

The Neverending Story



By

Michael Ende

A Novel Study
By Nat and Joel Reed

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About the author: Nat Reed was a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 years. He was a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, visit novelstudies.org.

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Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Most chapters of the novel study focus on three chapters of *The Neverending Story* and are comprised of these activities:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. Language and Extension Activities

A **portfolio cover** (p.7) as well as a **Checklist** (p.6) are included so that students may track of their completed work.

Every activity need not be completed by all students.

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to the following:

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

Themes and **topics** which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include fantasy and imagination, story-telling, self-confidence, courage, empathy, sacrifice, perseverance and personal growth.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying / creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *anagrams*
7. Identify *personification*
8. Use of singular / plural nouns
9. Listing compound words
10. Identifying parts of speech
11. Determining alphabetical order
12. Identification of root words
13. Identify/create *similes*
14. Identification of a *cliffhanger*

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Identify the climax of the novel
4. Five W's Chart

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Protagonists/antagonists
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Comparing two Characters

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Write a letter to a friend
4. Complete an Observation Chart
5. Conduct an interview
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete a KWS Chart

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Design an Information Card

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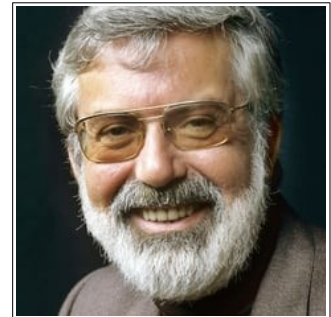
Synopsis

The Neverending Story is a classic tale of one boy and the book that magically comes to life. When Bastian happens upon an old book called *The Neverending Story*, he's swept into the magical world of Fantastica -- so much that he finds he has actually become a character in the story! And when he realizes that this mysteriously enchanted world is in great danger, he also discovers that he is the one chosen to save it. Can Bastian overcome the barrier between reality and his imagination in order to save Fantastica? (The Publisher)

Author Biography

Michael Ende

Michael Ende was born in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, in 1929. After attending drama school from 1948 to 1950, he worked variously as an actor, a writer of sketches and plays, a director of the Volkstheater in Munich, and a film critic for the Bavarian broadcasting company. His first novel for children, *Jim Knopf and Lukas the Engine Driver*, was published in Germany in 1960 to great popular and critical acclaim, and both radio and television series based on the Jim Knopf books were soon produced. In 1973 he published another award-winning children's novel, *Momo*. When *The Neverending Story* was first published in Germany in 1979 it immediately became the number-one bestseller and remained in that position for three years. It has since been published in many different languages all over the world, including Japanese, and has enchanted readers in each country in which it has appeared. Michael Ende passed away in 1995 at the age of 65. (The Publisher)



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Student Checklist

Student Name _____

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

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Name: _____

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Prolog to Chapter 3



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** of *The Neverending Story* is rather an unusual character – different than the swashbuckling hero of many adventure tales. Bastian a lonely, young boy whose mother has died and his father is quite uninterested in him. Bastian is also a dreamer who is usually shunned by most children and bullied by others. Why do you think such a protagonist as Bastian might be challenging for the author in an adventure novel? How might the author overcome such a challenge?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

conjecture	devoid	irrevocable	plausible
discernible	etiquette	chivalrous	extricate

1. Lord Balmore, was recognized by all for his brave and _____ acts.
2. It is only _____, but I believe that the witness was lying under oath.
3. It was very difficult to _____ little Timmy from the well.
4. She spoke in such a low whisper that her voice was barely _____.
5. It is _____ that such a thing may have happened, but I doubt that it did.
6. That criminal seemed to be _____ of any human compassion.
7. Sarah learned proper _____ at the finishing school she attended.
8. I'm afraid that once a law is passed, it is _____.

Questions



1. What is the **setting** of the novel at the beginning of The Prolog?

2. Match each name with the proper description:

1	Bastian		A	Sent on a Quest.
2	Vooshvazool		B	A centaur.
3	Cairon		C	Ill.
4	Blubb		D	The tiny.
5	Gluckuk		E	Reader of the book.
6	Atreyu		F	The night hob
7	Childlike Empress		G	The will o'-the-wisp.

3. Why do you suppose that Bastian was so determined to strike up a conversation with Mr. Coreander?

4. What hint in the Prolog do we have that this is no usual, run-of-the-mill book?

5. The four characters we are introduced to in Chapter One do not play a significant role in this novel. Why do you think the author chose to begin the book featuring these three characters rather than introducing Atreyu right away?

6. Describe what the message of the four messengers was, and to whom their messages were being taken to.

7. What did Gluckuk feel was the root cause of the calamity that faced Fantstica.

8. Why was the life of the Childlike Empress so critical to the people of Fantastica?

9. How would you describe Bastian's relationship with his father? What event had caused the change in this relationship?

10. What was so special about AURYN?

11. Why was the choice of Atreyu astonishing to Cairon, and what stipulation about the Quest made Atreyu's mission even more difficult.

12. What valuable piece of information did Morla provide Atreyu with? Who did he say might be able to help in this regard?

Language Activities



A. What Do You Know About Centaurs?

The centaur, Cairon, plays a fairly significant role in this section. As is explained in the novel, a centaur is a mythological creature with the head, arms and torso of a human and the body of a horse. But what else do you know about this mythological creature? Did you know, for instance, that the centaur is an important part of Greek mythology? Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, research three fascinating facts about the centaur and record this information below.



1	
2	
3	

B. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. Many of the characters in *The Neverending Story* are non-humans who exhibit human qualities. An example from this section is the will-o'-the-wisp, who not only speaks but wriggles with embarrassment.



a) Why do you think personification is a literary device used by many authors?

b) Create your own example of personification.

c) Find another example of this device from the novel..

C. Anagrams

An **anagram** is a word that is formed by changing the order of the letters of another word. For example, the letters in the word **PAN** can also form the word **NAP**. Follow these directions to form the anagrams:



a) read the clue in the right-hand column.

b) Using the word in the left-hand column move the letters around in any order, but you must use all the letters.

Each of the words in the left-hand column are found in this novel.

Word	Anagram	Clue
swarm		Dense group of insects.
ravine		More proud.
insect		Most pleasant.
easier		Large nests built by birds of prey.
green		Category.
dense		Of necessity.

D. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. We find an example of this in Chapter One: ... *and below his tousled black hair two big round eyes glowed like moons.*

In this example what two things are being compared?

--	--

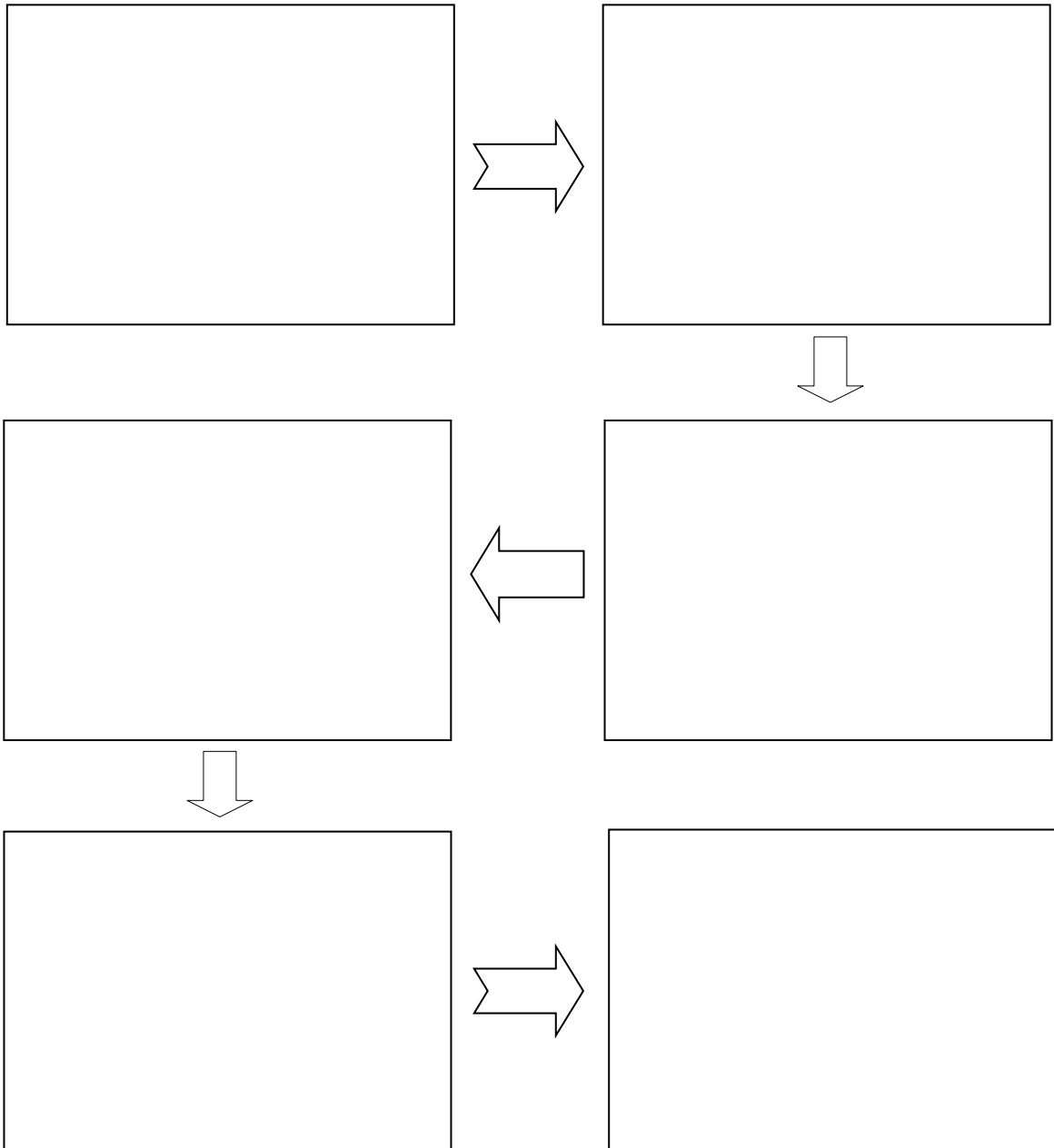
Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your imagination:

a) The cry of an owl

b) your own example

E. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in this section. In each of the six boxes below list the six events that you have chosen, describing what happened and telling why you consider this to be an essential part of the story.



Extension Activity



Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel.



Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first three chapters of our novel. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.

1	2
3	4
5	6