

WILDERLAND LEARNING TRAILS

The Archive of the Storykeepers

One shared story - three age levels - one family roundtable

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Trail 5 • The Archive of the Storykeepers

Research • Evidence • Source Evaluation • Informational Writing • Worldbuilding

Story connection: The Archive of the Storykeepers preserves charts, discoveries, maps, histories and disputed knowledge. It is an ideal frame for teaching the difference between observation, evidence, inference, uncertainty and invention.

TRAIL 5 • THE ARCHIVE OF THE STORYKEEPERS

Upper Elementary • Grades 4-5

Learning goals

Separate direct evidence from inference.

Gather and verify information from a text or guide.

Organize information under clear headings.

Identify one unanswered question.

Student Challenge • Archive Chart

Choose a place, creature, object or event from the book that interests you.

1. Create three columns: "The book tells me," "I infer," and "I wonder." Add at least four items to each.
2. Return to the book or guide and verify at least three facts.
3. Create an Archive Chart with: Chart number, title, recorder, location, description, significance, and illustration.
4. Put a small star beside any sentence that is an inference rather than a confirmed fact.
5. Finish with one unanswered question a future Storykeeper should investigate.

Parent notes

The key skill is separating what is known from what is guessed.

Do not punish creative inference; label it.

Encourage specific details from the text or map.

TRAIL 5 • THE ARCHIVE OF THE STORYKEEPERS

Middle School • Grades 6-8

Learning goals

Form a focused research question.

Gather evidence from several sources.

Distinguish primary evidence from interpretation/background.

Paraphrase, cite and identify uncertainty.

Student Challenge • Source Detective

Investigate one question about the Wilderland using at least three sources from the StoryKeepers materials - for example, the novel, map, Vocabulary Guide, Themes Guide, or Classroom Extras.

1. Write a focused research question.
2. Create a source log: source, what it contributes, and whether it is direct evidence, interpretation or background.
3. Record at least six notes. Quote sparingly; paraphrase most information.
4. Identify one point where the sources do not fully answer the question or where interpretation is required.
5. Write a 400-600 word Archive entry with headings and a short source list.
6. Add a "Disputed / Unknown" box explaining what remains uncertain.

Parent notes

The book itself is the primary source for fictional facts; educator guides are secondary interpretations.

A good student notices when a guide interprets rather than merely reports.

Basic citation can be simple: title + chapter/page/section.

TRAIL 5 • THE ARCHIVE OF THE STORYKEEPERS

High School • Grades 9-12

Learning goals

Formulate and refine a research question.

Synthesize several sources while assessing usefulness and limitations.

Separate canon, inference, external context and speculation.

Write a sustained evidence-based informational argument.

Student Challenge • Storykeeper's Dossier

Choose a question that requires reconstruction rather than simple lookup. Examples: How did Aridite knowledge become corrupted? What evidence supports competing explanations of the Great Flood memory? What does Horatio's past reveal about the larger world beyond the Wilderland?

1. Formulate a research question narrow enough to answer in 1,000-1,500 words.
2. Use at least four sources, including the novel and at least one relevant educator resource. If appropriate, add authoritative real-world research for historical/scientific context.
3. Create an annotated source log identifying usefulness, limitation, perspective and reliability.
4. Separate confirmed fictional canon, reasonable inference, external historical/scientific context and speculation.
5. Write a formal Archive dossier with an executive summary, evidence sections, competing interpretations where relevant, conclusion, and source notes.
6. End with "What would change my mind?" - identify one missing piece of evidence that could alter your conclusion.

Family roundtable

Ask: "How do we know what we know?" Let each child describe one thing they learned and the evidence that supports it.

The story comes first. Use this trail when it makes the reading richer.