

MIDNIGHT

Writing about *Midnight*

The Common Core State Standards for Writing focuses on three types of writing:

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

The following sets of discussion questions and prompts for each title in the **Midnight** series are intended to support these key areas in small group discussions and in written responses.

Student discussion questions for *Blood Moon*

1. **Key ideas and details:**
Throughout the story we learn that Mateo has a rocky relationship with his parents, especially his father. What are the reasons he doesn't get along with his parents? How does Mateo's perspective change by the end of the book?
2. **Craft and structure:**
There are two descriptions of the blood moon given in the story—one being scientific and one focusing more on myth and legend. How does the name "blood moon" take a different meaning with each description?
3. **Integration of knowledge and ideas:**
Compare the first story of the girl who went missing during a blood moon to what happened with Mateo's group of friends. If they'd had to go to the police, how might Mateo and his friends been able to convince people of what really happened? Is there anything they could have done differently from the first group?
4. **Range of reading and level of text complexity:**
Mateo changes his mind about quitting cross country and realizes he might have been taking his parents for granted after experiencing the events of the blood moon. Have you ever been in a situation where a bad experience changed your mind about something? What happened?

Writing prompt for *Blood Moon*

1. Write the origin story for the blood moon spirits. Where did they come from? Why are they luring new souls? What is the purpose?

Student discussion questions for *Dark Star*

1. **Key ideas and details:**
Students disappeared from the bluffs long before Claire and her classmates go on their field trip. What happened then? What are the similarities between those disappearances from when Claire was young and this trip?
2. **Craft and structure:**
Time is a very important element in *Dark Star*. There are even time stamps throughout the story. What purpose do you think these time stamps serve? What do they do to the story? Is this different than what the regular text does?
3. **Integration of knowledge and ideas:**
Val's pins allow her to control the other students. Think of another story where someone was able to control others. What happens to the people that were being controlled? Were they able to fight back, or were they always forced to do the bidding of someone else?
4. **Range of reading and level of text complexity:**
Mr. Petsky and most of the other students trust Val. Even Emma takes one of Val's pins and tells Cooper and Claire to relax. Have you ever been in a situation where somebody couldn't be trusted but others wouldn't listen? What happened? What did you do about it?

Writing prompt for *Dark Star*

1. After the group of kids disappeared when Claire was young, there were a lot of news articles about them. Imagine you are a reporter that is assigned to write the story about the disappearing kids. How do you write about something that is such a mystery? What do you do to try to find out more? How can you write the story to tell as much as you can with the little bit of information that you have?

Student discussion questions for *Graffiti*

1. **Key ideas and details:**
A number of couples have spooky experiences in the story. How are they connected? What experience does each couple go through?
2. **Craft and structure:**
Why is Tony so upset about people not keeping their promises? How does he take that anger out on others?
3. **Integration of knowledge and ideas:**
Think of a real-life example of a person who uncovered a mystery in their town. How did they handle the situation? What would you have done in their position?
4. **Range of reading and level of text complexity:**
Patricia manipulates and lies to her friends in order to protect Tony. How would you feel if you were a friend of hers?

Writing prompt for *Graffiti*

1. Imagine you are a detective writing a police report about the accidents at the bridge. What connections do you make from the evidence? Which characters would you want to interview? Which characters would you suspect?

Student discussion questions for *S.O.S.*

1. **Key ideas and details:**
How does Tyrell develop as a character throughout the story? What does he learn about himself that causes him to grow as a person while he investigates the factory fire?
2. **Craft and structure:**
The use of German language causes several misunderstandings in the book. What are those misunderstandings? How did they sometimes lead Tyrell in the wrong direction? What might have gone differently if English had been used instead?
3. **Integration of knowledge and ideas:**
As Tyrell tries to figure out who's flashing the light he keeps seeing, he also begins to solve an old mystery from the past. Can you think of another book where modern people learn the truth about historical events? Was there a supernatural element, or was it all realistic?
4. **Range of reading and level of text complexity:**
Tyrell struggles to convince his mother and the police that he's telling the truth about what he's seen in the factory and why he's in there. Have you ever been in a situation where you were telling the truth but couldn't get others to believe you? What happened? What did you do about it?

Writing prompt for *S.O.S.*

1. Imagine you're like Helga, writing a letter in the 1920s to let your family know you've found a job in America. What would you tell them? Describe your job, the people you've met, and what the city is like.

Student discussion questions for *Truth or Dare*

1. **Key ideas and details:**
Three students disappear at Lake Helen before Trey and his friends go camping there. How are their disappearances similar to Willa and Domenico's? How are they different? Why do you think Trey and his friends were able to escape while the other students couldn't?



Weird things keep happening in Middleton. From unexpected strangers to dangerous “accidents,” the teens in this town realize it is no longer fun and games. Dramatic twists and turns will keep readers on the edge of their seats!

Student discussion questions for *Midnight*

The Common Core State Standards for Reading divides student reading achievement goals into four areas as follows:

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Common Core Connections:

Key Ideas and Details

- Determining themes or central ideas; summarizing
- Story elements

Craft and Structure

- Meanings of words and phrases

All Anchor Standards: CCRA.R.2, CCRA.R.3, CCRA.R.4

Correlations are estimated and not final until verified by 3rd party expert.

2. Craft and structure:

This story is told only from Trey's perspective. How do you think it would be different if it was told from the perspective of the Woodsman? Using examples from the text, try to explain why the Woodsman believes he is doing the right thing by kidnapping the students and helping the trees.

3. Integration of knowledge and ideas:

In *Truth or Dare*, the kidnappings are caused by the Saturian trees that came to Earth from another world. Can you think of any other stories that use aliens or creatures from different worlds to explain the events of the plot? What were the reasons for those extraterrestrial invasions? What happened?

4. Range of reading and level of text complexity:

Trey feels he has to push off going to college because his parents' restaurant is suffering financially, which was directly because of Leslie's father's actions. Have you ever been in a situation where a large part of your life was in the hands of someone else? What happened? How did you deal with the problem?

Writing prompt for *Truth or Dare*

1. Write a journal entry from Louise's perspective that shows how returning to the present after being unconscious for so many years has affected her. How is she handling the new world and the new technologies? How does she feel about reconnecting with Leslie's dad, who was once the love of her life?

Student discussion questions for *The Witching Hour*

1. Key ideas and details:

Rosie came to town in the middle of a tragedy. What does Omar say happened? What does Jack and the rest of town think actually occurred? How does Rosie decide who to trust and what to do?

2. Craft and structure:

Omar claims he is being haunted, but other characters in the story aren't so sure. Although we hear about Omar's experiences, we only get to see what is happened to Rosie. How do you feel about what is really happening to Omar, as his experiences differ so greatly with Rosie's? What do you think actually happened? Why do you think we hear things from Rosie's perspective and not Omar's?

3. Integration of knowledge and ideas:

Mackie's goal throughout this story is for Jack and Omar to remain friends. What other stories are about friendships being challenged in hard times? How did they end up? Were the friends able to come together again in the end?

4. Range of reading and level of text complexity:

Rosie becomes friends with Omar even though she knows that most of the town is mad at him. Think about a time where you needed to do something you felt was right, but was not a popular choice. What were the challenges you had to overcome? How do you think your decision made a difference?

Writing prompt for *The Witching Hour*

1. Nobody really quite knows what happened the night Mackie died. Pretend you are a journalist for the local paper and report on what you think happened that night. Who are your most reliable witnesses? What evidence do you have to support your claims?



Key Ideas and Details

- Determining themes or central ideas; summarizing
- Story elements

Craft and Structure

- Meanings of words and phrases

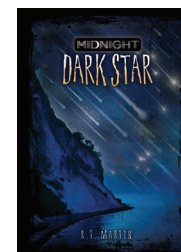
All Anchor Standards: CCRA.R.2, CCRA.R.3, CCRA.R.4

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