



THE GOLDEN COMPASS

ABOUT THE BOOK

The Golden Compass forms the first part of a story in three volumes. The first volume is set in a world like ours, but different in many ways. The second volume is set partly in the world we know. The third moves between many worlds.

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In **The Golden Compass**, readers meet for the first time 11-year-old Lyra Belacqua, a precocious orphan growing up within the precincts of Jordan College in Oxford, England. It quickly becomes clear that Lyra's Oxford is not precisely like our own - nor is her world. In Lyra's world, everyone has a personal dæmon, a lifelong animal familiar. This is a world in which science, theology and magic are closely intertwined.

These ideas are of little concern to Lyra, who at the outset of the story, spends most of her time with her friend Roger, a kitchen boy. Together, they share a carefree existence scampering across the roofs of the college, racing through the streets of Oxford, or waging war with the other children in town. But that life changes forever when Lyra and her dæmon, Pantalaimon, prevent an assassination attempt on her uncle, the powerful Lord Asriel, and then overhear a secret discussion about a mysterious entity known as Dust.

It is at this time that children mysteriously began to disappear. Children, and only the children, are vanishing at the hands of what become known as the "Gobblers." Who the Gobblers are and what they want is unknown, but soon, children from far and wide are disappearing with out a trace, even Lyra's good friend, Roger.

But before she can begin her search for Roger, Lyra is introduced to Mrs. Coulter, a beautiful and bewitching woman. Mrs. Coulter is a scholar and an explorer - seemingly everything that Lyra could ever hope to be. Mrs. Coulter takes Lyra under her wing and employs her as an assistant to help in the next expedition to explore the Arctic North. On the morning she is to leave Jordan College, the Master of the school gives Lyra an alethiometer, a rare and powerful instrument with the power to reveal the truth in all things.

While under Mrs. Coulter's guidance, Lyra learns of her mentor's critical role in Church's General Oblation Board, a.k.a. the Gobblers, the party responsible for the disappearing children. It is revealed that these kidnapped children are taken to Bolvangar, a place in the far North, to participate in Dust experiments whereby they are severed from their dæmons through a process called intercision. Lyra also learns that the Church has captured and imprisoned Lord Asriel in the Arctic region of Bolvanger where he has undertaken Dust experiments of his own.

Horried at what she has learned, Lyra and Pantalaimon flee Mrs. Coulter's home in the middle of the night and are rescued through the kindness of two gyptian men. The gyptians are a gypsy group of boat-people who live a harsh life on the water tempered by their unwavering sense of family, loyalty and love. It is the gyptians' children who have suffered most at the hands of the Gobblers, and they have vowed to travel North to rescue them. Lyra pledges to share what she knows, rescue her dear friend Roger, and ultimately find her imprisoned father. Through the gyptian elders, Lord Faa and Farder Coram, Lyra is bewildered to learn that her parents are Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter. Despite this shock, Lyra quickly learns to read the alethiometer and understand its messages. Although her alethiometer enables her to discover the truth in everything around her, Lyra is unaware of the incredible role her own life plays in the fate of the universe. Lyra is the subject of a great prophecy in which she is destined to commit a fateful betrayal that will determine the future of all worlds.

To succeed in the rescue mission for the children, the gyptians enlist the alliances of three people who come to regard Lyra dearly: Serafina Pekkala, the witch queen who reveals that the fate of universe lies in Lyra's future; Lee Scoresby, a Texan aeronaut and commander of a hot air balloon; and Iorek Byrnison, a renegade armored polar bear, deposed as king of his clan by a deceitful brother. While on their long, hard journey in the far North, Lyra and Pantalaimon are kidnapped by hunters who take them to Bolvangar, the place where all the kidnapped children have been brought. At long last, Lyra is happily reunited with Roger, but to her horror, she witnesses intercision, the gruesome Dust experiment that separates child and dæmon. Banding together, the children and their daemons escape the terrors of Bolvangar, fleeing into the safety of the gyptians, Serafina Pekkala's witches, Lee Scoreby's balloon, and Iorek Byrnison.

Although the children are rescued, the journey for Lyra and Roger is far from over. They travel further north and finally find Lyra's father, Lord Asriel. Lord Asriel has experimented with Dust as well, and has discovered its role in crossing the barriers into other worlds. He has constructed a bridge to another world, but crossing that bridge requires the energy released in an intercision. Unable to sacrifice his own child, Lord Asriel makes Roger his prey and escapes to another world. The universe has been broken and Lyra's friend lies dead, but she vows get revenge and discover the secret of Dust.

READER'S GUIDE

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The questions, discussion topics, and author information that follow are intended to enhance your group's reading of **The Golden Compass**. We hope that this guide will help you to navigate - alongside the story's young protagonist, Lyra Belacqua - Philip Pullman's richly imagined universe, populated by armored bears, gyptians, witches, and human beings, whose dæmons are never far from their side.

Dæmons are one of the most striking, charming, and powerful images in **The Golden Compass**. These spirit-creatures, which seem like physical representations of the human soul, can change form to reflect the myriad of emotional states their humans go through as children. But in adulthood, each dæmon settles into the animal form that best reflects the inner nature of its human counterpart. It is in this unusual and imaginative creation that Pullman turns his sharpest mirror back onto his readers, helping us to imagine our own souls as precious, living extensions of ourselves that we can love, challenge, or even betray.

The Golden Compass is a complex story that turns on a simple word: "Dust." This Dust does not gather in the unswept corners of Jordan College, Lyra's Oxford home. Rather, this Dust seems to reveal - or perhaps contain - the thing that makes each human being a unique creature. The concept of Dust provokes fear in some; others realize that mastery over Dust could be the source of great power. Although she does not quite realize it, Lyra - along with her dæmon Pantalaimon - finds her life inextricably entangled with the exploration of Dust. And as her understanding of Dust and her mastery over a mysterious tool called the alethiometer increases, the dangerous journey that she seems destined to make takes some astounding twists and turns.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The author tells us that **The Golden Compass** takes place "in a universe like ours, but different in many ways." How do you think Lyra's universe relates to ours?
2. What is a dæmon? How do they make humans different from other creatures? Why do you think servants' dæmons are always dogs? What sort of dæmons might your friends, relatives, classmates, or coworkers have? Describe your own dæmon.
3. The world of **The Golden Compass** is ruled by the Church. However, the nature of its power is unclear. What power do you think the Church holds over its people?
4. On pages 89-90, the General Oblation Board is explained in reference to the historical sacrifice of children to cloistered life. "Oblation" refers to the act of making a religious offering. What offering does the General Oblation Board make and to whom?
5. Human knowledge and experience are made physical in Dust. What other psychological, intellectual, or spiritual activities does the author physicalize?

6. What is the relationship between "severing" and death? Is the author using this fantasy to explore the notion of psychic or moral death?
7. Why do you think the author stresses that Lyra is not an imaginative child? Why would "imagination" be dangerous to her? How would it affect her understanding of the alethiometer? Is Lyra a truth-seeker? Who is Lyra Belacqua and/or what does she symbolize?
8. In what ways is gender a significant or stratifying element in the novel? Why do you think all witches are female? Why are dæmons usually the opposite gender of their human counterparts? Is the fact that Lyra is a girl-child relevant to the themes of the story?
9. Alongside human society in **The Golden Compass**, there exists the community of the armored bears, who have their own hierarchical structure and moral code. In one way Svalbard seems little more than an interesting foil to the human condition, yet the bear kingdom is also a final destination, the site of the story's climactic conclusion. What do you think is the author's purpose in inventing - and exploring - the world of the armored bear?
10. The author has filled this novel with binary imagery: person-dæmon; mother-father; Iorek-Iofur; Lyra's universe-the universe in the Aurora. What other binarisms can you find in the structure, landscape imagery, and vocabulary of this fantasy? How do these dualistic elements affect the novel's larger themes?
11. Discuss Lyra's "betrayal" of Roger in relation to other betrayals that occur in the novel. Has reading **The Golden Compass** altered your understanding of the act of betrayal?
12. Are Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter in collusion or are they fighting each other? How and in what way?
13. Curiously absent from **The Golden Compass** are four words that are prevalent in most fantasy adventures: right, wrong, good, and evil. Can these terms be applied to this story? How and why, or why not?
14. On the last page of the book, Lyra and Pantalaimon recognize that they are still "one being; both of us are one." The expression resonates with a phrase from marriage ceremonies. Contrast this moment in the story with the preceding interplay between Lyra's parents.
15. **The Golden Compass** is the first book in the trilogy **His Dark Materials**, which gets its name from a passage in John Milton's **Paradise Lost**, quoted at the beginning of the novel. Philip Pullman has said, "Milton's angels are not seriously meant to be believed - beings with wings and halos and white robes. They are psychological qualities, conceived and pictured as personalities. With them, Milton tells one of the central tales of our world: the story of the temptation and fall of humankind." Discuss the passage from **Paradise Lost** and this statement from the author in relation to **The Golden Compass**.
16. When Lyra walks "into the sky" at the end of Book One, we can presume that she is walking into the world of Book Two of **His Dark Materials** - "the universe that we know." What do you think will happen to her and Pantalaimon when they cross the bridge?

The Prydain Chronicles by Lloyd Alexander

The Sword of Shannara by Terry Brooks

The Left Hand of Darkness and **The Earthsea Tetralogy** by Ursula K. Le Guin

A Swiftly Tilting Planet and **A Wind in the Door** by Madeleine L'Engle

The Chronicles of Narnia and **The Screwtape Letters** by C. S. Lewis

The Giver by Lois Lowry

Paradise Lost by John Milton

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

The Hobbit by J. R. R. Tolkien

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Teachers can use this guide to discuss the His Dark Materials trilogy with their students. Here are several themes, topics, and other connections appropriate for class work and discussion. For use with grades 7-12.

About these Books

Philip Pullman's intriguing and haunting trilogy sends fantasy lovers on an incredible journey through other worlds where they meet mysterious creatures and a brave and extraordinary 12-year-old girl, Lyra Belacqua, who has the power to seek truth.



The Golden Compass, young Lyra Belacqua journeys to the far North to save her best friend and other kidnapped children from terrible experiments by evil scientists.



The Subtle Knife takes Lyra to Cittàgazze, where she meets Will Parry, a fugitive boy from our own universe who becomes her ally and friend. On their journey from world to world, Lyra and Will's lives become forever intertwined as they uncover a deadly secret.



And finally, in The Amber Spyglass, Lyra and Will, with the help of two tiny Gallivespian spies and Iorek Byrnison, the armored bear, set out to a world where no other living soul has ever gone, to make their most haunting discovery yet.

In the Classroom

The Amber Spyglass is the crowning conclusion to the intrigue begun in The Golden Compass and The Subtle Knife. Each of the novels in Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy offers an exciting adventure that takes readers, young and old, on a journey through different dimensions to unknown worlds. The electrifying plots and unusual and mysterious characters make these novels excellent choices for reading aloud.

Themes of good vs. evil, betrayal, courage, fear, trust, and love raise important questions, offering students a wonderful opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue. This guide offers questions for discussion and includes activities that connect the language arts, social studies, science, music, and art curriculum.

Pre-Reading Activity

Religion plays an important part in many works of fantasy, which often include themes of good versus evil and characters searching to understand the basic foundations of their faiths. Ask students to use the Bible, a storybook, or an encyclopedia to read about the Garden of Eden and the fall of Adam and Eve (Genesis 2-3). Have students discuss original sin, why God forbade Adam and Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, and how Adam and Eve's lives changed once they gained knowledge.

Thematic Connections

Betrayal - Ask the class to look up the various meanings of the word betrayal. How does Lyra betray Roger in *The Golden Compass*? Discuss whether she was aware that she was betraying him. How does she try to rectify this betrayal? What is Lyra's great betrayal in *The Amber Spyglass*? How do Lyra's mother and father betray her--and then protect her? Discuss how Lyra deals with these betrayals.

In *The Subtle Knife*, Will's mother is in a serious emotional state. He takes her to stay with his piano teacher while he sets out to recover important papers that belong to his father. Discuss whether Will is betraying his mother or helping her in her time of need.

What other characters in His Dark Materials trilogy are guilty of betrayal? Ask the class to draw a parallel between the betrayal in Pullman's novels to that found in the story of Adam and Eve. How is the betrayal in the novels important to the basic conflict in the stories? Ask students to discuss whether reading His Dark Materials has altered their understanding of the act of betrayal.

Good vs. Evil - The trilogy challenges our assumptions about good and evil: some witches are good, while some members of the church are evil. What are other examples of unexpected forms of good and evil in the trilogy? At the end of *The Amber Spyglass*, what do Will and Lyra learn about good and evil, about actions versus labels? How will this affect the way they will live the rest of their lives?

What does Lyra mean when she tells Will in *The Subtle Knife* that his dæmon is "inside"? Discuss whether people in Will's world--our world--have dæmons at all. What animal form do you think Lyra's dæmon will take when she becomes an adult? Explain.

In *The Subtle Knife*, the soldiers in the land of Bolvangar are cutting childrens' dæmons away. Why does Dr. Lanselius consider this evil work? How does Lord Asriel's mission reflect evil?

Courage - Have students trace Lyra's courage as she travels from one dimension to another. At what point does she almost lose her courage? How does Will show courage in *The Subtle Knife*? Discuss how Lyra and Will help one another sustain their courage throughout their quests in *The Subtle Knife* and *The Amber Spyglass*.

Engage the class in a discussion about whether having possession of the alethiometer and the subtle knife either gives Lyra and Will courage or threatens it. How does it take courage to leave one another and return to their own worlds at the end of the trilogy?

Fear - At the end of *The Golden Compass*, Lyra is afraid of her father, yet admires him. Why does he evoke fear in her? How can she be afraid and admire him at the same time? How is fear the basis of Will's mother's illness? Discuss how fear is related to courage. Engage the class in a discussion about how Lyra and Will's fears contribute to their courage as they face the evil forces.

Trust- In *The Subtle Knife*, Will accidentally kills an intruder who wants his father's personal documents and then labels himself a murderer. Why does this enable Lyra to trust him? Which characters do Serafina Pekkala and Lee Scoresby decide to trust? Is their trust warranted? Who are the characters that Lyra once trusted, but in the end finds that she cannot? In what other way does trust play an important role in Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy?

Love - In *The Amber Spyglass*, Will says to Serafina, "Thank you, Serafina Pekkala, for rescuing us at the belvedere and for everything else. Please be kind to Lyra for as long as she lives. I love her more than anyone has ever been loved." (p. 509) Trace the development of Will and Lyra's love for one another from the time they first meet in *The Subtle Knife* until they part in *The Amber Spyglass*. How does their love affect the fate of the living--and the dead? How does Lyra's adventure help her to discover a new meaning of love?

In *The Subtle Knife*, Will "loved her [his mother] so much he would have died to protect her." (p. 9) How is his search for his father related to his love for his mother? Why can't the subtle knife cut Will's love for his mother?

Interdisciplinary Connections

Language Arts - *The Golden Compass* has been described as a heroic novel. Ask students to identify the qualities of a hero. Who are the heroes in Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy? Have students select a hero from one of the novels and write a poem about that hero. Encourage students to share their poems in class.

It is quite common for writers of fantasy to create their own vocabularies. Vocabulary, including the names of characters, is often symbolic of the underlying themes and messages of the story. Make a glossary for Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy that represents the unique vocabulary he created.

Philip Pullman is very successful at creating terror in all three novels of his trilogy. Ask students to review the novels and select a scene or episode that is especially terrifying to them. Then ask them to rewrite the passage as a horror story. Their stories should have a beginning, middle, and an end. Some students may wish to illustrate their stories.

Social Studies - At the end of *The Amber Spyglass*, Will and Mary return to their world and Will accompanies Mary to her flat. Mary explains to Serafina that she can't just give Will a permanent home because in her world you must follow rules and regulations regarding keeping children. Find out today's rules regarding foster care. What is the purpose of foster care? Discuss whether Will would qualify for foster care. Would Mary qualify as a foster mother?

Art - Masks have been used through the ages to represent animals, monsters, supernatural spirits, dream creatures, etc. Ask students to think about which animal would most likely be their dæmon and create a mask to represent that animal. Allow students time to share their masks and to explain why they chose that particular animal as their dæmon.

Health - Mary says that Will's mother sounds like a "classic manic-depressive." Ask students to research the symptoms and characteristics of manic-depression or bipolar disorder. How is it different from other types of depression? From anxiety? Research the treatments for various types of depression. What type of treatment is Will's mother likely to need?

Science - In Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy, Lyra has the alethiometer, Will has the knife, and Dr. Malone has the spyglass to aid them in their quests. Though these items are fictitious, scientists have always used tools and instruments to conduct investigations. Have students research the type of instruments used through the ages and construct a time line that reveals their development. What instruments do scientists use today?

Music - Music plays an important role in modern fantasy and science fiction films. Play music from films such as Star Wars and ask students to analyze the music as it applies to plot development. How is music an important link in communicating story? Divide students into three groups and assign each a novel in the trilogy. Instruct them to locate music that would be appropriate for a film of their assigned novel. Allow time to share the selections.

VOCABULARY/USE OF LANGUAGE

There maybe unfamiliar words throughout Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy. Ask students to jot down words that are new to them and try to define the words taking clues from the context of the novels. Such words may include:

In *The Golden Compass*: languid (p. 13), renegade (p.30), malodorous (p. 44), inveigled (p. 46), sanctimonious (p. 60), desultorily (p. 63), soporific (p. 111), and stanchion (p. 274).

In *The Subtle Knife*: despotic (p. 43), malevolent (p. 44), putrefaction (p. 79), parapet (p. 175), and academicians (p. 281).

In *The Amber Spyglass*: lee (p. 8), perpetual (p. 16), vortex (p. 18), decoction (p. 20), propitiate (p. 23), serpentine (p. 29), impregnable (p. 42), hexagram (p. 65), adamant (p. 120), ruthless (p. 128), and fiercest (p. 387).

Teaching ideas prepared by Pat Scales, Director of Library Services, the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, Greenville, South Carolina.

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Reviews and Awards

Reviews for *The Golden Compass*

*"This first fantastic installment propels readers along with horror and high adventure...a shattering tale that begins with a promise and delivers an entire universe." --Starred, *Kirkus Reviews*

*"A totally involving, intricately plotted fantasy that will leave readers clamoring for the sequels." --Starred, *Booklist*

*"As always, Pullman is a master at combining impeccable characterizations and seamless plotting, maintaining a crackling pace to create scene upon scene of almost unbearable tension." --Starred, *Publishers Weekly*

Awards for *The Golden Compass*

[An ALA Notable Book](#)
[An ALA Top Ten Best Book for Young Adults](#)
A *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of the Year
[A Booklist Editors' Choice-"Top of the List"](#)

Reviews for *The Subtle Knife*

*"Presented in a rush of sensuous detail that moves and entrances...gorgeous imagery, pulse-pounding action, and the baiting of readers' affections." --Starred, *Kirkus Reviews*

*"Stunningly ambitious, original, and fascinating...Pullman offered an exceptional romantic fantasy in *The Golden Compass*, but *The Subtle Knife* is adding a mythic dimension that inevitably demands even greater things from the finale." --Starred, *The Horn Book*

*"The character development as well as the relentless pace...make this a resounding successful sequel." --Starred, *Booklist*

Awards for *The Subtle Knife*

[An ALA Best Book for Young Adults](#)

[A Booklist Editors' Choice](#)

A *Book Links* Best Book

A *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of the Year

[A Horn Book Fanfare Honor Book](#)

Review for *The Amber Spyglass*

*"The longed-for third volume in this trilogy satisfies deeply: full of grand set pieces, resplendent language, and glorious storytelling...Across this brilliant and vivid canvas, the largest of themes play out: life and death, goodness and evil, self and other, the redemptive power of love. Readers will be chastened -- and warmed -- and sorry to see the last page." - Starred, *Kirkus Reviews*

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Lord Asriel: Lyra's uncle, whose dæmon, is a handsome snow leopard. A dynamic and powerful adventurer, Lord Asriel in the possibility of other universes and is concerned with the investigation of Dust.

Barnard-Stokes: Two renegade theologians who postulated the existence of numerous invisible, unreachable, yet material worlds. Although they were silenced by the Church, some scholars believe that there are sound mathematical arguments for their theory concerning other worlds.

Lyra Belacqua: A half-wild, half-civilized young girl who lives among the scholars of Jordan College. Lyra's fate is intertwined with the theological mysteries of Dust and the possibility of other universes. To play the large - perhaps universe-saving - part to which she appears destined, Lyra must act without realizing what she is doing.

Butler, Mrs. Lonsdale, the Parslow family, Porter, Steward: Servants of Jordan College.

Cassington Scholar, Chaplain, Enquirer, Intercessor, Librarian, Palmerian Professor, Precentor, Sub-Rector: Scholars and administrators of Jordan College.

Ma Costa: A charismatic woman and member of a leading gyptian family.

Billy Costa: Ma Costa's son, who appears to have been taken by the Gobblers.

Mrs. Coulter: A beautiful scholar, arctic explorer, and socialite, who takes a particular interest in Lyra. Her dæmon is a golden monkey.

Stanislaus Grumman: A researcher whose expedition vanished while making celestial observations in the North, but not before reporting on a rare natural phenomenon seen there.

Master of Jordan: The ranking scholar of Jordan College, who feels responsible for raising and protecting Lyra, and who has learned something of her fate from an alethiometer.

Tony Makarios: A simple slum child who is abducted by the Gobblers.

Pantalaimon: Lyra's dæmon, who frequently takes the shape of a brown moth or an ermine.

Roger Parslow: The Jordan College kitchen boy, who is Lyra's good friend and playmate. Lyra believes he has been stolen by the Gobblers.

Iofur Ragnison: The usurper king of the armored bears of Svalbard. A vain and foolish ruler who is building an ornate marble palace in an effort to become more like humans. Iofur longs to have his own dæmon.

GLOSSARY

Alethiometer: A mysterious truth-seeking or future-telling device.

Anbaric Lights: Modern lights, or lamps, powered by anbaric energy, as opposed to older naphtha lamps, which provide light by burning a wick in oil.

The Aurora: Storms of charged particles and intense solar rays that cause a luminous radiation. A phenomenon of great beauty and mystery, the Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights, may contain a city from another universe.

Bristol, Henley, London, Norwich, Oxford, River Isis, White Hall Palace: Towns and cities and landmarks in Lyra's home country.

Chocolatl: A delicious warm drink enjoyed by children.

The Church: The major religious power of Lyra's world, administered by the Consistorial Court of Discipline through a tangled framework of colleges, councils, and lesser courts.

Dæmon: Soul-like companion to each individual human being. Dæmons are generally of the opposite gender to their human counterparts. In childhood, a dæmon can alter its form to reflect the emotions and concerns of its human. However, in adulthood, a dæmon loses the power to change, and it assumes a permanent form that best reflects the inner nature of its human.

Dust: Mystical particles that appear to come from the sky and are attracted to human adults. Dust seems to reveal, or perhaps contain, the thing that makes human beings unique creatures. Although holding very different views about its essential nature, the Church, along with many powerful individuals and political groups, believes that mastery over Dust would be a source of great power.

Experimental Theology: A lofty yet critically relevant field of study in Lyra's world that includes the exploration of the concept of Dust.

Gabriel, St. Michael's: Other colleges in Oxford, which are inferior to Jordan College, at least in Lyra's opinion.

Gobblers: A slang term for the mysterious group that is stealing children throughout the land.

Gyptians: A nomadic group of waterfarers who live on canal boats and travel to Oxford for the spring and autumn fairs.

Jericho, Port Meadow: Rough parts of Oxford, frequented by gyptians, where Lyra and her friends often play and fight.

Jordan College: A prosperous Oxford college and a center of experimental theology.

North: A region of inter-universal exploration. A place of great beauty, diversity, and danger, it is home to armored bears, Tartars, witches, and innumerable ghostly and ghastly creatures. Lord Asriel has photographed Dust and a sort of other world in the Aurora from an outpost in the North.

Oblation Board: A semi-private organization run by an enemy of Lord Asriel's. The Oblation Board is not entirely answerable to the Church's Consistorial Court of Discipline, but instead appears to operate outside normal constraints, and now seems to be gaining power.

Panserbjørne: Armored bears who live in the northern region of Svalbard. While not possessed of dæmons, the panserbjørne make special armor that they liken to their own souls.

Photogram: A type of photographic image; a slide.

Projecting Lantern: An oil-powered slide projector.

Svalbard: A cold, rugged Northern region inhabited by armored bears.

Tartars: A warlike people who live to the north and are known to perform a hideous scalping operation called trepanning, which involves making a hole in the skull.

Tokay: A rich golden wine savored by the Scholars of Jordan, particularly on special occasions.