

## **The Wonderful Wizard of Reading and Writing: Working with *The Little Prince* and *The Neverending Story***

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*Voici mon secret. Il est tres simple: on ne voit bien qu'avec  
le coeur. L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux.*

*It is only with the heart that one can see rightly;  
What is essential is invisible to the eye.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

“What is behind the curtain? What is behind the door? I do not dare to look.” Why does Alice run after the rabbit? What makes her do that? What we find in certain books, mysteries and adventures, are real and/or make believe. This is the main topic of my curriculum unit concerning books for children and young adults. The main purpose of this curriculum unit is working with two specific books, *The Little Prince* and *The Neverending Story*, and making some references to books like *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. My idea is to work with the first two books, creating lesson plans which help with activities of reading and writing for students in grades 3, 4 and 5. These activities will help to develop the main objectives the state requires for these grades, so the students are going to work with word maps, word wizards, word sorts, cognates, reading with partner correction and comprehension check, retelling through cards, Venn diagrams, using KWL charts, simple and content webbing, story mapping and various writing activities (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and sharing or publishing).

### **SCHOOL BACKGROUND**

I am going to try to work with a very specific audience: teachers and students from elementary schools. The school in which I work, Windsor Village Elementary, is located southwest of downtown Houston. It provides educational services for 917 pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students. The school population consists mostly of African American students and includes a large number of Hispanics. My school is a Vanguard Magnet that attracts students from outside the community. This Vanguard Magnet program serves 192 students (21%). There has been a marked increase in Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students and economically disadvantaged students. The LEP students are serviced in English as a Second Language (ESL) and the LEP population is 35%. I teach Spanish as Language Other Than English (LOTE) and I work with students who are native speakers and/or others whose first language is English. That is why some of my classes are held in Spanish (for the native Spanish speakers) and some others are

taught using English and Spanish. My intention with this unit is to present an approach to literature study through analysis of reading and writing. Some of the activities will be in Spanish and others in English, in an attempt to get balance between the heterogeneous groups.

### ***WHY THE LITTLE PRINCE AND THE NEVERENDING STORY?***

For students to be motivated to write and read they must have books with good plots and stories. I believe these two books, whose main characters are the same age as my students (8 and 9 years old), can help me to engage them. The elements of dream, imagination and reality in many books often make the story move from realism to fantasy. *The Little Prince* and *The Neverending Story* will be the main foundation of a curriculum unit. Although the main point of this unit is to work with these two books, we will also discuss reality and fantasy.

Why these two books? I personally think the characters in these books are very enticing to young readers. The students can really identify with these characters who are part of a magical story (for instance, Bastian, a character in *The Neverending Story*, is more involved in the story as he becomes a very important part of the story he is reading and finally becomes one of the most important characters in the plot because he can help the Fantasia people to survive; in fact, thanks to him, everything works out perfectly). One different example of this would be Harry Potter: he lives in a complete world of magic as long as he lives in the real world. In the beginning of the Harry Potter stories, everything has some magic and some kind of a dream. He is called to join the wizards' academy so, in a way, having been born with the ability to do magic, his dreams and his reality are much closer than Bastian's. When talking about *The Little Prince*, we see it is a fantastic story where reality and fantasy get mixed. It is the story of a pilot who has an accident in a desert and is visited by a boy from another planet. The game of reality versus imagination begins when he asks the pilot to draw a picture. This is the starting point of a very poetic book (there is a lot of poetic language) in which we are going to find very curious characters.

Each book will have a special section in this curriculum unit where I will try to get the point of main characters, plot, and setting so the students can get an idea of everything which surrounds the story: the real versus the imaginary stories. The students and teacher will explore these aspects through reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities. We will share, discuss, and write about the differences between the movie and the written version of *The Little Prince*. Since *The Neverending Story* is very long, we will use the movie for discussion and writing, and I will try to persuade the students to read the book.

## TWO IMPORTANT CONCEPTS EXAMINED BY THESE TWO BOOKS

### Reality, Imagination, and Dream

These two children, the prince and Bastian, have something in common: they live with the concept that what is real is imaginary and they feel/think that what they imagine is real. Manuel Angel Conejero in his book *Rhetoric, Theatre and Translation* says, “We live as long as we can translate our thoughts into specific strategies.” It is all about life: reading and writing with mixing reality and fantasy. Many of the world’s most important children stories have used realism to play with the idea of writing and combined realistic and fantasy elements. This is the case in the plots of *The Little Prince* and *The Neverending Story* where fantasy, dream, and reality are combined in such a way that they make the reader become involved in the plot. Is the reader any of the characters of the story? Do we feel, as readers, like the little prince and really live thinking that we saw the sun set forty-four times in one day? Is it not good to play with imagination? Where’s the limit of imagination and reality? Are we the protagonists of those stories? Of course, every book we read becomes a part of our lives while we are reading it, and some of them can have a great deal of influence on us.

Before going deeper in the study of the two core books, we must define the terms *dream*, *imagination*, and *reality*. *Dream* is a state of mind in which someone is or appears to be unaware of his or her immediate surroundings. The *imagination* is the faculty or action of forming new ideas or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses. *Reality* is the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or notional idea of them. These three definitions of what we consider dream, imagination and reality could be related to the three attitudes of the mind which Northrop Frye talks about in his book *The Educated Imagination*: “First, a state of consciousness or awareness that separates you as an individual from the rest of the world. Second, a practical attitude of creating a human way of life in that world. Third, an imaginative attitude, a vision or model of the world as you could imagine it and would like it to be” (37).

These three concepts are played out in these two books. In *The Little Prince*, the pilot has an accident in the middle of the desert, and when he is trying to repair the plane he gets an unexpected visit. The visitor is a prince who comes and asks him to draw a sheep. The pilot always wanted to be a painter and draw but because nobody could understand his drawings, he decided to be a pilot when he grew up. The idea of the boy coming to him in the middle of the desert could be interpreted as the imagination. The imagination makes him see a young boy wanting and asking him to draw. His reality, though, is the accident and the fact that his plane is not working.

In *The Neverending Story*, as the main character reads, he gets so involved in his reading that he becomes part of the book. He is part of the real world, but at the same time, he is part of the imagination. The author, Michael Ende, wants to convince us that

we are part of our readings. This idea of persuasion was expressed many centuries ago by Aristotle who talked about it as the “faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion.” I am also dealing with this in my curriculum unit: the idea of persuading to read through writing about fantasy, imagination and reality.

### **The Child’s Perspective and the Adult’s Perspective**

These two books also distinguish the child’s and the adult’s perspectives of the world. The authors, with their creative writing, “pull” us into the story and make us see the point of view of a child. For example, when the prince in *The Little Prince* shows his picture to “grown-ups,” they do not understand what he has drawn. The adults think he has drawn a hat, but to him it is a boa constrictor that has eaten an elephant. The narrator says, “They [adults] always need an explanation.” This is the voice of a child criticizing the adults’ world, but if we look further, the author is not a child; in fact, the author is a grown-up who has created a child’s perspective. In another part, the prince tells the pilot: “You talk like the grown-ups.” This idea of a child’s perspective being distinct from an adult’s perspective runs through the whole book.

### **THE LITTLE PRINCE: APPROACHING REALITY AND IMAGINATION**

I am going to divide my curriculum unit in two sections: each will be directed towards each of the books chosen and there will be a mixing of ideas and topics. I am not planning to make a study guide for each of these books, but I will try to get the main topics I want to cover with my students. Of course there will be a lot of information as the topics, themes and characters of these two books have been extensively studied, but the processed data will help me to prepare some activities around both stories.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry was born in Lyon, France on June 29, 1900. To commemorate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, a French Foundation launched a web site from which one can see all his works and facts about his life. From this site, we know that *The Little Prince* is the third most read literary work around the world after *The Bible* and *The Capital* (by Karl Marx). It is also a book which has been translated into more than 120 different languages and has been chosen as the book of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in France.

According to the *Britannica Student Encyclopedia*, Saint-Exupéry, who died when he was 44, “was an adventurous pilot and a lyrical poet who conveyed in his books the solitude and mystic grandeur of the early days of flight. He described dangerous adventures in the skies and also wrote the whimsical children’s fable *The Little Prince*.”

When talking about *The Little Prince*, we think about the idea of a classic book with different interpretations: a child will understand the things they like and an adult will possibly understand some deeper ideas. But everything is reading. It is the same writer, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, who is trying to justify himself when dedicating his book. He apologizes for dedicating this book to an adult, and, in a way, he is confirming that his

book was written for young people. Friendship, as in E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web*, is going to be a very important theme from the beginning. Saint-Exupéry says he dedicates his book to one of his best friends. His friend is hungry and cold, and he is referring to one of his best friends suffering a very special situation. The book was published during World War II. France was occupied by German Nazi troops. His friend was Jewish and was dealing with a difficult situation. That is why he was cold and angry. This idea leads us to believe that *The Little Prince* is an autobiographical book. In a certain way, so many of the themes and topics in the story drive us to the real life of the author.

"I was quite worried, for my plane crash was beginning to seem extremely serious, and the lack of drinking water made me fear the worst." It is, in fact, the most well-known story of this French writer who disappeared in a mission when he was flying over the Mediterranean Sea during the World War II. It is a fable for children and adults, and it is full of the most important values and moral virtues we can find in real life. It is all about reality and fantasy.

The little prince narrates his journey: he is the only inhabitant of an asteroid, ("I have serious reasons to believe that the planet the little prince came from is Asteroid B-612") and he is going to tell us about his secrets.

Everything in the story is full of special meanings: the king, the vain man, the drunkard, the businessman, the lamplighter, the old geographer, the switchman, the salesclerk, the flower, the fox, the snake.... Each one of the prince's visits is a reflection about a special idea, something between ingenuity and unconsciousness (which is characteristic of childhood). The prince wants to find new true friends. He wants to learn from people and meet people who have different roles and attitudes. He really likes the work that the switchman does. He is the only one who does a job a little bit useless but beautiful. The other characters seem ridiculous to the little prince because they do not meet one condition: dignity. For example, the king wants to rule and be in power: "Then, I command you to yawn," said the king, "I haven't seen anyone yawn for years. For me, yawns are curiosity. Come on, yawn again! It's an order." Another example is the vain man who sees the other people just as his admirers, or the businessman who only considers serious actions that allow him to get more things. The little prince asks all of them many questions, but he doesn't receive an *appropriate* answer. He does not understand why, and he thinks adults are strange. When the king tells him "I make you my ambassador," his only thought is: "Grown-ups are so strange."

But, why does the little prince leave his planet to go on this journey? Who or what is responsible for this? The answer is easy: his love for a flower. The little prince is in love with a flower. It is not just any flower: it is *his* flower. He lived in a little asteroid. His friend was a flower that was beautiful and vain at the same time. He did not know how to understand it, and that is why he decided to leave and find new friends. Then, he tells the pilot, he really thinks it was a mistake. He says he misses his flower a lot and also says: "I shouldn't have listened to her [...]. You must never listen to flowers. You must look at

them and smell them. Mine perfumed the planet but I didn't know how to enjoy that.” This paragraph is so poetic and full of feelings, in a way artistic. Art starts with the world we construct and not the world we see (Frye 23). “My flower is ephemeral,” the little prince said to himself, “And she has only four thorns with which to defend herself against the world! And I've left her all alone where I live!”

This is going to become the starting point for the little prince, and it is going to be a reference to what friendship is. Everything he is going to learn in his journey of life (love and friendship among others topics) will be related to the reference to the flower. Even when he says good-bye to the flower (and feels the tenderness), he feels he needs to go on that journey: he still wants to find the secret of real friendship.

Alison Lurie, in her book *Don't Tell the Grown-Ups*, says:

I am sometimes asked why anyone who is not a teacher or a librarian or the parent of little kids should concern herself with children's books and folklore. I know the standard answers: that many famous writers have written for children, and that the great children's books are also great literature; that these books and tales are an important source of archetype and symbol, and that they can help us to understand the structure and functions of the novel. (Lurie xi)

This story could be much more complicated if worked deeper. What we want to do with our students is just read and write about this story and have engaging activities so they can really enjoy it. Some other interesting quotations that we will work with during activities and which we will discuss are the following:

- “The planet Earth [...] has a good reputation” (47)
- (about the echo) “What a peculiar planet dry and sharp [...] People here have no imagination” (54)
- (the fox says) “Here is my secret. It is quite simple: one sees clearly only with the heart. Anything essential is invisible to the eyes” (63)
- But the little prince added, “But eyes are blind. You have to look with the heart” (71)

### ***THE NEVERENDING STORY: APPROACHING REALITY AND IMAGINATION***

“Every real story is a Neverending story.”

*The Neverending Story* tells readers about Bastian, a very shy boy who needs to help the kingdom of Fantasia. His only escape is reading books. When Bastian happens upon an old book called *The Neverending Story*, he is swept into the magical world of Fantasia, so much that he finds he has actually become a character in the story! And when he realizes that this mysteriously enchanted world is in great danger, he also discovers that he has been the one chosen to save it. Can Bastian overcome the barrier between reality and his imagination in order to save Fantasia? *Atreyu* is his alter ego: he is an inhabitant of the

kingdom of Fantasia and belongs to the Green Skin Tribe. He is on the other side of the story. The book inside the book (the book Bastian reads) is also one of the protagonists of the plot as it becomes the border between the real world and the world of Fantasia. This technique was often used in the times of William Shakespeare. If you would like to find some more information about the idea of “the theatre within the theatre” you can consult *Shakespeare’s Characters: The Lighter Side*, published by the Houston Teachers Institute in 2002.

Atreyu, the character inside the book, is called by Cairon, who has a very special message for him. The book, bound in copper-colored silk, has two snakes on the cover, a light and a dark one, biting each other’s tail. This book is another protagonist as it is not just a book but also the door leading to Fantasia. Through its pages Bastian gets involved in Atreyu’s adventures and his special mission: to find a remedy to cure the Empress’ illness. At the same time Fantasia is in danger. The Nothing is destroying and eating all territories and beings, everything it finds on its way. The Empress’ illness and the menace of the Nothing which is destroying everything seem to be the same thing. The best point is when Bastian understands that he is the saver, the only one who can save the world of Fantasia. He gets busy and becomes part of his reading:

As Bastian read this and listened to the deep dark voice of the Old Man of Wandering Mountain, a roaring started up in his ears and he saw spots before his eyes.

Why, this was all about him! And it was the Neverending Story. He, Bastian, was a character in the book which until now he had thought he was reading. And heaven only knew who else might be reading it at the exact time, also supposing himself to be just a reader.

And now Bastian was afraid. He felt unable to breathe, as though shut up in an invisible prison. He didn’t want to read anymore, he wanted to stop.

But the deep, dark voice of the Old Man of the Wandering Mountain went on, and there was nothing Bastian could do about it. He held his hands over his ears, but it was no use, because the voice came from inside him. He tried to tell himself—though he knew it wasn’t true—that the resemblance to his own story was some crazy accident.... (196-197)

Both worlds, Fantasia and ours, are joined in an indivisible way, so the future of one world will determine the future of the other: if Fantasia disappears, all the innocence and imagination in our world will disappear too.

Michael Ende wrote a wonderful story joining several magical elements: castles, princesses, giants, and dragons. All this constitutes a wonderful world which fights to survive and makes us see that the imagination is here to be used always.

## INSTRUCTION METHODS

In the case of *The Little Prince*, I want my students to read the book; in the case of *The Neverending Story*, I will introduce some chapters, and we will watch the movie. The aim is to prepare some activities that motivate them to read the book. (As it is a long book and in a certain way, difficult for them, they are free to read it. Reading of the entire book will not be compulsory.) As I also said in the chapter for *The Little Prince*, I do not want to make a study guide for *The Neverending Story* since we can find lots of information about it on the Internet, in bookshops, at libraries, and with other resources.

We will first read about Michael Ende, using the following summary:

Michael Ende was born in Germany on November 12, 1929 and died in 1995. In his 65 years, he wrote one of the greatest fantasy novels of all time: *The Neverending Story* (published in 1979). His other works include *Momo*, *The Night of Wishes*, and his first novel, *Jim Button*, which was published in 1960. His writings are very popular in Germany and have been called by some “a true celebration of imagination and fantasy.” The mastermind of *The Neverending Story* had the reputation of being shy and quiet, but his low-profile personality never dulled his sharp eye for the blend of realism and fantasy in his writing.

This short biography can help us to start working with ESL children on some vocabulary activities. We should work with them and have a translation of the text so that later on, we can work on the formation of the past tense in the English language. The teacher should pay attention to explanations on how the past is formed: different pronunciations at the end, and clear explanations on how we form past tense for regular and irregular verbs.

When talking about how to handle reading, we need to bear in mind that the Texas Education Agency’s focus at this point requires attention to *fluency* (activities such as page races, fast phrases, word pattern road races, bingo, and word folders), *phonological awareness* (activities like rhyming, identifying words sharing a common sound, jumping syllables, counting syllables), *instructional reading* (the W’s of story comprehension, story mapping), *word analysis* and *spelling* (building words with blends, word slides, changing one letter, and word hunting). Examples for all these activities can be found at *Essential Reading Strategies for the Struggling Reader*, edited by the Texas Education Agency. When we work on *The Little Prince*, I will read some parts to the students in the classroom, and they will have to read the book at home independently. When we discuss the book in class, they will read some parts aloud and others silently, always attending the diversity and modifications of our students.



If we try to summarize the plot of *The Neverending Story*, we can show a summary of the plot found on Hollywood Club 9779 at [www.geocities.com](http://www.geocities.com):

A lonely, otherwise rejected boy named Bastian Balthazar Bux comes across a mysterious, ornately bound book called *The Neverending Story*. Within its pages he finds a land of imagination called Fantastica (*the name on the movie is Fantasia and not Fantastica*), which is ruled by the serene Golden-Eyed Commander of Wishes (the Childlike Empress). However, Fantastica is being slowly destroyed by a mysterious force called The Nothing. The Childlike Empress falls ill and sends Cairon to find the Greenskin warrior Atreyu, in order to send him on the Great Quest and find a cure for the dying Empress. Among the characters Atreyu encounters are Artax, his faithful horse; Morla, the Aged One who dwells in the Swamp of Sorrow; Ygramul the Many, who resembles a large spider and lives in the Deep Chasm; and Falkor the white luckdragon, among others. Bastian finds himself absorbed so completely in Atreyu's adventures, and then comes to realize that they are really his own. And as the tagline states, it is "a magically evocative story to fulfill your deepest longings."

It is really a story about dreams and imagination. It is here that we learn what it takes to fight and defeat the Nothing: Imagination. The hero of the story, Atreyu, is no different from the "hero" who is reading the book, Bastian. With the use of all imaginative characteristics, I want my students feel that they can also be "heroes" through reading.

When writing, we need to bear in mind that the students need us to correct their grammar. That's why we need to check all their writing sheets, especially since some of them are ESL. We may wish to do it as a team. The teacher can check their mistakes, or they can correct each other's work. We can also display their work and review it so that they can learn from each other's work. This is all up to the teacher.

I will use the 1984 Warner Brothers movie adaptation of *The Neverending Story*. This is the version that the main activities will be based on. There are two later versions of the movie as well: *The Neverending Story II* and *The Neverending Story III*. We can also find an animated version of the story, *The Neverending Story Animated Adventure* that has run on HBO since 1996 with all the adventures of Bastian in Fantasia. We also know that many times movies are not as good as the original stories. Michael Ende was unhappy with the movie version of his novel, so he refused to allow his name to be listed at the beginning of the movie. There is a small credit to him at the end. He said: "The script no longer captures the substance of my novel. Left over are only some images, locations and characters, which have been robbed of all meaning and context. The problems inherent in making a film out of the book have been solved simply by eliminating the reasons for the problems, and in the process all depth, meaning and artistic seriousness." This is one of the main reasons that we, as teachers, even while working with the movie, must encourage children to read the book. We need to motivate our students by telling them about the threatening of the Nothing, and make them see that

Bastian has to make a very important decision and that that is why he walks into the world of Fantasia: to save it, to save the Empress, and to protect and save the world of imagination from the Nothing.

Encourage your students to travel to different worlds, imagining they are the protagonists of those stories, creating worlds of fantasy in which reading becomes the answer to save the world of Fantasia. In saving the world of Fantasia, our world is also saved.

## **LESSON PLANS**

### **The Little Prince Goes to the Movies**

**Subject:** Reading and Writing (language arts). Comparing books and movies.

**Grade level:** 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading (also can be used in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades).

**Implementation Time:** 4 classes of 45 minutes

#### ***1<sup>st</sup> Day***

Introduce book, author, circumstances, dedication and pictures. Start reading the book and start completing the information worksheet. Tell them to finish the book for the following week.


#### ***2<sup>nd</sup> Day***

Finish completing the information sheet and revising the book. Discuss with the students the main points of the book.

#### ***3<sup>rd</sup> Day***

Show them the video *Animated Version of The Little Prince* and start filling the second worksheet about the movie.

#### ***4<sup>th</sup> Day***

Check the 15 questions about the movie from the worksheet. Work with the Venn diagram worksheet. You can find lots of diagrams at [www.venndiagram.com](http://www.venndiagram.com) (so you can be original in choosing one for your students). Discuss similarities and differences between each version: movie and book. Thinking in terms of the boa constrictor eating an elephant, for example, tell them to write what is in the following shape: . Be original and give them several types of shapes so they can use imagination to write.

#### ***4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Standards Used***

- 1.1 Ask thoughtful questions and respond to relevant questions with appropriate elaboration in oral settings.
- 1.2 Summarize major ideas and supporting evidence presented in spoken messages and formal presentations.

- 1.5 Present effective introductions and conclusions that guide and inform the listener's understanding of important ideas and evidence.
- 2.5 Compare and contrast information on the same topic after reading several passages or articles.

#### ***4<sup>th</sup> grade Writing Standards Used***

- 2.2 Write responses to literature:
  - a. Demonstrate an understanding of the literary work.
  - b. Support judgments through references to both the text and prior knowledge.

#### ***Objectives***

Students will be able to compare and contrast the two versions of *The Little Prince* used in the classroom: the book and the movie. Make conclusions through comparisons (working with both editions of *The Little Prince*, the book and the movie, we will practice the four macro-skills of reading, listening, writing and speaking). Analyze a text (before, during and after reading).

#### ***Materials Needed***

A personal copy of "The Little Prince"

*Animated Version of The Little Prince*, VHS

Computers (in case we need to find some extra information on the Internet)

A printer

Venn diagram worksheet

Fill in information worksheet. (15 questions for the book, same for the movie)

Paper

Pencil

TV/VCR

#### ***Procedures and Activities:***

- Read the story. The Harcourt edition is a good edition as the pictures are in both color and black and white, making the book very attractive. The students can read the story together, orally, silently, in groups, with partners, etc...).
- Divide the class into small groups of four so each student can read one paragraph on each chapter. There are 27 chapters, so we will cover the most important ones in the classroom. They can read some chapters at home, too, and the teacher can read to them aloud.
- Tell the students that one of the most important things is to pay attention to the two main characters: the little prince and the pilot, a young boy and an adult.
- The first activity is going to be a fill-in information sheet where we get the main points of the book. Before reading the book (a warming-up activity), I will show them the cover of the book and ask them the following questions at the specified times (there are also questions for during and after the reading):

## **Questions**

Pre-reading:

1. What does the title (*The Little Prince*) tell me about the story?
2. What do the pictures tell me?
3. What do I already know about the story of *The Little Prince*?

During the Reading:

1. Who is the main character? Do we have one or two main characters?
2. What happens?
3. When does it happen?
4. Where does it happen?
5. Why does happen?
6. How does it happen?
7. What do I think will happen next?

Post Reading:

1. Who were the main characters?
2. What was the setting?
3. What was the problem?
4. How was the problem solved?
5. Why did...?

Once they have finished the book and have completed the above 15 questions, we have, as a result, a summary of the book. What we are going to do next is watch a video based on *The Little Prince*. It is the animated version of the book, and what students will need to do is fill in a separate sheet of paper with the same 15 questions.

Once they have finished the movie and have completed the questions, we will compare and contrast the two versions of this story. On a Venn diagram worksheet, the students will discuss the similarities and differences between the two versions. We can do this as a whole group, small groups or as a teacher-directed activity. As teachers, we can use different versions of the diagram to motivate students (at [www.venndiagram.com](http://www.venndiagram.com), you can find lots of different shapes).

It is a good idea to review the beginning of the book and remind them of the episode when the child draws a boa constrictor which has eaten an elephant. The adults think it is a hat but it is not a hat for the child. Give them some different shapes on a paper and tell them to write what each shape is. Let them justify themselves about it (*I think it is a ... because...*). The good point about this is that everybody will be right! You can use the following examples but the best thing is to be original and find “motivating” shapes.

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### ***Using Technology Resources in the Classroom.***

We can find a lot of web sites on the Internet that can help us to expand on this lesson and provide us with a lot of extra information about *The Little Prince* or its author, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

### ***Internet Resources***

- Resource Internet  
Type of resource: Web site- Spark Notes: Literature.  
URL: [www.sparknotes.com/lit/littleprince/canalysis.html](http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/littleprince/canalysis.html)  
Description: analysis of major characters, themes, motifs and symbols, important quotations explained and suggestions for further reading.
- Resource Internet  
Type of resource: Web site- 8m: Literature  
URL: [www.littleprince.8m.com/index1.html](http://www.littleprince.8m.com/index1.html)  
Description: includes biographical information, collections, information, and multilingual Little Prince.
- Resource Internet  
Type of resource: Web site- Britannica Encyclopaedia: Literature  
URL: [www.britannica.com/eb/article?eu=66525](http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?eu=66525)  
Description: a short biography, links to *The Little Prince* and Saint-Exupéry.
- Resource Internet  
Type of resource: Web site- Saint-Exupéry and *The Little Prince*.  
URL: [www.saint-exupery.org](http://www.saint-exupery.org)  
Description: Centennial commemoration of Saint-Exupéry's birth date, all his works and life, especial exhibitions.

### ***Assessment and evaluation (determining how the students have attained the instructional objectives)***

The teacher needs to evaluate the students' accuracy in answering the questions on both charts, in filling information and in their participation when asked about the questions.

### ***Sing and Fly a Fantasy with *The Neverending Story*.***

**Subject:** Spanish Language Arts (SLA) and English as a Second Language (ESL).

**Grade level:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Reading (also can be used in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades).

**Implementation Time:** 3 classes of 45 minutes

### ***1<sup>st</sup> Day***

Introduce the story. Tell them about when it was written and what it is about. Tell them they are going to see a movie called *The Neverending Story* and that you want them to tell you why the movie has that name.

### ***2<sup>nd</sup> Day***

Finish the movie and talk about fantasy. Discuss the real world and the fantasy world.

Bring a copy of the book to show them that the color of the ink is what makes us see what is real and what is fantasy.

### ***3<sup>rd</sup> Day***

They write about how to follow the beginning of the story (give them the sheet with the text so they can write either in Spanish or English). Then tell them they are going to listen to the original soundtrack. Give them the sheet (fill in the blanks, cognates, words, nouns).

### ***3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Listening and Speaking Standards used***

3.1 The student listens attentively and engages actively in various situations.

3.2 The student listens and speaks to gain knowledge of his/her own culture, the culture of others, and the common elements of cultures.

### ***Objectives***

Students will determine the purpose(s) of listening such as to get information, to solve problems, to enjoy, and to appreciate. Participate in rhymes, songs, conversations and discussions. Distinguish and produce sounds and intonation patterns of English. Infer meaning by making associations of utterances with actions, visuals, and the context of the situation. Interact with languages other than English, working with cognates.

### ***Materials needed***

- A copy of the movie either on VHS or DVD (this last version has more information as it includes different scenes and special features). *The Neverending Story* directed by Wolfgang Peterson in 1984. The version on DVD, released in 2001, includes scene selections including cast and crew, making movie magic, the heroes, the Childlike Empress, the People of Fantasia, and the theatrical trailer.
- Computers (in case we need to find some extra information on the Internet)
- A printer
- Lyrics for the song “The Never Ending Story”
- Writing worksheet

- Paper
- Pencil
- TV/VCR/DVD player

***Procedures and activities***

- Teachers should have read the book so that they can talk about the differences between it and the movie later. We do not want the students to read the whole book, but in case somebody shows interest, tell him/her to use the Puffin Books edition (Penguin Books), which is a good edition in terms of quality and price. There are some other editions in which the color of the ink (red or green) helps us to distinguish between the real world and the fantasy world in the book. After watching the movie and before doing any other activity, give them a writing worksheet with the beginning of the book and tell them to write a few lines:

“It was midnight, the storm wind was whistling through the tops of the great ancient trees. The towering trunks creaked and groaned. Suddenly a faint light came zigzagging through the woods, stopped here and there, trembling fitfully, flew up into the air, rested on a branch, and a moment later hurried on. It was ...

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“ Era media noche en el bosque de los aullidos. El viento soplaba entre las copas de los arboles milenarios. De repente, algo enorme avanzo causando un gran estrepito en la misteriosa espesura... \_\_\_\_\_

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This will be just a warm-up. After they have seen the movie, they will be able to write a few lines and go on with the story. It does not have to be a real one, that is, based on the movie they have just seen, but they will get involved in the plot without having read the book.

- The students can read the beginning of “their” story together, in groups, with partners, etc...
- Once the first activity (writing some lines from the beginning of the story) is finished, tell them they are going to listen to a song called “The Never Ending Story” which is taken from the original soundtrack for the movie. Give them the sheet with the lyrics and tell them they are going to listen to it and that they need to fill in the gaps. This has been taken from [www.kajagoogoo.com/lyrics/lyrics\\_limahl\\_neverending.html](http://www.kajagoogoo.com/lyrics/lyrics_limahl_neverending.html)

## The Never Ending Story

Turn around  
Look at what you see  
In her face  
The mirror of your dream  
Make believe I'm everywhere  
I'm hidden in the lines

And written on the pages  
Is the answer to a never ending story

Reach the stars  
Fly a fantasy  
Dream a dream  
And what you see will be  
**Rhymes that keep their secrets  
Will unfold behind the clouds  
And there upon the rainbow  
Is the answer to a never ending story, story**

Show no fear  
For she may fade away  
In your hands  
The birth of a new day

**Rhymes that keep their secrets  
Will unfold behind the clouds  
And there upon the rainbow  
Is the answer to a never ending story, story**

*(Repeat and fade)*

Nothing on Earth...

Lyrics: Limahl and Billy Griffin  
Music: Limahl, Billy Griffin and Derek Nakamoto.

- This activity is excellent for ESL students. You just need to take some words out and leave a blank. They need to write the words they think the song says and then fill in the gaps. You can do this using different versions of the activity:



- Take cognates out. There are lots of words similar to English words such as lines, pages, story, fantasy, rhymes and secrets.
- Take verbs out. Work on commands and the imperative with them: turn around, look at, reach the stars, fly a fantasy, show no fear, ...
- Give them some words and tell them to write definitions and/or write a sentence in which those words appear.
- There are some other activities you can do with your students apart from having them fill in the blanks. One of them is to give them the lyrics on construction papers and scramble the stanzas, lines or words.
- You can also use flashcards for filling in the blanks activities (face, mirror, stars, clouds, etc...). This is a free activity as you can use as many strategies as you want depending on your students and their level of understanding English.
- Listening Comprehension. After listening to the song, having worked on cognates, verbs, and some nouns (with flashcards), you can ask students to relate some of the words (dream a dream, fly a fantasy, reach the stars, etc.) of the song with the movie.

### ***Using technology resources in the classroom.***

We can find a lot of web sites on the Internet and elsewhere which can help us to improve this lesson and which provide us with a lot of extra information about *The Neverending Story* and its author, Michael Ende.

- Resource Internet  
Type of resource: Web site—The Neverending Story online.  
URL: [www.geocities.com/nesonline](http://www.geocities.com/nesonline)  
Description: wonderful web site in which you find information about the book, the movies, multimedia, funny and interactive news.
- Resource Internet  
Type of resource: Web site—“Neverending Story” Limahl Discography.  
URL: [www.limahl.co.uk/discog/NeverEndingStory.htm](http://www.limahl.co.uk/discog/NeverEndingStory.htm)  
Description: students can discuss the song being a hit in 14 countries and watch the video clip for the song.
- Resource Internet  
Type of resource: Web site—Literature (Interzona Literatura)  
URL:  
[www.unex.es/interzona/Interzona/Literatura/Trabajos/Entrevistas/Momo.html](http://www.unex.es/interzona/Interzona/Literatura/Trabajos/Entrevistas/Momo.html)  
Description: analysis of two characters from two of the best novels by Michael Ende: Momo and Bastian. This web site is in Spanish.
- Resource Multimedia  
Type of resource: DVD—*Tales from the Neverending Story - The Beginning 2002*

Description: New film adaptation of this international, best selling, fantasy epic which has captured the hearts of readers throughout the world. Includes a very good trailer and a great behind-the-scenes section.

***Assessment and evaluation***

The teacher needs to evaluate the accuracy in answering the questions, the accuracy of writing the beginning of the story and their participation when asked about the lyrics and the different exercises. The teacher evaluates if the students stay on task, use a quiet voice, have materials and use them correctly, work with a positive attitude, work well with the partner, and complete the sheets.

**The Space with *The Little Prince: my Planet B-612***

The idea of having read *The Little Prince* is a great idea to work on space science with your students.

***Subject:*** Science

***Grade level:*** 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Science (also can be used in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades).

***Implementation Time:*** 3 classes of 45 minutes

***1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Day***

There is a list of activities below that you can use in any of these three different days. In some cases, you may use four or five days. This is all up to the teacher and how his/her class is run.

***3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Science Standards used***

3.17 Identify the planets in our solar system and their positions in relation to the sun.

3.18 Describe the characteristics of the sun.

***Objectives***

Students will be able to talk about moons, the sun, constellations, night and day, eclipses and the solar system. Identify the planets in the solar system, analyze and interpret information to construct reasonable explanations.

***Materials needed***

Worksheets from several resources, either books or web sites

Pencil

Crayons

Construction Paper

Scissors

Glue

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### ***Procedures and Activities***

All these activities can be done according to the diversity of groups and available time for each class:

- Give them a paper to read with the definition of what a *moon* is (talk about the *orbits* or *phases* of the moon). They can color worksheets and teacher can introduce the following terms: *full moon, gibbous, half, crescent, new moon*. This can be done in English and/or Spanish according to the groups.
- The teacher can also give them a worksheet with the name of the *sun* (talk about the *stars*). Remind the students to remember at all times that the sun is a star and the moon is a satellite. Make them draw a picture: night versus day. If they do this, they can cut the pictures, label them and then glue them on a sheet of construction paper.
- You can talk about *constellations*. Tell them the sky is full of stars and they seem to arrange themselves into patterns. Give them pictures of constellations (Pegasus, Orion, Andromeda, Perseus). They can color pictures of the constellations, write names in Spanish and/or English.
- With a map tell them about how the light fills or doesn't fill the sky. You can also use a globe to show the students. It is 3 PM when they leave school in Houston, but at the same time, people in Spain (Europe) are going to bed as it is 10 PM there.
- You can introduce topics as the *solar system*: coloring solar system pictures, the *planets*, labeling the planets, talking about the Milky Way. They can arrange the planets according which are bigger or smaller than Earth.
- With all these activities, they can figure out how the sky is built: they must use correct terminology and this is an excellent topic to use with 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades.

### ***Using technology resources in the classroom (Lots of web sites where you can find lots of worksheets and information about the solar system and the planets)***

- Resource Internet  
Type of resource: Web site—The Space.  
URL: [www.starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/StarChild.html](http://www.starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/StarChild.html)  
Description: wonderful web site in which you find information about stars and the solar system.

### ***Assessment and evaluation***

The teacher evaluates if the students stay on task, use quiet voices, have materials and use them correctly, work with positive attitudes, work well with partners, and complete the sheets.

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A boy sets out to discover the source of a strange noise. He imagines the worst and he finally discovers it's his father's snoring.
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This is the story of a man of extravagant dream and of a woman who was his muse, the inspiration for *The Little Prince's* beloved rose –unique in all the world- whom he could not live with and could not live without.
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Bastian is a shy and awkward boy. His only escape is reading books. When he happens upon an old book called *The Neverending Story*, he's swept into the magical world of Fantasia. His reading makes him discover that he has been chosen to save Fantasia: he overcomes the barrier between reality and his imagination in order to save the Fantasia world.
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Addressed to educators as well as the general reader, this important yet lively and readable book explores the values and uses of literature and its study in our scientific age, and offers a broad program for the teaching of literature in elementary and secondary schools.
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The kids in Ms. Frizzle's class learned a lot during their unit on space and the planets. Now they are sharing everything with us. Stellar space facts, real planet photos, far-out illustrations, planet profiles. This is the book where you can find all the facts.
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Several Fellows of the Houston Teachers Institute in 2002 wrote a successful group of curriculum Shakespearean units. Find information about the technique “theatre within theatre.”

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A celebration of books written for and adopted by children. We find from religious tracts to multimedia comics, picture-books and pop-ups. Illustrations, historical images, portraits of writers enrich the text which is an ideal guide with universal appeal.

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Indian tales for young readers and listeners. Legends adapted to enchant youngsters and lovers of Native American myth and legend.

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Harry’s room is a tiny closet at the foot of the stairs and he never had a birthday party. One day he receives a letter with an invitation to a wonderful place he never dreamed existed. He finds friends, magic and a destiny.

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Includes biographical information, collections information and multilingual Little Prince.
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Find about the single being hit in 14 countries and watch the video for the song.
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Wonderful web site in which you find information about the book, the movies, multimedia, funny and interactive news.
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Friendship between a little pig and a spider. Parable for human life when things like feelings, life, death, comedy animals, trust, compromise, family and love, come together in a story which is loved by young and adults readers.