

Lesson Plan: Child Authors

OBJECTIVE: Students will become familiar with the benefits and drawbacks of biographical literary criticism

TIME: 45 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- “Riding the Dragon” from *Secrets of the Dragon Riders*
- *Eragon* (optional)

INTRODUCTION: You’re not supposed to judge a book by its cover—but what about by its author? Does it matter that *Eragon* and similar books were written by teenagers? Does knowing the author’s age change the way we read a book?

ACTIVITY:

Read “Riding the Dragon” together as a class.

Discuss . . .

- Are young people unfairly discriminated against?
- (If you’ve read *Eragon*) How did your knowledge of Paolini’s life affect the way you read *Eragon*?
- This essay was written by a thirteen-year-old. How does knowing that affect the way you see his argument?

Split the class into groups and discuss other facts about authors that could affect the way we read their work, along with when this can be a good thing, and when this might be a bad thing.