PROGRAM OVERVIEW

“World of Literacy: Lights Out in “The City of Ember”” is a program that is full of cross curricular activities. I decided to incorporate activities into a literacy program based on the novel “The City of Ember” by Jeanne DePrau. The nice thing about this program is that I introduce the program at the beginning, modeling and working closely with the students, but as we all know, there is no extra time to make this a regular subject, so I worked it into our Center Time. It is a very versatile program. The skills that were taught during this program were: comprehension, literary elements, vocabulary, critical thinking, writing and cross curricular in Social Studies, Art, Math (scale), and Science. In the book, the Founding Fathers had to design a city that would last for 200 years with enough supplies to support a growing population. An activity that the students will do, using social studies skills is to plan a city of their design, working with a partner. They will draw a map using dimensions and a key, as well as decide how the city will be governed. They will write the city’s laws and create a unique name for the city. Since “The City of Ember” was formed for a specific reason, the students will have to come up with a set of conditions under which their city will be formed. There are many other related activities that students will do based upon things that happened in the novel. For example, in one part of the book Granny remembers eating pineapple as a little girl and how much she enjoyed it. Lina had never seen pineapple much less tasted it. When you come to this part of the story the students can make a pineapple dessert which will call for them to measure some ingredients and learn to follow sequential directions. The internet is full of ideas for the novel. Each year this program is used so much more could be added to it or even changed in it to keep it fresh and exciting.

OVERALL VALUE

The overall value of this program is that the students easily become engaged in the story plot as well as the characters in the story. They do not want to put the book down. The students will also get to incorporate other subject areas while doing the activities that go along with the story. They will be integrating math, science, art, and geography into their reading as well as the reading skills that they will be building on. What better way for a child to learn the joy of reading a novel while doing fun activities with it. There are enough activities that students can be given a choice as to which activities they wish to do. Students can be assessed both formally and informally. Comprehension questions will be given for each chapter of the book. Completion of the assigned activities can also be used as a form of assessment. Their final assessment for this literacy program is the AR assessment of the novel, “The City of Ember.”

LESSON PLAN TITLES

- An Introduction to A City Built as a Last Refuge for the Human Race
- The Instructions from the Builders
- A Moment of Fear

MATERIALS

Materials for each lesson are listed separately on each lesson plan. Overall materials budget list will follow all the lesson plans.

ABOUT THE DEVELOPER

Robin Collins obtained a Master’s Degree in Education from Nova Southeastern University in 2005. Robin is currently teaching fourth grade STEAM at Jesse Keen Elementary, she has been teaching for 35 years. This is her second Developer Grant. She has adapted a T2T Adapter Grant.
“A World of Literacy: Lights Out in *The City of Ember*” Robin Collins

Lesson Plan No 1: An Introduction to A City Built as a Last Refuge for the Human Race

**SUBJECTS COVERED**
Reading, Math, Science, Art

**GRADES**
Fourth - Sixth

**OBJECTIVES**
Students will...

- show a comparison and contrast of realistic fiction and science fiction
- use information from brainstorming to make a graph (option: use the computer to design graph)
- determine the actual dimensions of “The City of Ember” based on a scale included in the map at the beginning of the novel
- design their own city, determine how it will be governed and write the laws for the city

**STANDARDS**
LAFS.4.RL.2.6 Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated...
MAFS.4.MD.1.3 Apply the area and perimeter formulas …
SS.4.C.1.1 Purpose of the Constitution...

**MATERIALS**
- Composition Notebook for Journal per child
- Copy of the Book “The City of Ember” per child
- Lay of the Land Activity (From Teacher’s Guide)
- Drawing Paper for Drawing the Map
- Grid Paper for Graph

**VOCABULARY**
ember
(in journal students will need to create their own glossary of difficult or unfamiliar words as they read the novel)

**DIRECTIONS**
Essential Question: How can a challenge bring out our best?

** See Below & Insert Here **

Background Information:
City was built as a last refuge for the human race.
http://www.webenglishteacher.com/duprau.html?sthash.aCttR2gp.dpuf

** INSERT ABOVE AS NOTED **

When the novel opens more than 200 years have passed since the formation of the city. Ember is suffering from shortages of food and medical supplies as well as a deteriorating generator, the city’s main source of power. The citizens believe Ember is “the only light in the dark world” and have no record or memories of life beyond its walls. Their only light comes from light bulbs in homes, shops and streetlights. The city suffers from frequent blackouts that are lasting longer all the time. Due to intense darkness, people do not venture beyond Ember’s borders.

** INTRODUCTION ACTIVITIES FOR THE BOOK **

Study of: *The City of Ember*

Genre: Science Fiction

Have students brainstorm a list of their favorite science fiction books and/or movies. Discuss characteristics of science fiction based on similarities among items on the list from brainstorming. Compile a class “top ten” list based on the most common books/movies listed. Math: Make a graph showing the top ten in order from most favorite to least favorite.

Compare and Contrast: CPs will use Venn Diagram and do a compare and contrast of realistic fiction and science fiction.

Prediction: Have students work in pairs to complete the attached activity “Lay of the Land” to predict what the novel will be about.

http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=the%20city%20of%20ember&source=web&cd=5&ved=0CEwQFjAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DkkSFsbv6eUg&ei=sD1YUtD_J4Xc9QTZtYD oDQ&usg=AFQjCNGu6CNBWNRZGZwJxaJKi-MonUhA
or http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcqw1PVIIR0

2014 - 2015 IDEA CATALOG OF EXCELLENCE
Directions: Prepare for reading by answering the following short answer questions.

1. Who is the author?
2. What does the title suggest to you about the book?
3. When was the book first copyrighted?
4. How many pages are there in the book?
5. Thumb through the book. Read three pages --- one from near the beginning, one from near the middle, and one from near the end. What prediction can you make about the book?
6. What does the cover suggest to you about the book?

Social Studies: Working in groups students will plan a city. The city may be set in any time period from present to future.

Must Have:
- Draw a map of the city
- Decide how the city will be governed
- Write the city's laws
- Create a unique name for the city
- Describe the conditions under which the city was formed (ex: peacetime vs. retreat in war).

Math Related: Students will work in CPs to determine the actual dimensions of Ember based on the scale included in the map at the beginning of the novel.

ACCOMMODATIONS
Students who struggle with reading the novel can be paired with a strong reader so that they can buddy read.

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT
Informal Assessment: Activities Assigned for the lesson

★★★
“A World of Literacy: Lights Out in The City of Ember”  Robin Collins  
Lesson Plan No 2: The Instructions from the Builders

■ SUBJECTS COVERED
Reading Literacy:
Science: Electricity
Writing: Creative Writing and Persuasive Writing

■ GRADES
Fourth - Sixth

■ OBJECTIVES
Students will…
... be able to answer the comprehension questions for Chapters 1-2 accurately while working with their shoulder partner
... students will be able to understand electricity and how not to waste it after exploring the website “Watt’s on Your Mind”
... will be able to choose an assignment of their choice from the selections and complete it with accuracy

■ MATERIALS
• Teacher’s Guide
• Composition Notebook for Journal
• Access to computers for each student or pairs to Explore the Watt’s on Your Mind Website about Electricity
• Paper for Foldable

■ VOCABULARY
• weary
• endeavor
• anxious
• frayed
• labyrinth
• prosper
• generator
• trudge
• immensely
• threadbare
• reverberating
• resonant
• serene
• antics

■ DIRECTIONS
   Essential Question: How can a challenge bring out our best?
   DAY(s) 1 or 2
   Activating Strategy:
   Discuss the characters in the book. (See pg. 4 of Teacher’s Guide)
   Introduce Vocabulary for Chapters 1 – 2
   weary, endeavor, anxious, frayed, labyrinth, prosper, generator, trudge, immensely, threadbare, reverberating, resonant, kiosks, serene, antics

   Figurative Language: Students will look up the definition of “ember”. Discuss how an ember burns and students; predictions for how the word may symbolize the book’s meaning (examples: fading, struggling, waiting to reignite, etc.)

   Vocab Activity: students will choose 3 vocabulary words that they know the least about and write a definition, write an illustration sentence and ask a question about it.

   As the class reads “The Instructions” and Chapter One “Assignment Day” you are modeling how the students will work independently.

   As a Whole Group discuss what was read. CPs answer the following questions about the chapter:
   1 Pages 1 – 3 “The Instructions” What story can you compare this story to? How are the two stories alike? How are they different? Use a 3-fold foldable to show your answer and comparison.
   2 Page 4 Why would the lights flicker and go out from time to time?
   3 Page 5 what were the people reminded of when the city lights flickered and they were in the dark?
Lesson Plan No 2: The Instructions from the Builders (cont.)

4 Page 5 How old were the students when they were assigned a job? What did they do after their assignment was given? Compare this type of finishing school to our graduation that we have. Use a Venn diagram to show compare and contrast.

5 Page 6 After reading up to this point, can you make an inference about who our main characters will be in the story?

6 Page 8 How were the children assigned their jobs?

7 Page 9 Describe what kind of work a "supply depot clerk" does.

8 Page 12 Why was a Pipeworks laborer's job so bad?

9 Why was Doon so upset?

10 Why did Doon want to trade jobs with Lina?

(Questions come from Teacher's Guide)

Art – Lina dreams of a world full of color and wonders what it might look like. She uses drawing as a way to express her dreams about faraway cities and unknown regions. She says that pictures can capture an idea or a place in ways language cannot. Ask students to sketch a place they have often dreamed about, like Lina does, and carefully select colors that reflect the mood and tone of the dream. Request that students accompany their artwork with a one-page explanatory essay.

Science – The novel hinges on electricity, a waning light source in The City of Ember. Using the internet resources in this guide, have students research the fundamentals of electricity. How does it work? Who discovered it? What are the key scientific principles behind it? As an extension, students can explore the Watt's on Your Mind Web site http://www.wattsnew.com/wattsnew3/castlegate/castlegate.html to learn about wasting electricity.

Choose 1 or 2 Activities from this List:

Creative Writing: Write three paragraphs in which you describe the Builders’ instructions to the citizens of Ember.

Character Analysis: Begin the Character attribute Web for Lina on pg. 26 of Teacher’s Guide. Continue this activity as you read through the novel.

Prediction: Begin the Prediction Chart on pg. 25 of the Teacher's guide. This activity will continue as you read the novel.

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

Informal Assessment: comprehension questions listed above

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who struggle with reading the novel can be paired with a strong reader so that they can buddy read.
Lesson Plan No 3: A Moment of Fear

“A World of Literacy: Lights Out in The City of Ember” Robin Collins

■ SUBJECTS COVERED
Reading, Vocabulary, Geography, ART

■ GRADES
Fourth - Sixth

■ OBJECTIVES
Students will...
... Read chapters 3 - 4 with shoulder partner and answer the comprehension questions with at least 85% accuracy
... complete a guide book that describes and explains basic geographic landforms to Ember's citizens, including landmarks.

■ STANDARDS
LA.FS.4.L.3.4 Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
CCSS.4.L.4.5.A Explain the meanings of simple similes and metaphors (e.g. as pretty as a picture) in context
SS.4.G.1.4 Interpret political and physical maps using map elements (title, compass rose, ...)

■ MATERIALS
• The City of Ember Novel (one per student)
• Teacher’s Guide
• Composition Notebook Journal
• Drawing Paper (not newsprint, they will be making a guide book and a map)

■ VOCABULARY
• anticipation
• clamor
• throng
• chasm
• complicated
• puzzled
• plodding
• absolute
• gauges
• infected

■ DIRECTIONS
Essential Question: How can a challenge bring out our best?
DAY(s) 1 or 2
Vocabulary Activity:
Cross Word Puzzle: Students will each select 10 words from their vocabulary list. They will use the form that will be provided to create a Crossword Puzzle with the words each has chosen. See Teacher’s Guide to get the lists of vocabulary words to choose from and to get the form from page 24.

Chapters 3 & 4 of “The City of Ember”
Teacher will use the Teacher’s Guide to give an overview of these two chapters. Students will read the book independently during center time while teacher works in small groups. They will use the following questions to answer as they read the material:

1. Do you think it is safe to work in the Pipeworks? What particular safety issues would concern you if you had to work there?
2. How do students learn directions in Ember? Why don’t the cardinal directions (e.g., north, south, east & west) relate to anything outside of Ember (e.g., the North or South Pole)?
3. In what condition is Ember and its infrastructure? Give examples to support your answer.
4. Explain how Doon has honed his mechanical ability.
5. Describe Granny's state when Lina returned home.
7. How would you react if you were alone in the Unknown Regions?
8 Why do you think there are no flashlights, fire, or matches in Ember?

9 Why do you think that the Builders did not equip Ember’s citizens with knowledge of how electricity and or the generator worked? Do you think they intended to pass on this knowledge? Why or why not?

Activities: (Choose at least two activities)

1 Art: Draw a map of the Pipeworks based on the author’s descriptions in Chapter 3.

2 Geography: Most Ember citizens do not understand the concept of a river. Create a guide that describes and explains basic geographic landforms to Ember’s citizens. Include landforms that would most likely exist in and around Ember.

3 Figurative Language: Begin the Metaphors and Similes activity on page 27 of the teacher’s guide. Continue it as you read the novel.

4 Cause/Effect: Begin the Cause/Effect chart on page 28 of the teacher’s guide. Add to it as you read the novel each day.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who struggle with reading the novel can be paired with a strong reader so that they can buddy read.

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

Informal Assessment:

Students will be assessed on the accuracy of the comprehension questions listed above and on the completion of the 2 activities of their choice.

Formal Assessment:

When the students finish the book they will take the AR Test (9 pts).

SUGGESTIONS

The remainder of the book will be done independently or in pairs during Center time each day. Use Teacher’s Guide for comprehension questions and activities.

Pineapple Delight:

Use Twinkies, crushed or chunk pineapple, cool whip, milk & vanilla instant pudding, paper plates or bowls, plastic spoons. Place Twinkie on bottom of dish, spoon on pudding, then the pineapple, and top with cool whip. Students get to help make the pudding mixture. Use this with chapter that talks about Granny having it as a young girl.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3NcETsMDLg YouTube Audio of The City of Ember

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### Materials Budget

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SUPPLIER</th>
<th>ITEM # AND DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>COST</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>TOTAL COST</th>
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<td><a href="http://www.bmionline.com/books/city-of-ember--class-set__e512.aspx">Link</a></td>
<td>Class Set of “The City of Ember”, Extra books are included for replacements, Class Bundle E5165 *</td>
<td>$237.24</td>
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<td>Novel Units **</td>
<td>Teacher Guide for “The City of Ember” by Jean DuPrau</td>
<td>14.95</td>
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<td>Publix</td>
<td>Ingredients for Pineapple Treat (enough for entire class)</td>
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<td>Staples (or Network Manager)</td>
<td>Ink for Printer to make copies as needed</td>
<td>58.00</td>
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Cost of some items is general because you may find them on sale, or at cheaper rates, or items such as the pineapple delight funds can be put towards something else in the program that you prefer.

* No Shipping if you use UPS Ground
** P.O. Box 97, Bulverde, TX 78163-0097

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**Teacher** Robin Collins  
**School** Jesse Keen Elementary

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| Subtotal | $400.18 |
| Tax if applicable |  |
| Shipping if applicable |  |
| **TOTAL BUDGET AMOUNT** | **$400.18** |
Rubric

“A World of Literacy: Lights Out in *The City of Ember*” Robin Collins

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<th>Beginning 1</th>
<th>Developing 2</th>
<th>Accomplished 3</th>
<th>Exemplary 4</th>
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<td><strong>Content of Each Activity</strong></td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting a beginning level of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting development and movement toward mastery of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting mastery of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting the highest level of performance.</td>
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<td><strong>Appearance of Each Activity</strong></td>
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<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting development and movement toward mastery of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting mastery of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting the highest level of performance.</td>
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<td><strong>Students are able to answer AR questions with 85% accuracy</strong></td>
<td>Scored 60% or less on the AR Assessment</td>
<td>Scored higher than 60% but less than 85% on the AR Assessment</td>
<td>Scored 85% or greater on the AR Assessment</td>
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City of Ember
By Jeanne DuPrau
Story Map
## City of Ember Story Map

### First Theme

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<th>Theme</th>
<th>Proof (Evidence)</th>
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City of Ember Story Map

Setting


Point of View


2014 - 2015 IDEA CATALOG OF EXCELLENCE
City of Ember Story Map

Characters

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City of Ember Story Map

Conflict

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City of Ember Story Map
City of Ember Story Map

**Second Theme**

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City of Ember Bulletin Board Ideas

I teach with a wonderful team of teachers. One of them came up with the fantastic idea. The bulletin board was relatively empty when we began reading *The City of Ember*. As the book progressed, so did the board.
City of Ember Bulletin Board Ideas
http://bookunitsteacher.com/reading_ember/board.htm
City of Ember Bulletin Board Ideas

http://bookunitsteacher.com/reading_ember/board.htm
The City of Ember by Jeanne DuPrau

ABOUT THIS BOOK

The City of Ember is the only light in the dark world. Beyond Ember, the darkness goes on forever in all directions. When the children of the city of Ember finish school, they begin work at 12 years of age. . . . Lina Mayfleet desperately wants to be a messenger. Messengers spend their days outside, running from one corner of the city to the other. Instead, she draws the dreaded job of Pipeworks laborer, which means she'll be stuck in tunnels deep underground. Doon Harrow draws messenger—and asks to trade with Lina! Doon wants to be underground. That's where the generator is, and Doon has ideas about how to fix it. For as long as anyone can remember, the great lights of Ember have kept the endless darkness that surrounds the city at bay. But now the lights are starting to flicker. When Lina finds fragments of an ancient parchment, she and Doon put the pieces together to discover a message that seems to be directions out of the city.

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Doon and Lina like very different things. Doon wants to work in the Pipeworks; Lina yearns to be a messenger. Doon likes to study how things work. Lina likes to run and explore. But their friendship grows because they are ultimately searching for the same thing. How do they complement one another and help one another develop through the novel?

2. Earth today has many environmental and social issues. What sort of problems could have led to the building of the City of Ember?

3. Clary tells Lina, “Everyone has some darkness inside.” (p. 168) Light and color both play very key roles in the novel. In what ways, other than the failing street lamps, are color and light important?

4. The possibility of never-ending darkness changes many of Lina's friends and many of the townspeople. She discovers that her friend Lizzie has begun to accept things from Looper, who is stealing things from the storerooms. Why does Lina turn down the gifts that Lizzie offers her? Do you think that she was right to do so?

5. The city of Ember was built when people were worried that the human race might not survive. Do you think this was a good plan?

6. The mayor is the most corrupt character in the novel. He squelches the thirst for knowledge and limits freedom, yet the majority of the townspeople just accept his behavior. Why do you think they act this way? What other actions might they have taken?

7. People react in various ways when they feel threatened. How do the people of Ember react to danger? Have you seen people reacting to danger in these ways? How are Poppy's actions important to the plot?

8. At the end of the novel, Lina, Doon, and Poppy have discovered a sunlit earth. What do you think will become of them in the sequel? Do you think that there are other people on the surface?

Jeanne DuPrau, The City of Ember Lesson plans and activities
- See more at: http://www.webenglishteacher.com/duprau.html#sthash.aCttR2gp.dpuf

The City of Ember is the only light in the dark world. Beyond Ember, the darkness goes on forever in all directions. When the children of the city of Ember finish school, they begin work at 12 years of age. . . . Lina Mayfleet desperately wants to be a messenger. Messengers spend their days outside, running from one corner of the city to the other. Instead, she draws the dreaded job of Pipeworks laborer, which means she'll be stuck in tunnels deep underground. Doon Harrow draws messenger—and asks to trade with Lina! Doon wants to be underground. That's where the generator is, and Doon has ideas about how to fix it. For as long as anyone can remember, the great lights of Ember have kept the endless darkness that surrounds the city at bay. But now the lights are starting to flicker. When Lina finds fragments of an ancient parchment, she and Doon put the pieces together to discover a message that seems to be directions out of the city.

Discussion Questions:

1. Doon and Lina like very different things. Doon wants to work in the Pipeworks; Lina yearns to be a messenger. Doon likes to study how things work. Lina likes to run and explore. But their friendship grows because they are ultimately searching for the same thing. How do they complement one another and help one another develop through the novel?

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7. People react in various ways when they feel threatened. How do the people of Ember react to danger? Have you seen people reacting to danger in these ways? How are Poppy’s actions important to the plot?

8. At the end of the novel, Lina, Doon, and Poppy have discovered a sunlit earth. What do you think will become of them in the sequel? Do you think that there are other people on the surface?

ABOUT THIS BOOK The City of Ember In the underground city of Ember, young Lina and Doon struggle with clues in order to reveal both the history of their city and a way to save the population before their source of light dwindles away to nothing. Jeanne DuPrau presents a colorless society with a bleak future in The City of Ember. The citizens of Ember live underground where they face daily blackouts, food shortages, and corrupt politicians. With the source of light waning, two young citizens take it upon themselves to unlock the secret to Ember’s mysterious past. Lina Mayfleet and Doon Harrow navigate this post-apocalyptic world in an attempt to decode a cryptic message that may save them all. The People of Sparks Followed by fellow Emberites, Lina and Doon emerge from the underground city and are taken in by the first town they encounter— but the additional population puts a strain on the town’s resources, inciting conflict. Having escaped from the underground world of Ember, Lina Mayfleet and Doon Harrow emerge into the post-disaster village of Sparks. The world of Sparks stands in stark contrast to life in Ember. Sparks glitters with its brilliant light, radiant color, and seemingly abundant resources. As the strain of adding new members to its community begins to take its toll, the people of Sparks resort to survival instincts in an effort to conserve resources. Conflicts emerge as leaders bicker and friendships begin to wane. It takes the courage and leadership of the novel’s young characters to unify the village as they attempt to create a harmonious world.

ABOUT THIS AUTHOR About the Author “What could be more interesting than thinking of mysterious happenings, finding the answers to intriguing questions, and making up new worlds?” – Jeanne DuPrau Jeanne DuPrau writes for several hours each day and finds inspiration in a quote from Thomas Mann that says, “A writer is someone for whom writing is harder than it is for other people.” This quote guides DuPrau’s writing, which she often finds to be a challenging task. DuPrau knew she wanted to be a writer at a young age and has tried related careers in teaching, technical writing, and editing. She has written three novels, six books of nonfiction, and with essays and stories. She lives in California where she loves to garden. Check out the Author Spotlight http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/authors/results.pperl?authorid=7639 on Jeannie DuPrau or visit the author’s official site! http://www.jeanneduprau.com/ TEACHING IDEAS

Pre-Reading Activities The City of Ember Pre-Reading Activity: Mock Assignment Day – Explain that today is “Assignment Day” and students will get a job placement that will determine their future within the community. Distribute mock job assignments to students and give a talk about service to one’s community. Ask students how they feel about being assigned to a profession. Ask them to speculate on what kind of world they are going to read about, where people are assigned jobs to work as messengers, laborers, electrician’s helpers, and supply clerks. The People of Sparks Pre-Reading Activity What Is Community? – Ask students to write an essay about community using the following writing prompt: What is the role of a community? Is the community responsible for taking care of every citizen? Ask students to share their writing responses and discuss how they would react if they were asked to give up vital resources for strangers being added to their community. Consider role-playing the idea of “survival of the fittest” to demonstrate what happens when a community’s resources are strained, and individuals begin to rely on survival instincts.

Thematic Connections Questions for Group Discussion Family – The main characters of both novels have nontraditional family structures. Discuss with students how the main characters acclimate to their unconventional families in the towns of Ember and Sparks. How do their family relationships change from one book to the next? How does the absence of a mother affect both Doon and Lina? Both Doon and Lina are very responsible young people. How are their responsible dispositions related to their family roles?
Friendship – Lina and Doon share a friendship in both novels, and Doon attempts a friendship with Tick in The People of Sparks. Lina and Doon recognize positive and negative qualities in their friendships, a key aspect of accepting someone as your friend. Ask students to keep a log of how Lina and Doon perceive their friendships and how their friendships wax and wane throughout both books. What personality traits do they admire in one another and in Tick? What qualities do they find troublesome in each other and in Tick? As an extension activity, ask students to write a paragraph describing what they admire about their best friends.

The Effects of War – Both novels are set in a post-apocalyptic world. Ember is a last refuge for the human race and Sparks is a post-disaster society starting over. Ask students to identify the lasting effects of war on both societies. What is the author’s message to readers? Ask students to imagine a world where technology and abundant resources no longer exist. How would their lives be altered?

Greed – How does greed escalate to conflict? Ask students to trace incidents of greed by both townspeople and politicians as the characters progress from one novel to the next. Create a timeline that illustrates how townspeople allowed fear and greed to lead them into battle. What is the ultimate message about greed in both novels? What is the message about humankind and war? What is the author trying to say about corruption and power? Are the events of these novels a realistic reflection of human nature?

Community Leadership – In small groups, ask students to discuss the role of community leadership in both novels and whether the leaders acted as good role models. Which characters provided true leadership for the towns? When times were tough, how did the leaders of Ember and Sparks provide for the citizens fairly?

Connecting to the Curriculum Art – Lina dreams of a world full of color and wonders what it might look like. She uses drawing as a way to express her dreams about faraway cities and unknown regions. She says that pictures can capture an idea or a place in ways language cannot. Ask students to sketch a place they have often dreamed about, like Lina does, and carefully select colors that reflect the mood and tone of the dream. Request that students accompany their artwork with a one-page explanatory essay.

Language Arts – Ask students to write a magazine article for a travel magazine that describes either Ember or Sparks as a travel destination. Cite lines from either text that describe what it’s like to live in Ember or Sparks. Ask students to use elements of descriptive language like imagery, simile, and metaphor in their writing.

Science – Both novels hinge on electricity, whether it’s a waning light source in The City of Ember or the need to reinvent electricity in The People of Sparks. Using the internet resources in this guide, have students research the fundamentals of electricity. How does it work? Who discovered it? What are the key scientific principles behind it? As an extension, encourage students to explore the Watt’s on Your Mind Web site http://www.wattsnrw.com/wattsnrw3/castlegate/castlegate.html to learn about wasting electricity. The idea of growing food and nurturing plants from seeds is paramount in both books. Have students grow food from seeds and research the science behind it, like photosynthesis and the life cycle of a plant. Helpful suggestions for lesson plans can be found in these Web sites: http://www.nyu.edu/projects/mstep/lessons/howplants.html http://www.kidsregen.org/educators/educators2.php?option=edu&ga&ID=3#evaluating http://www.sciencenetlinks.com/lessons.cfm?DocID=376

Social Studies & Geography – When the citizens of Ember escape their dark society for a more promising land, they became refugees. Ask students to define the word refugee and research the global refugee crisis. Provide your students with a brief overview of the top 10 locations on the planet with the highest population of refugees, then ask them to each choose one, and give a three page overview of that location’s current refugee situation as well as a brief history of its cause. Ask students to use a map to pinpoint the 10 areas of the world with the most refugees: Afghanistan, Angola, Burma, Burundi, Congo-Kinshasa, Eritrea, Iraq, the Palestinian territories, Somalia, and Sudan. Have students consider why refugees flee their homelands and why some countries deny refugees access into their territories. This assignment is suitable for older grades.

Economics – The principles of supply and demand dictate what resources are available in the towns of Ember and Sparks. As Lina says in The City of Ember, “You can’t divide a can of applesauce evenly among all the people in the city” (p. 153). Teach students about the concept of supply and demand and ask them to make a list of all the items in the novels that are in demand. Then ask students to think about the creative ways in which the novel’s characters supply these items.

Music – The townspeople of Ember have a “Song of the City” that describes the town and its city. Ask students to write a song, the lyrics of which reflect the spirit and the mission of their community and describe the kind of people who live there. Encourage students to use melodies that reflect the tone of the written descriptions.
Additional Resource Information Obtained from the Internet (cont.)

**VOCABULARY Vocabulary / Use of Language**

The language in *The City of Ember* is descriptive and thought provoking. Students should define the following words by using the context of the novel: resonant (p. 29), enmeshed (p. 55), moldering (p. 57), pungent (p. 59), and chortled (p. 92). The language in *The People of Sparks* is equally as challenging. Words for study include: tasseled (p. 25), flummoxed (p. 67), and thermodynamics (p. 110). To deepen vocabulary understanding, challenge students to use the words in a descriptive paragraph about an event or character from one of the novels.

**Discussion questions**

Spoiler alert! Some of the questions contain key elements of the plot. Do not read if you don’t want to know what happens!

1. Pay attention to “The Instructions” before chapter one in the book. Keep remembering them as you read the book, and re-read them when you finish.
2. Who do you think built Ember and why? When does the book happen?
3. Why did Doon want to trade jobs? Why was Lina so happy to trade with him? How does Lina’s new job really suit her? Describe Lina and Doon and the other characters you meet in the first few chapters.
4. Describe the jobs the other kids get. What would you want to do, if you lived in Ember?
5. Who takes care of Lina and Poppy? This changes during the story. How? How does the meaning of the words, “alone in the world” (p. 143) change for Lina? Do you have someone who looks out for you, or whom you look out for? What does Poppy and Lina’s grandma and Poppy herself have to do with the finding of the “The box in the closet” and “The message full of holes?” Who are the people Lina shows the message to? Would you have chosen different people to share the message with, or a different order of the people Lina chose? Who and when?
6. How would you have felt about sharing “Lizzie’s groceries?” There are clues in this chapter that Lina puts together with Doon’s “Dreadful discovery.” What are they? Somehow, they still don’t have the whole picture until Song Rehearsal Day. Can you imagine how you would feel in their place?
7. In “Where the river goes,” Lina, Doon, and Poppy display different reactions to their journey out of Ember. Do you identify with any of them, or would you have had a different reaction? How do the characters of Lina and Doon determine what happens in the book? Would you want them for friends?
8. Do you think the ending of the book was realistic? If not, how would you have changed it? Does the ending fit with “The Instructions,” at the beginning of the book?
9. There is a sequel to *The City of Ember*, called *The People of Sparks*. Do you think you will read it? Why or why not?
10. *City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau
11. Ember… It is a city without knowledge of anything beyond its walls; no one knows what’s out there and everyone is afraid to find out. With the electricity generated by the ancient generator ready to fail at any moment, Ember’s light is about to be snuffed out; the street lamps are the only remaining light source they have. The supplies stocked centuries earlier by the “Builders” are running scarce. The domed city meant to protect the last remaining humans on Earth is now on its last living thread. Lina and Doon have lived in this world their entire lives. They know that there is something better out there for them; they just aren’t sure what it is yet. Centuries ago, a document entrusted to the first major of Ember was thought to be lost until Lina finds a mangled paper (believed to be from the “Builders”) with instructions on how to escape the city of eternal darkness. Lina and Doon believe that this ancient paper with the “Instructions for Egress” will lead them to another world that they have only seen in their dreams. These practically indecipherable instructions send them on a dangerous mission into the dark unknown to find what they believe must exist: an exit door to salvation.
**Booktalk #1**
It's assignment day. Lina has dreamed of this day for so long. She's dreamed of wearing the red coat of a messenger. She knows no one gets to choose his/her own job. Everyone is assigned one and must work at it for two years before a transfer can be considered. After all, everything is done for the good of the City of Ember. When the jobs are announced, Lina receives the worst possible news. She's been assigned to the Pipeworks. Working underground in horrible conditions is her fate. Until her friend Doon asks to switch with her. He's been given the job of messenger but he wants to work in the Pipeworks. Lina can't believe her luck. But then she starts wondering why it is so important to Doon to work on the generators. Could what he says be true? Is the City of Ember running out of light? Can Lina and Doon really help save their people?

**Booktalk #2**
Imagine living in a city where there is no sun or stars. Of course, you wouldn't know about the sun or stars if you lived in the city of Ember. The only light the city has comes from large floodlights that are mounted on tall poles and on top of buildings. Everything in the City of Ember is old. Sometimes the lights go out in the middle of the day and the people of Ember experience darkness so total that it is suffocating. There have been more power outages lately and everyone is beginning to worry. Twelve-year-old Doon Harrow and Lina Mayfleet will be having their Assignment Day where all 12-year-olds receive their working assignments. Doon wants to be assigned the job of pipe works laborer. It's a very dangerous job working in the deep tunnels under the city but Doon wants to help save the city. Lisa wants to be a messenger and run throughout the city in a red jacket delivering messages. But on Assignment Day, they do not get the job they want. Later, Doon and Lina trade jobs and everything seems to be OK. But is it really? What about the message that was found in a secret box in Lina's closet and what about the secret door that Doon found in the tunnels. Are the message and the door connected? Lina and Doon vow to find out so that they can save their city. Read *City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau. (New Hampshire Great Stone Face Committee, 2004-05)

**Booktalk #3**
DuPrau, Jeanne. THE CITY OF EMBER In a post-apocalyptic underground world, Assignment Day arrives for 12-year-olds Lina and Doon who receive their jobs as “pipeworks laborer” and “messenger.” After trading jobs, the pair become detectives in search of the truth about their threatened subterranean city. Lina's grandmother accidentally uncovers instructions on how to escape from the dark world, and it is up to Doon and Lina to find the way out. The story's likable and courageous characters keep this science fiction thriller moving to the cliffhanger ending. (Sunshine State Young Reader's Award Program, 2004-2005)

**Booktalk #4**
In a post-apocalyptic underground world, Assignment Day arrives for 12-year-olds Lina and Doon who receive their jobs as “pipeworks laborer” and “messenger.” After trading jobs, the pair become detectives in search of the truth about their threatened subterranean city. Lina's grandmother accidentally uncovers instructions on how to escape from the dark world, and it is up to Doon and Lina to find the way out. The story's likable and courageous characters keep this science fiction thriller moving to the cliffhanger ending. (Sunshine State Young Reader's Award Program, 2004-2005)

**Booktalk #5**
Imagine living in a city where the sky is always dark, illuminated only by electric light bulbs. This is where 12 year-old Lina lives, in the city of Ember built underground. No one is permitted to leave Ember. The citizens of Ember are told it is dark and dangerous beyond the city limits. As time passes, the electric lights begin to flicker more and more. Sometimes there are long blackouts that terrify the citizens. Will their city soon lose all of its electricity? The townspeople are eventually supposed to receive a message allowing them to leave the city of Ember and return to their homes above ground. But, that was many generations ago, over 200 years have passed and most people have given up hope. Then Lina finds an ancient message written on fragments of parchment, can this help them save the city? Read this thrilling page-turner to find out what happens. (Jean B. Bellavance for Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Awards, 2004-2005)
Booktalk #6
Lina and Doon are at the age where they must now take jobs. Lina becomes a messenger and Doon becomes a plumber. They both live in the city of Ember. At first seems thing okay, but troubles lie deep in Ember. The city is running out of supplies, the generator is breaking down, and to make it worse the mayor is stealing what’s left. And did I mention...the live underground. Together, Lina and Doon must solve a riddle Lina found in the back of her closet. They find their way through the plumbing and travel above ground. Not knowing what to expect, they send a note hoping that someone will understand how to follow them. This will be continued by another book in the series. (Tracy Roope, smarter_sport101@yahoo.com, HCMS Library)

Booktalk #7
This book, The City of Ember, is about a girl named Lina Mayfleet and a boy named Doon Harrow who are twelve years old and are getting their first jobs for the city of Ember and Lina wants to be a messenger, but she draws the dreaded job of Pipeworks laborer while she was wishing to be a messenger. Doon Harrow desperately wants to be a Pipeworks laborer but instead draws the only card with messenger on it. Doon asks Lina to trade jobs with him so he might be able to figure out why there were blackouts and if he could fix the generator so that there would be no more blackouts. One day Lina comes home and finds her grandmother sorting through piles of junk trying to find “something important that was lost a long time ago” Lina tries to get her grandmother to stop, but she will not. The next day Lina comes home to find the same sight, but instead of in the kitchen, her grandmother is in the living room ripping up the couch and pulling out the stuffing. One day, a week later, she comes home to a sight of her grandmother in a small closet throwing the items that she doesn’t need out of the closet and onto the dining room floor. Lina sees her little sister sitting on the couch ripping up and eating a piece of paper. Lina asks where she got the piece of paper and her sister points to a metal box with an intricate locking system and Lina immediately demanded that Poppy, her sister, spit out the paper and she did so. When Lina saw the paper she put on the table to dry out, when it dried out Lina tried to paste it together and decipher the message written on the paper it was either typed or written in a very consistent hand. Lina ponders what the message could be and eventually invites her friend Doon over to try his cunning on the letter to see if he can figure out what it says, if it is a warning or directions to a way out of Ember. They eventually get a vague meaning of what the letter said and they tried to find what the letter led them to. They found what they were looking for in tunnel 351, a door that was locked!, but there was no key to be found and they went back up to the city. A week or so later Doon went back down to tunnel 351 and the door was unlocked with the key in the lock! Doon saw the mayor of Ember lying in a couch with a plate of food on a table in front of him. Doon looked through the boxes and found boxes full of cans, light bulbs, medicine, clothes, shoes and many other useful items that Ember was running short on. Doon excitedly ran up to the surface and told Lina all about his discovery. Then they ran together to the city hall and told the police officer of what the mayor was doing. While they were telling the police officer the chief police officer came out of the room which he was in and stood there watching what was going on between Lina, Doon, and the police officer. When Lina and Doon left the building the police officer told the chief what Lina and Doon told him. (Thomas Grimes, buzzbait@schoollink.net, HCMS Library)

Booktalk #8
In a city of food shortages and power blackouts, Lina and Doon struggle to piece together instructions for their survival left behind over 200 years ago. With each new revelation comes the knowledge that powerful people are trying to stop their progress. Will their new truths help them save the people of Ember or are they too late to lead them to a new existence? Black-eyed Susan Award nominee 2005-2006

Booktalk #9
Imagine a sky with no sun, no stars, nothing; just black dark. The kind of dark that you can almost feel in your mouth. Imagine a city lit only by lamps, lamps that are flickering and going out more and more often these days. A city where the darkness presses around the edges, threatening to creep-crawl into the streets and bring with it the beasts that are hiding within. No one has ever gone out into the darkness, except once, and we saw what happened to him. Imagine a city of food shortages and power blackouts, Lina and Doon struggle to piece together instructions for their survival left behind over 200 years ago. With each new revelation comes the knowledge that powerful people are trying to stop their progress. Will their new truths help them save the people of Ember or are they too late to lead them to a new existence? Black-eyed Susan Award nominee 2005-2006

And while you’re trying to imagine all of these things, you must keep in mind that there is also a lost message, a message left by the very founders of the city of Ember, a message that could answer a lot of questions about the dark, and what might be beyond the dark, a message that has been hidden, nay, forgotten in a closet for many years. And almost as soon as that message is found, and it does get found don’t worry, it gets torn into eleventy million tiny pieces and several of those pieces are lost. But the message still has to be read. Ember depends on it. But wait, there’s more. There’s also a secret door deep down in the tunnels under the earth; a secret door that’s hiding
something very secret. And I’m pretty sure somebody in the city of Ember isn’t telling the truth. In fact, that person is lying to the very people they’re supposed to be helping.

If you’re having trouble imagining all of this, don’t feel bad. It’s a lot to take in. The first time I tried to imagine it, it kinda blew my mind. In fact, it might be easier to handle if you read *The City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau. Oklahoma Sequoyah Children’s Book

**Booktalk #10**
The city of Ember has problems. There are shortages of everything: food, paper, pencils, medicine, everything! The only light in Ember comes from giant floodlights, and the city is thrown into complete darkness when they go out, which is becoming more frequent. Also, school ends at the age of 12 for the children of Ember. Graduation day is known as assignment day, the day the students will be given a job. The job you are assigned was a matter of luck. Lina was not so lucky. She wanted to be a messenger, but she ended up being a pipe works laborer. Her luck changes when she meets up with Doon. Doon got the job of messenger but wanted to work in the pipe works. The lights are starting to flicker; there are even a few total blackouts. Is the city in danger as Doon thinks? Could the ancient parchment Lina found lead to a way out of Ember, a way out of the darkness, a way to save the people of Ember?
(Prepared by: Kathleen Butler)

Things went as planned until the seventh mayor of Ember became ill and thought the box might hold a secret to save his life. Being less honorable his predecessors, he took the box from its hiding place, took it home, and tried to open it with a hammer. All he managed to do was dent the lid a bit and he died before returning it or telling his successor about it. The box ended up in the back of a closet sitting unnoticed for years until the time was proper and the lock quietly, unobtrusively, and unnoticed, tripped open. More years went by, and supplies began to dwindle, the power plant began to fail, and periods of darkness began to become more frequent. And, another dishonorable mayor arose.

http://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-the-city-of-ember/
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcqw1PVIIR0
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_City_of_Ember
http://www.jeanneduprau.com/books.shtml

**Booktalk #11**
When the city of Ember was built, the chief builder and his assistant talked about the future. The inhabitants would have to stay in the city for at least two hundred years they decided. When the time came to leave, they would need instructions. The instructions would be put in a box with a timed lock, set to open on the proper date. The mayor of the city of Amber would keep the instructions and pass them on to his/her successor until the proper time. The mayors would not be told what was in the box, only that it was information that would be available when needed. Of course, things don’t usually turn out as anticipated (Ending for short talk).