

## Teacher's Notes



### *Batthew Aromascent and the Stolen Sequels*

Written by Ella Mulvey and John  
Roebuck

Teacher's Notes by Bec Kavanagh

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### RECOMMENDED FOR

Middle grade readers (ages 8+, grades 3-5)

#### KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
  - AC9E3LE02
  - AC9E3LE03
  - AC9E4LE02
  - AC9E4LE03

### THEMES

- Class
- Privilege
- Theft
- Creativity
- Punishment

### SYNOPSIS

A mysterious burglar is breaking into all of Candlenut's fragrance houses and stealing their perfume recipes. Without them, the fragrance houses can't create their celebrated scents, and without scents, Candlenut is just another town! When the burglar successfully robs one of Candlenut's most famous houses – Olfactory, Batthew Aromascent's home – Batthew and his best friend, Lavender, must track down the thief.

While the Mayor and her team are busy chasing the wrong suspect, Batthew and Lavender follow their noses down a trail of intrigue and revenge. Batthew discovers the world of the Nose-Nots and starts to question many of the privileges he'd taken for granted. When Batthew and Lavender uncover the burglar's true motives, they're forced to reconsider everything they thought they knew about what's right and wrong.

In this spectacular sequel, Batthew and Lavender sniff their way through another exciting mystery.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

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**Ella Mulvey** (she/her) and **John Roebuck** (he/him) are the authors of the Batthew Aromascent series, which was shortlisted for Hardie Grant's Ampersand Prize. They live on Dja Dja Wurrung country/Castlemaine in regional Victoria, Australia.

**Ella Mulvey** works in environmental education and is a Biomimicry Learning Facilitator at the Botanic Gardens in Melbourne. She is also the author of one picture book, *The Rabbit-Hole Golf Course*, illustrated by Karen Briggs, which was a 2018 CBCA Notable Picture Book and recognised in the Speech Pathology Australia's Book of the Year Awards.

**John Roebuck** is a high school teacher without much skill or expertise. John worked as a film critic for over ten years and is the founder and former Creative Director of the ReelGood Film Festival.

## THEMES

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*Batthew Aromascent and the Stolen Sequels* explores class and privilege through the division of the Nose-Gots and the Nose-Nots.

Lavender explains to Batthew, who has never encountered the phrase, that 'Nose-Nots have no money. They can't afford to go to the School of Smell. And they don't have connections to get them an apprenticeship at any fragrance houses. Nose-Nots have to knuckle down and tough it out if they want to become a Nose. But they almost never make it. It's too difficult. Everybody else looks down on them.' (p125)

Later, when Batthew and Lavender confront Tomberthy Pocket for the first time, Pocket calls Batthew the 'Prince of the Nose-Gots', making Batthew reflect that 'if Philtrum was to be believed, this man had none of the opportunities Batthew enjoyed. Just because one was born Tomberthy Pocket, Nose-Not, and one was born Batthew Aromascent, son of Roger and Joy.' (p180)

The differences in the ways that the Nose-Gots and Nose-Nots are treated in the story reflect the way that privilege, luck and class operates in our society.

- Make a list of the Nose-Gots and Nose-Nots in the book. How are they treated differently by the police and by society?
- What privileges do the Nose-Gots have that the Nose-Nots do not? Is one more deserving than the other? Why/why not?
- How does Batthew feel as he starts to recognise his own privilege? What does he do about it?
- Mr Sandalwood tells Lavender that Nose-Nots and Nose-Gots are just names, and that they don't really reflect the person. To what extent do you agree with this?
- Use the examples in the book to consider your own privilege. Have you ever been treated or treated someone differently because of where they come from or how much money they have?



## WRITING STYLE

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*Batthew Aromascent and the Stolen Sequels* is, as the title suggests, a sequel! What is a sequel, and what do you expect from it?

Miss Tuttlelage describes a sequel as 'not merely a copy of [the original] work; something new, something better, something *different*' (p12). But Lavender says that sequels are always worse. What are some of the similarities between this book and the first book? What other sequels can you think of (in books or film)? Discuss these as a group – what makes a sequel better or worse than the original?

Batthew worries that he 'doesn't have a sequel in him.' What does he mean by this? Is he right?

## COMPREHENSION

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- Why is the city of Candlenut 'seized by panic!'? What is the thief taking?
- What is so special about The Goodbye Hug? What ingredient does Matthew add to the recipe in this book?
- How does Matthew describe Slagwash's perfume?
- Why does the Mayor assume that Hepzibah Brumpf is the burglar? Is she right?
- What is so special about orris?
- How does Professor Philtrum feel about Pocket? Do you think his behaviour towards Pocket at the S.N.O.T.T.E.Rs was justified?
- What's unusual about Detective Worthington?
- Why didn't the Pocket brothers steal anything from StreetPig?
- What did the Pocket brothers do with the perfume recipes? What are their plans for the profits?
- Do you agree with Matthew when he says that everything that happened with Tomberthy and Rumbelow 'wasn't exactly all their fault' (p252)? Why/why not?

## WRITING EXERCISE

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As Professor Philtrum says, smell is the strongest trigger for memory. Think of a memory that you have that is associated with a specific smell and write about it.

## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

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- Keep track of all the smells you encounter in one week and draw a smell map to show where you've been.
- Write a newspaper article for *The Candlenut Tribune* summarising one of the key events in the book.
- 'The world-famous Olfactory Smell Library was an archive of anything and everything found, used and bottled up since the Aromascent family of old first found themselves on the sunny shores of Candlenut.' Draw/create a new scent to add to the Olfactory Smell Library. Why do you think this scent deserves a place in the archive?



- What adventures do you think Batthew and Lavender might have next? Make some predictions as a group, then choose one and use it as inspiration to write the opening scene of Batthew Aromascent: Book 3.

## RELATED READING

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*Batthew Aromascent and the Missing Corpse Flower*

By Ella Mulvey and John Roebuck

*The Peacock Detectives*

By Carly Nugent

*The Midwatch*

By Judith Rossell

*The Search for the Story Realm*

By Brooke Scobie

