

DRAGON RIDER

Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award Nominee 2007 Grades 6-8

Submitted by Lolita Chatelain, Kindergarten Teacher, Brusly, LA and Graduate Student at School of Library & Information Science, LSU (Professor: Dr. Margie Thomas)

Dragon Rider by Cornelia Funke. Translated by Anthea Bell. The Chicken House (Scholastic Inc.) 2004. 523 p.

Summary

The community in which the dragons live is on the verge of a human invasion. In order to preserve their very existence, Firedrake and Sorrel (a brownie) set out to find the legendary Rim of Heaven. The Rim of Heaven is the place that the dragons came from long ago to escape being hunted to extinction by the fierce dragon hunter, Nettlebrand. Along their journey, they find Ben (or Ben finds them) and together they navigate through many twists and turns to find a safe place for the dragons to live in peace.

Author's Biography

Cornelia Funke was born in Germany. She began her work with the illustration of board games and children's books. At the age of 28 she became a full-fledged author and illustrator of children's books. She was relatively unknown in the United States until Chicken House published *The Thief Lord* after receiving a letter from a bilingual student who wondered why her favorite author was not being published in English. This book went to #2 on the New York Times Bestseller List.

<http://www.kidsreads.com/authors/au-funke-cornelia.asp>

<http://www.scholastic.com/corneliafunke/>

Other Fantasy Titles by Cornelia Funke

Inkheart

Inkspell

The Thief Lord

Related Titles

The Book of Dragons by E. Nesbit.

Dragonwings by Laurence Yep.

Eragon by Christopher Paolini.

Dragonriders of Pern (series) by Anne McCaffrey.

The Never Ending Story by Michael Ende.

Classroom Connections

See Scholastic's Lesson Plans:

- **Fiction vs. Nonfiction:** Scholastic website has a plan that can be modified to teach this aspect of Language Arts.
http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonplans/unit_fictionvsnonfiction.htm
- **Ideas For Teaching a Novel:** Scholastic has a unit plan that can be modified to incorporate any novel. This one is based on *Dragonwings* by Laurence Yep. It includes a rubric, a plot diagram, and a plot sheet and conflict list. The plan can be found at http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonplans/unit_dragonwings.htm

**Connections by Elizabeth Dumas, Good Hope Middle School, West Monroe
Grade 7**

ELA Unit 1: Modern Fantasy-Through the Wardrobe

Activity 2: Fantasy Book Review. This title can be included on the class list of fantasy novels for the students' selection for independent reading.

Activity 4: Elements of Fantasy. This book is a good source for examples of literary techniques and story elements in fantasy, especially character description and development.

Grade 8

ELA Unit 5: Novel

Activity 1: Sustained Silent Reading. This book can be included on a recommended reading list that students will use to self-select a novel to be read independently. It can then be used for the other follow-up activities in this unit.

Connection by Dorothy Grimsley, Instructor, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Language Arts: Compare and Contrast Dragons

- Read aloud *The Hobbit* and use a graphic organizer to compare/contrast the dragons in the two books.

Art: Dragons

- Have students locate pictures and information about dragons and then draw a mural to display different kinds of dragons.

Geography and Map Skills

- Locate the Himalayas, Nepal and India on a map.
- Have students find pictures and information about the Himalayas, Nepal and India.

Science

- Students can use the book *Dragonology: The Complete Book of Dragons* by Dr. Ernest Drake which is only 32 pages to research the natural science of dragonology. It includes maps, classifications, common and scientific names, etc.

Web Links

Book Browse – Dragon Rider

http://www.bookbrowse.com/reviews/index.cfm?book_number=1491

This site gives a summary, reviews, a chapter excerpt, an author biography and an author interview.

Dragon Riders of Pern

http://www.futurefiction.com/dragon_riders_of_pern.htm

This site discusses the three books by Anne McCaffrey about The Dragonriders of Pern series: *Dragonflight*, *Dragonquest* and *The White Dragon*.

Fantastic Fantasy of Cornelia Funke

<http://www.scholastic.com/corneliafunke/>

The official fan site of Cornelia Funke includes excerpts and reviews; a map of Firedrake's flight to find the rim of heaven; a *Dragon Rider* word search; a biography of Mrs. Funke, and a video interview. A link is provided to a fan club, which provides additional games and activities for Cornelia Fuke's books.

Kidsreads.com – Dragon Rider Review

<http://www.kidsreads.com/reviews/0439456959.asp>

This page reviews *Dragon Rider* and provides links to reviews and summaries of other books by Cornelia Funke. Reading guides for *Inkheart* and *The Thief Lord* are also included.

Nancy Keane’s Booktalks - Quick and Simple

www.nancykeane.com/booktalks/funke_dragon.htm

This site has an actual booktalk that can be given for *Dragon Rider*.

The World Of Cornelia Funke

<http://www.corneliafunke.de/en/index.html>

The author’s site includes a list of her novels, a biography, a list of awards, bookmarks for her books, a picture gallery, information about the upcoming movie adaptations of her books, and her contact information.

ThinkQuest: Dragons

<http://www.thinkquest.org/library/search.html>

Use search tool on this site to find quests about dragons.

Dragons Around the World <http://library.thinkquest.org/03oct/01993/>