

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“This winning combination of action and humor will keep readers turning pages right up to the ending.” **-Starred Review, *School Library Journal***

“Even adults will appreciate a tale in which street smarts mix with book learning, and resourcefulness and confidence are matched by loyalty and respect.”  
**-Review, *Publishers Weekly***

# THE FAMILIARS

Written by Adam Jay Epstein and Andrew Jacobson

Longtime writing partners and first-time authors Adam Jay Epstein and Andrew Jacobson make a fantastical debut with **THE FAMILIARS**, the first in a series of adventures for the animal companions of magicians in the land of Vastia.

Aldwyn’s living a rough-and-tumble life as an alley cat in the city of Bridgetower until one day he unwittingly ends up in the hands of a young wizard-in-training who mistakes him for a familiar. Jack falls for Aldwyn immediately, and brings him home to Stone Runlet where the wizard master Kalstaff teaches fellow novice wizards Marianne and Dalton.

At Stone Runlet, Aldwyn meets Skylark, a blue jay, and Gilbert, a tree frog, both in training as the familiars to Marianne and Dalton. At first, Aldwyn thinks that he’s got it made—a life of ease with a boy who loves him. Then, the unthinkable happens. Jack and the other young wizards are captured by the evil queen of Vastia. Aldwyn, along with Skylark and Gilbert, have to use all their magical resources to find them and save the kingdom. Little do they know that Aldwyn has a secret which may put their lives in great danger!

Adam Jay Epstein and Andrew Jacobson have created an incredible world of magic, adventure, and whimsy that young readers will delight in. **THE FAMILIARS** brings to life a kingdom where spies are at every turn and heroes come in the unlikeliest forms.

**THE FAMILIARS** will be produced for film by Sam Raimi and Sony Animations.

**ADAM JAY EPSTEIN** spent his childhood in Great Neck, New York, while **ANDREW JACOBSON** grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The two met in a parking garage out in Los Angeles. They have been writing together for film and television ever since. This is their first book. Adam Jay Epstein lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Jane; their daughter, Penny; and a black-and-white alley cat who hangs out in their backyard. Andrew Jacobson lives with his wife, Ashley, and their dog, Elvis, four traffic lights away. You can visit **THE FAMILIARS** authors online at [www.thefamiliars.com](http://www.thefamiliars.com).

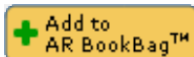
# Accelerated Reader Information

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## The Familiars

Epstein, Adam Jay and Jacobson, Andrew

AR Quiz No. 140349 EN



Three wizards-in-training are kidnapped by an evil queen. Their familiars, Aldwyn the alley cat, Skylar, a know-it-all blue jay, and Gilbert, a tree frog who can see the future, set out on a journey to rescue the boys. The coauthor is Andrew Jacobson.

AR Quiz Availability:

Reading Practice

<b>ATOS Book Level:</b>	6.3
<b>Interest Level:</b>	Middle Grades (MG 4-8)
<b>AR Points:</b>	10.0
<b>Rating:</b>	★★★★
<b>Word Count:</b>	58512
<b>Fiction/Nonfiction</b>	Fiction
<b>Topic - Subtopic:</b>	Adventure-Adventurers; Animals-Cats; Award Winners-SLJ Best Book; Fantasy/Imagination-Magic; Fantasy/Imagination-Wizards/Sorcerers;

**Series:**

# THE FAMILIARS

Students from all over the country have been creating their very own stories about familiars.

Here's how you can too!

## Make Your Own Familiar Writing Game

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1. What kind of animal is your familiar?
2. Is your familiar a boy or a girl?
3. How old is your familiar?
4. What's your familiar's magical talent?
5. What's your familiar's name?
6. Where does your familiar live?
7. What other kinds of animals might live there, too?
8. Is your familiar friends or enemies with that other animal?
9. What makes your familiar sad? What makes your familiar happy?
10. What is the title of your story?

Things to keep in mind after answering these questions and writing your story:

Every familiar should want something. Whether it's to save their wizards, find food or shelter, or escape their enemy, they need to have a goal.

After you have established the hero's goal, you need to have an antagonist, or obstacle, keeping that hero from achieving his or her goal. It could be a person, an element – like a violent storm – or an emotion, like fear.

Another thing you should consider while writing this story is how your familiar's magical talent might be able to help them achieve their goal and overcome the antagonist or obstacle keeping them from achieving it.

Here's an example:

1. What kind of animal is your familiar? An elephant
2. Is your familiar a boy or a girl? A girl
3. How old is your familiar? 12 years old
4. What's your familiar's magical talent? Time travel
5. What's your familiar's name? Black Hawk
6. Where does your familiar live? China
7. What other kinds of animals might live there, too? Pandas
8. Is your familiar friends or enemies with that other animal? Enemies
9. What makes your familiar sad? What makes your familiar happy? It makes our familiar sad when she doesn't have enough peanuts to eat.
10. What is the title of your story? Panda Strikes Back

Now that you've answered these questions, you need to write your story! Remember that your familiar needs a goal, an obstacle to achieving that goal, and a magical talent that will help them overcome that obstacle.

"Panda Strikes Back"

For Black Hawk, an elephant in China, life could be difficult - even when you have the magical power to travel through time. First, China is practically covered with panda bears, and as we all know panda bears and time traveling elephants do not get along. Especially when one of those panda bears eats the last of Black Hawk's peanuts. And you never want to make an elephant hungry. But this was a clever elephant, one that knew how to use her magical talent the way any good familiar should. So she decided to travel through time to a baseball game where she knew there would be stands and vendors filled with peanuts, and she would never go hungry again.

What is Black Hawk's goal? To find peanuts so she wouldn't be hungry.

What's the obstacle to achieving that goal? Her enemy, the panda bear, ate them all.

What talent does she use to overcome that obstacle? She travels through time to a baseball game!

Now you try! And be sure to send your stories to [thefamiliarsbook@gmail.com](mailto:thefamiliarsbook@gmail.com).

## Familiars Scavenger Hunt

Here are 25 trivia questions from our book. After you fill in your answer, the letter that falls in the place of the \* can be placed in the corresponding number of the larger puzzle below. So for the question numbered 1, the letter that lands in the space where the \* is can be filled in where the 1 is in the larger puzzle. Then, the larger puzzle will form yet another clue.

11 5 18 8 15 1 9 7 19 14 23 2 25 16 10 12 20  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ' \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

17 3 22 6 21 4 24 13  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

1. City custodians use a bell-shaped \_\_\_\_\_\*\_\_\_\_\_ to extinguish the candles lining the city's dark alleyways.

**Hint:** Chapter One, Page 2

2. Rumor has it that this frightening bounty hunter's distaste for felines goes back to his childhood.

\_\_\_\_\_\*

**Hint:** Chapter One, Page 11

3. You cannot cast one of these without black lichen.

\*\_\_\_\_\_

**Hint:** Chapter Two, Page 22

4. A simple, but powerful spell created by the great forest communer Horteus Ebekenezer.

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Two, Page 34

5. Marianne's and Dalton's familiars, Gilbert and Skylar, are curious to meet Aldwyn, the newest resident of

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Three, Page 40

6. What does Jack exclaim when he first realizes he can understand his familiar, Aldwyn?

" \_\_\_\_\_ \* \_\_\_\_\_ !"

**Hint:** Chapter Four, Page 62

7. Telekinesis is the ability to \_\_\_\_\_ things with your mind.

**Hint:** Chapter Five, Page 80

8. What do the familiars use to lure Agdaleen from her hut?

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Eight, Page 147

9. Skylar uses a talonful of

\* \_\_\_\_\_

to put out the cottage fire.

**Hint:** Chapter Seven, Page 120

10. Aldwyn uses a

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ \*

to curse the octopot in Agdaleen's lair.

**Hint:** Chapter Eight, Page 155

11. What does Kalstaff cast to protect the three young wizards from Loranela?

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Six, Page 115

12. One of the two components used to conjure a fire spirit.

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter One, Page 2

13. Grimslade chases Aldwyn and Gilbert with the aid of an

\_\_\_\_\_

\* \_\_\_\_\_

**Hint:** Chapter Ten, Page 206

14. On the Bridge of Betrayal, Gilbert is paranoid that Aldwyn and Skylar are going to steal his

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Eleven, Page 223

15. How many brothers and sisters does Gilbert have?

\_\_\_\_\_ \* - \_\_\_\_\_

**Hint:** Chapter Nine, Page 162

16. What is actually responsible for tripping the guard in the Swamps of Daku?

\_\_\_\_\_ \* \_\_\_\_\_

**Hint:** Chapter Nine Page 179

17. Skylar conjures this during the familiars' night in the cave in the Kailasa Mountains to keep them warm.



\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Twelve, Page 232

18. Who (or what) is the great wizard raising the cliffs in the Kailasa cave paintings?

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Twelve, Page 235

19. What does Skylar cast an illusion of to try to fend off the cave troll?

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Twelve, Page 243

20. What is the name of the Great Mountain Alchemist's familiar?

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Thirteen, Page 264

21. Gilbert has an unfortunate run-in with a bunch of what en route to Maidenmere?

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Fourteen, Page 275

22. Who is the leader of the cats of Maidenmere?

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Fourteen, Page 282

23. What nearly gets lost when the familiars cross Torentia Falls?

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Fifteen, Page 294

24. What color are Aldwyn's eyes?

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Two, Page 31

25. Who helps the familiars after they leave behind the buried city of Mukrete?

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

**Hint:** Chapter Nineteen, Page 351

## Familiars Scavenger Hunt (Answer Key)

11 5 18 8 15 1 9 7 19 14 23 2 25 16 10 12 20

A L D W Y N S M A I D E N M E R E

— — — — — ' — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —

17 3 22 6 21 4 24 13

S A N D S I G N

— — — — — — — — — —

Answer: DESERT CACTUS

1. SNUFFERS
2. GRIMSLADE
3. A PROPER HEX
4. VOCARUM ANIMALE
5. STONE RUNLET
6. HOLY DRAGON EGGS!
7. MOVE
8. STINKWEED
9. STORM BERRIES
10. FOUR-LEAF CLOVER
11. ASTRALOCH BUBBLES

12. JUNIPER BERRIES
13. OLFACTION TRACKING SNOUT
14. FRUIT FLIES
15. SIXTY-TWO
16. CHAMELEON CRABS
17. A FIRE SPIRIT
18. A DOG
19. A WOOLY BAT
20. EDAN
21. VAMPIRE LEECHES
22. MALVERN
23. SLEEPING POWDER
24. GREEN
25. SORCERESS EDNA

## The Familiars Trivia Challenge

	<b>Trivia Challenge Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Chapter # where answer can be found</b>
1	What color are Aldwyn's eyes?	Green	2
2	What two components does Kalstaff need to conjure a fire spirit?	Juniper berries and sage leaves	4
3	How many leaves should clover have so that it doesn't cause bad luck?	Four	5
4	What does Kalstaff cast to protect the three young wizards from Loranela?	Astraloch bubbles	6
5	What do the familiars use to lure Agdaleen from her hut?	Stinkweed	8
6	How many brothers and sisters does Gilbert have?	62	9
7	What does Skylar cast an illusion of to try to fend off the cave troll?	A wooly bat	12
8	What family of cats does Aldwyn say he was born to?	Desert Cactus	14
9	What is the last Hydra head to fall in the Sunken Palace?	The black tooth	17
10	What kind of spell does Gilbert use in the final showdown in the dungeon of the Sunken Palace?	A hiccup spell	18
	*Bonus Question * What is the name of Adam's daughter and Andrew's familiar?	Penny and Elvis	Dedication page

## The Familiars: Secrets of the Crown Trivia Quiz

### Quiz Questions:

1. What are the topiaries of Black Ivy Manor shaped like?
  - a. Wizards
  - b. Fruits
  - c. Archers
  - d. Trees
2. How does Stolix punish young wizards?
  - a. She bites them
  - b. She turns them invisible
  - c. She stings them
  - d. She immobilizes them
3. What are Jack, Marianne, and Dalton doing when the magic disappears?
  - a. Flying
  - b. Swimming
  - c. Eating breakfast
  - d. Fighting a dragon
4. Where does the council gather?
  - a. The Lost Quarry
  - b. The New Palace of Bronzhaven
  - c. The Hinterwoods
  - d. Black Ivy Manor
5. Who was the architect for the Shifting Fortress?
  - a. Agorus
  - b. Paksahara
  - c. Kalstaff
  - d. Queen Loranela
6. In what city did Aldwyn live as an alley cat before Jack found him?
  - a. Bronzhaven
  - b. Builtworthy
  - c. Maidenmere
  - d. Bridgetower
7. What does Jack give Aldwyn before the familiars leave for their adventure?
  - a. A lock of his hair
  - b. His sweater
  - c. His pouch
  - d. A poem
8. How long have Jack, Marianne, Dalton, and their familiars studied with Edna?
  - a. 45 minutes
  - b. One day
  - c. One month
  - d. One year
9. How does Aldwyn cut his paw?
  - a. He steps on a thumbtack
  - b. He steps on a shard of skull
  - c. He steps on a broken bottle
  - d. He steps on Gilbert
10. What is the name of Aldwyn's ancestral pride?
  - a. The Rainwalkers
  - b. The Ringworms
  - c. The Whiskers
  - d. The Mooncatchers

## The Familiars: Secrets of the Crown Trivia Quiz Answer Key

1. C
2. D
3. A
4. B
5. A
6. D
7. C
8. C
9. B
10. D