

THE COLOR OF THE SUN



HC: 978-1-5362-0785-9

Also available as an e-book and in audio

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



David Almond has received numerous awards, including a Hans Christian Andersen Award, a Carnegie Medal, and a Michael L. Printz Award. He is known worldwide as the author of *Skellig*, *Clay*, and many other novels and stories, including *Harry Miller's*

Run, illustrated by Salvatore Rubbino; *The Savage*, *Slog's Dad*, and *Mouse Bird Snake Wolf*, all illustrated by Dave McKean; and *My Dad's a Birdman* and *The Boy Who Climbed Into the Moon*, both illustrated by Polly Dunbar. David Almond lives in England.

ABOUT THE BOOK

One hot summer morning, only weeks after his father's death, Davie steps out his front door into the familiar streets of the Tyneside town that has always been his home. But this seemingly ordinary day takes on an air of mystery and tragedy as the residents learn that a boy has been killed. Despite the threat of a murderer on the loose, Davie turns away from the gossip and sets off toward the sunlit hill above town, where the real and imaginary worlds begin to blur around him. As he winds his way up the hillside, Davie sees things that seem impossible but feel utterly right, that renew his wonder and instill him with hope. Written by the internationally acclaimed David Almond, this is the exquisite story of a boy who rediscovers the beauty of his world, even in the midst of his own sorrow.

Common Core Connections

This discussion guide, which can be used with large or small groups, will help students meet several of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts. These include the reading literature standards for key ideas and details, craft and structure, and integration of knowledge and ideas (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL), as well as the speaking and listening standards for comprehension and collaboration and for presentation of knowledge and ideas (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL). Questions can also be used in writing prompts for independent work.



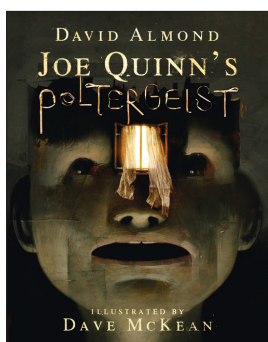
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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. At the beginning of this novel, Davie's mother says, "Get yourself out into the sun, lad!" (page 1). On the face of it, she is urging her son to go outside, but what does she really want from him? By the end of the novel, how has Davie fulfilled his mother's wish?
2. Take note of what Davie packs in his haversack. What does his mother add to the bag? What do you think is the significance of each item?
3. The Killens are a fierce clan, as their name suggests. What pleasure do they take in fighting? Why are even the youngest of the Killens so eager to go into battle with the Craigs? Do you think it's possible for either the Killens or the Craigs to change their violent ways? Why?
4. "I hardly care if it's true or not," Letitia says of her story of a bird and a baby (page 104). "I care only for the strangeness and the beauty and the terror of it." What is your reaction to her tale? Do you find it strange or beautiful or terrifying? What is the significance of the flight that Davie takes later in the novel? Does the experience change him? Why?
5. Davie is a character in a novel, not an actual person, so he is right to wonder if "maybe he himself is living in a story" (page 43). What are the important differences between fictional characters and real people? Are fictional characters less important? More important? Why?
6. "I'm in the wrong tale," Paddy says to Davie (page 52). "I'm already writing a new life" (page 53). What do you think the priest is saying about himself? How can he be both a character in one story and the author of another?
7. The United States and England share the same language, but not all the same vocabulary. Keep track of unfamiliar British words and phrases that you encounter in this book. What does each mean?
8. Davie is at an in-between age: too young to be preoccupied by girls and too old to play with his collection of stuffed animals. How do you think this novel would have been different if he were a little bit older or a little bit younger?
9. Of all the people Davie encounters on his climb up the hill, who is your favorite? Why?
10. A strange, slobbering dog follows Davie for most of the day. "Why are you with me?" the boy asks (page 115). What is your answer to Davie's question? When does the dog finally leave? Why?
11. Davie's mother has recently been widowed, but she doesn't act like someone who has just suffered a great loss. Are you surprised by her behavior? How does she stay cheerful?
12. "Stop thinking," Davie thinks to himself (page 39). "Stop wondering about everything. Just walk." How would you rate Davie's advice to himself? What are the advantages of not thinking too much? What are the disadvantages?
13. "There's always secret places waiting to be found," Davie's father told him. "Even in a little town like this, where you can think you've seen everything there is to see" (pages 130–131). Have you found secret places in your own community? Where are they?

14. The border between life and death in this novel is hazy, maybe even nonexistent. Who are the important dead people in Davie's life? How do they guide him throughout his journey? Does it matter to him that they're deceased? Does it matter to you?
15. "What we doing? Where we going? Why are we here?" (page 155). Wilf doesn't have any answers. Do you? How would you respond to Wilf's questions?
16. Once you've finished the novel, go back and reread its first line. What did it mean to you when you first read it? What does it mean to you now? How does this opening sentence set the stage for the rest of the book?

More from David Almond

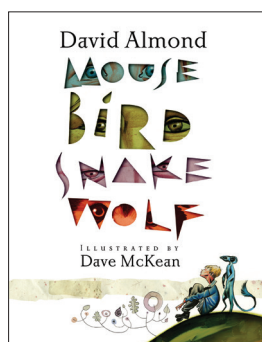


HC: 978-1-5362-0160-4

★ "A keen collaboration moving seamlessly between worlds inner and outer, natural and supernatural."

— *Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

There's a poltergeist in Joe Quinn's house, and Davie is determined to discover its source in this lively, hopeful graphic storybook.

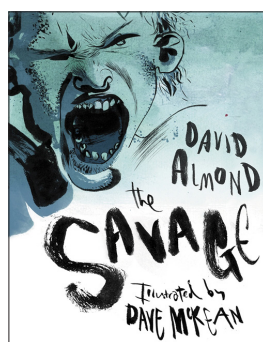


HC: 978-0-7636-5912-7

★ "You could say that this is Almond and McKean's most beautiful effort yet, but just know that beautiful has its own dark and wondrous meaning in their hands."

— *Booklist* (starred review)

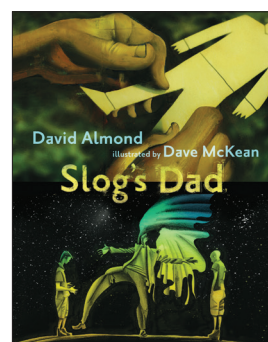
The imagination of three children takes on unexpected life in a creation tale.



HC: 978-0-7636-3932-7

An American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults

This graphic-novel-within-a-novel pairs the extraordinary prose of David Almond with the visual genius of Dave McKean.

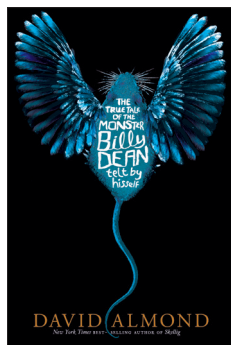


HC: 978-0-7636-4940-1

★ "The concise story opens a window onto the boy's enormous loss by narrating a single, puzzling event."

— *Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

The ineffable nature of grieving and belief inspires a tender, gritty, and breathtaking work of graphic storytelling.

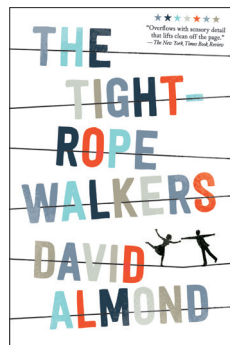


HC: 978-0-7636-6309-4

PB: 978-0-7636-7662-9

A Publishers Weekly Best Book of the Year

A gripping, exquisitely written novel about a hidden-away child who emerges into a broken world.



HC: 978-0-7636-7310-9

PB: 978-0-7636-9104-2

★ "An absolute must-have."
— *School Library Journal* (starred review)

A moving coming-of-age novel, masterfully told.



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