

A Star Explodes: The Story of Supernova 1054

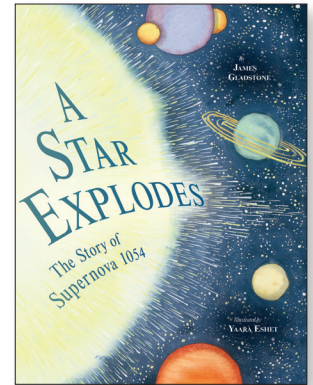
Discussion Guide by James Gladstone

About the Book

The supernova of 1054 was one of the brightest supernova events recorded in history. And its remnant, the Crab Nebula, is still studied today.

Beginning at the moment of a supernova explosion thousands of years ago, this story travels forward in time to 1054, the year people around the world saw the unparalleled light of an exploding star appear in Earth's sky. The story then travels deep into space to see the remnant of this supernova—the Crab Nebula—followed by a continuing trip forward in time.

Taking a unique approach integrating astronomy, cultural history, and advances in technology, the book encourages readers to think about the world around them and their place in the universe. Told in minimal, poetic text with stunning watercolor and ink illustrations, the book closes with an invitation for readers to imagine a time when they, too, might see the rare event of a supernova shining in the sky.



Book written by James Gladstone
and illustrated by Yaara Eshet

Before Reading

- Look at the picture on the front cover of the book. Describe what you see. What do you think the picture tells you about the story?
- Did you know that stars explode? What do you think happens when a star explodes? What are some questions you have about an exploding star?

After Reading

- Many years ago, a star exploded in our galaxy. What do we call a star explosion? Can you find it in the book?
- How might you feel if you saw a supernova in the sky?

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CURRICULUM LINKS

Language Arts: Reading
Comprehension
Science: Earth and Space Systems
Social Studies: Local and Global
Communities

READING LEVELS

Grade: 4
Fountas & Pinnell: R
Lexile® Measure: AD 880L
COMMON CORE: RL.4, W.4,
SL.4, L.4



After Reading (continued)

- How do you think seeing a supernova in the sky might connect people all around the world? Describe what you think.
- What did astronomers learn when they looked at the “guest star” through a telescope? Is the “guest star” really a star? What is it?
- How did the Crab Nebula get its name? Suppose you could give the Crab Nebula a new name. What would you call it? Why would you choose that name?
- The Crab Nebula is the starry remains of Supernova 1054. Why do you think we call it Supernova 1054?
- What do you think might be the best part of being an astronomer?
- Which pictures helped you understand what happens when a star explodes? Describe your ideas.
- What was your favorite picture in the book? How did it make you feel?

What do you think a supernova looks like? Draw your own supernova!



What do you think a telescope looks like? Draw your own telescope!

