

LOWTHAR'S BLADE TEACHER'S GUIDE

Books in the Lowthar's Blade Trilogy:

BOOK ONE: *The Forging of the Blade*

BOOK TWO: *The Secrets of Grim Wood*

BOOK THREE: *The True Blade of Power*

LANGUAGE ARTS

Literary Response and Analysis:

- I) What genre is The Lowthar's Blade trilogy? What makes it that genre?
- II) Pick one of the three books; *FORGING OF THE BLADE*, *THE SECRETS OF GRIM WOOD*, or *THE ONE TRUE BLADE* and do the following:
 - A) Write a paragraph summarizing the book's plot.
 - B) Who are the main characters in the book? Choose one and draw a picture or write a paragraph describing him or her.
 - C) What is the setting of the book?
 - D) What do you think the book's theme was?
- III) Pick one of the main characters and describe how they changed over the course of the story. How were they different at the end of the book from how they had been at the beginning of the book? What skills or personality traits or qualities have they acquired or lost?
- IV) Pretend you are Kenric and write a letter to his mother explaining what has happened and when you will be home.
- V) Plots are made up of certain elements. There is a beginning, a middle with rising action, a climax, and a resolution. In *THE FORGING OF THE BLADE*, can you identify these four elements of the plot?
 - A) What happens in the beginning that starts Kenric on his journey?
 - B) List three things that happen that involve rising action or increasing conflict.
 - C) What is the climax of the story?
 - D) How is it resolved?
- VI) Many times in a story, secondary characters will serve plot functions; a character will be a guide or a sidekick or a villain. Here is a list of some plot functions characters can fill. Match each of the plot functions with a main or secondary character in the Lowthar's Blade trilogy. (Hint: Many functions will have more than one character, and some characters may have more than one function.)

Hero:

Secondary Hero(es):

Antagonist: (Also known as the Bad Guy or Villain)

The Antagonist's Minions: (Those who do the bad guy's dirty work)

Enemies: (they don't necessarily work for the bad guy, but they work against the hero)

Mentors: (Those who help or guide the hero and secondary heroes)

Allies: (Those who befriend the hero)

Sidekick/Comic Relief: (Someone who helps the hero and also makes the reader laugh)

Writing

Remember to use concrete, sensory details to give solid impressions of people, places, and actions.

I) Writing:

A) Write a story about another adventure that Kenric and his friends have.

B) Hnagi was in trouble with the Goblin King. Make a "Wanted" poster that the King might have posted in his kingdom.

C) Write a letter from Linwe to Kenric after she has been ruler for a month, explaining the changes in her life.

D) In olden days, poets often wrote poetry to honor heroes and their adventures. Write a poem to honor one of the events in the story or one of the story's heroes.

E) Write a paragraph about a time when one of your parents was in trouble or having a hard time and you either helped them or wished you could help them.

F) Write a review of one of the books telling what you liked about it, what you didn't like, and whether you would recommend it to other readers and why or why not.

II) In the Science section of this guide, there is an activity to invent a new race for Lowthar based on a geographical habitat.

A) Write a paragraph describing the new race you invented.

B) Write a paragraph describing the habitat.

C) Write a paragraph describing how they use their habitat.

D) Invent a folk tale or myth or legend for this new race.

E) Write a scene where Kenric, Linwe, and Hnagi discover this new race.

Reading Comprehension - Discussion Questions

BOOK ONE: FORGING OF THE BLADE

1. Often times a title of a book can have a hidden meaning. Can you think of two different things words *The Forging of the Blade* could mean for this story?
2. How did Kenric's village fail him?
3. Why do you think Kenric, who was only eleven years old, was already working by his father's side?
4. If a town didn't have a blacksmith, how would that affect them? What tools and implements would they be missing?
5. What context clues in the first chapter revealed the setting of the book? At what point in the book could you tell it was going to be a fantasy?
6. What other choices did Kenric have besides going to find his father? What would the outcome of those choices have been?
7. How is Kenric treated by those he meets on his journey? Why do you think they treat him the way they do?
8. Why do the Fey dislike Kenric so much?
9. The king wraith says that even a small flame can destroy a cottage. What do you think he means by this? In what way is Kenric a small flame?
10. At the end of *The Forging of the Blade*, Kenric faces a very hard choice. Can you think of any other ways he could have solved his dilemma?
11. *The Forging of the Blade* is a fantasy, but there are often truths in fantasy; human truths, emotional truths, historical truths. What things about this story do you think might be true?

BOOK TWO: THE SECRETS OF GRIM WOOD

1. All Kenric wants is to return to his home and go back to being a family. Why do you think he agrees to do this task for the king? Does he have any choice? Why or why not?
2. Do you think it's right for the king to force Kenric to keep Hnagi's firestone, even though the little goblin wants it back? Why or why not? Why do you think the king does this?

3. Do you think King Thorgil is a good king? Why or why not?
4. Kenric's father explained that the Sleäg were knights once. How did they end up becoming Mordig's servants?
5. What makes Kenric uneasy about keeping Hnagi's firestone?
6. Why is Kenric's mission to the Fey so important? What will happen if he fails?
7. Do you think the Fey are right to be so suspicious of outsiders? Why do you think some of the Fey, even the good Fey, found it so hard to help Kenric?
8. In *The Secrets of Grim Wood*, Linwe has to make some very hard choices that affect the outcome of Kenric's mission. What were those hard choices she made? What were some other choices she could have made and how would those have changed the story?
9. Do you think Linwe is right to help Kenric against her father's wishes? Why or why not?
10. King Valorin of the Fey appears to have the interests of his people at heart, but does he really? Why or why not?
11. Kenric thinks the grymclaws are evil. Linwe thinks they are just predators. Who do you think is right, and why?
12. Looking back, can you identify the clues in the book that hinted at what happened to King Valorin? How do you think this was done?

BOOK THREE: THE TRUE BLADE OF POWER

1. Why do you think King Thorgil falls ill when Mordig escapes?
2. How do you think Mordig was able to escape from his stone prison? Did he have help?
3. Do you think the goblins were trustworthy? Why or why not?
4. What steps does Kenric take to get King Orlegg on their side? What else could he have done to convince him?
5. Sometimes a physical action in a book can symbolize something else, something emotional or a shift in mental attitude. What do you think the scene where all three blacksmiths join together to forge a new, stronger blade symbolizes?
6. Kenric wants to rescue the finnboggi that Mordig has captured, but King Orlegg doesn't think they're worth the trouble. What did Kenric do to convince the king to let him go rescue the finnboggi?
7. How is Prince Durrig different from his father? Who would make the best king of the goblins, and why?

8. Why do you think Mordig became so twisted and hungry for power?
9. How are Kenric, Linwe, and Hnagi the same? In what ways are they different?
10. Who do you think was the bravest person in this story? Describe why.
11. Describe how Kenric, Linwe, and Hnagi are different together than they were in the first book. How do their feelings for each other change?

ART

- I) Using what you know from the books, draw a map or picture of Tirga Mor, Elga Mora, or Carreg Dhu.
- II) Draw a picture of the new race you invented for the land of Lowthar. (See Science activity)
- III) Draw a picture of any of the mythical creatures in Lowthar; a Mawr hound, a Sleäg, a grymclaw, a wyrm, or Linwe's pet hilfen.
- IV) Collect magazine pictures of several different animals. Cut and paste parts of their bodies to create a new fantasy animal. Give it a name.
- V) Draw a picture of any of the main or secondary characters in the trilogy.
- VI) Make a diorama of a scene from the book.
- VII) Use clay, papier mache, or building toys like Legos or K'nex to make a model of Tirga Mor, Elga Mora, or Carreg Dhu.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- I) What were some of the natural resources in Grim Wood, Carreg Dhu, and the human areas of Lowthar? How did the different races use their resources?
- II) Using what you know in the book, predict what daily life must have been like for each of the races. Make up a day in the life of one family from either the goblin, Fey, or human realm.
 - A) What did the mother do all day?
 - B) The father?
 - C) The children?
- III) If Lowthar had a capitol, what would it be, and why?

- IV) Countries and groups often have a flag with symbols that stand for who they are or what they believe in. Make a flag for Lowthar, the Fey, or the Goblins.
- V) Lowthar goes through three types of government over the course of the story. Can you name or describe the three types of government? (Hint: One ended just before the story begins and the other comes at the very end of the third book.) How are they different?
 - A) What are the benefits and shortcomings of each one?
 - B) Which one do you think is best for Lowthar in the long run?
- VI) What types of cooperation existed between the three races? How did Kenric, Linwe, and Hnagi change this?
- VII) Do some research to find out more about the historical and mythological roots of goblins and fey (also sometimes called fairy or faerie.)

SCIENCE

- I) There are three races in Lowthar: the Fey, Goblins, and humans. Each race comes from a very different geography and habitat. List which race comes from which type of habitat.
- II) Using what you know from the books, describe how each of those different races was influenced by its habitat.
- III) What other types of habitats and geographical areas might exist in Lowthar? Marshes, deserts, oceans, coastal areas, frozen tundra?
 - A) Pick one of these and invent a new race for Lowthar. Make sure the race is shaped and influenced by its habitat.
- IV) There are three magic stones in the land of Lowthar; the blud-lith, the luna-lith, and the igni-lith. These are based on real life stones such as the bloodstone, the moonstone, and the dark opal.
 - A) Research the three stones and make a list of their properties. Then identify what type of rock or mineral they are and how they were formed.
 - B) Goblin weapon blades were made of obsidian, also a rock. Research obsidian to find out its properties and how it is formed.
- V) What are the physical properties of fire? Of earth? Of the moon?

MATH

- I) In Lowthar's Blade, there are many occurrences of three; three books, three races, etc. How many sets of three can you find throughout the book? Remember, they don't have to be things or creatures, they can be anything; quests, attempts, conversations, etc.
- II) Create a timeline for one of the books, or for the whole trilogy.

TECHNOLOGY

To learn about the history behind LOWTHAR'S BLADE, visit RL LaFevers website www.rllafevers.com and explore the links which will direct you to more information on castles, blacksmiths, forests and medieval life.

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