



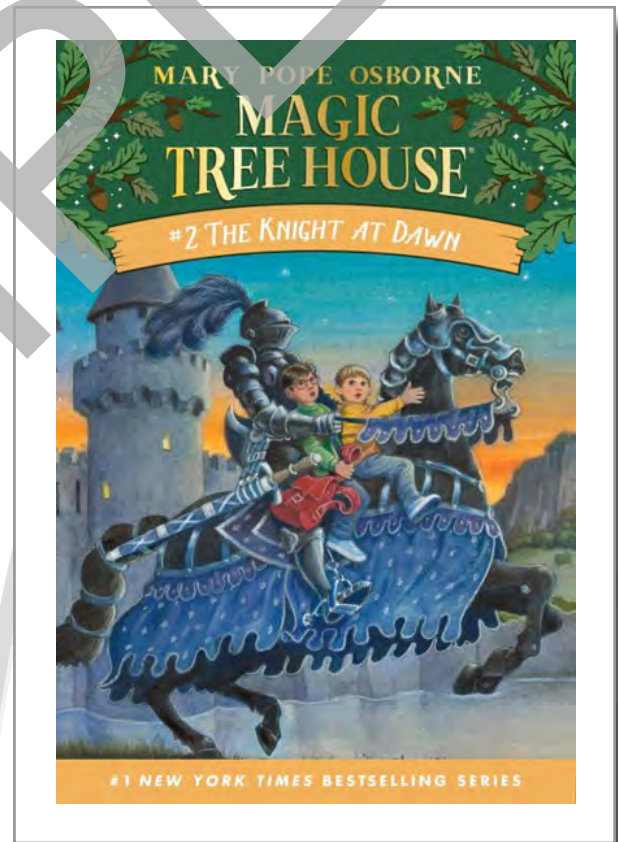
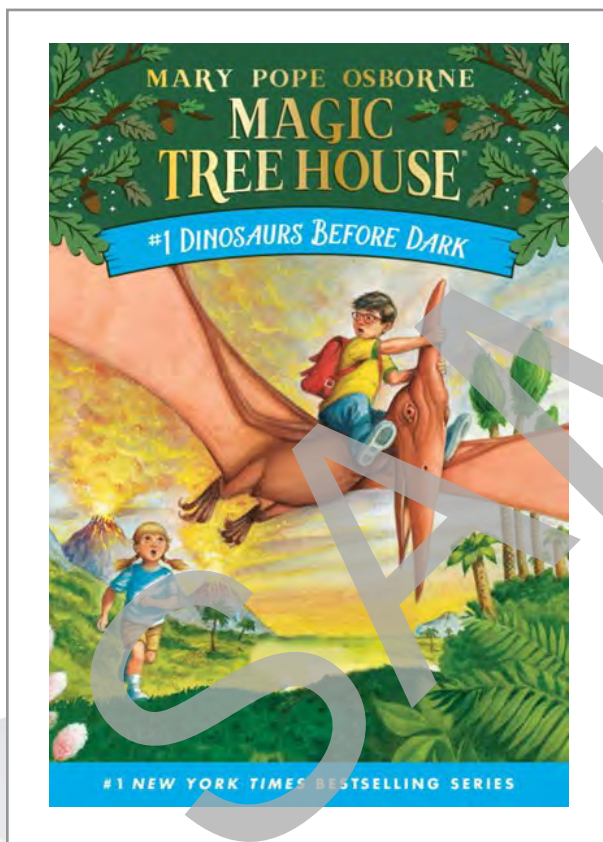
COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Dinosaurs Before Dark

Mary Pope Osborne

The Knight at Dawn

Mary Pope Osborne



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Dinosaurs Before Dark

The Knight at Dawn

Mary Pope Osborne

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Summaries

Dinosaurs Before Dark begins the story of eight-year-old Jack and his seven-year-old sister, Annie. One day, Annie discovers a rope ladder leading up to a tree house in the woods. The tree house is filled with books. Jack and Annie examine the books, and Jack wishes he could see a dinosaur like the one in his book. Suddenly, a dinosaur appears outside the tree house, and the children find themselves swept into the time of the dinosaurs! So begins their adventure in dinosaur land, where they meet some friendly and not-so-friendly creatures before wishing themselves back home.

The Knight at Dawn continues Jack and Annie's adventures in the magic tree house. During another trip to the tree house, Annie wishes to see a knight on a black horse like the one in her book. Jack and Annie soon find themselves inside a castle, where a great feast is being held. As they explore the castle, they are discovered by the castle guards. The guards chase Jack and Annie, but the knight on the black horse rescues them and brings them back to the tree house. Annie wishes them back home, and Jack ponders the mystery of the magic tree house.

About the Author

Mary Pope Osborne was born on May 20, 1949, in Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Her father was in the military, and by the age of 15, Mary had lived in Oklahoma, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, and Austria. When her father retired, the family settled in North Carolina. Mary studied drama and religion at the University of North Carolina, where she graduated in the early 1970s. After graduation, she worked as a window dresser, medical assistant, and Russian travel consultant. Mary soon met and married her husband, Will Osborne. After marriage, she worked as a waitress, a bartender, an assistant editor for a children's magazine, and an acting coach in a nursing home.

One day, Mary began writing a story about an 11-year-old girl in the South. After the story's publication, Mary knew that she wanted to be a full-time writer. During a visit to the country with her husband, Mary saw an old, worn-down tree house. She imagined the tree house was magic, and her *Magic Tree House* series was born. Since then, Mary Pope Osborne has written over 30 *Magic Tree House* books, as well as many other books for children and young adults. She currently lives with her husband in Goshen, Connecticut.

Bulletin Board Activities

1. Cover a large bulletin board with white paper. Have students use crayons or colored pencils to draw an adventure they would like to have. Hold a class discussion about whether the students' choices are fantasy or reality.
2. Display a classroom chart entitled "Magic Places." Have students create their own illustrations or cut pictures from a magazine to describe a place they believe is magic. Fill the chart with students' pictures. Encourage students to construct their own interpretations of magic. Responses can be a make-believe place, e.g., the city of Oz, or a real place, e.g., a library.

Name _____

Word Jumble

chirping (6)
whinny (13)

mysterious (7)
situation (14)

neighing (12)
misty (16)

armor (12)

Directions: Rearrange each set of letters below to make a vocabulary word from the list.

1. r m a r o _____

2. g i h n n i g e _____

3. t u o s i a t i n _____

4. i h p c i r n g _____

5. y m s i t _____

6. s t i r u s o y m e _____

7. n h y i n w _____

Dinosaurs Before Dark
Chapters 1–2, pp. 1–12

Vocabulary
teeny (3)
peering (6)
ancient (8)
reptile (8)
crest (9)
glider plane (9)
slanted (12)

Discussion Questions

1. How does Jack feel about his younger sister Annie? (*He thinks she is childish. p. 1*)
2. What time of day is it when the story begins? How do you know? (*late afternoon or early evening; The sun is about to set. p. 2*)
3. What do Jack and Annie find in the woods? (*a rope ladder leading up to a tree house, pp. 2–3*)
4. How do Jack and Annie feel about finding the tree house? What does this say about each child's character? (*Jack thinks they should just go home since they don't know whom the tree house*

belongs to. Annie wants to climb the rope ladder and explore the tree house. Jack is responsible, and Annie is carefree and adventurous. pp. 3–4)

5. What causes Jack to climb up to the tree house? (*Annie tells him that the tree house is filled with books. Jack loves books. p. 5*)
6. Describe the books in the tree house. (*Some are old with dusty covers. Some are new with shiny, bright covers. Some of the books have bookmarks in them. pp. 6–7*)
7. Which book interests Jack? What does he do with this book? (*a dinosaur book; Jack wishes he could see a dinosaur like the one in the book. pp. 8–9*)
8. What happens after Jack makes his wish? (*A dinosaur appears outside the tree house, and the tree house begins to spin. pp. 9–12*)

Supplementary Activities

1. Research: Read about the Pteranodon. Raise your hand and share the things you learned.
2. Writing: Write a sentence telling how you would feel if you saw a real dinosaur in your backyard.

Chapters 3–4, pp. 13–23

Vocabulary
ferns (13)
stammered (13)
vanished (15)
examine (18)
alert (19)
cautiously (19)
mutant (22)

Discussion Questions

1. Where do you think the dinosaur came from? (*Answers will vary.*)
2. Compare and contrast Jack's and Annie's reactions to seeing the real dinosaur. (*Both children seem excited and nervous. Jack is in disbelief, and Annie wants to talk to the dinosaur. pp. 14–17*)
3. How does Annie behave after climbing down the rope ladder? (*bravely, p. 18*)