

# Blackout

## A RIF GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

**Themes:** Electricity, Family, Technology, Community

**Book Brief:** One hot summer night, the power goes out. A boy and his family discover that being in the dark is not that bad!

**Author and Illustrator:**

John Rocco

**Content Connections:**

Science, Language  
Arts, Math



## TIME TO READ!

### BEFORE WE READ, LET'S LOOK AT...

**The Cover:** How does the cover illustration give you

clues about what the term “blackout” means?

**The Pictures:** What can you infer from the pictures about the time frame of the blackout? Think about the time of year as well as the time of day.

**Prior Knowledge:** Ask students if anyone has ever been without power for an extended period of time.

Tell them that this story is loosely based on the Northeast Blackout of 2003 when power was out for two days from New York City to Ontario, Canada, because of a software malfunction.

**Vocabulary:** huddled

**Purpose for Reading:** As we read, think about the inferences you can make about people, communities, and reactions to surprising situations.

## WHILE WE READ

### MONITORING COMPREHENSION

- ◆ What time of day does the story take place? What season is it?
- ◆ Can you make a connection to this family's nightly activities and your own?
- ◆ What clues does the author provide to deepen your understanding of the setting?



- ◆ What questions come to mind as you look at the pictures in relation to the time period?
- ◆ Why did the author include a picture of Edison on the family's wall?
- ◆ Do you think this was the boy's first experience with a power blackout? Explain.



## LET'S THINK ABOUT

**Our Purpose:** How did the boy and his family react to the power outage? How did the rest of the community react? What can you *infer* about the boy and his community based on their reactions?

**Extending Our Thinking:** What can cause the power to go out? Brainstorm with a partner. Is it possible to survive for long periods of time without power? Explain your answer. How would this story have been different if the power had gone out in the winter?

### NOTE TO EDUCATORS

- ◆ Extension Activities for Educators also available.

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