

Parent or Teacher Guide for "The Journey of Truth and Justice"

Series One of the Foul Lazy Dragons Chronicles



Illustration © 2025 Patricia Carden

"Fairy tales do not tell children that dragons exist.

Children already know that dragons exist.

Fairy tales tell children the dragons can be killed."

- G. K. Chesterton

By Thor Carden

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Adventures in Logic and Virtue
**The Foul Lazy Dragons
Chronicles**

Series One – THE JOURNEY OF TRUTH AND JUSTICE
Parent or Teacher Guide

Book I Quiver, the Brown Dragon (Fallacies of Ambiguity)
Book II Track, the Blue Dragon (Fallacies of Distraction)
Book III Cuz, the Green Dragon (Fallacies of Causality)
Book IV Slant, the Purple Dragon (Improper Use of Evidence)
Book V Primp, the Red Dragon (Fallacies of Presumption)
Book VI Slope, the Yellow Dragon (Fallacies of Scope)
Book VII Compo, the White Dragon (Faulty Generalizations)
Book VIII Perf, the Black Dragon (Assertions Contrary to Fact, & any informal fallacy)

QUICK START GUIDE:

Much of this guide is extra material that you may or may not decide to use. The core of it is the questions associated with each chapter. Start reading the first book, Quiver, the Brown Dragon, with your young reader. When you get to the end of the first chapter, open this guide to page 13 and decide which questions might be appropriate to begin your discussion together. You may want to preview the questions first.

Later, if you want to go deeper, come back to this description/table of contents and check what is available and determine what is appropriate to share with your young reader. Each child is unique. I did my best to provide too much rather than too little information. Everything is not for everyone, but everyone who wants to improve critical thinking should find something valuable here.

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Preface

(for parents and/or teachers)

PURPOSE OF THIS TEACHER'S GUIDE: This is NOT a step-by-step guide with learning goals and teaching plans. This is a reference book, so you can decide what would be most useful for your young reader. You know them best. It all depends on what academic level they are at and where you want to guide them. Informal logical fallacies are at the core of this series, so much of the guide is about them. However, there are opportunities to assign other academic work based on hooks or triggers I have placed in the stories. I will point those out and make specific suggestions.

WORLDVIEW: This teacher's guide was written from a Christian point of view. You can still use it if you have a different view, but many of the assignments and ideas will not work for you. You will have to adapt them to your views. The stories are not specifically Christian. They uphold clear thinking, courage, honesty, courtesy, and fair play, but Christianity does not have a monopoly on those virtues. **So even if you are not a Christian, you can use these stories to help your young reader develop better critical thinking skills.**

MY VISION: I hope to see my grandchildren, most of whom are grown, using these stories to teach their children, my great-grandchildren, critical thinking skills. This is all written for and to them. I hope others find them useful and enlightening, but understand that when you read this, you are listening to an old man telling stories to his great-grandchildren and trying to help his grandchildren use the stories to teach important life lessons.

INTENDED AUDIENCE: As written, I believe children will enjoy and benefit from all these stories. They stand on their own, without this teacher's guide, as a way for the children to grow their analytical skills. The target audience is middle school children, but if you read them aloud to younger children or read with them, I'm sure they will learn to analyze better as well. If your reader is older, but they still like fantasy, as I did and do, the stories might work for them as well. Another idea is to have your high school children use this guide to teach your younger children. That way, they both learn.

INSPIRATION FOR STORIES: These stories were first written twenty to thirty years ago as imitations of one aspect of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. The author, Lewis Carroll, was a mathematician and logician. The characters in his books were victims of critical thinking failures of one kind or another. The characters in these stories I wrote are also victims of poor thinking skills. I added an enhancement of my own. The protagonists in the books are successful when they use their critical thinking skills to expose lies. I hoped that if I organized it so that certain categories of logical fallacies were used together, the young readers would learn through repetition how to refute them.

STORIES' SUCCESS: I read the stories to my grandchildren, and it worked! I first knew this when my daughter reported that her son pointed out a logical fallacy by name on a television show they were watching. It wasn't a technical name like Non Sequitur or even a common name like Red Herring. He called it a Blue Dragon lie. It doesn't matter what someone labels a fallacy. If they can recognize and refute it, that is all that is needed.

STORIES' FUTURE: Soon, I will have great-grandchildren of middle school age. I may or may not be there to explain it to them, so I'm writing this teacher's and parents' guide so someone else might be able to help the children understand better thinking skills. I believe the stories will be helpful in that regard, even if they are just read for fun, without a teacher or parent. But I also believe the stories are an opportunity to teach even deeper aspects of logic and other academic topics, if that is the best thing for the young reader.

FUTURE PROJECT: Now that I have great-grandchildren who will soon be entering middle school, I am expanding the project to include formal fallacies as well as informal fallacies. As of this moment, I have those stories outlined, and the first is almost written. However, formal fallacies and informal fallacies are as different from each other as arithmetic is different from calculus. The additional five planned books are not necessary for the usefulness of this first series. As I write this, it is May 2025. I hope to have the first eight books (**The Journey of Truth and Justice**) and this teacher's guide published by the Spring of 2026. I plan to have the last five books (**Wisdom's Quest**) ready in the Spring of 2027.

MY EXPERIENCE: My experience as a teacher in a homeschool tutoring center made me realize that these stories can be used as a basis for teaching a lot more in-depth. Using my experience as an instructional designer for the training department of an international corporation, I have designed these materials in this book to help if you want to use these stories in that way.

REQUIREMENTS: It is not necessary to use the extra materials for young readers to begin to grasp the rudiments of logic. Each dragon tells a specific kind of lie. The Brown Dragon, Quiver, uses fallacies of ambiguity to cast her spells and put people under a curse that controls them. The Blue Dragon, Track, uses fallacies of distraction to cast his spells and unleash his curse. As the stories progress, the dragons are defeated by a team of children and talking animals by exposing the nature of their logical fallacies. The young reader will begin to comprehend these various families of fallacies as they continue through the series of adventures.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: I had originally intended to include a list of other resources here. When I first started working on these books, I could find almost nothing that taught critical thinking skills to children. Apparently, I was not the only one who noticed this void. There are now many books and websites that purport to teach critical thinking for children. I found a few I thought were very good. However, as I began to build my list of resources, I realized two things. First of all, websites have a tendency to vanish and change places frequently, and books go out of print or better ones are created all the time. Second, I have no idea what would be best for your young reader. I only know what I like best, and you are already reading it. I have no pretensions to believe this is the best for every situation and child. I just know it is the best I can do. I hope you find it useful.

YOU ARE NEEDED: Each child is different, of course, so how in-depth you go, if at all, will certainly be a judgment call on your part. I have tried to include too much, rather than too little, extra help in this guide. Very few people will find a use for it all, I think. It is my hope and prayer that these books will bless many families by helping children learn to think more clearly and communicate their thoughts more articulately.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A little bit about me, so you might be able to more easily discern when I probably know what I'm talking about, and when I might be just blowing noisy air.

I am not a professional logician. Although I did take some logic, philosophy, and apologetics classes in college, my degrees are in Human Resources Management from Trevecca University and Religion from Liberty University. However, debate and logic have been lifelong hobbies. When I was a child, my father, a lawyer, would invite people with widely divergent world views over to the house to sit in our living room and argue. I was allowed to sit in if I wanted to. Looking back on it, I am amazed at the amount of respect those people showed me as I offered my childish point of view. I didn't even know I was being trained in logical discourse. I was just having fun.

My parents were not religious. When I became a Christian, I tried out my apologetics on my father. He would patiently explain any logical flaws in my arguments, or if there were none, he would simply remain unconvinced. Logic is a reliable thought process, not the truth. It begins with the facts that are accepted and is only as valid as the truth of those facts. My father and I differed on what was factual, but again, as a young man, he trained me further in logical thinking.

I can still vividly remember my first introduction to a logical fallacy. I was the youngest of six children. Even though my parents were not religious, we were sometimes sent to Vacation Bible School in the summer, probably just because my mother needed a break. When I was in the first, second, or third grade (I know from where we were living at the time), I came home from VBS singing, "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." My mother explained to me that this was circular reasoning. Jesus and the Bible could not prove each other.

As an adult, I learned Jesus and the Bible *do* prove each other, but not in a circular way. It is not a logical fallacy, even though it sounds like one at first glance. The valid chain of reasoning goes something like this: The Bible, as a widely accepted history book, proves the existence of Jesus. The central facts of His life as described in the Bible are confirmed by secular history. His miracles, particularly His resurrection from the dead, demonstrate His credibility and divine nature. By His use of the Old Testament and the authority He conferred on the Apostles, He establishes the entire Bible as the Word of God.

As a child, I was homeschooled through the third grade, went to public school until the sixth grade, and finished up in Catholic schools, which was odd since both my parents and I were not Believers. I have attended both secular and Christian universities. However, both my bachelor's and master's are from Christian universities. Similarly, all of my children attended public and Christian schools and were homeschooled for a while. This certainly gives me a wider perspective than most, but it is up to you to decide whether it is a valuable perspective.

I learned from Lewis Carroll that children can identify illogical discourse. Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass demonstrate that. I learned from L. Frank Baum that children can enjoy puns and word play. His Oz books prove that. I have no notion that children will learn logical terminology from these books, but I do think they will learn to identify and refute illogical arguments.

LEARNING THEORY

Before retiring, I worked or volunteered in various aspects of education for decades. This is an essay about what I think I might have learned about learning.

I do not have a cohesive theory of learning, but I do have some stray ideas of my own that inform how I developed these materials. What you most need to know is that when you read the dragon stories, you are listening to a great-grandfather teach his great-grandchildren logical thinking skills. When you read this teacher's guide, you are listening to a grandfather showing his grandchildren how to teach their children critical thinking skills. I have no fortune to leave them. I believe this is more valuable than a fortune. For better or worse, this is my legacy to them.

I have worked in education most of my adult life, some professionally, but mostly as a volunteer. Almost a decade was in the training department of an international corporation. I developed computer-based training, as well as designing and delivering classroom training. About three years of my working life were in a tutoring center for Homeschoolers. I was a teacher and administrator. Most of my working life, I was a computer programmer or analyst, but I was almost always involved in teaching of some kind. Sunday School teacher, math tutor at a homeless shelter, or developing and administering Bible lessons for inmates in jails and prisons. I took a few semesters of education courses in various colleges. Summary is: I'm no great authority, but neither am I a novice.

Children are learning machines. They learn whatever they want to know easily. Getting their attention is difficult. They are not capable of making wise decisions about what they want to know. The adults around them must provide them with guidance in this area.

Are there children with "learning difficulties"? I don't see the value in pigeonholing some children by classifying them with this or that "learning difficulty." Each child is unique and must be respected as an individual. Children learn a great deal, as all humans do, but if the adults around them are not careful, they might learn a bunch of useless noise. Much of our education system turns out people on an assembly line. Anybody too far astray from "normal" or "average" gets shunted off to limbo. If this describes what is happening to your child, I highly recommend homeschooling.

I could have been one of these in limbo, except my parents tended very carefully to my education. My mind does not work anywhere close to "normal," but my parents took the time and effort to make sure I learned not only facts, but more importantly, *how to think well*. Thinking well is the key to further learning. We live in an age of information explosion, but which information is useful and correct, and in what context? Circumstances constantly change. You cannot memorize the answers in an age such as ours. You must learn how to be a lifelong learner and thinker.

I believe with all of my heart and mind that these books are a good foundation for that kind of life.

TEACHER'S GUIDE INTRODUCTION

The Journey of Truth and Justice

As I said in the preface, how deep you want to go is dependent on you and what impact you want this to have on your young reader. Perhaps just reading the story is right for your reader. Maybe just reading it together is enough. Or perhaps you could add to it by using the discussion questions provided for each chapter. You could read all the material provided here to enable you to discuss things better, or you could read it together. This entire teacher's guide is meant only to be a tool for your use, according to how you think it is best to use it. The stories stand on their own without this extra material. The point is that this is for you to use as you see fit.

There is a theme running through all these stories of having out-of-place plants, animals, and technology as triggers for research assignments. The young reader will learn not to trust fiction as a source of factual information. Also, they will learn more about our world and culture by looking deeper into these topics.

In section one, there is a subsection for each book and within that, for each chapter in the book. In section two, there are reference guides. There is an alphabetical list of all fallacies used in the series, an alphabetical list of all characters that appear in the series, and a subsection for each that goes into some detail regarding the geography, zoology, botany, and technology of Low Check. Finally, there is an alphabetical listing of figures of speech mentioned in this guide.

The books are organized into two main groups. The first eight are about informal fallacies. This teacher's guide is about those. The last five will be about formal fallacies, and a teacher's guide of their own is planned. I chose to organize the fallacies in the way I thought would be easiest for children to assimilate.

Some value can be gained from any individual book, but they are most effective all read in order.

I hope to have another series of books, Wisdom's Quest, and a companion Teacher's Guide available by Spring of 2027.

Series Two – WISDOM'S QUEST (Formal Fallacies)

Book IX Deni, the Silver Dragon (Denying the Antecedent)

Book X Con, the Pink Dragon (Affirming the Consequent)

Book XI Dis, the Golden Dragon (Undistributed Middle)

Book XII Cept, the Crystal Dragon (Any Formal Fallacies)

Book XIII Mal, the Orange Dragon (Any Fallacies, Informal or Formal)

**In this teacher's guide, we will only be covering
the first series of eight books:**

"The Journey of Truth and Justice."

TEACHER'S GUIDE SECTION ONE

Book Notes on The Foul Lazy Dragons Chronicles:

EACH BOOK (in the Journey of Truth and Justice Series)

There is a section for each book. I begin with an overview of the fallacies generally used by that color dragon. (One dragon per book.) Then I have a subsection for each chapter in that book. Following these, I go more in-depth to explain the fallacies used by that dragon and provide examples. Some versions of the dragon book concludes with an exercise I think might be fun and educational. They are not closely related to the stories and can be easily skipped.

EACH CHAPTER

For each chapter, I provide a list of possible discussion questions. I start with a summary question. This is where you discover this guide is designed primarily for homeschool families, although anyone can use it. The first time through, the parent will read the book with or in tandem with their child. However, as other children in the family mature and meet the dragons, the parent only needs a little reminder, so they don't have to read the stories multiple times, once for each child as they mature, they can reference the summaries of each chapter.

The second question in each chapter is usually about the logical fallacies found in that chapter. It is a question that encourages analysis of some fallacies used in the chapter. However, in addition to the dragons and their minions, others sometimes use fallacies, especially one of the dragon hunters named Hai. My purpose in having him do that is to help the young reader to realize that anyone can stumble into a fallacy. It is not evil unless it is used to intentionally deceive. Usually, it is just a sign of unclear thinking and is no worse than not knowing anything else we don't know. No one can know everything, and no one is right all the time.

Sometimes, I include ideas for extra assignments for the children to research other academic areas based on triggers within the story. Of course, these are all optional based on the academic level of the child and your teaching and learning goals.

In most books, I pick out a chapter or two to look in depth at the figures of speech used in that chapter. You may want to have a discussion with your young reader about these, or give them an assignment to find them on their own and use my notes as a sort of answer key. But my answers are not necessarily complete. Sometimes it is a matter of opinion which figure of speech is used, or even if it is a figure of speech.

I usually include some "Just for Fun" questions to trigger discussions with your young readers about that chapter.

Some of the later questions encourage the young reader to think ahead to what might happen next. This builds imagination and planning skills.

For each question, I include comments. Sometimes it is *the* answer or *an* answer. Sometimes it is an idea for further research. Sometimes it is information about things that happen later in the stories. If your young reader can't stand to wait to see what happens, you might share these with them. My intention is that you can more successfully guide their thinking as the mysteries in the stories are presented and later solved.

Book I Quiver, the Brown Dragon

Summary

Two children, Trudy and Jay, are magically transferred to the world of Low Check. They meet the Magician Key, who splits into three animals to help them on their way as they go to confront the Brown Dragon. The dragon breathes fire on the swamp water to create fog to prevent them from finding her. They meet a local man who takes them to Quiver Town. There, they unravel the Brown Dragon's deception, causing her soldiers to shrink to almost nothing, and the local people stomp on the soldiers. The next day, the dragon slayers go to confront the dragon, only to discover that somehow, by what they did in Quiver Town, she has already been defeated. Rusty Gold, the local man who was helping them, sets the lair on fire.

General Notes on the Brown Dragon Story

The Brown dragon, Quiver, uses fallacies of ambiguity such as amphiboly and equivocation to cast her spells and invoke her curse. Equivocation is when a word with multiple possible meanings is used in a way that does not make it clear which meaning is the intended one. An amphiboly is when the grammatical structure of a sentence makes it possible to understand the statement in more than one way. People talk this way all the time. We rely on context to make our meaning clear. These ambiguities only become a fallacy when they are used to make an invalid argument or to deceive.

Quiver rules over a swamp, named Am Big U Es Swamp (i.e. Ambiguous Swamp). Her full name is E. Quiver Kay Shun (i.e. equivocation). She is called Quiver. You may want to make learning this logical terminology a requirement. I'm content to wait until they learn logic in high school or college and are delighted to discover they already know a lot about it. You don't have to remember the name of a fallacy to show it is wrong. You just have to recognize what it is and offer the appropriate example to demonstrate that it is invalid. In section two of this guide is an alphabetical list of all the fallacies used in this series of stories.

As mentioned above, almost all human communication outside of a legal contract or a scientific article is ambiguous in some way. Even then, it is only unambiguous among trained scholars because the words they use have well-known, unambiguous definitions. An assignment might be to look for the use of ambiguity in other readings your young readers do, in the news, in entertainment, or in everyday conversation. Ambiguity doesn't mean someone is lying. It would be tedious to always have to provide definitions with everything we say. We rely on context to remove the ambiguity or at least mitigate it.

I have placed examples of Brown Dragon Fallacies at the end of the Teacher's Guide section for this book.

Chapter 1 "The Magic Key" - Questions

All questions will seldom be appropriate for all young readers. Please choose the ones that will most likely help them stay interested and will dovetail best with your teaching goals.

1. What happened in Chapter 1 "The Magic Key"?

Two children, Trudy and Jay, are magically transferred by a magic key to the world of Low Check, where they meet a Magician named Key and his wife, Locks. They learn that the land of Low Check is enslaved by a clan of evil dragons called the Fay Lacy dragons. After reading a prophecy scroll that names them as warriors destined to fight the dragons, they agree to help the Magician Key. Key has to break himself into parts to go with them. As the chapter ends, Locks is in the midst of an incantation which Trudy and Jay do not understand.

2. One of the things the Magician Key says to the children is "Don't be frightened." Does this remind you of anything?

This is reminiscent of all the dozens of times angels in the Bible say something like, "Fear not" to those who are receiving their message. This might be a hook to have your young reader find those passages and compare them. Just put "fear not" and/or "don't be afraid" in a Bible search engine, or look them up in an exhaustive concordance.

3. Trudy and Jay regard their being grounded because they are behind in their schoolwork as unfair or unjustified. Do you think they are right?

This might be a good moment to talk with your young reader about the difference between punishment as retribution and punishment as discipline. The discipline here was designed to help Trudy and Jay catch up on their studies by giving them more study time and less entertainment time. It wasn't their fault. When the family moved from one house to another, it caused them to fall a little behind. (See Hebrews 12:5-11) God disciplines those He loves. So do good parents.

4. The Magician Key reads from a "prophecy scroll." Do such things actually exist?

Here, the young reader may need to suspend disbelief and learn the difference between "prophecy" as a foreshadowing storytelling device in fiction and the real thing found in the Bible.

5. What did Trudy mean when telling their real given names? She says, "Our parents gave us weird names as a sort of a first birthday present?"

This is an example of an equivocation. Trudy means her actual day of birth, not the first anniversary of her birth. Birthday can mean either, depending on context. It might be a good moment to point out that not all ambiguities are meant to be deceptive. Also, perhaps talking about people's names in the Bible might be appropriate at this point. Many of the names have a specific meaning in the original language. Some people have their names changed by God. For instance, Abram to Abraham, and Saul to Paul. (See also Revelation 2:17)

6. When the Magician Key says, "The stars say the time is now," what does he mean?

Here might be a good place to point out to your young reader the difference between astrology and using stars and other heavenly bodies' movements to measure time. (See Genesis 1:14 and Psalms 104:19.)

7. What characters did we meet in Chapter 1? Which is your favorite so far? Why?

We meet Trudy, Jay, the Magician Key, and his wife, Locks. Mentioned but not met are the parents of Trudy and Jay, Patricius, an apprentice of Key, and some pirates. Only Trudy and Jay will appear in the remainder of the books. Key breaks into parts and becomes three characters, which also persist through all the books.

8. What did we learn about Trudy and Jay's parents in this chapter?

They care enough about their children to discipline them, and the children love their parents enough to want to get back to them as soon as possible.

9. How would you feel, and what would you think, if you were suddenly in a different place?

I love questions with no wrong answers that encourage children to imagine themselves in different circumstances.

10. The next chapter is titled "Into the Swamp." What do you think is going to happen?

Stopping mid-story to discuss how it will continue can be an exercise in creativity or an exercise to sharpen analytical skills by noticing narrative patterns, foreshadowing, and thematic directions. It builds patience by not rushing to a conclusion. Most importantly, it enhances enjoyment by making reading the story a social experience instead of a solitary one. I ask this question or one similar to it at the end of every chapter's list of possible questions. I will paste this explanation note into it occasionally as a reminder for you.

11. Can you find a Figure of Speech in Chapter 1, "The Magic Key"?

Age and grade level optional: You may want to have them identify figures of speech in the story. The reason I include this feature is that many figures of speech are logical fallacies in form, but are benign because they are not meant to obscure the truth, but to enhance enjoyment. The last thing any of us wants is to unleash children to point out every ambiguity the adults around them utter. This exercise will help them understand the importance of context and motive when identifying fallacies.

Here are the Figures of Speech I found in Chapter 1, "The Magic Key."

"Think fast!" - Jay wasn't asking her to actually think about anything. Thinking takes time. It is an **idiom** telling her to react swiftly as a way to convince her he was actually throwing the key.

"Cut it out" - Trudy isn't asking Jay to cut something. She used the **idiom** to suggest he stop being annoying.

"Don't you ever think of anything but your stomach?" - This is **hyperbole**. No one actually thinks about only one thing.

"Oh, my!" - This phrase literally has no meaning. It is a **euphemism** used to express surprise or realization. There is another word not included but only implied, "God," but some people (like me) consider using this phrase as cussing, so they leave out "God," making it a euphemism.

"Throw your words back in your face" - Jay uses this **idiom** to describe Trudy's habit of repeating exactly what someone says. Words are not actually thrown; they are spoken or shouted, or written.

"The City of Reason" - This **metaphor** represents a place where logic and rationality prevail.

"The Land of Low Check" - This is a **play on the words** "Low Check," which sounds sort of like the word "Logic," the previous name of the land. It also refers to the sign preventing tall people from entering. I suppose that makes it a **pun**.

"Their body and legs are about the size of an elephant's" - This **simile** compares the size of the dragons to elephants to give a clear picture of their enormity.

"The stars say the time is now" - This **personification** gives human-like, or even god-like, qualities to stars, suggesting they can communicate or predict events.

Chapter 2 "Into the Swamp" - Questions

1. What happened in Chapter 2 "Into the Swamp"?

The room they are in, Locks and Key, all vanish, and Trudy and Jay are suddenly standing next to a gate with three talking animals: a dovekie, a monkey, and a donkey. Startled by the rush of events, they follow the animals through a gate and find they are now stuck on the other side. Unable to go back the way they came, they advance into the swamp in search of the Brown Dragon. We meet Quiver and her spy Rook, a crow, nearby in the swamp where they plot an unpleasant reception for the dragon hunters.

2. What logical fallacies can you find in Chapter 2?

At least these three:

Example	Analysis
"Banana peels and slippery limbs! Haven't you been listening?!" screeched Hai, twitching his long monkey tail.	In the next book, we will learn that using insults and demeaning language like "Haven't you been listening?!" is a distraction fallacy.
"Very well," said Hai, jumping to the ground from Lug's back. "If you want to stop and discuss my plans, that is fine. I would think that you would just trust me."	In the next book, we will learn that using emotional manipulation like this is a kind of distraction fallacy.
"Perhaps we don't need weapons for the dragon," agreed Jay. He looked at the swamp, saying, "Looks like to me there might be something else in this Am Big You Es Marsh that is dangerous." "Nonsense," said Hai. "We can always scamper up a tree."	Here, Hai uses a fallacy of missing the point or a red herring. We will learn about that in the next book. He just ignores the fact that he and Passie are the only ones of the group with a ready-made escape route.

3. Several plants and animals are mentioned in describing the swamp. Is it reasonable that they would all appear in the same swamp?

No, it is not reasonable. I did some research about swamps and tried to describe swamp flora and fauna in accurate terms, although different kinds of swamps were mixed indiscriminately. For instance, tupelo, willows, and mangroves do not all grow in the same kind of swamp, and yet all are found in Ambiguous Swamp. The notion here was that the young reader would research real swamp information and recognize this. This would not only give them some good knowledge about the biosphere but also teach them something about the dangers of accepting information as valid from fictional stories.

If you decide to skip the swamp research assignment described above, your young reader may need help with some of the terminology of swamps. Hammock, for instance, is a slightly elevated patch of land in a swamp, an island if you like. This might be a good time to teach them how to look up the meanings of words in a dictionary or a dictionary website. Also, reminding them not to just skip unknown words in their reading. Even if all the swamp terminology is understood, there are probably other challenging vocabulary words in this series of books that should be found in a dictionary. I selected the ones I thought would be most challenging and put them in a list above. However, that is just my opinion. Any word can be challenging if the reader has not seen it before.

4. What characters did we meet in Chapter 2? Which is your favorite so far? Why?

We met Passie Key, Luggage Key, Hai Key, Quiver, and Rook. I like them all, but that is to be expected since I created them. That might explain why God loves us in spite of our failings. He created us.

5. Many of the characters seem to have more than one name, and some have nicknames as well. What are all your names? Where did they come from? Do they have any special meaning?

In the list of characters in section two of this guide, I talk about their names and the meaning of their names for many of the main characters. This question might be a good time to introduce your young reader to some of the people who make up their ancestry, if they are known. Also, it might be a good time to talk about their arrival in this world and what it was like for the people around them at that time.

6. What do you think you would do if a person you were talking with suddenly changed into three talking animals?

I love questions with no wrong answers that encourage children to imagine themselves in different circumstances.

7. The next chapter is called "Lost in the Fog." What do you think is going to happen next?

It seems likely this is the fog Quiver was creating with her fiery breath at the end of this chapter. Stopping mid-story to discuss how it will continue can be an exercise in creativity or an exercise to sharpen analytical skills by noticing narrative patterns, foreshadowing, and thematic directions. It builds patience by not rushing to a conclusion. Most importantly, it enhances enjoyment by making reading the story a social experience instead of a solitary one. This story is a fantasy. Reality is not a limit. Anything at all could happen.

Chapter 3 "Lost in the Fog" - Questions

1. What happened in Chapter 3, Lost in the Fog?

They get lost in Quiver's fog, exposing the weaknesses in Hai's plans. They are forced to eat plants that do not taste good and flounder about for ideas of what to do next. The chapter ends with them following some mysterious sounds to an island with a sign that reads, "New Zealand Sea Snails."

The fog in the swamp is a metaphor for ambiguity. Perhaps some research or discussion of the use of figures of speech in language in general, or fiction specifically, would be appropriate.

2. What logical fallacies can you find in Chapter 3?

At least these two:

Example	Analysis
Lug came to a stop, standing in the water in front of the other three. Hai stood on his back, looking angry and impatient. "We must go on!" Hai's tail waved angrily.	Hai keeps using this argument and ones similar to it, like, "We must go on, or we must hurry. This nagging is another kind of distraction fallacy that we will learn about in the next book.
"I don't think this is such a good idea," said Hai as they finished climbing onto the rocky island. "That sign said that there are dangerous snails here."	Here, Hai appeals to their fears, which is another kind of logical fallacy we will learn about in the next book.

3. Have you ever been lost? If so, what happened? If not, how do you think you would feel and act if you were lost?

This might be an opportunity to get to know something about how the young reader views a real event in their life, or it might be an exercise of the imagination. It might also be a chance to talk over the difference between being lost physically, confused or overwhelmed with information, or spiritually lost. "Lost" is a word which could lead to an equivocation fallacy if not used carefully, as is any word with a wide range of sense. You may also want to talk over with them what to do should they ever become lost.

4. Have you ever been in a real swamp? If so, what was it like? If not, what do you think it would be like?

It was soggy and smelled bad. Many unpleasant odors are caused by bacteria that thrive in wet conditions. I did not like it.

This might be an opportunity to get to know something about how the young reader views a real event in their life, or it might be an exercise of the imagination.

5. What do you think is making the mysterious sounds on the island? The next chapter is called "Nonsense Island." Does that give us a hint about what they will find there? What do you think is going to happen next?

Stopping mid-story to discuss how it will continue can be a chance to practice creativity or an exercise to sharpen analytical skills by noticing narrative patterns, foreshadowing, and thematic directions. It enhances enjoyment by making reading the story a social experience instead of a solitary one. This story is a fantasy. Anything at all could happen.