



Deltora Quest: The Forests of Silence Teaching Notes

BEGINNING THE BOOK

Display the cover.

What sort of story (genre) do you think this is going to be?

From a cover/illustration such as this one, what might you expect to happen in the story?

Do you think you would enjoy a book of this kind? Why?

What does the decorative frame make you feel? What does it remind you of?

Turn to the back cover.

This also has a frame. What do you see there? Can you identify anything?

The blurb gives some information about the book. Read to the class. Now read again and identify the adjectives used: **evil** Shadow Lord, **magic** belt, **great** and **mysterious** power, **dark**, **terrible** places, **unlikely** companions, **perilous** quest, **sinister** Forests of Silence, **gripping** Deltora Quest series. What effect are these adjectives trying to achieve with the reader?

Look at the spine. What is unusual about this spine? After reading the blurb, what do you think it is that is pictured on the spine?

Open up to the first page. Explain this is the half-title page. Only the title of a book goes on a half-title page.

The next double-page spread shows a map: The Land of Deltora. Display to class. Perhaps a photocopy enlargement could be used. Again, the material is copyright and due recognition should be made.

Do the students like maps in their books? What do maps suggest to the students? What can be guessed from this map?

The next double-page spread has the names of the eight books in the series on the left-hand page. Read out the titles. Does anyone in the class notice anything? Compare the titles with the map.

The right-hand page is the title page. A title page should include the title, the name of the author, and the name of the publisher. Which is which?

The next page is the imprint page. Consider the information supplied here.

Following this is the contents page. What can be noticed about the contents? It is hoped that students will identify that the book is in two parts.

CHAPTER ONE

Reading the Book

It is suggested that the chapter be read uninterrupted. However, there is a coded message as part of the text. It would be of interest to stop at this message, a copy of which could be available for the class to try to decode. If they have not solved it in a short time, continue reading until the code secret is revealed. Now let the class decipher the message. Continue the reading to the end of the chapter.

As an alternative to the teacher reading the story, there is a version on CD published by ABC Audio. The reading is by Ron Haddrick and is unabridged.

Synopsis/Summary

Endeavour to express what has happened in the chapter by using only one sentence. It would, at this stage, be best to carry out this activity with the class as a whole, taking their suggestions, and letting them modify, alter, and mould the one sentence until it gains a class approval. This activity should be carried out at the end of each chapter so that at the conclusion of the book, the students will have a chapter-by-chapter synopsis of the book.

There are several benefits to be gained from an activity of this type: students learn compression of ideas and complex sentence structure. It is suggested that this method is continued when students move onto group or individual readings.

Codes

The secret code which Jarred and Endon use is a simple one. Students could make up similar codes and try decoding one another's messages.

Jarred and Endon use the insertion of EL to make their code difficult to read. What happens when a word in the actual message ends or begins with EL?

Worksheet 1 is an exercise based upon Jarred and Endon's code.

Characters

There is a large cast of characters spread over the Deltora Quest series. The major characters continue from book to book. Lesser characters, though they appear predominantly in one of the books, frequently reappear in others. It could, therefore, be a good idea to begin creating a character summary list. This would need modification as the story continues and as the readers learn more about the characters. There is a worksheet (Worksheet 4) for this activity. The chart gives space for the character's name, followed by space for a description, for example: PRANDINE, the king's chief advisor. There is then a further space for information about the character. The final space is to indicate in which book/books the character appears. A number (or numbers, as subsequent books are read) would be sufficient for this column.

For Chapter One, it is recommended that the class make character summaries for Jarrad, Endon and Prandine.

Symbols

The stones of the Deltora Belt all symbolise some attribute: topaz – faithfulness; amethyst – truth; diamond – purity; emerald – honour; ruby – happiness; opal – hope.

Examine the symbolism attached to various items:

birds, eg dove – peace; owl – wisdom.

flowers, eg rose – love; wattle – Australia. What are the floral emblems for each of the Australian states?

animals, eg dog – faithfulness; donkey – stubbornness.

Examine the symbols that countries adopt, eg eagle – USA. What is the significance of the symbols that are chosen?

Rules

Rules form a large part of the early chapters in the book. The castle of Del works entirely by rules, many of which the two boys, Jarred and Endon, do not understand the reason for, for example, the manner in which their hair is braided.

Hold a class discussion on rules. Are they necessary? What would it be like without rules? Are there rules that do not work? When do rules work and when don't they?

There is a quiz suggested for an activity upon completion of the book. It could be an interesting activity for the class to make up the rules for running such a quiz.

Sentence modelling

The following sentence is an interesting one on which to model student variations. Read the sentence to the class. Indicate the structure. Ask students to create their own sentences using the model.

Never again would his deep, booming voice be heard in the hallways of the palace. Never again would he sit laughing in the feasting hall.

Structure: Never again would . . . Never again would . . . (p1)

Variations: Never again could . . . /Once more . . . /Every time . . .

Cause and effect

What is the effect of King Alton's death on Jarred? What is the effect of King Alton's death on Endon?

What caused Jarred to decide to go to the library to do some study?

Excitement graph

Begin to use a graph to record the level of excitement. The graph (Worksheet 2) has space for an entry for each chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

Prediction

At the end of the chapter ask 'Whose voice do you think it was that cut through the air like steel?'

Discussion

Can rules be bad? When? What can be done when a rule is bad or wrong?

What makes Jarred believe that Endon should wear the belt all the time?

CHAPTER THREE

Prepare a copy of the coded message in this chapter for showing to the students to decode when this part of the story is reached. Remember copyright.

Discussion

What was it that surprised Jarred once he escaped the palace?

Characterisation

What do you think about the character of Jarred/Endon/Prandine?

CHAPTER FOUR

Vocabulary

The author uses a number of words that are all associated with the blacksmith's shop. What words can be remembered?

blacksmith, forge, fire, hammer, red-hot, metal, horseshoe, tongs, iron, steel, swords, shields, axes, blades.

Worksheet 5 contains an exercise based upon these words.

Characters

Add Crian and Anna to the character summary sheet.

Cause and effect

What caused the people of Del to dislike their king?

Letter writing

The students could write a letter to the king trying to persuade him to lessen the suffering of the people of Del. See Worksheet 6.

Compare and contrast

What was life like inside the palace compared with life outside the palace?

CHAPTER FIVE

Make a copy of the message that Jarred finds so that it can be shown to the class at the appropriate moment in the story reading. Remember copyright.

Note the gap of seven years in the story line.

Characters

Add the Ak-Baba to the character summary sheet.

CHAPTER SIX

Characters

Add Sharn and Min to the character summary sheet.

Drawing conclusions

What has happened to the Belt? The author gives some hints. What are they?

CHAPTER SEVEN

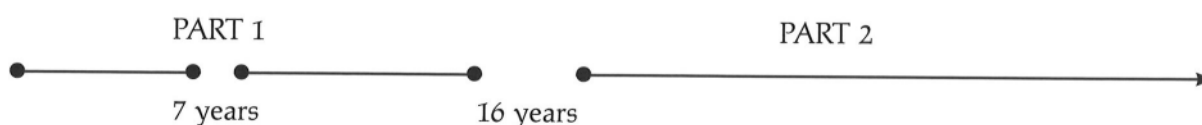
Characterisation

What do you think of Sharn?

CHAPTER EIGHT

Story elements

Note that there are time gaps in the story. There is a seven-year gap in Part I and there is a 16-year gap between Part I and Part II. This structure could be indicated by a line such as the following:



Possibly students could construct a similar line in the manner of a timeline and mark various points along it where incidents occur. The gap could include a note to indicate how much time has gone by.

Main idea and details

Sixteen years have gone by between Part I and Part II. What has happened during the 16 years?

Characters

Add Lief to the character summary sheet.

CHAPTER NINE

Structure

Novels generally have a problem for the main character or characters to solve. The problem has finally arrived in this novel. What is it? Do we have a main character? Who does it appear to be? The author has taken a long while – over half of the book – to reveal the problem and the main character. Why?

Characters

Add Barda to the character summary sheet.

CHAPTER TEN

Characterisation

Have readers' impressions altered in regard to Barda? What is Barda really like? Will Lief and Barda get on well together?

Plot

The author keeps on giving readers new surprises. It was a surprise to find out about Barda. What other surprises have you been given up to now?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Research

Comparisons have been made of the Wenn with wasps and spiders paralysing victims. Research creatures that use this technique to immobilise their prey.

Characters

Fantasy novels often have monsters or unusual creatures in them. From the information in the novel make creature sheets for the Wenn and the Wennbar. See Worksheet 7.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Characters

Add Filli, Kree and Jasmine to the character summary sheets.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Characterisation

What do the students think about Jasmine? What about the Wennbar?

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Characters

Add Gori to the character summary sheets.

Sentence modelling

The following sentence is an interesting one on which to model student variations. Read the sentence to the class. Indicate the structure. Ask students to create their own sentences using the model.

Not a bird called. Not an insect moved. Even the trees and vines through which they had climbed were still. (p100)

Structure: Not a . . . Not a . . . Even the . . . and . . . were . . .

CHAPTERS FIFTEEN/SIXTEEN

At this stage in the book there are no new characters and it will be beneficial to just let the book speak for itself.

AT THE BOOK'S CONCLUSION

Research

Research work could be done on the topaz. A worksheet (9) is included which could help students carry out this work.

Discussion

Hold a discussion to let the students discuss their feelings about the novel. Ensure that the questions are open-ended, that the students have an opportunity to say what they feel rather than there be 'correct' closed answers. Possible questions: What would you tell friends about the book? What would you deliberately not tell them? What are the parts of the story that you enjoyed the most? Were you able to see the story in your imagination? What parts did you see most clearly? If you had read the story before were there any parts that seemed a little different this time around? Are there any characters that particularly interest you? Why? Are the monsters characters in the story?

After the discussion students could fill in a novel assessment sheet (Worksheet 8).

Reward

A bookmark in the form of the Belt of Deltora could be handed out to students at the end of the unit of work on Book 1. Award the particular stone for the first section of the belt. As subsequent units of work are completed, the next stone could be handed out. Sheets of metallic papers can be cut up to make appropriate 'stones' for the awards. Worksheet 3 could be used for this purpose.

Quiz

At the completion of the novel hold a big class quiz. Divide the class into teams and run the session like a TV quiz show. The quizmaster would deliver one question to each team in turn, and, in turn, each member of the team would have a chance to answer a question. However, if the person answering the question is unsure of the answer, they could be permitted to ask one other team member for help.

It is suggested that each team prepares 20 questions. If each question is prepared on a separate card, they can then all be mixed and compiled into one big quiz. This set of cards could be used by the quiz master. Having the students prepare quiz questions is a good way to revise the novel and also to see how much the students have followed the story.

An extra question could be a coded message that the teacher prepares. A copy could be handed to each team and the first team to decode it correctly would gain the points.

A good source for questions is *The Ultimate Deltora Quiz Book*.

Name _____

☞ MONSTER RIDDLES ☞

With the same sort of code as the one that Jarred and Endon used, try to decipher these monster riddles.

The first two riddles use the exact same two letters in the code as Jarred and Endon's riddle. The remaining riddles use different pairs of letters.

1. What does a monster call people with skateboards?

MEACL LELSO OELNEL WHELEELELS.

2. What do monsters like to do at weddings?

TELOAELS TTELHE BELRIELDEA NELDEL GRELOELOM.

3. How many monsters can you fit in a car?

**IBA DOBAN'T BAKNBAO WBABUBAT BAYO UBA CABANF IBAT ABBA OUTBA
TEBANBA CABARS IBANA BAMONBASTEBAR.**

4. What happened to the monster that had a strawberry growing out of its head?

THTOE DOTOC TTOORG ATOVE HITOM TOSOM ETOC RETOAM TOFOTOR ITTO.

5. Did you hear about the mad scientist who invented an acid that can dissolve anything?

**HEGIIS GITRGI YGIIN GGITO GIFIN DGISO MEGITGIH NGIG TGIO GIKEGI EGIPI
GITIGIN.**

6. What happens when Darth Vader steals your parking spot?

HETT BETTGO METTS ATT TTSPATT CITEI NTTVATTD TTER.

Name _____

꠫ EXCITEMENT GRAPH ꠫

꠫ EXCITEMENT GRAPH ꠫ Name _____

	Ch1	Ch2	Ch3	Ch4	Ch5	Ch6	Ch7	Ch8	Ch9	Ch10	Ch11	Ch12	Ch13	Ch14	Ch15	Ch16	Ch17
10																	
9																	
8																	
7																	
6																	
5																	
4																	
3																	
2																	
1																	

꠫ EXCITEMENT GRAPH ꠫ Name _____

	Ch1	Ch2	Ch3	Ch4	Ch5	Ch6	Ch7	Ch8	Ch9	Ch10	Ch11	Ch12	Ch13	Ch14	Ch15	Ch16	Ch17
10																	
9																	
8																	
7																	
6																	
5																	
4																	
3																	
2																	
1																	

Name _____

BOOKMARK



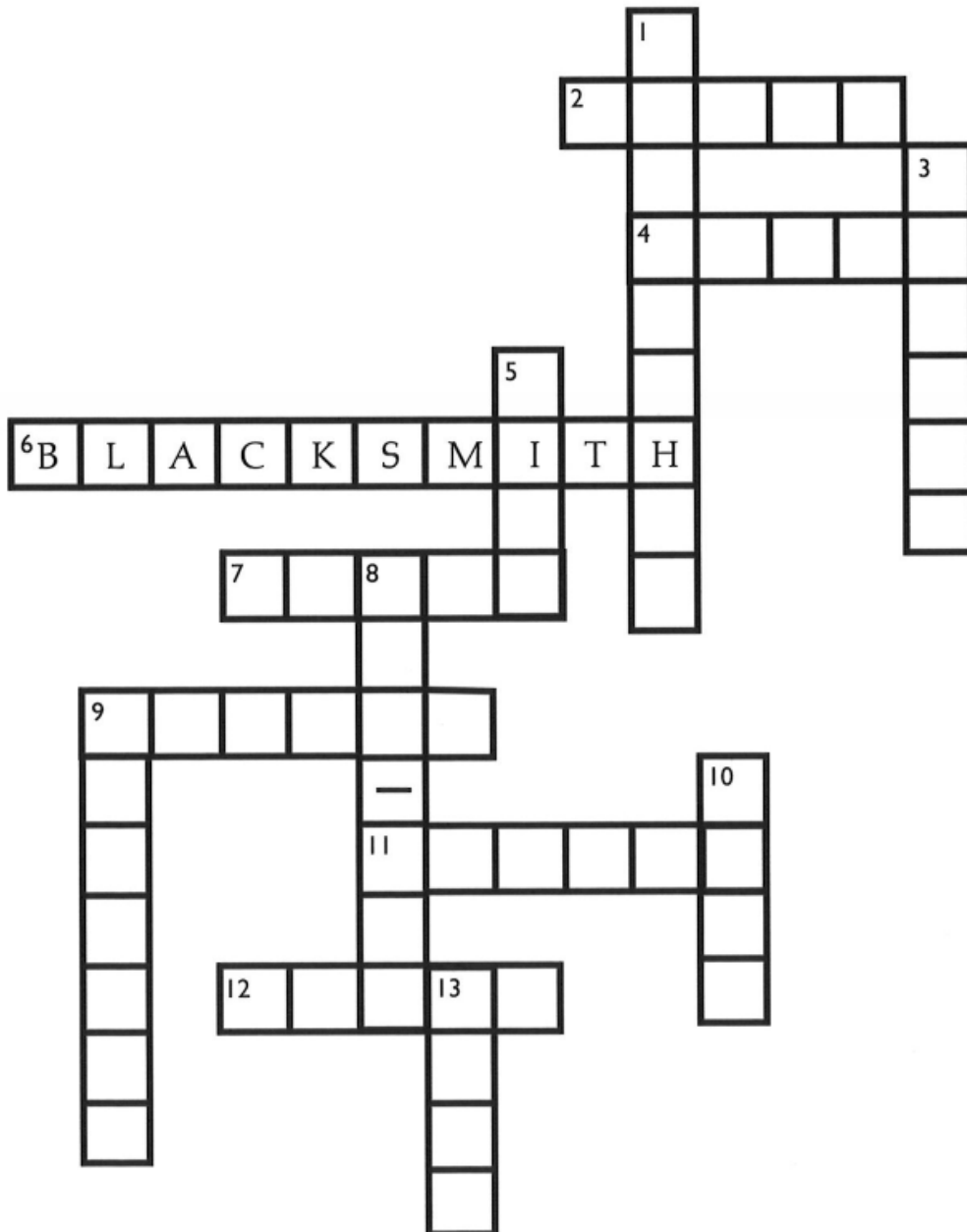
Name _____

THE BLACKSMITH PUZZLE

Here is a set of words that the author of *The Forests of Silence* has used when she was describing the blacksmith's shop:

- | | | | | | |
|------------|--------|------|--------|---------|---------|
| BLACKSMITH | FORGE | FIRE | HAMMER | RED-HOT | METAL |
| HORSESHOE | TONGS | IRON | STEEL | SWORDS | SHIELDS |
| AXES | BLADES | | | | |

See if you can fit them all into the puzzle squares. One word, BLACKSMITH, has been given to you to start with.



Name _____

CREATURE RECORD SHEET

Name of creature

Description

Body shape

Description of head

Description of limbs

Size

Habitat

Food

Dangerous or harmless

Any special habits

Illustration

Name _____

THE FORESTS OF SILENCE ASSESSMENT SHEET

I would rate the story

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Excitement in the story

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Quality of writing [how well it was written]

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My favourite character is _____ because _____

I thought the book's appearance was _____

Name _____

⚡ GEMS ⚡

Name of gem _____

Colour _____

Hardness _____

Where found _____

How to look after the gem _____

This gem is a birthstone for _____

Names of any famous ones _____

The name of the gem comes from _____

Any ancient beliefs about the gem _____

Special properties the gem is believed to have _____

The Deltora gem has these special properties _____
