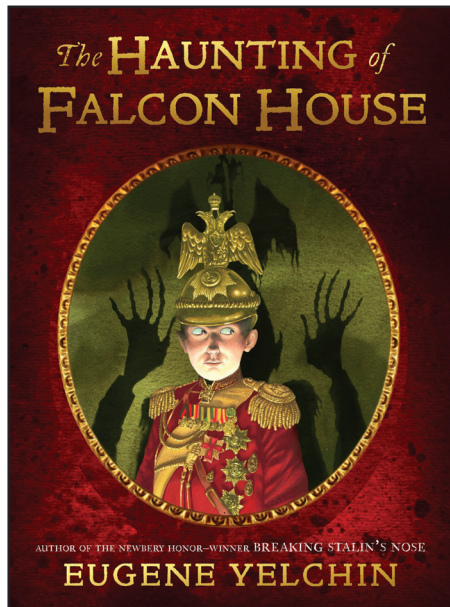


# A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR *The* HAUNTING *of* FALCON HOUSE



Ages 9–12 • 9780805098457 • e-Book: 9781627796606

## ABOUT THE BOOK

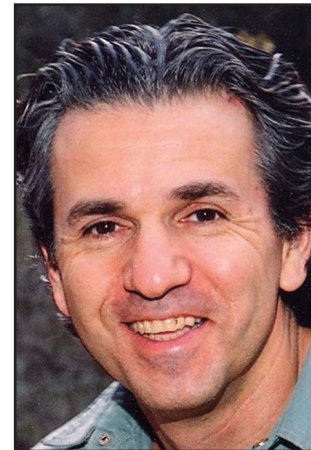
A long-undisturbed bedroom.  
A startling likeness.  
A mysterious friend.

When twelve-year-old Prince Lev Lvov goes to live with his aunt at Falcon House, he takes his rightful place as heir to the Lvov family estate. Prince Lev dreams of becoming a hero of Russia like his great ancestors. But he'll discover that dark secrets haunt this house. Prince Lev is the only one who can set them free—will he be the hero his family needs?

FOR  
USE WITH  
COMMON CORE  
STATE  
STANDARDS

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**EUGENE YELCHIN** is the author and illustrator of *Arcady's Goal* and the Newbery Honor book *Breaking Stalin's Nose*. Born and educated in Russia, he left the former Soviet Union when he was twenty-seven years old. Mr. Yelchin has also illustrated several books for children, including *Crybaby*, *Who Ate All the Cookie Dough?*, and *Won Ton*. He lives in California with his wife and children.



This guide is aligned with Common Core Standards for 6th grade but can be applied to grades 3–7. To attain specific Common Core grade level standards for their classrooms and students, teachers are encouraged to adapt the activities listed in this guide to their classes' needs. You know your kids best!



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# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Chapter Four ends with Lukich saying, “Be so good as to watch your step, Your Excellency. It’s slippery.” (p.16) What might the author be foreshadowing with this scene? Considering the quote above as well as the title of the novel, what should the prince be worried about? Use evidence to support your thinking.
2. Princess Olga Lvovna Lvov is a very strong-willed character, but because she is a woman, she was not given the opportunities her brother was. Discuss how this impacted the way she grew up and who she became.
3. The servants Shysh and Woldemar present Prince Lev with two very different perspectives on his aunt and grandfather. What has influenced their points of view? Who do you think the Prince should believe?
4. The author has included illustrations throughout the novel to match what’s happening in the story—with the exception of two grave illustrations: one on page 88 and one on page 144. What might these illustrations be symbolic of? Why do you think the author choose to include them even though they don’t match a particular scene?
5. Grandfather’s study, along with the rest of the house, is described as dark and dusty. How can a story’s setting affect you as a reader? What feelings do you get from reading this story?
6. Vanyousha beings to appear more and more as Prince Lev needs him. How might their friendship help the Prince, and how might it hold him back from fulfilling his duties?
7. Describe how Lev’s character changes from the beginning of the story to the end. Choose three major events that illustrate these changes.
8. Family is one of the central themes of this story. What other themes can you identify? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
9. At the end of the novel it becomes clear that Vanyousha is not a real boy. Why did he appear to Lev? How did Vanyousha’s presence help Lev through a difficult time?
10. Ghost stories often make the reader feel scared or frightened. Did you feel frightened while reading this story? Why or why not?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.3 Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.5 Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.6 Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.



# PRE-READING

◆ Before reading *The Haunting of Falcon House*, have students do a research project on Russia during the 1800s. Break students into small groups of three or four and have them research the following topics:

- Geography and climate
- Government
- Food and music

Students can present information in the form of a gallery walk. Students can present their research in digital form or on a poster. Have students walk around the room to look at other students findings and make note of the most surprising facts they see.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.2 Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.5 Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

# DURING READING

◆ In his “Note on the Translation”, author Eugene Yelchin tells the story of how he found a manuscript and how the accompanying illustrations helped him to fill in the missing pieces. Using a storyboard style template, draw six scenes that make a complete story (beginning, middle, and end). Switch drawings with a partner and have the other person write a story based on the illustrations.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

◆ Family history plays an important role in *The Haunting of Falcon House*. Have students gather information on their family history by interviewing members of their immediate and extended family. Students should then use the information they gathered to write a report on their family history to create a family tree visual. Trees can be displayed throughout the classroom.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

# POST-READING

◆ Have students write an email to the author evaluating the book. They should mention what they liked best about the story, providing examples, and ask any questions they might have. Choose the most thorough and well-crafted responses to email the author, and see if they get a response.

**Website: [eugeneyelchinbooks.com](http://eugeneyelchinbooks.com)**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Jessica Botterman has been teaching Language Arts at Sanborn Regional Middle School for ten years. She has her Bachelor's in English and Master's in Teaching Writing from Plymouth State University.

