



The Land of Giants

Author **Daniel Hernández Chambers** / Illustrations **Antonio Lorente** / 184 pages / Book Series **Eyes of Midnight**

Objectives

- To give students an **insight into a fantasy-within-fantasy world** which they could use as a model for their own creative writing.
- To build students' confidence in **understanding stories written in English**.
- To provide students with **new lexical items** within the context of the story.
- To encourage students to **notice loan words and cognates**.

Word bank

Key vocabulary

Fantasy objects: seeds from the Flower of Winter, compass, crystal dagger, magical sword

Key structures

Descriptive language: "I took off the dirty cloth and found a small brooch in the shape of a flower, with long pointed petals made of some type of precious metal – maybe sea-gold."

Tips and ideas

Before reading

- Elicit awards for films and books which your students have heard of (e.g. Nobel, Oscars, Goyas, etc.) and the kinds of categories these awards often have. As a class, choose an award and a category, and ask everyone to make a note of their favourite and a reason for their choice. Set up a pyramid discussion.
- Ask your students if they like fantasies. Also ask them if they have ever seen a film or TV series which was set in the past with someone on a journey. Then hold a class discussion based on a preliminary Think-Pair-Share stage.
- Introduce the title of the book and get pairs to whisper to each other two or three words they think of when they read it. Share these with another pair. Brainstorm some words and topics related to fantasy or the Middle Ages and draw a mind map on the board which you could add information to during the reading.

During reading

- As a class, draw a Storyboard / Timeline and add events and discoveries as the story progresses.

- As each chapter concludes, ask different groups to add their deductions and observations to the Clue Classification and Storyboard.
- Gather clues to what will happen next as they appear. Get students to classify them into *can't be / could or might be / must be*. Draw a table on the board to keep a tally of the clues as the characters come across them.

After reading

- Ask students to look at the storyboard they have sketched as they read the tales. Using the lexical sets brainstormed and added to during the reading, encourage them to write up a scene of their choice.
- Ask students to share their scenes with each other and see if they have described similar parts and if they have chosen the same language. Where possible, get them to team up with other students and encourage them to retell the stories together.
- Review the vocabulary which came up during the reading session and ask students to find other contexts (stories, songs, situations) where this lexis appears.

Teacher support activities

Great Games: Medieval Recreation

Ask students if they used to play board games or other types of physical games when they were younger. When, where and with whom did they play?

Give students a list of medieval games children used to play. Some examples could be hide and seek, hopscotch, blind-man's buff, etc. In small groups, they will choose one, learn how to play, and have 24 hours to prepare how they will teach the game to the rest of the class, explaining the rules and any relevant information about its origin.

Discuss how these games are similar or different to the ones today, if they have any influence today, and if they should still be important.

CLIL Link: Literary Connections

Write Lewis Carroll and *Jabberwocky* on the board. Tell the class they have eight minutes to search for as much information as possible on the poem. Explain that it is based on a famous literary work called *Beowulf* from the Middle Ages.

Read the poem together and explain the actions. Identify the various parts of speech in; nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions. Underline the nonsense words and decipher their possible meaning.

Students replace words to create their own Jabberwocky-type poem and share aloud with the class.

As they share their findings and *Jabberwocky* is read, ask your students if they ever believed in the magical creatures depicted in this poem and why they think so many people believed the stories of elves and spirits in the Middle Ages.

English Theatre: Make the Story our Own

Write various fables, short stories, legends or fairy tales with giants and elf themes on slips of paper and have a spokesperson from each group come to the front and pick one from a hat. Monitor and give encouragement.

As a whole class, decide on one of the stories from the collection to work on and brainstorm the main characters, setting, storyline and ending. Show the class what you want them to do by choosing one aspect (for example, one of the main characters or the setting) and asking for an alternative (for example, make the giant a famous painter or change the setting by placing it in your city).

Tell your students to make one or two changes and then to decide how these different characters or settings might change the ending. Groups have ten minutes to plan the changes and then rehearse and act out their alternative endings. They can use mime and as much language as they are happy to include.

Spend a moment to reflect on how each group has modified the story and the way their alternatives have changed the original tale.