

# Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for The Voyage of the Dawn Treader by C.S. Lewis

## Book Information

C.S. Lewis, The Voyage of the Dawn Treader  
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King Caspian and his crew sail through magic waters to the World's End. Book #3

**Topics:** Fantasy/Imagination, Misc./Other; Series, Chronicles of Narnia

## Main Characters

Aslan the great lion who saved Narnia  
Caspian the brave king of Narnia  
Coriakin the magician on the Island of the Voices  
Edmund Pevensie one of Eustace's cousins, who has been to Narnia  
Eustace Clarence Scrubb Edmund and Lucy's unlikable cousin  
Lord Argoz, Lord Mavramorn, Lord Revilian the lost lords found under a sleeping spell  
Lord Bern the lost lord found on the Lone Islands  
Lord Octesian the lost lord thought to have turned into a dragon  
Lord Restimar the lord believed to have been turned into a golden statue in Deathwater  
Lord Rhoop the lost lord found on the Dark Island  
Lucy Pevensie one of Eustace's cousins, who has been to Narnia  
Ramandu the old man who is a retired star  
Reepicheep a mouse who is able to talk and fight like a human

## Vocabulary

**cordial** a stimulant used to revive  
**coronation** the act or ceremony of crowning a king  
**poop** the stern section of the superstructure of a ship

**port** the left-hand side of a ship to a person facing forward

**starboard** the right-hand side of a ship to a person facing forward

**teetotaler** a person who does not drink alcohol

## Synopsis

The story begins at the home of Eustace Clarence Scrubb, an unlikable young boy. He is unhappy about the prospect of his two cousins, Lucy and Edmund, coming to visit. They are to stay at his home while their parents are in America. Soon, Lucy and Edmund are talking about their previous adventures in Narnia, a magical land which they had entered through a wardrobe. While Eustace is being particularly nasty, the three children are swept into a picture in Lucy's room.

The children find themselves floating in a great sea but are soon rescued by Caspian, the king of Narnia and the crew of the ship, "Dawn Treader." Lucy and Edmund are pleased to see their friend Caspian, but Eustace continues to annoy the entire crew. King Caspian is on a mission to find several lords who have not returned to Narnia from their adventures. The boat lands on the Lone Islands, where most of the crew and passengers are sold into slavery. Caspian is bought by Lord Bern, one of the lords for whom he was searching. Together, they take control of the Lone Islands and return the islands to the authority of Narnia.

The passengers and crew of the "Dawn Treader" set sail to continue their journey but, after a dangerous voyage, they come upon an inviting island. Having gone many days with limited rations of food and water, everyone is pleased to find such a wonderful place. As everyone else bands together to work, Eustace sneaks off into the island and comes upon a dragon. The dragon dies, however, and Eustace enters its lair out of curiosity. He falls asleep on piles of treasure and awakens as a dragon himself. He is very lonely without the company of his cousins, so he flies down to shore. At first, everyone is frightened; then they realize the dragon is Eustace because it is crying. The next night Aslan, the great

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lion, helps Eustace. Aslan rips the dragon skin from Eustace and Eustace returns to normal.

Back at sea, the crew battles with a Sea Serpent. The Serpent attempts to crush their boat, but Reepicheep, the talking mouse, persuades everyone to stop fighting it and push it off the ship. They succeed in their effort, and the Sea Serpent is left bewildered. Soon, they come to another island where they find a lake with a golden statue at the bottom of it. As Edmund's shoe is turned to gold by a lapping wave, he quickly realizes that the water in the lake turns everything to gold. Reepicheep names the island Deathwater, and the "Dawn Treader" makes a hasty departure.

The crew next lands on the Island of the Voices. Here they meet the Duffers, a group of creatures who have been made invisible. Lucy helps them break the magical spell and finds the magician, Coriakin, of whom the Duffers are so frightened. The kindly Coriakin explains that he turned the Duffers into Monopods because they would not follow instructions directed for their own benefit. Before the crew leaves the island, Coriakin helps them by creating a map using magic.

The crew then journeys to the Dark Island. Here, in utter darkness, they hear a voice begging for help. They pull the man into the boat and find it is Lord Rhoop, one of the lords Caspian is in search of. Lord Rhoop begs them to turn the boat around, warning them that this island is where all dreams come true. At first the crew is enticed by this promise, then they realize not all dreams are pleasant. Just as some of their nightmares begin, Aslan guides them to the light.

On the last island, the crew finds a banquet of fine food and three men who appear to have been sleeping for many years. A beautiful young woman explains that these three lords were placed under a sleeping spell when one touched the Knife of Stone. Soon, an old man comes forth and explains that to revive the men, the crew must travel to the World's End. This man, Ramandu, tells the crew that he is a retired star and that he can give Lord Rhoop the rest

he seeks while they go on their mission.

Very soon after they begin their last voyage, the crew notices the sea is much different. It is very calm, and the water is drinkable. They discuss the possibilities that lie before them. They question if their world is round or flat and what will happen to them when they reach its edge. Caspian informs the crew that his return to Narnia is uncertain because he plans to accompany Reepicheep to the World's End. After much debate, however, they finally convince Caspian that he has a responsibility to his people in Narnia. Reepicheep sails away in his coracle and vanishes. Lucy, Edmund, and Eustace wade in the water and soon get to dry land. There they speak with Aslan, who tells Lucy and Edmund they are too old to ever return to Narnia, but they will see him again. Next, Aslan opens a door in the sky, and they return to their own world.

### Open-Ended Questions

Use these open-ended questions as the basis for class discussions, student presentations, or extended writing assignments.

#### Initial Understanding

What does the gold arm ring mean to Eustace?

*At first, Eustace admires the gold arm ring. He places it on his arm and is prepared to take it when he turns into a dragon. This shows his focus on wealth and social status. When he becomes a dragon, however, the ring cuts into his arm terribly. The other passengers try desperately to get the ring off his arm to no avail. When Eustace becomes a boy again, he slips the ring off and offers it to anyone who wishes to have it. From this we see Eustace change from being greedy to being unconcerned with material gain.*

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## Literary Analysis

Choose a single scene in the book. Describe the emotions that the scene creates in you.

*Since this book contains many interesting scenes, students may have a variety of answers. Eustace turning into a dragon might make them first feel horror, then pity and sadness. The encounter with the magician might initially create fear, then relief and humor.*

## Inferential Comprehension

By the end of the book, how does Eustace feel about his shipmates? How do you know?

*In the beginning of the book, Eustace is intolerant of his fellow passengers. He finds many ways to criticize them and make them angry. After his experience as a dragon, Eustace seems to realize he would be lonely without his cousins and shipmates. He becomes very helpful in gathering food for them. He also shows his first signs of bravery and selflessness when he tries to kill the Sea Serpent.*

## Constructing Meaning

Which character do you relate to most and why?

*Students will have a variety of answers. Some may relate to Edmund and Caspian, as they are brave and the protectors of the others. Some may relate to Lucy, as she is curious and wishes to know what other people think of her. They may also relate to Lucy because she wishes to use a spell to make her even prettier. Some students may relate to Eustace because he begins as an unlikable boy, but becomes a good friend by the end of the novel.*

## Teachable Skills

**Recognizing Setting** Caspian and his crew take quite a journey through the magic waters near Narnia. Have your students create a map that details the route of the "Dawn Treader." The map should include Narnia, the Dark Island, the Lone Islands, the Island of the Voices, and the World's End.

**Comparing and Contrasting** Caspian and his fellow explorers bravely embark on an exciting but dangerous voyage in uncharted regions. Ask students to choose a famous explorer. Have them consult an encyclopedia for information. Ask them to list five similarities and five differences between their chosen explorer and Caspian and his crew.

**Understanding Sequence** Ask students to create the first chapter in their own sequel to this book. Be sure the sequel is woven into the end of this novel. Then, ask your students to compare their chapters in small groups. Have them discuss the similarities and differences among their work.

**Responding to Literature** Discuss the beginning of the book with your class. Focus on the character of Eustace. Ask the students if they can relate to how Eustace may have felt on the ship. Ask if they have ever acted inappropriately because they felt left out of a larger group. Discuss how Eustace was disagreeable at the start of the novel, yet by the end he was a good friend. Ask the students to write a page explaining how they might be a better friend to others.