



# Eldest

by Christopher Paolini

## Teacher's Guide

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## Synopsis

*Eldest* is Christopher Paolini's second book in his *Inheritance* series; he plans a third book.

### Synopsis of *Eragon*

*Eldest* opens with a summary of *Eragon*.

Eragon and his dragon Saphira have just saved the rebel state from destruction by the mighty forces of King Galbatorix, cruel ruler of the Empire.

### A Twin Disaster

Eragon has been badly injured from the battle. The healers have given him various potions and declared him healed, but his pain remains. The Urgals attack again. Eragon and the others fight them off, but Ajihad is mortally wounded. With his dying breath, he makes Eragon promise that he won't let the Varden fall into chaos. The warriors pay homage to Ajihad.

### The Council of Elders

Eragon is summoned to the Council of Elders, who announce that they have chosen Ajihad's daughter Nasuada as their new leader. Eragon realizes that the Council intends to use her as their puppet. Under pressure, Eragon swears his loyalty to Nasuada. Later, Nasuada accepts the Council's offer.

### Truth Among Friends

In a meeting with Nasuada, Eragon realizes that she has no intention of being anyone's puppet, least of all the Council's.

### Roran

The action cuts to Roran in Carvahall. After Garrow's death, Roran had returned home. Adrift for a while, he finally decides to marry his longtime love Katrina, daughter of the butcher Sloan. Roran feels that he cannot propose, however, as he has no livelihood or immediate prospects. Katrina tells him that he had better propose, for her father wants her married and she has other suitors.

### The Hunted Hunters

Roran is being pursued by Galbatorix, who has sent the Ra'zac and a unit of Imperial soldiers to capture him and thus lure Eragon out. Roran seeks refuge in the Spine.

### Saphira's Promise

The dwarf king Hrothgar tells Eragon that his people will repair Eragon's and Saphira's armor, a very noble deed. The king is delighted when Saphira announces that she will likely be able to repair Isidar Mithrim, the elves' huge star sapphire. Eragon and Saphira join the dwarves at a celebratory dinner, where Eragon and his dragon get drunk and pass out.

### Requiem

Hung over, Eragon and Saphira attend Ajihad's funeral. It is a stately, solemn affair.

### Fealty

The Council of Elders meet and appoint Nasuada the new leader of the Varden, as expected. In a scene reminiscent of tales of medieval knights, Eragon pledges to serve her, a bold political move that earns him some powerful enemies.

### A Sorceress, a Snake, and a Scroll

Eragon is attracted to Trianna, a beautiful sorceress, sparking Saphira's jealousy. Nasuada and

Eragon discuss how he is going to Du Weldenvarden to complete his training. He will learn more skills of the Dragon Rider: magic and swordsmanship. On the way, they will pass through Ellesméra.

### Hrothgar's Gift

Hrothgar gives Eragon his repaired armor and invites Eragon to join his clan, the highest honor the clan can bestow. Eragon accepts, even though it will bring him enemies.

### Hammer and Tongs

Back in Carvahall, the Ra'zac capture Quimby, whom they kill and eat in an act of shocking barbarity. The Ra'zac set the town on fire. No one is killed, but the fire galvanizes the town to unite to drive the invaders away.

### Retaliation

In the fierce battle, the Ra'zac confront Roran, hissing, "We want *information*," which we infer is about Eragon.



## **Az Swelen rak Anhuin**

Eragon, Saphira, and Arya arrive at Ellesméra. Eragon is confused when some shrouded dwarves derisively throw an iron ring down at his feet. That night, at the huge feast, Eragon learns that the ring means that these specific shrouded dwarves—Tears of Anhuin—are his bitter enemies. Eragon realizes that his choice to join Hrothgar's clan made him an enemy of this dwarf clan, descendants of guards of a person whose clan was killed in the war against Galbatorix.

## **Celbedeil**

Eragon goes to Celebedeil, the dwarves' temple, and explains the dwarves' spiritual beliefs and their history. Arya dismisses their spiritualism.

## **Diamonds in the Night**

Back in Carvahall, Roran organizes everyone to build a wall around the village Roran proposes to Katrina, and she accepts.

## **Under a Darkling Sky**

The Ra'zac attack again, this time killing a young boy named Elmund.

## **Down the Rushing Mere-Wash**

Eragon, traveling on his journey, has a strange dream, which Arya explains means that he has the power of premonition.

## **Drifting**

Eragon is attracted to Arya. The travelers continue their journey.

## **Arya Svit-kona**

Arya explains her people's complicated, crucial etiquette to Eragon.

## **Ceris**

On the fourth day, the travelers arrive at Du Weldenvarden and travel by boats over the water.

## **Wounds of the Past**

Back in Carvahall, Roran devises a way to keep the women and children safe—send them to the mountainous region called the Spine. Sloan is violently opposed, as his wife died in the Spine. After much opposition, Katrina agrees to go to the Spine as well.

## **Wounds of the Present**

Roran tells Sloan that he and Katrina are engaged. Enraged, Sloan disinherits his daughter. Katrina is disconsolate at having to choose between her fiancé and father. The villagers trek to the Spine, burdened with supplies.

## **His Enemy's Face**

Elain cautions Roran that life will be difficult without Katrina's dowry of household items. The Ra'zac kidnap Katrina and injure Roran badly as he tries to save her. Roran and some of the village men head to the Ra'zac camp, where they see the soldiers rebelling. Horrible

beasts arrive and take Katrina away. Roran realizes that Sloan had betrayed them.

## **Arrow to the Heart**

Eragon enjoys traveling with the elves because they are always happy. As Eragon learns more about elf history, he is shocked to learn that they are immortal. Arya, however, is young for an elf: only a century old. Saphira realizes that Eragon is full of love and looking for someone to reciprocate his emotions.

## **The Dagshelgr Invocation**

The next morning, Eragon realizes that someone is trying to scry him—read his mind. They decide to make haste. Arya advises Eragon to disguise that he is human; Saphira will hide as well. At Ardwen Lake, Eragon experiences Dagshelgr, the elven saturnalia. After they recover their senses the next day, the band mounts magical horses and continues their journey. Saphira is despondent because dragons are extinct and thus she can never mate.

## **The Pinewood City**

The travelers finally arrive at Ellesméra, where they are greeted by the elven queen Islanzadí. To Eragon's shock, Islanzadí embraces Arya, her daughter!

## **Queen Islanzadí**

Islanzadí apologizes to Arya for banning her, and the two reconcile. They discuss statecraft and then feast.

## **Out of the Past**

As Eragon prepares to begin his training, another Rider appears, perched on a huge golden dragon!

## **Conviction**

Back in Carvahall, Roran hatches an audacious and courageous plan: he will lead everyone across the Spine, take a ship from Narda down to Surda, and join the Varden in their fight Galbatroix. Everyone discusses the plan.

## **Repercussions**

Everyone is polite to Roran, but only Thane openly and strongly supports his plan.

## **Exodus**

The villagers back Roran's plan: they leave Carvahall and travel to Surda. Roran has earned the nickname "Stronghammer" because he defended Carvahall with a hammer given to him by Horst.

## **On the Craggs of Tel'naéir**

Eragon meets the other Dragon Rider, Oromis, the Mourning Sage. He is also called Osthato Chetowa, The Cripple Who Is Whole, because he can no longer control magic. His job is to direct Eragon's physical as well as moral education. Oromis looks at Eragon's scar and examines Saphira. Oromis pronounces Eragon sufficiently well to exercise and Saphira an extraordinary dragon. Oromis explains what he knows of Brom's back-

ground, the Rider from *Eragon*. Oromis reminds Eragon to bathe and shave every day.

**The Secret Lives of Ants**

Eragon and Saphira begin their training with Oromis and his dragon Glaedr. Eragon also learns how to read and speak the Ancient Language fluently, as well as to use various magic skills.

**Under the Menoa Tree**

Arya takes Eragon and Saphira deeper into her land. They come to a Menoa tree, a sentient being, and Arya tells the legend of its creation.

**A Maze of Opposition**

Nasuada adjudicates an issue involving a theft. In the lab, Orrin, king of Surda, has demonstrated a vacuum. Unimpressed, Nasuada urges him to do some practical experiments to help his people and hers. He refuses to give her more much-needed money for food for her people.

**Hanging by a Thread**

Back in her room, Nasuada discovers her dress on fire from one of Orrin's foul preparations. Her maid Farcia is an enormous help. Nasuada has a brainstorm: she summons Trianna the sorceress. Nasuada plans to have her subjects use magic to manufacture lace to fund the war efforts.

**Elva**

At Jormundur's request, Nasuada visits Elva, the child Eragon had blessed in *Eragon*. The child is a monster: although still a tot, she can speak as an adult. Even more disturbing, she senses people's pain and can use magic to alleviate it. Elva's repulsive appearance and manner come from her having assumed everyone else's pain.

**Resurgence**

Eragon's and Saphira's room is damaged in a storm.

**Why Do You Fight?**

Eragon continues to train under Oromis's guidance, although he suffers repeated bouts of pain from the battle scar on his back. Oromis cautions him that logic and the ability to reason are more important than wisdom. Oromis will teach Eragon logic through debating.

**Black Morning Glory**

Oromis teaches Eragon more magic. Eragon's feelings for Arya increase, and Saphira mocks his dreams of their becoming a couple because she is an elven princess and he a Rider.

**The Nature of Evil**

Eragon and Saphira grow steadily more powerful, but his progress is nonetheless impeded by the pain from his scar.

**Image of Perfection**

Thanks to Oromis's teaching, Eragon understands the Ra'zac better and they no longer seem as powerful.

Eragon reveals the depth of his feelings for Arya. Oromis guides him to focus on his need to be a Rider and a leader.

**The Obliterator**

Eragon focuses on his training rather than his feelings. He learns more about literature and culture along with sword fighting.

**Narda**

The narrative switches back to Roran: he has led his people to Narda. The journey was filled with hardships. Roran is seized with both relief and fury when he sees a poster of Eragon: like Roran, Eragon is wanted on the charge of treason. There is a huge reward on Eragon's head. Roran gets his people a ship to take them to Teirm, but they can't afford to pay Clovis, the owner, his full fee. They plan to trick and rob him.

**The Hammer Falls**

The Ra'zac arrive but do not attack. The villagers prepare to board the barge and set off. Roran tells Clovis the truth about their condition and mission

**The Beginning of Wisdom**

Eragon brings Arya flowers, apologizes for his mooning over her, and vows to attend to his studies. Arya tells Eragon that she is preparing to return to the Varden. After training, Eragon craves meat so he and Saphira go hunting and easily catch rabbits and deer. Despite his craving for meat, Eragon finds that he cannot eat the rabbits because they were living things, showing that his training has taken hold. Saphira devours them for dessert.

**Broken Egg and Scattered Nest**

Eragon and Saphira visit the Stone of Broken Eggs, the place where the elves killed the dragons and destroyed their eggs. Saphira is despondent that the dragon Glaedr, the only other dragon she has ever seen, does not desire her. Indeed, he attacked her.

**The Gift of Dragons**

On a traditional elvish celebration day of the pact with the dragons, called the Blood-Oath Celebration. Eragon is healed of his wound and, as an unprecedented gift from the dragons, gains elvish qualities that enhance his strength and agility.

**In a Starry Glade**

Eragon proposes to Arya, but she firmly rebuffs his advances.

**Landfall**

The narrative shifts to Roran. Felda asks him to talk to her son Mandel about Mandel's gambling. A group of men, led by Roran, heads south to Teirm.

**Teirm**

They scout around and then take lodging at the Green Chestnut inn. The next day, they search for provisions and transportation once again. They learn that Jeod

Longshanks's possessions are about to be auctioned off and seek him out.

### **Jeod Longshanks**

They chat for a while, but Jeod recognizes Roran.

### **And Unexpected Ally**

Jeod realizes that Roran and Eragon bear a strong resemblance. Seeing the posters of the two men, Jeod was able to surmise what had happened, but he never imagined that Roran had brought the entire village with him. The two men openly discuss the situation, filling in the gaps in each other's knowledge. Jeod, as a member of the Varden, tells Roran and the small group of villagers about Eragon and Brom, information he knows because Brom was his closest friend.

### **Escape**

Jeod helps Roran lead his group to Surda.

### **Child's Play**

Trianna shows Nasuada the magnificent lace created through magic. Elva arrives, having saved Nasuada from assassination. Elva serves as an unofficial bodyguard to Nasuada.

### **Premonition of War**

Trianna finds the assassin. Before the man committed suicide, Trianna learns that he is part of the Black Hand, a group loyal to Galbatorix. Orrin summons Nasuada, who brings Elva with her. Orrin has heard that an army of 100,000 men is gathering for attack. They plan a defense, including summoning Eragon.

### **Red Blade, White Blade**

Eragon is pleased at his heightened prowess; nonetheless, he still yearns for Arya.

### **Visions Near and Far**

Eragon feels that he has melded with the plants and animals in the forest, showing his increased powers in a different way. The raven Bladgen brings an enigmatic message of foreboding. Eragon learns from a magic mirror what has happened to Roran and the village. Eragon decides that it is time to fight.

### **Gifts**

Eragon leaves for the battle in Surda. First, Oromis gives Eragon three gifts: a restorative enchanted drink called "faelnirv"; the Riders' greatest treasure, the belt of Beloth the Wise, which is filled with large diamonds (used to store energy); and a scroll of knowledge. Eragon pays his respects to Queen Islanzadí. She gives Eragon a bow and a quiver of arrows. Eragon and Saphira leave.

### **The Maw of the Ocean**

Meanwhile, Roran, Jeod, the people of Carvahall, and Uthar Wynn, the head sailor, sail to Surda.

### **Running the Boar's Eye**

The ship crosses a fierce maelstrom, a whirlpool called

The Boar's Eye to shake off pursuing Empire ships.

### **To Aberon**

Eragon and the elves arrive in Aberon to find everyone poised on the edge of battle. The armies of the Varden, together with the army of Surda, camp on a plain opposite the vast armies of Galbatorix. Eragon, Saphira, and the elves arrive at the Burning Plains of Alagaësia.

### **The Burning Plain**

Nasuada tells Eragon about the dire situation: more than 100,000 soldiers are arrayed against them. Elva greets Eragon, who apologizes for his blessing gone wrong. Eragon decides to organize Du Vrangr Gata and lead them into battle. Arya wishes him well. Angela the herbalist is making an odd brew.

### **The Clouds of War**

Trianna is not willing to give up her control of Du Vrangr Gata, but Eragon wins her over. The magicians demonstrate their spells.

### **Nar Garzhvog**

The Urgals arrive and reveal that Galbatorix has tricked them, so they have decided to join Nasuada and her people. Nasuada agrees and they join forces. An emissary arrives from Galbatorix to say that by not surrendering, Nasuada and her people will be annihilated in battle.

### **Witch's Brew**

Nasuada reveals some shocking news: in the event of her death, she has chosen Eragon as her successor. Angela has poisoned the enemy's food, killing many soldiers and causing the officers to hallucinate.

### **The Storm Breaks**

The battle begins, and Eragon is able to repel the opposing armies, but the tide soon turns.

### **Convergence**

Roran and the villagers arrive in Surda and join the forces of the Varden.

### **Eldest**

With the arrival of the dwarves from the east, the situation changes again. An unknown Dragon Rider kills Hrothgar. Eragon feels two powerful new spell casters arrive: the Twins, thought dead. The Twins kill the sorcerers under Eragon's command. Eragon faces off with the unknown Rider. He finally unmasks his opponent: It is Murtagh!

### **Inheritance**

Murtagh tells Eragon that the Twins had betrayed the Varden and taken him to Galbatorix. Galbatorix made Murtagh and his dragon swear to try to capture Eragon. One of the two remaining dragon eggs has finally hatched. Murtagh explains that Galbatorix wants to capture Saphira and mate her with the third dragon hatchling, still dormant in its egg. Murtagh reveals that

Eragon was the youngest son of Morzan and Selena; therefore, Murtagh is Eragon's elder brother. Murtagh takes Zar'roc (Eragon's sword), saying it should rightfully have been his, an inheritance from Morzan.

**Reunion**

Eragon decides that even though Morzan may be his parent, Garrow was his father and Roran is more of a brother than Murtagh. In the meantime, Galbatorix's army is forced into retreat. Eragon and Roran decide they will seek out Katrina together. Through scrying, Eragon believes she is being held captive by the Ra'zac in Helgrind. The saga is to continue in Book Three.

**Timeline of Modern Events that Impact Fantasy Literature**

- 1970** liquid crystal watches go on market
- 1971** CAT scan
- 1972** pocket calculator
- 1973** car airbags
- 1974** barcodes on supermarket products
- 1975** home computers
- 1976** VHS and Betamax
- 1977** first complete genetic structure of an organism found (Great Britain)  
first flight of the Space Shuttle  
first commercial flight of supersonic Concorde between New York, Paris, London  
The United States admits testing neutron bomb  
Trans-Alaska Pipeline starts oil flowing Prudhoe Bay to Valdez
- 1978** Louise Brown born (first in vitro fertilization)
- 1979** graphical user interface developed
- 1980** Sony Walkman
- 1981** compact disks hit the market
- 1982** video keyhole surgery
- 1983** synthetic human insulin approved for sale
- 1984** DNA fingerprinting
- 1985** first dotcom registered
- 1986** laptop computer
- 1987** Prozac hits the market
- 1988** first Internet virus; 10 percent of online computers disabled
- 1989** toaster becomes first appliance controlled over the Internet
- 1990** first gene therapy (four-year-old girl with an immune disorder)

- 1991** Internet browser developed (spawns World Wide Web)
- 1992** text messaging
- 1993** Global Positioning Satellite
- 1994** genetically modified tomatoes
- 1995** Toy Story, the first entirely computer-generated feature film, is released
- 1996** Hubble Deep Field photographs reveal of slice of the universe approximately 10 billion light-years into the past
- 1997** Dolly the sheep: first mammal cloned from an adult cell
- 1998** first segment of the International Space Station launched
- 1999** electronic reusable paper invented
- 2001** implanted microchips give sight to three blind men
- 2002** iris (eye) scanners first used for airport security
- 2003** Homo sapiens fossil "Herto Man" is declared 160,000 years old, 50,000 years older than any anatomically modern human ever discovered.  
Human Genome Project publishes the complete human genetic sequence in the journal Nature.
- 2004** Astronomers confirm the discovery of the most distant object ever identified in our solar system, the first known object from the Oort Cloud.
- 2006** NASA's Stardust spacecraft completes its seven-year, three billion-mile expedition through the solar system, returning with a canister full of tens of thousands of comet particles and interstellar dust, the first such samples ever collected.
- 2007** NASA's Dawn Mission begins eight-year, 3.2 billion-mile journey to the beginning of the solar system.

**Biographical Sketch**

Born 1983 in Southern California and raised in Montana, Christopher Paolini became a publishing success while still a teen when *Eragon*, the first novel of a projected trilogy, topped the bestseller charts. Paolini, who was home-schooled by his parents, began writing *Eragon* when he was fifteen years old. It took him about a month to plot the entire trilogy; a year to draft *Eragon*, and two years to revise and edit. His parents, who own a small publishing company, decided to self-publish the

novel. After the Paolini completed the novel, Reed College in Portland, Oregon, offered him admission and a scholarship. He turned down the offer, preferring to go on a writer's tour with his novel. Dressed in medieval costume, Paolini read from his novel and autographed copies in schools, libraries, bookstores, and fairs around the country. He spoke in more than 100 locations.

The Paolinis also placed copies of *Eragon* in Montana book stores, where novelist Carl Hiaasen's stepson bought one. After Hiaasen read the novel, he called his editor at Alfred E. Knopf and suggested that they might want to publish it. Knopf accepted the novel with edits of 20,000 words. They added a new cover as well. The book has sold remarkably well, as explained earlier.

Ironically, Paolini began writing the novel as a hobby, never intending to publish the results.

### Critic's Corner

Riding on the success of Paolini's debut novel *Eragon*, *Eldest* quickly became a publishing phenomenon, selling 425,000 copies during its first week, making it the fastest-selling book ever published by Random House Children's Book group. *Eldest* was a *New York Times* best-seller, a *USA Today* bestseller, a *Publishers Weekly* best-seller, a *Wall Street Journal* bestseller, and a Book Sense bestseller.

Some critics were laudatory. *Booklist*, for example gave the book a starred review. Critic Sally Estes said: "The expected fantasy elements are well in place, and the characters and their relationships continue to develop nicely. The ending promises an even more cataclysmic battle ahead." *Bookmarks Magazine* noted: "If the pace is inconsistent or the themes formulaic, Paolini has nonetheless created a unified, vivid fantasy world that propelled most reviewers forward." Writing in *Time*, Lev Grossman commented that *Eldest* is "a book that significantly expands and enriches Paolini's fictional palette, adding new points of view ... including that of Eragon's cousin Roran ... and expanding Eragon's emotional range as he struggles against his arch nemesis, the evil wizard-king Galbatorix."

In her review in *Kliatt*, Michele Winship predicted that patient fans "will not be disappointed" by this sequel. Winship also observed that the author's "lush writing and close attention to detail make this epic flow effortlessly." In the opinion of a *Publishers Weekly* contributor, readers "are rewarded with walloping revelations in the

final pages."

However, reviews were not entirely positive. The amazon.com critic, for instance, had this to say: "The sheer size of the novel, as well as its many characters, places with difficult names, and its use of imaginary languages make this a challenging read, even for experienced fantasy readers. It is essential to have the plot threads of the first volume well in mind before beginning." Sarah Couri noted in *School Library Journal* that "While there's nothing particularly original here, the book will find its fan-base." *Entertainment Weekly* pointed out the novel's numbingly slow pacing, clunky style, and ridiculous plot line, rating it one of the five worst books of 2005, a "700-page drag." Many other critics lambasted its unmistakable similarity to *Lord of the Rings*, *Dragonriders of Pern*, and *Star Wars*.

### Other Works by Christopher Paolini

*Eragon*, 2003

### Related Reading

*Booklist*, August 15, 2003, Sally Estes, review of *Eragon*, p. 1981; April 15, 2004, "Top 10 Fantasy Books for Youth," p. 1455.  
*Bookseller*, September 23, 2005, J. Patrick Eves, "Eldest Stays on Top," p. 16.  
*Christian Science Monitor*, August 7, 2003, Yvonne Zipp, "Teen Author Wins Readers Book by Book."  
*Daily Variety*, July 15, 2005, Michael Fleming and Claude Brodesser, "Fox Fires Up Dragon Tale.(Twentieth Century-Fox to Release *Eragon*)," p. 1.  
*Entertainment Weekly*, August 26, 2005, Jennifer Reese, review of *Eldest*, p. 64.  
*Kirkus Reviews*, July 15, 2003, review of *Eragon*, p. 967.  
*Kliatt*, September, 2003, Michele Winship, review of *Eragon*, p. 10; September, 2005, Michele Winship, review of *Eldest*, p. 12.  
*New York Times Upfront*, September 19, 2005, "Turning Daydreams into a Best-Seller," interview with author, p. 6.  
*New York Times Book Review*, November 16, 2003, Liz Rosenberg, review of *Eragon*, p. 34.  
*Publishers Weekly*, July 21, 2003, review of *Eragon*, p. 196; July 25, 2005, review of *Eldest*, p. 78; September 5, 2005, *Eldest* Hot," p. 8.  
*School Library Journal*, September 1, 2003, Susan L. Rogers, review of *Eragon*, p. 218; October, 2005, Sarah Couri, review of *Eldest*, p. 170.  
*Time*, August 29, 2005, Lev Grossman, "The Real-Life Boy

Wizard: At 15, Christopher Paolini Created the Best-Selling Fantasy Novel Eragon. At 21, He's Back with a Sequel," p. 69.  
*Writer*, March, 2004, "Christopher Paolini.(How I Write)," interview with author, p. 66.

## General Objectives

1. To understand the importance of heroism
2. To assess the effects of war
3. To recognize the themes of loyalty and determination
4. To appreciate the importance of role models
5. To understand the novel's title
6. To appreciate the elements of fantasy
7. To find examples of bravery and courage
8. To describe the novel's setting
9. To analyze unusual characters
10. To see the different manifestations of evil

## Specific Objectives

1. To search for self-knowledge
2. To probe the clash of good and evil
3. To appreciate determination and stubbornness
4. To explore the power of dragons and other mythical creatures
5. To determine how Eragon matures and changes
6. To compare and contrast appearance and reality
7. To assess personal responsibility
8. To understand the Riders and their role in society
9. To differentiate between fantasy and reality
10. To engage in an heroic quest

## Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Christopher Paolini's style, present the following terms and applications to the novel:

**Fantasy:** a kind of writing that describes events that could not take place in real life. Fantasy has unrealistic characters, settings, and events. *Eldest* is solidly in the tradition of the classic heroic quest fantasy, including magic, dwarves, elves, and dragons, and the clash between good and evil.

**Allusion:** a reference to a well-known place, event, person, work of art, or other work of literature. Allusions enrich a story or poem by suggesting powerful and exciting comparisons. In *Eragon*, Paolini makes numerous allusions, including references to Norse legends and heroes.

**Archetypes:** an original model or type after which other similar things are patterned; a prototype. For example, *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* are

the archetypes that have influenced all subsequent horror stories. Paolini bases his hero Eragon and his loyal steed Saphira the dragon on previous historical and literary archetypes. Eragon's sword Zar'roc is also an archetype, drawn from the old English legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Archetypes help Paolini give his story the heroic dimensions he desires.

## The Importance of Setting

*Eldest* is set in the mythical land of Alagaesia. Paolini roughed out the main history of his mythical country before he began writing the novel. He drew a map (and included it in the novel) to show the location of each of his make-believe places. Alagaesia is a world of thrilling battles, bitter treachery, and true love. Since Paolini created the entire world of Alagaesia, he is free to suspend reality at will. As a result, the novel features mythical creatures such as dragons, witches, and elves. The dragon Saphira in *Eldest* is an especially beguiling creature. She is like a best friend: loyal, funny, brave, intelligent, and noble. She is also fiercely independent, proud, and capable of being jealous when Eragon becomes interested in other "women," especially Arya.

Further, people in Alagaesia have unbelievable powers, such as the ability to heal others, read minds, and meld their minds with creatures as well as humans. Thus, the setting is crucial to the novel, because the wild adventures that Paolini describes could not take place on a realistic world.

## Cross-Curricular Sources

### Fiction

- Richard Adams, *Watership Down*  
 Peter S. Beagle, *The Last Unicorn*  
 Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*  
 Barbara Kingsolver, *The Poisonwood Bible*  
 Ursula K. Le Guin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*  
 C. S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia*  
 Patricia A. McKillip, *The Forgotten Beasts of Eld*  
 Michael Moorcock, *Elric of Melniboné*  
 James Morrow, *Towing Jehovah*  
 Philip Pullman, *The Amber Spyglass*  
 Philip Pullman, *The Golden Compass*  
 J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*  
 J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*  
 Louis Sachar, *Holes*  
 Mary Stewart, *Merlin Trilogy*  
 J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*  
 Vernor Vinge, *A Deepness in the Sky*

T. H. White; *The Once and Future King*  
Connie Willis, *To Say Nothing of the Dog*  
Roger Zelazny, *The Great Book of Amber: The Complete Amber Chronicles, 1-10*  
Marion Zimmer Bradley *The Mists of Avalon*

## Nonfiction

John Clute, *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*  
Vincent Di Fate, *Infinite Worlds: The Fantastic Visions of Science Fiction*  
Frank M. Robinson, *Science Fiction of the 20th Century: An Illustrated History*  
Robert Silverberg, *Reflections and Refractions: Thoughts on Science-Fiction, Science, and Other Matters*

## Audiocassettes

*Eragon*  
*Eldest*

## Videos/Films

*The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*  
*Clamshell*  
*The Dark Crystal*  
*Edward Scissorhands*  
*Ergon*  
*The Indian in the Cupboard*  
*Labyrinth*  
*Lord of the Rings*  
*The Neverending Story*  
*The Neverending Story II*  
*Return to Oz*  
*The Rocketeer*  
*Superman - The Movie*  
*The Thief of Baghdad*  
*Time Bandits*

## Internet

Alagaesia Web site  
<<http://Alagaesia.com>>  
Interview with Paolini  
<[www.poweells.com/authors/paolini.htm](http://www.poweells.com/authors/paolini.htm)>  
Interview with Paolini in Teenreads.com  
<<http://www.teenreads.com/>>  
Christopher Paolini Bibliography  
<[www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/authors/Christopher\\_Paolini.htm](http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/authors/Christopher_Paolini.htm)>  
Interview with Paolini  
<[www.bookbrowse.com/author\\_interviews/full.index.cfm?author\\_number=934](http://www.bookbrowse.com/author_interviews/full.index.cfm?author_number=934)>

## Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Christopher Paolini's *Eldest* should include these aspects:

### Themes

- courage
- destiny
- determination
- maturity
- family
- friendship
- individuality
- innocence and experience
- loyalty
- villains

### Motifs

- training for life-and-death battles
- suffering painful injuries
- falling in love
- forging new friendships
- riding on dragons and fighting with legendary swords
- facing danger head-on
- being in a world of fantasy and science fiction
- trying to distinguish the good forces from the evil
- pledging loyalty to a leader
- using both intelligence and common sense to succeed

## Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Page numbers indicate the context from which the item is taken.

1. He felt fragile, as if a sudden shock would shatter his reconstructed body and consciousness. (p. 2)  
*(After the titanic battles in Eragon, the first volume in the series, Eragon is left feeling unsure of himself. He has been badly wounded physically, which has left him feeling brittle emotionally as well. In large part, Eldest is the story of Eragon coming to terms with his limitations, working with his still-considerable talents, and maturing. He has a great deal of help with this process, help that everyone needs as they make the transformation from teenager to adult.)*
2. He pounded the wall in frustration. I'm a man now, Saphira, not a hermit. (p. 67)  
*(One of the most significant aspects of Eragon's maturity is his growing awareness of his sexuality and sexual needs. In this scene, Eragon finds himself strongly attracted to Arya. This attraction bothers*



his dragon Saphira very much. In part, she is concerned for herself: since she and Eragon are linked emotionally, any attraction he has will affect her as well. She is also very jealous because she wants to be the only “woman” in his life. Eragon must learn to balance his needs against Saphira’s as well as the needs of others. This, too, is an essential component of maturation.)

3. Arya’s voice was very soft. “Misery is your sword. And so it was until you wielded it.” (p. 141)  
(*Eldest contains many exciting battles, and readers thrill to the dramatic confrontations. However, Paolini reminds readers that battles are filled with misery as well. Along with the considerable exhilaration of war comes the considerable heartache of death, injury, and destruction.*)
4. “This I will teach you. However, as Galbatorix has demonstrated, power without moral direction is the most dangerous force in the world.” (p. 273)  
(*In this scene, Eragon’s elven teacher Oromis delivers one of the novel’s primary themes: with great power comes great responsibility. Eragon, as with his teachers, takes this responsibility very seriously, as readers see over and over.*)
5. “When you can have anything you want by uttering a few words, the goal matters not, only the journey to it.” (p. 303)  
(*Here we see another of the novel’s major themes: working toward a goal is more important than reaching the goal. How Eragon conducts his life and the choices he makes, determines who he is as a human being. We can also infer that Paolini is speaking about the effort involved in writing a novel. The fact that a person perseveres to complete an entire novel is perhaps more important than ever having that novel published.*)
6. “If I may be arrogant enough to offer advice, I’ve found that it’s essential for my sanity to allocate a certain portion of the day for my own interests.” (p. 319)  
(*The speaker here is Orrin, who is deeply interested in chemistry. He suggests to Nasuada that she also make time for hobbies such as reading, exercise, or performance. Determined to save her people, Nasuada finds such a suggestion ludicrous, but Orrin makes a valid point about the importance of maintaining balance in your life. We can infer that the author suggests we should all heed these words.*)
7. “Wisdom is the most important tool for a person to possess.” (p. 350)  
(*Eragon utters these words, but Oromis disagrees. Instead, Oromis believes that the most important*

*quality is logic. Oromis believes that logic, applied properly, can overcome any lack of wisdom. Not everyone would agree. Many could argue that flexibility, tolerance, the ability to stick to a task, and humanity—the acceptance of others as they are—are far more important qualities than logic.*)

8. I should have paid more attention to her, realized Eragon. (p. 442)  
(*Here, Eragon recalls the advice he had received earlier: “When you can have anything you want by uttering a few words, the goal matters not, only the journey to it.” The fact that Eragon is able to take the advice of others, realize its wisdom, process it, and apply it shows that he is well on his way to maturity.*)
9. It is time. (p. 549)  
(*In this scene, Eragon decides that he is ready to attack Galbatorix and his supporters. Eragon feels that he is emotionally as well as physically ready and that he can no longer delay getting involved. This decision propels the plot to its climax.*)
10. Fathers, mothers, brothers, cousins, thought Eragon. It all comes down to family. (p. 662)  
(*Eragon believes that his true family is with Nasuada, the elves, and the others he has met along the way. These creatures are his “true family” because they have nurtured him, taught him, supported him, and guided him. Through these people, Eragon has found his greatest sense of belonging. Thus, “family” is comprised of those who support you, not necessarily those whose blood or bloodline you share.*)

## Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

### Questions 1-5 (Literal Level)

1. When and where does the story take place? Why is the setting significant to the plot?  
(*The story takes place in the fantasy land of Alagaesia. The time is not specified. The setting is important because Alagaesia is a land of fantasy and magic, including elves, witches, monsters, and flying dragons. This allows the author to weave his tale of make-believe.*)
2. What happens to Katrina?  
(*She is kidnapped by the Ra’zac, the king’s ghastly minions, to force Roran and Eragon out of hiding.*)
3. Who is Oromis and how does he help Eragon?  
(*Oromis, an elf and former Dragon Rider of the Old Order, teaches Eragon to reach his true potential. As*

*such, Oromis serves as Eragon's second father after Brom, a character from the first book in the trilogy, Eragon.)*

4. How does Arya raise the money she needs to feed, clothe, and arm her people?  
*(In one of Paolini's cleverest conceits, she devises a lace-making scheme, whereby her magicians weave fine lace by magic. They create a flourishing cottage industry.)*
5. How does Eragon change as the novel progresses?  
*(At first, Eragon is wounded psychologically as well as physically. He has been deeply affected by the battles and deaths he experienced in Eragon. As Eldest progresses, he reaches his full potential as a Rider, learning swordsmanship and magic through his education with Oromis. In addition, he becomes interested in women. Finally, his body is magically changed, his scar healed.)*

**Questions 6-8 (Interpretative Level)**

6. Galbatorix has yet to appear in person in the trilogy. Explain why.  
*(That which we fear is always more fearsome for being hidden. Thus, readers inflate the fearsome Galbatorix because all the knowledge they have of him is second-hand. Thus, by withholding Galbatorix, Paolini creates greater suspense.)*
7. Is it trust or fear that makes the people of Carvahall follow Roran into the wilderness?  
*(Students could argue both sides of this issue. Roran has become a true leader, and people trust him. They are also terrified of the Ra'zac, especially after these monsters eat their victims.)*
8. Eragon loves Arya, but she firmly rebuffs him. Why?  
*(As an elf, Arya recognizes that a relationship between a human and an elf is impossible. First, elves live extraordinarily long lives, and Arya is already more than a century older than Eragon, even though she appears to be his age. Further, she is a princess and he, a commoner, albeit a Rider.)*

**Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)**

9. What are the novel's shortcomings?  
*(Possible response: The plot is derivative, drawn largely from Lord of the Rings and Star Wars. Further, the story is sluggish and overblown; the characters and dialogue clichéd.)*
10. Do you find the relationship between Eragon and Saphira believable? Why or why not?  
*(Those who do find it realistic can argue that it is similar to the love between a boy and his dog. Those who do not find it realistic can argue that Saphira functions more as a girlfriend than as an animal. She is jealous of Eragon's attention to other females, for*

*instance.)*

**Questions 11-13 (Creative Level)**

11. Working with a small group of classmates, discuss some ways that you might use Eragon's powers.
12. Explain how Paolini makes his fantasy world seem believable.

## Across the Curriculum

### Art/Music

1. Draw a picture of a dragon. Use the descriptions in the novel to spark your creativity.
2. Write a ballad celebrating Eragon's heroic feats. Perform your ballad for your classmates.
3. Choose background music for an especially dramatic scene. Read the scene to a group of classmates as you play the music in the background.
4. Paolini claimed that his Montana home, nestled in the scenic Paradise Valley, was an inspiration for his story. Draw your impression of his family's home.
5. Create a new cover picture for the novel.

### Geography/History/Social Studies

1. Using magic, Nasuada has her subjects manufacture lace to fund the war efforts. Parallel this to Gandhi's success with homespun during the Indian Independence movement.
2. Why do the dwarves, the elves, and the humans all have such different mythologies? What do their stories tell us about each of their races? Explain in an essay or display.
3. Eragon feels that he has a destiny to fulfill. Name people in history who you feel had a destiny to fulfill. Possibilities include Abraham Lincoln, Mohandas Gandhi, and Martin Luther King. Then research one of these figures in detail.
4. In a Teenreads.com interview, Paolini said that he has "always been fascinated with the sources of most modern fantasy that lie in Teutonic, Scandinavian, and Old Norse history." Trace some of the legends he uses in the novel. See what elements he adapted for his novel.
5. Paolini used Old Norse as the basis of his elven language in Eldest, as well as many names. Choose any three names from the novel and find the original names that Paolini used for inspiration.
6. Choose an epic battle from medieval history and explain how it is similar to the battles in Eldest.

### Math/Science

1. The elves in this novel are strict vegetarians. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of being a vegetarian. Then list a week's worth of vegetarian

meals that you would like to eat.

2. In the novel, distance is measured in leagues. Find out how leagues relate to miles, yards, feet, and inches. Show your results on a chart.
3. People in the novel navigate by the stars. Learn more about this ancient method of navigation and share what you learn with a small group of classmates. Be sure to include information about the North Star.
4. How many miles can the average horse cover in a day? Show your results in a chart, comparing the progress of a horse to that of a person walking and a person riding in a car.
5. A number of the Varden die of heatstroke. Explain the symptoms and treatment for this condition.

**Language Arts**

1. Many reviewers have noted the similarities between *Eldest* and Tolkien's works. Read *Lord of the Rings* and compare and contrast it to *Eldest*.
2. *Eldest* opens with this sentence: "The songs of the dead are the lamentations of the living." What does this opening tell you about the story? What does the author mean by the "lamentations of the living"? Explain in an essay.
3. Names have a great deal of power in the novel. Rename yourself, choosing a name that reveals key aspects of your personality.
4. When asked what advice he would give to aspiring teenage writers, Paolini said, "Write about what excites and moves you the most, otherwise your enthusiasm will never sustain you through an entire novel." Based on his advice, write a summary of a novel that you would like to write.
5. Orrin is furious when he hears about the success of Nasuada's lace plan. He sputters that no bard can compose an epic about lace. Write the epic of *Eldest* now, including the role of the lace. Include at least five verses of four lines each.

**Speech/Drama**

1. Imagine that you are Roran. In a speech, convince the villagers to leave their homes and follow you through the Spine.
2. Does Nasuada take control of the Varden because she is Ajihad's daughter or because she has special leadership qualities? Debate this issue with a group of classmates.
3. To save the people of Carvahall, Roran kills, steals, and uses trickery to get what he needs. Are his actions justified because of their admirable reasons and their outcomes? Discuss this issue in a roundtable

format.

4. Who are the characters that might play a major role in the next book in the series? Consider Galbatorix, Arya, Murtagh, Roran, and Katrina in addition to Eragon and Saphira, of course.
5. Murtagh uses magic more effectively than Eragon. Explain why.
6. In a roundtable discussion, explore which elements of *Eldest* your classmates liked the most and which elements they liked the least.

**Alternate Assessment**

1. The raven Bladgen tells prophecies in riddles. Make up some riddles to share with your classmates. See if they can solve them.
2. Eragon learns a great deal and matures in this novel. Make up a schedule for your own self-improvement. You may wish to consult Benjamin Franklin's plan for self-improvement for ideas.
3. Analyze Paolini's writing style in this novel, focusing on word choice, sentence structure, figures of speech, and description.
4. Imagine that you could have any magical power at all. What power would you have and why? Explain in a speech how you would use this power.

### Vocabulary Test

Find synonyms and antonyms for each word from *Eldest*. See how many different synonyms and antonyms you can list.

|                 | <b>Synonyms</b> | <b>Antonyms</b> |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. lamentations | _____<br>_____  | _____<br>_____  |
| 2. carnage      | _____<br>_____  | _____<br>_____  |
| 3. flaccid      | _____<br>_____  | _____<br>_____  |
| 4. quagmire     | _____<br>_____  | _____<br>_____  |
| 5. nonplussed   | _____<br>_____  | _____<br>_____  |
| 6. fortuitous   | _____<br>_____  | _____<br>_____  |
| 7. fecund       | _____<br>_____  | _____<br>_____  |
| 8. absorb       | _____<br>_____  | _____<br>_____  |
| 9. reverie      | _____<br>_____  | _____<br>_____  |
| 10. frank       | _____<br>_____  | _____<br>_____  |

## Comprehension Test A

### Part I: Matching (20 points)

Complete each of the following descriptions with a name from the list that follows. Place the letter of your answer in the blank provided at left.

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| A. Eragon     | F. Islanzadí |
| B. Galbatorix | G. Oromis    |
| C. Saphira    | H. Glaedr    |
| D. Roran      | I. Arya      |
| E. Katrina    | J. Ra'zac    |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. the beautiful elf that Eragon loves
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Arya's mother
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Oromis's dragon
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Shadeslayer
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Stronghammer
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. the woman whom Roran loves
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. the crippled elf who teaches Eragon important skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. the dragon
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. the evil, mad ruler
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. the horrible creatures that eat their victims

### Part II: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true or F if any part is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. When the novel opens, Eragon and his dragon Saphira have just saved the rebel state from destruction by the mighty forces of King Galbatorix, cruel ruler of the Empire.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. With his dying breath, Ajihad makes Eragon promise that he will find his daughter and make her queen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Eragon is attracted to Trianna, a beautiful sorceress, engendering Saphira's jealousy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The elves eat only meat; they do not like vegetables at all.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Arya is deeply spiritual, more so than any of the others of her clan.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Dagshelgr comes from the town of Carvahall.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Saphira realizes that Eragon is full of love and looking for someone to reciprocate his emotions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Elva, the child Eragon had blessed in Eragon, is a monster, having assumed everyone else's pain.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Eragon and Saphira visit the Varden, the place where the humans killed the dragons while they slept.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. On a traditional elvish celebration day of the pact with the dragons, the Blood-Oath Celebration, Eragon is healed of his wound and, as an unprecedented gift from the dragons, gains elvish qualities that enhance his strength and agility.

### Part III: Identification (20 points)

Explain why each is important in the story.

- 1. Eragon's sword
  
- 2. dwarves' system of manners
  
- 3. names

4. dragons

5. the Menoa tree

**Part IV: Essay (40 points)**

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Commenting on *Eldest* during an interview in the *Writer*, Paolini noted: "In Book 2 [*Eldest*], I begin to explore Eragon's growing up. He's beginning to notice women. And how do you deal with that—when you're linked to a gigantic, scaly lizard that just happens to know your every thought? Their friendship is the core of the book." Prove Paolini's statement with at least two specific examples from the novel.
2. Which characters in *Eldest* do you find most admirable? Why?
3. Describe two realistic and two fantasy elements in the novel.
4. Summarize what you learned about dragons, mythical creatures, from the novel.

## Comprehension Test B

### Part I: Sentence Completion (20 points)

Circle the correct word or phrase to complete each of the following statements.

1. Eragon is summoned to the Council of Elders, who announce that they have chosen Ajihad's daughter (**Nasuada, Angela**) as their new leader.
2. At first, Roran seeks refuge in the (**Spine, Varden**), a fierce, dangerous region.
3. The king is delighted when Saphira announces that she will likely be able to repair Isidar Mithrim, the elves' huge (**mural, gem**).
4. (Farthen Dûr, Ellesméra) is the land of the elves.
5. Roran comes from the town of (**Carvahall, the Burning Plain**).
6. Nasuada raises the money she needs to support her people by having her magicians make (**food, lace**) to sell.
7. Orrin has heard that an army of (**1,000; 100,000**) soldiers is gathering for attack.
8. Oromis gives Eragon the Riders' greatest treasure, the belt of Beloth the Wise, which is filled with (**diamonds, gold**).
9. Roran's ship manages to cross a large maelstrom, a whirlpool called (**The Bermuda Triangle, The Boar's Eye**) to shake off pursuing Empire ships.
10. (**Murtagh, The Twins**) kill off the Varden's group of mages and sorcerers under Eragon's command.

### Part II: Matching (20 points)

Match the following descriptions with the names of characters from the list below. Place the letter of each response in the blanks provided at left.

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| A. Katrina  | F. Islanzadí |
| B. Arya     | G. Elva      |
| C. Glaedr   | H. Roran     |
| D. Hrothgar | I. Ra'zac    |
| E. Eragon   | J. Oromis    |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. the child who Eragon had blessed—with shocking results
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. the former Rider who teaches Eragon many of the skills he needs to be a Rider
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Sloan's daughter, who is in love with Roran
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. the dwarf king
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. the queen of the elves
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Oromis's dragon
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. the terrifying, fierce creatures that eat their victims after they kill them
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Eragon's cousin, also called "Stronghammer"

- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. the elven princess whom Eragon loves
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. the novel's teenage hero

### Part III: Reasons and Causes (20 points)

Complete each sentence with a reason from the novel.

1. Roran seeks out Jeod Longshanks because
2. The blessing Eragon bestowed on the child in Eragon was worded wrongly because
3. Angela helps the war effort by
4. The Urgals have decided to join Nasuada and her people because
5. Galbatorix can control Murtagh and his dragon because

### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Compare Eragon and Roran, showing how they are similar and different.
2. Eldest made several best-seller lists. Explain its tremendous appeal.
3. Describe how Eragon changes as he experiences the events described in the novel.
4. Explain how Eldest, as with many fantasy novels, explores the struggle between good and evil.

## Answer Key

### VOCABULARY TEST

#### Possible responses:

| Story Word      | Synonyms          | Antonyms    |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. lamentations | wailing, moaning  | laughing    |
| 2. carnage      | death             | creation    |
| 3. flaccid      | limp, flabby      | firm        |
| 4. quagmire     | dilemma, quandary | solution    |
| 5. nonplussed   | confused, baffled | enlightened |
| 6. fortuitous   | lucky             | unlucky     |
| 7. fecund       | fertile           | infertile   |
| 8. absorb       | soak up           | exude       |
| 9. reverie      | dream             | reality     |
| 10. frank       | honest            | evasive     |

### COMPREHENSION TEST A

#### Part I: Matching (20 points)

|      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. I | 6. E  |
| 2. F | 7. G  |
| 3. H | 8. C  |
| 4. A | 9. B  |
| 5. D | 10. J |

#### Part II: True/False (20 points)

|      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. F  |
| 2. F | 7. T  |
| 3. T | 8. T  |
| 4. F | 9. F  |
| 5. F | 10. T |

#### Part III: Identification (20 points)

- Eragon's sword Zar'roc has magical powers, much like King Arthur's sword in the legends of ancient England.
- The dwarves have a very complicated system of etiquette because they live so long they cannot afford to offend anyone. Arya teaches this to Eragon, and he learns it carefully.
- Names are crucial in the novel because they describe many of the character's qualities. Thus, many of the characters have two names. For instance, Oromis, Eragon's teacher in the novel, is also called Osthato Chetowä—The "Mourning Sage" and Togira Ikonoka—The "Cripple-Who-Is Whole." These titles describe his power and his physical condition.
- In this novel, dragons have many wonderful powers, not the least of which is their ability to meld their mind with the mind of their master. We see this with Eragon and Saphira, as they share each other's emotions.

- The Menoa tree is alive, a sentient being, which shows the power of nature and the respect that people should have for all living things.

#### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

### COMPREHENSION TEST B

#### Part I: Sentence Completion (20 points)

|              |                   |
|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. Nasuada   | 6. lace           |
| 2. Spine     | 7. 100,000        |
| 3. gem       | 8. diamonds       |
| 4. Ellesméra | 9. The Boar's Eye |
| 5. Carvahall | 10. The Twins     |

#### Part II: Matching (20 points)

|      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. G | 6. C  |
| 2. J | 7. I  |
| 3. A | 8. H  |
| 4. D | 9. B  |
| 5. F | 10. E |

#### Part III: Reasons and Causes (20 points)

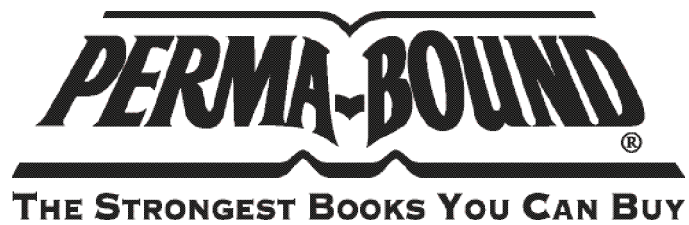
- Roran has heard that Jeod's possessions are about to be auctioned off and he wants to purchase them at a rock-bottom price.
- Eragon lacked sufficient knowledge of the Ancient Language at the time, so his blessing became a curse of sorts.
- poisoning the enemy's drinks and bread, killing many soldiers and causing the officers to hallucinate.
- Galbatorix has tricked them and they want land to farm. They conclude that Nasuada is best able to meet their needs.
- he knows their true names

#### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.







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