

# Fantasy and Magic in Fiction

*The Dragon's Apprentice* and *The Puppet Master*, both written by Linda McNabb, provide a perfect way to focus on the genre of fantasy and magic in fiction.

Both books have strong characters who inhabit worlds which are distant in reality and time to the familiar world of the student. The worlds created for the characters allow students to suspend their modern-day belief systems and really enjoy the special fascination that magic powers and the triumph of good over evil have for us all. (Most suitable for Years 6-9)

## Teaching and Learning Ideas

- Have students recall and share fairy stories and magic adventure tales they enjoyed when they were younger.
- Talk about the characters that made a 'big impression'. Why did they do this?
- List and discuss people and fantastic creatures that exist only in the imagination but are brought alive by stories.
- Make large lists of creatures and people in fiction they have enjoyed and identify their special characteristics and special powers.
- Speculate on why we enjoy believing in magic powers. List incidents when these were used for both good and evil purposes in the stories.
- Make collections of words and phrases that place each story in a different time and place, eg talisman, rune ...
- Talk about the genre of fantasy and magic. Why is it such a popular theme in fiction? Relate this to films students have seen, eg *The Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*.
- Discuss the difference between books and films. Which stimulates the imagination most? How?
- Do the students think these books would translate successfully into films? Select incidents from each story and have students ...
  - write a screenplay including directions for actors
  - produce costume and set designs
  - explore how computer graphics could enhance it visually
- Focus on the 'triumph of good over evil' theme of both books. Discuss why this appeals. How could these books have concluded if the opposite had happened?

