The Neverending Story
A Teaching Unit for Grade 8 English Language Arts

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PART ONE
Understanding the Novel

The first chapters

The first chapters of this novel are the most important for the reader. It is important that the students understand what they are reading and immerse themselves in the book. While the students are still reading the book, and before we start any in-class activities, as a class we can first describe the setting, which is divided between the real world – where Bastian Balthazar Bux is hiding away in the school attic – and Fantastica, where the story that Bastian is reading is actually taking place. In Fantastica, “The Nothing” is taking over, and they are looking for a savior – Bastian.

The students must also identify and describe the characters. Since there are so many characters in the novel, the main characters will suffice. These characters include Bastian, The Childlike Empress, Atreyu, and Falkor the Luck Dragon, for starters.

The beginning of the plot is also important to understand. Because of a sense of insecurity at home and also being prey to bullies, Bastian seeks refuge in the school attic to read a book he has taken from a local used book store. He reads the book as an escape from reality, without realizing how much of an escape he is about to receive.

Plot and Climax

Throughout the story there are a few events that can be taken as hints that lead us to the climax. For example, anyone who is holding the power of AURYN has the ability to wish for anything they want; second, when Atreyu passes through the second of the three magical gates, he sees a reflection of his true self – but it is not him – it is Bastian. Third, it is revealed that the Childlike Empress can only be saved by being given a new name, and only a human can do that. Fourth, when Atreyu returns to the Childlike Empress, Bastian becomes startled because he believes that he can actually see her – he sees her as “Moon Child”. (Foreshadowing for her new given name, which will save her and Fantastica)

Here, the students must identify the climax of the story, which is Bastian making the transition from reading the story to becoming part of it. There are various causes and effects that the climax will bring to the story. For example, for Bastian, joining the story is an escape from his mediocre, mundane life, where he feels unappreciated and unloved, and it is a chance to find something better and become an actual hero. For the Childlike Empress, having Bastian come to Fantastica means she will be saved and her kingdom will be rebuilt; and for Atreyu it means that someone else will be in possession of AURYN – which could be a relief or a burden. Only time will tell.

The Resolution

The resolution of this novel comes near the very end. Bastian, reluctantly, returns home to his father, and together they decide to work on their relationship and try to strengthen it. This provides the reader with a happy ending, and closure in the novel.
NB: To closely examine the cultural references found in *The Neverending Story*, please refer to Annex A of this unit plan.

**Background Knowledge**

The students will be encouraged to inform themselves on the author, Michael Ende, but simple self-education is the only goal. Since Ende is not a well-known North American author, it may be harder for the students to identify with him and his works. For example, if you were to consult Michael Ende’s Wikipedia page, you would learn that he was a German author of fantasy and children’s literature, and that *The Neverending Story* was his most famous work. Ende was one of the most popular and famous German authors of the 20th century until he died in 1995. Because his writing varies between fiction and children’s literature, it is difficult to link our story to any factual geographical, social, historical or political events. The teacher may be able to throw in some extra cultural references here in lieu of actual events.

**Narration**

The novel is narrated from an outsider perspective. While Bastian is reading his book, we are reading along, and reading his story as well. We read about Fantastica from the point of view of Bastian, and his point of view can be trusted because he is a curious, innocent child. The reader is affected because the story continues to pull you deeper and deeper, and I believe that the author made this choice because it is a fresh alternative to other novels targeting this specific age group.

**Suspense**

The author succeeds in building suspense by using a lot of foreshadowing and also keeping the chapters relatively short. The reader is able to cover multiple chapters in one sitting, and upon reaching the end of a chapter, they are willing to keep reading to uncover a bit more of the story.

**PART TWO**

Lessons and Activities for the Novel

This unit plan is designed for a Grade 8 ELA classroom. To effectively and efficiently teach this novel, you must include learning activities that cover all sections of GCOs (listening, speaking, reading and writing). For each of these outcomes, certain lessons must be taught. The following are simply suggestions, which may also be changed or elaborated upon. The students will have a time frame of two months to complete this teaching unit. Although they may have English language arts daily, we will focus on this unit every second or third class in order to leave room for other various activities as well. The students will start off by covering listening outcomes, followed by speaking outcomes and reading outcomes, and finishing the unit with a variety of writing outcomes. This unit will be used as a teaching tool to help students better understand the basics of the novel, uncover underlying messages and better communicate with their peers.
Listening Activities

We will kick off this novel study by holding reading sessions in the classroom. Although the students are still required to read the book on their own time, in-class reading may provide some benefits that are not accessible at home – i.e a nurturing, quiet environment and peers with whom you can share your input, ask questions, discuss etc.

This activity can be done a few different ways. The teacher may sit with the class and read aloud to the students as they take notes, or different students can volunteer to read a section or a chapter at a time while the rest of the class follows along and takes notes. As the teacher, you can decide which way works better with your class.

After we have finished reading a section or a chapter of the book, we can hold classroom discussions to make sure the students are following along. The following outcomes can be met with this activity:

GCO 1: Students will be expected to speak and listen to explore, extend, clarify and reflect on their thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences.

SCO 1.1: Consider and reflect upon the contribution of others’ ideas during discussions.

SCO 1.2: Ask questions that probe for accuracy, relevancy and validity; respond thoughtfully and appropriately to such questions.

SCO 1.3: State a point of view in a convincing manner, offering relevant information to support their viewpoint.

The students will be evaluated in a formative matter. The teacher can take note of participation; evaluate who is listening by asking questions, and note discussion participation, student’s opinions, justifications, comprehension of the novel, etc. This activity is an introductory activity for the teaching unit.

Speaking Activities

The second activity of this teaching unit is called a Literature Circle. This is an activity that will take place over a period of classes, or for a certain amount of time each class. (i.e: The first 15-20 minutes or the last 15-20 minutes of the class) The students will use other class time to work on shorter assignments pertinent to this unit plan, while this particular lesson will re-emerge throughout the two-month period.

For this activity, the class will be divided into groups of four. Each person has a role, and each time the group gets together, their roles change. The groups will meet once or twice a week, depending on how long it will take them to cover the 26 chapters. The roles are as follows:

- **Quick Reader**: This person must summarize the chapters covered this week.
- **Question Master**: This person asks 5 questions pertaining to the chapters covered.
- **Vocabulary Expert**: This person finds 10 new words (and their definitions) from the chapters covered.
- **The Artist**: This person must illustrate an important scene from the chapters covered.

Outcomes that can be met with the completion of this activity include:

GCO 2: Students will be expected to communicate information and ideas effectively and clearly, and to respond personally and critically.
**SCO 2.1:** Contribute to small group conversation and whole group discussion, choosing appropriate strategies that contribute to effective talk.

**SCO 2.3:** Give instructions and respond appropriately to instructions, directions and questions.

**GCO 3:** Students will be expected to interact with sensitivity and respect, considering the situation, audience and purpose.

**SCO 3.1:** Demonstrate active speaking and listening skills such as making eye contact, rephrasing, clarifying and summarizing points already made.

**SCO 3.2:** Demonstrate a respect for others by developing effective ways to express personal opinions.

**SCO 3.4:** Recognize that different situations require different speaking and listening conventions appropriate to the situation.

The third activity for this unit is a relatively simple activity that should take no longer than two classes to complete. It is a speaking activity that should be executed near the end of the unit, after the class has read a sufficient amount of the book.

In *The Neverending Story*, there is one recurring phrase: “But that’s another story, and shall be told another time.” So, that is exactly what the students will get the chance to do. For the first class (or the first half of the class, depending on time restrictions) the students will be put in groups, where they will brainstorm ideas for a story that could stem from our protagonist’s journey in *The Neverending Story*. (Groups from the literature circle activity should work fine). Once everyone has contributed an idea, they will read their short story aloud to the class.

A formative evaluation will be used, noting the student’s ability to contribute, work well with others, and listen while other groups are speaking.

**GCO 2:** Students will be expected to communicate information and ideas effectively and clearly, and to respond personally and critically.

**SCO 2.1:** Contribute to small-group conversation and whole-group discussion, choosing appropriate strategies that contribute to effective talk.

**SCO 2.4:** Evaluate the effectiveness of their own and other’s talk in a variety of contexts.

**GCO 3:** Students will be expected to interact with sensitivity and respect, considering the situation, audience and purpose.

**SCO 3.1:** Demonstrate active speaking and listening skills

**SCO 3.2:** Demonstrate a respect for others by developing effective ways to express personal opinions.

**SCO 3.4:** Recognize that different situations require different speaking and listening conventions.

**Reading Activities**

There is one main reading activity that the students must complete in accordance with this teaching unit; that is to successfully read all 26 chapters of this novel. Once a student has read a chapter, they must prepare a summary of that chapter to prove that they have finished it. (See Annex 2 for a complete example of chapter summaries). The students will have to complete a certain number of chapters each week (however many chapters covered by the literature circle
activity will suffice) and their chapter summaries will be collected and marked at random intervals – twice a month is suggested, four times in total.

This activity will be a summative evaluation, and the students will be marked on reading the correct chapters, reading all of the correct chapters, preparing a short summary for each chapter read, and having the correct information in each summary that is prepared.

This activity will cover the following outcomes:

**GCO 4:** Students will be expected to select, read and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media and visual texts.

- **SCO 4.1:** Select texts that address their learning needs and range of special interests.
- **SCO 4.4:** Read with greater fluency, confidence and comprehension by furthering personal understanding, recognition and use of cueing systems and strategies to read and view increasingly complex texts.

**GCO 7:** Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form and genre.

- **SCO 7.2:** Identify the various features and elements writers use when writing for specific readers for specific purposes.
- **SCO 7.3:** Expand on earlier abilities to respond critically to a range of texts in various ways.

There is also a secondary reading activity to be completed with this teaching unit. While the teacher is discussing the cultural references of the novel, we will touch on the subject of bullying, which is a very real problem in today’s society. The students will visit the computer lab, where they will research the topic of bullying on www.kidshelpphone.ca. They will read up on different aspects of bullying and write a small (250 word) response to what they have learned. They may also reflect upon the quote found in the novel on page 369, which says: “Atreyu was fighting not for himself, but for his friend, whom he was trying to save.” And reflect upon a time in their lives where they had helped a friend, or could have helped a friend in need due to bullying.

This activity will include a formative evaluation, where the teacher will note that the students are doing efficient work in the computer lab, reading the Kid’s Help Phone website thoroughly and making solid links to real-life experiences, including summaries and personal responses.

This activity will cover the following outcomes:

**GCO 4:** Students will be expected to select, read and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media and visual texts.

- **SCO 4.1:** Select texts that address their learning needs and range of special interests.
- **SCO 4.4:** Read with greater fluency, confidence and comprehension by furthering personal understanding, recognition and use of cueing systems and strategies to read and view increasingly complex texts.

**GCO 5:** Students will be expected to interpret, select and combine information using a variety of strategies, resources and technologies.

- **SCO 5.1:** Access appropriate print and non-print sources with increasing independence and select information to meet specific needs with increasing speed, accuracy and confidence.
- **SCO 5.2:** Experiment with and rely upon a range of print and non-print sources for accessing and selecting information.
GCO 6: Students will be expected to respond personally to a range of texts.
   SCO 6.1: Elaborate personal reactions to what is read and viewed by providing some extended explanations, examples and supporting arguments.
   SCO 6.2: State personal points of view about what is read and viewed and justify views with increasing regularity.
   SCO 6.3: With increasing confidence and flexibility, find evidence in texts to support personal claims and viewpoints about issues, themes and situations.

GCO 7: Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form and genre.
   SCO 7.1: Recognize that texts need to be assessed for bias and broaden their understanding and awareness of the ways in which print and media texts can be biased.
   SCO 7.2: Identify the various features and elements writers use when writing for specific readers for specific purposes; describe how texts are organized to accommodate particular readers’ needs and to contribute to meaning and effect.
   SCO 7.3a: Understand how personal knowledge, ideas, values, perceptions and points of view influence how writers create texts.
   SCO 7.3b: Recognize how and when personal backgrounds influence meaning, construction, understanding, and textual response.
   SCO 7.3c: Describe how cultures and reality are portrayed in media texts.

Writing Activities

There are innumerable amounts of writing activities that can be covered with the teaching of this novel. The first writing activity that I have included is to take place at the end of the teaching unit. After the students have finished reading the novel, they will have the chance to view Wolfgang Petersen’s 1984 film *The Neverending Story*, which will take two classes to watch because it is 102 minutes running time. After the students have watched the film, they will be asked to prepare a report of 2-4 pages detailing the differences between the novel and the film; comparing and contrasting the two stories. This short essay will be considered as a piece of formal writing for this teaching unit, and it will be graded using a summative evaluation.

The students will be evaluated on their grammar and syntax, spelling and vocabulary, subject matter, matters of correctness, and their ability to follow directions. A rubric, with the directions, will be distributed before watching the movie, so the students know what they should take note of. They may also include personal opinions.

The following outcomes can be met with this activity:

GCO 8: Students will be expected to use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences and learning; and to use their imagination.
   SCO 8.1: Demonstrate competence in the frequent use of writing and representing strategies to extend learning.
   SCO 8.3: Begin to use various forms of note-making appropriate to various purposes and situations.

GCO 10: Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and to enhance their clarity, precision and effectiveness.
   SCO 10.1: Build and rely upon a broad knowledge of how words are spelled and formed; use punctuation and grammatical structures capably and accurately.
**SCO 10.2:** Choose with increasing regularity, the prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading and presentation strategies to aid in producing various texts.

**SCO 10.4:** Demonstrate a commitment to crafting pieces of writing and other representations.

Another writing activity that works well with this teaching unit is the development of character sketches. The students will be asked to pick five characters out of the story and record all of the information that they have for these characters. Please note that character sketches do not involve actual sketching. The students must write a 3-paragraph description of the character in question. The first paragraph is a physical description, the second paragraph is pertaining to the character’s role in the story, and the final paragraph is a combination of personality traits (if available) and the student’s opinion of the character.

The students will be marked with a summative evaluation. The teacher will base their mark on matters of correctness (did the student give the correct information), the layout of each paragraph (in correct order), grammar, spelling, vocabulary and syntax. Students are also encouraged to submit rough copies so the teacher can track their writing process. The outcomes that can be met with this activity include:

**GCO 9:** Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.

- **SCO 9.1:** Continue to develop writing forms previously introduced and expand this range.
- **SCO 9.2:** Consider and choose writing forms that match both the writing purpose and the reader for whom the text is intended.
- **SCO 9.3:** Understand that ideas can be represented in more than one way, and use with other forms of representing.

**GCO 10:** Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and to enhance their clarity, precision and effectiveness.

- **SCO 10.1:** Build and rely upon a broad knowledge base of how words are spelled and formed; use punctuation and grammatical structures capably and accurately.
- **SCO 10.2:** Choose, with increasing regularity, the prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading and presentation strategies to aid in producing various texts.
- **SCO 10.4:** Demonstrate a commitment to crafting pieces of writing and other representations.

The third writing activity that accompanies this teaching unit should take place while studying the latter part of the novel, after the students have had the chance to really immerse themselves in the story, and they are comfortable with the vocabulary in the novel.

This is a vocabulary development activity (not to be confused with the vocabulary role in the literature circles) where the students must find 50+ words (real or fake, and not already used in the literature circles) and publish their own mini-dictionary. The words must be put in alphabetical order and each word must be accompanied by one or two definitions. The students may work in groups to complete this assignment (not the literature circle groups) and they will be marked using a formative evaluation. The teacher will evaluate how well the students work together and contribute words/definitions, if the students are making good use of their time/producing effective (correct) definitions for their words, and pulling everything together into a dictionary format. They may do this by hand, or using a computer program.
The outcomes that will be covered with this activity include:

**GCO 8:** Students will be expected to use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify and reflect [...] and to use their imagination.

- **SCO 8.1:** Demonstrate competence in the frequent use of writing and representing strategies to extend learning.
- **SCO 8.2:** Identify and reflect upon strategies that are effective in helping them to learn.

**GCO 9:** Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.

- **SCO 9.1:** Continue to develop writing forms previously introduced and expand this range.
- **SCO 9.4:** Keep the reader and purpose for writing in mind when choosing content, writing style, language choice and text organization.

**GCO 10:** Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing, and to enhance their clarity, precision and effectiveness.

- **SCO 10.1:** Build and rely upon a broad knowledge base of how words are spelled and formed, use such knowledge to expand vocabulary, regularly use resource texts to verify spelling, use punctuation and grammatical structures capably and accurately.
- **SCO 10.3:** Attempt to use various technologies for communicating to a variety of audiences.
- **SCO 10.4:** Demonstrate a commitment to crafting pieces of writing and other representations.
- **SCO 10.5:** Gather information from a variety of sources and integrate ideas in communication.

The final activity for this teaching unit is a series of journal entries and reflections that will be submitted to the teacher at the end of the unit. This will be the student’s final project for this novel. At the beginning of the teaching unit, the teacher will pass out an outline for this final project. It states that the student’s must keep journal entries or write reflections often throughout the unit. The writings can include thoughts and opinions on certain chapters/characters in the book, the imaginary land of Fantastica in general, etc. These entries may also include thoughts and opinions on the other activities that they have done pertaining to this teaching unit, the effectiveness of group work, their overall appreciation of the unit, etc. At the end of the unit, the students must submit all of their entries or reflections, as well as a 5 page report, summarizing the information that they have recorded. This will be the second, and final, piece of formal writing for this unit.

The teacher can use the summative form of evaluation, marking the students on grammar, spelling, syntax and vocabulary, on matters of correctness, on sufficient amount of entries/reflections submitted, and on the overall presentation of the final project. Points will be removed for lack of entries/reflections submitted in the final paper, and/or for the final paper being submitted past the deadline.

The outcomes that will be covered with the final activity include:

**GCO 8:** Students will be expected to use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learning; and to use their imagination.

- **SCO 8.1:** Demonstrate competence in the frequent use of writing and representing strategies to extend learning; to explore their own thoughts and consider others’ ideas, to
reflect on their feelings, values and attitudes, and to identify problems and describe logical solutions.

**SCO 8.3:** Begin to use various forms of note-making appropriate to various purposes and situations.

**GCO 9:** Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.

- **SCO 9.1:** Continue to develop writing forms previously introduced and expand this range.
- **SCO 9.2:** Consider and choose writing forms that match both the writing purpose and the reader for whom the text is intended.
- **SCO 9.4:** Keep the reader and purpose for writing in mind when choosing content, writing style, language choice and text organization.

**GCO 10:** Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and to enhance their clarity, precision and effectiveness.

- **SCO 10.1:** Build and rely upon a broad knowledge base of how words are spelled and formed, use punctuation and grammatical structures capably and accurately.
- **SCO 10.2:** Choose with increasing regularity, the prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading and presentation strategies to aid in producing various texts.
- **SCO 10.4:** Demonstrate a commitment to crafting pieces of writing and other representations.

This concludes the lessons/activities portion of the teaching unit. Feel free to explore the annexes to further your comprehension of the novel and to aid in the creation of future lessons. Happy teaching!
ANNEX A
Cultural References found in Michael Ende’s The Neverending Story

The Neverending Story is a twenty-six chapter work of fiction written by Michael Ende. The story follows a young boy, Bastian Balthazar Bux as he travels from our world to the land of Fantastica, where the Childlike Empress and all of the citizens of Fantastica are in danger of disappearing forever, unless Bastian re-writes their story and saves them from falling into “The Nothing”. As a teacher, I would study this novel with students at the Junior High level, which would be from grade 7 to 9.

The cultural references in The Neverending Story tend to differ from any cultural references that would be blatantly known to us today because it the novel is a work of fiction and it takes place, for the most part, in a fictional place. The cultural references are more subtle, benefiting highly from the use of metaphors. The people that Bastian meet and the places that he goes have almost zero connection to the real world. Nevertheless, I was able to find some cultural references that my students may be able to identify with.

In the prologue of the story, Bastian ducks into an old book store in order to avoid school bullies. Bullying is a problem that knows no cultural boundaries. Exploring the novel with junior high students would lead me to discuss the problem of bullying in today’s society and talk about help that is available (for example, Kid’s Help Phone) and other ways we can help put an end to it. Students of all ages should be aware of bullying and the negative effects that come along with it. Together, we can try to brainstorm some possible solutions.

Three cultural references that ring true throughout this story are the protagonist’s journey through various forests, the majestic Ivory Tower, and Falkor, the Luck Dragon. In many children’s fairy tales, there is often mention of an enchanted forest and a tower with a dragon or
a trapped princess. The students will be able to identify with this novel because it has all of the classic fairy tale characteristics, only they are presented in a very new light. The enchanted forests are always changing, sometimes harboring danger and sometimes providing new friendships for our main characters. The Ivory Tower signifies both a sign of hope and a sign of distress, depending on where our reader is at in the story, and Falkor is a luck dragon, which brings a lighthearted side to even the darkest parts of the story. I will reiterate the fact that I will teach this novel to students in grades seven to nine, so the students are beyond the age of reading fairy tales, but their knowledge of fairy tales will serve as a wonderful bridge into this book. It is obviously longer than any other fairy tale, but the key characteristics are there – which can serve as an aid to those who may be having some troubles following the story, or who many not have a huge interest in the story. Comparing and contrasting our story with classic stories would serve as a great class activity.

It is also important to note the 500 doctors that visit the Childlike Empress during her illness. Although there is no truth to this story whatsoever, and none of this is taking place in our world, it still seems important for the reader to take note of the modern day medicine and how beneficial it can be to most people. Here in Canada, we are lucky to have such great health care options and it is always interesting to see how it is addressed in other places, even if they are fictional.

There is a chapter in the book where one of the characters visits “The swamps of sadness” with his talking horse. The “sadness” takes hold of the horse and “drags” him down into the swamp. In our culture, this has many similarities to someone who may be suffering from depression, who seems to be “too sad” to continue their journey. This would be a great
discussion to have with my students, possibly linking it back to the bullying references, and explain the severity of depression, who it affects, and how to find help, etc.

In another chapter, Atreyu, an important character from Fantastica, observes a purple buffalo grazing in a field. He contemplates killing it, but he lets it go. Later, the purple buffalo reappears with key information that helps Atreyu along his journey. Much like the “swamps of sadness” metaphor, this can be taken as a plea towards the ethical treatment of animals. It is important for our students to know the importance of respecting animals, another discussion that can stem from this seemingly strange novel.

Throughout the latter part of the novel, Bastian attempts to recreate parts of Fantastica that have disappeared into “The Nothing”, by using an unlimited supply of wishes that he has been granted. This undoubtedly leads us to the popular phrase “Be careful what you wish for”. Like any child given an abundance of wishes, greed begins to take over and things start to go wrong. Students at the junior high age level are very easily led astray, so teaching them the difference between right and wrong, good and bad, and consequences in general is definitely something that I would incorporate into my lessons. Remember, all that glitters is not gold!

Finally, a huge underlying cultural reference that follows throughout the story is the father-son relationship. Throughout most of the novel, the relationship between Bastian and his father is not very strong (due to the fact that his mother has passed away) which is why Bastian decides to stay at school after hours to continue reading his book instead of going home and he ultimately decides to visit Fantastica under the assumption that his father will not notice that he is gone. In the epilogue of the novel, Bastian returns home to a father who is willing to listen to his adventure stories and promises that they will work harder on their relationship.
It is important that our students know that they should be able to communicate with their parents about anything – especially at the critical age of a pre-teen. We can open the discussion up to cover teachers, guidance counselors, friends, etc. as well, as long as they know that they are never alone, and there is always help available, as long as they are willing to ask for it!

This concludes the collection of primary cultural references that I found while reading Michael Ende’s *The Neverending Story*. Of course, there are many other underlying themes and references throughout the book that could definitely be discussed between a teacher and their students, but we must also take into consideration that addressing each and every tid bit would take the entire teaching semester, so be brief and precise! Happy reading!
ANNEX B
Chapter Summaries for Michael Ende’s The Neverending Story

Introduction
- Bastian Balthazar Bux ducks into a book store to hide from school bullies.
- Carl Conrad Coreander, the owner, asks him questions and then leaves to take a phone call.
- Bastian notices “The Neverending Story” and is immediately attracted to it. He steals the book.
- Knowing that he is now considered a thief, he cannot go home, so he hides in the attic of the school, and starts to read the book.

1: Fantastica in Danger
- A fairy flies through the Howling Forest, meeting up with other beings of the Fantastican Empire.
- They meet in the Forest entirely by chance – they are all seeking the Childlike Empress, to let her know that Fantastica is in danger – pieces and places of their world are disappearing.
- They arrive at the Ivory Tower, only to find hundreds of other messengers with the same message, and also that the Childlike Empress is very ill.

2: Atreyu’s Mission
- Sidenote: Bastian reads of the 500 doctors attending to the Childlike Empress, and it makes him think of when his mother was in the hospital, before she died.
- Cairon, the Black Centaur, emerges with AURYN, the magical gemstone, and announces that he will bring it to Atreyu, in hopes that he can cure the Childlike Empress.
- Cairon arrives at the Grassy Ocean and seeks out Atreyu, who is only a young boy.
- Atreyu accepts the mission and Cairon gives him AUYRN.
- Atreyu takes off on the Great Quest with his horse, Artax.

3: Morla, The Aged One
- Atreyu and Artax pass through the Silver Mountains and the Singling Tree Country by Salamander, Sassafran and Muwamath, until they get to the Howling Forest, where he first witnessed “The Nothing” for himself.
- A purple buffalo that Atreyu had failed to kill earlier appears in his dream and tells him to visit Morla, the Aged One.
- They cross through the swamps of sadness, where Artax becomes so sad and heavy that he drowns in the swamp.
- Atreyu arrives at Tortoise Shell Mountain, where he finds Morla, a giant ancient tortoise.
- She says that the Childlike Empress needs a new name in order to get better. He may be able to find one in the Southern Oracle.

4: Ygramul The Many
- Ygramul The Many is actually a being made up of hundreds of insects. Her bite is poisonous.
- She says she can get Atreyu to the Southern Oracle, he can wish himself there, but only after she bites him. He will have an hour to live.
- As Atreyu accepts, and disappears to the Southern Oracle, a black darkness that has been following him, in the shape of a wolf, comes closer, but loses the trail at the spot where Atreyu vanished.
- Bastian has a creepy feeling that there is something odd about this story.

5: The Gnomics

- Atreyu awakes in the Southern Oracle to find that the white luckdragon, who was also poisoned, had also wished himself there. His name is Falkor.
- The two find Gnomes, healers known as Gnomics, who rid their bodies of the poison.
- Engywook, a Gnomic, takes Atreyu to see the Sphinx.

6: The Three Magic Gates

- In the Southern Oracle, Atreyu must find Uyulala, who lives behind three gates: The Great Riddle Gate, The Magic Mirror Gate, and the No-Key Gate. Each gate poses a challenge for Atreyu.
- Atreyu passes through the first gate guarded by the Sphinx because he has no fear, at the second gate, he sees his true self – which is a reflection. But it is not him, it is Bastian. He passes through the reflection, but when he re-emerges, he has lost all memory. He has no idea where he is or why he is there. He examines the third gate, it opens a crack, and he peeks inside.

7: The Voice of Silence

- Atreyu enters the third gate and hears a voice. It is Uyulala, the voice of silence, who speaks only in rhyme.
- She tells Atreyu that the Childlike Empress can only be given a new name by a human, and no humans have been to Fantastica for a very long time.
- Atreyu returns to the Gnomes. More time has passed than he thought.
- “The Nothing” has started to take over. He must continue his journey.

8: The Wind Giants

- Atreyu and Falkor fly – trying to find the borders of Fantastica, trying to get to the Outer World where they might find a human to save the Childlike Empress.
- They meet the four Wind Giants of the North, South, East and West, who explain to them that Fantastica has no borders.
- After the Wind Giants start to battle, Atreyu and Falkor get separated. Atreyu wakes up on a beach. He sees people in the distance – they get sucked into The Nothing. He runs away.

9. Spook City

- Atreyu finds himself in an abandoned city.
- All of the townsfolk have thrown themselves into the Nothing.
- He finds a werewolf chained up. The werewolf explains that the only way to the human world is to jump into the Nothing, but when you get there, you become a lie. And you spend your time convincing humans that Fantastica doesn’t exist. You can never come back.
- The werewolf admits to being the one stalking Atreyu to kill him and stop his mission, but he dies, still chained up.

10: The Flight To The Ivory Tower

- Falkor finds AUYRN, which Atreyu had lost in the sea after meeting the Wind Giants, and finds Atreyu with the dead werewolf.
- They narrowly escape the Nothing and fly back to the Ivory Tower.
- The find the Childlike Empress.
- Bastian is startled, because he believes he can actually see her. He calls her Moon Child.
- He sees her not only with his imagination, but also with his eyes.

11: The Childlike Empress

- Atreyu and Falkor find the Childlike Empress.
- Atreyu apologizes for failing the mission, but the Childlike Empress assures him that he did not.
- She explains that she has seen the boy who can give her a new name, now it is up to him to come save them.
- Bastian reads the story and realizes that they are talking about him, yet he is still unsure of himself. He can’t bring himself to cross over into Fantastica.
- The Childlike Empress says there is another way – and she sets off to find the Old Man of Wandering Mountain.

12: The Old Man of Wandering Mountain

- The Childlike Empress makes her way to the Old Man of Wandering Mountain.
- Once she finds him, he shows her the book: “The Neverending Story”, in which everything that happens in Fantastica is written.
- Unfortunately, this is the end of everything – unless they can get the human to come save them.
- The old man starts to read the story from the beginning, starting where Bastian enters the book store, right up until he must open the book, and start reading it again.
- Bastian realizes that it is indeed A Neverending Story, unless he intervenes to save them.
- He calls the Childlike Empress by the name he has chosen for her: Moon Child, and he is transported to Fantastica.

13: Perilin, The Night Forest

- Bastian arrives in Fantastica, but there is nothing there. He is simply floating in darkness.
- Moon Child appears and presents him with AURYN.
- He must use unlimited wishes to recreate Fantastica as he sees it. They start with the forest, which Bastian names “Perilin, The Night Forest”
- Bastian’s outer appearance has also changed – he is now a young dark boy from the Orient with red boots and a blue turban.
- Moon Child leaves Bastian to his own devices – telling him to create anything and everything he wishes.

14: The Desert of Colors
- Perelin, The Night Forest slowly transforms into a desert of colorful sand – the Desert of Colors.
- Bastian meets the Lion Grograman, Lord of the Desert. Wherever he is, no one else can exist. He brings the desert with him, and the desert burns everything up.
- Grograman escorts Bastian to his palace. While Bastian is bathing, Grograman mysteriously turns to stone. The colorful desert disappears.

15: Grograman, The Many-Colored Death

- The lion awakes the next morning. He explains that each night he turns to stone, and each morning he wakes up. This is the way it has to be if the Perelin Night Forest will grow and the desert will exist simultaneously. Each needs the other to survive.
- The Lion also tells Bastian about the Temple of a Thousand Doors – which is his only way out. It can be accessed through any door; he just has to wish it.
- That night, the temple is presented to Bastian, and he leaves behind the Forest, the Desert, and Grograman.

16: The Silver City of Amarganth

- After walking through hundreds of doors, Bastian finally finds himself outside.
- There, he meets three men who are travelling to Amarganth for a tournament held by Atreyu, who is trying to find “The Savior”
- Bastian realizes along the way that he is the savior Atreyu is looking for, so he accompanies the men to the Silver City.
- When they arrive, hundreds of contestants are already competing. Bastian volunteers against the best (one of the men with whom he travelled), and he wins. He presents himself to Atreyu and Falkor.

17: A Dragon for Hero Hynreck

- Hero is the man Bastian beat in the tournament.
- Bastian hangs around Amarganth long enough to give them a rich history of stories. He explains that there is a library full of his stories that they can read, and because he wished it, it was created.
- As Bastian is travelling with Atreyu, they meet up with Hero Hynreck once again. He is mad because Bastian defeated him, and his princess left him. Bastian tells him that his princess has been captured by a dragon – he also tells him where to find the dragon and how to kill him, so Hero can regain his pride.

18: The Acharis

- Bastian continues his travels with Atreyu. Atreyu thought they were looking for a way to get Bastian home, but Bastian is simply leading them to the Ivory Tower at the center of Fantastica.
- They meet the Acharis, who are “so ugly that they weep constantly”. Bastian promises to make their lives better and used AURYN to turn them into beautiful butterflies.

19: The Travelling Companions
- Bastian begins to lose some of his memories from our world. This happens each time he makes a wish.
- He informs the others of his travelling plans to the Ivory Tower. Falkor insists that it is a bad idea; no one can meet the Childlike Empress multiple times.
- As they travel, more people join them. People from all over Fantastica, who have heard the stories of Bastian; hundreds of them.

**20: The Seeing Hand**

- Bastian is warned of Xayide, a sorceress who lives in Horok Castle, or “The Seeing Hand”, which is nearby.
- She captures Bastian’s 3 Knights and commands him to surrender to her.
- Bastian, Atreyu and Falkor fly to her castle to free them, and they succeed.
- Xayide apologizes and asks to be spared. Bastian lets her live and takes her with them on their journey.
- Atreyu and Falkor believe that this is a bad idea.

**21: The Star Cloister**

- Xayide convinces Bastian to abandon the faithful mule he had been riding, saying that he was not good enough.
- She also tries to convince him that Atreyu and Falkor were trying to take AURYN away from him.
- Bastian wished to be the wisest being in Fantastica, so no one could fool him.
- Soon, Bastian is summoned to the Star Cloister, where the Three Deep Thinkers have questions for him, since he is now the wisest.
- He answers all of their questions and leaves, forgetting more and more of his life from our world as he does so.

**22: The Battle for the Ivory Tower**

- Bastian overhears Atreyu and Falkor talking about taking AUYRN from him, but he doesn’t realize that they are doing it for his own good. He banishes them.
- Bastian arrives at the Ivory Tower. Moon Child is not there. Bastian decides that he will crown himself the new Childlike Emperor of Fantastica.
- On the day of the Coronation (lead by Xayide) a battle breaks out. Atreyu and Falkor have raised an army to defeat Bastian and take AURYN – thinking that this is the only way to save him from himself.
- The battle is bloody. Many die. Bastian stabs Atreyu, and Falkor carries him away.
- Bastian makes it known that the battle was Atreyu’s fault, and he will find him and bring him to justice.

**23: The City of the Old Emperors**

- Bastian leaves the ruins of the Ivory Tower in search of Atreyu.
- He finds the City of the Old Emperors, a jumbled city which hardly makes sense, filled with people called the “Know-Nothings”. Bastian finds a grey monkey who explains to him that the
Know-Nothings are all humans, people who have crowned themselves Emperor of Fantastica, or have tried to, at least.

- Once you try to use Moon Child’s power to take her power from her, you are sent here for eternity.
- Bastian realizes that Atreyu had saved his life, and he needs to use the few wishes that he has left to get home, before he forgets about his former life all together.
- The monkey tells him to start by crossing the Sea of Mist.
- Bastian finds the small people who live by this sea, and they agree to let him aboard one of their ships.
- Bastian crosses the sea and arrives in a land full of roses.

24: Dame Eyola

- Bastian arrives at the House of Change, where Dame Eyola lives.
- The House of Change gets its name from the fact that it is forever changing its structure – but also because it gives those that visit it the ability to change themselves.
- Dame Eyola is a type of plant, who will only live until she wilts, and then she will be replaced by a new Dame Eyola. Her and her predecessors have been waiting for Bastian for hundreds of years.
- Bastian stays at the House of Change for a long time, he learns that his final wish must take him to the inner borders of Fantastica (which do exist) where not even Moon Child can go.

25: The Picture Mine

- Bastian arrives at The Picture Mine, the home of Yor, the blind miner.
- Yor mines pictures from dreams that humans have forgotten. Fantastica lies on top of these dream-pictures.
- Bastian has forgotten everything except for his name.
- In order to find the Water of Life, which will be his way back home, he will have to find a memory – a picture from one of his dreams.
- Bastian finds a picture of a man with a plaster cast, frozen in ice. He knows that it means something, but he is not sure what. At this point, he forgets even his name.
- He sets off to find the Water of Life, but he is attacked by the Acharis/The Shlamoofs, who are mad at him for transforming them. They break his dream picture.
- Just as all hope seems lost, he sees Atreyu and Falkor circling in the skies above him.

26: The Water of Life

- Atreyu and Falkor join Bastian in his journey to the Water of Life.
- Bastian soon realizes his faults, and surrenders AURYN, laying it down in the snow.
- At that moment, a giant golden vault appears around them, with the intertwining snakes inside.
- The snakes explain that Bastian cannot return to our world until he has concluded all the stories that he has started in Fantastica. Atreyu offers to do this for him so he can go home.
- Bastian drinks the water and finds himself transported back to the attic of the school house.

Epilogue
- Bastian runs home to his father, who was very worried about him.
- Together they sit, and Bastian tells his tale of adventures.
- His father listens intently, and promises that things will be different between the two of them from now on.
- Bastian also goes to see Mr. Coreander to apologize for stealing his book.
- Mr. Coreander insists that the book was not his, but asks to hear of Bastian’s adventures.
- Mr. Coreander eventually reveals that he has also been to Fantastica, and asks Bastian to return to chat with him from time to time. It is nice to finally have someone to share stories with.