

Finding Scheherazade  
An Honors Thesis Proposal

**Purpose**

The purpose of this project is to complete the first forty pages of a middle-grade novel, *Finding Scheherazade*, addressing the connection of dreams to stories and the importance of insubstantial things to day-to-day life.

*Content*

Things that are not tangible or “real” are infinitely more powerful than things that are. Truth, justice, love, religion, stories, dreams—we cannot see, touch, or build these things. However, these are the things that we think and talk about. My thesis will ask the question: What would a world look like without these things?

In my thesis, 10-year-old Elizabeth lives in this kind of world and doesn't like it. She recognizes that there is something wrong but doesn't know what it is. At the beginning of the story, she meets the seller of dreams who tells her the first story she has ever heard, the story of Scheherazade, and how she went missing. After hearing that story, Elizabeth determines to find Scheherazade.

**Background and Significance:**

*Genre*

I will be writing in the children's literature genre. Specifically I will be writing a dystopian fairytale for middle-grade. Through my thesis, I aim to show the

importance of stories in a world without them. In this dystopian world, without stories, the characters have nothing to identify with and thus lose some of their ability to imagine and create.

### *Formal Organization*

There are three sections in the novel. For this thesis I will complete an introduction, present the first section of the novel and part of the second, outline the rest of the book, and include references.

### ***Methodology/Procedures:***

Currently I have an eighty-page draft that I have been working on for two years. For the purpose of my thesis, I will focus on the first forty pages of the novel. Throughout Winter Semester 2015, I will attend Brandon Sanderson's class for the second time, and work with a writing group to perfect different parts of my thesis. I will also meet with Professor Chris Crowe periodically. I will write for at least thirty minutes to an hour a day, editing, adding to, and tightening the novel.

### Preliminary Outline or Prospectus of the Finished Thesis:

- I. Introduction (approximately 15 pages)  
The introduction will include an exploration of my writing process, and an examination of the authors and critics who have influenced me.
  
- II. The Storyteller and the Seller of Dreams (approximately 40 pages)  
Elizabeth explains that she only ever knew one story growing up. She tells the story of Scheherazade and the circumstances surrounding it,

including her meeting the Seller of Dreams. After he leaves, she picks a dream off the ground and says, "I will find Scheherazade."

In her aunt's bakery she meets Ben, who recognizes her as a dreamer and introduces her to his sister Amy. Elizabeth finds Raoul painting a wall in the street and brings him back to them. She also puts a map up in her room, trying to find Scheherazade.

### III. Outline of the rest of the story

#### *Preliminary Research*

Since I was a child, I have read many fantasy and children's books, including works by George McDonald, Hope Mirrlees, C.S. Lewis, and J.R.R. Tolkien. I have researched children's literature fantasy, and written two research papers on the importance of fantasy and fairytales. The books that have influenced me the most are included at the end of this proposal. I have told this story to several friends and one or two children.

#### *Qualifications of the Investigator*

I am a storyteller studying English and editing. I have been working on this novel for about two years, and I have about eighty pages drafted. I am passionate about this story, and I am excited about the opportunity to turn it into my Honors thesis. My classes in creative writing include the Honors 301R (Literary Novel Writing), English 218 (Creative Writing), English 319R (Writing Poetry), and English 321R (Fantasy Writing).

*Qualifications of Faculty Advisor*

Professor Crowe is a published author as well as a creative writing professor. His focus is in young adult fiction and he has won several awards in the genre.

*Schedule*

Jan 31: Submit Thesis Proposal

Jan 31-April 30: Work on and edit thesis throughout winter semester.

April 30: Submit Preliminary Draft of Thesis

May 20: Submit Defensible Draft

June 9: Thesis Defense

## References

### Writing/Criticism

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### Literature

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