

**Teacher Guide**

**Grades 7–8**

# **Inkheart**

**Cornelia Funke**

 **NOVEL UNITS**<sup>®</sup>



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WRITING, & CRITICAL THINKING**



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# INKHEART

by  
Cornelia Funke

## Teacher Guide

Written by  
Linda Herman

### Note

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**Please note:** Parts of this novel deal with sensitive, mature issues. Please assess the appropriateness of this book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading and discussing it with them.

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## Skills and Strategies

### Comprehension

Predicting, inferring, problem solving, summarizing, supporting judgments, cause/effect

### Literary Elements

Characterization, story mapping, setting, conflict, theme, point of view, author's purpose, figurative language, genre

### Vocabulary

Syllables, definitions, synonyms, root words, target words

### Listening/Speaking

Discussion, debate, presentation, performance

### Writing

Creative writing, personal narrative, poetry, essay

### Critical Thinking

Brainstorming, research, compare/contrast, analysis, evaluation

### Across the Curriculum

Literature—classics, techniques, authors, epigraphs, publishing logos, book anatomy, time line, elvish languages; Social Studies—history, culture, superstitions; Science—bookworms, olive trees, venomous snakes, wildfires, animal behavior; Music—composition, soundtrack; Art—design, illustration

nothing more than to escape into the story to forget her problems. Meggie focuses on the story and the words, so much so that she extracts Tinker Bell from the story. By wishing she could fly away like the fairy, Meggie makes a connection between her life and Tinker Bell's. This connection and Meggie's needs seem to be vital links to her success.)

14. **Prediction:** How will Tinker Bell affect the story?
15. **Prediction:** What will Capricorn do with Meggie now that he has discovered her gift?

### Supplementary Activities

1. **Speaking:** Debate the positive and negative effects of wildfires. Choose either the position that wildfires should be allowed to burn naturally as an important part of some ecosystems' natural cycles or that wildfires should be contained as quickly as possible to reduce harm to humans and the environment. Form teams to prepare your arguments, and then participate in a classroom debate.
2. **Literary Elements:** Use the ideas in the Character Buzzword chart on page 38 of this guide to create a character. Consider what information a writer needs to know about characters but would not necessarily include in a story.
3. **Critical Thinking:** Imagine that Mo invites you to the character you created in Supplementary Activity #2. Write a dialogue between yourself (as the writer) and your character. Discuss your thoughts and feelings about each other.
4. **Drama:** Working with a small group, write and stage a scene from the play *Peter and Wendy* by J. M. Barrie. Act out appropriate costumes, background music, and lighting.

### The Punishment for Traitors, Evoked in the Dead of Night

In two days' time, Capricorn expects Meggie to read the Shadow and Immortal Monster, out of *Inkheart* to execute Dorothea and Resa as traitors. As Farid sets out to look for Dustfinger, Mo gives him a coded message for Meggie. Darius tells Meggie that he had Resa from *Inkheart*, and Meggie deduces that Resa is her mother, Teresa. Meggie passes Mortola's test, reading the tin soldier out of *Collectanea*, *Tales of Hans Christian Andersen*. Gwan delivers Mo's message and leaves with Meggie's response. Fenoglio makes a deal with Mortola: paper and a pen in return for a hex on Mortola. Inspired by Mo, Fenoglio plans to write a new ending to *Inkheart*.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why does Capricorn assume Meggie is angry with Mo? What does he mean when he says, "Hatred can be very inspiring" (p. 371)? (*Capricorn assumes Meggie is angry with Mo for abandoning her. Because Capricorn disliked his father, he assumes Meggie feels the same hatred toward Mo. Answers will vary. Strong emotions motivate people. Capricorn is driven by the hatred of his abusive childhood and hatred of others.*)
2. How does Capricorn feel about Resa? Is this surprising? (*Capricorn seems fond of Resa. Not only is she beautiful, but because she can't speak, he trusts her. Capricorn acts reluctant about executing Resa as a traitor but sees no alternative, especially with Mortola pushing him. Answers will vary. Discussion could include that writers usually give villains one decent characteristic or weakness because rarely is one person completely evil.*)

Vocabulary	
frenzied	
disdainful	
execution	
pitiless	
bugbears	
timidity	
tentatively	
niches	
sarcophagus	
inexhaustible	
impenetrable	
legible	
exotic	

- Why was Fenoglio proud of his written description of the Shadow? How does Fenoglio feel now? *(Answers will vary. The passage is wonderfully descriptive, making the Shadow sound terrifying. Now, Fenoglio does not want the burden of knowing he brought an immortal monster into the real world.)*
- Why does Meggie think Resa is her mother? *(Resa looks like the woman in the old photo she carries with him. Meggie believes Darius read her mother from the photo, and that the reason Resa lost her voice is because Darius is not as good a reader as Mo.)*
- Why is Meggie reacting to Mortola? Why does she agree to read “Capriccio” orders Meggie to read a character out of a story as a test before she reads the Shadow from the book. Meggie agrees to read because Fenoglio wants her to “save” the tin soldier from the story and to ask for paper and a pen.

Meggie would worry if he knew Resa was going to be arrested and might do something rash. Meggie may not want to distract Mo from his original plan. She may also be thinking of her earlier feelings of jealousy concerning her mother. She may be unsure of her emotions or trying to keep Mo to herself for a while longer. Meggie has many conflicting feelings about her mother, but she is certain she would not be able to swim for Mo.)

- What information does Resa want from Dustfinger? How does Dustfinger feel about her questions? *(Resa wants to know if Silvertongue is her husband and if Meggie is her daughter. Dustfinger knows he will lose Resa once she reunites with Mo and Meggie. He justifies withholding information and attempting to take Resa from Mo to keep her out of his world. Dustfinger regards his facial expressions; he does not want Resa to know his feelings for her.)*
- Why does Farid feel awkward with Mo? *(Farid is not accustomed to people worrying about him or asking his opinion. He feels awkward when Mo expresses concern about his welfare and embarrassed when Mo praises him for being clever.)*
- What does Fenoglio mean when he says, “...the magic of the written word. Nothing is more powerful for good or evil...” (p. 415)? How is the written word powerful? *(Fenoglio is mocking Basta and his superstitions while reminding Basta that he created him. As a writer, Fenoglio understands the magic power of words. Authors create new stories or relay information and connect with their readers through writing. Answers will vary. Writing is used to compose works that hide truths. Readers are influenced by what they read.)*
- How is Fenoglio’s deal with Basta ironic? *(Fenoglio mocks Basta for his superstitions such as spitting. Yet Fenoglio spits on the nine pieces of paper that, according to Basta, will put a hex on Mortola. Basta does not realize that Fenoglio is preying on the ridiculousness of his superstitions.)*
- How is the tin soldier’s story a “trial run” for Fenoglio? Will he and Meggie know if the experiment is a complete success? *(Fenoglio is experimenting with Mo’s idea of changing a character’s fate by rewriting a story. If the experiment works, Meggie should be able to read the tin soldier back into a story with a new, appealing ending. Answers will vary. Fenoglio and Meggie know the experiment works when the tin soldier disappears; however, they have no way of knowing whether the experiment worked exactly as they planned.)*

12. “I, Fenoglio, master of words, enchanter in ink, sorcerer on paper. I made Capricorn and I shall destroy him as if he’d never existed—which I have to admit would have been better” (p. 421)! What does Fenoglio’s declaration tell you about him? *(Answers will vary. The power of creating and changing characters thrills Fenoglio. Yet, he also realizes the problems his characters are causing and feels responsible. Fenoglio is excited about using his power as an author to remedy the unfortunate circumstances that have occurred.)*
13. Compare the story of Gwydyon, his nephew, and Blodeuedd with Fenoglio’s plans to change the Shadow. Do you see any possible problems? *(Answers will vary. Fenoglio uses this Welsh tale to explain how his revisions and Meggie’s reading will change the Shadow, rendering the monster incapable of performing the way Capricorn expects. However, Fenoglio seems to assume that he can control the Shadow. Fenoglio sees the benefits of Blodeuedd acting unexpectedly but does not want to consider that unexpected actions by the Shadow could have unforeseen results.)*
14. **Prediction:** Will the Shadow act as Fenoglio expects?
15. **Prediction:** How will Meggie react?

### Supplemental Activities

1. Research: Research J. R. R. Tolkien’s invented languages, and then complete one of the following: a) create a visual display about Tolkien’s elvish languages (with brief written descriptions), b) learn how to write using Tolkien’s Tengwar script by installing elvish fonts on your computer, or c) invent a language of your own.
2. Comprehension: Dustfinger tells stories by writing half a sentence, which Dustfinger then finishes. Write the opening to a story about a stranger arriving in a new world. Write for five minutes, and then exchange papers with the student next to you. Add to the story you received. Continue exchanging papers and adding to others’ stories. Return each story to its original writer. Write a conclusion to the story you started, and read the finished stories aloud.
3. Art: Read another scene from *The Graveyard Book*, the Roald Dahl book mentioned in the epigraph for Chapter 40. Illustrate your scene on a separate sheet of paper.
4. Literary Analysis: Select a 75- to 100-word passage from this section, and explain the author’s purpose in writing the passage.

# Vocabulary Target Word Chart

**Target Word**

What is it?

What is it used for?

Where do you find it?

**Target Word**

What is it?

What is it used for?

Where do you find it?

**Target Word**

What is it?

What is it used for?

Where do you find it?



## Character Web

**Directions:** Complete the attribute web by filling in information specific to a character in the novel.

