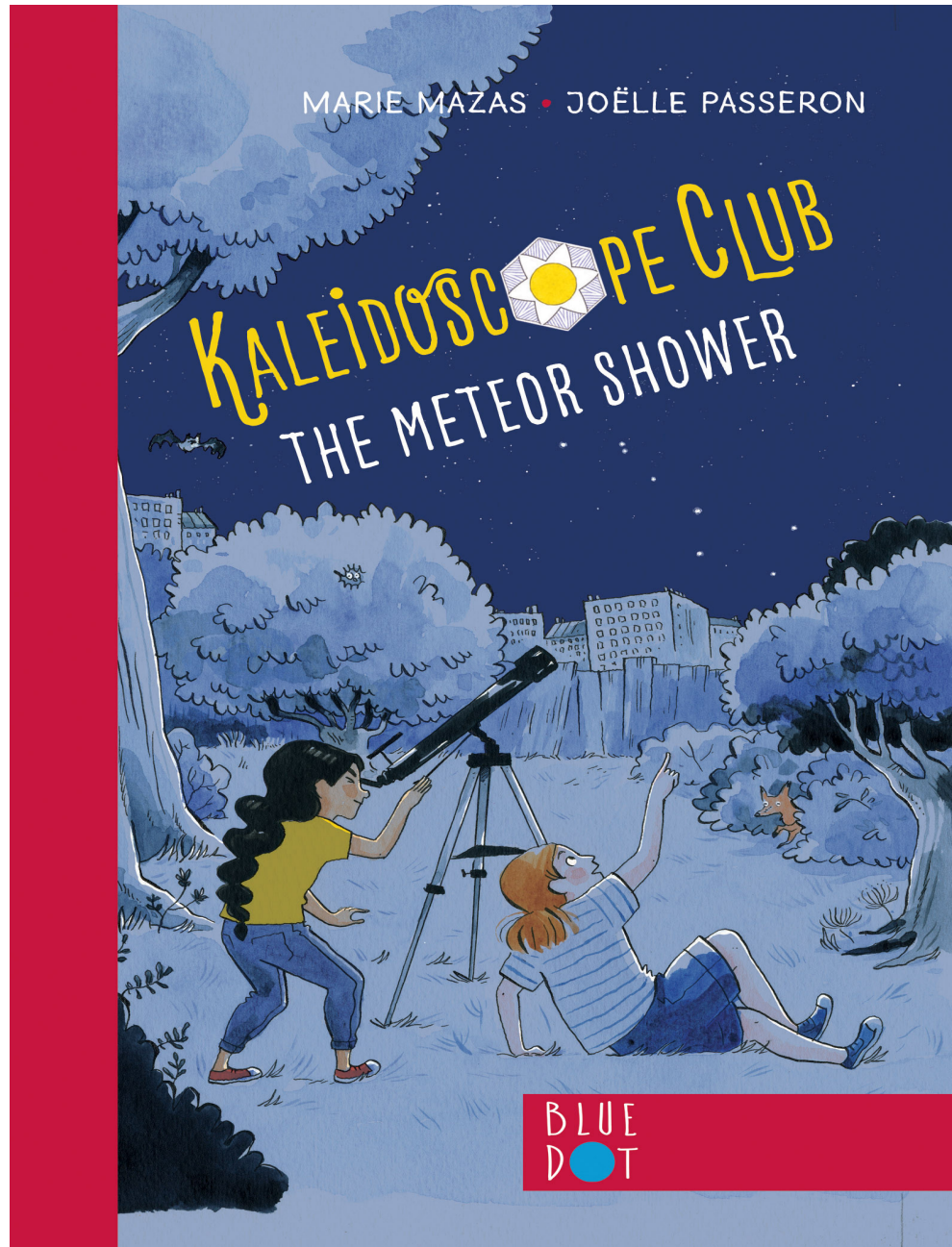


Grades 1-4



Your Teacher's Guide

from Blue Dot Kids Press



The Kaleidoscope Club: The Meteor Shower

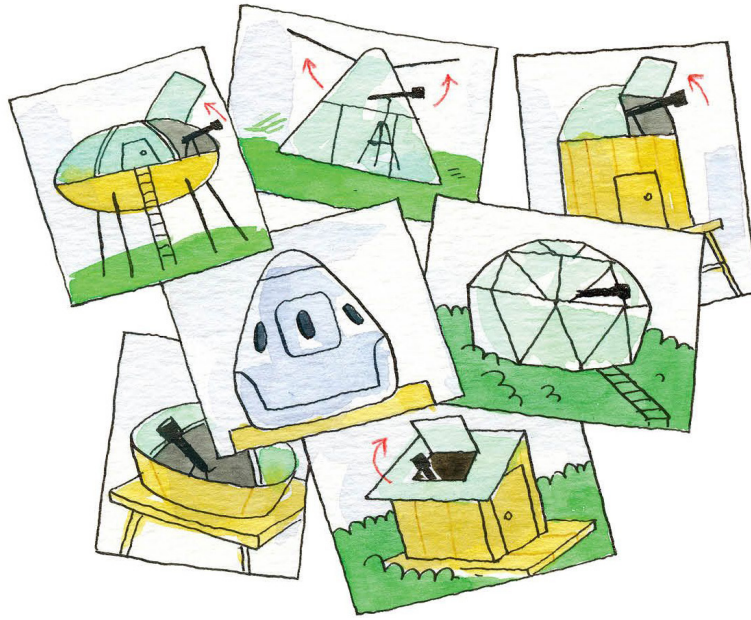
Written by Marie Mazas and Illustrated by Joëlle Passeron

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We intentionally leave this page blank so our guides can be printed like a book.



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Before Reading

Discussion

Before you book's summary on the back cover, look for clues about the story in the title and cover and interior illustrations.

- What do they tell you about the book?
- Where do you think the story takes place?
- Who will be in the story?
- What might happen in the story?

Word Work

These are some of the words in the book that might be new to students. Talk about their meaning before reading.

Constellation

E-Waste

Galaxy

Hubble Space Telescope

LED

Light pollution

Meteor Shower

Milky Way

Observatory

Shooting star

Solar system

Zodiac



During Reading

Reading Methods

Have students read the book aloud as a class, in pairs or small groups, or independently. The book could also be used in teacher-led story time.

As they are reading, students should take notes on anything they wonder about, and, based on your plans for discussion and activities during and after reading, prompt them ahead of time about types of things to look for and make note of. Suggest they include page numbers with their notes for easy reference later.

You may want to discuss the book as you read, so build in pauses after every few chapters. Breaking a longer book into parts also helps all readers feel like they can reach the final page.

Discussion

General

Pause occasionally and wonder, *What will happen next?*

Reading and Writing

Point of View

- Who's telling this story? How do you know?
- What is this type of point of view called (first person), and what are the other types (second person, third person)?

Senses

How does the author use our senses—sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste—in descriptions?

Examples:

p. 21 “I try to focus on the noises I can hear: is that a toad croaking down by the river? The more I listen, the more I hear: the rustling of leaves, the whispering of the grass, the pitter-patter right beside me of teeny-tiny feet . . .”

p. 39-41 “leans toward me, reeking of cigarette smoke”

Figurative Language

What is a simile? What are some examples of similes in the book, and what is the author trying to express with each one?

Examples:

- p. 11 “And the thousands of stars up there shone like diamonds.”
- p. 11 “the sea shone like the stars”
- p. 15 “How I’d love to be on a beach and watch [the sun] sink into the horizon like a big orange.”
- p. 39 “as sweet as honey”

What is a metaphor? What are some examples of metaphors in the book, and what is the author trying to express with each one?

Examples:

- p. 13 “that night I was swimming in the sky”
- p. 16 “the fading light crowns the trees”
- p. 39 “Poor Jonathan shrivels at this telling-off.”

What is personification? What are some examples of personification in the book, and what is the author trying to express with each one?

Examples:

- p. 23 When Nour looks at the moon through the telescope and sees its craters, she says, “It’s got scars! Like me after chicken pox.”
- p. 94 “Time stands still.”

What is an idiom? What are some examples of idioms in the book, and what is the author trying to express with each one?

Example:

- p. 19 “over-the-moon excited”
- p. 77 “That’s bananas!”



Geography

Nour's dad grew up in Morocco. August talks about powerful telescopes in Hawai'i.

- Where are these places?
- What do you know about each of them?

Connecting with Characters

The Marshmallow is a cozy hideaway for Nour and August.

Where do you go to read quietly or hang out with your friends?

August is scared of the dark, so he has a night-light to help him sleep and always has at least one flashlight nearby.

Write about what scares you.

Do you do something to help you feel better? If you don't, can you imagine right now something you could do?

Nour's dad is often tired and serious because he works hard and puts a lot of energy into trying to be a good parent, but when he visits the Kaleidoscope Club garden, he relaxes and is happy (p. 15).

- Write about what makes you worried, nervous, stressed out, tired, or scared.
- Now write about the place, person, or activity that always makes you so happy that you forget everything else.

At first, Nour feels jealous of August and Elisa's friendship.

- Write about a time you felt jealous.



After Reading

Comprehension

- What are the challenges Nour and August face when they try to fight light pollution in their town?
- Do Nour and August succeed at making their town dark enough to see the meteor shower? How?
- When August tells Nour about Elisa, Nour’s first reaction is to cross her arms and feel a little annoyed. Why?
- What are some facts about the animals—a fox and a tricolored bat—in the book?
- What are some of the facts about stars and planets in the book?
- August tells Nour that his telescope can help them see “things we normally can’t see, like distant stars, planets in our solar system, and even the Milky Way!” But what is one thing he quickly warns Nour that we should never look at through a telescope (pp. 9–10)?
- What are the not-so-scary tricks behind the scary haunted house that Nour and August create?

Further Thinking

- What is something in the book that surprised you and why?
- What is one thing you learned?
- Which character did you relate to the most and why?
- What is something that made you laugh?



STEAM ACTIVITY

How Bright Is Your Home? Your School?

For an individual project, study your home; for a class project, study your school! See if you could advocate for any changes to outdoor lighting at home or at school that could lessen your light pollution.

Activity Prep Work

Before Nour and August could fight light pollution, they needed to understand their own motivation. Humans do our best work when we're passionate about a project, when our reasons are clear, especially to ourselves. This was no different for Nour and August—and is no different for students reading this book!

Discuss motivations—the class may share some, or individual students may have their own.

- Take inspiration from the book. What are some of the reasons Nour and August wanted to lessen their town's light pollution?
- Visit DarkSky, an organization dedicated to education about light pollution and helping individuals fight it. They offer reasons, from effects on wildlife to human life, why we may want to pay better attention to our outside lighting (<https://darksky.org/resources/what-is-light-pollution/effects>).

Once you know why you care about light pollution, you can start to research how “clean” your home or school is!

Activity Supplies

- Paper and pens or pencils for taking notes and drawing maps of home and school
- If students have access to iPads or other electronic devices for drawing and/or digital cameras (in phones or separate), this activity can be adapted to use those as well.

Activity Instructions

- Walk around the outside of your home or school.
- Write down or mark on a diagram you have drawn every light you see.
- Note if it points up or down.
- Note if it is on even in the daytime.

Post-Activity Work

Discuss three simple changes you could consider:

- *Keep it on the ground:* Redirect lights that point up so that they point down instead.
- *Change your bulbs:* Use lights that are 3,000 degrees Kelvin or less.
- *Swap your fixtures:* Install dimmers, motion sensors, or timers, so lights are on and bright only when people are around.

Brainstorm how to work with adults—like parents, landlords, and school leaders—to make positive changes. For example:

- Make and give a presentation.
- Write a letter.

However you want to talk with adults, the key is that you do it! Remember that Nour and August didn't give up. Share with adults why they may want to improve any of the lights—and suggest how they could do it, such as changing the direction of the bulbs, turning down the Kelvins, and installing timers. DarkSky offers free outreach materials to help: <https://darksky.org/resources/public-outreach-materials/>.

Writing and Drawing Activities

Remember a Special Night

Nour's dad tells Nour and her siblings about his "favorite memory of the starry sky" (pp. 10–13), but it's really a story about when he fell in love with Nour's mom. Write about one of your favorite memories of looking at the stars. Describe the sky as you remember it—but don't forget to write about what else was happening at the same time. Where were you? Who were you with? What were your feelings?

Make a Wish

While they watch the meteor shower, the kids wish upon the shooting stars they see. If you saw a shooting star right now, what would you wish for? Write or draw about it.

Imagine Your Own Universe

Constellations are "a group of stars that make a shape when you draw lines between them," Nour's brother Ahmed explains (p. 13). We call the constellations by those names—so, the constellation the Unicorn looks like, you guessed it, a unicorn! Look up pictures of the constellations and draw your favorite ones. Then, make up your own constellations—in your imaginary universe, what shapes would your stars form? Draw those!

CITIZEN SCIENCE ACTIVITY

Citizen science, also called community science, happens when people study the world around them and send the data they collect to scientists. Citizen scientists are people— young or old, who have attended a lot of school or very little, from cities and from small towns—who help collect data for research projects and help to answer real scientific questions.

Globe at Night

Help Globe at Night (<https://globeatnight.org>) measure the brightness of the night sky. This information helps scientists to educate the public about light pollution. All you need is a smartphone, an internet connection, and a place to be outside and see the night sky.

Instructions

Here are the basic steps. More detailed information can be found at the Globe at Night website.

1. Look up the Globe at Night campaigns—these tell you which constellations the organization wants citizen scientists to focus on, and on which dates.
2. Download a night sky app.
3. Before the campaign dates, practice finding the campaign constellations that exist in the night sky where you are.
4. During the campaign, go outside more than an hour after sunset but before the moon is bright in the sky.
5. Let your eyes become used to the dark.
6. Use your night sky app to find the constellation.
7. Fill in the information on the Globe at Night Report page (<https://app.globeatnight.org>); your night sky app will give you some of the answers.
8. Hit submit!



Blue Dot Kids Press inspires curiosity with beautifully crafted stories that connect us to each other and the planet we share. Written and illustrated by impassioned **storytellers and artists from around the world**, our books engage young readers' innate sense of **wonder and empathy**, connecting them to our global community and **the pale blue dot we call home**.

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