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Angie Sage was born in London and grew up in the Thames Valley, London, and Kent. She now lives and writes in a house by a creek in Cornwall, England. When she is not writing about the Heaps, she likes to sail her boat, *Muriel*. She is the author-illustrator of many picture books and also the author of the Araminta Spookie series.

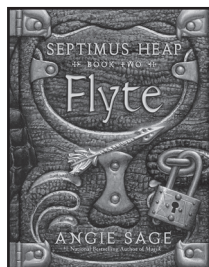
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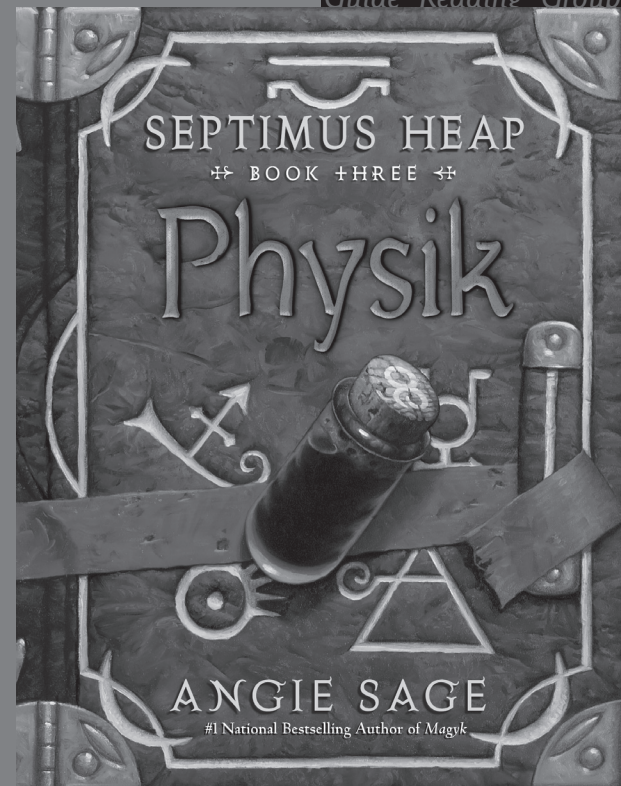
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This guide was created by Jan McDonald, Rocky Mountain Readers.

Reading Group Guide



**Septimus Heap,
Book Three: Physik**
By Angie Sage

When Silas Heap UnSeals a room in the Palace and finds a disturbing portrait of a long-dead Queen, the spirit of the Queen is also released. Queen Etheldredda is as awful in death as she was in life, and she is still up to no good. It is her plan to involve Septimus in the creation of a potion that will secure her endless life, but in order to do so, Septimus must go back in time five hundred years and become Apprentice to her son, the famous alchemist, Marcellus Pye. With a Sickness plaguing the Castle, it's up to Jenna, Nicko, Spit Fyre, and their new friend, Snorri, to save Septimus.

1. Angie Sage, the author of *Physik*, was born in London and today lives by a peaceful creek in Cornwall, England. She writes from her perch looking over the oyster boats passing below. How are these influences evident in her writing?
2. Marcia Overstrand, the ExtraOrdinary Wizard of the Castle, believes Marcellus Pye is irrelevant and wicked and his work is drivel. Septimus Heap thinks Marcellus is really good and his work is fascinating. Whose opinion is closest to the truth? Provide a specific example from the story to prove your point.
3. What is Physik? What is its importance to Septimus and the entire kingdom? What is the legacy of Marcellus's book? How would his biography read in *Our Castle Story*?
4. Has Jenna proven herself worthy of becoming Queen with her adventures in another Time? Explain the reasons for your answer. Jenna says that a Queen "just ends up being a horrible person doing horrible things to everyone" (p. 125). Do you believe Jenna is capable of doing "horrible things"?
5. Queen Etheldredda and Marcellus both wish to own the Tincture of Everlasting Life. What are their reasons? Would you consider taking this potion? What would your reasons be?
6. If Queen Etheldredda were to face a Tribunal for crimes against humanity, what charges would be on the list? If she were found guilty, what should be her sentence?
7. Snorri Snorelssen says the hardest thing she had ever done in her life was going into Sally Mullin's Tea and Ale house on her own (p. 10). Were her adventures on the Alfrún and going through the Glass harder? What would each of the other characters say was the hardest thing they had ever done? How would you answer this same question?

8. Snorri visits the Trader's Office to get her official papers, and there she must deal with an impatient old man "shaking his head at the impudence of youngsters today" (p. 18). Describe an impudent youngster. How do they act? Find examples of the characters acting this way. How did "the impudence of youngsters" prove extremely valuable at different times and places in *Physik*?
9. *I, Marcellus*, the book, has three sections; the first is Alchemie; the second is Physik; and the third is the Almanac. In the Almanac, Marcellus makes predictions for the next thousand and one years. If you were Septimus, would you read the Almanac? Would you want to know the future? Would you wish to visit a Time in the future to see what becomes of you?
10. Septimus has learned to expect the unexpected. What do you think is the most startling or unexpected thing that happens to Septimus or Jenna in *Physik*?
11. What is the Aie-Aie's part in the story? What is Ullr's place? What does Spit Fyre contribute to the story? How are other animals important throughout *Physik*, and how do they represent good and evil?
12. *Physik* is one large puzzle made up of many pieces over hundreds of years old. As a reader, what do you think was the most perplexing part of the puzzle? What piece of the puzzle first trapped Queen Etheldredda? What piece finishes the puzzle and puts an end to her?
13. What questions do you have about *Physik* that have been left unanswered? What would you like to see happen in Angie Sage's next book? How might Lucy and Simon play a part?

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