

# Artemis Fowl; the Graphic Novel

Eoin Colfer & Andrew Donkin

Teacher's Notes

Written by Meghan Brunet

*"This story began several years ago at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Artemis Fowl had devised a plan to restore his family's fortune. A plan that could topple civilizations and plunge the planet into a cross-species war. He was twelve years old at the time..."*

## Introduction

*Artemis Fowl* is an ideal text with which to introduce the graphic novel genre to a junior or middle secondary English class.

Written by Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin (whose works include *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight*), with art by Giovanni Rigano, the book presents the first of the six-book Artemis Fowl prose series in mesmerizing visual format.



The novel blends 'Top Secret' government agency profiling documents and crime surveillance photographs with its comic-book panels, allowing readers to glimpse and digest elements of the plot and characters that add depth and intrigue to the unfolding storyline.

The artists behind *Artemis Fowl* have created dark, cluttered and eerie worlds for both the human and magical realms. Seedy backstreets in Saigon are awash with sweltering heat, yellow smog and the scent of rice wine. Readers are taken deep underground to the fairy realm - presented in panels of blue and green, where goblins and other faceless creatures lurk in the shadows. For the first time we also get to see Fowl Manor – an imposing and isolated mansion where Artemis lives and plots, surrounded by wealth, weapons and suffocating darkness.

The characters themselves, although archetypal in one sense, are never allowed to fall neatly or completely into their traditional stereotypes.

Artemis is an evil child genius struggling to care for his deranged and abusive mother whilst he naively hopes for the return of his missing father.

Butler is his beefy henchman who happens to be fluent in seven languages and a bona fide cordon bleu chef.

Holly is the only female in Recon, an elite branch of the fairy police. She is sexy and smart but begins the novel in a precarious position with both a "sexist, stick-in-the-mud boss" and a botched paramilitary operation in her past.

Likewise, the smaller characters in this tale are quirky and extreme enough to be entertaining, whilst realistic enough in their thoughts and motives to be accessible.

For a mixed ability class in need of material that will both engage and empower them as readers and visual analysts, *Artemis Fowl* is an easy sell.

## Plot Synopsis

The opening paragraphs are written on yellowed parchment, as though a wrinkled and bespectacled psychiatrist has attempted to observe and record exactly what it is that is so different about young Artemis Fowl.

Artemis is described with bewilderment as a “child prodigy” who “delights in not speaking” and “dedicates himself wholly to criminal activities”.

From there the first few illustrated panels begin to tell the story of Fowl’s latest villainy. A satellite picture of the universe; safe for now. A pale figure hunched over reams of data by the light of a single lamp. A birds-eye view of Ho Chi Minh City, where a twelve year old boy in a dark suit and a giant bodyguard trawl the streets in search of a drunken fortune-teller...

Artemis has, after months of research, learnt that there exists a fabled book in which all the secrets of the fairy race are recorded; their magic, their wealth, their laws and their weaknesses. The human intelligent enough to translate the Gnommish script would find himself with “an entirely new species to exploit”.



Using his brains, Butler’s brawn and the boundless family fortune, Artemis locates and translates the book. The latter task is no mean feat. Computer screens blaring “NEGATIVE” sprawl across the pages where other panels explore the real world Artemis lives in: A dark, eerie mansion too vast and empty for one little boy and his delusional mother.

Artemis finally solves the puzzle and states with no emotion whatsoever that fairies are now under his command, bound “to help me restore the financial fortune and the criminal reputation of the Fowl Family”... if only he can find one.

It is here we meet Holly, the young female member of the fairy special police, working to maintain order and secrecy in the last underground safe haven for all creatures like her. She is smart and sassy, and desperate to prove herself to her chauvinist pig of a boss. But she is weak when she takes on a risky mission that will take her to the surface world, having not yet renewed her magic with the yearly ritual.

After a bungled troll-retrieval operation in the human-world, Holly is left vulnerable and visible. As she limps her way to the ancient ritual site, Artemis, armed with the knowledge of all her magic tricks, quickly captures her.

With a valuable member of the fairy underworld as his prisoner, Artemis now holds the fairy world to ransom. His demand is one tonne of fairy gold in exchange for one hostage. The authorities are forced to obey his demands as in one incident after another Artemis shows that he is not a ‘man’ to be toyed with.

Having been given the gold Artemis becomes aware that his enemies have planned a double-cross, sacrificing their own agent in order to wipe out all human occupants of Fowl Manor with their most powerful weapon – the Bio-Bomb.

We hold our breath as Artemis asks his companions to trust him, and then administers them all and himself, a powerful sedative.

We should not be surprised when the next few pages reveal a genius plot that has once again, managed to foil Artemis’ enemies and ensure that Artemis ends up with exactly what he planned from page one.

## Chapter by Chapter discussion

The **Introduction** is one simple double-spread. One page of prose and one page of panels.

### Questions:

1. How does the author create intrigue in the first description of Artemis?
2. How has the artist in the second panel communicated the idea that Artemis is a recluse?

In **Chapter One** we find Artemis and Butler in the middle of a cluttered and chaotic Ho Chi Minh city, liaising with an opportunistic snitch who has information about the book they seek. This leads them to a deserted back-alley slum, where an ancient fairy offers fortunes for rice wine. Artemis tricks her into drinking Holy Water and she is forced to trade her book for the viral antidote, which Artemis then photographs and flies home.

### Questions:

1. Discuss the colours and details used to create a specific sense of place in Saigon.
2. Discuss the presentation of the waiter-snitch. How do we know he is a shady character by his physical appearance?
3. How does Artemis speak and why is this unusual for a twelve-year old boy? Why might he possess this kind of vocabulary and tone?
4. How is the fairy world first represented to us? Discuss the wider symbolism of the drunken, hermit fairy.

In **Chapter Two** we learn more about Artemis' sad personal life. He spends hours locked away in his study, trying to decode the Gnommish script of the book. We learn that Butler lives with him, as does Butler's younger sister Juliet. Upstairs, locked in self-imposed quarantine, is Artemis' deranged Mother, driven insane by the mysterious disappearance of her husband years ago.



Artemis finally notices the similarities between the fairy script and the Egyptian hieroglyphs on an old family heirloom, and the secrets of the book are unlocked.

### Questions:

1. How is Fowl Manor a visual indication of the way Artemis has been brought up?
2. In what scenes do we as the reader feel sympathy for Artemis? How has the author prevented Artemis from becoming the stereotypical villain?
3. Discuss the symbolism of the colours and lighting presented in the interior scenes of Fowl Manor?
4. How would you describe the relationships between Butler and his sister, and between them and Artemis?
5. What allusions are made to Artemis' Father in this chapter? What is the significance of all the blue tones used in this scene?

In **Chapter Three** we meet Holly, getting ready for another day at *Recon*. She is given a tongue-lashing by her superiors for arriving one minute late, and then assigned to a dangerous 'locate and retrieve' mission above ground, where a rogue troll is about to encounter human life. Unwilling to risk her job by admitting her magic is at a low ebb, Holly takes the mission and nearly dies when it goes horribly wrong. In shame she slinks off to perform the ritual to renew her magic powers.

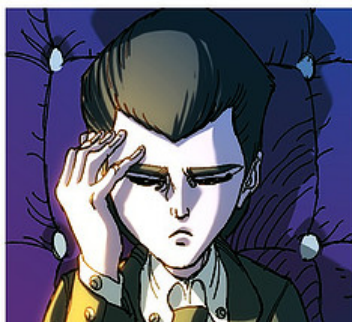
### Questions:

1. How would you describe Holly's personality from the first page alone? Justify your response with textual evidence.
2. What is she haunted by, and how is colour used in the memory panels?
3. On the second page Holly narrates that "*since the humans began experimenting with mineral drilling, more and more fairies have been driven... into the depth and security of Haven City*". What wider meaning does this have regarding humans and their relationship with the planet?
4. What is interesting about the names used for various creatures in this other world?
5. Discuss the physical appearance of Haven City, and Holly's workplace. What era do you think this is set in? What does it suggest about the fairy species?

In **Chapter Four** Artemis and Butler lie in wait for a fairy to come to the ritual place they have read about in the Book. She struggles in vain, as Artemis is equipped with the fore-knowledge of all her spells and developed gadgets to defend against them.

### Questions:

1. Discuss the visual presentation of the human world in the first page? How does it contrast with the fairy world?
2. How have the artists managed to communicate two concurrent plot-lines at the same time, through the use of colour and panels and close-ups?
3. How are internal thoughts presented in order to distinguish them from spoken conversation?



In **Chapter Five** we find ourselves back at Recon headquarters where Commanders Root and Foaley are alarmed at the feedback they have received from Holly's helmet camera. Root comes to the surface to rescue his lost agent, who is now being held prisoner in the hull of an abandoned merchant ship, with Juliet as her curious warden.

Artemis, watching his prisoner on screens from the safety of Fowl Manor, has a moment of self-doubt and guilt, but quickly recovers and deals swiftly with Commander Root who has attempted to enter the ship.

### Questions:

1. Discuss the setting of Dublin Docks and why it is appropriate as the preferred location of Artemis.
2. What evidence is there in the text that Butler is not merely the mindless 'brawn' in this operation?
3. Discuss the persona of Commander Root. Does he remind you of any other typical "big boss" figures in other novels or films?
4. How is Artemis humanised briefly in this scene, and what image signifies his departure from all emotions?
5. How does Artemis relate to adults and why is this unusual?
6. How are shadows and perspective used to portray evil just before the explosion?

In **Chapter Six** the Recon team gather their resources, come to the surface and place Fowl Manor under siege.

### Questions:

1. What emotions are stimulated by the scene in which Artemis' mother fawns over a stuffed effigy of her missing husband?
2. What colours and setting have you come to associate with Artemis' mother? Why might these colours have been selected?
3. What evidence is there in this chapter that Artemis is still a little boy inside?
4. How is Artemis' power enhanced by the reactions other characters, such as Foaley, have to him?
5. Discuss the different management styles of Artemis and Commander Root.
6. How are the fairy Recon squad presented as a paramilitary group? What is their human equivalent?
7. How is the use of colours, angles, perspective and text font different in fight scenes? Discuss.
8. What is Holly attempting to do in her cell that so puzzles Artemis, and what is his and Butler's response to her struggles?
9. How is colour used to distinguish the outside of Fowl Manor from the inside?
10. What is the symbolism of the fire in the negotiation scene between Root and Artemis?

In **Chapter Seven** we meet Mulch, a low-life dwarf incarcerated for breaking and entering. Since he can dig at incredible speeds, expelling the rocks and dirt from his rear-end, he has been released to dig into Fowl Manor from underneath. Using the technology given to him at Headquarters, and some forest-leveiling flatulence, Mulch rescues Holly (although she is still bound to the Mansion) and in the following flurry of ransom exchanges, manages to escape.

### Questions:

1. What parallels are drawn between the human world you are familiar with, and the world of underground creatures in the prison scene?
2. How is a hierarchy suggested in the fairy world, through the way various creature species are drawn?
3. How has colour been used to separate different spheres of action (settings) in this chapter?
4. How is magic represented in art?
5. Why can't Holly leave the mansion after being rescued?
6. What evidence is there in the text that Artemis is not always confident in his plans?
7. How does Mulch escape the authorities?



In **Chapter Eight** Julius Root is replaced as Head of Operations, by a young, ambitious upstart who believes unleashing a furious troll will solve the stalemate with Artemis. Holly tries to warn the humans of the troll approaching but it bursts into the house and unleashes hell. Butler is nearly killed, but Holly uses her magic to heal him and he manages to find a way to bludgeon the troll into submission.



**Questions:**

1. How does this chapter deal with familiar human concepts such as corruption, ambition and division amongst the authorities?
2. Why is the panel showing Artemis on the floor after being punched by Holly, repeated three times? Why does the lighting change in each? What is being suggested about his character?
3. What do Holly's actions in saving the humans from the troll reveal about her character?
4. How have the artists managed to capture and communicate the size and strength of the troll?
5. Discuss the use of onomatopoeia in this chapter.
6. Discuss the colours, angles and perspectives used in the scene between Butler and the troll. Why is Butler's use of antique armour significant?
7. Discuss the way in which our view of this troll completely changes in just one comic panel. Find the panel and discuss why it has such impact.
8. How is the passing of time communicated in the long blue panels after the troll is thrown from the manor?

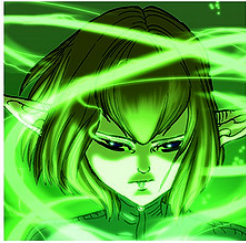
In **Chapter Nine** the fairies unleash their last result and most powerful weapon – the Bio-Bomb. Its job is to obliterate all organic life-forms in the building whilst leaving the structure and content intact. Artemis is given the gold but he mystifies his enemies by letting Holly walk out with half of it. Inside the manor, as the Bio-Bomb is being prepared, Artemis seeks the absolute trust of his companions and gives them all a powerful and instant sleeping potion. In quite a sensitive scene the three companions toast to their collective risk, and the Bomb hits the mansion.

The final pages unveil the deviously simple way in which Artemis managed to escape with his friends, and the Recon officers return to the Underworld, struggling to swallow the fact that they have been thoroughly beaten by a pubescent brat.

**Questions:**

1. What evidence is there that Artemis can appreciate the friendship of others? How does he demonstrate his friendship to Butler and Juliet throughout this chapter?
2. Discuss another friendship that ends in this chapter, and explain why this was so.
3. What object is used to symbolise unity and loyalty when Artemis and his companions devise their final plan?
4. What visual elements add drama and poignancy (sentiment) to this final scene?
5. What is revealed by Artemis' first word when he recovers from his stupor?
6. Discuss the use of light in the last pages of this chapter.
7. How has the author cleverly left us with a mixed impression of Artemis in the final page? Why might he have ended with a contradiction like this?

## Major Characters



**Holly Short** is the only female in Recon, the special division of fairy police responsible for the secret retrieval of underground creatures who stray to the human world.

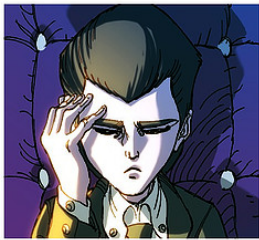
She represents the feisty female archetype, desperate to prove herself in an all-male world of “gangs” and “dirtbags” but also driven by her own macho lust for action “*God I love this job*”.

She is haunted by a failed retrieval operation that occurred in Hamburg, and has thus lain herself open for public criticism of even

the smallest infractions “*What time do you think this is Short!!*”

A typical youth, she has put off performing her magic-renewing ritual until it’s too late, and thus her capture by Artemis is inevitable when she comes to the surface.

Holly nevertheless is smart, quick-thinking and compassionate – caring more for the preservation of life (human *and* fairy) than for her official duties.



**Artemis Fowl Jr** is the central protagonist of the novel, and a character possibly already well-known by many of your students. His supreme intelligence at such a young age, and in particular his moral misuse of these talents, have “*puzzled the greatest medical minds and sent them gibbering to their own hospitals*”.

He is a child prodigy of baffling extremes. He is a mathematical and scientific genius, can translate ancient languages and possesses

an unnerving knowledge of the human psyche. He effortlessly manages the family estate and his mentally ill mother – not to mention his own employees, international travel itinerary and plot for world domination.

He is also however, something of a contradiction.

He is both evil villain and child victim. Perhaps his eternal quest for wealth, power and domination over others is merely compensating for a lack of family, love and youth.

He feels moments of remorse (“*I hadn’t expected our guest to appear quite so...*

*human*”), misses his father terribly (“*but there isn’t going to be any news of Mr Fowl*”)

and always protects his Butler’s life along with his own. He is also visibly affected by the verbal abuse his deranged mother throws at him, caught up in her own miserable delusions. When at the end he spends his millions in ill-gotten fairy gold on a wish for his

mother to be well again, we see the little boy he has been all along. “*Her embrace is warm and strong. I feel like a boy again*”.



**Butler** comes from a long line of men who have served the Fowl family. His occupation is also his real last name – “*several eminent linguists believe this is how the noun originated*”. His skills

include SAS-level marksmanship, martial arts, emergency medicine, fluency in several languages and cordon bleu cooking.

He is more than just the “muscle” or the “henchman” of this story however; his friendship with and unofficial guardianship of

Artemis is evident at many points in the novel. He is concerned for Artemis’ personal wellbeing “*It’s after dawn sir...why don’t you have a break?*” as much as he is for the

mission he is assigned to do. Artemis trusts him completely “*Why should I flinch? Butler always intervenes*” and makes it clear that Butler commits crimes only as part of his loyalty to the Fowls “*Butler is a man of great honour. He does not find kidnapping innocents easy*”. Butler also has a younger sister, Juliet, who lives in Fowl Manor with him and Artemis. He is thus also involved in various situations where we see he is caring, devoted and aggressively protective of both his own family and his adopted one.



**Julius (Commander) Root** is the head of LEPrecon – the special branch of fairy police that are in charge of retrieving all manner of dangerous and criminal creatures who have strayed to the human realm and risk making contact.

He is a career-cop, notoriously aggressive, pushy and disrespectful of “*any authority other than his own*”. He seems to be the otherworldly parallel for such typically wound-up bosses as we see in Superhero flicks, office TV shows and police dramas. “*They*

*call him “Beetroot”. There’s an official betting pool running on how long it’ll be before his heart explodes.”*

Again however, he is not allowed to completely satisfy the obnoxious-boss stereotype.

He explains his unfair treatment of Holly as proof of his respect for her “*there are a lot of hopes resting on you*” and more than once risks his own life and career to save the lives of his staff, “*for a job like this, we need our very best*”.

## Themes

### Grief

Artemis’ actions cannot be separated from his deplorable situation as a child with no parents. He grieves for his Father, Artemis Fowl Snr, who has been missing presumed dead since his cargo ship was sunk by the Russian Mafia in the Bay of Kola. In his study Artemis has installed an entire wall of televisions, permanently tuned to every major international news channel, so that if ever a trace of his father is found, he will know immediately. These televisions are never turned off, and are a physical reminder of Artemis’ loneliness, hope and obsession.

Artemis also grieves for his mother – alive but not mentally well. Since the disappearance of her husband she has been driven insane by the lack of knowledge or closure. She locks herself in her chambers, where she lives in a delusional fantasy that her husband is alive and sharing her bedroom. Artemis is called on frequently to bring her food or some other comfort, where he is faced with a mother who not only does not recognize her only son, but verbally abuses him at the slightest provocation.

- What visual evidence is there that Artemis is in a state of permanent grieving for his Father?
- What is the difference between the pain Artemis feels in relation to his father and his mother?
- To what extent might Artemis’ grief be influencing his actions?
- How are colours and setting used to communicate the disturbing world of Mrs Fowl?
- If Artemis’ parents were alive and well, how would you feel about his actions?



## **Evil**

This is a very interesting theme in the novel – due to its ambiguity. Artemis is clearly capable of assault and abduction if not murder, and rarely displays remorse or second thoughts about any of his violent and deceptive actions.

He is an accomplished liar at the age of twelve, capable of manipulating adults on so many levels that not even their criminal psychologists and profilers are safe from his calculated deceptions.

On the other hand, how can he truly be evil if he is just a child? Are his violent, domineering words the bluff of a young man scared to use aggression? We might note that it is Butler who performs the more heinous aspects of Artemis' plans, and that Artemis is never seen firing a gun or delivering a blow. In many cases his clever plans are devised so carefully to avoid physical violence, and there are moments when Artemis is visibly shaken by aggression (verbal and physical) when it is directed at him.

- What is the difference between evil and opportunism?
- Why is intelligence so effective for evil?
- Is Artemis truly evil?
- Can children be evil?
- What might the author be saying here about the effect of poor parenting (or lack of) on the behaviour of young teens?
- Artemis uses the gold he has demanded from the fairies in ransom, to purchase a wish for his mother to be well again. Does this motive justify the means by which he acquired the gold? Does the “end” ever justify the “means” in our society?

## **Friendship**

It is perhaps surprising to see a theme like this in a novel that is predominantly about characters drawn together only by Artemis' criminal plans. Despite the limited ‘normal’ interactions between the characters however, we do see many varieties of friendship appearing throughout the storyline.

- Is it loyalty or friendship that motivates Butler's service of Artemis?
- What comes between the friendship of Commander Root and Commander Cudgeon?
- Would Holly Short make a good friend? Justify your response.
- Would you befriend Artemis if he came to your school, and if so why?
- How does Commander Root show ‘friendship’ of a kind, to his colleagues (i.e. Foaley) and subordinates (i.e. Holly)?

## **Ambition**

Artemis has a number of ambitions. One he states proudly to Butler and Juliet is to “*restore the financial fortune and criminal reputation of the Fowl family*”. Another he thinks to himself only – “*The world will remember my name*”. Earlier, he also narrates a third and darker ambition, revealing the less palatable wishes of this unique twelve year old... “*Any human who came into possession of such a book would have an entirely new species to exploit*”.

Commander Cudgel is a minor character with major ambitions, and other characters have their own personal agendas – whether they regard their careers or families.

Butler is perhaps unique in his apparent lack of personal ambition (apart from the desire to continue his family's legacy of exceptional service), appearing all the more loyal and selfless for it.

- What do you think Artemis' REAL ambitions are?
- Did Artemis succeed in any of his ambitions?
- Do you think Artemis' ambitions are morally acceptable?

- Why might Artemis have a desire to “exploit” others?
- Do you have to be selfish to be ambitious?
- What do you think the ambitions might be of Artemis’ mother, Juliet, Butler, Commander Root and Holly?

### **Family**

The only biological families in this novel are both incomplete. Artemis is missing his Father and has only the shell of his mother with him at home. Butler has a sister but there are no references to any other family. We do know however, from a case file, that Butler’s father was killed in action – meaning the mission must have been part of his duties for Mr Fowl Senior.

The relationships in both of these families are also fairly unusual if not dysfunctional. The age gap between Butler and his younger sister is large, and there is no explanation of how they came to live together in Fowl Manor, or what purpose she fulfils there. Butler is strongly protective of Juliet but they rarely converse or spend time alone together. Artemis’ mother does not even recognize him, and he feels a mixture of disgust and yearning for her.

The extent LEPrecon troops go to under Commander Root to save Holly’s life, suggests that her work have become a pseudo family to her – or perhaps that when a species are driven underground their sense of unity becomes stronger.

- How many types of family are there in the novel? How are you defining ‘family’ in each case?
- What connection does the breakdown of family have on Artemis’ actions?
- How is the theme of family explored in the novel?
- In what visual contexts are we introduced to various members of the characters’ families?

### **When worlds collide**

The setting for this story is a world in which fairies and other creatures are real. They have been ‘driven underground’ to haven city and now direct all their efforts to remaining a secret from humans.

- What does this novel have to say about how some cultures or communities in our world treat others?
- How do the fairies view humans? How do humans view fairies?
- Why do the fairies try so hard to stop humans ever seeing any of their race?
- Who might the human parallel to the fairies be, in our world today?
- What does this novel have to say about cultural dominance?
- Which species is dominant, and which is superior? Are they the same?

### **Misfits**

Mulch is a troll who belongs to no community. He is hated by prison folk, and rejected by general fairy society. He is only spoken to by the fairies when they need his help in digging through to Fowl Manor.

Holly is the only female in an all-male police branch. Her isolation has made her strive harder for acceptance. She is a mix of teenage nonchalance and career-driven recklessness, ever aware of both her successes and failures. Especially how they will appear to her male coworkers.

Artemis of course, is no normal child. He has no friends, no family and would certainly not fit in at any normal school or suburb.

Butler similarly, stands out physically in society, and does not seem to fit any lifestyle of his own. The only place he 'fits' is in service to others and thus he puts all his effort into this. His sister Juliet is the only girl in Fowl Manor, and with her fairly normal style of dressing and speaking, does not seem to 'fit' the dark world and plots of Artemis.

## Suggested Student Activities



### Reconstructing Text

When teaching graphic novels, we want students to understand and appreciate all the visual clues that go into an image. One way to draw their attention and analysis to features such as colour, perspective, angle, space and symbolism is to make them rely on all of these.

Photocopy or scan a page of the novel, white out the text, and photocopy again for students. They will have to use all visual clues given to them to reconstruct what might be taking place in terms of action, thoughts and dialogue. Discuss their decisions as a class – what they wrote in a speech bubble is not important – **why** they wrote it is.

### Reconstructing Colour

Again, to help students understand the power and suggestive symbolism of colour, is to remove it and ask them to put it back in. Photocopy or scan a page of the novel (or an unseen text) and print in grayscale. Students must decide what colours to put back into the panels, basing their decisions on the settings, the tone of voice characters seem to be using, the mood of the scene and the personalities of the characters.

### Construct a timeline

A quick activity designed to help students cement their understanding of plot development. Since stories in graphic novels are not bound by the same literary and structural rules as prose, they can often amble all over the place, interweaving sub-plots, flashbacks, other media and so on. Have students create a timeline on which the events are clearly shown in order of occurrence. They also might have sub-plots branching off and occurring on parallel lines.

### Alternative Ending

Artemis' scheme relied at many points on everything going according to his calculations. He would predict how people would react, what decisions they would make, and what their weaknesses were. Ask students to pick a point in the novel where Artemis has taken a gamble (or calculated risk) and have them re-write or draw the scene that would have followed if he had been wrong.

Students could also extend the ending. What if Artemis had lost the gold, and the trust of his companions? What if his mother had not become her normal self again? How would Artemis react, and how might this affect his next scheme?

### Movie Adaptation

You are a Hollywood director who has been approached about the idea of creating the first in a series of Artemis Fowl movies. They hope it will be the next Harry Potter franchise. You are keen to direct but you need industry sponsorship. Create a portfolio that you will use in a meeting next week to pitch the movie concept. You need to show them a list of actors suited to each role and why they will be successful, a movie poster including the 'hook' line, a list of locations you will need to shoot at (and accompanying

travel budget) , a profile of your target theatre audience and a design for merchandise that is going to surprise and impress.

### CD Soundtrack

Students will have to consider the thoughts and feelings of various characters, as well as the themes explored in various situations, by creating music that represents these. Ten songs must be selected for the Artemis Fowl soundtrack, each being accompanied by one paragraph. In this paragraph students must explain where the song fits, why it is suitable and what aspects of the music or lyric will enhance the content of that scene.

### Plot reconstruction

A quick and simple task that helps students understand the structure of dialogue, and dialogue-driven plot. The panels of one scene are jumbled up for students to reassemble. They must use clues within the text (characters' use of tense, physical positioning, referencing one another, tone of voice etc) to decide on chronology.

### Paired interview task

Students pair up to plan and present an interview scenario between Artemis and a child psychologist. Give them room for creative interpretation but the questions should mostly revolve around Artemis' family relationships, how he feels about life, parents, human society and himself , and what motivates him to use his resources for evil.

### Plan Artemis' next Plot

Using what they know about Artemis' personality, desires and physical resources, students can brainstorm what Artemis' next evil scheme might be. The plot should include motives, aims, method, people required, weapons and technology required, and a step-by-step timeline of how he will execute the plan.

### Text Response Essay

After one or two lessons reminding students of the typical discursive essay structure, students can be given one of the following essay topics. They have a chance to demonstrate basic essay and text response skills, as well as constructing an argument around some of the more thought-provoking aspects of the novel.

1. "Is Artemis Fowl Jnr really a *villain*? Support your arguments with evidence from the text (quotes and examples)."
2. "Would Artemis be a good friend? Justify your response with textual evidence."
3. "Does Artemis fit the stereotype of a 'normal boy'? Explain why or why not, using evidence from the text to support your ideas."
4. Can graphic novels tell a story as powerfully as a traditional novel? In your response refer to both the Graphic Novel and Prose versions of this text."



## Further resources and Reading

*Teachers are encouraged to use 'Artemis Fowl' as part of a wider unit on Graphic Novels, particularly if teaching this text in any grade level higher than 7. When it is time to branch out further into the Graphic Novel genre, the following resources can be used.*

### **Comic Book Confidential (DVD, 1988)**

Introduced by Kevin Smith (known to your students as *Silent Bob* from various MTV movies) director Ron Mann takes viewers through the controversial history of comic books from the early '30s to the late '80s, the documentary itself presented as an interesting mix of panel art, archival footage, and quirky interviews.

### **Maus I and II (Art Spiegelman, 1973)**

Shocking the literary world by winning the Pulitzer Prize in its year of publication, *Maus* allows students to relive the trauma of the Holocaust through the eyes of metaphorical mice, relentlessly hunted by Nazi cats. Use sections only, but loan to your more capable readers who will love the fact that it represents a real and shocking era of human history.

### **A Contract with God (Will Eisner, 1978)**

Offering a glimpse into the sad, spiritual, seedy and harrowingly real lives of those who live in one apartment building, this was the first publication to introduce itself as “A Graphic Novel” to readers, coining the term as we know it today.

### **The Sandman: Preludes and Nocturnes (Neil Gaiman, 1995)**

One for the more sophisticated readers, this is the first in a volume of eleven in the *Sandman* library. It is a collection of dark and brooding tales, blending “modern myth and dark fantasy” in a dramatic, elegant and witty style that will appeal to students who will readily identify themselves.

### **Death: The Time of Your Life (Neil Gaiman, 1997)**

A favourite of 14-16yr old girls with a penchant for gothic-style humour and smart, edgy narrative. Although the title seems morbid the central protagonist – Death – is actually portrayed as a seventeen year old girl who wears a top hat and quotes Mary Poppins. Her carefree zest for life (when she gets to visit earth to collect souls) and sensitivity to the departed teach us not to fear death, but to value life.

### **Runaways; Pride & Joy (Marvel. Written by B. K Vaughan, 2003)**

Pulled from the Premier's Reading List of 2007, this is an easy read that tells the story of six teens, forced to band together and leave home after witnessing their parents sacrifice a young girl as part of a secret crime organisation called “The Pride”.

### **A Very Sammy Day (Azad, 2004)**

A nice quick read for the more reluctant members of your class, who will easily get pulled into the worst day in existence for the “world's unluckiest thief”.

### **Polly and the Pirates (Ted Naifeh, 2006)**

Another easy introduction to Graphic Novels, and also on the Premier's Reading List, this is a must-read for girls aged 12-15. Polly is a spoilt heiress, abducted one night by a pirate gang who claim her dead mother used to be their leader. After some cultural acclimatisation Polly becomes a swashbuckling Pirate queen with a surprisingly vicious taste for violence to accompany her blonde pigtailed.