

New Windmills

2004

Resource sheets by Alan Pearce

Artemis Fowl

By Eoin Colfer

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Artemis Fowl

by Eoin Colfer

Synopsis

Artemis Fowl is a 12-year-old boy, who is a member of a wealthy family that has a history of crime. Artemis has a brilliant mind which he puts to acquiring one tonne of 24 carat gold that is owned by the fairies. To do this he obtains a copy of *The Book*, which contains all of the fairies' secrets and translates it into English. He uses the knowledge from *The Book* to kidnap a fairy and hold her to ransom. The ransom of one tonne of gold is paid, but a battle ensues in the Fowl's Irish mansion to release the captured fairy and reclaim the gold. In the chaos of the battle, the captured fairy is released and most of the gold is returned to its rightful owners. However, this is not the end of the tale because the novel's epilogue warns us that there will be a sequel.

This is a very clever novel which successfully combines a range of genres, including fairytale, science fiction and detective story. The underlying humour, and even some moralising, makes this novel accessible to a wide audience. Interesting characters and almost-plausible technology capture the imagination.

Prior learning

The impact of the humour often relies on the reader's knowledge of the various genres that are used. It would be helpful if students had some knowledge of the conventions of the following genres: fairytale, science fiction and detective story.

Study areas

Most of the characters in the novel are fantasy creations, and most of the action is completely unrealistic. However, there are still some interesting possibilities for students studying the novel. Possible areas for study would include:

- **Author's craft:** It would be possible to study the conventions of the various genres used in the novel. More able students may be able to re-write traditional fairy stories in different genres.
(Author's craft: Yr7 R12; Yr8 R10; Yr9 R9)
- **Independent research:** The novel introduces some exotic locations, such as Ho Chi Minh City, Tutankhamen's inner chamber and Eire. Students could research these locations and produce a booklet providing background information for future readers of the novel.
(Independent research: Yr7 R1; Yr8 R2; Yr9 R2, Wr9)
- **Personal view:** Although Artemis Fowl is a criminal, he does have some redeeming qualities, such as his concern for his sick mother. Students could consider their judgements of Artemis Fowl.
(Writing reflectively: Yr7 Wr19; Yr8 Wr16; Yr9 R9)
- **Persuasive writing:** Holly Short is the first female officer to be assigned to Recon. She is told that as a 'case study' she needs to perform more successfully than the male officers. The students could produce a piece of writing persuading Holly's senior officer that, although Holly has not always been respectful of authority, she has acted heroically.
(Persuasive writing: Yr7 Wr15; Yr8 Wr13; Yr9 Wr13)

Teacher guidance

Resource Sheet 1

This resource sheet helps the students to study at least three of the characters from the novel. The students are asked to collect information in order to produce Help Cards to be given to future readers of the novel.

Literacy Framework Objectives

Year 7: **R1** Locate relevant information; **R2** Use appropriate reading strategies; **R8** Infer and deduce meaning.

Year 8: **R4** Review active reading strategies; **R7** Identify implied and explicit meaning.

Year 9: **R1** Review and extend reading strategies; **R16** Analyse cultural contexts; **Wr12** Exploit presentational devices.

Guided Reading Opportunities

Each Help Card asks students to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the character. This requires inferential reading skills. The following extracts could be studied with a small group of students who need support with inferential reading.

- Holly Short's strengths: pp167–71
- Commander Root's strengths: pp78–82
- Commander Root's weaknesses: pp151–2
- Mulch Diggums' strengths: pp127

As these page references are only representative of the characters' strengths and weaknesses, you could ask the students to recall other similar passages in the novel.

Resource Sheet 2

This resource sheet asks students to engage in some close reading in order to produce a Reference Booklet to support other students' reading of the novel. Students must provide brief explanations for a range of words that will be unfamiliar to readers.

Literacy Framework Objectives

Year 7: **R1** Locate relevant information; **R2** Use appropriate reading strategies; **R6** Adopt active reading strategies; **R8** Infer and deduce meaning.

Year 8: **R4** Review active reading strategies; **R7** Identify implied and explicit meaning; **R14** Recognise conventions of literary forms.

Year 9: **R1** Review and extend reading strategies; **R16** Analyse cultural contexts.

Guided Reading Opportunities

Students have to provide definitions of a range of words that they will not be familiar with. Students are given a list of words and the page number on which each word first appears.

- 1 You could support a group of students with poor skimming and scanning skills in finding the words from the list on the page. You could teach them the appropriate skills, and then time their skimming and scanning to make this task into a competition: students could compete against themselves or against each other.

- 2 Once the students have located the words from the list, they have to provide a brief explanation of each word. This requires close reading. You could work with a group of students whose skimming and scanning skills are secure, but who need more support with close reading.

Resouce Sheet 3

This resource sheet asks the students to imagine that they are Eoin Colfer. They then have to imagine that they are interviewed. The students have to use the Internet to find biographical details, use the novel to select information and use their own imaginations.

Literacy Framework Objectives

Year 7: R1 Locate relevant information; **R2** Use appropriate reading strategies;

Wr1 Plan and draft a text; **Wr10** Organise texts appropriately;

Wr11 Select and organise information; **Wr15** Express a point of view.

Year 8: R2 Undertake independent research; **R4** Review active reading strategies;

Wr10 Organise and present information; **Wr13** Present a case persuasively.

Year 9: R2 Synthesise information from a range of sources; **Wr9** Integrate diverse information; **Wr13** Present a case persuasively.

Guided Reading Opportunities

This task requires a range of reading skills:

- locating web pages; finding required information on web pages; distinguishing between fact and opinion; making appropriate notes
 - close reading of the novel, with personal response
 - close reading to locate particular information.
- 1 The students are asked to use the Internet to find biographical details about Eoin Colfer. You could support a group of students in this task. First, discuss the nature of search engines. Next, explore the use of key search terms. Once appropriate sites have been identified, support students in finding the necessary information.
 - 2 The students are asked whether Artemis Fowl has any qualities that the reader can admire. You could support a group of students in answering this question. First, support them in their re-reading of the following pages: pp14–16, 56, 91, 190. They could then identify what qualities Artemis Fowl displays in the extracts and consider whether these are qualities that can be admired. Finally, you could support the students in a brief piece of writing, using quotations from the novel to support their opinions about Artemis Fowl.
 - 3 The students are asked to identify environmental issues raised in the novel. This requires close reading but also some broader understanding of what environmental issues are. You could support a group of students in some close reading of the following pages in order to identify the environmental issues raised in the novel: pp 37, 51, 78. You could then ask the group to discuss the significance of the issues raised. This could lead to an extension activity in which you ask the group to research further into the issues raised and give a presentation to the rest of the class.

1 Character studies

Introduction

There are many fantasy characters in *Artemis Fowl* who have unusual powers. Imagine that a publishing company has decided to produce a pack of Help Cards that contain information about each of the characters in the novel.

Your task is to produce Help Cards for the following characters: Root, Holly and Mulch.

Planning

Each Help Card will provide information under sub-headings. These sub-headings have been provided in the tables on page 6. Your first task is to collect the necessary information from the novel by filling in the tables. The pages that have been numbered in each table will give you some information, but you can add more of your own. Your second task is to design the Help Cards and produce them. Try to make them as attractive as possible.

The editors at the publishing company would like to see Help Cards based on other characters in the novel. They would also like to know whether there is enough information in the novel to allow you to draw a picture of each character to illustrate the back of each Help Card.

1 Character studies

Holly Short	Pages	Details
Occupation	23	
Details about her past	27	
Strengths	167,171	
Weaknesses	40, 50	
Any other interesting details		

Commander Root	Pages	Details
Occupation	23	
Details about his past	23, 62	
Strengths	78–82	
Weaknesses	151,152	
Any other relevant details		

Mulch Diggums	Pages	Details
Occupation	119	
Details about his past	119	
Strengths	127+	
Weaknesses	199,200	
Any other relevant details		

2 Reference Booklet

Introduction

There are many words in *Artemis Fowl* that the average reader will not be familiar with. For example, what are 'mud people' and what is a 'troll'? In addition, there are a number of characters and this might cause some confusion for the reader. Imagine that a publishing company has asked you to produce a Reference Booklet to be given away free with each copy of the novel.

Your task is to produce a Reference Booklet that explains all of the terms in *Artemis Fowl* that the average reader would not be familiar with. You must also provide brief details about each of the main characters.

Planning

The editors at the publishing company have provided you with all of the words that they would like to be included in the Reference Booklet. However, they are happy for you to include any additional words that you think need explaining. Your first step is to find all of the information you need. Use the page references in the table on page 8 to help you find the information and fill in the rest of the table. Add any other words that you think need to be explained. Your next step is to design and produce the booklet: you will need to make decisions about its size and its presentation. For example, will your booklet be A4 or A5? In what order will you place the words? Will there be illustrations?

2

Reference Booklet

Words	Pages	Details
The Book	13	
Artemis Fowl	Prologue	
Butler	22	
Angeline Fowl	14	
Juliet Butler	15	
Holly Short	23	
Commander Root	23	
LEP-Recon	24	
Retrieval Squad	45	
Mud People	37	
The Hamburg Affair	27	
Troll	29	
Pressure elevators	33	
Pod	33	
Shields	39	
Hummingbirds	37	
Blue rinse	95	
Mulch Diggums	119	

3 An interview with Eoin Colfer

Introduction

Eoin Colfer, the author of *Artemis Fowl*, was born in Ireland and used to work as a primary school teacher. This task will help you to find out more details about his life. It will also help you to explore what Eoin Colfer might think about his novel, *Artemis Fowl*.

Your task is to imagine that you are Eoin Colfer and that you are to be interviewed by a journalist who wants to publish the interview on a website. You will have to write the answers to a series of questions.

Planning

In the table below, you will find the questions that you will be asked in the interview. Your task is to write interesting answers to each of the questions.

- If you enter 'Eoin Colfer' or 'Artemis Fowl' into *Google*, or a similar Internet search engine, you will find a great deal of information that will help you answer some of the questions.
- For some of the interview questions you will be able to use information from the novel.
- You will need to use your imagination to answer other questions.

	Questions	Hints
1	You trained to be a teacher and you have taught in primary schools for many years. How did you become an author?	Use the Internet to find an answer to this question.
2	You have taken a break from teaching to promote your writing. Do you think that you will ever go back to teaching?	Use the Internet to find an answer to this question.
3	<i>Artemis Fowl</i> has been an extremely popular novel. Who is your favourite character, and why?	You will need to use your imagination to answer this question.
4	Although <i>Artemis Fowl</i> is a humorous novel, you still deal with some important environmental issues. What issues do you raise?	To help you answer this question, re-read the following pages in the novel: pp37, 51, 78
5	In the Epilogue to <i>Artemis Fowl</i> , you say some horrible things about Artemis. For example, you say that he is completely selfish. Don't you think he has any qualities that we can admire?	You should use your own opinions about Artemis Fowl to answer this question. However, it might help if you re-read the following pages: pp14–16, 56, 91, 190