A Teacher's Guide to

The Spiderwick Chronicles

By Tony DiTerlizzi and Holly Black

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Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing
When Jared, Simon, and Mallory Grace moved into their great-great-uncle Arthur Spiderwick’s estate, they had no idea what awaited them. But once Jared finds *Arthur Spiderwick’s Field Guide to the Fantastical World Around You*, he discovers a world of trolls, goblins, and sprites. And after meeting their house brownie, Thimbletack, Jared learns that his family is in danger from the fantastical world around them. Then in the Beyond the Spiderwick Chronicles series, *The Spiderwick Chronicles* leave the old-fashioned charm of New England behind and head south to embark on a whole new journey with Nick and Laurie as they continue the fight against fiendish fairies in the hot Florida sun.

**ABOUT THE CREATORS**

**Tony DiTerlizzi** is a *New York Times* bestselling author and illustrator who has been creating books with Simon & Schuster for more than a decade. From his fanciful picture books like *Jimmy Zangwow’s Out-of-this-World Moon Pie Adventure*, *Adventures of Meno* (with his wife, Angela), and *The Spider & The Fly* (a Caldecott Honor book), to chapter books like *Kenny and The Dragon* and *The Search for WondLa*, Tony always imbues his stories with a rich imagination. You can visit him at DiTerlizzi.com.

**Holly Black** spent her early years in a decaying Victorian mansion, where her mother fed her a steady diet of ghost stories and books about faeries. However, Holly is now the author of bestselling contemporary fantasy books for kids and teens. In addition to *The Spiderwick Chronicles* (with Tony DiTerlizzi), some of her titles include the Modern Faerie Tale series, the Curse Workers series, and her ghostly middle grade novel, *Doll Bones*, which received six starred reviews and a Newbery Honor. She has been a finalist for the Mythopoeic Award, a finalist for an Eisner Award, and the recipient of the Andre Norton Award. She currently lives in New England with her husband, Theo, in a house with a secret door. Visit her at BlackHolly.com.
Activity suggestions for using the Spiderwick Chronicles books in the classroom and libraries

1. After reading all The Spiderwick Chronicles, discuss with your students whether or not the characters in The Spiderwick Chronicles grow and mature throughout the series or remain stagnant.

2. As a class, identify the themes in The Spiderwick Chronicles and then find evidence in the story to support the themes.

3. While reading The Spiderwick Chronicles, notice adjectives. Have students look up the definitions of unfamiliar words to ensure the proper understanding of the material.

4. In The Ironwood Tree and The Wrath of Mulgarath, note how the author uses words to create imagery.

5. Have students write a diary page using the point of view (perspective) of one of the main characters such as Jared, Simon, or Mallory.

6. Have the students write a ballad to commemorate Hogsqueal’s victory over Mulgarath. Have the students perform the ballad for other students.

7. Imagine you have found a sprite. Using information found in The Care and Feeding ofSprites, ask students to write a persuasive letter to their parents on why they should be able to keep the sprite as a pet. Ask them to present the argument to the class.

8. As a class, research the differences between a sprite and an insect. Use The Care and Feeding of Sprites for the information on sprites and use a nonfiction book on insects.

9. Suggest to the students that the classroom or library is going to have a sprite for a pet. Research, using The Care and Feeding of Sprites, which sprite would be appropriate for the school or library. Determine what type of housing, food, clothing and accessories will be needed. Exchange information with the class and discuss how the class will take care of the sprite.

10. Instruct your students to pretend they are a parent and write a persuasive argument on why their child should not own a dragon. Refer to Arthur Spiderwick’s Field Guide for reasons on why one should not own a dragon.

11. Together as a class, compare and contrast Arthur Spiderwick’s Field Guide to a field guide found in the non-fiction section of the library, perhaps one on insects or flowers.

12. Have the class make a faerie house using only natural materials. Write a descriptive narrative on how the house was built, including where it was built, what materials were used, the appearance of the house after it was built and if anything was used to attract faeries to the house. Revise the writing after it has been critiqued.

13. Discuss with the students the concept of shape changing. Ask the students if they could change into another form, what that form would be. Have the students write a paper describing how their bodies would change shape using as many descriptive words as possible.

14. Divide the students into pairs. Identify rhyming words in Thimbletack’s speech. Use phrases to identify beat. Have the students try to carry on a conversation pretending they are Thimbletack and can only speak in rhymes.

15. In Lucinda’s Secret and The Wrath of Mulgarath it is noticed that the phooka only spoke in riddles. Have the students visit the library and investigate the 818 section of the nonfiction section of the library to learn more about riddles. Try expressing oneself in a riddle.
16. Using multimedia resources, have the students write a news report concerning the unusual events happening around the Spiderwick estate and then video the report. Students could interview different members of the Spiderwick family. Example stories could be about contaminated water with a burning sensation when drunk (dragons), unexplained sightings of large birds (griffins), or sudden disappearances of dogs and cats (goblins).

17. Discuss Mrs. Grace’s point of view concerning Jared’s odd behavior. Is she right to be worried about Jared? What could she do differently to help Jared? Have the students role-play a conversation between Jared and Mrs. Grace.

18. Have the students imagine a new fantastical creature. Many helpful writing suggestions are included in Notebook for Fantastical Observations. Give the students a small piece of paper, the size of a trading card. Have them draw a picture on one side of the paper. On the reverse side have the students write descriptive information about the creature. In The Notebook of Fantastical Observations there are examples of how trading cards are made. Have a contest to see which ones are the best. Make copies of the best ones as if they were trading cards. Give them out as rewards for good work and allow the students to trade them as if they are trading cards.

19. During dental month (February), discuss the problems goblins have because they have no teeth and their need to improvise new teeth. Refer to The Notebook for Fantastical Observations for a chart to help document the students’ ideas.

20. The Nixie’s Song introduces new characters to The Spiderwick Chronicles. As a class, compare and contrast Jared, Simon, and Mallory to Nick, Laurie, and Jules.

21. Discuss with your students how Jared deals with his anger versus how Nick handles his anger.

22. In The Nixie’s Song it is noted that Taloa is amphibious. Using Arthur Spiderwick’s Field Guide, have students compare and contrast a nixie to other amphibious creatures. Go to the library for nonfiction books on amphibians.

23. Ask students to do a characterization of Mallory, Simon, and Jared. Revise and rewrite the composition.

24. Have students rewrite Jared, Mallory, and Simon’s excuse for getting home late, using these details:
   - Mallory is wet
   - Simon is scratched and his clothes are in tatters
   - Jared has grass stains and scraped elbows

   Ask students to revise and rewrite the composition and present it to the class.

25. Compare and contrast a hobgoblin and a goblin using a chart to help the students understand and analyze the material.

26. Choose an excerpt from any one of the stories and have the children perform readings using clear diction and voice quality.

27. Have students write a letter to their favorite character in the books.

28. Go to Spiderwick.com to access ideas and information about all things Spiderwick. Discuss fantasies as a particular genre and compare to other genres. Discuss realism versus fantasy, citing incidents from the Spiderwick Chronicles. Compose a fantasy of your own using a character or characters from The Spiderwick Chronicles.
Trivia Questions for Book One: The Field Guide

1. What style house did Great-Aunt Lucinda live in?
2. Great-Aunt Lucinda says that someone brings her food, which tastes better than anything the doctors had ever tasted. Who brings the food?
3. Originally, how did Jeffery and Lemondrop become Simon’s pets?
4. When Simon and Mallory pulled out the nest from the wall, Simon noticed something was missing. What was it?
5. What method does Jared use to get up into Arthur Spiderwick’s library?
6. Arthur Spiderwick drew a sketch of a boggart with a notation that it had stolen something of his. What did it steal?
7. Name one of the words that were printed on slips of paper that were found in the nest in the wall.
8. How did Arthur Spiderwick get into his secret library?

Answers to Trivia Questions for Book One: The Field Guide

1. Victorian. 2. Littlemen, also known as sprites. 3. He found them in a strip in Mrs. Levette’s downstairs apartment in New York. 4. There were 5. A dumbwaiter. 6. His spectacles. 7. Luminous or soliloquy. 8. Through the upstairs linen closet.

Trivia Questions for Book Two: The Seeing Stone

1. What has Jared secretly been practicing?
2. Who predicted there would soon be trouble because of a “fell smell in the air”?
3. Besides the Seeing Stone, what other methods allow one to have the Sight?
4. When did Arthur Spiderwick’s brother, Theodore, disappear? How did Jared find out?
5. What keeps the river troll from capturing Jared and Mallory when they go searching for Simon?
6. What did Jared and Mallory find in the grass that belonged to Simon?
7. The cage Simon was found in was lined with ________.
8. How many goblins did the river troll gobble up?
   A. three  B. five  C. ten
9. How long does hobgoblin spit allow one to have the Sight?
10. How did Thimbletack punish Jared for grabbing the Seeing Stone?

Answers to Trivia Questions for Book Two: The Seeing Stone

1. Drawing. 2. Thimbletack. 3. A. Red Hair; B. Being the seventh son of a seventh son; C. Faerie bathwater. 4. 1885. From an old Pennsylvanian newspaper article. 5. A. three  B. five  C. ten  6. Thimbletack tore Jared’s sheet to shreds and tore the mattress apart.

Trivia Questions for Book Three: Lucinda’s Secret

1. What did Arthur Spiderwick do for a living?
2. Besides talking in riddles, what special talent do phookas have?
3. While phookas talk in riddles, Thimbletack talks in ________.
4. What did the phooka mean when he said, “If grass can move, a boy could find himself rooted in place.”
5. Why wasn’t Jared tricked by the stray sod?

Answers to Trivia Questions for Book Three: Lucinda’s Secret

1. He illustrated advertisements. 2. They can shift shapes. 3. Rhymes. 4. He used magic powder on your eye. He popped the saucers three times to make the mirror appear. 5. Everyone is welcome here.
TRIVIA QUESTIONS FOR BOOK FOUR: The Ironwood Tree

1. What is the term used to describe fungi that give off a dim, bluish glow?
2. How did Jared protect himself against Not-Jared?
3. As Jared and Simon are being transported via cage from chamber to chamber, Jared thought he saw something on the wall move. What was it?
4. Dwarves are noted as great craftsmen. What material do they use that would hurt fairies?
5. Knockers have the ability to understand __________.
6. What does the knocker give to Jared and why?
7. When fencing, why did Jared think it was unrealistic to count only hits to the chest?
8. Who does Mallory have a crush on?
9. When Jared and Simon search for Mallory after the fencing match they find her fencing medal and an engraved stone with the word ________.
10. Who lives in the quarry?
11. Who unscrambles the words: MITES OPEL THREE TOCK KON, and what does it mean?
12. What plans do the dwarves have once Mulgarath gains control of the world?
13. What trick did the dwarves play on Jared?
14. Where did Simon and Jared hide when the dwarves thought they had escaped?
15. Simon plays ________ with the mechanical dogs.
16. Who is Not-Jared?

Answers to Trivia Questions for Book Four: The Ironwood Tree


TRIVIA QUESTIONS FOR BOOK FIVE: The Wrath of Mulgarath

1. What happened to the books in Arthur Spiderwick’s library?
2. Who did Hogsqueal save from the goblins?
3. What trick did Thimbletack use to capture Hogsqueal?
4. How was Arthur Spiderwick able to come out of the woods to speak to Jared if he was not allowed to touch the ground?
5. What flaws do ogres have that Jared was able to use to his advantage against Mulgarath?
6. While waiting to be taken to Mulgarath, Jared and Mallory watched a goblin toss something into a fire. What was it?
7. Another word for a baby dragon is __________.
8. What color are Richard Grace’s eyes?
9. What shape does Mulgarath shift into that leads him to his doom?
10. How does Jared know when to take Arthur Spiderwick’s Field Guide to the faeries?
11. Who accompanies Jared when he takes the Field Guide to the faeries?

Answers to Trivia Questions for Book Five: The Wrath of Mulgarath

1. The books had been ripped free of their bindings and scattered. 2. Simon, get help! 3. He used your idea, Mallory, and Thimbletack. 4. “Leaves were swept around them and dropped in a corner in front of him.” 5. “I’ll search the attic. Helen Grace, Simon, Thimbletack, and Mrs. Spiderwick and something has been stolen.” 6. “I don’t think so.” 7. “Yes, it’s a dragon’s egg.” 8. A dragon’s egg. 9. A dragon’s egg. 10. “I thought you might understand.”
**Trivia Questions for Arthur Spiderwick’s Field Guide to the Fantastical World Around You**

1. At night these creatures give off a faint glow, which can be confused with fireflies.
2. How many rows of teeth do manticores have?
3. A cock-a-trice is also known as a ___________.
4. What happens when one looks into a cock-a-trice’s eyes?
5. Name four other talents leprechauns have besides making shoes.
6. Why are trolls nocturnal?
7. When was the last recorded dragon slaying and by whom?
8. The offspring of a horse and a griffin is a ____________.

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**Answers to Arthur Spiderwick’s Field Guide Trivia Questions**

1. Sprites.
2. Three.
4. It will turn into stone.
5. They tailor clothes, build homes, fashion tools, and forge horseshoes. C. Squirrel will turn them back.

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**Trivia Questions for Notebook for Fantastical Observations**

1. What did Kelly L. give her brownie, Skifflewhim, to eat that made him so mad he turned into a boggart?
2. After Ross captured a lizard, why did he drop it?
3. When Eric N. went to Soltieg the dwarf’s house, what games did they play?
4. Why couldn’t Eric ever return to Soltieg the dwarf’s house?
5. What fantastical creature is most likely to warn you of a gas leak?
6. When Steven was trying to earn his Order of the Arrow badge, he witnessed an ogre changing shapes. What shapes did the ogre morph into?

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**Answers to Notebook Trivia Questions**

1. Kittylitter.
2. It was a dragon and it had bitten Ross, injecting poison into him. Z. They played a dice game with rubies, a board game with glass figurines, and a card game with card suits.

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**Trivia Questions for Care and Feeding of Sprites**

1. Which sprite of all the sprite species is considered the most aggressive and clever?
2. Name three creatures often mistaken for sprites.
3. What species of sprites carry their food on their heads?
4. When trooping faeries get together, what kind of behavior should warn you of impending trouble and why?
5. When a sprite is exhibited in a show, what qualities are the judges looking for?
6. Why should you not use perfume or scented soaps on your sprite?

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**Answers to Care and Feeding of Sprites Trivia Questions**

1. Human or humanlike.
2. Goblins, pixies, and will-o-wisps.
3. They are quiet. They are usually planning some trick. G. Smart outlook.
4. Irony and whimsy. 
5. Sprites are never allergic to most chemicals.
**Trivia Questions For Beyond the Spiderwick Chronicles**

**Book One: The Nixie’s Song**

1. What word did Nick spell with his alphabet soup?
2. The first time Nick was able to see faeries it was because A) he had red hair B) Hogsqueal spit in his eyes, or C) he had a four-leaf clover.
3. Later, what other method did Nick use to get the Sight?
4. As Nick escorts Laurie around their neighborhood, Laurie stops to go wading to look for evidence of faeries. What evidence is she looking for?
5. What did the giant think salamanders were and why did he want to eat them?
6. What is Jared and Simon Grace’s real last name?
7. How often do giants wake up?
8. How did Nick and Laurie transport the nixie back to the pond?
9. Who is able to soothe the angry giant and how?
10. Why was Nick’s father’s new car filled with sand?
11. Laurie hates her name and wishes her name was A) Gweneth B) Lauranathana, or C) Evelyn.
12. How did Nick prove to Jared Grace that he had the Sight?

**Answers to The Nixie’s Song Trivia Questions**

1. LAME. 2. C) He had a four-leaf clover. 3. Taloa submerged Nick in water she had been soaking in to gain the Sight. 4. Hoofprints in mud from a horse hearse.

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**Trivia Questions For Book Two: A Giant Problem**

1. Why did Laurie twist her hair into a braid?
2. Nick smiles when Laurie beats him in a video game. He believes Laurie is improving her ______________.
3. What Nick and Laurie believe is a thunderstorm is really ______ ______.
4. Why do giants fight?
5. Noseeum Jack is a giant killer yet he has only killed ______ ______.
6. What gift does Laurie give Jules for luck?
7. One of Nick’s favorite activities is to make models. What model did Nick’s mother give him?
8. Why did Laurie leave a bowl of milk on the brick steps to her house?
9. What message did Taloa leave for Nick and Laurie?
10. What reason does Sandspur give for getting into the trash?
11. As Noseeum Jack is led away from his house he tells Nick he has left him a present in the backyard. What is the present?
12. What is causing the giants to awaken?
13. What inspires Nick to come up with the plan to lead the giants out to sea?
14. In exchange for their help what do the mermaids demand?
15. Who or what do the mermaids hold for ransom?
16. From which sea does the “new fish” originate?
17. The name of the fish Cindy’s father gave the fish from the Red Sea was ______.
18. How does Nick capture the mermaids’ singing?
19. How do the kids learn the locations of the giants?
20. Who informs Nick that the reason the giants are waking up is to kill something else?

**Answers to A Giant Problem Trivia Questions**

Trivia Questions for Book Three: The Wyrm King

1. What is the name of the community where Nick's father is making his development?
2. What is the name of the counselor the Varcas family goes to for help?
3. What was the promise Nick gave to Sandspur?
4. What is it called when many rat tails stick together with dirt and blood and the rats start thinking as one?
5. What was in the kiddie pool behind Noseum Jack’s house?
6. What color are the nixie’s eyes?
7. Mallory jumps into a sinkhole and begins to chock. What was wrong?
8. What does Nick put into a mason jar?
9. Why can’t you build on a landfill?
10. What is worse than giants?
11. What is one difference between the dragons in Maine and the dragons in Florida?
12. Why did Jules decide not to go surfing anymore?
13. Why hadn’t Nick been swimming since his mother died?
14. What kind of wax does Cindy use on her longboard?
15. Who gave Nick a cap of ovenseagrass and what was its purpose?
16. Jared expresses an interest in drawing which fantastical creature?
17. Ibi is hurt while she is singing to the giants. How did she get hurt?
18. Describe Ibi’s singing.
19. What did Nick believe people without “The Sight” saw when the giants came out of the ocean?
20. When Jules’s car slides into a sinkhole, why does a fire start?
21. What happens to Sandspur when he falls into a sinkhole?
22. How does Laurie trick Sandspur?
23. Sandspur is not a hobgoblin, so what fantastical creature is he?
24. Jack Jr. is surprised when Nick informs him not to kill the giants. Why shouldn’t the giants be killed?

Answers to The Wyrm King Trivia Questions

1. Mangrove Hollow. 2. Dr. Teresa Gunner. 3. A. He will be set free. B. To feed him until he was full. C. To give him a bath. 4. A. A rat king. 5. Taloa and her sisters. 6. Golden. 7. The air quality was full of methanegas from the snake-like creatures. 8. A. A sprite. B. A fish. C. Three glossy black creatures whose tails were tangled together. 9. Methanegas build up, replace oxygen, and are very flammable. 10. A. Fire-breathing dragons. B. A stepbrother or sister. C. Hobgoblins. 11. Maine dragons are poisonous. One touch will burn you. Florida dragons produce methanegas. 12. The mermaids had taken him hostage underwater and he had not gotten over the experience. 13. His father thought swimming was too dangerous. 14. A. Pineapple surf wax. B. Moustache wax. C. Paraffin wax. 15. The mermaids gave Nick the cap. It allowed him to breathe and speak underwater. 16. Ibi, an nixie, is Taloa’s sister. 17. The seawater made his skin puffy and raw. 18. A. It was loud and scratchy. B. It was sweet and pure. C. Rhythmic and harsh. 19. A. An landslide of falling rocks. 20. The methanegas produced from the dragons ignited. 21. He eats the dragons and grows at an alarming rate. 22. She fed him rocks to fill him up. 23. A. A giant. B. A boggart. C. A spriggan. 24. They are needed to eat the dragons.

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Beyond the Spiderwick Chronicles Activities

1. Using a chart to help visualize the differences, compare and contrast the Grace kids versus the Vargas kids. For instance: Jared has anger issues due to a divorce, Nick has anger issues due to a marriage after the death of his mother. Both Nick and Jared think quickly to escape dangerous situations. Nick likes school but Jared hates it. Simon likes school and doing research. Laurie has an over-active imagination, Mallory doesn’t.

2. One of the themes in the books is the importance of keeping checks and balances of our environment. Explore ways in which our environment has been tilted off balance and what has been done to try to reestablish the balance. Different parts of the country and world would have different environmental issues. A universal imbalance is air pollution.

3. Simon pointed out that animals within a species could have differences. He explained that the dragons in Maine were poisonous while the dragons in Florida produced methane gas. Research an animal species and look for differences within the species. Write a report, check the report for accuracy, and correct any mistakes. As part of the reporting process have the students make a PowerPoint presentation. Present the findings to the class.

4. The nixies’ songs were described as being mesmerizing, so sweet and pure one didn’t want the music to stop. There have been many tales of sailors hearing songs while out at sea. Research to learn more of these stories. Do any of them have any definitive answers as to what the sailors heard? Cooperating with the music teacher, explore examples of mesmerizing songs. What qualities describe a mesmerizing song?

5. The nixie, Taloa, is capable of making her voice impossibly loud. In theater the actors and singers use techniques to make their voices heard over large audiences without technical help. Research how they are able to produce large voices without straining their vocal cords. Practice projecting one’s voice over large distances using these techniques. Use a dramatic scene from one of the books that has dialogue, and have the students read the lines using their new loud voices.

6. Nick wondered what it was about having “The Sight” that changes one forever. Imagine you have been given “The Sight.” What do you think you would see and how do you think that information would change the way you act? Where you live may make a difference on what you might observe. Is the fantastical world closer than you think? Write an essay on how you received your “Sight,” what you are now capable of seeing, and what you will do with this knowledge.

7. One of the themes in the Spiderwick books is that friends and family form bonds that are capable of handling any problem. Think of a time when your family or a close friend came to your assistance. In story form, write about the experience and how it made an impression on you.

8. One of the drawings Jared took from Noseeum Jack’s house, as reproduced in the book, was of a creature with several heads. Research the word Hydra and especially research the connection of a hydra with Hercules. Compare and contrast the two drawings.

9. Simon was fascinated with researching rat kings. Using the Internet, research rat kings. There are many images of rat kings available on the Internet. Share the information found with the other students in the class.

10. Tony DiTerlizzi and Holly Black do research before writing and illustrating their books. Explore the world of fairy tales and myths to find references to the fantastical world. Using these bits of information, incorporate them into your own story. At the end of The Wyrm King there is a note reminding you to keep a pen and paper at hand, for your own fairy tale may begin sooner than you think.
Read it before you see it!
You’ve read the books and now you are going to view the movie. STOP! WAIT!
Before watching the movie, do a simple drawing of a main character in the books. Describe in your own words how you envision the character to look and act from the images and descriptive words in the book.

Now that you have seen the movie:
• Look at your drawing and reread your written description of the character you chose. Did the character in the movie look and act the way you thought it would?
• Using a Venn Diagram compare and contrast The Spiderwick Chronicles books to The Spiderwick Chronicles movie.
• Choose a main event from one of the books. Retell the events of the story in sequence. Compare the same event in the movie. Was the sequence of events the same in both the book and movie?
• Were there events missing? If there were missing events, what were they?
• Did they add events in the movie that are not in the book? If they did, what were they?
• Write a characterization of a character from one of the books. Use evidence from the book to prove your point.
• Write a characterization of the same character from the movie. Use evidence from the movie to prove your point of view.
• There are visual effects in The Spiderwick Chronicles movie. Were the characters created by visual effects made to look realistic? Defend your opinion with evidence from the movie. Did the actors portray their characters realistically?
• What was your favorite part of the movie? Defend your opinion with evidence from the movie. Was it the same part that you enjoyed in the books?
Guide prepared by Spiderwick enthusiast Lynn Dobson, librarian at East Brookfield Elementary School, East Brookfield, MA.