

A Curriculum Guide to

Dragonwatch

By Brandon Mull

About the Book

The dragons that have been kept in sanctuaries want their freedom—and their revenge—and the world’s only hope is the reformation of the ancient order of Dragonwatch in this *New York Times* bestselling first novel of a new sequel series to *Fablehaven* from author Brandon Mull. In the hidden dragon sanctuary of Wyrmoost, Celebrant the Just, King of the Dragons, plots his revenge. He has long seen the sanctuaries as prisons, and he wants nothing more than to overthrow his captors and return the world to the Age of Dragons, when he and his kind ruled and reigned without borders. No one person is capable of stopping Celebrant and his dragon horde; it will take the ancient order of Dragonwatch to gather again if there is any chance of saving the world from destruction. In ancient times, Dragonwatch was a group of wizards, enchantresses, dragon slayers, and others who originally confined the majority of dragons into sanctuaries. But nearly all of the original Dragonwatch members are gone, and so the wizard Agad reaches out to Grandpa Sorenson, caretaker of Fablehaven, for help. As his grandchildren, siblings Kendra and Seth, confront this new danger, they must draw upon all their skills, talents, and knowledge as only they have the ability to function together as a powerful dragon tamer. Together they must battle against forces with superior supernatural powers and breathtaking magical abilities.

Discussion Questions

The discussion questions below particularly address the following English Language Arts Common Core State Standards: (R.L.4-7.4) (R.L.5-6.5)

1. After finishing *Dragonwatch*, go back and analyze the opening pages titled “From the Journal of Stan Sorenson.” What do these pages tell you about the past? What content do you need to know to understand the rest of the story? What do they tell you about Grandpa Sorenson as a person?
2. Find examples from the beginning of the book that foreshadow future problems with the dragons. How does the author build suspense around the dragons?
3. Describe Dragonhaven using both its history and its different areas. What is the purpose of Dragonhaven? How do the dragons feel about it? Who are the staff members at Blackwell Keep, and what are their roles there?
4. Explain Celebrant’s role in Dragonhaven. What are Celebrant’s goals? How does he plan to reach them? Discuss the fact that he’s known as “Celebrant the Just,” and how that may impact his actions. Do you consider him to be a villain?
5. Why are Kendra and Seth chosen as caretakers for Dragonhaven? What are their special qualifications? What is Celebrant’s reaction to their appointment?

6. What makes Kendra and Seth such a good team? When do they work particularly well together in the story? At what points are they frustrated with each other, and why do you think that is?
7. One of Seth's main characteristics is that he is a risk-taker. Give examples of when he takes big risks and what those consequences are. How does he justify the risk-taking? How do others around him react to his actions?
8. Describe Seth's interactions with Knox. Does he put Knox in serious danger? Why does Knox agree to Seth's plans? Why don't the dragons attack Knox when he goes to and from the safe hut?
9. Who is Bracken, and what is his background? Analyze Kendra's relationship with him. What role does Bracken play in the plot? What is his situation at the end of the novel?
10. Calvin, the Tiny Hero, accompanies Seth on much of his quest. Describe Calvin's history, appearance, and personality. How does he prove important to the plot and the quest? What are his strengths, and how is he able to use them?
11. Raxtus is Celebrant's son who was raised by fairies. Why has Raxtus chosen to side with his father? How does Raxtus justify his father's desire to obtain freedom for the dragons? Why are mortals, who can be destructive, allowed to roam free, while dragons are confined to sanctuaries?
12. Explain Jubaya's role and why Kendra meets with her. What danger does the meeting pose for Kendra? How does their meeting benefit Jubaya? What does Kendra learn from the conversation? Analyze whether it was a good choice for Kendra to meet with her.
13. Why are Kendra and Seth supposed to be diplomatic when they meet Dalgorel? How successful are they at this diplomacy? What do they learn from Dalgorel, and in what ways does he help them?
14. Describe Dromadus's interactions with Kendra and Seth. How do the siblings manage to reach the scepter and return it to Blackwell Keep? What obstacles do they face? How do the Tiny Hero, Henrick, and the horses help along this journey?
15. How do both siblings contribute to Celebrant's defeat at the end of the story? What risks do they take? What do their actions reveal about their personalities and their strengths?
16. What major problems have been resolved by the end of the novel? What major problems still exist? In what ways does the end of the story leave the reader in suspense?
17. Courage is a major theme throughout the story. Give examples of times when characters displayed courage, mentioning at least four different characters. What were the results of their courageous actions? What were the risks?

Extension Activities

Spotlight on the Tiny Hero

Calvin, the Tiny Hero, would make for a great central character. Have students think about what *Dragonwatch* would be like if Calvin were the protagonist. Using that idea, students should write a few paragraphs to describe such a book, with the goal of persuading someone to read it.

Mapping Their Quest

Kendra and Seth travel from Fablehaven to Blackwell Keep before moving on to visit the Fair Folk, the Somber Knight, and more. Have students work alone or in pairs to create a map that shows where the characters traveled, including Seth's journey on the griffin. In addition to place names, the map should include small illustrations of the important places Kendra and Seth visited.

Out of the Frying Pan, into the Fire

Scenes of danger and risk fill *Dragonwatch*. Have students work in small groups to make a chronological list of at least ten dangers that Kendra and Seth confront, either separately or together. Then gather as a class and compile a full list of dangers, organized chronologically. Discuss how the author uses dangerous incidents to create suspense and excitement.

Swords and Scepters

This fantasy novel draws on legends about knights, history about royalty, and many areas of mythology. Have each student choose one such element to research such as scepters, magical swords, knights, vassals, fair folk, or dragons. They should use print and digital sources to create multimedia presentations about their topics, including how the element fits into the novel.

Pros and Cons of Neutrality

The Fair Folk have a policy of neutrality, which not all of them want to continue. Have students do basic research on neutrality, such as its role in WWII when Switzerland, Sweden, and Ireland were among the neutral countries. Students should gather in small groups to discuss the pros and cons of neutrality in both the real world and the novel, addressing whether they think the Fair Folk should remain neutral or fight the dragons.

Words of the Solemn Knight

The Solemn Knight has a distinctive style of speaking and a large vocabulary. Have students find at least five unfamiliar or unusual words in the Knight's speech and look up their definitions. Have students write each word and definition on a sheet of paper, illustrating it if appropriate. Create a wall of Solemn Knight speech in your classroom.

Meet Brandon Mull

As a class, watch the short video on Brandon Mull's website called "What Makes a Great Book?" Let students discuss whether they agree with his criteria, and what they might add to it. Then apply the criteria to *Dragonhaven* and other classroom novels to analyze whether these books have the components that Brandon Mull values. www.brandonmull.com

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