

HOLLER OF THE FIREFLIES

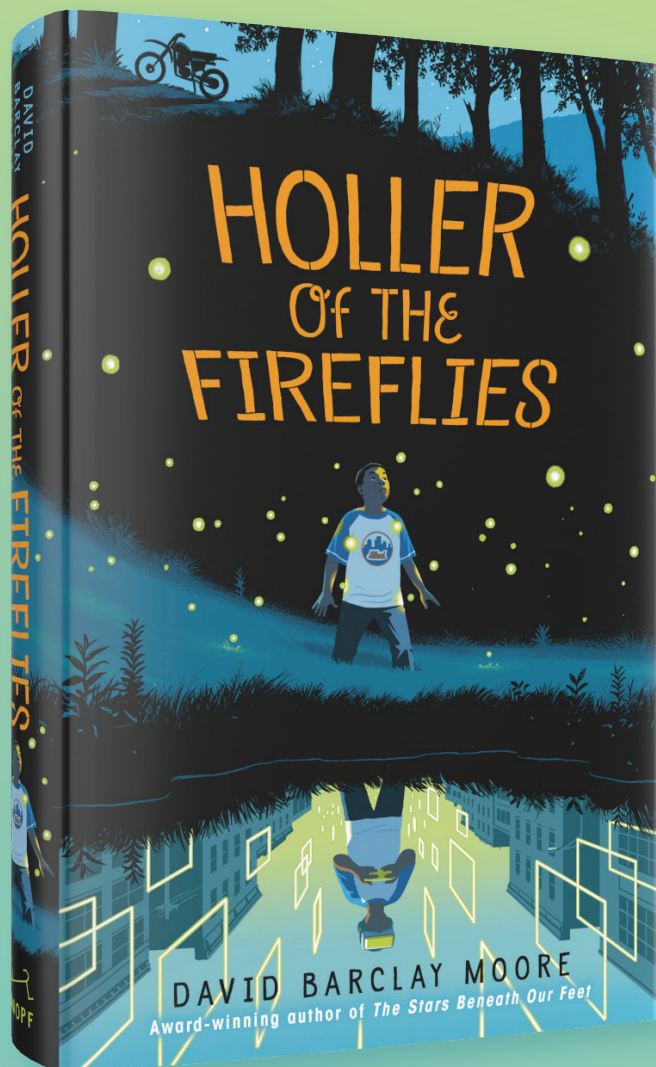
DAVID BARCLAY MOORE
Award-winning author of *The Stars Beneath Our Feet*

EDUCATORS' GUIDE



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ABOUT THE BOOK

Javari knew that West Virginia would be different from his home in Bushwick, Brooklyn. But his first day at STEM Camp in a little Appalachian town is still a shock. Though run-ins with the police are just the same here. Not good.

Javari will learn a lot about science, tech, engineering, and math at camp. And also about rich people, racism, and hidden agendas. But it's Cricket, a local boy, budding activist, and occasional thief, who will show him a different side of the holler—and blow his mind wide open.

Javari is about to have that summer. Where everything gets messy and complicated and confusing . . . and you wouldn't want it any other way.

THEMES: African American Interest, Fairness, Justice & Equality, Racism & Prejudice, Poverty, Friendship

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Barclay Moore is the author of *The Stars Beneath Our Feet*, which won the Coretta Scott King–John Steptoe Award for New Talent.

David was born and raised in Missouri. After studying creative writing at Iowa State University, film at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and language studies at l'Université de Montpellier in France, David moved to New York City, where he has worked in film, journalism, and communications.



Photo © Timothy Greenfield-Sanders

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

1. Research the American Appalachian Mountains. Where are they located? Who are the original inhabitants (Native people)? Why are the mountains important in the history of the United States? What are they known for today? Create a photo gallery with your findings using Google slides or any other site to which you have access. Create captions that describe each photo. Consider the following subjects: famous people, inventions, arts and culture, Black and Indigenous Appalachians.
2. Capture a video of yourself playing a game in a simulated reality or find a video online of someone playing a game. You may choose to narrate over the video explaining the rules of the game, write code for a game of your invention, or write a short piece describing why you like the reality created for you in games like *Animal Crossing* and *Minecraft*.
4. Why do you suppose science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in the United States are dominated by people from the dominant culture?
5. Why do you think people make assumptions about others?
6. Ethan says, “Skipping the electronics when you want to build forces you to absorb even more about how stuff really works!” (p. 127) What do you think about this? Can you think of a time when doing things the hard way was beneficial?
7. Have you ever heard any “chocolate hillbilly music”? If not, why do you think you haven’t?
8. What do you think about the Confederate flag and the position that it represents hatred and racism? [Read and discuss this article.](#)
9. Why is it so offensive to compare people to animals? (pp. 166–167) What would you do or say in that situation? Discuss how the characters respond.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you believe protests can bring about social change?
2. Have the demographics of your neighborhood changed over time? If so, how? What has that meant for the people who have lived there for a long time?
3. What is gentrification? How does it impact those with and without economic and social privilege?
10. Why do people hate? Reread pages 234–235. Why would people need something to be afraid of? What is meant by this?
11. What do you think about the idea that people who experience racism can’t be racist because of the way power structures operate? Discuss.
12. Do you agree that humans often move forward with technological advances without considering whether they should?

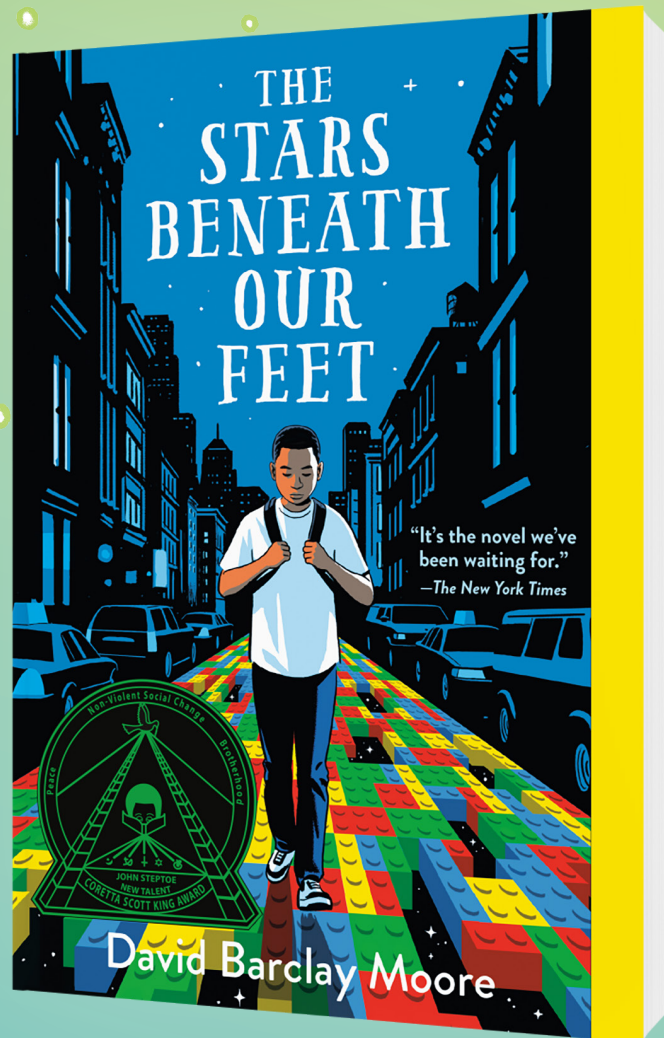
POST-READING ACTIVITIES

1. Create a mini-poster about an individual who made significant advancements in a STEM field but is not well known. In the top left corner, write a short biography of the person. In the top right corner, place a picture of them. In the bottom left corner, create a QR code that leads to a video or sound clip with additional information about why they may not be well known. In the bottom right corner, explain how their invention or knowledge contributes to modern society.
2. Create a social media campaign or another social action project with climate justice as its key component. You may make a campaign for a project that has already started (for example, getting clean water to Flint, Michigan, or Jackson, Mississippi), or create a campaign to bring awareness to an issue in your community (polluted waterways or parks). Create images as well as text as part of your campaign and research technology that could help to solve the problem.
3. Research people and communities in Appalachia. Create a Google Maps tour through at least five places of present-day or historical interest. Make sure to annotate the map, including why you selected each place and its importance to the community.



Julia E. Torres is a national recognized veteran language arts teacher-librarian in Denver, CO. Julia facilitates teacher development workshops rooted in areas of anti-racist education, equity and access in literacy and librarianship, and education as a practice of liberation. She is a co-founder of #DisruptTexts. You can find her online at juliaetorres.com.

ALSO BY DAVID BARCLAY MOORE



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★ *The Bulletin* | ★ *Kirkus Reviews* | ★ *Publishers Weekly* | ★ *School Library Journal*
★ *Shelf Awareness* | ★ *VOYA*



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