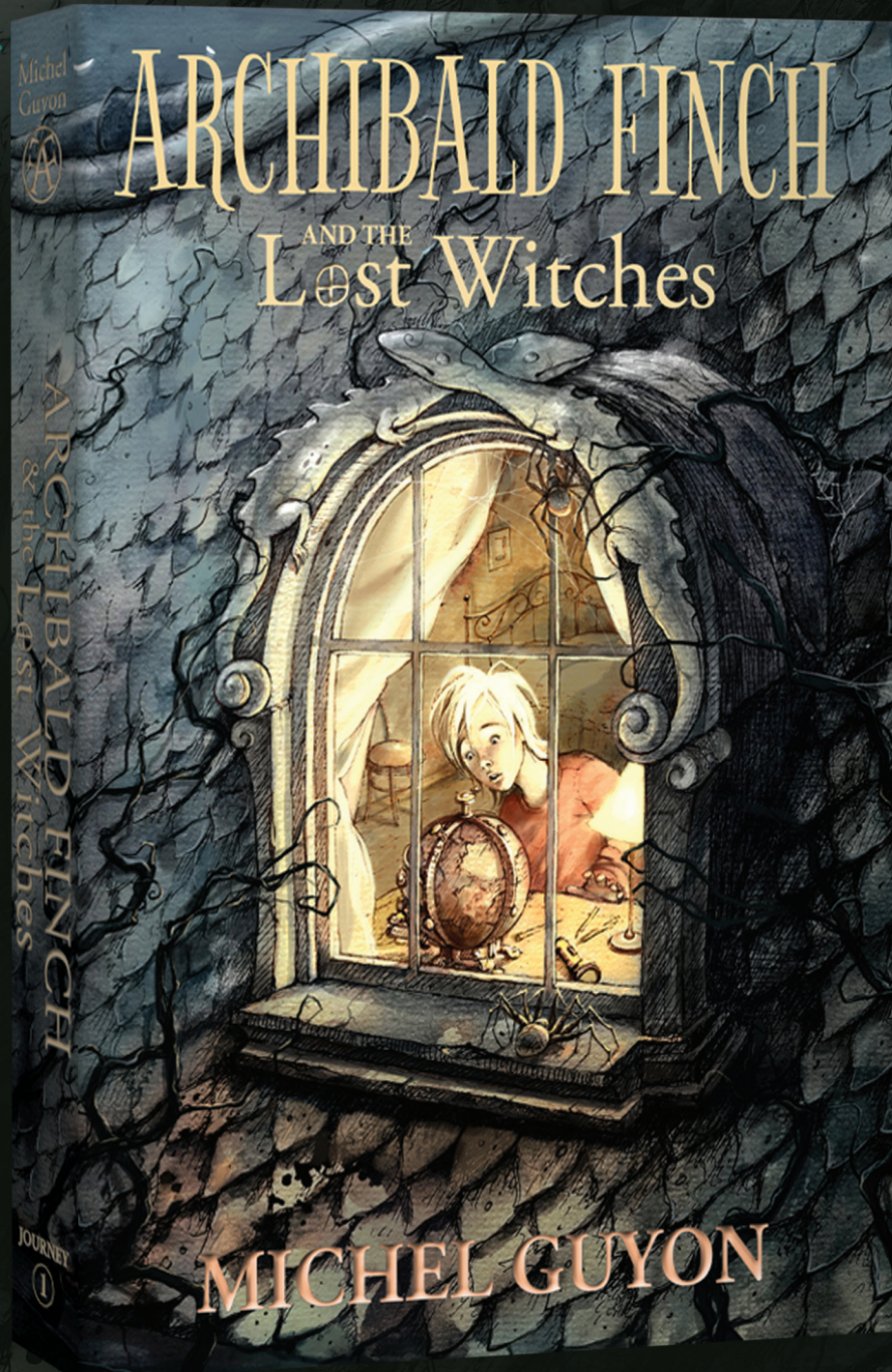


# Educator's Guide

With Curriculum Connections, Discussion Questions  
and Activities



By Michel Guyon With illustrations by Zina Kostich



## Curriculum Connections, Grades 4-6

### English Language Arts:

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of text and inferences drawn.
- Determine themes and consider how plot, setting and character magnify theme.
- Analyze character; compare and contrast characters.
- Evaluate plot, structure and setting.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases.
- Write opinion pieces, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- Write narratives using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.

### Art:

- Demonstrate and extend understanding of text with creative projects.

### History:

- Conduct research projects that build knowledge.
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

### Objective:

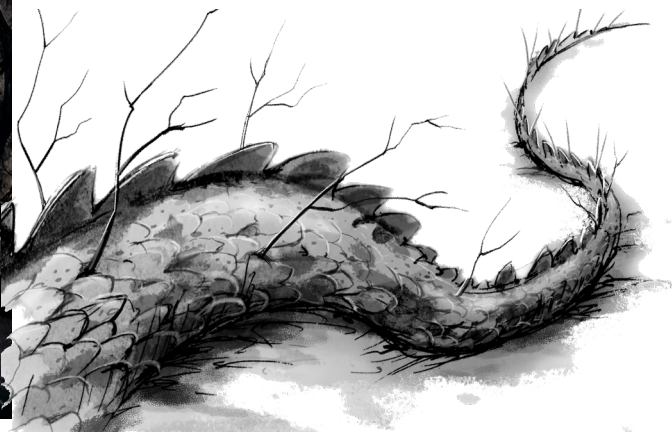
Students will read the book independently; extend vocabulary; participate in a class discussion and in small group sessions; and complete independent activities based on the book.

### About the Book:

History, magic, and adventure collide in this riveting middle-grade fantasy novel about an unusual boy who unlocks an ancient relic—and with it, a forgotten world. Whisked from his home into an alternate universe and befriended by a band of young witches, Archibald Finch must quickly adapt to survive in Lemurea, where a battle born in the Middle Ages is still unfolding. Back at home, Archibald's sister Hailee—who witnessed his disappearance—embarks on a daring quest to find him and bring him home.

### About the Author:

Michel Guyon was born in France, in a small medieval town perched on a rock, surrounded by high walls, with the remains of an ancient fortress at its heart. That's where the author had his first brush with ancient myths, puzzling legends, and dark tales of the Middle Ages. Since then, Michel has learned a thing or two about mining for clues and connecting the dots, mainly as an investigative journalist for newspapers and magazines. While his childhood fed his fertile imagination, his travels as a reporter, from Bosnia to Afghanistan, were crucial in shaping his view of the world.



## Pre-reading:

Ask students to keep a list as they are reading of words or phrases that are unfamiliar or not understood in context. Encourage them to first try to figure out the meanings from the text and then to consult a dictionary.

## Post-reading:

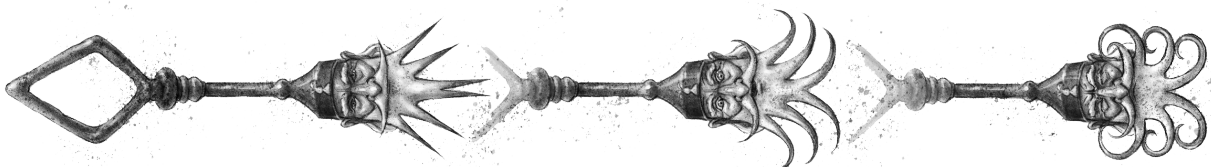
Use these questions to engage the entire class in a collaborative discussion.

1. What did you think when you saw the cover of this book? Does it invite you to open the book and start reading? What clues does the cover give to what genre the book belongs in? Did you like the interior illustrations? How did they help create and enhance the atmosphere of the story?
2. A prologue is often used to give background information and/or to grab readers' attention with the opening scene. Did this author do a good job with his prologue? Did it pique your interest and make you want to keep reading?
3. Once the story began, what components did the author employ that kept you most involved in the story? Was it the way he structured the plot, the magical setting that Archibald landed in, or the way the characters interact with one another?
4. Archibald's name is in the title, but how does the author indicate in other ways that Archibald is the main character in the book? How did you feel about him at the beginning of the story? Name all the ways you might find Archibald irritating if he were your brother or friend. Do you think the author did a good job of turning Archibald into a more sympathetic character by the end of the book? In what ways did Archibald grow and change throughout the story?





5. Name the villains in the story. Are they all adults? Why is it important to have "bad guy" characters and not just fill a story with all happy people? Can you name some memorable villains from other books you've read? Why do readers sometimes admire villains?
6. Discuss the plot and sub-plots of this book. If the main plot might be most simply described as: "Archibald discovers a magic globe that transports him to an alternate world," what are some of the sub-plots? How do they connect to the main plot? Did you think there were too many sub-plots? Which story lines didn't matter to you? Which ones did matter?
7. The Orbatrum is at the center of the action in the story. In what ways does the author use it as a writing device? Can you think of other books where a scientific gadget or magical object central to the plot? What do those books have in common with this one? What would you do if you were to obtain a magic item that could transport you to another place? Where would you like to go, or when?
8. Worldbuilding is the process of constructing an imaginary world in literature, films, games, and comics. What did you think about Lemurea, the world this author has created in the book? In what ways is Lemurea similar to Archibald's home, and in what ways is it different? What are some of the more interesting facets of life in Lemurea? Can you name some other imaginary worlds you have enjoyed reading about, gaming in, or watching?
9. What are some of the magical elements in Lemurea that you enjoyed reading about? Did the witches have some attributes that you admire? What can you imagine doing if you possessed their magical golems?
10. Discuss the two main settings of the story. Was the plot harder to follow because there was action taking place in two places? Or did that just make the book more interesting? Which setting do you think has more effect on what is happening to the characters in that setting? Give an example.
11. Can you remember some of the words and phrases that are reflective of medieval or mythological life? Did the author choose these words on purpose, to reinforce the setting or plot? How many of these were you familiar with and how many were new to you?
12. When Faeryday is talking to Archibald about witch hunts, she says: "Thousands of women across Europe were hunted down just because they were different..." and "their only crime was to be too caring and way too smart..." From what you know from history and this book, is that a fair statement? What are your personal feelings about that? Does it make you angry? Who would consider smart women to be a threat? Does Archibald feel that way?
13. Were you surprised by the ending of the book? Why did the author choose to end the book with a cliffhanger? Can you guess anything about the next book in the series? Do you want to read it?





## Small group discussion questions

Break students into three small groups, assign each a question, ask them to discuss and then report back to the class on their discussion.

1. Part of the book's descriptive information says: "At the core of this thrilling, history-rich novel...are heartfelt lessons in friendship, tolerance, and the true meaning of courage." Would you agree that these are three of the book's main themes? How are each of these themes supported by plot, setting and character? Can you suggest some other themes found in the book?
2. Archibald's sister Hailee is a second central character, with her own journey and adventures throughout the book. What is her motivation for trying to find Archibald? Would you do the same for a sibling or friend? Is her quest as compelling as his? Have you read other books with both a boy and a girl as primary characters?
3. What kind of relationship do Hailee and Archibald seem to have with their parents? Why doesn't Hailee tell her dad that the light that took Archibald came from the globe? Would you have told him? How is the theme of "family" depicted in other ways in the book? How is your family alike or dissimilar to Archibald's? Would you search for your sibling or cousin?



## Activities

### English Language Arts:

#### Opinions Wanted

*In an opinion essay: state your opinion about something, share some pertinent arguments and reasonings, and support your point of view with reasons and information.*

Ask students to choose one of these statements from the book and write an opinion essay supporting or opposing it:

- "Remember; the unknown is always scarier than what you can see and understand."
- "We are all teachers...we all have things to learn from one another. The key to learning lies in observing, listening, and sharing."
- "We all have it in us to be better; we just need a little push."
- "Sometimes things are right in front of your nose and for some reason, you're just blind to them."
- "... men will never change. They'll continue to ravage the planet through wars, pollution, and greed, triggering one disaster after another. I have come to the conclusion that the human species is not worth saving..."



## What a Character!

*In a character analysis: evaluate and draw conclusions about a character's traits and their contributions to theme, setting and plot.*

Ask students to complete a character analysis. Some questions they could consider: Who was your favorite character and why? Do you identify with one character more than the others? What are some of their admirable qualities? What about their undesirable qualities? Share an example of a scene from the book where your favorite character contributes to a big event or undergoes a physical or emotional transformation.

## On the Scene

Ask students to choose a chapter or scene from the book and use one of the following to highlight it:

- Rewrite it as a script for stage and screen. Outline the scene, provide a list of characters in the scene; include dialogue for each; and use stage directions. (Research "the structure of a scene" to find the proper format.)
- Write a newspaper article reporting the events of the scene.
- Compose questions and answers for a podcast interview with one of the characters. Or, conduct and record an actual interview using your questions and asking a classmate to pose as a character from the scene.

## Vocab in Action

Ask students to consult their lists of unfamiliar vocabulary words or phrases from the book. After confirming the definitions for all, use each of them in a sentence.

## Wrap it Up

*A synopsis is a brief summary of a book's plot.*

Have students write a synopsis of what they think the sequel to this book could be: major plot points, characters, setting and themes.

## Art Extensions:

### Get Graphic

Have students think about the descriptive language the author uses to "draw a picture" of the characters in the reader's mind. Use these words as inspiration to sketch a few of the characters: Bartholomeo, a Marodor, Paws, one or more of the witches, or Archibald himself.

### Dream Devices

Have students design their own "outlandish invention" like the Orb. They can draw, paint or sketch a diagram of it, labelling the parts that make it work. They could also construct, build, sculpt, or collage a prototype.

### Creature Feature

Ask students to consult their vocabulary list and the book to compose a Bestiary depicting the monsters named in the book (for example: gargoyles, basilisks, dragons, griffons).

### Runic Relic

Have students create a poster that would hang in a travel office or be for sale at a souvenir shop in Lemurea depicting the runes used in Lemurea, and their meanings.



## History Extensions:

Ask students to choose one or more of the topics below, conduct research to learn more about it, and then write a three-page report sharing information they've learned about it.

### Leonardo da Vinci's Inventions

Leonardo da Vinci is the creator of Archibald's globe! Share some general biographical details about him and then choose six of his inventions and write a paragraph about each of them.

### Monastic Sign Language

Faerydae shows Archibald some of the sign language the witches use; it was borrowed from monks. Explore how and why monks use sign language, when the practice was started, and which monastic communities use it. Was sign language used by others in medieval times?

### Historical Witch Hunts

In Lemurea, the witches are safe from witch hunts! How and why has our society hunted witches throughout history? Which cultures have participated? Is it still happening today?

### The *Malleus Maleficarum*

Mr. Heinrich bought a copy of this book from Mr. Doyle. Find out more about it! When was it written? Who is the author or authors? What does the book have to say about witchcraft?

### Trompe l'oeil

Archibald uses this style of art to camouflage the boats on their journey to see the Queen. Explore this art technique that creates an optical illusion. Who invented it? Where is it used? What are some famous examples?

### The phrase "here be dragons"

Mr. Hickinbottom tells Hailee about this phrase, found on ancient maps to identify unknown territories. Find out more about the history and usage of this phrase, and other dragons that were used on maps. Was it started in medieval times? Were there any creatures besides dragons used on maps? Are there other ways the phrase is used?

