



Humanities

# Teaching Literature in the Tenth Grade

*Terry Pratchett's Discworld Novels as an Introduction to Classic English Literature*

ENS001F Thesis for an MA degree in English

Valgerður Guðrún Bjarkadóttir

January 2009

University of Iceland

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English

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**To my family for their support and Inga Sóley for introducing me to Terry  
Pratchett's Discworld novels.**

## Summary

This thesis suggests that the Discworld novels by Terry Pratchett may be used to introduce tenth graders in Icelandic compulsory schools to classic English literature, in addition to providing a definition of fantasy and how the Discworld novels fit into that definition. I suggest that this can be accomplished by introducing the students to the fantasy genre, to which the Discworld novels belong. The Discworld novels are parodic fantasy novels and through them the students will be exposed to the classic themes, plots and characters of more traditional English literature. The thesis focuses on the use of three Discworld novels: *Eric*, *Wyrd Sisters* and *Lords and Ladies*. These three novels are, respectively, parodies of Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* and Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and therefore provide an excellent springboard to these three classic plays. Motivational reading activities, such as classroom dialogue; peer and self-assessments, and task based learning along with video and audio stimulations are used to create instruction guides for teaching each of the three Discworld novels. These activities are applied to the pre-, during and post reading assignments. Students are encouraged to become more responsible for their studies as they become more involved in assessing their schoolwork and abilities. To help those students with reading disabilities and further motivate less skilled readers, the instruction guides include video adaptations of the plays that the novels are parodying as well as other related material. Additionally there are recommendations for secondary reading of works with plots, themes or subject matter that are similar to the three Discworld novels discussed in the thesis.

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# 1 Introduction

This thesis will examine the applicability of the Discworld novels by Terry Pratchett as a means to introduce tenth graders in Icelandic compulsory schools to classic English literature, in addition to providing a definition of fantasy and how the Discworld novels fit into that definition. First the students are introduced to the fantasy genre, to which the Discworld novels belong. The Discworld novels are parodic fantasy novels and can provide a bridge to more traditional English literature as the second chapter fully examines. The focus of the thesis is on three Discworld novels: *Eric*, *Wyrd Sisters* and *Lords and Ladies*. These three novels are, respectively, parodies of Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* and Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and therefore provide an excellent springboard to the plays. In the first chapter motivational reading activities, such as classroom dialogue, student assessment, and task based activities as well as video and audio stimulations are explored and incorporated into instruction guides based on each of the three novels. The author of the Discworld series, Terry Pratchett is also introduced to the reader in the first chapter. The third chapter gives a literary analyses of each of the three Discworld novels and how to apply the learning activities discussed in the first chapter to the pre-, during and post reading assignments, such as reading comprehension exercises, creative writing, and translation and spelling exercises. The students are encouraged to become more responsible for their own learning by becoming more involved in assessing their own schoolwork. To help those students with reading disabilities and further motivate less skilled readers, the instruction guides include watching adaptations of the plays the novels are parodying as well as other related material. Video stimulation breaks up the monotony in the classroom, eases the stress that is often part of reading in a foreign language and puts the students on more equal footing with regards to the material. Secondary reading recommendations are also provided, which have similar plot outlines, similarity in theme or subject matter to each Discworld novel that has been completed. These

recommendations are for the students' pleasure reading and so there are no study guides attached to them other than suggestions about the reading skill the students need to read the novels as well as alternative suggestions to reading, such as films and audio CDs. The instruction guides presented in this thesis are in accordance to the National Curriculum Guidelines for teaching English in the tenth grade in Icelandic compulsory schools.

## ***1.1 Teaching Literature to Teenagers in a Foreign Language***

The National Curriculum Guidelines for students in the tenth grade learning English are abilities orientated.<sup>1</sup> Foreign language acquisition is seen as providing the students with an insight into other cultures and to promote tolerance.<sup>2</sup> The National Curriculum Guidelines puts great emphasis on the students being able to speak the foreign language and encourages every avenue that encourages the students' use of the language.<sup>3</sup> While the students are learning the English language, however, they ought to be aware of the links the English language has to Great Britain and the United States of America, as well as the rest of the English speaking world.<sup>4</sup> Language teaching in Icelandic compulsory schools is built up in such a way as to give the students the necessary skills to communicate in a foreign language and "understand the language as it is used in everyday life".<sup>5</sup> Tenth graders "should be able to read literature, novels, poems, short stories (for example, English novels for adolescents, easily accessible novels intended for English speakers, romances, thrillers)".<sup>6</sup> This is the level of skill the previous school years should have placed tenth graders and this thesis is aimed at the general population of students, while it is understood that a portion of every class is less advanced in their acquisition of the English language, due to a variety of reasons ranging from a lack of interest to severe learning disabilities, for example dyslexia. It is clear that to motivate students to read more is needed than just a book.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, *Erlend Tungumál: Aðalnámskerá Grunnskóla 1999*, Online 20 Sept. 2008 at < <http://bella.mrn.stjr.is/utgafur/AGerlendtungumal.pdf>>.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, *Erlend Tungumál: Aðalnámskerá Grunnskóla 1999*, internet.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, *Erlend Tungumál: Aðalnámskerá Grunnskóla 1999*, internet.

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, *Erlend Tungumál: Aðalnámskerá Grunnskóla 1999*, internet.

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, *Erlend Tungumál: Aðalnámskerá Grunnskóla 1999*, internet, a translation of the following: "skilja málið eins og það er notað við raunverulegar aðstæður".

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, *Erlend Tungumál: Aðalnámskerá Grunnskóla 1999*, internet, a translation of the following: "geta lesið bókmenntir, skáldsögur, ljóð, smásögur (t.d. enskar unglíngabækur, aðgengilegar skáldsögur ætlaðar enskumælandi, ástarsögur, reyfara)".



The students' interest in the material has to be sparked or their self-esteem stimulated by the learning activities.

## ***1.2 Motivating Students to Read***

Placing a book in front of students and telling them to read it is no guarantee that the student will do so or if the student does, that it will be done with interest in the material beyond its function as preparation for examinations.<sup>7</sup> Therefore the students may still be unmoved to acquire a second language or to have found no merit in the material provided for those purposes.<sup>8</sup>

Motivation for acquiring a second language can roughly be put in two categories:<sup>9</sup> the first one is that the second language will assist the student on a professional and/or an academic level.<sup>10</sup>

These “utilitarian factors” are part of the national curriculum for the upper secondary schools.<sup>11</sup>

In the second category is the “integrative factor” where the student might feel some connection to the “other cultural group and [its] way of life”.<sup>12</sup> There are also self-motivated students.<sup>13</sup>

Although different motivational factors can be utilised when introducing tenth graders or levels above to English literature, the following motivational activities are aimed at the last category.

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<sup>7</sup>Janice Hartwick Dressel, *Teaching and Learning about Multicultural Literature: Students Reading Outside Their Culture in a Middle School Classroom* (Newark: International Reading Association, 2003), pp. 13-14, 36.

<sup>8</sup> Dressel, pp. 9-10, 13-14, 36.

<sup>9</sup>Zoltán Dörnyei and Richard Clément, “Motivational Characteristics of Learning Different Target Languages: Results of a Nationwide Survey” in *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition*, eds. Zoltán Dörnyei and Richard Schmidt (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2001), p. 400; Robert C. Gardner, “Integrative Motivation and Second Language Acquisition” in *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition*, eds. Zoltán Dörnyei and Richard Schmidt (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2001), pp. 1-2.

<sup>10</sup> Dörnyei and Clément, p. 400.

<sup>11</sup> *Erlend Tungumál: Aðalnámskerá Frambaldsskóla* (Reykjavík: Menntamálaráðuneytið, 1999), p. 19.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Gardner, pp. 1-2, 5-6.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Gardner, p. 6.

In a class of mixed skill levels, it is vital that all of the students foresee something that will interest them sufficiently to keep up with the class and participate in “classroom dialogue”, despite anxieties connected with “[using] the second language in classroom, or non-classroom contexts”.<sup>14</sup> As Kyösti Julkunen states in “Situation- and Task-Specific Motivation in Foreign Language Learning”, “Teaching and learning can be experienced either as being motivating or demotivating” and this means that the tasks set for the students must vary in difficulty, and to avoid monotony in the classroom, the use of text books needs to be broken up with the aid of non-paper sources, such as the internet, audio or dialogue exercises or, if possible, watching the material performed.<sup>15</sup> As the students participate more in both dialogue and “peer and self-assessment” they are forced to really think about what they are studying and how they are doing.<sup>16</sup>

Taking into account the stressful situation language learning can be “to low-achieving students” it is vital to have a wide range of materials in order that everyone is motivated to participate.<sup>17</sup> Deviating from strictly printed materials to audio and video materials is a good way to motivate students, as the internet, television and radio are part of students’ environment outside the classroom.<sup>18</sup> Audio and video materials are useful so that students get used to hearing English spoken by native speakers, and visual stimulation can help provide the students with a better understanding of the written materials.<sup>19</sup> Concerning source materials being superior to

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<sup>14</sup> John Gardner, *Assessment and Learning: Theory, Policy and Practice*, ed. John Gardner (London: Sage, 2005), pp. 14-16; Robert Gardner, p. 8.

<sup>15</sup> Kyösti Julkunen, “Situation- and Task-Specific Motivation in Foreign Language Learning” in *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition*, eds. Zoltán Dörnyei and Richard Schmidt (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2001), p. 29.

<sup>16</sup> John Gardner, pp. 14-17.

<sup>17</sup> Julkunen, pp. 31, 33.

<sup>18</sup> Julkunen, p. 29.

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, *The National Guide for Compulsory School: General Section*, Online 27 Oct. 2008 at < <http://bella.mrn.stjr.is/utgafur/general.pdf>>; Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, *Erlend Tungumál: Aðalnámskrá Grunnskóla 1999*, internet.

their adaptations, this is a very debatable subject and one where personal opinions factor greatly.<sup>20</sup> Adaptations are always linked to their sources and openly so, while the method or tools used to adapt the texts or source material varies and can often improve on the source material although this is not always the case.<sup>21</sup>

Having the necessary materials is not enough in itself to motivate students to learn. Motivation can come from simply being able to finish an assignment or able to participate without the fear of having misunderstood the text, hence the importance of the audio and video material. In Julkunen's essay, "Situation- and Task-Specific Motivation in Foreign Language Learning", he lists eight factors that are typical of enjoyable tasks and amongst those listed is the completion of a task that is clearly set up and getting "immediate feedback".<sup>22</sup> This should be taken into account when finding ways to assess the students and is linked to the ideas of "classroom dialogue", which gives the students time to answer questions and forces the teacher to open up the discussion and treat wrong answers with care and not outright dismissal.<sup>23</sup> While it can be difficult get the students to participate initially, due to shyness or stress, participation in the discussion can motivate the students to read if only to be able to contribute to the dialogue. This leads to "feedback through marking" that is based on giving comments without grades because students are more likely to focus on the grade and disregard the commentary.<sup>24</sup> Giving the students pointers rather than grades will help them focus their studies in a more proactive manner and is connected to the concept of "peer and self-assessment", which is critical to help students understand the goal of learning and how to get to that goal, and by assessing their peers

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<sup>20</sup> Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), p. 3

<sup>21</sup> Hutcheon, pp. 3, 7.

<sup>22</sup> Julkunen, p.34

<sup>23</sup> John Gardner, p. 14.

<sup>24</sup> John Gardner, pp. 14-15.

the students are better able to assess their own work.<sup>25</sup> By having clearer goals the students are more likely to be motivating to read.<sup>26</sup> Finally, there is the “formative use of summative tests” where the students participate by suggesting topics for a test that enables them to prepare strategically for a test and so helps the students “restructure their knowledge to build in new and more powerful ideas”.<sup>27</sup> It should be noted that the concept of “formative use of summative tests” is used as the concept of “peer and self-assessment”, to get the students to participate in formulating assignments; this helps them see how they have focused their studies and as the students read more, the more they can contribute to the rest of the class, to the assignments and the assessment of their own progress.<sup>28</sup> The knowledge that the students can have a say in the organization of assignments can translate into motivation for them to read.

By using the motivational tools such as task completion, classroom dialogues, and student participation in formulating tasks and assessing them to further the English acquisition of tenth graders and at the same time introduce them to English literature, I propose to use the Discworld novels by Terry Pratchett; *Eric*, *Wyrd Sisters*, and *Lords and Ladies*. These three novels will act as mediators of to the classical plays by Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragic History of Doctor Faustus* and William Shakespeare’s *The Tragedy of Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, respectively, which the novels parody while providing an introduction to the fantasy genre.

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<sup>25</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

<sup>26</sup> Dörnyei and Clément, p. 400.

<sup>27</sup> John Gardner, pp. 15-16.

<sup>28</sup> John Gardner, pp. 15-16.

### ***1.3 Terry Pratchett: The Author of the Discworld Novels***

In order to appreciate Terry Pratchett's Discworld novels better and to provide information about him that can be used in the instruction guides for *Eric*, *Wyrd Sisters* and *Lords and Ladies*, this chapter will briefly introduce a Terry Pratchett biography. Terry Pratchett was born in Britain, more precisely in Buckinghamshire in 1948.<sup>29</sup> Pratchett still resides in Britain; he is married, and has one daughter.<sup>30</sup> Terry Pratchett is quoted in an interview with the BBC saying that “[fantasy] allows you to reflect things happening in our world by looking at it in a slightly distorting mirror”.<sup>31</sup> Pratchett is second only to J.K. Rowling as Britain's most read author and is the most “shop-lifted author” in the UK.<sup>32</sup> However, he was not an active reader until he was ten years old but after that the world of books opened for him, and Pratchett cites *Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame as the first book to really influence him.<sup>33</sup> He found the weird and strange playfulness that characterises *Wind in the Willows* really inspired him to read more and ever since Pratchett has delighted in “the strangeness of the everyday”, as may be seen in all of his novels.<sup>34</sup>

Pratchett started his writing career early, as he was only thirteen when he was first published.<sup>35</sup> As a young man, Terry Pratchett worked as a journalist and has always seen himself

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<sup>29</sup> “Terry Pratchett's Hogfather”, Online 20 Oct. 2008 at:  
<<http://www.skyone.co.uk/hogfather/terrypratchett.htm>>.

<sup>30</sup> “Terry Pratchett”, Online 20 Oct. 2008 at  
<[http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Terry\\_Pratchett&oldid=245695919](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Terry_Pratchett&oldid=245695919)>.

<sup>31</sup> “Pratchett's Rich Vision”, Online 20 Oct. 2008 at <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/2122514.stm>>.

<sup>32</sup> “Pratchett's Rich Vision” internet.

<sup>33</sup> “Pratchett's Rich Vision” internet.

<sup>34</sup> Sally Weale, “Life on Planet Pratchett”, Online 20 Oct. 2008 at  
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2002/nov/08/sciencefictionfantasyandhorror.terrypratchett>>.

<sup>35</sup> “Pratchett's Rich Vision” internet.

more as a journalist than a writer.<sup>36</sup> However, it was as a press officer for the Central Electricity Generating Board, working closely with the nuclear industry around the time “when confidence in nuclear power was at an all-time low”, that Pratchett supported himself and his family until the success of the Discworld series.<sup>37</sup> Since 1987, Pratchett has been able to focus on his writing and make a living doing so.<sup>38</sup> To date his imaginary world, the Discworld, has been covered in about thirty-six novels, and this is not counting graphic novels, stage adaptations of his novels and collaborations.<sup>39</sup> Pratchett has been a highly prolific writer and has published on average two novels a year.

Terry Pratchett is quoted in an interview with Sally Weale from the *Guardian* in 2002 that he would rather have a bestseller than a Booker Award, for his journalistic background instilled in him the determination to get his message across to as many people as possible *and* get paid.<sup>40</sup> However, Pratchett has not gone without his share of recognition and in 1998, he was awarded an OBE for his contribution to literature and in 2002 Pratchett won the Carnegie Medal for Children’s Literature for his novel *The Amazing Maurice and his Educated Rodents*, which takes place in Discworld.<sup>41</sup> That same year Pratchett succeeded in being “the only author to have topped adult and children's lists simultaneously”.<sup>42</sup> In December of 2007, Terry Pratchett announced that he was suffering from a rare form of Alzheimer’s disease: Posterior Cortical Atrophy, or PCA.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> “Pratchett’s Rich Vision” internet; Sally Weale, internet.

<sup>37</sup> Sally Weale, internet.

<sup>38</sup> Terry Pratchett, *Wyrd Sisters* (London: Corgi Books, 1998), p. 1. All further references in the text (in parentheses) are to this edition, abbreviated WS.

<sup>39</sup> “Terry Pratchett’s The Colour of Magic”, Online 20 Oct. 2008 at <<http://www.skyoneonline.co.uk/tcom/index.html>>.

<sup>40</sup> Sally Weale, internet.

<sup>41</sup> Sally Weale, internet.

<sup>42</sup> Sally Weale, internet.

<sup>43</sup> “An Ailing Brain with an Imagination Undimmed”, Online 20 Oct. 2008 at <[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/magazine/7560713.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/7560713.stm)>.

He has since been a vocal advocate of better funding to study the disease and to erase the stigma attached to dementia patients.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> “An Ailing Brain with an Imagination Undimmed”, internet.

## 2 Discworld

The Discworld is a disc-shaped world carried by four elephants standing on the back of a giant space turtle called Great A'Tuin; it is orbited by a sun and a moon, and is on the very edge of reality.<sup>45</sup> Terry Pratchett's Discworld is the location of a number of novels that parody or show distorted mirror images of works of literature, films, events, issues and people. It is very Anglo-centric, so that the reader benefits from being aware of the general history of Britain and its literature, as well as knowledge of Western history and contemporary issues, such as racism, urban living, integrative societies, and the workings of democracy within a monarchy to name a few. That the Discworld novels deal with issues that are often very Anglo-centric, and therefore give insight into cultural issues, is an extra bonus for English language learners in Iceland considering that the national curriculum for compulsory schools in Iceland states that it is vital to “uphold the traditional links to the UK and the USA” as well as to give “insight into the culture that fostered the language” when learning English.<sup>46</sup>

The Discworld series began with the novel *The Colour of Magic*, first published in 1983, and its sequel *The Light Fantastic* from 1986. These novels parody the traditions of many of the fantasy novels that had preceded them, such as the novels about Conan the Barbarian, Anne McCaffrey's Dragonriders of Pern series, *Lord of the Rings* and many more. These two novels have since been adapted into a television miniseries in 2008. In both *The Colour of Magic* and *The Light Fantastic* Pratchett places the Discworld firmly in the realm of fantasy literature, although they are parodical in nature. The series can be read as being pure fantasy novels, as it is not necessary to be aware of the elements being parodied and this is especially true of the later novels that are

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<sup>45</sup>Terry Pratchett and Stephen Briggs, *The New Discworld Companion: the Fully Revised and Updated Reference Book to All Things Discworldian* (London: Gollancz, 2003), pp. 78-80, 91-92.

<sup>46</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Erlend Tungumál: *Aðalnámskerá Grunnskóla 1999*, internet., a translation of the following: “viðhalda hefðbundnum tengslum við Bretland og Bandaríkin”, p. 17 and of: “innsýn í menningu sem bundin er tungumálinu”, p. 7.



perhaps darker or more mature in their subject matters. Pratchett has split the Discworld series into internal serials that can be put into five categories: Rincewind; the City Watch; the Witches; Death; Moist Von Lipwig; and independent novels (although these novels will usually have characters that interlink with one or more of the internal serials).

The Discworld has, as many fantasy novels do, what seems to be a nostalgia for simpler, better, less frightening times. Although considering the nature of Pratchett's novels it might just be a convenient way to leave out cell phones. The series has a medieval to prehistoric aura (e.g. the fashion, relations of the sexes, technology, etc.), which is natural as the series started by spoofing earlier fantasy novels that take place in 'past-like' worlds. In the adaptation of *The Colour of Magic* and *The Light Fantastic*, *The Colour of Magic* (2008), the producers chose to cast Sean Astin, who played Sam in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, as Twoflower, the Discworld's first and most enthusiastic traveller. This is a reminder of the novels' parodic nature, as Sam was the most reluctant of travellers. The television mini-series *Hogfather* (2006) and *The Colour of Magic* (2008), which are adaptations of Discworld novels, place the Discworld in a 'past-like' place, although in *Hogfather* (2006) it is perhaps more Victorian than medieval. This is in keeping with the way Pratchett depicts society in the Discworld novels, mixing the late Victorian period with modern and medieval societies (women are part of the workforce, but it is clear that this is a recent phenomenon as can be seen in *Men at Arms*) and the sexes are not likely to be sent to the same schools (see *Equal Rites* and *Lords and Ladies*), although the practice of educating the sexes separately in English public schools continues to the present date. Placing fantasy novels in a 'past-like' place is frequently done as can be seen in Frank Herbert's *Dune* series and Anne McCaffrey's *Dragonriders of Pern* series that both have "equally conservative and male-dominated [societies]" but the difference between those two writers is that McCaffrey "brings a

feminine awareness to the situation.”<sup>47</sup> The Discworld characters, however, seem sentient of the need for equal rights and often pursue them.

The reader may be unaware of what exactly is being spoofed in the Discworld novels, yet this can be the essence of a good parody.<sup>48</sup> The highly ironic tone of the novels informs the reader that there is more to the novel than its plot. There is, however, a fine line between parodying and giving offence, and here the critic Simon Dentith states that heads of state and religion are now accepted targets, but at the same time, the question arises if this means for example all religions or just Western religions?<sup>49</sup> This is a tricky question, and one that Pratchett tackled in the novel *Small Gods* that took all the major monotheist religions as one and managed to mentally stimulate its readers and parody the major monotheist religions without causing too much offence. Still it is not enough to state that the Discworld novels are parodies. They are found in bookstores under the elusive markings of “science fiction/fantasy”, amidst Star Trek novels and *Lord of the Rings*. This begs the question of how to define the series, which the following chapter will attempt, as well as look at the difference between science fiction and fantasy fiction.

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<sup>47</sup> Lynn F. Williams, “‘Great Country for Men and Dogs, but Tough on Women and Mules’: Sex and Status in Recent Science Fiction Utopias” in *Women Worldwalkers: New Dimensions of Science Fiction and Fantasy* (Lubbock: Texas Tech Press, 1985), p. 229.

<sup>48</sup> Simon Dentith, *Parody* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 27-28.

<sup>49</sup> Dentith, p. 163.

## ***2.1 Science Fiction Versus Fantasy Fiction: The Generic Place of Discworld***

In placing Terry Pratchett's Discworld series within a literary genre, it is necessary to put forth a definition of the genre to which it belongs. From the beginning of this thesis, the series has been labelled as parodic 'fantasy' novels, without defining what exactly is meant by this generic marking. The Discworld novels are often lumped under the label of science fiction/fantasy that says very little about their content other than that it might include spaceships, and possibly some elements of the fantastic such as magic, and that it is fictional. But what is fantasy fiction? How is it different or similar to its ever present cousin, science fiction, and are the genres mutually exclusive?

Fantasy fiction has its origins in the "traditional fairy tale" and much of the wonder, horror and unreal elements of those early fairy tales reverberate in modern fantasy fiction.<sup>50</sup> Like traditional romances, many fantasy novels deal with "wish-fulfilment", and "wonder" as well as demons of the imagination and harsh, near apocalyptic conditions in which its characters (of various species) must survive.<sup>51</sup> For some critics, such as Simon Dentith, the contrast between the mundane and/or the harsh realities of life and wonder decreases the sense of "romance" of fantasy, but for others like Christopher Routledge it does the opposite, for the sharp contrast makes the wondrous more so and it can also function as a way to show that ordinary life is near miraculous.<sup>52</sup>

Fantasy fiction has certain generic tools or props that feature in novels labelled as fantastic or as fantasy novels. They include magic, supernatural activity, superhuman strength, dragons,

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<sup>50</sup> C. N. Manilove, *The Impulse of Fantasy Literature* (New York, Macmillan, 1983), p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> Dentith, p. 55.

<sup>52</sup> Dentith, p. 55; Christopher Routledge, "Harry Potter and the Mystery of Ordinary Life" in *Mystery in Children's Literature: from the Rational to the Supernatural*, eds. Adrienne E. Gavin and Christopher Routledge (Houndsmill, UK and New York: Palgrave/St. Martin's Press, 2001), p. 203.

royalty, lost heirs, wizards and witches, sorcerers and sorceresses, heroes, elves, vampires, monsters, demons, werewolves, dwarfs, trolls, alternative history, no laws of physics, etc. This list is by no means definitive but helps to give an idea of what to expect when reading a ‘fantasy’ novel. These tools are useful to “introduce multiple, contradictory ‘truths’” in the society it is written in to show “the limits of [the culture’s] epistemological and ontological frame”.<sup>53</sup> Fantasy fiction often reproduces the world as it is in new but hauntingly familiar settings and so blurs the line between reality and fantasy to tackle issues that can be too sensitive, too obscured, or too often ignored by conventional fiction.<sup>54</sup> This is especially true of Pratchett’s Discworld series, which he often uses to address issues of racism, freedom of speech, democracy, patriotism while always celebrating the sense of wonder in life. Unlike fantasy, mystery does not need to solve the problem being discussed or pondered but can simply present the issue, explore it or if it wants to, or needs to for the sake of the narrative, leave it.<sup>55</sup> In this respect, fantasy fiction is similar to science fiction, which often uses the outer, generic “trappings” to examine various issues, although mostly concerning what it entails to be the ‘other’.<sup>56</sup>

As with fantasy fiction such as the Narnia series, *Princess Bride*, and *Lord of the Rings*, science fiction often places its narrative in environments “rooted in a sense of the past”, for example the Dune series and some of the societies encountered in the Star Trek novels.<sup>57</sup> The reason authors of both genres employ the past is to give their readers “familiar roots” in an unfamiliar world and this also helps keep the texts from dating.<sup>58</sup> Science fiction is usually associated with space travel, aliens, robots of various kinds, technology, time travel, alternative history, and paradisiacal or

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<sup>53</sup> Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy, the Literature of Subversion* (London; New York: Methuen, 1986), p. 23.

<sup>54</sup> Jackson, p. 37.

<sup>55</sup> Adrienne E. Gavin and Christopher Routledge. “Mystery in Children’s Literature from the Rational to the Supernatural: an Introduction” in *Mystery in Children’s Literature: from the Rational to the Supernatural*, eds. Adrienne E. Gavin and Christopher Routledge (Houndsmill, UK and New York: Palgrave/St. Martin’s Press, 2001), p. 3.

<sup>56</sup> Adam Roberts, *Science Fiction* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 14, 30, 36.

<sup>57</sup> Roberts, p. 36.

<sup>58</sup> Roberts, p. 40.

dystopian future worlds.<sup>59</sup> These generic tools are very much a part of the science fiction novel, and although it might only have one of the above mentioned items, it will be one of the focal points of the novel, as unlike fantasy fiction that relies on the ‘unfamiliar familiar’, science fiction is grounded in the how and why.<sup>60</sup> To illustrate this, think of a Star Trek episode or even *Galaxy Quest* (1999), a film that spoofed the original Star Trek series from 1966-1969. Even as a film that is parodying the science fiction genre, it has to explain its “material”; for example how its transporter-ray works because that is fundamental to science fiction.<sup>61</sup> Fantasy fiction, however, does not need, and indeed seldom does, explain the fantastic elements it employs. This is clear in the Narnia books, where the reader is presented with talking animals; *Lord of the Rings*, where elfin bread can last an astonishing long time and elfin ropes apparently obey people’s will; and in *Wyrld Sisters*, where the witches keep the country of Lance outside of time while the rest of the Disc moves on fifteen years.

Some Discworld novels do use generic tools more usually associated with science fiction than fantasy fiction, such as spaceships and submarines but all of these are treated as props and are not central to the story itself. Other elements such as time travel and alternative history<sup>62</sup> do feature in the Discworld series, but they do not fall under the definition of science fiction due to the use of magic and fairy tale elements that are interwoven in the novels and as stated before, the how is immaterial. Science fiction and fantasy fiction are both able through their “representations of the world” to illustrate certain traits, ideologies, faults, alterity or sameness.<sup>63</sup> It is clear that both genres have common elements that have lead to genre crossover in both the

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<sup>59</sup> Roberts, pp. 14-15.

<sup>60</sup> Roberts, p. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Roberts, pp. 3-4.

<sup>62</sup> Although alternative history is a generic tool of both fantasy and science fiction it usually functions differently within each genre.

<sup>63</sup> Roberts, p. 30.

written form and the visual. Although they do not always mix with each other, both science fiction and fantasy fiction frequently cross paths with horror and comedy. Visual representations of genre crossing can be found within the Discworld series, as the novel *Hogfather* was adapted in 2006. The novel is a mixture of genres, with the ever-present comic element of the Discworld novels, mixed with horror, mythology and fantasy. The film *The Fifth Element* (1997) is a classic example of genre crossover of science fiction, fantasy and comedy.<sup>64</sup> The fluidity between fantasy and horror is often seen in the Discworld novels, for example in *Witches Abroad* that has zombies and frog-princes, or *Night Watch* a novel that builds up an atmosphere of panic and entrapment with its serial killer, fascist government and helpless knowledge of history being about to repeat itself. This mixture of horror and fantasy is not just found in Discworld novels but also in many of Neil Gaiman's novels as well as those of Laurell E. Hamilton and Terry Brooks.

Fantasy fiction has often been classified as “children’s literature”, but considering for example the massive readership of the Harry Potter series and *The Hobbit* that have crossed all age barriers, it hard to define the average age of fantasy readers.<sup>65</sup> This is due to the vast amounts of fantasy fiction that have been published. The Discworld novels themselves are for readers ranging from adolescents to adults with various adaptations of the novels to draw in children. However, defining the series children’s literature can hardly be seen as a negative aspect or to state that most of its readers are children or teenagers. It is possible that the perceived slight is due to the defensive response of many fantasy writers. This attitude is evident in an interview with Terry Pratchett in *The New Discworld Companion: The Fully Revised and Updated Reference Book to All Things Discworldian*, where the author states that the majority of his readers are “over the age of twenty-five and about sixty per cent of them are women” but that the press persists in defining

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<sup>64</sup> J.P. Telotte, *Science Fiction Film* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 8.

<sup>65</sup> Gavin and Routledge, p. 2.

Discworld readers as “fourteen-year-old [boys]” as if this were negative.<sup>66</sup> The comic and parodic elements of Discworld novels are what make them suitable for such a range of readership, for twenty-five-year-old women and fourteen-year-old boys will not easily spot what they have in common; expect perhaps massive insecurities about their body image.

The Discworld novels parodic nature is rooted in spoofing novels, generic tools and characters of fantasy novels, as they were prior to 1983. The series has taken from the scale of parody many tools to mock the heroics of many fantasy novels and classic literature, and spoofs them relentlessly and is unafraid to make obvious jokes or sharp parody.<sup>67</sup> Parody, like fantasy, often takes place or raises the past when sending up events in present because as Pratchett puts it in a Discworld novel the past is a “more defensible position” and can show the grim reflection of the present.<sup>68</sup> As with adaptation, parody has a seemingly parasitic relationship with its source material that can either enhance or demean the “hypotext” as can the relationship between source text and adaption.<sup>69</sup> With the Discworld series, it is up to the individual reader to decide if they feel offended at the way sources are treated in the novels, if, for example, whether one’s appreciation of *The Tragedy of Macbeth* is lowered or enhanced after reading *Wyrd Sisters*.

In examining fantasy fiction and science fiction, its differences and similarities, it is clear that the Discworld novels belong within the fantasy genre. Although rooted in parody, the Discworld novels are most definitely fantasy, as Pratchett makes frequent use of that make up the fantasy genre in the series, such as the use of magic, heroes, the supernatural, elves, trolls and many more.

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<sup>66</sup> Pratchett and Briggs, p. 280.

<sup>67</sup> Dentith, p. 6.

<sup>68</sup> Dentith, pp. 183-184; Terry Pratchett, *Men at Arms* (London: Corgi Books, 1994), p. 11.

<sup>69</sup> Dentith, p. 189; Hutcheon, p. 3.

## ***2.2 Main Themes***

The main generic trend of the Discworld series is parody, as Pratchett uses fantasy to rediscover the strangeness that is part of people's everyday lives. The themes most often encountered in Discworld novels are four: narrative causality, life, metaphor and belief, and non-conformity.<sup>70</sup> Due to the generic nature of the novels, reality can easily be twisted to suit the story, and it is this element of writing that is one the "factors which make up Discworld 'physics.'"<sup>71</sup> "Narrative Causality" is a very real force on Discworld, and perhaps in our own world as well where clichés like 'history is repeating itself' are repeated in the media daily.<sup>72</sup> This power that stories have over the lives of the characters on the Disc is best documented in the novel *Witches Abroad*, where Granny's evil and twisted sister Lily has caused an entire city-state to fall under the rigid rule of fairy tales. Fairy tales are not trusted on Discworld, for they tell people how to behave and think, without actually taking responsibility for their actions and without thinking of the consequences of their actions.<sup>73</sup> Free will can be very hard to exercise when stories are forcing wolves to walk upright; prince-wannabes are trying to charm innocent young ladies or witches, and everyone is looking at you. Princess Keli's thwarted assassination in *Mort* has the ramifications that history attempts to 'right' itself by presenting her as dead to everyone in the kingdom. As these examples show, stories are very much alive on Discworld and the characters are often aware of this.

Another theme in Pratchett's Discworld is life.<sup>74</sup> Life is everywhere on the Disc and its abundance has lead to the existence of trolls, which are basically sentient rocks; thunderstorms

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<sup>70</sup> Pratchett and Briggs, p. 80.

<sup>71</sup> Pratchett and Briggs, p. 80.

<sup>72</sup> Pratchett and Briggs, p. 81.

<sup>73</sup> Terry Pratchett, *The Wee Free Men A Story of Discworld* (London: Corgi Books, 2004), pp. 62-63.

<sup>74</sup> Pratchett and Briggs, p. 80.



that are trying to impress its fellow weather systems; and clothing or buildings that take on the spirit of those who wear/inhabit them so as to appear alive and fully cognisant.<sup>75</sup> Two separate Discworld novels deal with this last phenomenon on the Disc: *Sourcery*, which is also a spoof on *Arabian Nights*, but centres on the Archchancellor's hat. The hat has taken on a life of its own after being worn for centuries by the most powerful and dangerous wizards on the Disc. The other novel is *Maskerade!*, which mercilessly rips into the musical *The Phantom of the Opera*, as adapted by Andrew Lloyd Webber, as well as other musicals and operas. The novel shows the inane storylines that most musicals and operas rely on to get the audience from song to song, although it acknowledges that the music itself can often be fantastic. The Opera House in *Maskerade!* has absorbed so much opera over the years that the people working there automatically follow operatic 'storylines' in their own lives. That life should be such "a very common commodity" on the Disc has led the characters to fail to notice it, any more than people notice the sun coming up in the morning and uttering "Wow! How does that happen?"<sup>76</sup>

The third major theme in Discworld novels is twofold; metaphor and belief, that both have active existence beyond just words and faith.<sup>77</sup> Metaphors on the Disc must be taken very seriously, for they frequently come into full existence. For example, there is Death, a "7-foot-fall skeleton of polished bone", who usually has on a robe of darkness and carries a scythe in addition to being a metaphor for mortality.<sup>78</sup>

Belief is a major factor on Discworld, without which its vast pantheon of gods and goddesses could not exist. The novel *Small Gods* explores the symbiosis between deities and humans through belief; and all the witches' novels show very clearly that self-confidence is the key to "half the

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<sup>75</sup> Pratchett and Briggs, p. 80.

<sup>76</sup> Pratchett and Briggs, p. 80.

<sup>77</sup> Pratchett and Briggs, p. 80.

<sup>78</sup> Pratchett and Briggs, pp. 65-66, 80.

power of witches”.<sup>79</sup> However, knowing these three themes is not enough to appreciate fully how the Discworld functions, for the characters are instrumental to that end and are best suited to introduce the fourth theme of the novels.

Non-conformity, the ability to make one’s own destiny and making peace with oneself are significant actions in all of the Discworld novels. The characters’ ability to take control of their own lives is frequently challenged in the novels as the characters come up against narrative causality and the Disc’s abundant and out-of-control life force. Being presented with an invisible script, provided by whatever story that feels like running off with your life, can be daunting but many of the characters have learnt to manipulate the narrative causality to their own advantage. The following chapter describes the characteristics of the major recurring characters in Discworld novels, who all exhibit independent thought while facing pressure to conform to someone else’s storytelling.

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<sup>79</sup> Pratchett and Briggs, p. 80.

## ***2.3 Major Recurring Characters, and Internal Series within the Discworld***

### ***Series***

Cohen the Barbarian, a character from the Discworld's conception, is a caricature of a hero, who only really wants hot water, soft toilet paper and good dentures.<sup>80</sup> But he knows how stories work: if a hero is outnumbered, the story is more likely to act in favour of the lone hero.<sup>81</sup> Cohen is a character that has accepted his part in the story and expects it to cooperate with him when it is convenient.

Samuel Vimes is character who is recurring in the City Watch novels and also appears as a minor character in *The Truth*, *Monstrous Regiment*, *Going Postal*, and *Making Money*. This is an angry character, who is itching to arrest the gods for not performing their roles properly. Vimes' character reacts time after time against social injustice, as it is portrayed in the Discworldian city of Ankh-Morpork, with its class structure. However, he is equal in his dislike of rich and poor, although more often than not his sympathies lie with the disadvantaged. Pratchett often parodies the class distinction in Britain in the Discworld novels and through the character of Vimes is often a shrewd observer of the "stratified" society he inhabits.<sup>82</sup> This character will always attempt to be independent and free from any perceived oppression, to the extent of fighting his alcoholism; racial prejudice and speciesism;<sup>83</sup> reverse class snobbery in addition to his own dark nature. This fierce independence has made him a respected commander of the City Watch. The character of Vimes has evolved from the drunk and disillusion captain that first appeared in

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<sup>80</sup> Terry Pratchett, *The Light Fantastic* (London: Corgi Books, 1996), pp. 47-48.

<sup>81</sup> Terry Pratchett, *The Last Hero a Discworld Fable* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), pp. 142-143.

<sup>82</sup> Dentith, pp. 30-31.

<sup>83</sup> 'Speciesism' occurs when a Discworld character is prejudiced against other species, such as trolls, dwarfs or humans, depending on the character's species.

*Guards! Guards!* as the world around him changed, and his family circumstances and social position have altered.

Rincewind the “wizzard”, unlike the Vimes character, is the proto-typical Discworld ‘hero’ and very constant in his outlook on life and in his behaviour.<sup>84</sup> Rincewind is consistent, similar to the solid and unchangeable character of Nancy Drew, which is comforting to readers, especially for children and young adults who find change very disruptive and disturbing.<sup>85</sup> This character, who is the protagonist of the first two novels in the Discworld series, has always been inept and cowardly, but nonetheless a clear thinker. His skill in survival is based on his masterly ability to run away, the destination being immaterial so long as it distances Rincewind far from the immediate danger.<sup>86</sup>

Rincewind has always been portrayed as being completely hopeless with regards to magic, which is a major handicap considering that his profession is in wizardry. Rincewind is certain there must be something better than magic, some kind of technology that could improve life, although to date, he has been repeatedly disappointed. Rincewind’s philosophy in life is very simple: “I run, therefore I am; more correctly, I run, therefore with any luck I’ll still *be*” (E, p. 42). To stay alive, using his wits, minimising all violence, at least violence directed at him, running away is a natural state of existence to Rincewind. He is an amazing linguist, who knows how to “shout ‘help’ in fourteen languages and scream for mercy in a further twelve” (E, p. 42). It is because of his cowardice that Rincewind is truly able to think clearly and see that human life is precious. He is fully aware that moments of boredom should be “enjoyed” because something

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<sup>84</sup> The spelling of wizzard with two zetas is deliberate, as this is how the character spells the word in the novels and is a sign of his incompetence.

<sup>85</sup> Karen Coats, “The Mysteries of Postmodern Epistemology: Stratemeyer, Stine, and Contemporary Mystery for Children” in *Mystery in Children’s Literature: from the Rational to the Supernatural*, eds. Adrienne E. Gavin and Christopher Routledge (Houndsmill, UK and New York: Palgrave/St. Martin’s Press, 2001), p. 186.

<sup>86</sup> Terry Pratchett, *Eric* (London: Orion Books Ltd., 1996), p. 42. All further references in the text (in parentheses) are to this edition, abbreviated E.

terrible could happen at any time (E, pp. 33-34). This character is essentially a homebody who has been forced into the role of a world traveller, having been all over the Disc, geographically, temporally and spatially. These travels have led to a number of near-death experiences, which Death is starting to resent.

A keen observer of humanity and its constant companion, Death is a result of the Discworld's overdeveloped metaphor for mortality. Death features to some degree in almost all the Discworld novels and is the main protagonist in *Reaper Man* and *Hogfather*, as well as being a major character in *Mort* and *Soul Music*. Death as a character allows the author to really examine people from an outsider's perspective. Death is curious about why humans seem so intent on wasting their brief existence, for the average life is over in a blink of an eye for an eternal creature. Death is perplexed by humans, and finds their 'invention' of boredom to be amazing and cannot understand people's lack of appreciation for the everyday miracle that life is.<sup>87</sup>

Death frequently misunderstands the purpose of everyday utilities, but understands better than most that in order to believe in the "big lies" in the world, such as truth, mercy and justice, people must first believe the "little lies" like the Disc's Hogfather, Tooth fairies and Soul Cake Duck.<sup>88</sup> It is the fantasy of something better that exists in the imagination of humans that helps make life better and is the "PLACE WHERE THE FALLING ANGEL MEETS THE RISING APE" (H, p. 422).<sup>89</sup> Death exhibits his will to do his duty, while never bending to outside rule, which is best seen in his constant struggle with the Auditors of Reality, a race of beings that detest life in all forms. The Discworld novels in which Death is a major character show the strangeness of ordinary life, and emphasize that all things must be kept in balance.

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<sup>87</sup> Routledge, "Harry Potter and the Mystery of Ordinary Life", p. 203.

<sup>88</sup> Terry Pratchett, *Hogfather* (London: Corgi Books, 1997) p. 422. All further references in the text (in parentheses) are to this edition, abbreviated H.

<sup>89</sup> Death's dialogue is presented in capital letters in the Discworld novels.

Balance between life and death and in fact all things in between is central to the character of Esmeralda ‘Granny’ Weatherwax. The character started as a simple village witch in *Equal Rites*, the third Discworld novel, and the first one that does not feature Rincewind. However, this character does not fully emerge until in the novel *Wyrd Sisters*. There the cunning and self-assured witch of that and later novels is first seen, and the importance of balance is established to include more than equal education for the sexes, as in *Equal Rites*. Nonetheless, Granny will bend the rules if it suits her, but she will always pay the price willingly when she has the time, as she does in *Maskerade!* when she does not allow her skin to be pierced after holding a sword blade in her bare hand until she has time to be wounded some days later.<sup>90</sup> Granny’s character, like that of Samuel Vimes, is locked in a constant internal struggle against her own darker nature. Both characters use the past to remind themselves of what can happen when the darker intents are allowed to rule, even for good reasons, as can be seen in *Witches Abroad*, *Maskerade!* and *Thud*. The constant choice of doing the right thing is difficult for both characters, although Granny seems to be more self-confident than Vimes, perhaps because she knows exactly how far she can go, using her ill-fated sister, Lily, as a yardstick.

There are various other characters that regularly appear in the Discworld series, and some of them move from novel to novel irrespective of the internal mini-series that have formed within the series. For example, the characters of Corporal Nobby Nobbs and Sergeant Fred Colon, who appear in nearly every novel that takes place in Ankh-Morpork; Susan Sto Helit, Death’s prickly granddaughter; a nod to from Pratchett to the Superman comics by the way of a few primates is the Librarian, who became an orang-utan after a magical accident and refuses to be turned back into a human; Lu Tze, a History monk; Gaspode, a talking dog with an eye for scraps and a

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<sup>90</sup> Terry Pratchett, *Maskerade!* (London: Corgi Books, 1996), pp. 353, 377-378.

longing for beer; and Lord Vetinari, the patrician of Ankh-Morpork.<sup>91</sup> Another characteristic of the Discworld novels are the footnotes. All the novels have footnotes with small pieces of extra information, whose relevance to the narrative is sometimes nonexistent but are always amusing and break up the reading process. The footnotes are almost a character in themselves within the series, or at least they are characteristic of the novels.

The internal mini-series within the Discworld novels are defined by the characters that feature regularly in them, for the most part. Rincewind-novels all have Rincewind as their protagonist, and they include the first two novels in the series as well as four others. The Death-novels, as a series, do not always place Death as the protagonist per se, but he is always in a major role and the novels always feature his domain. The Death-novels are four in total. Moist von Lipwig is the protagonist of two novels that are direct sequels, much as the first two Rincewind novels were, although not they are not published consequently as there are two other Discworld novels in between them. The witches-novels are to date nine novels that can be broken up into three distinct phases: Magrat Garlick; Agnes Nitt and Tiffany Aching, with the exception of *Equal Rites*. The witches-novels are also different from the other mini-series in that the Tiffany novels are marked for younger readers, although this in no way limits the readership of these novels, for who knows how old people's internal reader is. The City Watch-novels, which are seven novels in all, have shifted their initial focus from Carrot Ironfounder'sson, Ankh-Morpork's king-in-hiding, to Samuel Vimes. However, all of the seven novels are about the City Watch in Ankh-Morpork, although the later novels have moved about the Disc as the effects of 'discilisation' have reached the largest city on Discworld.<sup>92</sup> The rest of the Discworld novels are independent novels, although *The Thief of Time*, *Small Gods* and *Night Watch* (of the City Watch-

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<sup>91</sup> Gary Westfahl, *Science Fiction, Children's Literature, and Popular Culture: Coming of Age in Fantasyland* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), p. 13.

<sup>92</sup> The term 'discilisation' is my own and corresponds to the word 'globalisation', however, as the Discworld is a disc not a globe the term globalisation is not apt in this case.

novels) all prominently feature the History Monk's main operative, Lu Tze, but not to the extent that puts them into an internal mini-series of their own. Having a series of thirty-six books that splinter off into mini-series makes the Discworld series a challenging choice of teaching materials, especially when considering how one would apply the novels to introduce Icelandic students in the tenth grade to classic English literature.



### 3 Using Terry Pratchett's Discworld to Introduce Tenth Graders to Classic English Literature

Three of Pratchett's Discworld novels are direct parodies of well known literary works, and so are well suited to guide first time readers towards the texts parodied. Christopher Marlowe's play *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* and indeed the Faustian myth itself is at the centre of *Eric*, a Discworld novel in the Rincewind-series. Both the play and the novel discuss similar issues, but from very different vantage points. The next section will analyse *Eric* in order to provide better understanding of the assignments and secondary reading presented below. Two Shakespeare plays are parodied in the Discworld series, both within the witches-novels and have for the most part the same set of principal characters. These plays are *The Tragedy of Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and they are the basis of the novels *Wyrd Sisters* and *Lords and Ladies* respectively. What all three novels have in common therefore is that they parody Elizabethan plays that tenth graders in Iceland would be unlikely to read independently and would very likely feel intimidated by the language, age and reputation (should they know it) of the plays if presented with them in class. The language of the bare text of the plays, to this writer, is still too difficult for the average tenth grader to fully understand. However, the Discworld novels that parody them are written in modern English, and even if the students are kept unaware of the specific literary work the novels are spoofing, the novels are enjoyable on their own merits and the issues raised in the novels are of a nature that can inspire understanding in Icelandic teenagers. Nonetheless, in order to introduce the students to the plays after having read the novels<sup>93</sup> it better *not* to have the students read the plays, unless as secondary reading for the most advanced pupils. Plays, by their very nature are best appreciated when experienced in a viewing medium and fortunately all of the plays have been filmed, some even fairly recently. This would also provide students who are less

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<sup>93</sup> Only one novel and subsequently only one play would be taught in a single school year, but for now, I will speak of all three as this applies to the teaching of them all.

skilled readers with a change to experience the plays on a more equal footing with the more skilled students. Added to which, the students themselves are more likely to perceive viewing a play with a more positive attitude than reading it, even an abridged version, as video is more part of their everyday environment and will lessen stress.<sup>94</sup>

There are other factors that work in favour of these three plays, when one is looking to introduce them to teenagers: *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* and *The Tragedy of Macbeth* are both horrific in nature and horror as a genre has been aimed at teenagers for a long time, at least in Hollywood, for example the films *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984) and *Scream* (1996). This alone will certainly help promote a positive response from the pupils, although it is likely best to ensure parental permission to show adaptations of the plays. In the novels, however, Pratchett turns the horror element on its head with comedy in *Eric*, and romance in *Wyrd Sisters*. This changing element can be part of the discussion in class to establish which genre best suits the 'bare plot' as it were. With *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, there are two of Hollywood's favourite tools to attract teenage audience: Romance with disapproving parents and full-on fantasy. Teenagers are very likely to respond positively to a play about young people in love going up against parental authority, and the fantasy element of the play will get the audience that is less enthusiastic about romance than elves. However, these are only the incentives to read the novels and view the plays. How would it best suit to teach these novels and plays, in order to broaden vocabulary, reading and writing skills, as well as reading comprehension? For each novel/play pair there will follow a detailed instruction guide and recommended secondary reading within both the Discworld series and the fantasy genre. The order in which the novels are present is also an indicator of the level of difficulty of each book: Of the three novels discussed in the following chapters, *Eric* is the 'easiest' for first time readers of the Discworld series and this is due to the length of the novel, light tone and its subject matter. *Wyrd Sisters* with its various adaptations

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<sup>94</sup> Julkunen, pp. 31, 33.

makes it fairly accessible to first time readers with the proper preparation. However, *Lords and Ladies* is the most 'difficult' novel for first time readers of the series due its length, and subject matter, therefore, careful preparation and additional material is needed to help first time reader access the story.

### ***3.1 Eric***

*Eric* is the ninth Discworld novel and the fourth novel in the Rincewind cycle. It makes its association and parodying very clear from the start, for the under title of novel is *Faust*, leaving the reader in no doubt that the novel intends to use the Faustian myth as its basis. The play by Christopher Marlowe and the subsequent adaptations of the myth by Goethe and Mann all come into play in the novel, but for the purposes of this thesis, the play by Marlowe will be the one students are introduced to after reading the novel. As the novel's protagonist is Rincewind, the unlucky and incompetent wizard, certain factors will be in the forefront of the novel: Inept at magic, as Rincewind is, he is an expert on surviving. In this novel, a thirteen-year-old boy, Eric, forces Rincewind into the role of a demon. Eric, who is obsessed with world domination and women as well as his main interest in raising demons, is unlike Rincewind. Eric is a self-confident character, inasmuch as a teenage boy covered in acne can be, and he is determined to have everlasting life, wealth and power, and the most beautiful woman in the world (E, pp. 22-27). This puts the novel into the 'odd couple' category because Rincewind and Eric have little in common with one another other than their gender and knowledge of the occult.

The focus of the novel is on Eric, who is described by the king of Hell as being "horribly bright, [and] self-centred" and in fact just the type of person needed in Hell to innovate the demons' nastiness (E, pp. 32-33). Eric's parents are well meaning but an ineffectual part of his life, something he puts up with until getting world domination and girls (E, pp. 26-27). This lack of parental supervision is often found in children's novels and fantasy literature, and is often essential for the characters to experience some autonomy.<sup>95</sup> Eric's optimism and youthful arrogance is pitted against Rincewind's pessimism and cynical cowardly outlook on life, and as

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<sup>95</sup> Mary Jeanette Moran, "Nancy's Ancestors: the Mystery of Imaginative Female Power in *The Secret Garden* and *A Little Princess*" in *Mystery in Children's Literature: from the Rational to the Supernatural*, eds. Adrienne E. Gavin and Christopher Routledge. (Houndsmill, UK and New York: Palgrave/St. Martin's Press, 2001), p. 36.

the novel progresses and everyone of the boy's three wishes are fulfilled, Eric gradually learns that getting what one wants is not the same as getting what one needs. When faced with certain death Eric has two opposite examples of behaviour from his fellow condemned prisoners: Rincewind, who will cling to life with all of his strength and da Quirm, who is fearless about dying (E, p. 62). Eric begins to understand that life is not to be taken for granted and that ruling the world can have dire consequences.

Having wishes granted by a demon, will ensure that something is off, similar to a very vivid dream that is almost like real life but remains firmly off kilter, for instance when Eric meets the Disc's most fabled beauty. The teenage boy realises beauty is relative, when he is confronted with Elenor of Tsort, a parody of Helen of Troy, Eric comes face to face with a motherly woman with several children and "the beginnings of a moustache" (E, p. 92). In a youth obsessed culture, as today's Western culture is, this presentation of the Disc's most fabled beauty is a reminder that not everyone fall under one standard of beauty and that horny, young men with limited education and no experience of sex, who think being eunuchs in a harem is an ideal job, are bound to be disappointed (E, pp. 86-95). Another factor in Eric's journey through space and time with Rincewind is that he begins to understand that not everything written about historical figures is necessarily the *whole* truth and that to justify ten years of bloody warfare governments need to add some seasoning to the official version of the truth (E, pp. 86-87, 95). History, as Pratchett often brings up in Discworld novels, is written by the winners.<sup>96</sup> This is a realisation that many students will relate to, as the straightforward history of their first years in school starts to give way to the greyer areas of the cause and effect approach to history.

Everlasting life is granted, at least momentarily, to Eric and Rincewind, as they are present at the creation of the universe and inadvertently begin the cycle of life by littering, i.e. throw away

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<sup>96</sup> Valerie Krips, "Mystery in Children's Literature from the Rational to the Supernatural: an Introduction" in *Mystery in Children's Literature: from the Rational to the Supernatural*, eds. Adrienne E. Gavin and Christopher Routledge. (Houndsmill, UK and New York: Palgrave/St. Martin's Press, 2001), p. 101.

an egg and cress sandwich without the mayonnaise which explains why life has a tendency to be harsh and at times unsavoury (E, pp. 104, 108-112, 117-120). The pair is faced with eternal life of near solitude and the prospect of experiencing history as it happens is enough to whip Rincewind's survival instincts into gear and he and Eric head for the relative safety of Hell. Eric and Rincewind are aware that people have returned from Hell, hence its bad publicity according to its inhabitants, and that whatever else might happen at least they would have company there (E, pp. 135-138). This is an important step for the two main characters, for both of them realise that having other people around, even demonic in nature, is better than being starved for company as well as food (E, pp. 118-119, 122, 128). Rincewind, who has always cherished boredom, comes to realise that being bored when other more interesting events are imminent is different from being bored for all eternity with no chance of reprieve (E, pp. 133-134). Eric, on the other hand, is no longer trapped in delusions of self-grandeur and understands that while demonology might seem fun in the safety of his own room, being damned is another matter entirely (E, p. 101). Rincewind and Eric escape from Hell on the road of good intentions thus ensuring a 'happy' conclusion to the novel, but a 'happy ending' is, like the beauty of Elenor of Tsort, relative to those who experience it (E, pp. 152-155). The circularity of coming home after an adventure, being the same if somewhat wiser than before is a part of accepting who one is, a recurring motif in fantasy literature that is different from its roots in fairy tales where a change of social position or location is often more important.<sup>97</sup> It also provides a certain security for the reader, especially young readers, finding out the characters can go home having matured as a result of their adventures.<sup>98</sup>

In many Discworld novels, getting what one needs is seen is more important than getting what you wish for, on the basis that people seldom have their own best interest at heart. This is

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<sup>97</sup> Manilove, p. 70.

<sup>98</sup> Coats, p. 186.

because of the active nature of stories in the Discworld novels, and *Eric* functions in accord with the basic story of demonically granted wishes are bound to backfire on the person selling their soul and that an unlikely partnership of mismatched individuals on a quest of sorts will always triumph against the odds. This is a popular theme in novels and films, often as in *Eric* with a comic element as is brought in with Eric's youth and inexperience mixed with Rincewind's blatant uselessness, and is in stark contrast with the play the novel is parodying. The time separating the two works, of course, explains much of the changing attitudes to the gravitas of selling one's soul to the demons. In the play<sup>99</sup>, which was first published some four hundred years ago, Hell is no laughing matter, religion is taken very seriously and social position is not to be tampered with. In the novel, Eric wishes for eternal life, in the play Faust receives twenty-four years on Earth to do with as he wills after which he will be damned for all time<sup>100</sup>. Another fundamental difference between Eric and Faust is that given the chance to redeem himself, Eric does so unwittingly, while Faust consciously ignores his own spiritual salvations. Faust, in fact, uses his pact with the devil to travel, to trick and to meet Helen of Troy but not until his final hours does he give any thought to the consequences of his demonic bargain<sup>101</sup>. However, the difference is that the demon conjured up by Eric is no demon, but a human being and one who understands life well. Rincewind's cowardly ways, his teaching Eric how to flee from danger are what enable Eric to mature and escape damnation. This changing nature of the 'devil' that the Faustian character deals with has been constant from Marlowe through Goethe and Mann to Pratchett.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Every reference to the play from the following: *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, Online 15 Oct. 2008 at <<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext97/dfst10a.txt>>.

<sup>100</sup> *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, internet.

<sup>101</sup> *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, internet.

<sup>102</sup> Jackson, pp. 54, 57.

Another major difference between the novel and the play is the attitude towards learning. The play emphasises that a person should not overextend their reach: to be content with one's position and be faithful to God is to be good. Faust gets into trouble because of his ambition to learn more, achieve more and his willingness to forfeit his soul to obtain 'forbidden' knowledge. All the same, for all the knowledge that he gains, Faust *learns* nothing unlike Eric, who does not really get what he wishes for but learns a great deal about human and demonic nature. Eric does not repent as such, but he gradually becomes a more thoughtful and understanding person, which is the exact opposite of what the demons want (E, p. 101). Faust, on the other hand, is unrepentant until he foresees imminent damnation and then only warns his fellow scholars to be wary of going beyond 'licensed' knowledge.<sup>103</sup>

The two works treat the subject of knowledge, power and humanity very differently. While the play is moralising about piety and morality, the novel focuses more on what it means to be human, what is the nature of Hell and who are worse, demons or humans, when it comes to inflicting cruelty. The tone of the play is also different from that of the novel, as the play was meant to be taken seriously, its subject matter at the time very pertinent. The novel, however, is a parody of the play and so does not take itself or the play's subject matter seriously. The comical aspects that can be seen in the play are brought to the foreground in the novel, such as Faust's lust for Helen of Troy, a long dead woman, the incident with the Pope, and his dealings with his devilish manservant.<sup>104</sup> By switching the focus from a grown man to a teenage boy, the novel has more leeway to have the Faustian character grow and change, in a more credible manner than if Eric had been an adult as Faust is in the play. It also opens up the Faustian myth for a younger audience, as they are more likely to relate to a child or adolescent character than a grown man.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, internet.

<sup>104</sup> *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, internet.

<sup>105</sup> Westfahl, p. XII.



The medium that these two literary works use is of course very different: A play, by its very nature, appeals to a mass audience, it is a communal experience and the writer is aware of this and so tries to satisfy a range of expectations from his potential audience. This can be seen in *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, where issues of eternal damnation are mixed with clowns.<sup>106</sup> A novel, in contrast, is not experience by readers communally but is usually read solitary. Each individual reader experiences a novel differently and usually *separately* from other readers. While book clubs and school classes discuss novels as groups, it is still up to individuals to read the novel. Another difference between these two mediums is that while a play can be read, it is written primarily to be performed and experienced in that manner and differs drastically from a novel, which must be read to be experienced it at all. This all factors into my reasoning for having the students see the play after reading the novel, rather than attempt to read the play itself or a retelling of it.

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<sup>106</sup> *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, internet.

### 3.1.1 Instruction guide for *Eric*<sup>107</sup>

The activities suggested in this instruction guide and the instruction guides for *Wyrd Sisters* and *Lords and Ladies* are to motivate the students' reading and to aid their comprehension of the novels.<sup>108</sup> In this instruction guide and the ones for *Wyrd Sisters* and *Lords and Ladies* it is suggested that the students do vocabulary exercises, however, the nature of these exercises is up to each individual teacher to be determined in accordance to the strength of the students and in step with the students' suggestion.<sup>109</sup>

**Goals:** The goal is to introduce the students in the tenth grade to Christopher Marlowe's classic play *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* through the Discworld novel *Eric* by Terry Pratchett.

**Objectives:** The main objectives are to increase the students' enjoyment of reading in English and broaden their literary experience.

To assist the students understand the relationship between *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe and *Eric* by Terry Pratchett and be aware of main themes in both the play and novel.

To help the students take more responsibility for their learning process and to aid the students to increase their vocabulary, train them in using it during discussions about the play and the novel as well as in written formats.

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<sup>107</sup> Tricia Hedge, *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 32-33; Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, *Íslenska Sem Annað Tungumál – Handbók Fyrir Kennara* (Reykjavík, Námsgagnastofnun, 2000), pp. 70-77.

<sup>108</sup> Tricia Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, gen. eds. Roger H. Flavell and Monica Vincent, (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 1985), pp. 38-39, 45-48, 57-59, 101, 104-106, 116-119.

<sup>109</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 68-71.

**Pre-reading activities:** The goal of these activities is to establish for the students a certain knowledge base, i.e. for the students to get some idea of what they are about to read and state if they are familiar with the subject in addition to motivating their reading. The pre-reading activities can be either verbal or written and are based around the following six questions: a) Have you read any fantasy novels and if so which? b) Have you read any Discworld novels or seen either of the two television mini-series based on Discworld novels? c) To your mind, what is a fantasy novel and how is it different from ‘normal’ novels? d) Are you familiar with the Faustian myth? e) Are you familiar with Christopher Marlowe’s play *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* or its author? f) Have you read or seen a film where someone sells their soul to the devil? Positive responses from any student to questions a) and b) or e) and f) will greatly motivate the students’ reading of the novel. Telling the students about Pratchett’s Discworld novels and discussing the students’ experience of fantasy literature will further motivate their reading of *Eric* and orientate them within the world in which the novel takes place.

**During reading activities:** During the reading of the novel the students are given various assignments and activities that are designed to motivate their reading, promote their understanding of the novel and exercise their vocabulary. The students will spend one lesson while reading the novel listening to or reading out loud from the novel. This is helpful for the students’ comprehension of the text and can further motivate their private reading of the novel.<sup>110</sup> Hearing the novel read will also assist the students during classroom discussions about the novel as one lesson weekly is devoted classroom dialogue. These dialogues about the novel will exercise the students’ vocabulary and train them in carrying a conversation in English, as well as checking their understanding of the text and contributing to reading comprehension and vocabulary exercises. The reading comprehension assignments and vocabulary exercises are to test the students weekly and will also give them a chance to get satisfaction through task

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<sup>110</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 112-113.

completion and see their contributions to the assignments.<sup>111</sup> These assignments are also aimed at motivating the students' further reading of the novel and to increase their understanding of the material covered. Twice during the reading process the students are given translation assignments with vocabulary from the novel that help the students see how well they have incorporated the language of the novel into their acquisition of English. The students are given a spelling exercise once during their reading of *Eric*, which will contain language from the novel and will be handed to the students some time in advance so the students can prepare for the exercise. The preparation can lead to less stress during the exercise and after the teacher has gone over them the students will self-correct the spelling exercises, as this helps the students become more aware of which areas of spelling are troubling them, in addition to promote responsibility in the students' learning ethic.<sup>112</sup>

**Post writing activities:** Post-reading assignments include refreshing the students' memories about the introductory discussion relating to the Faustian myth and Christopher Marlowe and watching a film adaptation of *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, titled *Doctor Faustus* (1967) which starred Richard Burton as Doctor Faustus and Elizabeth Taylor as Helen of Troy, in three segments. As with listening to texts, watching a play can be fun and motivate the students to attempt to read the play later on.<sup>113</sup> After watching two thirds of *Doctor Faustus* (1967) the students are given an assignment about the play to help them better comprehend the film and which will give them the opportunity to speculate on the play's outcome from their reading of *Eric*. This exercise and further two exercises are to encourage the students to apply their knowledge of English in the written format, as well as help the students understanding of how the novel and the play are connected. A spelling exercise and a translation exercise are also part

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<sup>111</sup> Julkunen, pp. 29, 34.

<sup>112</sup> Julkunen, p. 35; John Gardner, pp. 15-16.

<sup>113</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 111, 113-114.

of the post-reading activities that are similarly designed to help the students actively prepare how they study and how well they have incorporated the vocabulary from the novel and the film into their English acquisition.<sup>114</sup>

**Number of lessons:** Thirty-four lessons of forty minutes each for seven weeks.<sup>115</sup>

**Lesson 1:** Introduce Terry Pratchett's *Eric* and the Discworld novels as well as Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* and the Faustian myth. Start by asking the students to answer six questions either in written form or as classroom dialogue about their knowledge of fantasy novels in general and Pratchett's Discworld in particular such as the following: a) Have you read any fantasy novels and if so which? b) Have you read any Discworld novels or seen either of the two television mini-series based on Discworld novels? c) To your mind, what is a fantasy novel and how is it different from 'normal' novels? While these three questions are simple, responses to them can be very revealing. Should any of the students be familiar with the Discworld novels and gives the novels positive recommendations, this can often transfer into greater interest in the prospective novel, as teenagers are more trusting of each other's taste in literature than their teacher's.<sup>116</sup> Pre-reading assignments can motivate the students' initial reading progress in a positive manner.<sup>117</sup> During this first lesson the students are given the novel to look over and a timeline similar to appendix one to plan their reading.

Other key questions before reading the novel, are d) if the students are familiar with the Faustian myth, e) are they familiar with Christopher Marlowe's play or the author, and f) have they read or seen a film where someone sells their soul to the devil? Questions d-f relate

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<sup>114</sup> John Gardner, pp. 15-16.

<sup>115</sup> See appendix one, for the timeline for *Eric* and pages allotted for each week.

<sup>116</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>117</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 92, 96-97.

specifically to preparing students for reading *Eric* and responses to them are very important. If the students are unfamiliar with the Faustian myth or the play itself but recognise the plot from some other source this makes preparing to read the novel relatively simple: Briefly introduce the pupils to the play and myth, as well as the author and then proceed to read the novel. If, on the other hand, the students are totally unfamiliar with d-f, then add to the introduction to the play, author and myth some suggestions about films that deal with the subject. Some general information about the Discworld series itself should also be added, such as what type of books they are, general information about the author and fantasy literature as this will orientate the students when starting the novel and motivate their reading.<sup>118</sup>

**Lesson 2:** In the second lesson, a classroom discussion about Terry Pratchett's *Eric* is continued with the six questions from the first lesson in mind. The parodic nature of the Discworld novels is explained and how the novel is connected to Marlowe's play. This discussion should take about fifteen minutes and the rest of the lesson is devoted to read the first twenty pages. As the novel is no more than a hundred and fifty-five pages<sup>119</sup>, it is simple to break it up into readable sections for all the students, regardless of how advanced their reading skill. Although for those students who are dyslexic or have severe reading disabilities, an audio CD of the novel can be provided, as this will greatly aid their progress and "assist [their] comprehension" of the material.<sup>120</sup> If needed the general assignments can be tailored for students with disabilities, such as having the assignments in Icelandic, simplifying the language of the assignments or giving them verbal rather than written assignments. Most of the Discworld novels are not broken up into chapters. Therefore it is not possible to break the reading up according to chapters, rather most of the novels, *Eric* included, break off and switch topic, characters or narrators, wherever the author

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<sup>118</sup> Dressel, p. 3.

<sup>119</sup> My copy of the novel, which is the one I refer to throughout this essay.

<sup>120</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, p. 100.

feels it expedient to so. This being the case, it is best to have the students read for each week sections of twenty-five pages (more or less, according to where they are stopping) as the plot moves quickly in the novel and smaller segments may leave the reader feeling disoriented in the story. The number of pages suggested for the instruction guide is given with skilled readers in mind and aims to finish reading the novel after seven weeks. However, the number of pages for each week will have to vary according to the overall strength of each class that individual teachers can evaluate. Icelandic tenth graders have around four hours a week allotted to English studies, varying between schools.<sup>121</sup> These four hours are usually cut down into six forty-minute classes, which is what the instruction guide is based on. The timeline given to prepare the students for reading the novel, viewing the play and finish up assignments connected to both the novel and the play is ten weeks interspersed with other reading material, grammatical exercises and various other exercises, such as reading comprehension assignments, vocabulary exercises, spelling and translation.<sup>122</sup>

The first week is to orientate the students about the material, and from the start, it is best the students be given an outline on how the novel will be read, so that they have the opportunity to plan their homework.<sup>123</sup> Another crucial factor in preparing the students before they begin reading the novel is that they are aware that they are *not* to translate the book, but simply read it and preferably understand it.<sup>124</sup> This is because translations, glossaries and such have a demotivating effect on students and as the sections for each week are around twenty-five pages, the workload would be too much for tenth graders, especially those who are less skilled readers.

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<sup>121</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, *The National Guide for Compulsory School: General Section*, internet.

<sup>122</sup> See appendix one.

<sup>123</sup> See appendix one.

<sup>124</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, p. 100.

**Lesson 3:** The students listen to or alternatively read aloud the text. One lesson each week will be given over to listening to or reading out loud the pages to be read for that week. This will help put ‘sound to symbol’, as many students are unsure of how words are pronounced and this will also help them with spelling.<sup>125</sup> Reading out loud can enhance the students’ comprehension of the text and motivate their private reading, although mispronunciation can cause confusion.<sup>126</sup> The reading/listening to lesson of the week can also be utilised for silent reading, giving the students a chance to check their comprehension of the text with the teacher or their fellow classmates.<sup>127</sup> If possible, it is best to separate the lesson devoted to listening by three classes from the lesson the students have to have read the allotted pages. This will give the students time to read and for the students to prepare for classroom discussions about the novel.

**Lesson 4:** In this lesson the pages assigned for this week are discussed, the students can ask about “difficult vocabulary or idioms” from the novel as well as contribute to the reading comprehension and vocabulary assignments.<sup>128</sup>

**Lesson 5:** Reading comprehension assignment based in the pages read so far as well as some vocabulary exercises. The students have thirty minutes to finish the assignment and the final ten minutes are given over to correcting it. One lesson a week at least is devoted to assignments that test the students’ reading comprehension and vocabulary as part of reading process.<sup>129</sup> The students are not required to translate what they read, so the need for them to have glossaries is minimal. However, a part of their assignments at the end of each week are vocabulary or glossary exercises, as this will both enhance their vocabulary and help them prepare for other related

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<sup>125</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, p. 113.

<sup>126</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 113-114.

<sup>127</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 112-113.

<sup>128</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, p. 113; John Gardner, pp. 15-16.

<sup>129</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, p. 113.



assignments, in addition to encourage the students' reading even further.<sup>130</sup> Some of these vocabulary exercises or glossaries will be in the form of words or expression suggested by the students themselves in accordance with “formative [uses] of summative tests” as discussed in chapter 1.1 to further motivating the students reading and focusing their studies.<sup>131</sup> Therefore the glossaries the students gather while reading *Eric* are from the assignments and the translation exercises have language that is familiar to the students but is still challengingly new.

**Lesson 6:** This lesson is just as the third lesson, i.e. listening to or reading together the pages assigned.

**Lesson 7:** In this lesson, the students are given a translation exercise, based on the vocabulary they should have picked up from the novel and their other reading materials. The translation exercise is to assess how well the students have incorporated the vocabulary from novel in their acquisition of English and see if they can apply it in this instance in a translation between English and Icelandic.

**Lesson 8:** As in the fourth lesson, the class will discuss the development in the novel. The discussion will include the students' suggestion for the next reading comprehension assignment. The class can be broken up into small groups of three to five persons that present their suggestions after discussing amongst themselves which words, idioms or expression they want explained and therefore part of the reading comprehension assignment. The classroom dialogue should take about twenty minutes and group activity ten minutes. The final ten minutes of the lesson are to be utilised for silent reading.

**Lesson 9:** As in the fifth lesson, this lesson is devoted to a written reading comprehension assignment, which the students have twenty-five minutes to finish. The final fifteen minutes are

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<sup>130</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, p. 101.

<sup>131</sup> John Gardner, pp. 15-16.

for correcting, if needed, the assignments, which the students will go over their fellow students' assignments or their own.

**Lesson 10:** The students will either read out loud the allotted pages or listen to them from the audio book, as in lessons three and six. In the final five minutes of this lesson, the students are given a spelling exercise that they will do during the eleventh lesson.

**Lesson 11:** During this lesson, the students have a spelling exercise based on the vocabulary from *Eric* as well as other reading materials. The spelling exercise should be given to the students at least a day in advance to prepare. After having reviewed them, the teacher should give the exercises back to the students for self-correction, as this helps students become more aware of which areas of spelling that are troubling them.

**Lesson 12:** This lesson follows the same plan as the eighth lesson, with classroom discussion about the pages read so far and students' contributions to the next reading comprehension assignment.

**Lesson 13:** The students have twenty-five minutes to complete the reading comprehension and vocabulary exercises. The final fifteen minutes the students go over each other's assignments.

**Lesson 14:** The lesson is the same as lessons three, six and ten.

**Lesson 15:** For the first twenty minutes, the class will discuss the development of the novel and then use the next five minutes to write down their individual suggestions for the next reading comprehension assignment. The final ten to fifteen minutes are for silent reading of the novel.

**Lesson 16:** As in lesson thirteen, the students have a reading comprehension assignment on the pages they have read so far. The time the students have to complete the written assignment is the same as during the thirteenth lesson and correction process is the same.

**Lessons 17 and 20:** The students listen to or read out loud the pages assigned for these lessons.

**Lessons 18 and 22:** These lessons are the same as fifteenth lesson.

**Lesson 21:** In this lesson the students do a translation exercise similar to the one in lesson seven.

**Lessons 19, 23, and 26:** As in the sixteenth lesson the students have twenty-five minutes to complete written reading comprehension and vocabulary assignments and use the final fifteen minutes for correcting each other's exercises.

**Lesson 24:** The students finish reading or listening to the novel.

**Lesson 25:** As well as discussing the end of the novel the students' memories are refreshed about the introductory discussion relating to the Faustian myth and Christopher Marlowe. Time allotted to this discussion is about twenty-five to thirty minutes with the final ten to fifteen minutes set aside for the students' contributions to the next reading comprehension assignment.

**Lesson 27:** In this lesson the post-reading assignments begin by watching a film adaptation of *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, titled *Doctor Faustus* (1967) that stars Richard Burton as Doctor Faustus and Elizabeth Taylor as Helen of Troy. The film's viewing is broken up into three half-an-hour sections, the first segment watched during this lesson.

**Lesson 28:** In this lesson, the students are given a translation exercise using language from Terry Pratchett's *Eric* as well as other reading material. Similar to the translation exercises in lessons seven and twenty-one the purpose of the exercise is to assess how well the students have integrated the vocabulary from novel in their acquisition of English.

**Lesson 29:** The students watch the second segment of the film *Doctor Faustus* (1967).

**Lesson 30:** In this lesson, the students are given an assignment based on what they will have seen of the play so far and this will help test the students' comprehension of the film, which will be viewed with an English subtitle if possible, rather than an Icelandic one. Watching the two segments of the film therefore, is similar to having two long listening exercises before testing the students' understanding. The students have twenty-five minutes to complete the assignment.

Following the assignment, the students should be encouraged to participate in classroom dialogue that centres on speculation about the outcome of the play.

**Lesson 31:** The students finish the play and are given a spelling exercise that they will do in lesson thirty-two.

**Lesson 32:** The first thirty minutes of the lesson are for a spelling exercise, as the one in lesson eleven, but with additional vocabulary taken from the play as well. Preparation and assessment is the same as in the exercise during the eleventh lesson. The final ten minutes the students can use to correct and read over the exercise before handing them over to the teacher.

**Lessons 33 and 34:** The final two lessons are for assignments that are based on the connection between the novel and play, what is dissimilar and what the students think is the cause of this difference. In both lessons, the students have twenty-five minutes to answer the questions posed in the assignments and the final fifteen minutes are for the students to go over and correct each other's exercises.

### 3.1.2 Secondary Reading

After finishing *Eric* and watching the play, a diverse range of novels in the fantasy genre can be suggested as secondary reading. The reading material suggested here is divided into two categories: Discworld novels of a similar nature as *Eric* and other fantasy novels outside of the Discworld novels. As for the vocabulary the students are likely to pick from the novels, it is both specific to fantasy novels, especially the vocabulary gained from the novels listed outside of the Discworld series, and at the same time, much of the vocabulary from the Discworld novels is applicable to literature outside of the fantasy genre. For most of the novels suggested, advanced reading skills are required. In *Eric*, there is a certain “us-versus-them” mentality with the human and demon characters, although by the end of the novel, it is clear that whatever difference exists between them is marginal.<sup>132</sup> Other Discworld novels that deal with similar issues are most, if not all of the City Watch novels. *Jingo*, is the fourth novel in that mini-series and its focus is on the dangers of jingoism and how racial prejudice can effect the judgement of otherwise sound individuals. Like in *Eric*, the characters in *Jingo* realise that while appearances may differ, most other things really are the same and one of the steps to accept equality is not to bar one another from the potential of being a villain or hero. This can be an interesting point of view for Icelandic students to contemplate as globalisation has an ever-increasing effect on our lives and as Icelandic community integrates more immigrants and a more racially diverse populace. It leads to the question of how the students perceive themselves and their nationality.<sup>133</sup>

Another Discworld novel that might interest students, who liked *Eric*, is the novel *Interesting Times*. This novel is one of the Rincewind-novels and the one that follows Rincewind after his

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<sup>132</sup> Dressel, pp. 50-51.

<sup>133</sup> Dressel, p. 53.

adventures in *Eric*. As in the first two Discworld novels, its focus is on Rincewind and Twoflower's escapades, this time on the Counterweight Continent. Fused into the narrative are parodies of some of the more xenophobic and closed countries on Earth. The novel includes bits of history from China, Russia and the USSR, and the USA, so some awareness of twentieth century history adds to the reader's enjoyment. The title of the novel refers to the worst curse the people of the Counterweight Continent have, which is "May you live in interesting times". This curse alludes to the fact that people are invariably more fascinated with those periods in human history, when 'interesting' events such as wars, famine and natural disasters occur.

The third Discworld novel, recommended as secondary reading following *Eric* is from the Death-novels. *Hogfather* is a darker novel than the previous two, with its near-horrific motif of blood and fantasy, but its parodying of Yule time traditions and other similar fantasies should engage the reader. This novel has been adapted into a television mini-series. Students who liked *Eric*, but are for various reasons unlikely or unable to read more difficult or complex books without aid, then the television mini-series gives them a chance to enter the Discworld again. Another advantage of this novel having a television adaptation is that for the more skilled readers, assignments can be made that have them evaluate the televised version alongside the printed one. *Hogfather* is also an interesting read when compared with the sinister past of the Icelandic Yule lads.

The final Discworld novel recommended in this section is *The Wee Free Men*, a witches-novel in the Tiffany phase. This novel is marketed for younger readers and unlike most of the other Discworld novels it is broken up into chapters. Again, there is the theme of 'us against them' as well as a central precocious child character similar to the eponymous character of *Eric*. *The Wee Free Men* is not as long as *Jingo*, *Interesting Times* or *Hogfather* but it might offer some difficulty for Icelandic students as much of the characters' dialogue is written as it would be pronounced with a thick Scottish accent. The nature of humans is a central theme in this novel as it questions what

makes people human, does our shape determine our humanity or our actions and other similar questions run through it. However, without all the heavy philosophical ponderings, it is a novel about a young girl, who decides to rescue her baby brother from evil elves with the help of half-crazy, blue-painted men, who are short in size but not in ego.

Novels in the fantasy genre recommended for those students who have read *Eric* are in the 'epic' subgenre of fantasy. They have a strong connection to the original fairy tale element from which all fantasy literature springs and are likely to capture the imagination of the students and so further motivate them to read. David Eddings' Belgariad and Malloreon series consists of ten books and two additional novels that follow up from the events in the Malloreon, which are all interconnected and share protagonists. The Belgariad series has all the basic elements of a good fantasy for beginners: heir in hiding, epic battles between good and evil, humours and embarrassing encounters involving teenagers and romance. The first novel in the Belgariad is *Pawn of Prophecy* and while the ending of that novel is inconclusive as such because it is the first of five novels within that series, it still is captivating for those readers who are interested in reading fantasy novels. This series is also a good place to start because the series has a definite beginning and an ending, for many fantasy novels are parts of serials that have an ongoing publication history or are incomplete for some reason.

Another recommended novel is from the Earthsea cycle, *A Wizard of Earthsea* by Ursula Le Guin. This novel has a young protagonist, Ged, who is ambitious and powerful, much like Eric, and the length of the novel is also in its favour, as it is around two hundred pages. A great emphasis is placed on words and balance, e.g. to know the true name of someone will grant power over them and balance must be kept. This novel was first published in the 1960s, but it is far from being dated and will likely win over new readers in a new age. The novel is the first novel in a cycle of some six books, including a short stories collection, and one that has had immense popularity. *A Wizard of Earthsea* has been adapted into a television mini-series, although

personally I find it is very untrue to the novel and badly acted and conceived. However, it is worthwhile to point it out to students, to see that not all adaptations improve on their source material or even do them justice.

The third novel suggested as secondary reading is *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien. *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy has been filmed and mass-marketed in recent years, so most students will likely to be familiar with the setting of *The Hobbit* and so have an easier time immersing themselves in the world of Middle Earth. The prequel to the trilogy has a more fairy tale ‘feel’ to it and is lighter in its subject matter than the trilogy itself. An added bonus is that this novel has been dramatised for radio, which is available on audio CD as is the novel itself. This is perfect for those students who are less-skilled readers or have dyslexia. This is the oldest novel suggested here, being first published in the 1930s, but like *A Wizard of Earthsea*, it is far from being dated. This is partly due to the ‘past-like’ presentation of Middle Earth that roots it in the familiar for the reader and keeps it fresh.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Manilove, p. 93.



### 3.2 *Wyrd Sisters*

*Wyrd Sisters* is the sixth Discworld novel to be published and is the second novel of the witches-novels. The protagonist of the novel is Granny Weatherwax, who is the most powerful and respected witch in the Ramtop Mountains. Granny's character is always out of patience with impractical thinking and practices, although she does find people's wilful ignorance useful at times. Granny's character influences the way the novel parodies *The Tragedy of Macbeth* by Shakespeare as well as some elements from *Hamlet* and other plays by the same playwright. Granny's character, from the first of the witches-novels, is such that it has to be central to the narrative and so will not be content to screeching prophesies at would-be kings. The coven, which consists of Granny, Nanny Ogg and Magrat Garlick, therefore, takes on the central roles in a novel that has many elements from Shakespeare's plays and presents a story about propaganda, politics and romance, all three of which are dangerous if mishandled.

Words and the power they have to shape life is a central theme in this novel. The way to use words to form the world around you and influence memory, i.e. how to apply propaganda to the daily running of a government is explored in this novel. The novel's exploration of the usefulness of propaganda coincides with Pratchett's parodying of *The Tragedy of Macbeth* and *Hamlet* by Shakespeare. However, Shakespeare himself was not above using parody in his own plays by way of language.<sup>135</sup> Both plays parodied in the novel have political intrigue at its darkest level with kings being assassinated to make way for their killers' ascension to the throne. Shakespeare may even have been employing subtle propaganda in his composition of *The Tragedy of Macbeth* by portraying Macbeth as more villainous than he perhaps was and showing Banquo, King James I

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<sup>135</sup> Dentith, p. 125.

ancestor, as extra noble.<sup>136</sup> Considering the volatile nature of monarchs in the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras, this was a wise choice to make.

In the novel the fool, a man who really understands about pointed phrases, suggests using rumour and propaganda to help legitimise the rule of the duke Felmet, who helped himself to the throne of Lancre after stabbing his relative, King Verence (WS, pp. 86-87, 172-174). By showing his employers the usefulness of persuading the populace to approve of unpopular actions and turning against minorities, the fool has unleashed a very dangerous tool at the expense of the duke and duchess. This is evident when the fool points out that people's memory can be influenced through stories and plays, and if the duke wants present a version of the truth favourable to himself, then a play depicting the witches and King Verence as evildoers is the first step to making it the official history of the event (WS, pp. 86-87, 174-176). This also spoofs modern cinema, with films that claim to be based on 'actual events' or 'a true story' but often have little to do with what really occurred. As well as spoofing films, this is also an allusion to the play-within-a play in *Hamlet*, where Hamlet manages to show the court how his uncle gained the throne.<sup>137</sup>

The play commissioned by duke Felmet in the novel, is beset with production problems, similar to the superstitions that surrounds modern productions of *The Tragedy of Macbeth* (WS, pp. 277-278). Another nod to the present time in the novel is when it shows how many modern audiences react to Shakespeare plays, as the audience in the novel does not understand half of what is being said in the play but equate that to mean the play must be good (WS, p. 276). When looking at *The Tragedy of Macbeth* after or before reading *Wyrd Sisters*, it becomes clear that the play in the novel is set up along the lines of Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, where the witches'

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<sup>136</sup> William Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: the Complete Works*, gen. eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 975.

<sup>137</sup> William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* in *William Shakespeare: the Complete Works*, gen. eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 671-673.

prophesy prompt Macbeth and his wife's ambitions for power into action.<sup>138</sup> Unlike the play, where Lady Macbeth is consumed with guilt, in the novel the duke is the one hounded by guilt for killing the king (WS, pp. 83-85).<sup>139</sup> This is an interesting change, for the novel portrays the duchess as a woman with a will of steel and no conscious guilt for the cruel deeds committed in her past (WS, pp. 306-307). The gender roles in *The Tragedy of Macbeth* are reversed in the novel, except the duke is still the one who kills the king at the behest of his wife, and this has an influence on how the marriages for the two villainous couples come across to readers. In the play, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth seem almost loving, are ambitious, on the face of it in accord with one another and at the death of his wife Macbeth is saddened.<sup>140</sup> Their parodies in the novel, the duke and duchess, have only ambition in common with each other and it is clear that the duchess is the dominant partner in their marriage (WS, pp. 24-27). Another difference between the two couples is that it clear from the beginning of the novel that duke Felmet has already begun to lose his grip on reality and that the guilt over killing King Verence is what finally pushes him into madness (WS, pp. 85-86). In *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, there is never the sense that either Macbeth or his wife are insane or on the edge of sanity before committing the murder, all that the audience is aware of is that they are morally flexible. Macbeth finds it difficult to kill the king, not because he is inexperienced in killing, but rather that he defines it as murder to kill a man in his sleep while chopping men to pieces in battles is more honourable, more acceptable.<sup>141</sup>

The coven of witches, as they are seen in the play, are merely there to prompt others into action, they are passive characters with only their words having dynamic power in the play.<sup>142</sup> The

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<sup>138</sup> William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (London: The Penguin Group, 1994), pp. 29-30, 36-38, 42-49.

<sup>139</sup> Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, pp.93-95.

<sup>140</sup> Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, pp. 36-38, 100-101.

<sup>141</sup> Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, pp. 26, 42, 46-49.

<sup>142</sup> Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, pp. 28-30.

power of words is evident in the novel, as it is pitted against Granny and the other two witches, to discredit them. Granny's coven, however, is made up of characters that are active participants in the narrative and they take direct action to thwart the ducal pair from the start of the novel, when they rescue the heir to the throne (WS, pp. 17-21). Both Granny and Nanny Ogg's are very self-reliant women, however, they are not of the "Amazon" type of female characters sometimes seen in fantasy novels or television series, such as Buffy the Vampire slayer or Anita Blake.<sup>143</sup> While the witches are more sympathetic to the ghost of the murdered king than to the duke, they know they cannot replace the duke outright because what magic rules it also destroys (WS, pp. 154-155). This is a reference to *The Tragedy of Macbeth* and its protagonist's violent end.<sup>144</sup> Granny's reluctance to interfere with the duke's regime, however, is short-lived after she perceives that the people are losing their respect for her and the other witches (WS, pp. 166-67, 169-171). Although Granny's character in the witches-novels always struggles to maintain balance, much as the characters in Ursula Le Guin's Earthsea cycle, she will nonetheless go all out when she breaks the rules (WS, p. 171).<sup>145</sup> By placing the fool on the throne, as he is the older brother of the heir the coven saved, the witches defy destiny, which they see as just another way of telling a person their *narrative* in advance (WS, pp. 166-167, 329-331). This is also a contemporary interpretation of royal succession, as the fool and Tomjon are brothers by the same father, although he was not the king and as the novels states "[royalty] has to start somewhere" (WS, pp. 329-331). Both *The Tragedy of Macbeth* and the novel use magic, although only *Wjrd Sisters* can be called a true fantasy, as the element of the supernatural and the causal use of magic is more pervasive throughout the novel, than the play.<sup>146</sup> Also the novel carefully mixes

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<sup>143</sup> Kathleen Cioffi, "Types of Feminist Fantasy and Science Fiction" in *Women Worldwalkers: New Dimensions of Science Fiction and Fantasy* (Lubbock: Texas Tech Press, 1985), pp. 83-85.

<sup>144</sup> Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, pp. 104-105.

<sup>145</sup> Manilove, p. 32.

<sup>146</sup> Manilove, p. X.

in the mundane with magic to ground the novel, as can be seen in Granny's borrowing and later conversation with Lancre, and when Granny throws Magrat's teacup at the highwaymen attacking Tomjon (WS, pp. 80-82, 102-104, 256-259).

Romance, is yet another departure the novel takes from the play, with the fool and Magrat's careful courtship, with all the misunderstandings, excitement and worrying that goes with a recent romance. Their relationship contrasts with the coldness emitting from the relationship between the duke and duchess. However, there is no traditional 'happy' end with a marriage between Magrat and Verence the fool as this would be adhering to the will of stories. Stories and plays, the playground of words, are shown throughout the novel to be potent and a true craftsman can twist history to fit any mould. In the novel Pratchett makes many allusions to Shakespeare himself, his plays and the way theatre evolved in his day in the form of Vitoller's travelling acting company and their chief writer Hwel (WS, pp. 75-78, 212-213). These are usually very humorous episodes in the novel, especially so if the reader happens to recognise the references made to plays, events or even films that are interwoven into the narrative concerning Vitoller's men. Even readers who are unaware of the connotations would enjoy these scenes for themselves, although not nearly as much as initiated readers. The episodes showing Hwel composing or Vitoller and his actors preparing also help to deflate or reduce the awe-inspired respectability Shakespeare plays have accumulated through the centuries, which is especially helpful in gaining the sympathy of teenage readers. One such scene in the novel is where Tomjon reflects he has never understood what "divers alarums" means, despite having been part of the theatre his entire life, wondering if the stage has "dangerous depths, or lack of air pressure" (WS, p. 244). This mocks the Latin stage directions, which are usually part of the printed versions of Shakespeare plays and shows that even native speakers of English or as it is in the Discworld series, Morkporkian, can be confused by them. Another aspect that is spoofed in the novel is the language of plays from the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras, as is best seen in the fool's jargon, which he uses to disguise a

sharp political mind and at times saves his life (WS, pp. 28-29, 59-60). The spelling of the time is not exempt from the general parodying in the novel, as it is shown to be wild and practical, unlike the modern spelling, as is beautifully demonstrated on the word Weatherwax, which morphs into Wethewacs as Hwel writes the duke's play (WS, p. 244). As the English language has changed in past four hundred years, so has the ability of the general reader to understand plays from around that time period lessened and this is something that Icelandic tenth graders can probably relate to as they tackle the Icelandic Sagas.

Pratchett centres the novel on words, how they are used, what meaning they take and how they shape people's memory. In doing so, Pratchett reveals the enormous influence writers have when presenting their views and opinions. In addition, the novel demonstrates that language is an ever-changing and living organism, which is hard to confine to a page under orders to obey the rules. Words, like the witches in the novel, will go along with 'tyranny' while they have respect, but should never be considered harmless. As often in the Discworld series, belief and metaphors are liable to come to life and in *Wyrd Sisters*, this is best seen in the saying about the land and the king being one. Lancre and the duke are incompatible, due the duke's loathing of the land, which in turn is slowly becoming as mean spirited as the duke (WS, pp. 102-103, 166-167). Again, this also shows the importance the novel places on people understanding the meaning behind words and expressions.

### 3.2.1 Instruction guide for *Wyrð Sisters*<sup>147</sup>

**Goals:** The goals are to introduce students in the tenth grade to more traditional English literature, in this instance William Shakespeare's play *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, using fantasy literature, in particular Terry Pratchett's *Wyrð Sisters*, in addition to increasing the students' vocabulary.

**Objectives:** The main objectives are to enrich the students' literary experience and hopefully enhance the students' enjoyment of reading in English. The students come to appreciate the connection between *The Tragedy of Macbeth* and *Wyrð Sisters* and the main themes of both the play and novel. Through various exercises, the students' vocabulary is to be increased and they educated in participating in classroom discussions and taking added responsibility for their learning process.

**Pre-reading activities:** When undertaking to teach *Wyrð Sisters* to tenth graders in Icelandic compulsory schools and through that novel introduce the students to Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, as well as some of his other plays and fantasy literature, it should be noted that the instruction guide does not take into account seasonal changes in the curriculum relating to festive events, holidays or exams, and as with the instruction guide for *Eric*, it is tailored for skilled readers. All this has to be incorporated with regards to each schools' calendar, as it varies between schools how they divide their school year, some have trimesters, others fall and spring semesters, and the reading skill of the students.

The groundwork before reading Pratchett's *Wyrð Sisters* starts similarly to that of *Eric*, in establishing if the students are familiar with fantasy literature, how they would go about defining

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<sup>147</sup> Hedge, *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*, pp. 32-33; Arnbjörnsdóttir, pp. 70-77.

fantasy from other literature they are acquainted with, and if any of the students have read any Discworld novels or seen some the adaptations made from those novels. *Wyrd Sisters* is a longer novel than *Eric* is and it could be somewhat more difficult for less skilled readers. The novel will be read over a period of fifteen weeks, with an average of twenty-five pages a week. To further aid the students in preparing themselves before reading the novel, it is best to give them a timeline similar to appendix two, as this will help the students plan their reading and other studies.<sup>148</sup> On the timeline the students can see that from week three they will be watching twenty-minute segments of the animated version of *Wyrd Sisters* from 1997. Viewing this adaptation of the novel will help the less skilled students better comprehend the reading and make it feel less daunting, in addition to breaking up the traditional classroom work.<sup>149</sup> Another factor to be dealt with before starting *Wyrd Sisters* is to get parental consent for the students to watch the film adaptation of *The Tragedy of Macbeth* with the same title from 1971 directed by Roman Polanski. Given that permission is given, the preparation can start in earnest to introducing the novel and its author as well as ascertaining what the students know about myths or legends involving three females playing with the fate of men, such as what Icelandic or Nordic equivalents there are. As well as introducing *Wyrd Sisters* and Terry Pratchett, it is important that the students are made aware of the connection the novel has to Shakespeare and *The Tragedy of Macbeth* as well as some of his other plays. It should be made quite clear to the students that they are not expected to read the novel with translations in mind, rather that they understand what they are reading and gain some vocabulary in the process.

**During reading activities:** The students will have one lesson every week in which they will either listen to or readout loud the pages assigned for the week, as this can motivate their

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<sup>148</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

<sup>149</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 92, 113; Julkunen, p. 33.



personal reading and aid their understanding of the material.<sup>150</sup> Alternatively, this lesson can be utilised for silent reading as it can be beneficial to the students to be able to directly check their comprehension with the teacher or their fellow classmates.<sup>151</sup> To further aid the students' comprehension of the novel every week there is a classroom discussion about the novel; what has occurred on the pages read so far and speculation about the direction the novel might take. The classroom dialogue is also to get the students used to expressing themselves in spoken English and to contribute to the reading comprehension assignments and vocabulary exercises.<sup>152</sup> As well as reading comprehension assignments, the students also have assignments that assess their understanding of the play's connection to Pratchett's *Wyrd Sisters* and to the animated version.

While reading *Wyrd Sisters* the students will watch a cartoon version of Pratchett's novel *Wyrd Sisters* (1997) every other week followed by various assignments, including vocabulary exercises, reading comprehension assignments, and translation exercises based on the vocabulary from the novel, as well as from the alternative reading materials. By watching the cartoon alongside reading the novel, students are motivated to read on and it breaks up monotony in the classroom.<sup>153</sup> The students are also given three spelling exercises while reading the novel, using language from the novel. The students are given the exercise in advance to help them prepare for the exercise and this will also help the students take more responsibility for their studies as will their participation in correcting it afterwards.<sup>154</sup>

Once during the reading process the students will have a creative writing assignment, where the students are encouraged to use the language they have picked up from the novel as well as

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<sup>150</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 113-114.

<sup>151</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 112-113.

<sup>152</sup> John Gardner, pp. 14-16.

<sup>153</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, p. 100; Dressel, p.36; Julkunen, pp. 29-30.

<sup>154</sup> Dressel, pp. 15-16.

from other sources. The purpose of this assignment is similar to the classroom discussions, i.e. the students expressing themselves in English, although this time in the written format. The students also have four translation exercises, which are based on the vocabulary from the novel as well as other sources, and they are to help the students to better assimilate the vocabulary into their acquisition of English. Unlike the instruction guide for *Eric*, where the students finished reading the novel before watching the play, the instruction guide for *Wyrld Sisters* integrates the viewing the play with the reading of the novel and watching its adaptation. This is done for four reasons: Firstly because the film version proposed this time is longer and will need more time for the students to view it. Secondly because the novel itself is longer and so is more time consuming than the reading of *Eric*. Thirdly because this will help the students, who will by this time have read more than half of the novel, be more aware of the parodying factors in the novel. The fourth reason is that reading the novel alongside watching the play will aid the students' understanding of the play. The film's running time is a hundred and forty minutes, as is the animated version of *Wyrld Sisters*. However, it would be better for the students to view the play in larger portions than the cartoon version of the novel, so the students will watch twenty minute to half-an-hour sections of the film.

**Post-reading activities:** After the students finish reading the novel, the classroom discussion will cover both the final pages and the novel as a whole, along with the speculation on how the animated version will end, such as whether or not it will be faithful to the novel. It can also be beneficial to use the classroom dialogue to get the students to think about the similarities and differences between *Wyrld Sisters*, both the novel and the cartoon, and *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, to prepare them for the final assignment. The students will watch the final episode of *Wyrld Sisters* (1997) and do the final reading comprehension assignment mixed with vocabulary exercises. The final assignment is based on both versions of *Wyrld Sisters* and the film adaptation of *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, where the students are asked how they perceive the connection between tragedy and

comedy by using examples from the play and cartoon, and how they felt two versions of *Wyrld Sisters* measure up against each other and the play.

**Number of lessons:** Fifty-four lessons of forty minutes each over a period of fifteen weeks.<sup>155</sup>

**Lesson 1:** This lesson will be in the form of a classroom discussion and starts by establishing what the class thinks about fantasy literature and how familiar are the students with Terry Pratchett's Discworld and his novel *Wyrld Sisters*. After a brief summary of the author, Terry Pratchett and the basics of the Discworld, the students are asked what they know about myths and legends involving three women playing with the fate of men. The students are given a timeline similar to appendix two. After introducing *Wyrld Sisters* and Terry Pratchett, it is important that the students are made aware of the connection the novel has to Shakespeare and *The Tragedy of Macbeth* as well as some of his other plays. This can be done with a brief examination what the students know about the playwright and what connotations they associated with his name and the title of the play. End the lesson by giving the students the novel.

**Lesson 2:** The students either listen to the first twenty-four pages or read the pages out loud as this can improve the students' comprehension of the text and motivate their private reading, although mispronunciation can cause confusion.<sup>156</sup>

**Lesson 3:** During this lesson the pages assigned for this week are discussed and the students can talk about anything from the novel as well as contribute to the reading comprehension and vocabulary assignment that is for the following lesson.

**Lesson 4:** In this lesson the students have a reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read so far as well as some vocabulary exercises. The students have thirty minutes to finish

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<sup>155</sup> See appendix two, for the timeline for *Wyrld Sisters* and pages allotted for each week.

<sup>156</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 113-114.

the assignment and the final ten minutes are given over to correcting it. This assignment and others of a similar nature are to enhance the students' vocabulary and help them prepare for other related assignments, in addition to encourage the students' reading even further.<sup>157</sup> The format of the exercises will be a mixture of words or expressions from the novel part of which are suggested by the students themselves.<sup>158</sup>

**Lesson 5:** Lesson five is the same as the second lesson, using the time either for silent reading or to listening to the pages assigned for the week.

**Lesson 6:** As with the third lesson, this lesson is for classroom dialogue devoted to a discussion about the novel and the students' contributions to the next vocabulary exercise.

**Lesson 7:** In this lesson the students are given a translation exercise, that is to gauge how well the students have incorporated the vocabulary from the novel in their acquisition of English and see if they can apply it in this instance in a translation between English and Icelandic.

**Lesson 8:** For the first twenty minutes of the lesson the students will watch the first segment of the cartoon version of *Wyrd Sisters* from 1997, which is a hundred and forty minutes long. The students will watch the cartoon in seven twenty minute segments interspersed with other lessons. After watching *Wyrd Sisters* (1997), the students have fifteen minutes to do a vocabulary exercise and the final five minutes to go over the assignment and make corrections.<sup>159</sup>

**Lesson 9:** The same as lessons two and five.

**Lesson 10:** For thirty or thirty-five minutes the lesson is devoted to a discussion of the pages read so far and to make suggestions for the next reading comprehension assignment. For the

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<sup>157</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, p. 101.

<sup>158</sup> John Gardner, pp. 15-16.

<sup>159</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

final five to ten minutes of the lesson the students are given the spelling exercise they will do in lesson eleven to prepare themselves.

**Lesson 11:** The students do a spelling exercise based on the vocabulary from *Wyrld Sisters* and other reading materials. After having reviewed them, the teacher should give the exercises back to the students for self-correction, as this helps students become more aware of which areas of spelling that are troubling them.<sup>160</sup>

**Lesson 12:** The students have twenty-five minutes to complete the reading comprehension assignment and the final fifteen to go over the assignment and do what corrections are needed.

**Lesson 13:** Same as lessons six and nine.

**Lesson 14:** The class discusses the development in the story and makes suggestions for the next vocabulary exercise.

**Lesson 15:** The students watch the second part of the animated version of *Wyrld Sisters* for the first twenty minutes of the lesson after which the students do a vocabulary exercise for the rest of the lesson.

**Lesson 16:** As in lesson six, nine and thirteen, the students either listen to or read (silently or out loud) the pages allotted for the week.

**Lesson 17:** Classroom discussion about the pages read so far for thirty minutes. The final ten minutes are used to tell the students about their next assignment for lesson eighteen, which is in two parts – one short story written without aid and another short story written about a cartoon strip. This way the students can prepare for the first part of the assignment.

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<sup>160</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

**Lesson 18:** Creative writing session. The assignment is twofold: the students are asked to utilise the vocabulary they have gained from the novel to write a short story, and then another story based on a cartoon strip.

**Lessons 19, 23 and 26:** Same as lesson sixteen.

**Lessons 20 and 24:** The students discuss what has occurred in the novel so far and make their suggestions for the next reading comprehension assignment.

**Lesson 21:** As in lesson seven, the students are given a translation exercise based in part on the vocabulary from *Wyrd Sisters*.

**Lesson 22:** The first twenty minutes of the lesson are used to watch the third segment of *Wyrd Sisters* (1997) and afterwards the students will complete a reading comprehension assignment.

**Lesson 25:** The students are given an assignment to test their understanding of the novel along with some vocabulary exercises.

**Lesson 27:** Classroom dialogue about what has occurred in the novel so far.

**Lesson 28:** In this lesson the students begin to watch a film adaptation of William Shakespeare's play *The Tragedy of Macbeth* from 1971. The film is a hundred and forty minutes long and will be watched in five parts, each ca. twenty minute to half-an-hour. The ten to twenty minutes left after each viewing is devoted to discussing what has occurred in the film to help the students better comprehend the play.

**Lesson 29:** The lesson is divided into two twenty minute parts. During the first part the students will watch the fourth segment of the cartoon and afterwards they will do a translation exercise that uses language from Pratchett's novel as well as vocabulary from other sources such as the film *The Tragedy of Macbeth* (1971).

**Lessons 30 and 34:** As lessons twenty-three and twenty-six, these lessons are used to listen to or read (silently or out loud) the pages assigned for the week.

**Lesson 31:** The first thirty minutes of the lesson is devoted to a classroom discussion about the development of the novel. In the last ten minutes the students are given a spelling exercise that they will do in the following lesson, giving them time to prepare.

**Lesson 32:** Just as with the spelling exercise in lesson eleven, this exercise uses language from *Wyrd Sisters* as well as other material. The correction process is the same as in lesson eleven.

**Lesson 33:** For the first twenty-five minutes the students will watch the second part of the film and the remaining fifteen minutes the students will use to complete a short assignment about novel and play.

**Lesson 35:** This lesson is used for a classroom discussion about the pages read so far and for the students' contributions for the next reading comprehension assignment and vocabulary exercises.

**Lesson 36:** The third part of the film is watched for twenty-five minutes to a half-an-hour. The remaining ten to fifteen minutes used to discuss developments in the film to help the students' understanding of the film.

**Lesson 37:** This lesson is divided into two twenty minute parts: in the first half the students watch the fifth segment of *Wyrd Sisters* (1997) and the second half is used to complete a reading comprehension assignment and vocabulary exercises.

**Lessons 38, 43 and 47:** These lessons are used to read or listen to the pages assigned for the each week.

**Lesson 39:** The lesson is devoted to a classroom discussion of the pages read so far. During this lesson the students are also encouraged to think about and discuss how the play (as seen in the film) and the novel are connected – for example what is similar or different, and shifts in focus.

**Lesson 40:** The same as lesson twenty-one.

**Lesson 41:** The students will watch the fourth part of the film for twenty-five minutes to a half-an-hour, with the remaining ten to fifteen minutes employed to discuss developments in the film.

**Lesson 42:** The students have twenty-five minutes to complete an assignment based on the connection between the play and novel – as far as the students have read the novel and seen the film adaptation of the play – and do some vocabulary exercises. For the last fifteen minutes the students will correct each other's assignments.<sup>161</sup>

**Lesson 44:** This lesson is given over to a classroom discussion about the pages read so far and about the close connection between tragedy and comedy as seen in how the novel takes elements from the play, a tragedy, and changes them into comedy, such as Macbeth's paranoia in the play is comic in the character of the duke in the novel and the cartoon.

**Lesson 45:** In this lesson the students finish watching the film adaptation and for the remainder of the lesson the class will discuss the play, its outcome and how that might affect the end of the novel.

**Lesson 46:** As in lesson thirty-seven, this lesson devotes the first twenty minutes to watching the sixth part of the cartoon and the remaining time the students utilise to complete an assignment based on how the play and the cartoon use similar subjects either for comedy or tragedy.

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<sup>161</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.



**Lesson 48:** This lesson is the same as lesson thirty-one, although part of the classroom discussion is devoted to the students' contributions for the next reading comprehension exercise and they are given the spelling exercise to prepare for lesson forty-nine.

**Lesson 49:** The same process as the spelling exercises in lessons eleven and thirty-two.

**Lesson 50:** The students are given a reading comprehension assignment and some vocabulary exercises to complete during the lesson.

**Lesson 51:** The students listen to the final twenty-seven pages.

**Lesson 52:** In this lesson the students discuss the outcome of the novel. The discussion should also include some speculations about the ending of the cartoon – will it be faithful to the novel and similar questions – and how the novel and the play are connected. The students also make suggestions for the final reading comprehension and vocabulary assignment.

**Lesson 53:** The final segment of *Wyrld Sisters* (1997) is watched for the first twenty minutes of the lesson after which the students will complete the final assignment on vocabulary and reading comprehension connected with *Wyrld Sisters*.

**Lesson 54:** The students get twenty-five minutes to complete an assignment about the differences and similarities between the two versions of *Wyrld Sisters*, and how the play *The Tragedy of Macbeth* is used in the novel. The fifteen minutes remaining the students use to go over the assignment to make what corrections are needed.

### 3.2.2 Secondary Reading

As with the secondary reading suggested after reading *Eric*, the secondary reading suggested here is also divided between recommendations within Terry Pratchett's Discworld series and within the fantasy genre itself. As language is very central to *Wyrld Sisters*, such as the way it can be used to alter memory, create history and tell a good story, it is in the fantasy subgenre of alternative history where readers will find similar novels. Within the Discworld series, the most obvious choice to recommend to students after *Wyrld Sisters* is another witches-novel, and one that directly follows the events chronicled in that novel. This is the novel *Witches Abroad*, which like *Wyrld Sisters* is in the Magrat phase of the witches-novels and has Granny's coven as its protagonists. Narrative causality is the novel's main theme. How didactic fairy tales can be and how dangerous to human and animal life it can be to let stories control life. The novel demonstrates that just because someone is a fairy godmother that does not automatically mean that person is good or well intentioned. By taking traditional fairy tales, such as Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty, and slightly twisting them, the author turns the seemingly innocuous storylines to reveal a sinister and cruel side to them. Others have done this before and since, but have seldom managed to retain the sense of the fun and narrative plausibility that Pratchett manages in this novel. As with *Wyrld Sisters*, *Witches Abroad* is more suitable for advanced readers, although the familiar storylines interwoven into the novel might help motivate less skilled readers to read the novel.

The second Discworld novel recommended in this section also has a fairy tale connection. This is the novel *Thief of Time*. It is one of the independent Discworld novels, featuring Lu Tze and the History Monks, and the Auditors of Reality. In this novel, time can be altered, redirected and meddled with in order for history to be correct. The two main protagonists of the novel are

Jeremy Clockson and Lobsang Ludd. They have a special relationship with Time<sup>162</sup> and are orphans as is often useful in fiction.<sup>163</sup> This novel is about defining humanity or life, what it means to be alive and why the Auditors detest it so. The Auditors of Reality find a loophole that helps them to freeze time and thereby life on the Disc, which they do by using the human invention of the clock. This novel is suitable for skilled readers, who are very interested in the Discworld series, but less advanced reader would likely give up on it.

*Moving Pictures* is the third novel to be recommended after reading *Wyrld Sisters*. Like *Wyrld Sisters*, historical accuracy in certain art forms is questioned and spoofed. This novel mercilessly mocks Hollywood's early years, making fun of the industry itself and how seemingly normal individuals can be changed into true believers of the industry by simply being around it. 'Historically accurate' clicks, the Discworld equivalent of flicks or films, are revealed to usually amount to having the names of the historical characters correctly spelled and are not above adding manic embellishments to historical stories to reel in audiences. The audience does not escape from ridicule either, as they are shown to be near zombies once the clicks start, as best demonstrated with the consumption of banged grains with butter and salt, which taste suspiciously like buttery salted cardboard, not unlike popcorn. The novel is long, but not off-putting in its content and as this novel is available on audio CD, it could be perfect for those students who have reading disabilities.

The final two recommendations in the Discworld category are two novels from the City Watch novels. The first novel, *Night Watch*, is suitable only for well-advanced readers, and the second one, both the graphic version and novel version of *Guards! Guards!*, are suited for those students with reading disabilities or who are less motivated readers in general. *Night Watch* is the twenty-eighth Discworld novel and one of the darker ones. Accidental time travel places Sam

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<sup>162</sup> Spelling of the word with a capital letter is intentional.

<sup>163</sup> Moran, p. 36.

Vimes, the protagonist of the novel, in Ankh-Morpork's recent and murky past. Realising when and where he is, Vimes struggles against fear and panic as the bloody events of civil war unfold *again* around him, as he must keep himself and his younger self alive to get back to his own time before history engulfs him. In *Guards! Guards!*, which is the first City Watch novel, the main protagonist is Carrot Ironfounder-son, not Sam Vimes, although he does feature prominently in the story. The novel parodies the Arthurian legend and indeed all fantasy novels with a lost heir theme. It has dragons, mystery and romance, and is suitably long for students to read at their leisure. The graphic novel helps to visually stimulate those students, who are inactive readers or those who have reading difficulties.

The novels in the fantasy genre best suited after reading *Wyrld Sisters* and watching *The Tragedy of Macbeth* (1971) are very different from each other but are all about alternative takes on history, except for the first novel, *Macbeth: the Graphic Novel* adapted by John McDonald. This graphic novel takes the text from the play and sets it into a graphic setting, which is colourful and easy to follow. Most the students should be able to read it after having seen the play performed. The form helps to ensure less skilled readers can enjoy it. An added bonus to this novel is that it can be used instead of watching the play, should parental consent be denied. However, the basic elements of *The Tragedy of Macbeth* are such that they fit into the fantasy genre, with its kings, knights, villains, witches, and battles, so it is not such a stretch placing this graphic novel into the category. The first novel of pure fantasy suggested here is Jasper Fforde's *The Eyre Affair*. In this novel, as in so many Discworld novels, narrative power is an actuality, with special branches of the police guarding works of fiction, as if they were living, breathing entities. It takes Charlotte Brontë's novel, *Jane Eyre* and changes the plot, making the version in Fforde's novel end with Jane and Rochester being apart. Only after chasing a villain thrown into the tale, does the protagonist accidentally end up with *Jane Eyre* as it is in our world. As in *Thief of Time*, history and time are very movable objects and are frequently changed to accommodate or trap the characters.

The vocabulary in this novel is also very useful for future readings of other literature, not just within the fantasy genre.

George Orwell's *1984*, with its pessimistic future predictions about a totalitarian regime controlling every aspect of people's lives, is a classic fantasy novel. The darker tone of this novel is similar to *Night Watch*, suggested above and like *The Tragedy of Macbeth* it shows that it can be hard to be decent in a society that thrives on violence and deception. There is the same emphasis on words in this novel as in *Wyrld Sisters*, as the main protagonist, Winston Smith is constantly rewriting history to best suit the government. However, *1984* more suited to advanced readers. In keeping with predictions of a glum future or as it were in the case of the novel *Fatherland* by Robert Harris, the past that takes place in Nazi Germany in the 1960s. In the novel, Hitler is still alive in the 1960s and rules much of Europe, and a cold war exists between the USA and Nazi Germany. The spin-doctors of the Third Reich have altered history to such an extent that no one questions the will of the government or its actions, that is until the novel's protagonist, Xavier March, a police detective, and an American journalist start to discover the atrocities committed during and after the Second World War. The vocabulary in the novel should be accessible to most readers and useful for further reading both within the fantasy genre and in other literary genres. However, the novel is too advanced for students who have reading disabilities, so they should be pointed toward the film adaptation of the novel from 1994. The setting of the novel in the recent past helps readers or viewers to instantly orientate themselves within the world of the novel or film.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Melissa Thomas, "Teaching Fantasy: Overcoming the Stigma of Fluff", Online 23 Sep. 2008 at <<http://www.proquest.com/>>

### ***3.3 Lords and Ladies***

*Lords and Ladies* is the third Discworld novel to be examined in this thesis. It is a parody of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a romantic play including elves, Amazonian warrior queens and young lovers. This novel takes Shakespeare's carefree and comic play and turns it into a narrative filled with danger, horror and comedy. As with *Wyrd Sisters*, where a tragic play was turned into a comedy with sharp satirical commentary about how to handle language, *Lords and Ladies* changes the romantic and playful atmosphere of play, into that of a battlefield, where the winner will control human destiny. The novel is the fourteenth in the Discworld series and the fifth witches-novel. It follows the characters of Granny Weatherwax and her coven from the events in *Witches Abroad*, as the author's note at the beginning of the novel explains. This novel is less easily accessible than the two previous Discworld novels discussed above, because to really enjoy *Lords and Ladies*, the reader must have seen or read *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and be aware of the dynamics between the characters in the coven.

As in the first witches-novel *Equal Rites*, the worlds of the witches and wizards of the Disc collide in *Lords and Ladies*. Mimicking the romantic pairing that is pervasive throughout *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the novel presents the reader with various odd couples, such as Granny and Mustrum Ridcully, the two most powerful magic practitioners on the Disc. Relationships feature highly in the novel, not just between the sexes but also between species. While the play had the two pairs of young lovers, the duke and his bride and the fairy royal couple, the novel trims the narrative down to three main couples. The novel also reverses some the roles from the play, as well as combining them, as can be seen in King Verence II, who is put in the role of Hermia. He is the coveted prize in a fight between two queens, as Hermia is the love object of

Lysander and Demetrius.<sup>165</sup> At the same time, Verence is also in the role of the duke and that of Bottom, he is the ruler about to marry, like the duke he is an object of desire for the Fairy Queen and just as Bottom, Verence is thoroughly silly while in that role (LL, p. 339).<sup>166</sup>

The role of Magrat is changed from what it is in *Wyrd Sisters* and *Witches Abroad*, where she always relied on the older witches to guide her, even if she begrudged their interference and did not understand their motives fully. In *Lords and Ladies*, however, Granny pushes Magrat out of the coven for her own safety and fully into her future role as Queen of Lancre (LL, p. 37). This facilitates her taking up a role similar to that of Lysander, merged with that of Hippolyta (LL, pp. 263, 271). Magrat as an Amazonian warrior queen experiences much more action and emerges victorious, with help from Nanny and Granny, unlike her Shakespearean counterpart, who the audience never see fighting and knows she lost her last battle against her future husband, although she had a more active sex life than Magrat prior to her wedding (LL, pp. 188, 202, 370).<sup>167</sup> Mustrum and Granny's relationship is also a mixture, for in the novel they were summer sweethearts during their teens, but as they each pursued advancement in the world of magic neither really had time for long term romance nor the inclination (LL, pp. 109-111). Their relationship is not rekindled as such in the novel, but any regrets for the choices they made in their youth are resolved due to the theory of parallel universes and knowledge that they are content with their lives in the here and now (LL, p. 381). Mustrum and Granny are a juxtaposition of the duke and Hippolyta and the sweeter aspects of the Fairy King and Queen in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as they are older, more powerful than Verence and Magrat and have the humane qualities of Oberon and Titania. Unlike the play where all the pairs end up marching

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<sup>165</sup> Terry Pratchett, *Lords and Ladies* (London: Corgi Books, 1993), p. 339. All further references in the text (in parentheses) are to this edition, abbreviated LL; William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in *William Shakespeare: the Complete Works*, gen. eds Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, (Oxford and New York; Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 313.

<sup>166</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, pp. 316, 326.

<sup>167</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, pp. 313, 316.

along in marital bliss or at least harmony, Granny and Mustrum remain resolutely single and the elfin King and Queen continue their cold war separation (LL, pp. 314, 349-350, 381).<sup>168</sup>

The younger coven in the novel has no counterpart in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* other than the youthful rebellion of Hermia and Lysander against the patriarchal authority separating them. Unlike the lovers, the coven has been left to their own devices, which has led them to be very assertive and confident in their ability to handle the occult despite no training (LL, pp. 77-85).<sup>169</sup> In fact, this lack of supervision has led the young coven to a dangerous ally, the Fairy Queen, who promises power but is silent about the price she will later extract. As a species, the elves in the play are seen as benign creatures who sympathise with humans and set out to help them while having some fun as well. This is best seen in Oberon's compassion for Helena, his contempt for Demetrius' treatment of her and later orders to Puck to set the lovers right (LL, pp. 338-350).<sup>170</sup> The Fairy Queen in the play is from the start made more human, as she is given a name, and portrayed as a caring foster mother, unlike her counterpart in *Lords and Ladies*, who is stone cold, uncaring, and willing to inflict bodily harm and/or death to achieve her ambition to rule Lancre.<sup>171</sup> Elves in Pratchett's novel are contemptuous of humans, seeing humans as toys and treating them as cats would mice (LL, pp. 260-262, 270-278). It is by turning the elves from playful and caring characters to mischievous and malignant creatures that the novel manages to turn from light romantic fairy tale to a horror fantasy story, genres that often mix.<sup>172</sup> Again, roles are merged, as the Fairy Queen in the novel has aspects of Helena's character, in that she is the

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<sup>168</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, pp. 327-329.

<sup>169</sup> Moran, pp. 35-36.

<sup>170</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, pp. 318, 321.

<sup>171</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 317.

<sup>172</sup> John Stephans and Robyn McCallum, "There are Worse Things Than Ghosts': Reworking Horror Chronotopes in Australian Children's Literature" in *Mystery in Children's Literature: from the Rational to the Supernatural*, eds. Adrienne E. Gavin and Christopher Routledge, (Houndsmill, UK and New York: Palgrave/St. Martin's Press, 2001), p. 165.



one pursuing a lover as well as having characteristics of both Oberon and Titania, with Oberon's cunning and Titania's blindness to the changes in her surroundings. While the King and Queen in the play enjoy an open marriage, much as the royal fairy couple in the novel do, and have opposite and separate courts, the novel makes it clear that King and Queen are not about to reconcile (LL, pp. 314, 349-350).<sup>173</sup> The King, as he appears in the novel, is closely associated with the devil, with his horns, smell, and the fact that he is bidding his time until he returns to rule the Disc all add to the menace the reader should link with the elves and is similar to the menace of Icelandic elves (LL, pp. 310-314, 349-350). Gender relations are often looked at in the novel, for example in the expectations of behaviour and how witches and wizards view magic and what each find necessary to give up or not to achieve power (LL, pp. 133-134, 150, 264). In the play, the active participants are Demetrius and Lysander, Oberon and Puck, they are the ones who fight, trick, and are the dynamic characters, while Hermia, Titania and even Helena are passive characters. In the novel, the women, especially the witches, are the active characters, and at the centre of the narrative. However, that does not mean the male characters are neutered and inert, as seen in the actions of the Lancre Morris Men, the Librarian and Casanunda (LL, pp. 294-297, 318-323). Nonetheless, they are extras in the battle between Granny and the Queen, where as in *Wyrd Sisters*, words, plays and people's perceptions play a big role.

As in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the novel has a play within the novel, which is performed by amateur thespians and as the troupe in the play has difficulties in settling into their roles, so do the Lancre Morris Men in the novel (LL, pp. 172-176).<sup>174</sup> The actors in the novel are well aware of the fact that the rehearsals are going badly, more so than the 'clowns' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and similarly in both the novel and the play, the performance of the entertainment is

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<sup>173</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 316.

<sup>174</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, pp. 315-316.

marred not only by bad acting but outside interruptions (LL, pp. 179-186, 240, 291).<sup>175</sup> However, unlike the troupe in the play, which is ridiculed and mocked for their efforts, the Lancre Morris Men are able to salvage their dignity by reverting to a deadly form of Morris dancing (LL, pp. 292-296). In the play, Shakespeare plays with the two separate classes of aristocrats and workers, providing comic relief through the clownish efforts of the actors to entertain the wedding guests and mocking commentary of the elite, using language as a comic tool.<sup>176</sup> However acceptable in the sixteenth century, by the late twentieth century it is pushing the limits of 'acceptable' parody by disparaging the financially challenged classes, therefore in the novel, it is by staying true to their roots and knowledge that the Lancre Morris Men are able to help the witches defeat the elves.<sup>177</sup>

The amateur troupe, in fact, does provide another link to one of the main elements of *Lords and Ladies*, which is language. Words and expression can often lose their meaning or become distorted by misuse. In the play, while the actors are being assigned roles Quince tells Bottom he does his lion "too terribly" and so denies him the role.<sup>178</sup> Taking in the modern sense, Quince means that Bottom would be an unconvincing lion and that his acting is bad, however as the rest of his explanation to Bottom shows, he simply mean that Bottom might frighten, i.e. strike terror into the hearts of the female audience, and get them all killed.<sup>179</sup> This is not the only instant of language being directly played with in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as the title of the play the men are planning to perform suggests: *The Most Lamentable Comedy and Most Cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisble*. Lamentable comedies aside, the play is a source of much mirth for the wedding guests, as

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<sup>175</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, pp. 320-321, 330-332.

<sup>176</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, pp. 330-332; Dentith, p. 125.

<sup>177</sup> Dentith, p.131.

<sup>178</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 315.

<sup>179</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 315.

they pick apart the description of the entertainment, such as “tedious brief scene” and “tragical mirth” and this focus on words is also found in the novel, where descriptions of the elves are closely examined to establish their true nature.<sup>180</sup> This is done very simply in the novel by looking at the adjectives used to describe the elves and disengaging them from their everyday uses to the source of the words meanings to establish the fact that in the novel “[elves] are *bad*” (LL, pp. 169-170). People’s memory of that fact has altered as the meanings attached to the words have changed or widened. Memory residing in words is a concept also brought up in *Wyrd Sisters* but in this novel, the concept is connected to iron. Knowledge is like a needle on a compass for the people of the Disc and as the elves dwelling in a parasitical world to the Discworld hate iron and all things associated with it, the development of cities and increased literacy is hindering them from ruling the Disc again (LL, p. 311). The possibility of the fairies is one that people need, they need fantasy, but it cannot be allowed to rule humans as the cost is too high, as the character of Granny acknowledges during her final confrontation with the Fairy Queen (LL, p. 342). Always with Granny’s character, the need for balance is paramount as was examined in chapter 2.3. so despite wanting the Queen and her elves gone from Lancre, Granny knows she needs to continue existing elsewhere. The novel itself makes it clear that while Granny is indeed a powerful witch, she still needs to clean her privy like most people, keeping a balance between “the mundane and the marvellous”, which every fantasy novels needs (LL, pp. 22, 359-360).<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, p. 329.

<sup>181</sup> Manilove, p. X.

### 3.3.1 Instruction guide for *Lords and Ladies*<sup>182</sup>

**Goals:** The main goal is open up more traditional English literature, in this instance William Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to tenth graders, using fantasy literature, in particular Terry Pratchett's *Lords and Ladies*.

**Objectives:** The main objectives are to give the students a taste of English literature from several angles, such as fantasy novels to Shakespearean plays and to increase the students' vocabulary. The way Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is woven into Pratchett's *Lords and Ladies* and the main themes of both the play and novel are made clear to the students. To get the students used to expressing themselves both in spoken and written English and to encourage the students to take responsibility for their learning process.

**Pre-reading activities:** *Lords and Ladies* is by far the most difficult novel of three Discworld novels examined in this thesis and for tenth graders to truly appreciate the novel and indeed to understand it they are going to need much more preparation before starting the novel itself. Another factor that should be considered is that this novel might be more suited for skilled readers, although classroom discussions will aid the less skilled readers to keep up. With the time taken to prepare the students, as well as time allotted to reading the novel and assignments during and after reading it, it should take sixty-one lessons or sixteen weeks to finish *Lords and Ladies*. This, however, does not factor into the timetable, exam periods, holidays or seasonally related material. As with *Eric and Wyrld Sisters*, the instruction guide allots six forty minute lessons a week, from which three lessons are always used for teaching related to the novel with the option of adding a fourth or fifth lesson if needed.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Hedge, *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*, pp. 32-33; Arnbjörnsdóttir, pp. 70-77.

<sup>183</sup> See Appendix three.

The preparation for the students begins with a classroom discussion about fantasy literature, how the students define it, have they read much fantasy and more precisely any of Terry Pratchett's Discworld novels. After a brief summary about Terry Pratchett and the Discworld, a discussion about elves is useful, and how the students have experienced them in the books and fairy tales they have read or have had read to them. This is to find out if the students believe in elves or the Icelandic equivalent, 'huldufólk' and what connotations they have when hearing about them. Then the students are given a short rundown about William Shakespeare and his play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. At the same time to establish what the students know about the playwright and the play, and what they associate with him or his plays. The students will watch a film adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from 1999 starring amongst others Christian Bale and Michelle Pfeiffer. After the students have watched the play then they have an assignment about the play to test their comprehension of it. The students will also watch the animated version of *Wyrld Sisters* (1997), because to fully understand *Lords and Ladies* the students have to be aware of the dynamics between the characters in the coven, just as they benefit from having seen the play to understand what is being parodied in the novel. To further help the students understand the main protagonists in Pratchett's *Lords and Ladies*, the students are given an abstract from Terry Pratchett's *Witches Abroad* followed by an assignment based on the abstract. The students are given a timeline similar to appendix three, so that they can from the start plan their reading schedule.<sup>184</sup>

**During reading activities:** One lesson every week is devoted to listening to or reading – alternatively out loud or in silence – the pages allotted for that week. For each week the students will read about twenty to thirty pages, as anything less will leave the reader confused about the story. While the students are not required to be able to translate the pages they read weekly, vocabulary and glossaries are gradually memorised through the various exercises, such as

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<sup>184</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

translation exercises, reading comprehension and vocabulary assignments and any glossary or difficult language can be addressed in the weekly classroom dialogue sessions.<sup>185</sup> The classroom dialogue sessions are mainly to get the students to express themselves in spoken English about the novel, to discuss the development in the novel and for the students to make suggestion about words, expressions or plot devises for either the reading comprehension and vocabulary exercises or the creative writing lessons that are interspersed during the reading process.

Creative writing exercises are often part of the assignments during the reading process of *Lords and Ladies* as they offer a variety of assignments all designed to help the students get used to expressing themselves in written English, such as describing illustrations, filling in conversations, writing reviews and short stories.<sup>186</sup> For the creative exercises the students will be asked to utilise vocabulary from the novel. During the reading process the students have three translation exercises that are based on the language from the novel and are to help the students to fully assimilate that vocabulary into their English acquisition and how they use it when applied to translation between English to Icelandic or vice versa. The students also have two spelling exercises using vocabulary taken from the novel, which the students will get to see prior to doing the exercise and they will correct their mistakes themselves so that the students gain a better understanding of where their strengths and weaknesses lie.<sup>187</sup> Towards the end of the reading process the students are given an assignment designed to remind them of the play and how it connects to the novel; such as how the comic element of the play is turned into horror in the novel. The students are asked to speculate on the outcome of the novel, using the play as their guide.

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<sup>185</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 112-113.

<sup>186</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 104-106.

<sup>187</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

**Post-reading activities:** The post-reading assignments consist of a final classroom discussion about the novel, a translation exercise to gauge how well the students have incorporated the language of the novel into their general knowledge of English spelling, and a final assignment about the connections between *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Pratchett's *Lords and Ladies*.

**Number of lessons:** Sixty-one lessons of forty minutes each over a period of sixteen weeks.<sup>188</sup>

**Lesson 1:** This lesson is in the form of classroom dialogue, which the students have to get used to participating in as it will be a weekly session and is designed to help the students getting used to articulating themselves in English and get them to be more proactive in their schoolwork.<sup>189</sup>

This discussion is to establish what the class thinks about fantasy literature, what they know about the novel *Lords and Ladies* and its author Terry Pratchett, myths and legends about elves and “huldufólk” and the like. The author of the play, William Shakespeare is introduced and the play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the novel is spoofing is discussed. Also the general knowledge about the playwright and what connotations the students have to him and his plays is examined.

**Lesson 2:** The students will watch a film adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from 1999 starring amongst others Christian Bale and Michelle Pfeiffer. The film's running time is a hundred and sixteen minutes and so the students will watch it four half-an-hour segments. The ten minutes remaining of the lesson is used to discuss what has occurred in the film.

**Lesson 3:** The second part of the film is watched and then a ten minute discussion about film.

**Lesson 4:** In this lesson the students are given the novel and a timeline similar to appendix three. The lesson is utilised for silent reading or for the students to plan their studies in accordance with the timeline.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> See appendix three, for the timeline for *Lords and Ladies* and pages allotted for each week.

<sup>189</sup> John Gardner, pp. 14-16.

<sup>190</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp.112-113; John Gardner, pp. 15-16.

**Lesson 5:** The students watch the third part of the film and then talk about the film for the final ten minutes of the lesson.

**Lesson 6:** The fourth and final part of the film is watched and is followed by a classroom dialogue devoted to a discussion about the film and the students' contributions to an assignment about the film.

**Lesson 7:** In this lesson the students are given an assignment to test their comprehension of the film. The students have twenty-five to thirty minutes to complete the assignment after which they will correct if needed each other's assignments.<sup>191</sup>

**Lesson 8:** The students will watch the first segment of the cartoon version of *Wyrld Sisters* from 1997, which is a hundred and forty minutes long. The students will watch the cartoon in four thirty-five minute segments. After watching *Wyrld Sisters* (1997), the students use the five minutes left for silent reading of the novel.

**Lesson 9:** As in lesson eight, the students watch a segment of *Wyrld Sisters* (1997) and use the remaining time to read in silence.<sup>192</sup>

**Lesson 10:** The students either listen to the first thirty-two pages or read the pages out loud as this can improve the students' comprehension of the text, however, it should be noted that mispronounced words can cause confusion.<sup>193</sup>

**Lesson 11:** The class discusses what has occurred in the novel so far.

**Lesson 12:** For the first fifteen minutes the students read in silence an abstract from Terry Pratchett's *Witches Abroad* and then they have fifteen minutes to complete a reading

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<sup>191</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

<sup>192</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 76-77, 101.

<sup>193</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 113-114.



comprehension assignment based on the abstract and the final ten minutes to go over the assignment and do what corrections are needed.

**Lesson 13:** In this lesson the students watch the third part of *Wyrð Sisters* (1997) and use the remaining five minutes to read silently from the novel.

**Lesson 14:** The final segment of *Wyrð Sisters* (1997) is watched and as in lesson thirteen, the students end the lesson reading the novel in silence, seeking assistance if needed.<sup>194</sup>

**Lesson 15:** The students read out loud or listen to the pages assigned for this week.

**Lesson 16:** The class discusses what has occurred in the novel so far and considering the play, the cartoon and the abstract from *Witches Abroad* the students are asked to speculate about what might happen next. The class also makes suggestions for a translation exercise and a reading comprehension assignment that follow in the next two lessons.<sup>195</sup>

**Lesson 17:** In this lesson the students are given a translation exercise, to which they have contributed suggestions of “difficult words or idioms” and which will help the students further incorporate the vocabulary from novel into their acquisition of English and how they can apply that vocabulary in a translation between English and Icelandic.<sup>196</sup>

**Lesson 18:** The students have twenty-five minutes to complete the reading comprehension assignment and fifteen minutes to go over the assignment and do what corrections are needed.

**Lessons 19, 22, and 26:** Same as lesson fifteen.

**Lesson 20:** The students discuss what has occurred in the novel so far and make their suggestions for the next reading comprehension assignment and vocabulary exercise.

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<sup>194</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, pp. 112-113.

<sup>195</sup> John Gardner, pp. 15-16.

<sup>196</sup> Hedge, *Using Readers in Language Teaching*, p. 113.

**Lesson 21:** The student are given a reading comprehension assignment from the pages read so far as well as some vocabulary exercises, which they have thirty minutes to complete. For the last ten minutes of the lesson the students correct each other's exercises.<sup>197</sup>

**Lesson 23:** During the first twenty-five minutes of the lesson, the students are asked to consider especially how the Lance Morris Men compare to the troupe in the play as seen in the film as well as other developments in the novel so far (LL, pp. 85-108). After the classroom discussion the final fifteen minutes are used to tell the students about their next two assignments for lessons twenty-four and twenty-five. The students are given the spelling exercise they will do in lesson twenty-four to prepare themselves and told about the creative writing assignment for lesson twenty-five, which is in two parts – one short story written without aid and another short story written about a cartoon strip. This way the students can prepare for the first part of the assignment.

**Lesson 24:** The students do a spelling exercise based on the vocabulary from Pratchett's *Lords and Ladies*. After having reviewed the spelling exercises, the teacher should give them back to the students for self-correction, as this helps students become more aware of which areas of spelling that are troubling them.<sup>198</sup>

**Lesson 25:** The students are asked to write two short stories using some of the language from the novel, one of which they are to base around a cartoon strip.

**Lesson 27:** Classroom dialogue about what has occurred in the novel so far, giving special notice to the young coven and comparing it to the older one (LL, pp. 108-133). The students also make contributions to the next reading comprehension exercise.

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<sup>197</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

<sup>198</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

**Lesson 28:** The students have thirty minutes to complete the reading comprehension assignment and the final ten minutes to go over and make corrections.

**Lessons 29, 32 and 36:** These lessons are used for reading (silent or out loud) or listening to the pages assigned for that week.

**Lesson 30:** Classroom discussion about the pages read so far for thirty minutes, such as how are definitions of magic different between witches and wizards, how are the elves in the novel different from the ones in the play, etc (LL, pp.133-161). The final ten minutes are used to tell the students about their next assignment for lesson thirty-one, which is the same as in lesson twenty-five and for the students to make suggestions for the next vocabulary exercises.

**Lesson 31:** In the creative writing assignment, which the students have twenty-five minutes to complete, the students are asked to utilise the vocabulary they have gained from the novel to write a short story. The students then have ten minutes to do vocabulary exercises and five minutes for needed corrections.

**Lesson 33:** This lesson is used for a classroom discussion about the pages read so far, taking care to guide the discussion towards how words can sound differently from their spelling, towards words and their meaning, why Magrat is miserable and how royalty is spoofed in the pages read for this week (LL, pp. 161-191). The students also make contributions for the next translation exercise.

**Lesson 34:** The students do a translation exercise based on the vocabulary from the novel.

**Lesson 35:** During this lesson the students have thirty minutes for an assignment about the connection between the play and the novel so far and how the students see the difference

between presentation of the witches in the novel and in the cartoon. The final ten minutes the students go over each other's assignments making corrections if needed.<sup>199</sup>

**Lesson 37:** This lesson is for classroom dialogue particularly about whether the students understand why the bursar's behaviour is wrong and the connection given to the South in the USA. The students are also asked to discuss balance with regards to Granny and her borrowing and why Magrat and Verence are reluctant to accept that modernisation is not always right (LL, pp. 191-215). The students will also make suggestions for the next reading comprehension assignment.

**Lesson 38:** In this lesson the students have a reading comprehension assignment for which they have twenty-five minutes to complete and fifteen minutes for necessary corrections.

**Lessons 39, 43 and 47:** These lessons are used to read or listen to the pages assigned for the each week.

**Lesson 40:** The lesson is devoted to a classroom discussion of the pages read so far. During this lesson the students are also encouraged to think about and discuss Nanny and Casanunda, Granny and Ridcully, parallel universes, the simile between Verence and the Magnificent Seven, and speculate about why Magrat is so angry (LL, pp. 215-241). The students are also asked to make contributions for the next reading comprehension exercise and told about a creative writing exercise in lesson forty-two.

**Lesson 41:** The students have twenty-five minutes to complete the reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read so as far in the novel and for the last fifteen minutes the students will correct each other's assignments.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> John Gardner, p.15.

<sup>200</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

**Lesson 42:** This creative writing assignment has the same format as the one in lesson twenty-five.

**Lesson 44:** This lesson is given over to a classroom discussion about the pages read so far, such as how Diamanda is in a similar state as the lovers in the play, Magrat's anger and her reaction to the elves, why Magrat is so relieved to see that there is more to being queen than just tapestries and more (LL, pp. 241-266). The students are asked to make suggestions for the next translation exercise.

**Lesson 45:** In this lesson the students have a translation exercise based on the vocabulary from *Lords and Ladies*.

**Lesson 46:** The students utilise twenty-five minutes to complete an assignment based on how the play and the novel connect so far, how comedy is turned into horror and the students asked to speculate how the novel will end. The remaining fifteen minutes the students use to do what corrections are necessary on each other's assignments.<sup>201</sup>

**Lesson 48:** During this classroom discussion the students are asked to focus their attention on how the elves in novel are behaving and how they are different or alike the elves in the play; why the students think Queen Ynci's armour gives Magrat power or make her think it does; cat and elves; speculate on what could be in the letter to make Magrat so angry and so assertive; and about the Lancre Morris Men on the more. Part of the classroom discussion is devoted to the students' contributions for the next reading comprehension exercise.

**Lesson 49:** The students are given a reading comprehension assignment to complete in twenty-five minutes and asked to use the remaining fifteen to make needed correction on their own assignments.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

<sup>202</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

**Lessons 50, 54 and 58:** These lessons are used to read (in silence or out loud) or listen to the pages assigned for the week, with the fifty-eighth lesson the final one and devoted to listening to the final pages.

**Lesson 51:** In this lesson the students discuss amongst other things Nanny enlisting the King of the elves; who the King of the elves is supposed to resemble and why this is a negative image; talk about misconceptions – Nanny and Granny’s about Magrat and Magrat’s about those two; folksongs; and how the elves found a way into Lance (LL, pp. 296-324). In the last ten minutes of the lesson the students are given the spelling exercise, which they will do in lesson fifty-two.

**Lesson 52:** Same process as with the spelling exercise in lesson twenty-four.

**Lesson 53:** The students to a twofold creative writing exercise using vocabulary picked up from the novel, where the students have thirty minutes to write one short story of their choice and another short story based on a cartoon strip. For the final ten minutes the students can use to either make improvements on their stories or read *Lords and Ladies* in silence.

**Lesson 55:** In this classroom discussion the students are encouraged to talk about the ‘army’ that goes to help Granny and Magrat; Granny and the Queen’s confrontation; why the elves use age as a threat and why this does not have the desired effect on Granny; why do humans need elves; what reasons can the students give for why elves should not take over; the confrontation between the King and Queen and speculate about whether or not Granny is dead (LL, pp. 325-353). The students also make suggests for the next reading comprehension assignment and vocabulary exercises.

**Lesson 56:** In this lesson the students use twenty minutes to read an abstract from Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* to refresh their memories of the play and then use the remaining twenty minutes to discuss the play and its characters.

**Lesson 57:** The first fifteen minutes are given a reading comprehension assignment, and then the students have ten minutes to complete vocabulary exercises. The students will use the remaining fifteen minutes to make needed correction on their own assignments.<sup>203</sup>

**Lesson 59:** This is the final classroom dialogue session and is used to discuss the end of the novel, whether the students anticipated the ending and how the novel and the play connect. The students make contributions to the final translation exercise.

**Lesson 60:** The fourth and final translation exercise that uses language from *Lords and Ladies*.

**Lesson 61:** This lesson is divided in two parts, with the first devoted to an assignment on the connection between Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Lords and Ladies* by Terry Pratchett. The students have twenty-five minutes to complete the assignment and will then use the remaining fifteen minutes to correct if needed each other's assignments.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

<sup>204</sup> John Gardner, p. 15.

### 3.3.2 Secondary Reading

Of the Discworld novels, suggested as secondary reading after finishing *Lords and Ladies*, there is one that has already been suggested: *The Wee Free Men*. This novel, as mentioned before, is about Tiffany's struggle against the elves, and more precisely the Fairy Queen, who has stolen her brother. The subject matter is similar to *Lords and Ladies* in examining the nature of the elves versus human nature, although *The Wee Free Men* has a lighter tone than *Lords and Ladies*. Another novel, which also features Tiffany, is *Wintersmith*. This novel also explores humanity and mythical creatures and as in both *Lords and Ladies* and *The Wee Free Men* where the elves did not understand humans or their needs, neither does Winter in his pursuit of Tiffany. This novel has the added bonus of being targeted at younger readers as are all the Tiffany phase novels in the witches-cycle and it is also divided into chapters. The protagonist is thirteen years old and is having boyfriend trouble as well as problems relating to her training as a witch. This will instantly help the students identify with Tiffany and so help motivate their reading. However, as with *The Wee Free Men*, the language of the Nac Mac Feegles is likely to cause the students some difficulty and it is similar in length as *Lords and Ladies*.

Keeping with relationship between mythical creatures and humans is the novel *Small Gods*, which explores religion, gods and men, atheism and turtles. This novel is one of the independent novels, so the reader needs no background information from other Discworld novels to jump into the story. Nonetheless, readers should be aware that the novel parodies every major monotheistic religion and the ancient Greek pantheism, as well as staunch and unbending atheism. Some knowledge about these factors will add to the reader's enjoyment of the novel, but the humour of it shines through even if the reader is unaware. The novel centres on Brutha, a true believer and incidentally also the sole believer of Om and his dealing with Vobis, a high ranking clergyman and nonbeliever, and Om, the once great god of Omnia, who is currently a



tortoise. This novel is best suited for advanced readers, although with patience and time less skilled readers might like it.

A Discworld novel more suited for all levels, especially those students with reading difficulties, is *The Last Hero: A Discworld Fable*. This novel or novella is illustrated throughout by Paul Kirby and these illustrations help to further enliven the strong and humorous narrative. It is one of the shorter Discworld stories and features Rincewind, Carrot Ironfoundersson and Cohen the Barbarian. As with the three novels mention above, *The Last Hero* deals with the relationship between men and gods. Combining fantasy clichés, space missions and heroism this novel references many events in the twentieth century as well as Renaissance artists in a playful manner. As with all of Pratchett's Discworld novels, the reader will enjoy the novel more should he or she be aware of what is being parodied but the story is strong enough to stand alone if the reader is ignorant about the references. An altogether more difficult novel and one more appropriate for skilled readers is *Carpe Jugulum*, one of the witches-novels in the Agnes phase. This novel does not require the reader to have any specific knowledge other than being aware of the concept of vampires. As such, this novel is fairly easily accessed although as with all the witches-novels it is best to be aware of the preceding novels. However, as the students will have read *Lords and Ladies*, seen *Wyrd Sisters* (1997) and read an abstract from *Witches Abroad* they should recognise most of the key characters. *Carpe Jugulum*, as the other novels recommended in this section, examines humanity in context with creatures who are immortal. As the elves tried to overtake Lancre in *Lords and Ladies*, so do vampires in this novel. The witches, especially Granny and Agnes Nitt, actively oppose them. Agnes is young witch, overweight, with a split personality, the thin and bitchy Perdita X. Dream. Agnes' character is likely to strike a cord with teenage readers and motivate them to read the novel, should they be otherwise uninterested in vampires and witches.

The novels recommended in the fantasy genre outside of the Discworld series are four in this section. The first novel is *The Golden Compass* by Phillip Pullman. The novel is the first of a trilogy and has the added bonus of having been filmed. As the novel itself is best suited for advanced readers, both due to its language and length, the film will give students with reading difficulties an access to the fantasy genre that might later motivate them to read the novel or its sequels. As in *Lords and Ladies*, the world in *The Golden Compass* has many parallel worlds and has a horror factor in the ‘cutting’ process. While the authorities in the novel are humans unlike the elves in *Lords and Ladies*, they show little or no humanity in their research. The protagonist of the novel, Lyra, is a young girl, and is as many young female heroines an orphan, or so she assumes, as well as being curious and keen to have an adventure.<sup>205</sup> She is also willing to investigate mysteries long after adults are daunted or frighten off, as often is the case with child detectives.<sup>206</sup>

The second novel suggested is very unlike the first one. The novel, *Armageddon’s Children*, is by Terry Brooks and is very dark in content. The novel takes place on Earth in an apocalyptic future, where demons wage war on humanity, and elves are faced with having to come out of hiding. *Armageddon’s Children* is a mixture of *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* (1985) and *Lord of the Ring*, with rough technology and despondent fighters as well as elves hugging trees, and magic. The length of the novel and its language is such that it is better suited for advanced readers, although the machismo of the narrative might motivate male readers, who might otherwise be unlikely to read. The third and final novel recommended is more accessible to less skilled readers as well as the advance ones. It is Neil Gaiman’s *Stardust*. The novel is short, with fairy tale elements mixed with horror. The novel was adapted into a film in 2007, so students who feel unable to read the novel but would like to experience more of the fantasy genre, can watch the

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<sup>205</sup> Moran, pp. 33, 35-36.

<sup>206</sup> Christopher Routledge, “Children’s Detective Fiction and the ‘Perfect Crime’ of Adulthood” in *Mystery in Children’s Literature: from the Rational to the Supernatural*, eds. Adrienne E. Gavin and Christopher Routledge, (Houndsmill, UK and New York: Palgrave/St. Martin’s Press, 2001), pp. 64-5.

film, as can advanced students be given an assignment comparing the novel and film. The language in the novel is general enough to be useful to the students in their future readings in other genres.

## 4 Conclusion

Looking for teaching materials that will motivate students in the tenth grade to further their acquisition of English is tricky. Many factors have to be taken into account before handing the students a book with the expectation that they will read it. Utilising various tools to motivate the students to read, to actively participate in the classroom dialogue and take responsibility for their studies were examined in the first chapter and later incorporated into the instruction guides for each of the three novels. However, to fully be able to use Terry Pratchett's Discworld novels as a teaching material, both the teacher and students have to be aware of the world in which the novels take place, what type of novels they are and from what culture they originate. This was done by exploring the Discworld, the fantasy genre to which the novels belong and the definition of fantasy. The parodic nature of the novels was explored to further illuminate the character of the series. Part of the preparation for the students before reading the novels is to introduce them to the author of the novels and therefore a brief overture of Terry Pratchett's life was included.

To flesh out Pratchett's Discworld for those who have not read the novels the main themes of the series were examined, with examples of which novels in the series display these themes to full effect. The series' major recurring characters all have certain traits in common, such as being nonconformists while still being stereotypical, such as the coward Rincewind, über-hero Cohen the Barbarian, and the pessimistic police officer Sam Vimes. The information about the internal series within the Discworld series can help first time readers when picking which novel to begin with and what characterises it. The application of Pratchett's Discworld novels as a tool to introduce tenth graders to classical English literature was then explored. By taking three Discworld novels that directly parody plays by Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare, a teacher can introduce the students not just to the fantasy genre and Terry Pratchett's Discworld but moreover to more traditional English literature. Without having to worry about the students

being daunted by the text of the plays, buried in their dictionaries and frustrated, the instruction guides propose the students will watch film adaptations the plays after, during or before reading the novels, depending on difficulty level of the novel. The three novels, *Eric*, *Wyrd Sisters* and *Lords and Ladies* were each analysed in turn and instruction guides to each novel explained as were the secondary reading suggestion. The order in which the novels are presented is in relation to their difficulty level, with *Eric* being a novel suited for most all readers. *Wyrd Sisters*, while published before *Eric* is nonetheless more difficult for less skilled readers and the instruction guide for the novel reflects that by combining viewings of both *Wyrd Sisters* (1997) with the film *The Tragedy of Macbeth* (1971) to help students with reading difficulties to keep up.

The novel *Lords and Ladies* is the least accessible of the three novels and so needs the most preparation before the novel itself is read. As the novel is also the most difficult of the three, constant reading comprehension assignments and teacher directed classroom discussions combined with watching *Wyrd Sisters* (1997) as well as the play would help the less skilled readers to keep up. When using *Eric*, *Wyrd Sisters* and *Lords and Ladies* to introduce tenth graders to English literature, it should be noted that the instruction guides and secondary reading suggestions are based on taking only the one novel during the school year, not all three. Depending on the skill level of the students or a wish to rotate material between years, a teacher can pick any of the three novels for any given school year that best suits both the teacher and the students.

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## Appendix One

### *Eric* – Timeline:

Homework assigned for that day is within brackets.

#### Week 1

- 1st. Preparation for reading *Eric*, establish what the class thinks about fantasy literature, what they know about the novel and author, Faustian myth etc.
- 2nd. Give the students the novel, introduce the author of the play and discuss the play the novel is spoofing.

#### Week 2

- 3rd. Listen to p. 5-25
- 4th. (read p. 5-25) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 5th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

#### Week 3

- 6th. Listen to p. 26-45
- 7th. Translation based on the vocabulary from *Eric* and alternative reading materials.
- 8th. (read p. 26-45) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 9th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

#### Week 4

- 10th. Listen to p. 46-61
- 11th. Spelling exercise based on the vocabulary from *Eric* and other reading materials.

12th. (read p. 46-61) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.

13th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

### **Week 5**

14th. Listen to p. 61-82

15th. (read p. 61-82) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.

16th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

### **Week 6**

17th. Listen to p. 82-100

18th. (read p. 82-100) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.

19th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

### **Week 7**

20th. Listen to p. 100-120

21st. Translation based on the vocabulary from *Eric* and alternative reading materials.

22nd. (read p. 100-120) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.

23rd. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

### **Week 8**

24th. Listen to p. 120-155

25th. (read p. 120-155) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.

26th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

## Week 9

- 27th. View the film adaptation of Christopher Marlowe's play *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, from 1967 titled *Doctor Faustus* (1967) starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. The film is ninety-three minutes in running time so it is best to view the movie in three sittings, thus breaking into three half-an-hour viewings.
- 28th. Translation based on the vocabulary from *Eric* and alternative reading materials.
- 29th. Second part of the play watched.
- 30th. An assignment based on what the students will have seen of the play so far, to test their comprehension and have them speculate on the outcome of the play.

## Week 10

- 31st. Third and final part of the play watched.
- 32nd. Spelling exercise, based on the vocabulary from *Eric*, alternative reading materials and the play.
- 33rd. Assignments based on how the play and the novel *Eric* connect.
- 34th. Assignments based on how the play and the novel connect.

## Appendix Two

### ***Wyrd Sisters* – Timeline:**

Homework assigned for that day is within brackets.

#### **Week 1**

- 1st. Preparation for reading *Wyrd Sisters*; establish what the class thinks about fantasy literature, what they know about the novel and author, myths and legends involving three women playing with the fate of men etc. Give the students the novel and timeline, introduce the author of the play and discuss the play the novel is spoofing. Also see what the general knowledge about the playwright is and what connotations the students have to him and his plays.

#### **Week 2**

- 2nd. Listen to/read p. 5-29
- 3rd. (read p. 5-29) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 4th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

#### **Week 3**

- 5th. Listen to/read p. 30-54
- 6th. (read p. 30-54) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 7th. Translation based on the vocabulary from *Wyrd Sisters* and alternative reading materials.
- 8th. Watch 20 min of the cartoon version of *Wyrd Sisters* (1997) and then some vocabulary exercises.

#### **Week 4**

- 9th. Listen to/read p. 54-78
- 10th. (read p. 54-78) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 11th. Spelling exercise based on the vocabulary from *Wyrld Sisters* and other reading materials.
- 12th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read so far.

#### **Week 5**

- 13th. Listen to/read p. 78-104
- 14th. (read p. 78-104) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 15th. Watch 20 min of the cartoon version of the novel as well some vocabulary exercises.

#### **Week 6**

- 16th. Listen to/read p. 105-130
- 17th. (read p. 105-130) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 18th. Creative writing assignment using the vocabulary picked up from reading the novel.

#### **Week 7**

- 19th. Listen to/read p. 131-155
- 20th. (read p. 131-155) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 21st. Translation based on the vocabulary from *Wyrld Sisters* and alternative reading materials.
- 22nd. Watch 20 min of the cartoon version of the novel and after that a reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read.



## Week 8

- 23rd. Listen to/read p. 155-180
- 24th. (read p. 155-180) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 25th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

## Week 9

- 26th. Listen to/read p. 180-205
- 27th. (read p. 180-205) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 28th. View the film adaptation of William Shakespeare's play *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, with the same film title from 1971 starring Jon Finch and Francesca Annis. The film is a hundred and forty minutes in running time so it is best to view the movie in five sittings, thus breaking into twenty minutes or half-an-hour viewings.
- 29th. Watch 20 minutes of *Wyrld Sisters* (1997) and then a translation exercise based on vocabulary from the novel, alternative reading materials and film.

## Week 10

- 30th. Listen to/read p. 180-205
- 31st. (read p. 180-205) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 32nd. Spelling exercise, based on the vocabulary from *Wyrld Sisters*, alternative reading materials and the play.
- 33rd. Watch second part of the film. Assignment based on how the play and the novel connect so far.

## Week 11

- 34th. Listen to/read p. 205-231.
- 35th. (read p. 205-231) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.

- 36th. Watch third part of the film.
- 37th. Watch 20 minutes of *Wyrld Sisters* (1997) and then a reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

### **Week 12**

- 38th. Listen to/read p. 231-255
- 39th. (read p. 231-255) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 40th. Translation exercises, one based on the vocabulary from *Wyrld Sisters*, alternative reading materials and the play, the other from unseen materials.
- 41st. Watch fourth part of the film.
- 42nd. Assignment based on the connection between play and novel so far and some vocabulary exercises.

### **Week 13**

- 43rd. Listen to/read p. 256-280
- 44th. (read p. 256-280) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 45th. Watch fifth and final part of the film.
- 46th. Watch 20 minutes of *Wyrld Sisters* (1997) and an assignment based the play and the animated version of *Wyrld Sisters* – how tragedy is turned into comedy etc.

### **Week 14**

- 47th. Listen to/read p. 280-304
- 48th. (read p. 280-304) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.
- 49th. Spelling exercise, based on the vocabulary from *Wyrld Sisters*, the play and other material.
- 50th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

## Week 15

- 51st. Listen to/read p. 305-332
- 52nd. (read p. 305-332) Finishing the novel.
- 53rd. Watch the final 20 minutes of *Wyrld Sisters* (1997) and reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.
- 54th. Assignment on the similarities and differences between the two versions of *Wyrld Sisters* and how they relate to *The Tragedy of Macbeth*.

## Appendix Three

### *Lords and Ladies* - Timeline:

Homework assigned for that day is within brackets.

#### Week 1

- 1st. Preparation for reading *Lords and Ladies*; establish what the class thinks about fantasy literature, what they know about the novel and author, myths and legends about elves and “huldufólk” etc. Introduce the author of the play and discuss the play the novel is spoofing. Also see what the general knowledge about the playwright is and what connotations the students have to him and his plays.
- 2nd. Watch first segment of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.
- 3rd. Watch the second part of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.
- 4th. Give the students the novel and tell them they have two weeks to read the 32 first pages.

#### Week 2

- 5th. Third part of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.
- 6th. Watch the final part of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.
- 7th. Assignment based on the play to test the students’ comprehension of it.
- 8th. Watch first part of *Wyrð Sisters*
- 9th. Watch the second part of *Wyrð Sisters*

#### Week 3

- 10th. Listen to/read p. 5-37
- 11th. (read p. 5-37) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.

12th. Have them read an abstract from *Witches Abroad* in class and do a reading comprehension assignment based on the abstract.

13th. Watch the third part of *Wjrd Sisters*.

14th. Watch fourth and final part of *Wjrd Sisters*.

#### **Week 4**

15th. Listen to/read p. 37-63

16th. (read p. 37-63) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far and considering the play, the cartoon and the abstract what the students think might happen next.

17th. Translation exercise based on the vocabulary from *Lords and Ladies* and other reading materials.

18th. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read so far.

#### **Week 5**

19th. Listen to/read p. 63-85

20th. (read p. 63-85) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far.

21st. Reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read so far and vocabulary exercises.

#### **Week 6**

22nd. Listen to/read p. 85-108

23rd. (read p. 85-108) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far, how the Lance Morris Men compare to the troupe in the film etc.

24th. Spelling exercise based on the vocabulary from the novel and abstract as well as other reading materials.

25th. Creative writing assignment using the vocabulary picked up from reading the novel.

## **Week 7**

26th. Listen to/read p. 108-133

27th. (read p. 108-133) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far, give special notice to the young coven versus the old one.

28th. A reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read.

## **Week 8**

29th. Listen to/read p. 133-161

30th. (read p. 133-161) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far, how are definitions of magic different between wizards and witches, how are the elves in the novel different from the ones in the play etc.

31st. Creative writing assignment using the vocabulary picked up from reading the novel as well some vocabulary exercises.

## **Week 9**

32nd. Listen to/read p. 161-191

33rd. (read p. 161-191) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far, how the language can sound so different from its spelling, words and their meaning, why Magrat is miserable and spoof on royalty.

34th. -Translation exercise using the vocabulary from the novel and other reading materials.

35th. Assignment about the connection between the play and the novel so far, how the witches are different in the novel from the cartoon etc.

## Week 10

36th. Listen to/read p. 191-215

37th. (read p. 191-215) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far, see if the students understand why the bursar's behaviour is wrong and the connection given to the South in the USA, balance in the character of Granny when borrowing, why Magrat and Verence are reluctant to accept that modernisation is not always right etc.

38th. A reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read.

## Week 11

39th. Listen to/read p. 215-241

40th. (read p. 215-241) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far, Nanny and Casanunda, Granny and Ridcully, parallel universes, talk about the simile between Verence and the Magnificent Seven, speculate on why Magrat is so angry.

41st. A reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

42nd. Creative writing exercise.

## Week 12

43rd. Listen to/read p. 241-266

44th. (read p. 241-266) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far, how Diamanda is in a similar state as the lovers in the play, Magrat's anger and her reaction to the elves, why Magrat is so relieved to see that there is more to being queen than tapestries etc.

45th. Translation exercises, one based on the vocabulary from *Lords and Ladies*, alternative reading materials and the other from unseen materials.

46th. Assignment based on the connection between play and novel so far, how comedy is turned into horror and speculate on how the novel will go.

### **Week 13**

47th. Listen to/read p. 267-296

48th. (read p. 267-296) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far, how the elves are behaving and how they are different or alike the elves in the play, why would Queen Ynci's armour give Magrat power or make her think it has, cats and elves, what could be in the letter to make Magrat so angry and so assertive, the Lancre Morris Men on the move etc.

49th. Reading comprehension assignment with vocabulary exercises.

### **Week 14**

50th. Listen to/read p. 296-324

51st. (read p. 296-324) discuss what has occurred in the novel so far, Nanny enlisting the king of the elves, who is the king suppose to resemble and why is that a negative image, misconceptions – Nanny and Granny about Magrat and Magrat about the those two, folksongs, how the elves found a way into Lancre.

52nd. Spelling exercise, based on the vocabulary from *Lords and Ladies* as well as other material.

53rd. Creative writing exercise.

### **Week 15**

54th. Listen to/read p. 325-353

55th. (read p. 325-353) Discuss the novel so far, the 'army' that goes to help Granny and Magrat, Granny and the Queen confront one another, why the elves use age as a threat, why Granny does not fear it or at least accepts death, why do humans need elves and why the elves cannot take over, confrontation between the king and queen, is Granny dead? etc.



56th. Read an abstract about the play followed by discussion about the play, the characters etc.

57th. A reading comprehension assignment based on the pages read as well some vocabulary exercises.

### **Week 16**

58th. Listen to/read p. 353-382

59th. (read p. 353-382) Finish discussing the novel.

60th. Translation exercise based on the vocabulary from the novel.

61st. An assignment on the connection between the play and the novel.