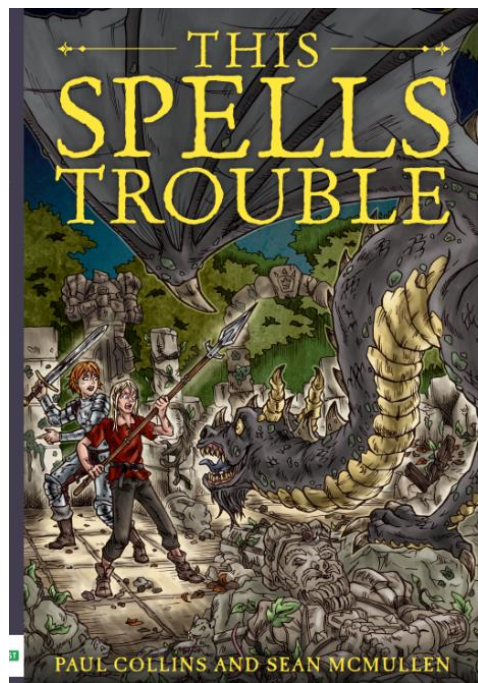




TEACHING NOTES

This Spells Trouble



When unwilling wizard apprentice Winston repeatedly demonstrates his superior powers and intelligence, which far outstrip those of his lazy master, Faramond, ructions are bound to follow. And when the pair get caught up in the designs of the powerful Summoner, Yolantha, and her plans for The Black Tower, things only get worse. Add into the mix a headstrong and wilful girl on a mission, a dangerous dragon, and a very clever demon, Winston's mission to rescue the enslaved beings of his world become a matter of life and death. All in all... this spells trouble.

BEFORE READING

- Use clues in the cover art to predict genre, setting, character, plot and any possible theme/s. Students should be able to suggest adventure/fantasy and point out dragon, ruins, armed characters who appear quite young. They may suggest a quest and add ideas such as courage, resilience and resourcefulness.
- What other similar books have the students read (or movies watched)? Compile a class list for further reading.
- The title is what type of literary device/figurative language? In this instance it also has a double meaning. Ask the students what they think that might indicate i.e., magic.
- Read the blurb to confirm or add to predictions.
- Have the students read any other books by either of these authors? [Paul Collins](#) [Sean McMullen](#) . Visit the school library to find as many of their titles as possible for a bulk loan.

DURING READING

VOCABULARY

- There are many words used throughout the text that may be unfamiliar to the students. Have them select some from the list, attempt a definition based on the context and then compare with the actual meaning, after checking a dictionary. [App 1]
- Have students select another unusual word and play 'What's the Story?'. Each player offers three different meanings to their chosen word. One is true, one is half-true and one is false. Others must try to work out which is the correct meaning.
- There are several significant words (often used as spells/incantations) that have Latin or Greek roots. Research the original root for the following and construct lists of other words which use the same root:

igienisen	vortextrias	valiant	delictiar fugoris
alpha	beta	gamma	Delta

- Have students create their own 'signature spells' using a word or words that use a root from Latin or Greek. [Combined lists are freely available on the internet]. They could also devise the finger movement to trace the symbol for their spell. This could become an illustrated piece.
- The word '*iffryt*' is very like the Arabic word 'ifrit'. Do some research to see how the two are connected. Write and draw a description of an iffryt (this could be Elvar).

- There are a great many 'occupations' mentioned throughout the text. Use the list and select five to investigate further. Write a definition for each.

Merchant	journeyman	scribe	tinker	tinsmith	wayfarer
goatherd	priest	hunter	trapper	carter	miner
jester	mercenary	chronicler	freebooter	theologian	herbalist
miner	artisan	arena girl	artistocrat	militiaman	knight

- Choose one of the occupations/trades and create a 'Positions Vacant' advertisement. You might choose to use a template for this.

STRUCTURE/PLOT

- Discuss the characteristics of the quest plot in narratives. Have students write their own definition and give examples they know from their own reading/viewing.
- Use a copy of the map to plot the comings and comings of the characters.
- Conflict is the struggle between two forces in a narrative. It may be external or internal. Identify conflict/s in the story and classify according to type.
- Write your own blurb for the book.
- Create a story map, or use a template, to summarise the text.
- Follow up with a story graph to plot the action.
- Hold some mini-debates on significant quotes such as:
 - ✓ Winston had not yet learned that 'older' usually meant more foolish rather than wiser, but no older person was going to admit it. p 29
 - ✓ Winston, [who had] decided that life was just a collection of problems strung out between cradle and grave. p 155

CHARACTERS

- A foil [character] is one that contrasts to another. It is usually a secondary character, and one which highlights the traits/qualities of the first. Identify any in the text and describe how the authors achieve this.
- Choose a character and create a profile OR create a character web which illustrates how characters are connected with each other.
- As a class brainstorm the characteristics of heroes and villains and construct a generic profile for each.
 - ✓ Are there characters that are not wholly one or the other?
 - ✓ Can either change to a different type?
 - ✓ Create a list of heroes/villains pairings from students' suggestions
- *Griffid looked old even though he was fairly young for a dragon. His black and grey hide was blotched by lichen, and the teeth that had once crunched through the expensive armour of famous knights were now yellow because he didn't eat enough wood. His silver wings and immense body remained buried under the vines. P 34/35* Use this description of Griffid, along with any other references to draw or paint him.

HASS/SCIENCE

- p 276/277 *a world that is a globe – a world that is flat (on top of a dragon's head)....* Answer these questions, after some research:
 - ✓ Who first suggested the idea that the earth was round?
 - ✓ When was it proven and by whom?
 - ✓ What is the spherical shape of the Earth called?
 - ✓ Scientists usually list 7 reasons that prove the Earth is round. What are they?
 - ✓ Why do some people still believe the Flat Earth theory?
- *Because Wilderclaw's Second Law of Relative Motion states that a body within a freely falling body will be denied the influence of gravity.* p 288. Is this an actual scientific fact? Research to find out about free-falling.
- Boar hunting is a sport with a long history across many cultures. Do some research and write a short report on this. Compare what you find with the descriptions of Winston's hunting methods.

AFTER READING

- Create a Bloom Ball report: Bloom Balls are three-dimensional projects in which students complete various activities related to the topic, moving through levels of Bloom's taxonomy. There are many examples available on the net with templates and generic guiding questions. You can use generic questions/points (App 2) or create specific ones tailored to the text and students. Alternatively, students can create a simple Ball Book report (App 2).
- As individuals or as a paired activity, create a board game based on the book's events. This might include such features as 'chance' cards and could be based on the map.
- Some means of transportation mentioned in the text include: sand cart with chicken legs, enchanted carpet, carried by iffryt (Elvar) or dragon, and levitation castings. If you could choose one, which would it be? Write a short piece describing a journey you would make, making good use of figurative devices, creative description and rich language.

ABOUT THE BOOK

This Spells Trouble

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Paul Collins

Paul has written many books for young adults. He has many strings to his bow. He's been an agent, publisher, writer and editor. He is best known for his fantasy and science fiction titles in The Jelindel Chronicles and The Quentaris Chronicles.

Sean McMullen

Sean McMullen is one of Australia's top science fiction authors, with nominations for the Hugo and BSFA awards, fifteen other awards, and works published in over a dozen languages.

SPECIFIC CURRICULUM LINKS

Years 5-8

[English](#)

Year 5

ACELA1518 Present a point of view about particular literary texts using appropriate metalanguage, and reflecting on the viewpoints of other

ACELT1613 Understand how to use knowledge of known words, base words, prefixes and suffixes, word origins, letter patterns and spelling generalisations to spell new words

ACELT1610 Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses

ACELT1612 Create literary texts using realistic and fantasy settings and characters that draw on the worlds represented in texts students have experienced

Year 6

ACELA1525 Investigate how vocabulary choices, including evaluative language can express shades of meaning, feeling and opinion

ACELA1526 Understand how to use knowledge of known words, word origins including some Latin and Greek roots, base words, prefixes, suffixes, letter patterns and spelling generalisations to spell new words including technical words

ACELT1613 Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts

ACELT165 Identify and explain how choices in language, for example modality, emphasis, repetition and metaphor, influence personal response to different texts

Year 7

ACELA1539 Understand how to use spelling rules and word origins, for example Greek and Latin roots, base words, suffixes, prefixes, spelling patterns and generalisations to learn new words and how to spell them.

ACELT16320 Reflect on ideas and opinions about characters, settings and events in literary texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others and justifying a point of view

Year 8

ACELA1547

ACELA1549

ACELT1627

ACELT1629 Recognise, explain and analyse the ways literary texts draw on readers' knowledge of other texts and enable new understanding and appreciation of aesthetic qualities

ACELT1630 Identify and evaluate devices that create tone, for example humour, wordplay, innuendo and parody in poetry, humorous prose, drama or visual texts

HASS

ACHASSI122 Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges.

ACHASSI123 Locate and collect relevant information and data from primary sources and secondary sources

SCIENCE

ACSI124 Identify questions and problems that can be investigated scientifically and make predictions based on scientific knowledge.

ACSHE119

ACSI130 Summarise data, from students' own investigations and secondary sources, and use scientific understanding to identify relationships and draw conclusions based on evidence

ACSI132 Use scientific knowledge and findings from investigations to evaluate claims based on evidence

Appendix 1

	What I think it means	Dictionary definition
peril p 1		
swooned p3		
venerable p6		
indentured p 8		
negligent p 11		
cutlasses p 13		
flatulent p 18		
indecipherable p 44		
felon p 51		
nightsoil [wagon] p 52		
hedgerow p 54		
wayfarer p 62		
turgid p 79		
cadaverous p 100		
unscathed p 103		
begrudgingly p 151		
cloying p 163		
languidly p 208		
contusions p 216		
restorative p 219		
rotund p 220		
chivalrous p 269		

Appendix 2

Generic questions for a Bloom Ball book report

Knowledge/Remembering	Use the entire circle to write the title and the author/s in a creative, colourful way Research five fun facts about the author/s
Comprehension/Understanding	Describe the main character. Include both physical and personality characteristics. List three problems faced by the main character. Use complete sentences.
Application/Applying	Draw an important symbol from the text. Describe it in detail using five sentences. Create either a social media profile or a fake interview for a character.
Analysis/Analyzing	Focus on one scene and use your five senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste to describe the setting. Consider a character's motives. Why did she/he/it act in the way they have?
Evaluation/Evaluating	Write a paragraph which tells others your opinion of the text. Explain if you think a particular character made wise or poor choices.
Synthesis/Synthesising	Cite some examples of humour in the text and classify them i.e., irony, physical humour Describe connections and comparisons between the text and your own life or experiences.

Alternative Book Ball generic example:

1. Title Side: Write your name and the title and author of your book.
2. Author Side: Write a brief (8-10 sentences) author bio.
3. Character Side: Describe the main character of the story. Include both physical traits and personality characteristics.
4. Setting Side: Draw a picture or a map of the setting of the story.
5. Illustration Side: Draw a picture of the most exciting, the funniest, or the most interesting scene in the story.
- 6-7. Summary Sides: Write a summary of the book on these two sides. Include key ideas, important events, and all relevant information, without giving away the ending.
8. Poetry Side: Write a poem (any type, 10 lines or longer, does not have to rhyme) about the story, a certain character, or a favorite scene.
9. Alternate Ending Side: In one paragraph, write a different ending to the story (8-10 sentences).
- 10.11. Review Side: Write a 2 paragraph Book review (8-10 sentences).
12. Qualities Side: Describe two qualities about one of the characters that you admire. (8-10 sentences).

