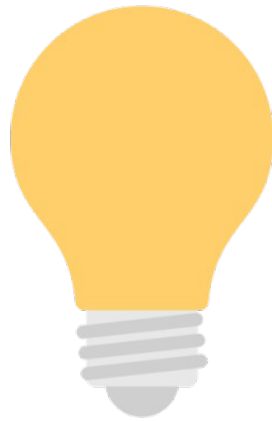


# The City of Ember



By

Jeanne DuPrau

A Novel Study  
by Joel Michel Reed

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## Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on three chapters of *The City of Ember* and is comprised of five of the following activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension Activities

### Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

**Themes** which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include growing up, respect for authority, perseverance when facing difficult circumstances.

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## List of Skills

### Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *anagrams*
7. Use of singular / plural nouns
8. Listing compound words
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Determining alphabetical order
11. Identify *personification*
12. Identify/create *similes*

### Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

### Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Identify *cliffhangers*
4. Identify the climax of the novel.

### Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Relating personal experiences

### Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Write a description of personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an Observation Sheet
8. Complete a KWS Chart

### Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

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## Synopsis

Lina Mayfleet desperately wants to be a messenger. Instead, she draws the dreaded job of Pipeworks laborer, which means she'll be working in damp tunnels deep underground.

Doon Harrow draws messenger – and asks Lina to trade! Doon wants to be underground. That's where the generator is, and Doon has ideas about how to fix it. For as long as anyone can remember, the great lights of Ember have kept the endless darkness at bay. But now the lights are beginning to flicker... (Random House)

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_city\\_of\\_ember](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_city_of_ember) (Warning: Website contains plot spoilers)

## Author Biography

*Jeanne DuPrau*

**Jeanne DuPrau** (born 1944 in San Francisco, California) is an American writer, best known for *The City of Ember*, a series of novels for young people. She lives in Mento Park, California.

DuPrau received a BA in English Literature from Scripps College in Claremont, California. She has been a high school English teacher, an editor for educational publishing companies, a technical writer for **Apple Inc**, and a freelance writer. On her website and several other online biographies, DuPrau is described as a gardening enthusiast and dog lover. She is also an ice skater, a bird watcher, a house builder, a gardener, a piano player, and a gourmet vegetarian cook. DuPrau has no children. She has two nephews and a niece.



Courtesy of Wikipedia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeanne\\_DuPrau](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeanne_DuPrau)

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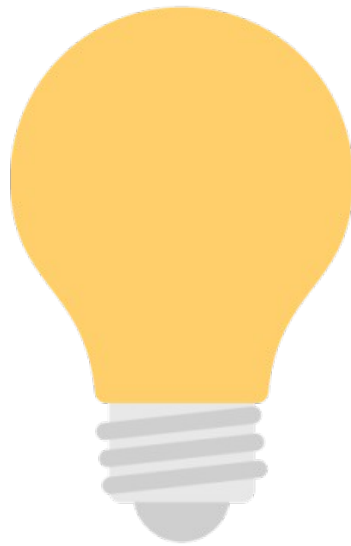


## Student Checklist

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

# The City of Ember



*By Jeanne Duprau*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Chapter 1-2



**Before you read the chapter:**

Write a brief summary about what you believe *The City of Ember* will be about.




**Vocabulary:**

Circle the correct word that best matches the meaning of the underlined word.

- But most of the time life proceeded as it always had.  
a) reversed      b) clarified      c) processed      d) continued
- The desks were arranged in four rows of six, one behind the other.  
a) scrambled      b) ordered      c) disorganized      d) chaotic
- Lina looked up and gazed around the schoolroom. She said a silent goodbye to everything that had been familiar for so long.  
a) shrugged      b) gestured      c) stared      d) walked



4. Lina hesitated a moment, then put her hand inside and fingered the bits of paper.  
a) wavered      b) continued      c) proceeded      d) talked
5. Somewhere inside her, a black worm of dread stirred.  
a) evil      b) fear      c) hate      d) muppet
6. He wasn't hurt. He could have jumped up, grinned, and walked away.  
a) gagged      b) laughed      c) smiled      d) chuckled

## Questions



1. Briefly describe the 'Instructions' section found at the beginning of the novel.


2. Why were the residents so concerned about the flickering lights?


3. Why did Lina and Doon want to trade jobs with each other?


4. Briefly describe the incident which resulted in Lina and Doon growing apart as friends.


5. What happened to Lina's parents?


6. What are the four rules that every messenger must follow?


### Language Activities



**A.** There are many writers that enjoy using **alliteration** - a literary device is where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's an example of an alliteration: "grouching, grouching, grumbling about something or other."



Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

The sound of an engine	
The sound of a woodpecker	
The sound of bacon frying	

**B.** A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. Here's an example from Chapter One: *"Some years there were several good jobs, like greenhouse helper, timekeeper's assistant, or messenger, and no bad jobs at all. Other years, jobs like pipeworks laborer, trash sifter, and mold scraper were mixed in."*



What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

a) A girl kicking a soccer ball.

--

b) A boy jumping on a trampoline.

--

### C. What Would You Bring?

If you were in a long-term survival situation, and you could only bring ten items along in your backpack or suitcase, what would you bring?



Be sure to place your chosen items in order of importance.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

## Extension Activity

### Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene - or the entire novel.



Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first 2 chapters of *The City of Ember*. You may wish to practice your drawings before you begin.

1	2
3	4
5	6