



ALIEN IN MY POCKET

Ohm vs. Amp by Nate Ball



DISCUSSION GUIDE

BOOK TALK

Zack and Amp, the four-inch blue alien, have learned to tolerate and even like each other—until Amp’s leader, Ohm, crash-lands on Earth to rescue Amp. Life at Zack’s house is now double crazy with two four-inch blue aliens in residence. Ohm doesn’t understand anything about Earth, but he does accept that Erdians cannot overtake it. Together, Zack, Olivia, Ohm, and Amp must find a way to repair Ohm’s ship so that Amp and Ohm can return to Erde. It’s up to Zack and Olivia to help get the Erdians home—or the results will be disastrous, again!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When Ohm shows up, what are Zack and Olivia’s concerns and fears? Why don’t they trust what Amp tells them?
2. How does Zack react to the news that Amp is going to leave and return to Erde? Why is Zack’s reaction a surprise?
3. Why does Zack want to tell his family about Amp and everything that has happened? Why doesn’t Zack tell them?



4. How do Zack and Amp react when Ohm leaves Earth without Amp? What does Olivia say about Zack and his “help” to launch the spacecraft?

The above questions correlate to CCSS (Speaking): SL.3.1, SL.4.1, SL.5.1; CCSS (Reading Literature): RL.3.1, RL.4.1, RL.5.1; CCSS (Language): L.3.1, L.4.1, L.5.1 and L.3.3, L.4.3, L.5.3

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

THE MOON ORBITS?

Ask students to define the terms “perigee” and “apogee” and to make a list of the dates each will occur. Then using that information, ask students to select a partner and write a short narrative involving a situation where the moon orbits would impact the outcome of the story. Students can share their stories with the class in a reading circle.

CCSS (Writing): W.3.3, W.4.3, W.4.3, W.3.4, W.4.4, W.5.4, and W.3.7, W.4.7, W.5.7; CCSS (Language): L.3.1, L.4.1, L.5.1, L.3.2, L.4.2, L.5.2, and L.3.4, L.4.4, L.5.4.

AMP AND OHM: FRIENDS OR ENEMIES

In the scientific world, what do the words “ohm” and “amp” (short for ampere) mean? Ask students to write a brief explanation of the words and how an ohm and amp work together. Then using Amp and Ohm’s characteristics, write a two-voice poem expressing how their names match their personalities. Have students practice and present their poems to the class.

CCSS (Writing): W.3.2, W.4.2, W.5.2, W.3.4, W.4.4, W.5.4, and W.3.7, W.4.7, W.5.7; CCSS (Language): L.3.1, L.4.1, L.5.1, and L.3.2, L.4.2, L.5.2, and L.3.4, L.4.4, L.5.4.



FOOD BAZOOKA: TO LAUNCH OR NOT TO LAUNCH

Olivia uses her marshmallow launcher for fun and for protection. With a partner, ask students to search for a way to build their own launchers. Once the launchers are complete, ask students to write a scientific explanation of how their launchers work. Students can demonstrate their launchers to the class and then read their explanations.

CCSS (Writing): W.3.2, W.4.2, W.5.2, W.3.4, W.4.4, W.5.4, and W.3.7, W.4.7, W.5.7; CCSS (Language): L.3.1, L.4.1, L.5.1, and L.3.2, L.4.2, L.5.2, and L.3.4, L.4.4, L.5.4.

PROJECTILE MOTION—WILL IT SAVE THE DAY?

Ask students to investigate the physics of projectile motion. Have students use their newly acquired knowledge to write an explanation of projectile motion and to relate the physics of projectile motion to Zack’s ability to help launch Ohm’s spaceship. Then ask students to create a visual aid to help them demonstrate how projectile motion works. As a class, create a display of the students’ explanations and visual aids in the classroom or school library.

CCSS (Writing): W.3.2, W.4.2, W.5.2, W.3.4, W.4.4, W.5.4, and W.3.7, W.4.7, W.5.7; CCSS (Language): L.3.1, L.4.1, L.5.1, and L.3.2, L.4.2, L.5.2, and L.3.4, L.4.4, L.5.4.

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