

Study Guide - Facilitator Version

The Book of Second Chances

Facilitator Notes

This is a special version of the Study Guide for *The Book of Second Chances*. Text in brackets [like this] is not included in the standard Study Guide. All notes [in the brackets] are those of J. Michael Blumer, author of *The Book of Second Chances*. The bracketed notes are his thoughts on character motives, feelings and personalities as they relate to the study guide questions and activities. At the end of both this Facilitator's version, and the standard version of the Study Guide, is contact information for the author, J. Michael Blumer, who is available on a limited basis to participate with educators and with book clubs. His wife is a second grade teacher, so naturally he gives first priority to educators.

Part I. Story and Author

About the Author

J. Michael Blumer started writing in high school and carried around a spiral notebook where he jotted down simple musings, observations about people, and thoughts on life in general.

In college he took a creative writing class. His first assignment was to write a piece of nonfiction. He wrote about an adventure he had with a friend at an abandoned farmhouse they thought was haunted. The instructor gave Michael a "D" along with a note that said he had a creative and dramatic flair, but the assignment was nonfiction, not some wild story dreamed up in Michael's imagination. His rebellious attitude took over and he dropped the class. His story was true. Well, maybe he did embellish it just a bit.

Over thirty years later things changed in his life and Michael finally took the time to do some serious writing.

Inspiration for the Story

The story started in an unusual way. Michael was helping his wife baby-sit at a friend's home and he brought along a pencil and paper to play with ideas for a new story. Writing the "old fashion" way brought memories of how he wrote years ago, just using pencil and paper instead of a computer. He thought about how he wished he had pursued a serious writing career instead of dropping that first writing class. He was glad for this second chance to write. After thinking a bit more, he realized the chance was

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always there. The secret all along was to do what he was doing now –simply start writing. It didn't take magic.

[Trivia: In chapter one, Michael couldn't think of anything for the third wizard to say that rhymed correctly with the other two wizards' parts of the spell. Michael gave up and used the only lines he could think of; "Laughs from a boy who ain't too tall," and "Tears from a girl with an overbite."

When friends read the chapter to give him feedback, they all loved the "wizard who couldn't rhyme." That small part of *laziness* on Michael's part set the personality for the wizard Fernbark.]

About the Story

Windslow, a boy in a wheelchair and his stepsister, Hillary, undo spells that hide the magic Book of Second Chances. When they sleep, the book transports them to the world of Gabendoor.

Windslow meets three wizards responsible for safeguarding the book. Fistlock, the evil ruler of Gabendoor, is determined to have the book at any cost. Everyone wants the book, but no one can solve the secrets to unlock the book's magic which they believe grants unlimited second chances. Windslow wants the book to walk again. Hillary wants it to save Gabendoor. Fistlock wants it to expand his power.

Hillary travels with three strange Sallyforth sisters who know many of the book's secrets. The trouble is, one sister always lies, one tells the truth, and one sometimes lies and sometimes doesn't. An oracle calls Hillary and Windslow the Children of the Summer Wind, and gives Hillary clues to understanding riddles that appear in the book each time Windslow survives a dangerous situation.

Fistlock captures everyone and takes the book, but not before the stepbrother and stepsister team solve the last riddle. Armed with the knowledge from the book, Hillary and Windslow defeat Fistlock and save the world of Gabendoor.

Main Characters

- Windslow Summerfield: Hillary's stepbrother and hero in the story.
- Hillary Windgate-Summerfield: Windslow's stepsister and heroine in the story.

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- **Fistlock:** An evil wizard who rules Gabendoor and wants the Book of Second Chances.
- **Bitterbrun:** Fistlock's bumbling chamberlain and assistant.
- **Haggerwolf, Fernbark, and Larkstone:** Three retired wizards who help Windslow and Hillary battle Fistlock.
- **Molly Folly Sallyforth:** A strange girl from Gabendoor who sometimes tells the truth and sometimes doesn't. She is one of three triplet sisters.
- **Nelly Never Sallyforth:** The triplet sister who always lies.
- **Tillie Truly Sallyforth:** The triplet sister who always tells the truth.
- **Trish Windgate-Summerfield:** Hillary's mother and Windslow's stepmother.
- **Bill Summerfield:** Windslow's Father and Hillary's step-father.

Part II. Questions for Discussion Before Reading the Book

[These questions help prepare for later compare and contrast questions. In the end, the story teaches that second chances don't come from magic, they come from action.]

The book is about second chances.

1. What do you think a second chance is?
2. Describe a time when you wished you had a second chance to do something important to you.
3. Tell why it was important.

Part III. Questions for Discussion During or After Reading the Book

A) The Book of Second Chances is a fantasy novel, but it teaches some lessons.

1. What is similar and different about your thoughts on second chances before reading the story and after?

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2. Describe one lesson you learned from reading the story.
3. Describe what lessons Hillary and Windslow learned, and why the lessons were important.

[Windslow learned to conquer his fear. He still was afraid, but was able to act anyway. He scaled Crystal Mountain even though he was afraid of heights from falling off his roof. He had to climb Crystal Mountain to reach Fistlock in the spire room and stop him from destroying Eldervale. Hillary learned to be a leader.

The wizards and Windslow relied on Hillary to make decisions about what to do to stop Fistlock. She discovered that the goo pond was full of magic and was able to lead the group and destroy it.]

4. Describe one or two other lessons in the story, who learned them, and why the lessons were important.

[The three wizards learned that even though they were old and retired, they could still be useful. Windslow and Hillary could not have defeated Fistlock without help from the wizards and their magic. The residents of Eldervale learned that they could stand up against Fistlock's army without having a magic book to help them.]

B) Sometimes stories make us think about things in our own lives or about people we know. In the end, the story teaches that second chances are there, we just need to take them.

1. Compare two or three parts of the story to similar events that happened in your own life.
2. Tell how the story has changed how you think about things in your past or what you might do about them now?
3. Describe a second chance you might take in your own life now that you've read the story?

C) Windslow and Hillary are step-brother and step-sister.

1. Identify the characteristics of Hillary and Windslow at the beginning of the story.

[Windslow is a bit rebellious. He pushes people to see how much he can get away with. He is a little cocky and knows

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that he can get away with things because his parents feel sorry for him. He is more of a big talker than a real risk taker after the accident.

Hillary hates having to take care of her stepbrother, but never complains too much. She feels like a servant, but also feels like the accident was partly her fault. She feels that being Windslow's "slave" is a punishment she deserves. Hillary lacks self-confidence and is more of a follower than a leader.]

2. Describe Hillary's and Windslow's similarities and differences.

[Similar: Both stepchildren, both the same age and go to the same school. Windslow is more outgoing and thinks of all the ideas that get them into trouble. Hillary thinks of consequences and tries to talk Windslow out of some of his ideas, but usually gives in. Both have guilt about Windslow's accident.

Windslow's guilt is over the secret that he was the one that put Hillary's stuffed animal on the roof in the first place. He put it there so he could show off. To him, the accident was his own fault and punishment for deceiving Hillary and his family to make them think he was a hero.

Hillary has guilt too. She was showing off to her friends and encouraged Windslow to rescue her stuffed animal. She was also flattered by the fact that her girlfriends thought she was "cool" because her stepbrother was cool and cute. She feels guilt because she thinks Windslow's accident was her fault.]

3. Compare and contrast their relationship at the beginning of the story to their relationship at the end of the story. Why did it change?

[In the beginning of the story, they have a good relationship, but Windslow tries to boss Hillary around and she lets him. They argue a little, but mostly over things like Windslow using his slingshot to shoot acorns at animals.

Because they are the same age and go to the same school, they like to study and do homework together. Hillary gets annoyed sometimes because she has to do chores that Windslow can't do because of his wheelchair, or because their parents feel sorry for him.

At the end, they work as a team, both doing things they are good at. Being stepbrother and stepsister isn't in their

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thoughts. They feel like natural sister and brother. Hillary has become at being a leader and Windslow has become good at taking action.

They are closer to each other. Windslow has new respect for Hillary's abilities. Hillary has new respect for Windslow's abilities. Instead of competing with each other, they both use the strengths of the other.]

4. How have Hillary and Windslow changed as people and what caused the change?

[Windslow no longer fears heights, and isn't worried about people treating him different because he's in a wheelchair. He knows he can do many things. He has gained confidence and got rid of his guilt. Hillary got rid of her guilt and learned how to be a leader instead of trying to let her stepbrother always have all the attention. She has now found confidence in herself and respect for her stepbrother. She has more self-esteem now that she is out from under the shadow of her brother. They changed as they began to use their abilities to overcome challenges in the story.]

5. Describe how these changes might be good or bad.

D) In the beginning of the story, Windslow and Hillary's relationship centers on Windslow's accident and how they both felt about it.

1. Compare and contrast the guilt Windslow felt and the guilt Hillary felt. Discuss how it was different, even though guilt for both of them came from the same thing.

[The event was the accident. Windslow felt it was his fault. Hillary felt it was her fault. Windslow carries the extra burden of his secret –he put the stuffed animal up on the roof in first place. Hillary feels guilty because she knew there was a danger, yet she wanted to show off for her friends through her stepbrother.]

2. By the end of the story, how have their feelings of guilt changed?

[In the end, the guilt had vanished as simply something that happened in the past. Instead of worrying over why it happened, they both accepted that it did. They now look to the futures for themselves and the people who have become their friends.]

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E) Both Windslow and Hillary had certain feelings about themselves that changed by the time they finished their adventure.

1. Compare and contrast how Windslow felt about being in a wheelchair at the beginning, middle and end of the story. Why do you think his feelings changed?

[He didn't like it when his parents didn't treat him like normal. They didn't get mad at him or punish him when he was bad like they did before the accident. Windslow wanted to be treated like a normal person. He was happy when his parents got so mad they grounded him. In the end, the wheelchair was just something that was there. To Windslow, it was like one person being tall and another short. What did height matter? So he was in a wheelchair. It didn't matter.

Hillary felt it was partly her fault, and was protective of Windslow. She also let him boss her around. By the end of the story, she had seen how he concentrated on what he could do rather than what he couldn't do. She realized she didn't need to punish herself by being her stepbrother's slave. She was amazed at what he was able to accomplish.]

F) At the beginning of the story everyone had different ideas about what the book could do for them.

1. What did the people of Gabendoor want to have happen to the book? Why?

[Most of them thought like Fistlock. They thought they would have unlimited chances to defeat Fistlock. They felt that without it, they had no hope of ever defeating him.]

2. What were Windslow's hopes for the book? Why?

[Windslow thought that maybe he could relive his climb on the roof and avoid the accident that put him in the wheelchair. He thought the book let you try things over and over again. He thought he could change the past with the book.]

3. What were Hillary's hopes for the book? Why?

[Hillary wanted to use the book to save Gabendoor from the start. Hillary is protective, and has a good sense of what is right and wrong. She didn't like Windslow shooting acorns at animals with his slingshot. She didn't like what Fistlock was

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doing to Gabendoor. She never thought about using the book for herself.]

4. What did the three wizards want to happen to the book? Why?

[Not so obvious from the book, the wizards wanted to keep the book hidden so that no one could have a second chance. They secretly wanted it to have a second chance at being powerful wizards again so they could save Gabendoor.]

5. What did Fistlock want to do with the book? Why?

[Fistlock didn't understand how the book worked. He believed, like most people, that it gave you unlimited chances at things. He thought that if he lost a battle, the book would let him try the same battle again and again until he won. With the book, he would always stay in control of Gabendoor.]

6. Even though no one knew how the book really worked, which character do you feel had the best idea for how to use the book? Defend your reasoning.

[Everyone knew the book was magic and assumed it gave unlimited second chances. No one knew how to use the book to make its magic work. No right answer, but the wizards had the best idea –keep it hidden. If no one knew where it was, no one could use it. Molly Folly Sallyforth was the only one who knew the book taught lessons about second chances. That was its magic –the magic of learning.]

G) Each person faces challenges in a different way.

1. How did Molly Folly Sallyforth approach challenges and difficulties?

[Molly is practical and upbeat. When faced with adversity, she simply digs in and works at a solution. Molly believes you can do anything you set your mind to.]

2. Describe the characteristics of Molly and how they contributed to her attitude.

[Molly rarely gets angry and liked to laugh and have fun. She always believes the best in everyone. She thinks that adults take things too seriously. She is very playful.]

3. Compare and contrast the characteristics of Molly to the characteristics of Hillary and Windslow.

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[Windslow and Hillary worry about things and are hesitant to take action at first. Molly doesn't like to spend time worrying. She likes to take action, sometimes without thinking first.]

4. Compare and contrast the characteristics of Molly to the three wizards.

[Molly is always positive and upbeat. She liked to have fun and is a little mischievous. The wizards are serious most of the time and are a bit "stuffy." They are set in their ways and resist change. Molly is all about change and trying new things.]

5. Discuss how Molly was different than most of the other characters.

[Molly rarely has any doubts. She had great confidence in herself and in others. She sees the brighter side of things and never has bad thoughts about anyone.]

6. What impact did Molly Folly have on Windslow, Hillary, and the three wizards?

[Molly taught by example. She supports people, never thinking or acting critical or unkind. She helped them all become confident. She supported them all, cheered them up when necessary.]

H) Molly Folly Sallyforth taught people lessons in her own special way.

1. How would you describe how Molly Folly Sallyforth taught lessons to others?

[Molly taught by example and by encouraging others to act.]

2. How do you think Molly Folly feels about second chances? Why?

[Molly knew the secrets of the book from the very start. She didn't tell anyone because she knew the value would come from Hillary, Windslow and the wizards figuring things out for themselves. She knew that a second chance is there for anyone who wants to take one.

The book doesn't say why, but hints at it. Molly's grandfather wrote the book and did help raise Molly and her sisters. He wrote the book to be a lesson to others. But he was able to teach that lesson directly to his granddaughters.]

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I) In part of the story Windslow feels very discouraged about himself. Molly tricks him.

1. How and why did Molly trick Windslow when he was locked in the dungeon? Describe what her trick made Windslow realize.

[She pretended to have magic that would fix Windslow's back again. It helped him get his confidence back, restored his hope, and boosted his courage.]

[It made him think Molly had magic to cast a spell to heal his back. All Molly did was crinkle a candy wrapper to make a sound Windslow thought was magic. When he found out it was a trick, he realized that his ability to do things didn't come from believing in magic, but believing in himself.]

2. Do you think tricking Windslow was a good thing for Molly to do? Why or why not?

J) The three wizards didn't like the Sallyforth girls.

1. What is "prejudice?"
2. Explain the difference between prejudice and just not liking someone.
3. Decide if you think the wizards were prejudiced against the Sallyforth triplets or just didn't like the girls. What made you come to this decision? Give examples from the book that support your decision and explain the reasons for your thoughts.

[They are grumpy old men and don't like all the shenanigans that the three girls pull. In a way (not clearly obvious in the book) they are amused by the antics of the triplets, but feel that as wizards they have a serious image to uphold. It's not a matter of prejudice.]

K) Fistlock didn't like lots of things.

1. In your opinion, why did Fistlock split people up into different villages?

[From chapter 12: "Fistlock hated families. He broke them apart and sent children to live in one place, parents in another and grandparents in places like this village, Eldervale. Fistlock had villages for overweight people, cities for short people and even isolated lodges for people with warts." We don't know more about Fistlock's reasons. From

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the author: Fistlock hated families because he never had a happy family life growing up. He became obsessed with putting people in groups –more a case of sorting people into categories to keep them from being individuals.]

2. Give some examples, in our world today, that are similar to what Fistlock did.
 3. For at least one of your examples, describe some possible solutions to keep this sort of thing from happening.
- L) When Windslow, Hillary, the Wizards, and even Fistlock thought they might have the book, it seemed to give them confidence and the ability to do or try things they thought they couldn't do without the book. It turns out the book really didn't help them the way they thought it would.**
1. What is a talisman?
 2. Why do you think the Book of Second Chances could be or could not be considered a talisman?
 3. Explain where you think Windslow's, Hillary's and the wizard's confidence and ability really came from.
 4. Tell about cases in our world where people think that having things, like a lucky rabbit's foot, will help them do special things.
 5. What does this tell us about ourselves or those special things?

Part IV. Topics for Research and Discussion

Topic 1: Character, Plot, Mood

A challenge in writing any story is developing the plot and deciding what changes a character will go through as they struggle to succeed in the end. Many times, when a character changes, there is a specific "turning point." The characters and setting work within a mood to help make the story feel more real to readers.

1. At what point in the story did Windslow feel like he was a failure?
[After the Gorlon captured Windslow and he was locked in the dungeon. Fistlock took away the magic that let Windslow

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walk with crutches in Gabendoor. Windslow thought that Molly might be dead.]

2. When was Windslow's turning point? At what point in the story did he overcome his fear?

[When Fistlock locks himself in the tower and prepares to use the spire to destroy Eldervale, Windslow knows the only way to stop Fistlock is to climb the outside of Crystal Mountain. Another turning point is when Windslow rides the Gorlon to Eldervale during the battle with Fistlock's troops.]

3. What mood or feeling does The Book of Second Chances create? Cite evidence from the story that the author used to create this mood.

[The author intended to convey more of a lighthearted mood, rather than a sense of foreboding or "dark mood."

The opening scene with the fox also is a mood setting device. A pastoral setting in the woods, a wizard who can't rhyme and mixed up clothing all hint at a lighter story compared to a darker, more dramatic story.

Shadow creatures that work with the "bad guys" are an example of mood setting. The shadow creatures are things we might be afraid of as children, like shadows in corners or scary things under our beds. By giving them names, like the tellagain, or the trundle-wraith, they are still monsters, but fun monsters. Another example is the Sallyforth Sisters, who provide comic relief at many points in the story.]

4. What visual images does the author use to help you picture the setting and the characters?

[Examples that can be used; Chapter 3: Introduction of Fistlock and his shadow creatures. Chapter 1: Introduction of the three wizards and the patterns on their clothing. Chapter 3: Introduction of Bitterbrun.]

5. If you could be one of the wizards or one of the Sallyforth triplets, which one would you choose and why.

Topic 2: World Building

Fantasy and science fiction, authors do what is called, "world building." The worlds their stories take place in don't exist. The author must create them. They can invent things that don't exist in the real world but everything must be believable to their readers. An author doesn't always

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work out all the details of what they create. They work out enough to make their creation work in the story.

1. What period in time is the story set in? Give evidence that supports your answer.

[The story doesn't give a specific year, but is a fairly modern timeframe. Clues are the automobiles, television, microwave oven, motorized wheelchair, etc.

In Gabendoor, we don't know what the timeframe is.]

2. What mode of transportation do Fistlock and the three Wizards use to travel from Gabendoor to earth? Cite passages from the story that explain how to use this mode of transportation and what it does to the person who uses it for travel.

[A journey-wind. It can mix up your clothing. Once you call one up, you can't stop it from taking you someplace.]

3. What difficulties or advantages can you think of for using this mode of transportation that weren't explained in the story by the author?
4. Name three of Fistlock's shadow creatures. Which one do you think is described the best? Explain why.

[Author's favorite: The Tellagain that makes little old men repeat the same stories over and over again.]

Topic 3. Reader Perspective

There some parts of fantasy writing that are always hard decisions for a writer. How much detail to provide is one of those decisions. Find something or someone in *The Book of Second Chances* that you wish the author had given you more information about, such as a person, place, or thing.

1. What is the person, place, or thing you selected?

[Suggestions:

- More about the Sallyforth Sisters. Where they came from, why isn't there any mention of their parents, where they live.
- Who are or what are the Forge-Twiddlers and what other inventions have they made?
- More about Crystal Mountain.

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- More about Biffendear and all his frogs, toads and other creatures.
 - The history of Dreadmoor temple.]
2. Why did you select it?
 3. Tell what else you would like to know and why.
 4. Use your imagination and make up the missing detail for the person, place, or thing you selected. Write it down so that you can share it.

Topic 4. Main Versus Secondary Characters

In movies, sometimes an actor playing a supporting role wins all the awards. In books, there are usually major characters and minor characters. Sometimes a minor, or supporting, character steals the attention. They become a favorite character.

1. What books have you read where your favorite character wasn't the main character? Tell who that character is and describe what it was about this character that made you like them.
2. Compare and contrast what you like about your favorite character and the main character of that book.
3. If you could be one of the wizards or one of the Sallyforth triplets, which one would you choose and why?

Topic 5: Second Chances

Windslow helped his teacher with her secret wish for a second chance. Talk to some of your friends or a parent. Ask them what they would do with a magic second chance, or what they have done with a second chance.

[J. Michael Blumer made time in his life to pursue writing. He wrote *The Book of Second Chances* and is working on the next one in the five book series: *The Book of Broken Promises*.]

1. Why did they want a second chance?
2. What keeps them from taking one or why did they take one they did?

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3. If their wish is for something impossible, like doing something over that happened in the past, what could they do today that might be almost the same thing?

Topic 6: Perseverance

Sometimes people become successful after many failures. They keep trying, making their own second chances. Research a famous person's life who has succeeded after many attempts.

1. Who is the person and why are they famous?
2. Describe the lessons they learned and how they learned them.
3. What was it that made them keep trying or helped them keep trying?
4. What lessons have you learned, after researching the person's life, which you can apply to your life?

-or-

Describe a situation where you used a similar lesson in your own life.

Topic 7. Changes in the Publishing Industry

Book writing and publishing is changing. For example, for the first *Harry Potter* book, many publishers turned it down. They thought it would not be successful, because it was a book for young readers, but written more like a book for adults. Research how *Harry Potter* has changed the way publishers think about books for young readers.

[Thoughts here are about things like *Harry Potter* being too long for youth to read; the language too "adult" and more. The focus is on how the popularity of *Harry Potter* spread "from playground to playground," and has changed the nature of publishing for early chapter readers, middle grade readers, young adult and even adult readers. It has changed how books are written, and has changed what gets published.

Resource: Article in the Chicago Tribune. The link is:

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-030619epprogeny,1,2489139.story>

The URL is one long line that includes the .../news/chi-030...

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Keep the dash. You can also get great results by doing a web search using the string: "How Harry Potter changed the publishing industry"

One change is the creation of a separate children's bestseller list by the New York Times. Another is awareness that that kids' books are not just for kids.]

1. What are some of the changes predicted for writers and publishers of books for younger readers? Explain why you agree or disagree with those predictions.
2. If you have read Harry Potter, how does it compare to other books you liked to read before Harry Potter was published?
3. What should publishers and writers do differently to produce quality books for your reading taste?

[Some broad thinking: Books were written for children or adults, but could not be successful if written for both age groups. A book written for young readers would never find itself on a best seller list. Other than a few classics, like *Alice in Wonderland*, fantasy books only appeal to a small group of readers.]?

Topic 8. Disabilities

Windslow is in a wheelchair yet he has a great adventure. Many people with disabilities have accomplished great things. Sometimes what they accomplished might not have happened if they didn't have the disability.

1. Research the life of a person who was born with a disability, yet accomplished great things.

[Do a web search for "overcoming disabilities," "wheelchair athletes," or "famous people with disabilities." There are many resources at the website for the Disability Resources Organization:

<http://www.disabilityresources.org/FAMOUS.html>]

2. Who is that person and what were her or his accomplishments?
3. Describe at least three things you discovered that you think helped them with their accomplishments.
4. Research the life of a person whose disability came later in their life.

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[A good example is Christopher Reeves. Find more examples by having your student start with a web search for "Christopher Reeves."]

5. Describe at least three things that you think helped them overcome their disability.
6. Discuss what you think their life may have been like without the disability.
7. How are the lives of the people you researched similar or different?

Topic 9. Influence

Some people believe that excessive violence in movies and video games contributes to increased violence in the people that watch and play them. Some people say that science-fiction has led to scientific discovery, increased interest in science, and was partly responsible for the space program.

Describe the influence you think fantasy has, or has not had on people.

What do you think about the idea that fantasy encourages people to believe in magic solutions, or encourages them to hide away from real life problems?

1. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
2. What do you like most about reading fantasy? Why?
3. What do you like least about reading fantasy? Why?
4. What would you change in the way fantasy novels are written if you were a writer or a publisher? Why?

Topic 10. Stereotypes

Sometimes characters perpetuate stereotypes. All the heroes are tall, white, blond-haired men or boys. All the villains are dark and not so attractive men. Magic is all fireballs, windstorms, lightning bolts, and explosions.

1. What is a stereotype?
2. Describe some stereotypes.

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3. Select at least three fantasy books and compare the main characters. Describe how they fit, or don't fit a stereotype. Write about what you found or discuss it with a friend.
4. Compare the magic and magic spells in at least three books. Describe how they fit or don't fit a stereotype.
5. Compare and contrast what you learn about stereotypes to the magic and characters in *The Book of Second Chances*. How do the characters and magic compare to stereotypes you found in the other books?
6. What do you think fantasy authors could do to get away from stereotypes?

Part V. Class Activities

[These learning activities and story extensions provide for students with different learning profiles, interests, and readiness.

Use or adopt them according to your student's needs. The suggested activities can be used for a whole group, small groups, pairs, or individuals. The activities can be assigned to different groups. Products from each group can be shared and/or displayed.]

Radio Show Activity:

Have one student be a radio show announcer. Have two or three students be characters from *The Book of Second Chances*. Have the announcer conduct an interview, and accept call-in questions from the listeners (other students).

Poster:

Create a poster that compares and contrasts the characteristics and attributes of three characters.

Diary or BLOG:

Create diaries that Molly or another character might have kept during their adventure in Gabendoor. Record entries that might have been written by the character, describing their thoughts and feelings.

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Online Author Interview:

Have the students prepare from five to ten questions to ask J. Michael Blumer online. Schedule a time and method for an online chat or for back and forth email to answer the questions.

I've Got a Secret – Yes, no, maybe so:

In *The Book of Second Chances*, Tillie Truly Sallyforth always tells the truth. Nelly Never Sallyforth always lies. Molly Folly Sallyforth sometimes tells the truth and sometimes doesn't.

Give three students a secret name of a person, place or thing for the class to guess. Student (1) must always lie. Student (2) must always tell the truth. Student (3) can decide to tell the truth or not for each answer they give.

Split the class into two or more groups. Each group takes a turn asking a question following the order, student (1), student (2), student (3). The first group to discover the secret, wins.

[Sample secret answers:

- Forge-Twiddler
- Forge-Twiddler Reversible Paint.
- Dream-Slipping
- Journey Wind]

Wacky Inventor:

The Forge-Twiddlers are a group of dwarfs who invent and manufacture many things found in the world of Gabendoor. Nearly all of their creations are a bit “wacky.” Most work in strange and unexpected ways, or have flaws that keep them “fun.” For example, they make locks of all kind, but every key is the same. If you have one key in Gabendoor, you can unlock just about anything. Another example is their Forge-Twiddler Reversible Paint. Put the lid upside down on the can and the paint disappears.

Have students invent their own Forge-Twiddler product. Tell how the product is used and explain what is “wacky” about it. Products can be described on paper, presented on a poster or made as a “mock-up” with craft materials.

You could also have a Forge-Twiddler Science Fair.

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Author Participation

You can continue your discussion and ask the author questions at <http://www.jmb-publishing.com>

The author, J. Michael Blumer, also has limited availability to work with your class or book club. Availability depends on his schedule and your needs. To request his participation or support, email him at: studyguide@jmb-publishing.com.