

CTYOnline Young Readers' Series for Grades 2 & 3



Dragon Tales Sample Assignment

In *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* by Bruce Coville, *Dealing with Dragons* by Patricia C. Wrede, and *The Dragon Slippers* by Jessica Day George, Jeremy, Princess Cimorene, and Creel do not realize how completely their lives and outlooks will be changed when they befriend dragons. In *Dragon Tales*, students explore people's attitudes toward dragons, which vary from friendship and fascination to fear. The three books include humor, suspense, fantasy, mystery, and adventure.

Designed for children in grades 2 and 3 with a reading of grade 5 or above, students in this critical reading series:

- read three thematically connected, age-appropriate books of increasing difficulty
- participate in online discussions with gifted classmates from Boston to Beijing
- post book related writing assignments such as newspaper articles, diary entries, and letters written from a character's point of view
- learn sophisticated vocabulary words and literary terms with the help of online games and puzzles

Instructors encourage students to read carefully and cite the text to support their points. Students become conscious of the importance of interpreting an author's inferences in understanding plot and character. Students typically read and share written responses every other day (fall, spring, and early summer sessions) or daily (midsummer intensive session). Work is posted in the virtual classrooms at the student's convenience as long as deadlines are met. Parents should review the books in each theme before choosing in order to find the most interesting and appropriate theme for their child.

To give you an idea of the type of assignments involved, the following is the first of ten lessons:

Instructions for Lesson One

All work is due by the following Sunday at midnight. (That's the end of Sunday, not the beginning!) This means that your assigned reading should be started early and completed by Thursday night--at the latest--to allow you enough time to finish all the assignments (Reading, Quiz, Poll, Blog, and Discussion Posts) by Sunday night.

1. Begin reading *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* by Bruce Coville in the following reading chunks:

Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 1 - 21)

Chapters 3 - 5 (pp. 22 - 52)

Chapters 6 - 8 (pp. 53 - 85)

2. Read the pages above and then take this self-graded Quiz.

Directions: Read the pages listed above for this lesson before taking this self-graded quiz. If you don't know an answer, refer to your book. To answer the last two questions, count how many questions you answered correctly without referring to the book. Feel free to click on the links to learn the definitions of literary terms such as "inference," "simile," "alliteration," and "onomatopoeia."

3. Vote your opinion in the Poll.

4. Post ONE of the following blog assignments to the Blog Forum:

a. Pretend you are Mary Lou Hutton and you have decided to follow Jeremy home on the day he runs out of art class. In 50-250 words and using the first person **point of view**, write a diary entry describing what you saw when you opened the door to Jeremy's room. Be sure to include your reactions to the scene.

b. Jeremy is clearly in need of some help with Tiamat, and he has misplaced the book Miss Priest loaned him. Following the example of the hatching charm on page 24, write two to three different charms (50-250 words in total) to help Jeremy in different situations with his dragon. You might write one to help him tame the dragon; one to help him teach the dragon to safely hunt; one to teach the dragon proper behavior at school; or one to teach the dragon how to mow the lawn, etc.

c. Pretend you are Dr. Thatcher and write a 50-250 word email to your best friend describing the disastrous dinner party. [Decide whether Dr. Thatcher would be mostly angry, sad, or amused and be sure to write the email from that perspective.]

5. Contribute two (or more) thoughtful posts to the Discussion Forum in response to any of the following topics. (Remember! At least one of these two thoughtful posts should be in reply to a discussion post made by another student.)

a. **Unmowed grass.** "The wet grass, a little long because—despite his promise—Jeremy had not mowed yet this week, sparkled in the moonlight." Why does the author include the detail that Jeremy had not mowed the grass? What do you learn about Jeremy from that detail?

b. **About Miss Priest.** What do we know about Miss Hyacinth Priest by the end of Chapter four? Write three things we know about her. Do you like this character? Why or why not?

c. **Silly questions.** At the end of Chapter 4, Miss Priest tells Jeremy ["fiercely"] that "No question is silly if you really want to know the answer." What does this statement tell you about Miss Priest? Do you agree with her?

d. **Communication with the dragon.** How does Jeremy communicate with his dragon? Give three examples from the book of the way in which they communicate.

e. **To see or not to see.** Why do you think Mrs. Thatcher can't see the dragon? With all that Jeremy's experienced thus far, why does he think the idea of his mother not seeing the dragon is strange?

f. **What's important in Chapter 7?** At the end of Chapter 7, Tiamat sheds her skin for the first time. However, there is so much else going on in that scene that it can be difficult to follow. List three things that happen in the second half of Chapter 7, and explain why they are important.

g. **Jeremy and Mary Lou.** Why do you think that Mary Lou is able to see Tiamat when the rest of Jeremy's friends and family cannot? Are Jeremy's feelings toward Mary Lou starting to change? Explain. Is Mary Lou treating Jeremy any differently?

Note: You are provided with a list of "Mind-Expanding Vocabulary Words" that you can use to help better understand this book and increase your knowledge of vocabulary words in general.

OPTIONAL -Not required- Fun and Challenges:

- Share your favorite stories and authors with other students in the [Recommended Reading Wiki](#).
- Print out and work on the crossword puzzles that have been provided to help reinforce your knowledge of the "mind-expanding" vocabulary words.
- Play some of the literary terms games.