

# Batthew Aromascent and the Missing Corpse Flower

AUTHORS

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid Primary

## SYNOPSIS

When the world's largest and most pungent flower goes missing right before its grand unveiling, the smell-mad city of Candlenut is in uproar. Luckily, Batthew Aromascent, 11-year-old heir to the famed Olfactory Fragrance House, and his best friend, Lavender, are on the case.

It isn't just any missing flower, either. It's a legendary Titan Arum, grown from a seed that was sent by Batthew's parents—renowned noses, Roger and Joy Aromascent—before they vanished on an expedition deep in the jungle.

Batthew and Lavender have just three days to track it down before the flower wilts and dies, along with any clues as to his parents' whereabouts. But are they prepared for what they'll find in the darker corners of the fragrance world?

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ella Mulvey and John Roebuck are a husband-and-wife writing team, who live in Castlemaine, Victoria, and are both teachers. Ella is completing an Associate degree of Writing and Editing at RMIT and has published one picture book, *The Rabbit-Hole Golf Course*. John is a high school media teacher, film critic and founder of the ReelGood Film Festival.

## STUDY NOTES

### THEMES

- The letter that Batthew's parents leave him, tells him to keep the Titan Arum seed safe (p 40). This letter fuels Batthew's sense of responsibility, and makes him feel as if he needs to solve the mystery of the flower's disappearance to honour his parents. Later, when he is unable to find it, he feels that 'he'd let his mum and dad down' (p1 80). Discuss the way that the book explores themes of responsibility.
  - What do you think Batthew's parents would say to him if they were there?
  - How does Batthew feel when he thinks he's not going to find the corpse flower?
  - Why do you think Batthew leaves the letter from his parents at the Corpse Flower memorial?

## WRITING STYLE

- *Batthew Aromascent* is described as an 'unguessable mystery'. What makes a book a mystery? Discuss genre as a class, and make a list of some of the elements you might expect to find in a mystery (think clues, suspects, red herrings, etc.). Create a table with the following headings to keep track of these details as you read:
  - Suspect (name)

- Reasons for suspecting them (clues)
- Solution—did they do it?
- What other genres can you think of? How are they different to a mystery?
- Are you surprised when you learn who the Titan Arum thief really is? Imagine that one of the other suspects was really the thief, and write an alternate ending for the story showing how they're caught (or how they get away with it!).

### Comprehension

- How does Batthew describe the smell of excitement?
- What's unusual about the way that Vera Vetiver smells?
- What does Batthew's Aunt Bella think about STREETPIG?
- Who is the number one fragrance house in Candlenut?
- Describe the rivalry between the two sides of Candlenut? What are some of the differences between the two sides of the city?
- What does outré mean? What are some examples of outré in the novel?
- What's so special about the door to the Outré Museum? How does Batthew find it?
- What's different about a Puff-tuk?
- Why aren't Artemesius Musk's Smell Fireworks ready for use yet?
- Why have Lavender and Batthew been warned to stay out of Deep Smog? What do they find there?
- What does Mr Sandalwood tell Batthew about coping with terrible smells?
- What does Batthew see when he's overcome by the scent of the Titan Arum? What do you think this vision means?

### ACTIVITIES

- Toilet explains that The Museum District is designed in the shape of a fragrance wheel. What is a fragrance wheel? If you google 'fragrance wheel' you'll find some examples of fragrance wheels that perfumiers use to help them create their scents. Using one of these as a template, draw your own fragrance wheel but fill it in with the specific descriptions from the book, and draw a small image to accompany each description.
- Batthew is trying to create a fragrance that captures his last memory of his mother. What's in it?
- Think of a memory that's special to you and write a perfume recipe for it.
- Read (or watch) *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl and use it as a comparative text to answer the following questions.
  - In *Batthew Aromascent*, who is most like Willy Wonka? Who is like Charlie and why?
  - What do both books say about creativity and experimentation?
  - How do both books explore themes of right and wrong?
  - The world of chocolate, just like the world of scent, is highly competitive. Why do you think this is?
  - What do you like about each of the books? What don't you like? Discuss your opinions in small groups.
- Use the Pixar story spine (below) to write a blurb for book two in the adventures of Batthew and Lavender. What do you think will happen?

#### The Pixar Story Spine

Once upon a time \_\_\_\_\_

Every day \_\_\_\_\_

Until one day \_\_\_\_\_

Because of that \_\_\_\_\_

Because of that \_\_\_\_\_

Because of that \_\_\_\_\_

Until finally \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHOR OF NOTES  
**BEC KAVANAGH**