

Enter the Enchanted Short Guide

Enter the Enchanted by K. A. Applegate

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.



Contents

Enter the Enchanted Short Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Overview.....	3
About the Author.....	4
Setting.....	6
Social Sensitivity.....	7
Literary Qualities.....	8
Themes and Characters.....	9
Topics for Discussion.....	12
Ideas for Reports and Papers.....	13
For Further Reference.....	14
Related Titles.....	15
Copyright Information.....	16



Overview

The situation in Everworld grows ever more complicated for April, David, Christopher, and Jalil. The greatest complication comes in the form of Galahad, a knight of King Arthur's Round Table. The problem he presents is that in Arthurian literature his character is the blending of more than one mythological figure. In Everworld, this results in his sometimes being confused in his memories, as if he were more than one person. This seems to be a clue as to what is actually happening in Everworld, but April and her companions do not have much time to think about it.

Loki is the giant, angry god of Norse mythology. In the "Everworld" series, he reappears in all his cunning and all his fury, bringing with him mayhem and destruction. He is very good at destruction. There are limits to his power, frightful though it is, and Merlin knows something about how to frustrate Loki. As if the teenagers do not have enough to worry about, dragons make their appearance and unleash some of their destructive power. Not even the great castles of Galahad can shield April and the others from the symphony of destruction sweeping through Everworld.

About the Author

Katherine Alice Applegate is simultaneously one of America's most famous authors and one of America's most mysterious.

She guards her privacy, as does her publisher, Scholastic, which has brilliantly marketed her Animorphs and Everworld series with astounding success. Applegate was already a well-established writer of books for young readers, mostly romance novels, when she proposed the Animorphs series to Scholastic, where the proposal was met with enthusiasm. She wanted to write a series of books that showed how the world might look from the perspectives of different animals; the result has been a series of fascinating novellas for readers from late elementary school to junior high school.

After moving around the United States several times, the Michigan-born writer now resides in Minneapolis. Over a hundred of her books have been published books, and she has written them at an amazing pace.

Begun in 1996, her Animorphs series numbered over forty books plus several spinoffs by 2001. Her series intended for adolescents, Everworld, begun in 1999, numbered nine volumes by the end of 2000. Sally Lodge, in Publishers Weekly, quotes Applegate, "A series writer has to develop plotting and pacing that become a well-oiled machine.

You don't have the luxury of spending a year on a book and absolutely cannot indulge in writer's block. Yet I knew I had to write in perfect language and choose just the right images, to make sure that my middle readers fell in love with the characters and returned again and again.". The two hundred letters from young readers Applegate receives per week, as well as the one hundred emails she receives per day from youngsters, attest to the success she has had in reaching her intended audience.

They love her characters.

In spite of the success of Applegate's writings, they have received scant attention in the press, perhaps because of a prevailing view that books written so quickly cannot be worth writing about, or perhaps because of the immense difficulty in keeping current with all the books Applegate publishes. In spite of the great pace at which Applegate has written her books, they tend to be of higher quality than other massmarket writings. In the Animorphs series the perspectives of characters as animals, whether fleas or birds, are artful and informative. The Everworld novels offer fine introductions to the mythologies of the world. In both series, the suspense is captivating and the characterizations are sharp but well-rounded; the books are pageturners, I-can't-go-to-bed-until-I-finish tales of adventure.

Applegate does not shy away from the tough questions about growing up and building sound, honest relationships with others. For instance, the nonseries title Sharing Sam deals with the prospect of a close friend dying and how to love in spite of the pain. In Everworld, the relationships among the principal characters are essential to the appeal

of the novels. The art of characterization is one that Applegate has mastered, and it is perhaps the most important reason her rapidly-written works stand as good literature as well as entertaining reads.



Setting

According to April, "There was magic here [Everworld]. Not magic like, 'Ah, the moonlight was magic.' Magic as in cause and effect didn't always cause or effect. The magic that negates all human knowledge, that invalidates ten thousand years of human learning." Especially disturbing to her are the variations in the effect of gravity in Everworld. "If gravity could come and go, wax and wane, then things could fly when they could not possibly fly." This exemplifies one of April's special contributions to the "Everworld" series. She insists on maintaining a firm grasp of earth-style reality, comparing it to, and highlighting Everworld's unique qualities. Everworld is, as she says, "a place apart, a place not touching reality, isolated."

In *Enter the Enchanted*, April deals with the sometimes unpleasant realities of being the only Earth girl other than Senna in Everworld. She is relieved to find herself untouched in Galahad's castle; in Loki's castle and New Tenochtitlan, she was in danger of suffering many indignities. In the lands of Galahad, courtly courtesy reigns, and women are treated with respect. It is a land of magnificent castles, broad meadows, fine forests, and happy people. Yet, disaster follows April and her companions, and there are menaces such as Loki and remote menaces such as the one that threatens to kill Everworld's gods.



Social Sensitivity

In *Enter the Enchanted*, April is in a man's world, a patriarchal society in which noblemen such as Galahad are in charge. This will not always be the case in other novels, but in *Enter the Enchanted*, it is a special concern for April, especially since events in *New Tenochtitlan*, in *Land of Loss*, have shown the depravity to which people can sink in *Everworld*. Therefore, it is only natural to be happy to find when she awakens in Galahad's castle that she has been unmolested. It is comforting to her to discover that Galahad expects women to be treated well.

Through the first three novels of *Everworld*, April has been concerned about differences between men and women and a bit uncomfortable about her own sexual feelings. She has manifested her concern by criticizing all men, accusing them all of being governed by hormones and afflicted by immaturity. In *Enter the Enchanted*, she shows that much of her problem in dealing with her male companions comes from her own confusion about what are right and wrong feelings to have. For instance, when she knocks on David's door and he opens it and is only wearing pants, April's eyes are drawn to David's chest. She resists looking at it, while trying to focus on talking with him, but her thoughts stray to "I said, don't look at his chest, it's tacky. It's the kind of thing a guy would do." If one has read *Search for Senna* and *Land of Loss*, then one knows that David is big and athletic, and his chest might reasonably attract admiring looks. Yet, April feels unready for her sexual emotions and tries to set them aside—and evidently she fails. She probably should be forgiven for this, because just as she claims that men have been raised to go to war, so she has been raised with social dogma that does not necessarily apply to real life. It is taking her time to sort through what she wants to be true, what she feels, and what should be true.

Her comment on men is a curious one, probably meant to show just how far her prejudices go. She remarks, "[Men had] been raised from birth with the understanding that the day might come when they would have to go to war." She offers this comment not as a condemnation of men, although in an offhanded way it is, but as an explanation for her own paralysis as Loki's trolls approach her. "And for me, for all women, it wasn't that way. I had never played the video games, the mock battles, never run the fantasies through my head, never channel-surfed and felt the draw to stop at every battle scene." If the readers of this passage are thoughtful ones, they will note that April's premise is fundamentally wrong. In life, America has many brave, heroic women in the military; they must have thought about going to war. Further, many women play video games. What April is doing is denying her own individual problems by saying that "all women" are just like she is. This may be at the root of her objections to David, Christopher, and Jalil—not that they suffer from congenital male stupidity, but that they have points of view that vary from what she wants them to think.



Literary Qualities

Maintaining interest in a story line that transpires over a series of novels is challenging. One good way to do it is with foreshadowing, but Applegate is faced with the challenge of dropping the tantalizing phrases of mysteries to be solved and action to come without compromising her fictional narrator, April. So, the author does this in part by having characters mention their plans or worries in vague terms, for example, Merlin shows himself to be actively involved in the contest for possession of Senna without giving away exactly what he means to do with her. That he is an enemy of Loki does not mean that he is a friend to April or to earth, although he drops hints about wanting to protect Earth.

Cryptic remarks by characters is another way to foreshadow future events and whet the audience's appetite for more adventures in Everworld. For example, Loki says, "The thousand years of the prophecy are almost done." What prophecy? The only way to find out is to continue reading.

Direct threats can also heighten tension and interest: "As we came to Everworld, we can return to the Old World [the Earth]," Loki declares. Then there is the matter of the invasion of Everworld: "Ka Anor is the god-eater, he will kill you all, one by one, and the Hetwan will exterminate all the free peoples, and that will be an end to Everworld," shouts Merlin. The prospect of a cosmic conflict involving all the quarrelsome, complex gods of Everworld against someone called a "god-eater" promises great action and thrills to come. Further, there is Merlin's declared hope to unite all of Everworld to fight Ka Anor and save Everworld. Although this sounds grand, as Loki points out, Merlin's last attempt resulted in the death of King Arthur. Merlin does not have a good track record for fighting evil. So, what is it to be? Is there to be a unified front, an invasion of the Earth, or two invasions, not only of Earth but of Everworld, too? Applegate promises excitement to come with well-placed remarks, declarations, and threats.

When April catches David with his shirt off Applegate employs literary irony (the audience of a literary work, in this case a novel, knows more about what is going on than the characters do). In the case of April in *Enter the Enchanted*, we the audience understand more about what April is talking about than she does. Her criticism of men as immature and guided by their hormones turns on her when she fails to recognize that looking at David's attractive chest is obviously not something only a guy would do, because she is in fact doing exactly that—staring at a chest. As the audience, we are aware of her feelings and reaction, even if she is not aware.



Themes and Characters

As much fun as they have been as narrators of *Search for Senna* and *Land of Loss*, David and Christopher do not seem to grow as much in those novels as April does in *Enter the Enchanted*. April O'Brien narrates *Enter the Enchanted*, and as she tells the story of the events that befall her and her companions after the dragon attack that ends *Land of Loss*, she tells of an internal personal struggle for control of herself. She engages in a fundamental reassessment of who she is and who she ought to be. This reassessment involves her view of how women should behave and be treated, as well her view of herself as either a victim waiting to be victimized, or someone who takes action to help herself.

When, near the end of *Enter the Enchanted*, April watches Loki's trolls advance on the scant fortifications defended by what is left of Galahad's followers, April says, "Soon the trolls would rush and crush and drive the men before them and pour in on us and what was I going to do, stand there and scream, 'Save me, save me' when there was no one left alive to save me?" The experiences April has endured have stripped away much of her civilized veneer, leaving the real April exposed. In *Land of Loss*, Christopher admits that he was terrified by his experiences. He had to choose to overcome his fear or perish. April, too, has had to deal with her fear, but her morally superior attitude to those around her has taken a pounding, as too often others have done her fighting for her. She must choose who she really wants to be, the victim Senna sneers at, or an activist in her own life. "I started walking," she says. "Knees knocked.

Stiff. Forcing my body to move, and then seeing, as though from far off, that movement had become automatic. Forward. Closer.

No longer even involved with the act of moving, the choice made, now could not be unmade." April makes her choice about herself. This is what the main theme is about, taking responsibility for oneself, and *Enter the Enchanted* is April's story of difficult, complex growth. Although her growth is still incomplete at the novel's end, she notes that once she has taken her first steps the choice cannot be undone.

Each of the narrators believes events in *Everworld* have been particularly tough on him or her. This is symptomatic of selfcenteredness, but it is a useful trait for each to have, because it contributes to Applegate's intention of having each novel uniquely reflect the individual narrator. April has her own special concerns, partly originating in her immersion in cultures—Viking, Aztec, and Arthurian—in which men tend to be the bosses and women stand a fair chance of being victims of violence. "I threw back the covers, a sudden, convulsive gesture," she declares. "I sighed. I still had my clothes on. A weird little outfit consisting of the clothes I'd been wearing down at the lake and the odds and ends I'd picked up from Vikings and Aztecs." This brief passage is a model of concision, of saying much with few words. It sets out her situation nicely; describing her clothes goes a good way toward describing how well-off she is.



Beyond that is the subtext of her relief in being clothed, a point that she emphasizes by later repeating it: "Things couldn't be too bad: I was in a feather bed and had my clothes on." In literature, nudity can be an expression of a character's vulnerability; having her clothes on gives April a sense of security she would not otherwise have had in a strange place. It also means that she was not molested.

April is in a castle. David tells her that it is "Galahad's castle. Or one of them. I think he has more." April soon finds herself in a contest for David: not fighting for a boyfriend, but fighting because she fears he has lost control of his mind. "He [David] was her [Senna's] puppet. She might as well have her arm inserted up his butt." When Senna asserts that she is the only person who can enable April, David, Christopher, and Jalil to return home permanently, rather than only during their sleep, April demands that Senna release control of David. That Senna concedes to April's demand is important not only because she allows David to think for himself, but because it is an unspoken admission that she really does control his mind at times.

Thus, Senna's character is further developed in *Enter the Enchanted*. She becomes more than Loki's victim, dragged to Everworld to do his bidding—she is an active part of events. Although she is good at pretending to be the defenseless female who needs protection from big, strong males, she is, in fact, a deadly earnest player in Everworld's crisis. Christopher believes her to be a manipulator of minds in *Land of Loss*, but she could have been simply exerting the effect of her good looks on males who, according to April's view, are governed by rampaging hormones. In *Enter the Enchanted*, she makes it clear that she has used April and the others, even though she insists that she is one of them. April rejects that idea because Senna is too much the puppeteer and not enough the companion.

April seems resistant to Senna's mind control, and much of *Enter the Enchanted* focuses on April's contest of wills with Senna. She tries to persuade David to defy Senna: "'She lies to us, David,' I said. 'Uses us. I don't know how, I admit that, but she does, she is. She's using us right now, or else planning to.'" This makes April a danger to Senna, whose response is to taunt April and to threaten her. Even though April is willing to believe that only Senna can get her home, she finds herself "wondering which was worse: Senna alive, or Senna dead?" This suggests that April may be willing to sacrifice her chance to get home in order to prevent Senna from doing something monstrous such as letting Loki go to Earth. There is much courage in a person who believes "[Senna] was something different from me. Greater than me," yet stands her ground against Senna. Indeed, April has a good grasp of reality, in spite of the battering she has taken in a world where earthly physical laws are often disregarded.

When Senna shows that she can misjudge people by saying to April, "You've decided you believe in me," April snaps back, "I believe in the same God I've always believed in, and guess what, that's still not you, Senna." Score a victory for April in the contest of wills.

The contest for Senna broadens in *Enter the Enchanted*. Loki had his own designs on her in *Search for Senna*, and he still does in *Enter the Enchanted*, but another great



power enters the contest, Merlin: And in walked the old man with the onceblond hair and beard. He wore a robe, dark blue, but not the goofy curly-toed slippers you'd expect on some goofy book wizard. He wore boots crusted with mud and pants tucked in at the top, also muddy and only now beginning to dry. There was a sword at his side.

Applegate's Merlin is a man of action, symbolized by mud on the boots and the sword. The mud means that he is willing to get dirty, to get into the muck as April has, in order to get what he wants, and the sword means that he is willing to take action. Although he speaks of helping people, the reason he wants to control Senna is kept vague—he is not someone who gives away his plans.

Of all the people April and the others have met so far, Merlin has the best chance of standing up to a god like Loki. In *Search for Senna*, David describes Loki as huge.

Typical of his point of view, David focuses on how formidable an adversary Loki would be. This contrasts with April's point of view: "He [Loki] was handsome, that's what was weird about him. Lustrous blond hair, high cheekbones, and perfect teeth. He could have been a model. He could have been a movie star." That Loki could be attractive is an important idea, because it suggests that violence is not the only means of persuasion available to him. The passage also shows something of how Applegate makes each narrative in the *Everworld* novels unique to the individual narrator. In this case, the different narrators focus on different details about someone they both describe. Yet, handsome or not, Loki reveals himself in all his rampant evil when fighting breaks out between his forces and those of Galahad.

There is much to admire in Galahad, and April is just the right person to notice the warmth of his personality, as well as his strength of character. At dinner, she notes: Galahad was calm, assured, soft-spoken once we were past his bellowed demand for "Food!" His eyes were often downcast, not sad, but thoughtful. He smiled, but not in derision, only in welcome. He sat tall in his chair, arms held wide, open, inviting, an equal at least in his body language. When he spoke, he met the eyes of the person he spoke to, listened attentively, nodded appreciatively.

April may be forgiven for liking Galahad more than most of the other people he meets. She eventually learns that he is not just talk and good feelings; when it comes to treating people well he is willing to fight and to die for them.

Enter the Enchanted is April's novel, and her companions tend to be background figures. David is often too trusting, but he proves to be a magnificent fighter when called upon to fight the trolls. Christopher makes wisecracks and tries to stand and fight if he can. Jalil is the analyst. There are hints of what his narrative in the next novel will be like when he says of his home world, "We live in a superstitious age. People's heads full of mush." His supercilious attitude ends up annoying just about everyone.



Topics for Discussion

1. Was killing off Galahad a good idea? Will you miss him?
2. Galahad is a mixture of mythological figures. What does this imply about the other denizens of Everworld?
3. What accounts for April's sometimes sexist attitude?
4. When does April save the lives of her companions?
5. How dangerous is Senna to April? 6. Does David accept April's claim that Senna somehow controls his mind? Why or why not?
7. Is Merlin on the side of good or of evil, or some other side altogether? How do you know?
8. How good is April at describing battles? What is significant about her perspective during the battles?
9. Are there dream-like passages in Land of Loss?
10. In Land of Loss, Christopher suggests to April that she is overly concerned with "Political Correctness." Does she seem that way in Enter the Enchanted?
11. In what ways does April change during her narrative in Enter the Enchanted?
How well does she adapt to her situation in Everworld?
12. Why would the dragon kill Galahad?
What does this say about the dragon?
What might it foreshadow for contact with dragons in later novels?

Ideas for Reports and Papers

1. What does Loki mean when he says that Merlin got careless and cost King Arthur his life?
2. The Galahad of Enter the Enchanted is the combination of more than one figure, according to April. What are the mythical origins of the knight now known as Galahad?
3. In the Middle Ages, what rules were supposed to govern the conduct of knights toward women?
4. Who is Merlin? In what ancient stories is he found? Based on the stories about him, how may he be expected to behave in Everworld?
5. What are trolls? Where do they come from? Why would they be in Loki's army?
6. Does April sound like a teenager? Where does she sound most realistic, and where does she sound more like Applegate?
7. Compare the narratives of Enter the Enchanted, Land of Loss, and Searchfor Senna. Are there notable differences in how the stories are told? Are there notable similarities? What does this tell you about Applegate's artistic achievement in Enter the Enchanted?
8. Draw a map of an ancient British castle, showing how the rooms would be laid out, and note the different places where April would have been and where the action in Enter the Enchanted takes place.
9. Loki changes size in Enter the Enchanted.
Is this something that happens in Norse myths?
10. What are the common characteristics of dragons in medieval European folktales?
Are any of these characteristics reflected in Enter the Enchanted?

For Further Reference

"Applegate, Katherine (Alice)." In *Authors and Artists for Young Adults*, vol. 37.

Detroit: Gale, 2000. A biographical essay with comments on Applegate's life and work.

"Applegate, Katherine (Alice)." In *Something about the Author*, vol. 109. Detroit: Gale, 2000. An essay that includes biographical information about Applegate and information about her writing.

"NYC Radio Station Celebrates the Season." *Publishers Weekly* (January 17, 2000): 26. Mentions the marketing of the "Everworld" series.

Review of *Search for Senna*. *Publishers Weekly* (June 21, 1999): 69. In this review the critic says, "With her blend of accessible story and mythological cast of characters, Applegate is sure to attract a host of new fans."

"Scholastic's Animorphs Series Has Legs."

Publishers Weekly (November 3, 1997): 36-37.

Related Titles

Applegate likes to experiment, and her novels tend to be lively exercises in ideas and techniques. In the case of *Everworld*, she creates a place where the world's ancient mythologies coexist, and she has fun creating adventures that involve mixing the mythologies. For the "Everworld" series, she creates four adventurers who are snatched from fairly ordinary teenaged American lives, although Jalil's psychological problems are somewhat out of the ordinary. Through these characters she experiments with techniques of narration by having each one narrate novels: first David for *Search for Senna*, then Christopher for *Land of Loss*, then April for *Enter the Enchanted*, then Jalil for *Realm of the Reaper*, and the cycle is repeated through the subsequent novels.

This can be disconcerting. David is a very engaging narrator, and losing his storytelling voice for *Land of Loss* is disappointing, although Christopher manages to make *Land of Loss* his own novel. In *Enter the Enchanted*, April proves to be an engaging narrator who is frank about her concerns and about what she observes, especially in the behavior of others. She whines a little bit, blaming others when events do not go according to her hopes. The personality of each narrator shows through in each book, and April proves herself to be an appealing figure, courageous and thoughtful. The shifting of narrators allows *Everworld* to be described through David's love of action and interest in logistics, through Christopher's acidic humor and tendency to see below the surface of events to find what is really going on, through April's good sense and practicality, and through Jalil's analytical mind that finds the logic linking events.

The novels also continue to introduce mythologies, and in the process, Applegate creates a new mythology of her own. Human endeavors are placed in a vast cosmic scheme in which everyone is important, even though in any individual novel they may seem like pawns. Once the youngsters meet Merlin in *Land of Loss*, the grand contest of universeshaking powers begins to reveal itself, and dreams really do seem more real than real life. *Enter the Enchanted* advances the story of *Everworld* by showing how Merlin views Senna, how Loki hopes to achieve his goals, and how the mythological figures of *Everworld* may be like Galahad, products more of human imagination than earthly substance.



Copyright Information

Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction

Editor

Kirk H. Beetz, Ph.D.

Cover Design

Amanda Mott

Cover Art is "Pierrot," 1947, by William Baziotès Oil on Canvas, 42 1/8 x 36 Donated by the Alisa Mellon Bruce Fund, ©, 1996 Reproduced with Permission from the Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction

Includes bibliographical references and index

Summary: A multi-volume compilation of analytical essays on and study activities for the works of authors of popular fiction. Includes biography data, publishing history, and resources for the author of each analyzed work.

ISBN 0-933833-41-5 (Volumes 1-3, Biography Series)

ISBN 0-933833-42-3 (Volumes 1-8, Analyses Series)

ISBN 0-933833-38-5 (Entire set, 11 volumes)

1. Popular literature—Bio-bibliography. 2. Fiction—19th century—Bio-bibliography. 3. Fiction—20th century—Bio-bibliography. I. Beetz, Kirk H., 1952-

Z6514.P7B43 1996[PN56.P55]809.3—dc20 96-20771 CIP

Copyright ©, 1996, by Walton Beacham. All rights to this book are reserved. No part of this work may be used or reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or in any information or storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the copyright owner, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information, write the publisher, Beacham Publishing Corp., P.O. Box 830, Osprey, FL 34229-0830

Printed in the United States of America First Printing, November 1996