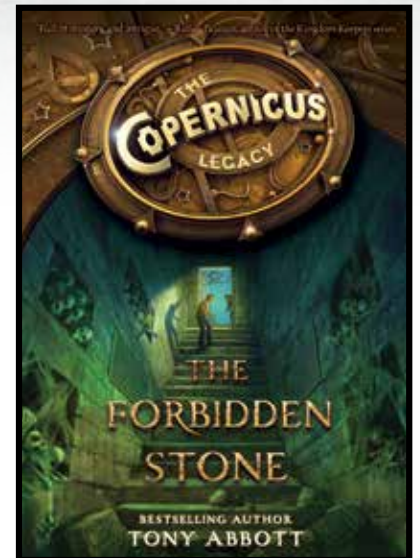




## ABOUT THE BOOK

It all begins when Wade Kaplan receives a strange, coded email from his uncle Henry, shortly before the old man's sudden and suspicious death. He sets off for Germany to attend the funeral with his father, Roald, and his three friends Darrell, Lily, and Becca, only to discover that Uncle Henry left them yet another baffling message that they suspect is the key to figuring out how and why he died.

The message leads to a clue, which sends them to a dark and creepy family tomb. The more clues they discover, the farther they travel down a treacherous path toward an ancient, guarded secret that could threaten the fate of humanity. Soon, they are in a breathless race across the globe, running for their lives as a ruthless shadow organization chases them around every corner. Their only hope of saving themselves—and the world that they know—is to find twelve magical relics from a hidden past that will unlock the Copernicus Legacy.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**TONY ABBOTT** is the author of nearly 100 books for young readers, including the bestselling series *The Secrets of Dron*, *Cracked Classics*, *The Haunting of Derek Stone*, *Underworlds*, and *Goofballs*. Tony has worked in libraries, bookstores, and a publishing company, and he currently teaches college English. He plays guitar, owns thousands of books on every subject imaginable, and in his workroom has three desks, at one of which he writes the literary blog [www.fridaybookreport.com](http://www.fridaybookreport.com). Tony lives in Connecticut with his wife, two daughters, and two dogs. He frequently appears at conferences, book festivals, and schools nationwide. You can visit him online at [www.tonyabbottbooks.com](http://www.tonyabbottbooks.com).



Photo by Thomas Sayers Ellis

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think about Uncle Henry's words on page 4: "The sky is where mathematics and magic become one." How do these words come to life for Wade and his friends? How do math and magic play a role in solving the clues and riddles the team encounters? How do they become one?

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Reading: Literature: Craft and Structure: RL.6.5.*

2. What is a kraken? What does it symbolize in this adventure? On what items is the image of a kraken found?

3. As Vogel lay dying, he grabbed a silver pitch pipe. The pale man says, "Play for us. Play your swan song . . ." (p. 16). Why is this statement ironic?

4. Since Dr. Kaplan obviously does not know about the ancient secret, why does Professor Vogel send his final email to him? What is Professor Vogel's hope?

5. What special talent do each of the four friends possess that aids the group in solving the clues and riddles? How do their unique gifts work together?

6. What motivates the secret order to find the ancient relics? How does their motivation differ from that of Dr. Kaplan's team?

7. What is the theme of the story? How does it develop throughout the story?

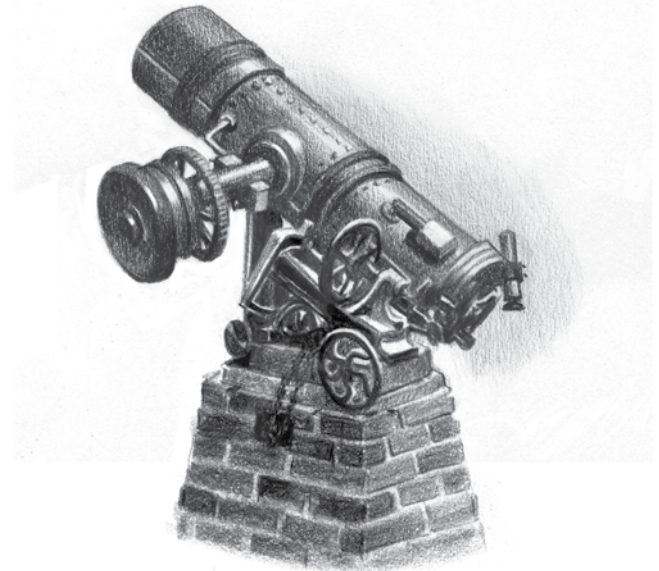
*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Reading: Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL.4.2, RL.5.2, RL.6.2, and RL.7.2.*

8. As the adventure progresses and the danger increases, the bond between the four friends becomes stronger. What brings them together? Why are they so committed to finding the relics in spite of personal danger?

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Reading: Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL.5.3 and RL.6.3.*

9. Why is Galina Krause's character surrounded in mystery? Drawing on specific details in the story, make a list of her characteristics. How do those characteristics make her the perfect antagonist?

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Reading: Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL.4.3*



## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS ALSO ADDRESSED BY ALL QUESTIONS:

CCSS ELA>Language: Conventions of Standard English: L.4.1, L.5.1, L.6.1, and L.7.1. Knowledge of Language: L.4.3, L.5.3, L.6.3, and L.7.3. ELA>Speaking & Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration: SL.4.1, SL.5.1, SL.6.1, and SL.7.1.

# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. **THE AGE OF COPERNICUS.** Nicolaus Copernicus, an astronomer, and Ferdinand Magellan, an explorer, both lived during the sixteenth century, when Copernicus is supposed to have built his *machina tempore*. In groups of three, ask students to select one of the above individuals and to research his life. In addition, students should research the sixteenth century to determine what life was like in politics, medicine, science, education, and culture at the time. Each group should use their findings to write a skit depicting both the life and times of one of the two individuals. Students should practice and present their skits to the class.

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Writing: Text Types and Purposes: W.4.2, W.5.2, W.6.2, and RL.7.2 and Research to Build and Present Knowledge: W.4.7, W.5.7, W.6.7, and W.7.7. ELA>Reading: Informational Texts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: RI.4.7, RI.5.7, RI.6.7, and RI.7.7.*

2. **IT'S IN THE STARS.** Wade loves the sky and stars. Ask students to work in teams of three or four students to investigate the stars and constellations. Ask each team to write and research a series of guiding questions centered on what they would like to know about the stars and constellations. Have each team choose a constellation from the star map pictured on the front of this poster to research. Have each team compile a multimedia presentation with their research findings to present as part of a science fair or to display in the school library.

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Reading: Informational Texts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: RI.4.7, RI.5.7, RI.6.7, and RI.7.7; ELA>Writing: Text Types and Purposes: W.4.2, W.5.2, W.6.2, and RL.7.2.*

3. **CRACKING THE CODE.** Wade, his stepbrother, and his father enjoyed deciphering the coded email from Professor Vogel. With a partner, ask students to create a code and write a message using that code. Then have the students exchange messages and try to decode them. Post the codes and coded/decoded messages.

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Language: Conventions of Standard English: L.4.1, L.5.1, L.6.1, and L.7.1.*

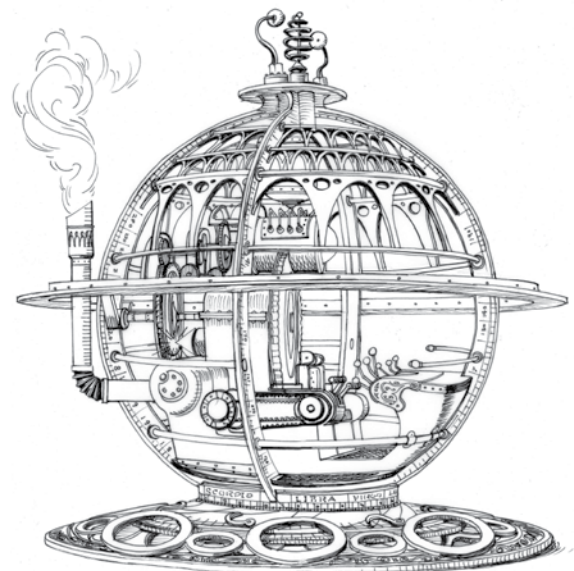
4. **TUNNELING UNDERGROUND.** The kids are often underground, walking through tunnels, examining tombs, searching crypts, and exploring catacombs. Have students work in small groups to create a visual aide for one of

the underground sites in the book. The visual aid should include a definition, an explanation of its uses (both current and historical), and an image. Then have students locate descriptions of these settings from the novel and juxtapose them with the student-written informational text. Display student-written texts alongside the author's descriptions. Have the small groups discuss and share with the whole class why the author chose these sites, how the choice supports his purpose, and how the descriptions add to the meaning.

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Writing: Text Types and Purposes: W.4.2, W.5.2, W.6.2, and RL.7.2. ELA>Speaking & Listening: Presentation of Knowledge & Idea: SL.4.2, SL.5.2, SL.6.2, and SL.7.2.*

5. **WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF . . .** When Becca and Wade stumble on what could possibly have been a time machine, they understand the necessity for traversable wormholes. Provide students with selected readings or student-appropriate, accessible websites on hypothetical traversable wormholes. Armed with information, lead students in a discussion about what they are and brainstorm the implications the discovery of such a traversable wormhole could have on our society. Have students write an essay response to one of the possible implications. Have students share their essays in small groups.

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Speaking & Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration: SL.4.1, SL.5.1, SL.6.1, and SL.7.1. ELA>Reading: Informational Texts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: RI.4.7, RI.5.7, RI.6.7, and RI.7.7. ELA>Writing: Text Types and Purposes: W.4.2, W.5.2, W.6.2, and RL.7.2.*



# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

6. **THE TEUTONIC ORDER.** Ask students to trace the rise and fall of the Teutonic Order from its beginning in the thirteenth century through history. Divide students into four groups to research each of the following time frames: beginnings through thirteenth century, fourteenth century, fifteenth century, and sixteenth century to present. Students should determine the philosophy of the order, the purpose or reason it was founded, the founding principles, membership requirements, and changes or adaptations during their selected time period. Have each group write a short history of their time period and create a visual to support their research: a timeline, a flow chart, a map, or other appropriate visual. Have each group present their findings and visuals to the class.

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Writing: Text Types and Purposes: W.4.2, W.5.2, W.6.2, and RL.7.2; ELA>Reading: Informational Texts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: RI.4.7, RI.5.7, RI.6.7, and RI.7.7. ELA>Speaking & Listening: Presentation of Knowledge & Idea: SL.4.2, SL.5.2, SL.6.2, and SL.7.2.*

7. **TRAVELING IN TIME.** Wade determines that Copernicus did travel in time because of the mathematic equation he used that was from the future. Ask students to write an imaginative time-travel narrative. Have students prewrite using a storyboard that includes: description of the time travelers, where they would choose to go, the time period they would travel to, one or more conflicts they would encounter, and resolutions to their conflicts. Students may also want to include what they would choose to bring back with them if they could travel in time. Have students complete their time-travel narratives and share with a younger school audience.

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Writing: Text Types and Purposes: W.4.3, W.5.3, W.6.3, and RL.7.3.*



8. **GENREFLECTING.** As a class, discuss the different types of literary genres, the distinguishing features of each, and the reader's expectations for each type of genre. In small groups, ask students to identify which category(s) *The Copernicus Legacy: The Forbidden Stone* falls into and to discuss their choice(s) using details from the book. Then have each student write a book review for the book by focusing on the selected genre and how well the book meets the reader's expectations for that specific genre. Students should incorporate supporting details for their position and their review of the book. Post and share student book reviews.

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>Reading: Literature: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: RL.4.9, RL.5.9, and RL.6.9.*

9. **TRIPPING WITH THE KAPLANS.** The Kaplans begin their travels in Austin, Texas, and travel to Europe and Guam. Ask students as a class to trace the route and the stops the Kaplans traveled as they searched for the relics. Have students work in small groups, each group selecting one stop along the way. Students should research geographical features, history, and the culture of the selected stops. Then have students set up a classroom model of the route the Kaplans took. Each stop will include a looping digital presentation to include a brief account of what occurred in each location as well as the researched information. Allow students and other classrooms to "travel" the route around the classroom visiting each of the digital presentation sites. Students should identify each stop and write a brief account of what occurred in each location.

*Correlates to CCSS ELA>History/Social Studies: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: RH.6-8.7 and ELA>Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge: W.4.8, W.5.8, W.6.8, and W.7.8.*



Teaching guide prepared by Susan Geye, Coordinator of Library Services, Everman Independent School District, Everman, Texas.