

Cole Seager & Emily Flandermeyer

HN 300: Through the Looking Glass Project

Link to the video we made: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-ywhljxm9_vQUhsZEVFTXN6YjQ

This egg-dropping experiment allows us to explore our scientific interests in a way that was more engaging, fun, and creative than what we are used to in our classes. Creativity was a big factor in this project because we limited ourselves to the materials we could find on campus, which meant we used odd materials like popcorn, rubber bands, and plastic bags to cushion the eggs. In addition to the creativity of materials, we also tried to think outside the box when designing the contraptions, pairing our scientific knowledge (for example, adding the plastic bags as parachutes to cushion the egg's fall in one of the designs) with the weirdest inventions we could think of (since we wanted to follow in the footsteps of the White Knight).

We devised the 'egg-dropping' project to capture many of the themes and ideas presented throughout Lewis Carroll's work *Through the Looking-Glass, And What Alice Found There*, especially those present in Chapter VI: Humpty Dumpty and Chapter VIII: "It's My Own Invention". This project quite literally captures the In addition, we felt that the egg drop incorporated the ridiculous inventions of the White Knight. He created lots of inventions, such as ankle braces that protected a horse's ankles from shark bites, that were illogical, unnecessary, and did not work as intended. We used odd materials (bubble wrap, popcorn, rubber bands, boxes, plastic bags, etc.) to keep with the spirit of the White Knight's odd inventions. Our inventions were ultimately designed to cushion an egg and prevent it from breaking from a fall, but not all of them worked. Our most bizarre contraption, two cups filled with popcorn and wrapped in rubber bands, failed to protect the egg. Following in the spirit of the White Knight, all of the contraptions were designed in an incredibly impractical yet amusing way. None of the inventions could be practically reused, kind of the like the White Knight's failed inventions. Lastly, our project reflects the backwards nature of the Looking Glass world because we had to design an invention that would protect the egg from the natural laws of gravity. Much like Alice, we had to think in a backwards way to try to prevent the egg from breaking. We believe this

project put an interesting twist on the usual unexplainable antics in *Through the Looking Glass* by designing an experiment which was solely ruled by science, specifically the laws of physics. This project was able to not only capture our interest and attention by its reliance on science, but also its opportunities for exploring the themes of the incredible, yet impractical inventions and ideas presented in *Through the Looking Glass*.

Emily: One of my main goals for the Looking Glass Project was to incorporate more research into the Alice class. I am used to doing a lot of outside research between my classes and my psychology research position, so that was a skill I was looking to utilize more for the second half of the course. *Through the Looking Glass* was a more difficult read for me than *Alice in Wonderland*, especially with all of its connections to chess, so I was pushed to do a lot more outside research in order to be prepared for class and have a working knowledge of the book. Our project also lent itself nicely to research because we looked up good materials to use as cushioning for the egg and different designs that would help prevent the egg from receiving the brunt force of the drop. By making a greater effort to explore Lewis Carroll and his works outside of the classroom I was able to achieve my goal of doing more research the second half of the semester.

Cole: From the Looking Glass Project, my ultimate goal was to culminate together many aspects of education which I found interesting to me, with one of those being science. I've always been fascinated by the sciences, especially chemistry and physics. From this project, I found that I was able to incorporate both in the themes and exhilarating adventures from *Through the Looking Glass*, while also incorporating in a scientific aspect to it that fulfilled both of my desires. Much like Lewis Carroll, although he was the author of fantastical novels, he was also a lover of sciences, especially mathematics. I thought that this project would be a way to culminate together both Carroll's scientific ideologies and his fantastic ideas and themes presented in *Through the Looking Glass*. This project not only forced me to research more into the physics that was required with this project, but also allowed me to combine together two of my favorite educational avenues into one: literature and science.