

CTYOnline
YOUNG READERS SERIES

“Magic Life Lessons” Syllabus

Please Note: Parents should review the books in each series before deciding on a theme that will be most interesting and appropriate for their child. Students taking “Magic Life Lessons” will read *Matilda* by Roald Dahl, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* by J. K. Rowling, and *Inkheart* by Cornelia Funke.

Note to viewers on the CTY website. Although the glossary words in blue are actual links to a web-based classroom, you cannot access that classroom because it is password protected.

Instructions for Lesson One

1. Begin reading *Matilda* by Roald Dahl, preferably reading in the following reading chunks:

Pages 7-29 (“The Reader of Books;” “Mr Wormwood, the Great Car Dealer”)

Pages 30-65 (“The Hat and the Superglue;” “The Ghost; Arithmetic;” “The Platinum-Blond Man”)

Pages 66-89 (“Miss Honey;” “The Trunchbull”)

Pages 90-116 (“The Parents;” “Throwing the Hammer”)

2. Post ONE of the following two blog assignments (your choice) to the Discussion Blog:

a. Using the explanations of 1st Person [Point of View](#) found in the terms [Narrator](#) and [Point of View](#) in the Glossary, pretend you are a character in *Matilda*, and write a 100-250 word diary account from “your” 1st person [point of view](#) describing some event that occurs in the book. You can be any character other than Matilda herself.

b. Matilda made up the following [limerick](#) about Miss Honey:

The thing we all ask about Jenny
Is, “Surely there cannot be many
Young girls in the place
With so lovely a face?
The answer to that is, “Not any!”

Why should Matilda have all the fun? Using the explanation of a [Limerick](#) found in the Glossary, write 3 of your own 5-line [limericks](#) describing various characters in *Matilda*.

3. Contribute three (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Board in response to any of the following questions. (Remember! At least one of your three thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)

a. **Predict a book by its cover.** Read the front and back covers of *Matilda* and write a short prediction about the book. (If you have seen the movie, please don't provide a spoiler--that is, don't send any post that divulges information intended to be a surprise or plot twist!)

b. **Matilda's reading list.** Have you ever heard of any of the books on Matilda's reading list in the first chapter? Which ones? Do you have any books that you would like Matilda to read? Name one or two books and explain why Matilda would like the books and what she could learn from these books that might help her cope with her situation.

c. **Can reading change the reader?** Matilda seems to believe that if her parents would read some classic books, they would discover that there is more to life than cheating people and watching television. Do you think that reading--and thinking about what you are reading--can change a person? Explain why or why not.

d. **Why do some people try to dominate people who are smarter?** People like Matilda's father and Miss Trunchbull often are mean to or try to dominate people who are smarter than they are--even to the point of calling them "stupid." Why? Why do you think that Mr. Wormwood is so nice to his son Michael?

e. **Compare Matilda's dirty tricks with those of her father.** How are the dirty tricks that Matilda plays on her parents similar to those that Mr. Wormwood plays on his customers? How are they different?

f. **Does revenge help Matilda?** Matilda seems to feel that her "punishments" improve her parents' behavior--at least for a while. How likely do you think it is that such punishments would improve a person's behavior if the person did not know the reason for the punishment? Has Matilda actually helped herself by her acts of revenge against her parents? Explain your opinion.

g. **Knowing right from wrong.** Matilda obviously has never been taught about right and wrong by her parents. So how does she know that her father's chosen way of making money (selling cars that are "lemons" to trusting people) is wrong? Do you think Matilda's parents and Michael know that cheating people is wrong? Do they care? Can good people honestly disagree about what is right and what is wrong? (This is not assuming, of course, that Mr. Wormwood should ever be considered a "good" person!)

h. **Should all children's books contain humor?** Matilda tells Miss Honey at the end of the chapter titled "Miss Honey" that all children's books should contain "funny bits" because children are not so serious as grown-ups and they love to laugh. Do you agree that all books read by children should contain humor? Have you read any good books that did not contain humor?

i. **Miss Trunchbull's rule.** At the end of the chapter titled "Miss Trunchbull, the headmistress tells Miss Honey that she has a rule that all children must remain in their own age groups regardless of ability. Can you discuss the advantages and disadvantages of enforcing such a rule in a school?

Note: You are provided with a list of "50 Mind-Expanding Vocabulary Words from *Matilda*" that you can use to help better understand the book and increase your knowledge of vocabulary words in general.

Crossword puzzles are also included to help reinforce your knowledge of these useful vocabulary words. Working on the crossword puzzles is an optional—not required—activity!

Instructions for Lesson Two:

1. Continue guided reading of *Matilda*, preferably reading in the following reading chunks:

Pages 117-158 (“Bruce Bogtrotter and the Cake;” “Lavender;” “The Weekly Test”)

Pages 159-192 (“The First Miracle;” “The Second Miracle;” “Miss Honey’s Cottage”)

Pages 193-214 (“Miss Honey’s Story;” “The Names;” “The Practice”)

Pages 215-240 (“The Third Miracle;” “A New Home”)

2. Post ONE of the following two blog assignments (your choice) to the Discussion Blog:

a. Using the explanation of 3rd Person **Point of View** found in the terms **Narrator** and **Point of View** in the Glossary, use your imagination and write your own 100-250 word short story in the 3rd person (as an observer, not a participant) about another time that Matilda cleverly tricked her parents or the Trunchbull. (This would be a great opportunity for you to look over the literary terms in the Glossary and include an example or two of a **Hyperbole**, **Alliteration**, **Metaphor**, or **Simile**!)

b. Is *Matilda* a dangerous book that should be banned from school libraries? Using the explanations for the terms found in the Glossary, write a 100-250 word **Editorial** or **Letter to the Editor** for your local (or school) newspaper explaining whether parents, teachers, and principals should fear that children who read *Matilda* will be encouraged to punish grownups by using Superglue, hair dye, or similar acts of revenge.

3. Contribute three (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Board in response to any of the following questions. (Remember! At least one of your three thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)

a. **Advice on dealing with mean, domineering people.** What advice is suggested in *Matilda* about effective ways to deal with mean, domineering people?

b. **Miss Honey and Dylan Thomas. What’s that about?** Why do you think that Miss Honey finds the Dylan Thomas poem on page 184 is so comforting? What do you think the poem is about?

c. **Does practice make perfect?** Matilda tells Miss Honey in the chapter “Miss Honey’s Cottage” on page 181 that her magic is “like anything else, the more you practise it, the easier it gets.” She proves her point in the chapter titled “The Practise” by working on her magic for hours every day until she mastered lifting an object and writing with it even though she was standing far away. In your life, have you ever found that “practice makes perfect” or at least “practice makes better”? Explain.

d. **Which Literary Device?** Great writers such as Roald Dahl often use literary devices. Review the definitions of the literary devices **Hyperbole**, **Onomatopoeia**, **Metaphors**, **Similes**, or **Alliteration** found in the Glossary. For example, which literary device is the author using in the chapter titled “Lavender” on page 137 when he writes that no one at Crunchem Hall would ever admit that the Headmistress was a

less "formidable foe than the famous Frenchman" ? Which literary device might Miss Trunchbull be using when she says at the beginning of the chapter titled "The First Miracle" that "My idea of a perfect school, Miss Honey, is one that has no children in it at all" ? What literary device does the author use when he describes on page 160 that the newt came out "plop" into the glass? What literary device is Miss Honey using when she tells Matilda on page 200 of the chapter "Miss Honey's Story" that being controlled by a very strong person such as Miss Trunchbull turned her "to jelly"? What literary device is Miss Trunchbull using when she expresses her opinion in page 151 of the chapter "The Weekly Test" that small people should be "kept out of sight in boxes like hairpins and buttons"?

e. **Most memorable literary devices.** After you have reviewed the definitions of the literary devices [Hyperbole](#), [Onomatopoeia](#), [Metaphors](#), [Similes](#), or [Alliteration](#) found in the Glossary, reread any 2 or 3 chapters of *Matilda* and notice the author's use of these literary devices. Finally, give a couple of examples of literary devices that you think most represent Dahl's style or that you consider most memorable. Would you enjoy Dahl's books as much if he did not use literary devices?

Note: You are provided with a list of "50 Mind-Expanding Vocabulary Words from *Matilda*" that you can use to help better understand the book and increase your knowledge of vocabulary words in general. Crossword puzzles are also included to help reinforce your knowledge of these useful vocabulary words. Working on the crossword puzzles is an optional—not required—activity!

Instructions for Lesson Three:

1. Begin guided reading of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* by J. K. Rowling, preferably reading in the following reading chunks:

Pages 1-30 ("Owl Post;" "Aunt Marge's Big Mistake")

Pages 31-68 ("The Knight Bus;" "The Leaky Cauldron")

Pages 69-95 ("The Dementor")

Pages 96-140 ("Talons and Tea Leaves;" "The Boggart in the Wardrobe")

2. Post ONE of the following two blog assignments (your choice) to the Discussion Blog:

a. In the world of *Harry Potter*, a **HOWLER** is a message that is delivered to someone with whom the sender is really angry (see further details in Glossary). Write a 100-250 word **Howler** from the perspective of some character in *Harry Potter* to another character that expresses both characters' traits (personality) and motivations. (No actual cursing. Creative pejoratives, such as "nitwit," or "blast-ended scroot," are expected, but **symbols** of angry language such as "#\$@""* show a lack of imagination and should be used sparingly!)

b. Professor Snape is cruel and insulting to many of his students, such as Neville Longbottom. Pretend that you are Neville Longbottom's grandmother or some other student's close relative and write a 100-250 word letter of complaint to Headmaster Dumbledore expressing your thoughts about how Professor Snape treats his students.

3. Contribute three (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Board in response to any of the following questions. (Remember! At least one of your three thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)

a. **Predict a book by its cover.** Read the front and back covers of *Harry Potter* and write a short prediction about the book. (If you have seen the movie, please don't provide a spoiler--that is, don't send any post that divulges information intended to be a surprise or plot twist!)

b. **Harry's setting vs. Matilda's setting.** After reviewing definition of **Setting** in the Glossary, describe the **setting** in *Harry Potter*, and explain whether you think the **setting** is more important in *Harry Potter* than in *Matilda*.

c. **Compare Harry and Matilda.** Read the first two chapters of *Harry Potter* and notice the similarities between Harry and Matilda. In particular, how are both children treated by the grownups who are supposed to take care of them? Why do you think the grownups seem so fond of Michael (Matilda's brother) and Dudley (Harry's cousin)? Do the authors like Michael and Dudley? Examine the texts for specific examples of how the authors describe Michael and Dudley. Review the definition of **Dramatic Foil** found in the Glossary, and explain how Michael and Dudley serve in this capacity.

d. **Make an inference about Harry's bangs.** In the middle of page 39, Harry "nervously flattened his bangs down again." Why? What **Inference** (see Glossary) does the author want the reader to figure out?

e. **Is Snape a realistic character?** Do you think that Professor Snape's behavior of being cruel to some students and overly partial toward other students is a realistic portrayal of teachers or an exaggeration? Do you consider Miss Trunchbull from *Matilda* or Professor Snape to be the more believable character? Explain your answers.

Note: You are provided with a list of "50 Mind-Expanding Vocabulary Words from *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*" that you can use to help better understand the book and increase your knowledge of vocabulary words in general. Crossword puzzles are also included to help reinforce your knowledge of these useful vocabulary words. Working on the crossword puzzles is an optional—not required—activity!

Instructions for Lesson Four:

1. Continue reading *Harry Potter*, preferably reading in the following reading chunks:

Pages 141-182 ("Flight of the Fat Lady;" "Grim Defeat")

Pages 183-210 ("The Marauder's Map")

Pages 211-251 ("The Firebolt;" "The Patronus")

Pages 252-290 ("Gryffindor Versus Ravenclaw;" "Snape's Grudge")

2. Post ONE of the following three blog assignment (your choice) to the Discussion Blog:

a. Imagine that Harry had been caught during one of his visits to Hogsmeade. Pretend you are Harry and write a 100-250 word letter of apology and explanation to Headmaster Dumbledore, Professor McGonagall, or Professor Lupin.

b. Quidditch is an important part of Harry's life at Hogwarts. Author J. K. Rowling explains the rules of Quidditch in great detail. Can you invent a new sport (either real or magical)? Write a 100-250 word description of the rules and the basic strategy.

c. In recent years, the Harry Potter books have often been included in the list of most banned books, putting author J.K. Rowling in the company of authors Harper Lee (*To Kill a Mockingbird*) and Mark Twain (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*). One mother in Georgia, Laura Mallory, has been fighting to have the Harry Potter series banned from school libraries because she believes the books are an evil attempt to indoctrinate children in Wicca religion. Ms. Mallory thinks the books offend her beliefs and she blames them for school shootings. She admitted that she has not read the Harry Potter series because she is too busy and she thinks it would be hypocritical to read something with which she disagrees. Board of Education attorney Victoria Sweeney responded that if schools were to remove all books containing reference to witches, they would have to ban *The Wizard of Oz*, *Cinderella*, and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Sweeney argued that the Harry Potter books do not support any particular religion but present instead universal themes of friendship and overcoming adversity. What do you think? Write a 100-250 word letter to the Board of Education in Georgia giving your opinion about whether the Harry Potter books should be banned from schools.

3. Contribute three (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Board in response to any of the following questions. (Remember! At least one of your three thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)

a. **Loyalty vs. doing the right thing.** What can a reader learn from Hermione as to what loyalty one owes to a friend? Do you have to be willing to withstand a friend's disapproval if you do something you think right and s/he disagrees? Do you think Hermione was right to tell Prof. McGonagall about the Firebolt given by an unknown donor? Why or why not?

b. **Some symbols in Harry Potter.** Review the definition of **Symbol** found in Glossary. How does the author use "boggarts" and "dementors" as **symbols** for fears, anxiety, and depression? Professor Lupin teaches his class to use laughter in Harry Potter to defeat "boggarts" and teaches Harry Potter to use a "Patronus" to overcome the "Dementor's kiss." What could you use as a "Patronus" substitute when you are sad? Music? Talking to a friend? What works for you? Do you think that the author's use of "boggarts" and "dementors" is an interesting use of **symbolism**? What do you think about the author's suggestions about how to defeat the "boggarts" (fears and anxiety) and "dementors" (depression and sadness)

c. **Make an inference about Professor McGonagall.** In the bottom of page 207, Professor McGonagall "sounded as though she had a sudden head cold." Why? What **Inference** (see Glossary) does the author want the reader to figure out?

d. **Literary devices in Harry Potter.** Review the terms in the Glossary and provide some examples of **Flashbacks**, **Imagery**, and **Personification** in Harry Potter so far. Can you provide some examples of **Hyperboles**, **Onomatopoeia**, **Metaphors**, or **Similes**? Give examples of literary devices that you think most represent J. K. Rowling's style or that you consider most memorable.

e. **What's your favorite literary device?** Do you have a favorite literary device? Explain why.

Note: You are provided with a list of “50 Mind-Expanding Vocabulary Words from *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*” that you can use to help better understand the book and increase your knowledge of vocabulary words in general. Crossword puzzles are also included to help reinforce your knowledge of these useful vocabulary words. Working on the crossword puzzles is an optional—not required—activity!

Instructions for Lesson Five:

1. Finish guided reading of *Harry Potter*, preferably reading in the following reading chunks:

Pages 291-331 (“The Quidditch Final;” “Professor Trelawney’s Prediction”)

Pages 332-377 (“Cat, Rat, and Dog; Mooney, Wormtail, Padfoot, and Prongs; The Servant of Lord Voldemort”)

Pages 378-415 (“The Dementor’s Kiss; Hermione’s Secret”)

Pages 416-435 (“Owl Post Again”)

2. Post ONE of the following two blog assignments (your choice) to the Discussion Blog:

a. Pretend the author had not written pages 428-435. Now use your imagination and write your own 100-250 word different ending to this Harry Potter book. Does Harry have to return to live with the Dursleys? Be sure to write in the 3rd person [Point of View](#) (as an observer, not a participant).

b. Write a literary “rap.” Choose a character from either *Matilda* or *Harry Potter* and write a 12-20 line rhyming description of the character or the character’s actions during a specific event. You may do this in the form of three or four [Limericks](#) (see Glossary) with an AABBA Rhyme Scheme (see Glossary) or a 16-20 line “rap” using any Rhyme Scheme of your choice (AABB is particularly easy).

3. Contribute three (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Board in response to any of the following questions. (Remember! At least one of your three thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)

a. **Why didn't the Dementor kiss Harry?** What do you think stopped the Dementor from giving Harry Potter the Dementor’s kiss? Can you make any predictions to explain what happened (or did not happen)?

b. **Harry's decisions about Sirius and Scabbers.** Did you respect Harry’s decision about whether to kill Sirius Black? What about Harry’s treatment of “Scabbers”?

c. **Is the Ministry of Magic fair?** Do you think that the Buckbeak’s appeal by the Ministry of Magic was fair? What about the Ministry’s treatment of Sirius Black? Cite examples from the text to support your position.

d. **Lupin's lycanthropy- Dangerous?** In the early 1980’s, many children who were diagnosed with AIDS were infected when they were mistakenly given tainted blood during medically necessary blood transfusions. During that period of time, there was no treatment for AIDS, and many people refused to allow children with AIDS to attend schools and otherwise socialize with other children. Some people

believe the author uses Professor Lupin’s condition of being a werewolf (see *Harry Potter*, 352) to comment about how society sometimes blames and isolates innocent victims. Do you think that Professor Lupin is right in concluding that he must leave a career he loves—even though his condition can be treated with medication—because some parents would still consider him to be dangerous? Would you be willing to go to school with a werewolf whose condition was controlled by medication?

e. **Make an inference about Professor Lupin.** In page 424, “Lupin shook his head and did not speak.” Why? What **Inference** (see Glossary) does the author want the reader to figure out?

Note: You are provided with a list of “50 Mind-Expanding Vocabulary Words from *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*” that you can use to help better understand the book and increase your knowledge of vocabulary words in general. Crossword puzzles are also included to help reinforce your knowledge of these useful vocabulary words. Working on the crossword puzzles is an optional—not required—activity!

Instructions for Lesson Six:

1. Begin guided reading of *Inkheart* by Cornelia Funke, preferably reading in the following reading chunks:

Pages 1-29 (Chapters 1 - 3)

Pages 30-71 (Chapters 4 - 6)

Pages 72-100 (Chapters 7 - 11)

Pages 101-130 (Chapters 12 - 14)

2. Post ONE of the following two blog assignments (your choice) to the Discussion Blog:

a. *Inkheart* contains many characters who find books to be an important source of comfort and inspiration. In Chapter 2 alone, there are three different quotations in praise of books:

1. “What do these children do without storybooks?” Naftali asked. And Reb Zebulun replied: “They have to make do. Storybooks aren’t bread. You can live without them.” “I couldn’t live without them,” Naftali said (Isaac Bashevis Singer, *Naftali the Storyteller and His Horse, Sus* quoted in *Inkheart*, 12)

2. “If you take a book with you on a journey,” Mo had said when he put the first one in her box, “an odd thing happens: The book begins collecting your memories. And forever after you have only to open that book to be back where you first read it. It will all come into your mind with the very first words: the sights you saw in that place, what it smelled like, the ice cream you ate while you were reading it... yes, books are like flypaper—memories cling to the printed page better than anything else” (Cornelia Funke, *Inkheart*, 15).

3. “...There was another reason why Meggie took her books whenever they went away. They were her home when she was somewhere strange. They were familiar voices, friends that never quarreled with her, clever, powerful friends—daring and knowledgeable, tried and tested adventurers who had traveled far and wide. Her books cheered her up when she was sad and kept her from being bored” (Cornelia Funke, *Inkheart*, 15-6).

How important are books to you? Write a 100-250 word explanation of how important (or unimportant)

books are to you. Do you think that any or all of these three quotations apply in your own life? How? Do you think that it is possible to read too much?

b. Write a 100 - 250 word description of Elinor and her attitude toward her niece Meggie, citing incidents from the first fourteen chapters. Is there any explanation given in the text for why Elinor seems to value books more than people? Name which character in *Harry Potter* does Elinor remind you of and why. If you had to make a prediction, would you guess that Elinor will become more like Miss Trunchbull or Miss Honey. Why?

3. Contribute three (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Board in response to any of the following questions. (Remember! At least one of your three thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)

a. **What allusions and epigraphs in *Inkheart* have caught your interest?** There are many allusions (see Glossary) to other stories in *Inkheart*. The author provides an epigraph from other books at the beginning of each chapter. The epigraph frequently sets the tone for the events that follow. Mo, Meggie, Elinor, and Fenoglio frequently refer to books by title, by characters, events, or even by description. As you are reading Chapters 1-14, notice the many allusions and comment about specific allusions you recognize or that intrigue you. For example, do you recognize the title, character name, event, or description? Have you read the story that the allusion is about? If not, based on the allusion (including the epigraphs that precede each chapter), would you like to read the story to which the allusion refers? [This question will be repeated at the end of each lesson, so you may want to make special notice of the allusions you notice throughout this book!]

b. **What does poem on page 8 mean?** In Chapter 1, page 8, Meggie says that she knows what the poem on that page means. What do you think it means?

c. **Why doesn't Elinor have books in her kitchen?** Why do you think Elinor has books everywhere except in the kitchen? What about the kitchen makes it more dangerous for her books than the other rooms in the house?

d. **Which literary devices and so forth?** Review the definitions of Simile, Metaphor, Hyperbole, and Personification in the Glossary, and decide which term(s) apply to this sentence found in Chapter 6, page 67: "The fire licked his skin like something living, a darting, burning creature that he had befriended, a creature that caressed him and danced for him and drove the night away." Can you find any other literary devices in first 7 chapters? (Chapter 7 contains a lot of literary devices for a short chapter!) Do these literary devices add to your appreciation of a book?

e. **Why does Dustfinger call himself a coward?** Re-read the last two pages of Chapter 11. Why is Dustfinger calling himself a coward? What information is it that Dustfinger decides "he dare not look?" When Dustfinger asks, "Who wants to know the end of a story in advance?" what story is he referring to? If you were in his position, would you make another choice?

Note: You are provided with a list of "50 Mind-Expanding Vocabulary Words from *Inkheart*" that you can use to help better understand the book and increase your knowledge of vocabulary words in general. Crossword puzzles are also included to help reinforce your knowledge of these useful vocabulary words. Working on the crossword puzzles is an optional—not required—activity.

Instructions for Lesson Seven:

1. Continue guided reading of *Inkheart*, preferably reading in the following reading chunks:

Pages 131 - 172 (Chapters 15 -17)

Pages 173 - 203 (Chapters 18 and 19)

Pages 204 - 226 (Chapters 20 and 21)

Pages 227 - 259 (Chapters 22 - 24)

2. Post ONE of the following two blog assignments (your choice) to the Discussion Blog:

a. At the end of Chapter 19 of *Inkheart*, Meggie finds herself wishing that she could “bring them out of books, touch them, all those characters, all those wonderful characters. I want them to come out of the pages and sit beside me, I want them to smile at me, I want, I want, I want.” Think about what you would do if you had this “gift” and could make characters from books come alive so you could talk with them. Which three to five characters (from which books) would want to meet first? Would you want to meet with them individually or do you think that they would enjoy meeting each other? Once you can answer these questions, use the explanations of 1st Person [Point of View](#) found in the terms [Narrator](#) and [Point of View](#) in the Glossary and write a 100-250 word diary account from "your" 1st person [point of view](#) describing a time when three to five literary characters came alive and talked with you. In your diary account it might be interesting to have each of your characters decide whether they would prefer to stay in your world or go back to their own.

b. What does the reader know about Dustfinger so far? Describe everything that you know about Dustfinger’s personality and life history in the first 24 chapters of the book. Is there anything about him that puzzles you? Can you make any predictions about what he might do further along in the book? Do you expect him to be more of a hero or a villain? Describe what you think he would consider a “happy ending” to the situation in which he finds himself. (Your total word count should be between 100-250 words.)

3. Contribute three (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Board in response to any of the following questions. (Remember! At least one of your three thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)

a. **Secrets vs. "whole truth"?** In the end of Chapter 15, on page 135, Mo decides that it is time to tell Meggie the “whole truth,” even though he would rather wait until she is a little older. Meggie replies that she is 12 years old and asks, “Why do grown-ups think it’s easier for children to bear secrets than the truth? Don’t they know about the horror stories we imagine to explain the secrets?” List some of the different secrets that have been kept from Meggie by Mo, Elinor, and Dustfinger since the beginning of the book. For each of the secrets you list, decide whether you think Meggie could have handled the “whole truth” when she was younger.

b. **Do you feel sorry for Dustfinger?** On page 145 of Chapter 16, Meggie asks her father whether he still feels sorry for Dustfinger. Mo responds that he did feel sorry for him sometimes. Do you? Explain why or why not, giving specific examples of Dustfinger’s behavior and activities that helped you to form your opinion.

c. **Meggie is ashamed.** At the end of Chapter 19, on page 203, Meggie is ashamed of her thoughts. What does she wish she could do? Do you think Meggie should be ashamed? Why or why not?

d. **"New pair of feet?"** On page 216 in Chapter 21, what do you think Elinor means when she says she has "to buy a new pair of feet?" Can you figure out whether her statement is an example of a [simile](#), [hyperbole](#), [alliteration](#), or onomatopoeia?

e. **Which world?** On page 242-243 of Chapter 23, Dustfinger compares his world with Mo's and Meggie's world. Based on his description and your knowledge of the world in which you live, which do you think is more dangerous? Why? In which world would you rather live?

f. **How does your story end?** At the bottom of page 243 in Chapter 23, Dustfinger asks, "Do you know how your story ends?" Why are the words "you" and "your" in italics? That is, how do the italics change the meaning of the question? If you had the opportunity to read a book describing your life, would you want to know how your story ends?

g. **Where did the bird come from?** At the end of Chapter 23, Mo opens a window to let a bird escape. Where did the bird come from? Explain fully.

h. **More questions about allusions and epigraphs.** As you are reading Chapters 15-24, notice each [allusion](#) (see Glossary) and comment about specific [allusions](#) you recognize or that intrigue you. For example, do you recognize the title, character name, event, or description? Have you read the story that the [allusion](#) is about? If not, based on the [allusion](#) (or the [epigraphs](#) that precede each chapter), would you like to read the story to which the [allusion](#) or [epigraph](#) refers?

Note: You are provided with a list of "50 Mind-Expanding Vocabulary Words from *Inkheart*" that you can use to help better understand the book and increase your knowledge of vocabulary words in general. Crossword puzzles are also included to help reinforce your knowledge of these useful vocabulary words. Working on the crossword puzzles is an optional—not required—activity.

Instructions for Lesson Eight:

1. Continue guided reading of *Inkheart*, preferably reading in the following reading chunks:

Pages 260 - 287 (Chapters 25 - 29)

Pages 288 - 322 (Chapters 30 - 32)

Pages 323 - 352 (Chapters 33 - 36)

Pages 353 - 387 (Chapters 37 - 41)

2. Post ONE of the following two blog assignments (your choice) to the Discussion Blog:

a. In *Harry Potter*, witches and wizards share their world with exotic creatures such as elves, unicorns, giants, and werewolves. Those who were especially experienced in magic could even transform into animals; In *Inkheart*, Dustfinger and Capricorn came from a world with fairies, trolls, and glass men. Imagine that you live in a world with exotic creatures and are able to transform into an animal who can communicate with other animals. Write a 100-250 word 1st person story or diary account about your adventure and end with a description of what you learned from your experience.

b. Pretend you are a talk show host and interview Dustfinger, Capricorn, and at least one other character from *Inkheart* on your show. Remember that you need to write both your questions and their answers. (Total word count should be between 100-250 words).

3. Contribute three (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Board in response to any of the following questions. (Remember! At least one of your three thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)

a. **Happy endings?** On page 262 of Chapter 25, Fenoglio snorted scornfully when Meggie claimed that she liked exciting stories “only if they have happy endings.” What about you? Do you prefer stories with happy endings? Can you enjoy a book with an “unhappy” ending?

b. **Dangerous Friends.** On page 309 of Chapter 31, “fire” is said both to be dangerous and a friend. Discuss some other things that could be classified as a “dangerous friend?”

c. **"Farid trotted after him."** The last words of Chapter 31 are “...Farid trotted after him.” Farid is a boy. Why do you think the author used the word “trotted” to describe what Farid did? What impression is the author trying to give?

d. **Easy to persuade children that they are worthless?** On page 338 of Chapter 34, Fenoglio says that “it’s terribly easy to persuade children that they are worthless.” Do you agree with him? Why would this be especially true about children?

e. **"Take me away..."** On page 362 in Chapter 38, to whom is Meggie speaking when she whispers, “Take me away from here...please take me away from here.” Is her plea successful?

f. **Do you recognize any allusions or epigraphs?** As you are reading Chapters 25-41, notice each **allusion** (see Glossary) and comment about specific **allusions** you recognize or that intrigue you. For example, do you recognize the title, character name, event, or description? Have you read the story that the **allusion** is about? If not, based on the **allusion** (or the **epigraphs** that precede each chapter), would you like to read the story to which the **allusion** or **epigraph** refers?

Note: You are provided with a list of “50 Mind-Expanding Vocabulary Words from *Inkheart*” that you can use to help better understand the book and increase your knowledge of vocabulary words in general. Crossword puzzles are also included to help reinforce your knowledge of these useful vocabulary words. Working on the crossword puzzles is an optional—not required—activity.

Instructions for Lesson Nine:

1. Finish reading *Inkheart*, preferably reading in the following reading chunks:

Pages 388 - 423 (Chapters 42 - 46)

Pages 424 - 456 (Chapters 47 - 49)

Pages 457 - 499 (Chapters 50 - 55)

Pages 500 - 534 (Chapters 56 - 59)

2. Post ONE of the following two blog assignments (your choice) to the Discussion Blog:

- a. Pretend you are a reporter and write a 150-250 word article for the local newspaper describing some event that took place in *Inkheart*. Be sure to answer the reporter's questions: who, what, where, when, and how.
- b. Pretend you are Meggie's mother and write a 150-250 word letter to Meggie explaining how much you missed your daughter and husband during the past 9 years. Be sure to explain how you came to escape from the book back into the "real world," and what had stopped you from returning to your family.

3. Contribute three (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Board in response to any of the following questions. (Remember! At least one of your three thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)

- a. **Basta's superstitions.** On page 399 of Chapter 42, Fenoglio says that they will play on Basta's superstitions. Describe some of Basta's superstitions that are mentioned in the book.
- b. **Mo's treatment of Farid.** In Chapter 44, explain what Farid finds so different about how Mo treats him.
- c. **Nothing is more powerful than the written word.** On page 415 of Chapter 45, Fenoglio says that nothing is more powerful, for both good and evil, than the written word. Do you agree with him? Why or why not?
- d. **"Tonight has aged me by 10 years."** What do you think Elinor means on page 428 of Chapter 47 when she says that "tonight has aged me by 10 years"? Review the definitions of [Simile](#), [Metaphor](#), [Hyperbole](#), and [Personification](#) in the Glossary, and explain which term(s) apply to her statement.
- e. **Questions about Mortola.** On page 438 of Chapter 48, why do you think Mortola doesn't want people to know that she is Capricorn's mother? If Mortola did not arrive at the same time that Capricorn, Dustfinger, and Basta first appeared in Mo's livingroom, how do you explain that she is now living in Meggie and Mo's world?
- f. **Should the story end after Chapter 57?** To some readers, page 519 feels like an ending. After finishing Chapters 58 and 59, explain whether you think the author Cornelia Funke should have ended the book at the end of Chapter 57. What effect does the addition of Chapters 58 and 59 have on the story?
- g. **Writing as a kind of magic.** The very last sentence of the book ends with Mo's observation that writing stories is a kind of magic. Do you agree? Why or why not?
- h. **Allusions and epigraphs.** As you are reading Chapters 42-59, notice each [allusion](#) (see Glossary) and comment about specific [allusions](#) you recognize or that intrigue you. For example, do you recognize any title, character name, event, or description? Have you read the story that the [allusion](#) is about? If not, based on the [allusion](#) (or the [epigraphs](#) that precede each chapter), would you like to read the story to which the [allusion](#) or [epigraph](#) refers?

Note: You are provided with a list of “50 Mind-Expanding Vocabulary Words from *Inkheart*” that you can use to help better understand *Inkheart* and increase your knowledge of vocabulary words in general. Crossword puzzles are also included to help reinforce your knowledge of these useful vocabulary words. Working on the crossword puzzles is an optional—not required—activity.

Instructions for Lesson Ten

- 1. Post ONE of the summary blog assignments, which ask you to think about, discuss, and compare all three books read.**
- 2. Contribute three (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Board in response to any of the listed summary topics, which ask you to think about and discuss all three books read. (Remember! At least one of these three thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)**

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