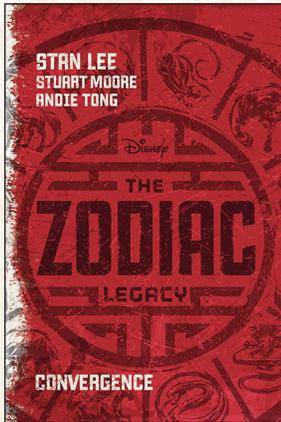


This guide is aligned with the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (CCR) for Literature, Writing, Language, Speaking and Listening. The broad CCR standards are the foundation for the grade level–specific Common Core State Standards.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Disney • HYPERION BOOKS



ABOUT THE BOOK

When twelve magical superpowers are unleashed on the world, a Chinese-American teenager named Steven will be thrown into the middle of an epic global chase. He'll have to master strange powers, outrun superpowered mercenaries, and unlock the mysteries of the zodiac.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Have the students locate a map of Hong Kong before 1997 and after. Have the students research why English would be so prevalent in a Chinese city.
- 2 Ask the students to identify as many of the symbols of the Western zodiac as they can. Ask them to identify their own symbol if they know it.
- 3 Ask the students to identify as many of the symbols of the Chinese zodiac as they can. Ask them to identify their own symbol if they know it. Ask them what characteristics each of the zodiac symbols represents.
- 4 Have each of the students identify the Chinese zodiac symbols of their family members.
- 5 Have the students draw their Chinese zodiac animal avatar or find a pictorial depiction on the Internet that they think represents it.

Correlates to CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1, RH.6-8.2, RH.6-8.4, RH.6-8.7, RH.6-8.8

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 *The Zodiac Legacy: Convergence* opens with two of the main characters, Jasmine and Steven, at the New China Heritage Museum. What is your first impression of the characters and their roles? Are they similar or different? Do they remain that way throughout the story?
- 2 Describe Steven. Does he act like someone you would want to befriend? Does he act like a traditional hero? Why or why not?
- 3 Describe Jasmine. Does she act like someone you would want to befriend? Does she act like a traditional heroine? Why or why not?
- 4 Steven hears a scream and goes to investigate. Is this wise behavior? What would you do in the same situation, and why?
- 5 In the Convergence chamber we meet Maxwell. What is your first impression of him? Does it ever change throughout the story?
- 6 We also meet Carlos in the Convergence chamber. Throughout the story Carlos is the only main character without superpowers. Do you feel like Carlos belongs? Why or why not?
- 7 Steven gets the Zodiac power of the Tiger. Is that the most fitting animal for Steven? Why or why not?
- 8 Steven tries to contact his parents when he decides to go with Jasmine and Carlos. How does the interaction unfold? How did you expect it to go, and why?
- 9 The next Zodiac-powered person we meet is Roxanne in France. How does Roxanne behave? Describe Roxanne's relationship with her mother compared to Steven's relationship with his parents.
- 10 When Steven dreams of his grandfather, we get the first mention of ancestors through the Zodiac. Do you think this interaction is important? Do you think every character will have this interaction?

- 11 Roxanne’s band is called Les Poules. What does that give away about her eventual Zodiac power?
- 12 How does Roxanne’s mother respond to Roxanne’s Zodiac power? How do you think the other parents would react? How would your parents react?
- 13 Next we meet Josie, the Horse Zodiac. How does her upbringing and life description compare to her zodiac sign? Is that the zodiac sign you would have expected for her?
- 14 What is your first impression of Josie? Does she act like someone you would befriend? Does your opinion of her change throughout the book?
- 15 Next we meet Liam in Ireland. Liam has the Zodiac power of the Ram. Is that the zodiac symbol you would have picked for him? Does his Zodiac spirit animal reflect his personality?
- 16 Of all the challenges Steven has to overcome, which is the greatest: his allies or his enemies? Why do you think this?
- 17 Describe each member of the Zodiac team with up to five words. Explain your choices.
- 18 How do the illustrations in the novel help the reader understand the story? Are the characters more fully realized because you know exactly what they look like? Why or why not?
- 19 Why do you think the author chose to create a character like Josie? What insights do you get into the Vanguard agents through her? Do you think she is a sympathetic character? Why or why not?
- 20 Predict what challenges Steven and the team will face in future installments in the series.

Correlates to CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1, RL.6.3, RL.6.5, RL.6.6, RL.7.1, RL.7.3, RL.7.6, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.1, RI.6.3, RI.6.6, RI.6.7, RI.7.1, RI.7.3, RI.7.6, RI.7.7, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1, W.6.1.A, W.6.1.B, W.6.1.C, W.6.2, W.6.2.B, W.6.4, W.7.1, W.7.1.B, W.7.2, W.7.2.A, W.7.2.B, W.7.4

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Research and Writing

WRITING PROMPTS

- 1 In Chinese, the word for *zodiac* is Shēngxiào and means “birth likeness.” Choose any animal to be your birth likeness and describe what superpowers that animal would give you and why.
- 2 The word *zodiac* is Greek in origin and literally means “circle of animals.” Create a new zodiac using mythological animals from popular culture. Can you pick twelve?

Correlates to CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.D, W.6.2.D, W.6.4, W.7.1.D, W.7.2.D, W.7.4

POETRY

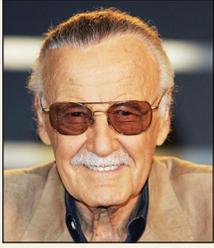
Have the students choose a poem prompt and complete it.

- 1 *Name Poem:* Write a name poem using every letter in your name and attributing a quality of your zodiac animal to each letter.
- 2 *Animal Art Poem:* Write a poem in the shape of a Chinese zodiac animal.
- 3 *Haiku Poem:* While the symbols in the zodiac are Chinese in origin, the Japanese use the same animals in their zodiac. Have the students write a traditional haiku about a zodiac animal.

Correlates to CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.D, W.6.2.D, W.6.4, W.7.1.D, W.7.2.D, W.7.4



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Stan Lee is known to millions as the man whose Super Heroes propelled Marvel to its preeminent position in the comic book industry. His co-creations include Spider-Man, The Avengers, Iron Man, The Incredible Hulk, The Fantastic Four, as well as hundreds of others. He introduced Spider-Man as a syndicated newspaper strip that became the most successful of all syndicated adventure strips and has appeared in more than 500 newspapers worldwide. Stan currently remains Chairman Emeritus of Marvel, as well as a member of the Editorial Board of Marvel Comics. He is also the Chairman & Chief Creative officer of POW! Entertainment, a multimedia entertainment company based in Beverly Hills, CA.



Stuart Moore has been a writer, a book editor, and an award-winning comics editor. His recent writing includes *Civil War*, the first in a new line of prose novels from Marvel Comics, *The Art of Iron Man 3* (Marvel, with Marie Javins), and *The 99*, a multicultural superhero comic from Teshkeel.

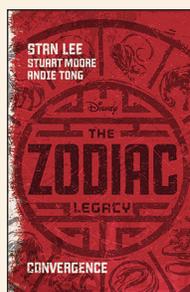
ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



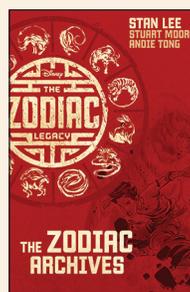
Andie Tong has worked on such titles as *Tron: Betrayal*, *Spectacular Spider-Man* (UK), *The Batman Strikes!*, as well as for the *Smallville*, *Wheel of Time*, *TMNT*, *Masters of the Universe*, and *Starship Troopers* franchises. When he gets the chance, Andie concept-designs for various companies, and also juggles illustration duties on a range of children's picture storybooks for Harper Collins. Andie currently resides in Singapore with his wife and daughter.

This guide was created by Jai Nitz, an American comic book author. He has won the prestigious Xeric Grant, the Bram Stoker Award, and the Stumptown Comics Award for comic book writing. He works as a lecturer at the University of Kansas, teaching courses about writing, graphic novels, and film.

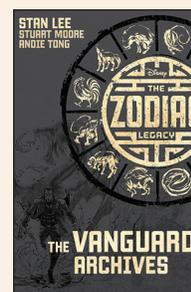
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