

THE CHANGELING CHILD

H.S. NORUP

READING GUIDE & ACTIVITY PACK

Helle Norup grew up in Denmark where she devoured fairy tales and escaped into books. After living in six different countries, she now lives in Switzerland with her family and writes stories inspired by her travels that are set in the borderlands between the real and imaginary worlds. When she is not reading or writing, she spends time skiing (in the winter) and hiking in woodlands or mountains (in the summer), and she loves swimming in fresh water, ideally without water sprites.



In *The Changeling Child*, eco-warrior Saga is as much the protagonist as Alfred, who, after uncovering the truth about his heritage, is afraid to return to the Faerie Hill. Three months have passed since the two of them put a stop to Mayor Underwood's motorway and saved Faerie, and Saga longs to go back to the mystical world they discovered. After all the excitement, her life feels ordinary and too quiet. But when the mayor announces plans to turn the entire Faerie Hill into a giant tourist attraction, the local woodland and the faeries yet again come under threat. What's more, the fearsome faeries intend to fight back. While Alfred is forced to venture deeper into the faerie realm than ever before, Saga must remain in the real world and unravel a mystery that may just be the key to everything.

At its heart, the story is about family, friendship, and discovering who you are and where you belong. Caring for nature and the environment are also important themes in the book.

HELLE SAYS:

Summer or winter, I love to be outside in nature. I think there's something magical about the outdoors, and, for as long as I can remember, I have daydreamed about otherworldly creatures hiding just out of sight. The Faerie Hill books are full of faeries—fearsome faerie creatures—that I imagined on long walks in my local forest. Some of them are helpful while others are tricky or downright spiteful. But all of them share my wish, and that of Alfred and Saga, that we do our utmost to protect our natural world.





NATURE & THE ENVIRONMENT



Saga is active in protecting the nature around her. **Chapter 1** opens with her on a litter-pick walk, where she's annoyed and can't understand why people leave their rubbish behind. She also helps out at a local bird sanctuary after school (**page 26**), and she walks or cycles whenever possible.

QUESTION: What are some small things you can do or are already doing to protect the environment?

Saga is also knowledgeable when it comes to nature. For instance, she can tell the difference between poisonous toadstools and harmless mushrooms (**page 51**), and she knows that dandelions have healing properties (**page 143**).

QUESTION: Do you know the properties of specific plants or mushrooms? If not, try to see what you can find out about dandelions or your favourite plant or mushroom.

The mayor intends to build a cable car that will give people from the city easy access to nature without the use of their cars (**page 54**). In many ways that is a good thing, and even people from Saga's nature group agree (**page 252**). However, the extent of his project will be a threat to the woodlands and its inhabitants.

QUESTION: What do you think about the project? Are there any similar constructions near your hometown? Discuss the balance between the creation of outdoor attractions and the damage these may cause to nature.

In the Faerie Hill books, all human construction work causes desolation in the faerie realm. That desolation takes the form of a bleak void-like space that has been drained of all natural energy (**page 54**). And, if iron is involved, that causes even more damage (**page 113**) which is why Saga is tasked with removing the story poles. After she removes the story poles (**page 143**) she plants dandelions and hopes they will help restore nature.

QUESTION: How do you think plants and trees can help restore nature? Are there any rewilding projects near where you live? Can you find out what these projects are aiming to achieve and how?





FAMILY



Different kinds of families are represented in the book. Saga's family is large, as both she and her parents have many siblings, and she sometimes feels overlooked. Alfred is part of a small family that only consists of him, his dad and his granny. He loves them, but he is also a little envious of Saga (**page 40**).

QUESTION: How do you think Saga's and Alfred's family situations influence their motivations and decisions in this book?

.....

The demi-fae grow up without their parents in a kind of faerie boarding school, where they live in a magical den full of hammocks (**page 75**).

QUESTION: Do you think they behave more like siblings or friends towards each other? What do you think constitutes a family?

.....

When Saga finds the changeling child, she takes him to meet his mother in **Chapter 51**.

QUESTION: What do you think happens after the book ends? Will he choose to stay with his mother or return to Faerie? Why?

.....

FRIENDSHIP

Saga and Alfred became close friends in *Into the Faerie Hill*, and they have stayed in touch ever since. Already from the video call on **pages 19-22**, it's clear that they know each other very well.

QUESTION: Find examples in the text from what they are saying or thinking that show this. How does their friendship develop in this book?

.....

On **page 225** Alfred says he doesn't trust the other demi-fae and that they don't understand him, and Saga deduces that it's because they lack empathy and compassion.


QUESTION: How do you think trust and empathy and compassion impact friendships?

.....

On **page 250**, Viola asks if you are friends when you help someone without exchanging promises first.

QUESTION: What do you think about her statement? What does it require to be friends? What are some things you would do for a friend without expecting anything in return?

.....





SECRETS, TRUST & FAERIE DEALS



There are quite a few examples of people keeping secrets from one another in the book. True names are kept secret: Saga hasn't even revealed her real name to her best friend, though Alfred learns it on **page 37**, and Amanita wants Alfred to keep his name secret (**page 73**). Lillith keeps her family relationship to Alfred a secret.

QUESTION: What are some things that happen in the book because of all this secrecy or to protect the secrets? In general, are secrets a good thing, or are they a double-edged sword?

Saga is forced to keep everything she knows about faeries a secret, but she still has a notebook full of the most fascinating things she has discovered about the realm (**pages 12, 121, 266**).

QUESTION: What would you write down about the faeries and their realm, if you were Saga? Can you make a sketch to accompany your notes?

Everything is transactional in Faerie. There is no trust between the faeries, and nothing comes for free, so faerie deals are important. Alfred's name, *alf rät*, means elvish advisor, and he shows his dealmaking skills and cunning from the moment he promises to return to Faerie with Amanita in **chapter 8**. In **chapter 9**, Saga is annoyed that she isn't part of Alfred's deal.

QUESTION: Do you think he could have found a way to let her come with him to Faerie, and, if so, why didn't he?

Later, when Alfred makes Saga promise that she won't go into the woods (**page 177**) and seals this promise in a faerie deal, she gets really angry.

QUESTION: Why do you think that is?

Alfred becomes ever more well-versed in faerie ways, and he keeps what Farriel said to Amanita a secret (**page 208**) and later uses it as currency to obtain a favour from Kaleido (**page 270**).

QUESTION: Have you ever used a secret to get information or something else you wanted? Was it worth it, or did it backfire?





FAERIE MAGIC

There are many kinds of faeries and faerie magic in the book, and different ways of using faerie magic.

QUESTION: Can you name some of them and their magic? Which kind of faerie magic would you most like to have or learn to use?

The demi-fae learn two types of faerie magic—glamour and moth enchantments. Both can be used for good and bad. In **chapter 37** Amanita enchants Saga's brother, Oliver, with a moth faerie dance and plants a new memory where he is a hero in his mind.

QUESTION: Why do you think this new memory annoys Saga so much? If Saga had been able to choose what Oliver remembered, what do you think that would be?

On **page 100**, the demi-fae each attract a moth faerie.

QUESTION: Read the descriptions of their moth faeries and see if you can guess which real-world moths these are based on. Find out more about these and other moths and think about which kind of moth faerie you would like to pair up with.

Glamour can be used to hide or change the appearance of something, but it can also reveal things we might not see unless we focus on them.

QUESTION: Try to go outside and look at nature up close (in a garden, a park, or a forest). What do you notice if you pay close attention?

OTHER TITLES BY H S NORUP





THE CHANGELING CHILD



WORDSEARCH

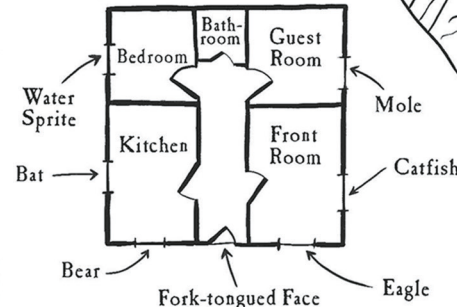
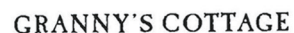
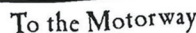
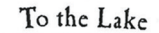
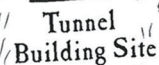
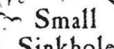
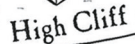
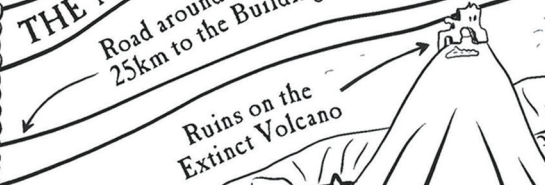
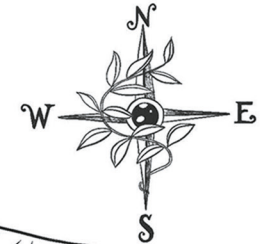
R X Y C H A N G E L I N G X E W K X N Q
H H C P T U M B L E W E E D N D Z D L S
G E K O V J A A V O R X C U V E Y Y I L
D X F T U Q X P L G A E I S I A P Y L U
O T P H U N F T M F T H U Y R L G R L H
Y R I S R O T X A R R J Q M O N B M I M
S A B D W S Z E L X H E B O N Z T O T B
C O R A Y I A O S O S O D F M W G R H E
M R O N T X M G L S C C J O E Y D W E B
J D T D U D P M A Z Z G I U N B G Z M Y
R I H E A P J Q I O H P O S T T M O T H
O N E L P E U H H N U D X N S D D F A P
I A R I I L J P A S G R B W Z O Y W T F
M R H O X G R A N D M O T H E R R N H E
R Y C N I O W M J Y G M I R X V F S Y A
L X T I E F A E R I E H K W X M S X C R
V X T K S X R J U U E N C H A N T X H S
P M D E S O L A T I O N W K V W I M I O
M H T V L E V V V V T K B Q K H N O L M
C T I P M E G L A M O U R T N K K F D E

BROTHER
CHANGELING
CHILD
COUNTESS
DANDELION
DEAL
DESOLATION

ENCHANT
ENVIRONMENT
EXTRAORDINARY
FAERIE
FEARSOME
GLAMOUR
GRANDMOTHER

LILLITH
MOTH
PIXIES
SCISSORS
SWIMMING
TUMBLEWEED





COLOUR IN YOUR OWN FAERIE DOORS

