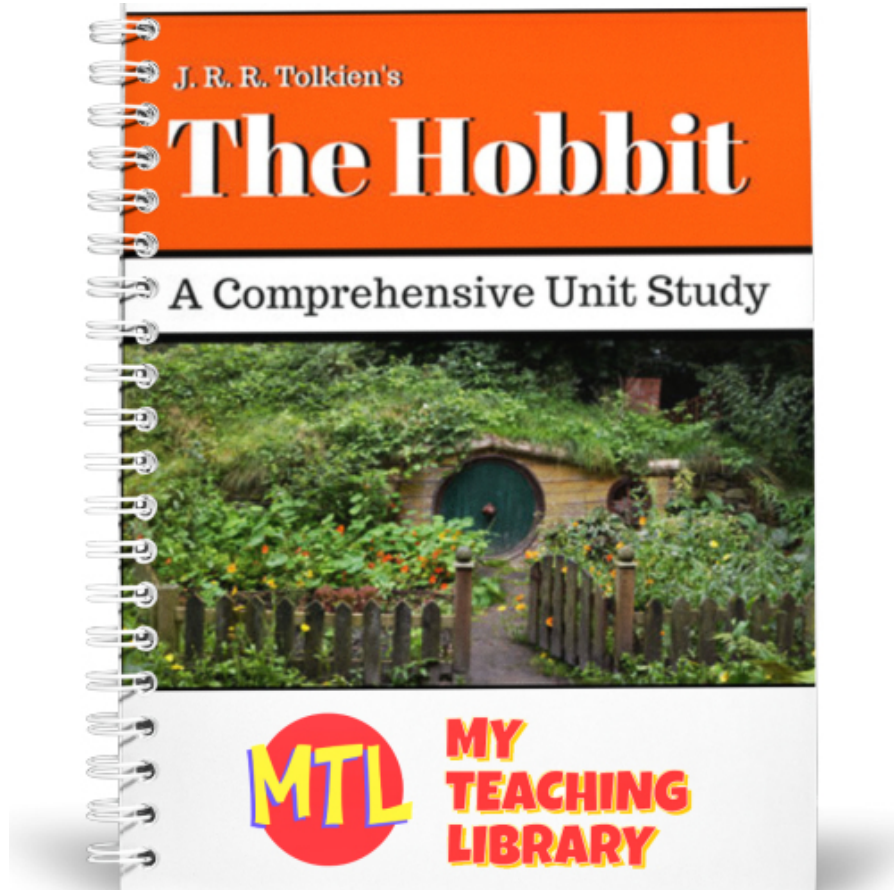


Sample Preview of...



The Hobbit – Comprehensive Unit

Table of Contents

Biography of Tolkien	1
About The Hobbit	2
Key Aspects of The Hobbit (Tone, Setting, Point of View, Character Development)	3
Themes	4
Symbols	4
Character List	5
Major Themes	7
Story Short Summary	9
Chapter Summaries & Analysis	
Chapters 1-4 (Section 1)	10
Chapters 5-7 (Section 2)	14
Chapters 8-11 (Section 3)	18
Chapters 12-14 (Section 4)	21
Chapters 15-19 (Section 5)	23
Section 1: Chapters 1-4	
Assignments, Questions & Vocabulary	27
Thought Questions / Discussion	28
Classroom Activities	29
Section 2: Chapters 5-7	
Assignments, Questions & Vocabulary	31
Thought Questions / Discussion	32
Classroom Activities	33
Section 3: Chapters 8-11	
Assignments, Questions & Vocabulary	34
Thought Questions / Discussion	35
Classroom Activities	36
Section 4: Chapters 12-14	
Assignments, Questions & Vocabulary	38
Thought Questions / Discussion	39
Classroom Activities	40
Section 5: Chapters 15-19	
Assignments, Questions & Vocabulary	42
Thought Questions / Discussion	43
Classroom Activities	44
Section Worksheets & Answer Keys	
Section 1	46
Section 2	48
Section 3	50
Section 4	52
Section 5	54
Vocabulary Work & Answer Keys	
Section 1 Crossword Puzzle	57
Section 2 Crossword Puzzle	59
Quiz (Sections 1 & 2)	61
Section 3 Crossword Puzzle	63
Section 4 Crossword Puzzle	65
Quiz (Sections 3 & 4)	67
Section 5 Crossword Puzzle	69
Quiz (Sections 1-5)	71
Final Paper / Essays	74
Final Exam & Answer Key	77

Biography of Tolkien, J.R.R. (1892-1973)

While John Ronald Reuel Tolkien is known for his contribution to British literature and his reliance upon old Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon literature, the author was not born in Europe but in Africa. In 1892, Tolkien was born in the South African town of Bloemfontein, in an area known as the Orange Free State. His father, Arthur Tolkien, had left England in order to take up a senior position with a bank in the colony. When J.R.R. Tolkien was almost three years old, he returned to England with his mother and his younger brother.

After Arthur's death from rheumatic fever, the family made their home at Sarehole, near Birmingham. This beautiful rural area made a great impression on the young Ronald, and its effect can be seen in his later writings and his pictures. Mabel died in 1904, leaving the boys to the care of Father Francis Morgan, a priest at the Birmingham Oratory. At King Edward's School, Ronald was taught Classics, Anglo-Saxon and Middle-English. He had great linguistic talent, and after studying old Welsh and Finnish, he started to invent his own "Elvish" languages.

1914 saw the outbreak of the First World War. Ronald was in his final year at Exeter College, Oxford: he graduated the following year with a First in English Language and Literature and at once took up his commission as a second lieutenant in the Lancashire Fusiliers. Before embarking for France in June 1916, he married his childhood sweetheart Edith Bratt. Tolkien survived the Battle of the Somme, where two of his three closest friends were killed, but later that year he was struck down by trench fever and sent back to England.

The years after the Great War were devoted to his work as an academic: as Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford, where he was soon to prove himself one of the finest philologists in the world. He had already started to write a great cycle of the myths and legends of Middle-Earth which was to become The Silmarillion. He and Edith had four children and it was for them that Tolkien first told the tale of The Hobbit, published in 1937 by Sir Stanley Unwin. The Hobbit proved to be so successful that Sir Stanley was soon asking for a sequel: but it was not until 1954, when Tolkien was approaching retirement, that he the first volume of his great masterpiece, The Lord of the Rings, was published, and its terrific success took him by surprise.

After retirement from Oxford, in 1956, Ronald and Edith moved to Bournemouth but when Edith died in 1971, Ronald returned to Oxford. He died after a brief illness on 2nd September 1973, leaving his great mythological work, The Silmarillion, to be edited for publication by his son, Christopher.

Preview

About The Hobbit

Sample Preview

About The Hobbit

In terms of Tolkien's literary context, we should look to his twin focuses: philology (the study of languages) and philosophy (moral, rather than political ethics). The Hobbit is a literary exposition of Tolkien's personal grappling with the "big ideas" that have long engaged the great minds of Eastern and Western civilizations. Without straying into Tolkien "lore," we briefly note Tolkien's career as a Professor at Oxford, the site of Tolkien's well-documented and highly-intellectual relationship with the well-read Professor C.S. Lewis, a close friend and fellow author (think: Narnia). Tolkien's relationship with Lewis is significant because it helps to establish Tolkien's understanding of good and evil in the world, repeatedly represented through the old archetypal binaries: Light = good, white, God, truth, etc.; darkness = evil, black, devil, deception, etc. The Hobbit is a good preparation for a reading of the LOTR trilogy (or a reading of Lewis' 7-part Chronicles of Narnia) because Tolkien's traditional and Christian world-view has to become flexible enough to incorporate magic, benevolent wizards (biblical outlaws) and non-human thinkers. Here is an example of a potentially sticky question: if Bilbo has compassion, then within Middle Earth, does Bilbo have a soul? Lewis and Tolkien both explored issues of religious and moral philosophy in their literary works, texts that are, arguably, works of fantasy. And one thing to always keep in mind is that Tolkien created "Middle Earth" over a period of decades, and most of his works were published after his death much like The Hobbit, originally published in 1937.

In considering other writers, C.S. Lewis' slim non-fictional volume, *The Problem of Pain*, is an interesting insight for readers who are looking to make a fuller context of works like Lewis' and Tolkien's. Chapter 5, "Riddles in the Dark," is not as rigorous as "The Grand Inquisitor," the oft-compared and highly dramatic scene of religious debate and moral philosophizing, presented as a chapter of Dostoevsky's "The Brothers Karamazov." Tolkien wants to recreate mythology and make these epics relevant to his contemporary society. His problem is a fact of history: the Greek myths, Norse epics and Anglo-Saxon sagas may be a safe and academic pursuit for philologists who enjoy studying ancient languages. But a 20th century Oxford Professor has to grapple with the essential paganism of these ancient writers, characters and themes. Tolkien does not have to be fearful of censorship, or the Spanish Inquisition, but Tolkien's quest for one of them is an attempt to write something old and magical that might re-affirm Tolkien's Christian understanding of good and evil.

Tolkien wants to turn those old pagan Anglo-Saxon sagas into something that will edify and morally gird an increasingly slack, confused and frightened society.

As one reads more and more of *The Hobbit* and *Lord Of The Rings* trilogy, one finds the characters will diverge into good and evil groups, their individual magical powers become comparatively insignificant, the "conflict" emerges as a battle between One Good and One Evil, and the allusions and archetypes drift away from old pagan types and into Christian ones. As a final note on context and history's irony, cultural relevance is very much a part of what we consider old and new. For a philologist, a "dead language" may have arrived well after a language that is still spoken. Similarly, a student of philosophy and literature will probably realize that those old pagan Anglo-Saxon sagas were written well after the time period attributed to the Biblical scriptures. And of course, those sagas and myths never lost their ability to strike moral chords and teach lessons without striking the wrong chords and ruffling religious feathers.

Key Aspects of The Hobbit

Tone

The Hobbit is at times whimsical in tone, as a children's story or fairy tale might be. However, it also treats its setting with tremendous gravity, as if there are serious political or historical events transpiring alongside Bilbo's narrative.

Setting

The Hobbit takes place in the fictional land of Middle-earth, the same world in which *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and *The Silmarillion* are set. Middle-earth is populated by several fantasy races, including Hobbits, Dwarves and Elves, and magic is known to exist there. Of the continent of Middle-earth, Tolkien said, "Most people have made this mistake of thinking Middle-earth is a particular kind of Earth or is another planet of the science fiction sort but it's just an old fashioned word for this world we live in, as imagined surrounded by the Ocean."

Point of view

The narrator of *The Hobbit* is omniscient, and while the reader mostly follows Bilbo's point of view, other characters are examined as well. It is interesting to note that the narrator often refers to legends and events of Middle-earth as if he or she is a participant in them.

Character development

Bilbo Baggins is introduced as a comfortable homebody who couldn't conceive of himself as an adventurer. He's flustered by the disorder the dwarves cause and terrified of the dangers he might face on the road. But Bilbo quickly learns that he is resourceful and clever enough to get himself and his friends out of trouble. He begins to trust himself and his ideas, gains confidence in his abilities, and ends up respected as a true hero.

Themes

Cleverness in Conflict Resolution

Bilbo was an unusual fantasy hero for his time. Instead of fighting his enemies by hacking at them with his sword, he defeats them with clever tricks (and occasionally the help of his magic ring). This is a tactic encouraged and admired by Gandalf, who uses it himself to put an end to the trolls.

Never Overlook the Small Heroes

Bilbo is, of course, the prime example of this: he's physically unimposing and nobody expects much of him (except for Gandalf, that is). But there are other small characters who make important contributions, especially birds like the thrush and the ravens.

Money (or Treasure) Corrupts

Smaug the dragon would be a very sympathetic character if it weren't for his murderous greed. Likewise, the noble Thorin Oakenshield is corrupted by that very same hoard of gold. Gold is never a good influence on anyone in this story.

The Hero's Journey

As Bilbo embarks on his physical journey, he is also embarking on a journey of character development. As so many other questing heroes have before him, the little hobbit learns many lessons about himself and his abilities, and returns home changed (and with quite a bit more gold!).

Symbols

Smaug

Smaug is a symbol of intense greed, and the corrupting power of wealth.

Hobbits

Hobbits seem to represent a sort of idealized vision of a country gentleman: with simple desires, conservative values and strong moral codes.

The Arkenstone

The Arkenstone represents Thorin's legacy, and all the dangerous, corrupting baggage that comes with it.

The Ring

The Ring has a more complicated and involved symbolism in the greater Tolkien canon, but in *The Hobbit* it represents Bilbo's resourceful cleverness and trickery.

Climax

The climax of *The Hobbit* comes at the Battle of the Five Armies, in which all the various conflicts that have been brewing throughout the story finally come to a confrontation.

Structure

The novel follows a basic quest structure, adhering to Joseph Campbell's "hero's journey" formula.

Character List

Bilbo Baggins

is the main character of the story. He is a hobbit who prefers domesticity to adventure, but he soon finds himself caught up in the escapades of Gandalf, the wizard, and a group of dwarves. Bilbo is hardly the raw material of a hero, but as the story progresses he develops into a clever and brave hero. Throughout the novel, he longs for his home but he is able to perform his duties as a member of the group. Finding the ring that makes him invisible is certainly the greatest tactical advantage that he gains in the story.

Gandalf

is a wizard who appears in *The Hobbit* intermittently, though he has a more sustained presence in the first novel of the *Lord of The Rings* Trilogy. Gandalf is a friend of Bilbo's mother, Belladonna Took, and he contrives the gathering of Bilbo and the dwarves that initiates the adventure. He has plenty of wisdom, magical skills (usually fireworks) and useful contacts with individuals like Beorn and the Lord of the Eagles.

Smaug

is the major villain of the story. He is a dragon that has terrorized several towns and, within his mountain, he guards a massive hoard of treasure. Part of this treasure belongs to the dwarves and so they intend to reclaim it. Smaug dies in battle against the villagers of Esgaroth, when a warrior named Bard shoots an arrow through his unshielded breast.

Thorin Oakenshield

is the leader of the dwarves that accompany Bilbo to the cave of Smaug. Like most dwarves, he is focused on wealth, political ascendancy and historical lineage. He carries an old sword and he is heir to the throne established in Smaug's mountain. Unfortunately, Thorin's negative tendencies reveal themselves in his power-hungry maneuvers at the novel's end.

Balin and Dwalin

are among the dwarves that accompany Bilbo; they are brothers. Balin is obsessed with the historic glory of the dwarves and his tomb, in the caves of Moria, appears in the first book of the LOTR trilogy.

Bard

is a valiant warrior from the town of Esgaroth. As an excellent archer, he slays and kills the dragon Smaug.

Beorn

is half-bear and half-man. He is a fearsome protector who provides lodging and food for the dwarves and helps defend them against the wolves.

Belladonna Took

(deceased) is the mother of Bilbo Baggins. She does not appear in the story but she is known for being courageous and adventurous.

Bert, Tom and William

are three trolls who capture the dwarves, but they are bewitched by Gandalf and the sunlight petrifies them into dead stone.

Bifur, Bofur, and Bombur

are among the dwarves on the journey and they are often mentioned together. Bombur stands out as immensely fat and heavy. He falls into enchanted water and suffers a narcoleptic delusion for a good part of the novel.

Dain

is a cousin of Thorin who arrives to assist in the battle of Chapter 17.

Dori, Gloin, Nori, Oin, and Ori

are dwarves who do nothing especially distinct during the story. They do play the flute, though.

Elrond

is a wise old friend of Gandalf. He lives in the Last Homely House and he re-appears in LOTR. He replenishes the travelers' stocks and helps them decipher the moon runes of their map.

The Elvenking

holds Thorin and the other dwarves captive, though Bilbo manages their escape.

Fili and Kili

are the two youngest of the dwarves, significant because they accidentally choose a goblin's cave as suitable lodging for a night.

Galion

is one of the laborers in the Elvenking's palace. His drunken negligence enables Bilbo to sneak his friends out of prison.

Gollum

is a creature that Bilbo encounters in the caverns of the Goblins. Gollum has lost his birthday-present, the ring which Bilbo has found. The ring renders its bearer invisible and so, this is a great loss for Gollum. He reappears in the LOTR Trilogy.

Great Goblin

is the leader of the goblins, slain in his cave when Gandalf uses the sword Foe-hammer.

The Lord of the Eagles

rescues the dwarves in Chapter 6 and saves the battle in Chapter 17.

Roac

is a wise bird who can communicate with certain creatures; he seeks to avoid war but also aids in destruction of Smaug.

The Sackville-Bagginses

are greedy and unpleasant members of Bilbo's family.

Major Themes

Solitude and Nostalgia

Gollum is an interesting piece of the puzzle. Sitting on a rock within a subterranean lake, besieged by memories of life with his grandmother above ground, Gollum is an allusion to Caliban, a pitiable, doomed-to-be-evil malcontent who appears in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and reappears in "Caliban upon Setebos," a famous Victorian poem. Like Caliban, Gollum has a history that includes a brief education, a maternal unit, life above ground and more happiness than the present. Caliban is named for cannibalism and marked by his inability to speak properly; Gollum is named for the talking sound he makes while eating and as far as eating goes, Gollum is more than willing to voice his grammatically improper desire to eat Bilbo or anything else. Gollum's dismal state stimulates a brief flash of sympathy, for his loss of his magical ring (another parallel to the alluded Caliban) is a well-timed juxtaposition to Bilbo's growing nostalgia and magical power (much like Caliban's victorious adversary).

Sleep and Unconsciousness

In the first few chapters, we find that sleep is one of the few cherished joys of the hobbits. Things change as the quest requires Bilbo's maturation into a full hero. Chapter 8 offers an interesting fusion of sleep, lethargy and unconsciousness. We find Bilbo's victory is achieved because he is a light sleeper, while Bombur's dip into the water has made him blissfully forgetful. This is an allusion to the dark waters of the underworld (Greek mythology). The river Lethe, from which we get the word lethargy, inspired an erasure of memory. The opiate and narcotic effects of the underworld are repeated in this same chapter as the "dinner dreams" (fires set by numerous elves) seem to be forged in some hellish furnace, a deliberate effort to lure the travelers off of their path. Continuing with the idea of sleep, we can also see the archetypal forest and residential elves paving a way to Shakespeare's hilarious "A Midsummer Night's Dream." This is not an allusion; rather, both works take the old images and ideas surrounding sleep, forests and elves and employ them in new efforts that encourage us to reconsider who we think our noble hero is, where we think our homes are, and what we think is happening while we sleep. Tolkien retains Protestantism's intense suspicion of sleep and only when we are deep within the elven lands can we glimpse the beauty and revelry of unsuspecting, bewitched sleep - a pagan vestige that Shakespeare secured by placing his story within an explicitly pre-Christian setting (Athens of ancient Greece).

Captivity, Surveillance and Invisibility

This is of primary importance when we remember that Bilbo has stolen a ring that makes him invisible. Throughout the novel, the need to hide oneself is present and one thing that certainly distinguishes this group of travelers from an ordinary set of heroes, is the fact that they are always hiding in fear of a lurking monster. Creatures like Gollum thrive on the advantage they have to see others while remaining invisible. We also see this power used for good in the examples of Bilbo and Gandalf. The issue of surveillance is very connected to the theme of captivity as the group is captured in every other chapter. Bilbo is able to play a hero's role by using his invisibility to avoid initial captivity. Then, he can invisibly rescue his friends. He can help his friends to share his freedom, but in the end, he cannot share his magic with them.

Wisdom and Knowledge

This story is full of maps, keys and clever games of riddles. All of this helps to balance the magic of the story. Besides fate and magic, there is a good deal of wisdom that is necessary in order for Bilbo to become a successful hero. We find characters like Elrond, who is able to decipher the moon-runes, and Bard, who is able to understand the language of the bird, Roac. At the end of the novel, Bilbo's own foray into political intrigue demonstrates that he has gained a certain sensibility. And this is no small feat, as the Ring tends to make its bearer foolhardy and unwise, rather than cautious, generous and patient.

Sample Chapter Summaries Preview

Short Summary

The Hobbit is the story of Bilbo Baggins, a hobbit who lives in Hobbiton. He enjoys a peaceful and pastoral life but his life is interrupted by a surprise visit by the wizard Gandalf. Before Bilbo is really able to improve upon the situation, Gandalf has invited himself to tea and when he arrives, he comes with a company of dwarves led by Thorin. They are embarking on a journey to recover lost treasure that is guarded by the dragon Smaug, at the Lonely Mountain. Gandalf has decided, much to Bilbo's chagrin, that the hobbit will make an excellent addition to the team and Bilbo is going to play the role of a burglar. As they start on their way, Bilbo has serious misgivings.

On the journey, Bilbo and the dwarves encounter all sorts of villains and obstacles. They have not traveled very far when they stumble upon a group of trolls. A combination of Gandalf's wizardry and Bilbo's burglary land the group out of harm's way. They are able to replenish their supplies with the food that they find in the trolls' lodging place and they soon move on, pensive and fearful.

Gandalf leads the group to a place where they can get a short rest and they pass through the country of the elves. It is June and all of the joys and songs of midsummer are on display. Bilbo and the dwarves stay at the house of Elrond, an old friend of Gandalf. As they continue on their journey, Bilbo is depressed and nostalgic. The group passes through a mountain chain and two of the dwarves, Fili and Kili, locate a cave for the group to sleep for the night but the cave turns out to be inhabited by Goblins. Bilbo's startled yell helps to save the group.

And after these difficulties, there is trouble with giant spiders and with elves before the group actually arrives at Smaug's mountain. In these travels though, Bilbo has outwitted a creature called Gollum, and gained a ring that makes him invisible. This is certainly helpful in battling the Giant Spiders and getting the dwarves out of the Elvenking's prison. But the ring is especially needed when the group arrives at Smaug's mountain. Once there, the dwarves argue about who will enter Smaug's cave and since Bilbo is the burglar, Bilbo must go ahead and face the challenge. He follows the treacherous course into the heart of the cave and though he is sure he is in danger, he is attracted by a red glow that compels him to approach. This is the glow of Smaug. Bilbo manages to steal a cup and hurriedly exits but Smaug awakens and begins to rage. The lake-town of Esgaroth is the victim of Smaug's terror, for the information that he learns from Bilbo gives him reason to believe that they are involved in the theft of his cup. Bard, the grim-voiced, grim-faced man, is willing to challenge Smaug and he has help from a messenger bird, called a thrush. The thrush relays information that Bilbo discovered while in Smaug's lair: the hollow of Smaug's left breast is not plated with his red-gold armor. When Bard strikes this spot, Smaug falls dead, his massive body crushing the city of Esgaroth. The survivors seek Bard as their new king but Bard provisionally declines the offer, though he intends to establish his own city. As the news of Smaug's death spreads, various groups advance towards the mountain for there is treasure to be had.

Thorin continues to speak of the Arkenstone because it means so much to him, as it is an heirloom and he threatens to take revenge on whoever has prevented him from getting it. In spite of this warning, Bilbo decides that he will leave the mountain and offer the Arkenstone to Bard; then, Bard can offer the Arkenstone to Thorin in exchange for a fair portion of the treasure. Thorin is thinking of ways to avoid a fair bargain and when battle erupts, it includes men, elves and dwarves. They are ready to attack one another until Gandalf announces the approach of the Goblins, bats, wolves and Wargs. The armies re-align themselves and conduct what became known as the "Battle of Five Armies." The Goblins and Wild Wolves battle against the Elves, Men and Dwarves. Gandalf has expected some sort of assault but it did come swifter than he had expected. The Goblins are initially repelled and ambushed by the Elves, but a reinforcement of Goblin troops tilts the balance of the battle. It is only with the final arrival of the Eagles, that the forces of good are sustained. Unfortunately, Bilbo is "smote" with a "stone hurtling from above...and he fell with a crash and knew no more."

When Bilbo regains consciousness, he finds that he is alone and he has to take his ring off so that the individuals who were sent for him can find him. After recovering in the company of Gandalf, Bilbo makes his way back home and their journey though covering the same perilous terrain is far more pleasant and mild than it was the first time. As Bilbo says, "So comes snow after fire, and even dragons have their ending." Gandalf and Bilbo pass through Rivendell and eventually make their way to Hobbiton. It is summer and Bilbo is disappointed to learn that he is legally dead. Greedy cousins, the Sackville-Bagginses are auctioning his property because he is "Presumed Dead." They are more than a little displeased at his arrival and it takes several years for Bilbo to sort out the legalisms. In fact, Bilbo had to buy back a good deal of his own furniture his reputation, for better or

worse, was harder to reclaim. But as for Bilbo, son of Belladonna Took, "for ever after he remained an elf-friend, and had the honour of dwarves, wizards, and all such folk as ever passed that way.

Summary and Analysis of Chapters 1-4

Chapter 1: An Unexpected Party

Bilbo Baggins is a peaceful and domestic hobbit who enjoys living in his cozy hole in The Hill. His life is quite wonderful by hobbits' standards, which is to say, there is no excitement and there are plenty of meals each day. Bilbo is the only son of Belladonna Took and the Tookes are a wealthy family but Belladonna and a few of the others had adventurous streaks and they were not nearly as respectable as the Bagginses. In this story, Bilbo is going to lose his respectability on a rather wild adventure.

One of Belladonna's old friends is a wizard by the name of Gandalf and though he has no official business in Hobbiton (the place where Hobbits live), Gandalf makes an appearance at Bilbo's house. The two really don't get on well at the beginning, as Gandalf is a stranger and strangers are adventurous and not very respectable. When Gandalf reveals his identity, Bilbo is politer and goes as far as to invite Gandalf to tea in a few days. Bilbo has a memory of Gandalf setting fireworks and it does seem that his off-handed treatment of the wizard is pardonable.

Gandalf is always plotting something and he usually knows more than those around him know. Bilbo plans to have tea with Gandalf on Wednesday but Gandalf transforms the tea into an organizational meeting for an adventure in which Bilbo is to play the central role as a professional thief. Of course, Bilbo is not interested in this and he has no experience, but Gandalf has brought twelve dwarves to the tea and the company disregard's Bilbo's protests. They also do a good job of eating all of the food in the hobbit's house.

The adventure surrounds an old dwarf-map that depicts a mountain, in which a dragon named Smaug lives. Smaug has stolen hordes of treasure and these hordes must be reclaimed. It is up to Bilbo Baggins to find a way to sneak into the mountain. Of course, there is an incredibly dangerous terrain separating Hobbiton from Smaug's mountain and this is most of the challenge. The head of the assembled dwarves is Thorin and he is eager to reclaim the lost glories of his race. When Bilbo finally heads to bed, he is not at all pleased with the formidable challenge that stands before him.

Analysis:

Tolkien does not waste anytime introducing us to the world of his fiction, Middle Earth. Dwarves and hobbits are only a few of the many types of creatures that are encountered. Gandalf, the wizard, is a major character in The Hobbit as well as in the Lord of the Rings trilogy. His intentions are rarely manifest though this secretive aspect does not really make him a negative character. Instead, his characterization is positive; he is a guardian and symbol of wisdom. Bilbo is a wonderful contrast to Gandalf and Thorin, the more extroverted of the dwarves. Well before the end of the novel, Bilbo Baggins will prove himself to be an able adventurer but in this chapter Bilbo's joys are all images of domesticity and peace. There will be no tea, little food and hardly a good night's rest on the road and while Bilbo isn't in any danger yet, his discomfort is certainly foreshadowed here.

The characterization of Bilbo Baggins is more complex than the others, as Bilbo is the main character of the novel. The most important thing to notice here is the juxtaposition of Baggins-like Hobbit-style respectability and Took-ish disregard for convention in favor of adventure. Of course, Bilbo will end up more like his mother, Belladonna Took, but even as "belladonna" means beautiful (woman) it is also a name for a poison. Smaug's stolen treasure is another image that commingles beauty and death. Finally, no quest is complete without a destination and treasure in mind and this story borrows on the old motif of the treasure-map and the lost-and-found key. Maps and keys are guides, sources of direction and very convenient. On a thematic level, we will find that discussions of maps and keys bring the ideas of wisdom, natural and acquired talent to the table. Bilbo and Thorin will give us ample data to test hypotheses on whether heroes are born, self-made or both. Finally, we can expect fate to loom as consistently as foreshadowing, which is to say all the time. This voyage is the fulfillment of ancient prophecy but that does not mean it is destined for complete success.

Chapter 2: Roast Mutton

When Bilbo wakes up late in the morning, his guests have already departed. He thinks that he has escaped the adventure, but Gandalf enters the scene and explains the dwarves have left a note for Bilbo and they are waiting

for him at the Green Dragon Inn. Bilbo is forced to rush to the Green Dragon and he arrives at exactly 11 AM, the appointed hour. He has not had time to collect the things he would bring with him, but there is no time for him to turn around. The company travels into a region called the Lone-lands and it is not long before Bilbo has traveled far beyond his previous limits. He already wishes that he was at home, warming himself by the fire and drinking tea and the torrential downpour is not helping his mood.

The group is not as organized as they should be; they only notice Gandalf's absence well after he has departed and they cannot start a fire to cook dinner on account of the rain and wet. The two youngest dwarves, Fili and Kili, are nearly drowned when one of the ponies is frightened and nearly loses himself in the river.

They spot a light in the distance and since Bilbo is the burglar of the group it is his job to go and investigate the scene. Arriving at the fire, Bilbo discovers three trolls who are roasting mutton on spits. They are, of course, significantly larger than Bilbo and summoning his nerves, Bilbo decides to live up to his profession by pick-pocketing. Bilbo reaches for the troll's purse but the bag squeaks: "Ere, oo are you?" and of course, the troll seizes Bilbo. The three trolls, Bert, William and Tom are discussing exactly what a hobbit is and whether Bilbo is worth eating and if so, how should he be prepared?

The trolls argue over Bilbo's fate and when they are physically engaged with one another, Bilbo escapes though not without bruises. Unfortunately, the scene does not end here because the dwarves grew impatient while waiting for Bilbo and, hearing the trolls' noises, decided to approach the fire. Trolls hate the sight of dwarves and the appearance of Balin sets Tom and the other trolls on a rampage. It is not long before all twelve of the dwarves are held in sacks and the trolls are contemplating another dinner. Gandalf rescues the dwarves with an invisible appearance. He periodically interrupts the trolls' conversation, saying false statements in voices that resemble the trolls' voices. Bert, William and Tom each conclude that the other two are lying and/or mad and of course, they engage in more physical brutality, whacking each other in the head and arguing until dawn is suddenly upon them and they turn into rocks.

Gandalf is pleased with his performance and he releases the dwarves. Bilbo had stolen a key that fell from one of the troll's pockets and the group is able to find the trolls' lair and make good use of their provisions.

Analysis:

In terms of narrative structure, this chapter provides a comic interlude as the trolls' ignorance really prevents them from becoming formidable. Still, the chapter shows the steady evolution of Bilbo into a hero; this germination is already in progress. The key motif is reiterated here as the object and symbol of Bilbo's success. Like Gandalf, Bilbo relies upon his intelligence and stealth and as the story continues, expect to see Bilbo stealing all sorts of things from strangers and from his enemies. The characterization of Bert, Tom and William is poignant because these trolls are rather like humans at their worst. One does have to wonder how trolls get named William in a story that has dwarves named Bomfur...

A recurring motif that is certainly connected to the key and map is that of the cave/lair of the villain. Bilbo and the group do some very good work here, enjoying the spoliation of their defeated enemy. Several of the novel's scenes, involving caves and lairs, are allusions to one of two classical scenes. Here, we find references to the Homeric epic, *The Odyssey*. Bilbo, like Ulysses becomes known for his excessive craft and trickery. Here, the deaf trolls are like the blinded Cyclops in the classic. The "mutton" image is also a bit of poignant residue from the Homeric tale and in archetypal fashion, the "dawn" is a symbol of victory over the night, survival and hope for a new day. The "Cyclops" allusion is not intense but should be identified, as it recurs in alternation with references to the Anglo-Saxon epic, *Beowulf*. Finally, the stone trolls are symbols of the ignorance of the trolls who were alive but stone-deaf.

In regards to the central themes: heroism, wisdom and nobility we can add the complexities of a noble thief: is this an oxymoron? And in terms of heroes it is ironic that the dwarves were sacked after rather timidly relegating the dirty-work to Bilbo. Do not expect this to change. As far as character-development goes, Bilbo is the central focus. He is growing into Gandalf's glowing pronouncement and the dwarves are for now, at least being themselves. Even as he sheds respectability, Bilbo seems so hyper-civilized, proto-human and (dare we say) British. "Tea" and the forgotten "handkerchief" might make Bilbo seem like a reference to Lewis Carroll's *White Rabbit*, jumping in and out of hiding holes. Both fantasy writers (Carroll and Tolkien) were drawing upon well-established traditions of British domesticity and this adds a little weight and a bit of a real-world perspective to Bilbo's reveries of the hearth and forgotten articles. From this point until the end of Chapter 17, one of the most important words that we can associate with Bilbo is "nostalgia;" thematically, this is all-important. It is part of Tolkien's personal life and a necessary component of stories that are in this genre,

Sample Preview

Assignments, Questions
& Vocabulary

Section 1 (Chapters 1-4) - Assignments, Questions & Vocabulary

Assign for reading, chapters 1 - 4

Content Summary for Teachers

This section introduces our hero, Bilbo Baggins, a well-to-do hobbit from the idyllic Shire. Hobbits are short, content, simple people who like to eat and smoke and rarely go on adventures. Bilbo's life is upended when the wise wizard Gandalf shows up at his door and invites him on an adventure. The hobbit finds himself the unexpected fourteenth member of a band of dwarves, on a mission to reclaim their mountain homeland and substantial fortune from a vicious dragon. The adventurers set out and run into a band of trolls, who nearly eat them but are thwarted by Gandalf's cleverness. Next stop is the Elven community of Rivendell, where the band's host, Elrond, provides some important information about their quest.

Thought Questions (students consider while they read)

1. Why doesn't Bilbo want to go with the dwarves? Why does he change his mind?
2. Describe the characteristics of a hobbit. How is Bilbo different from other hobbits?
3. Why do you think Gandalf insists Bilbo is the right person for the job?
4. Compare Tolkien's elves to other representations of elves in fiction and mythology.
5. What kind of person did Tolkien want the reader to envision when thinking of Hobbits?

Vocabulary (in order of appearance)

Chapter 1

1. Wardrobe: A large cabinet for storing clothing.
2. Well-to-do: Wealthy.
3. Prosy: Dull, matter-of-fact.
4. Throng: A mob of people.
5. Depredation: Plundering.
6. Excitable: Overly responsive, easily disturbed.
7. Estimable: Esteemed, respected.
8. Remuneration: Payment.
9. Obstinate: Stubbornly.
10. Prudent: To act with thought to repercussions.

Chapter 3

1. Homely: Cozy and home-like.
2. Bannocks: A type of bread loaf.

Chapter 4

1. Haymaking: To cut grass and then cure it into hay.
2. Quaff: To drink.
3. Skriking: To scream (from old Norse).

Section 1 (Chapters 1-4)

Thought Questions - Discussion

1. Why doesn't Bilbo want to go with the dwarves? Why does he change his mind?

Discussion: Bilbo is deeply influenced by Hobbit-culture's notions of propriety and social acceptability. Though his mother, Belladonna Took, had an adventurous spirit, Bilbo thinks he takes after his homebody father instead. But Gandalf knows that Bilbo has more to offer, and can be inspired by songs and stories. Bilbo has a terrific love of storytelling and a wonderful imagination, and it is these qualities that allow him to see himself as heroic enough to go questing with thirteen strange dwarves.

2. Describe the characteristics of a hobbit. How is Bilbo different from other hobbits?

Discussion: The answers to this question can be pulled directly from the text. Discuss how hobbits have certain predetermined characteristics (in both physicality and behavior) and how the Took family differs from them. Some differences might include: curiosity, courage, a thirst for adventure. It is worth noting that while many (if not most) hobbits are farmers, Bilbo is wealthy and has no apparent job.

3. Why do you think Gandalf insists Bilbo is the right person for the job?

Discussion: Pretty much immediately, the reader can guess that Gandalf is very wise, and probably privy to some information that we are not. Whether this is actually true is never really established (and indeed, Gandalf's powers seem less mystical and more confident estimation the more you read of him), but it is enough for the reader to trust that Gandalf knows what he's doing. Bilbo seems to feel the same way. Ostensibly, Gandalf picks Bilbo because he knew Belladonna Took well, and would have trusted her to undertake this mission.

4. Compare Tolkien's elves to other representations of elves in fiction and mythology.

Discussion: Students may wish to discuss how the elves that Bilbo meets differ from other versions of elves they may be more familiar with. You may also want to compare the elves to their film counterparts in the Peter Jackson adaptations of Tolkien's works. Their film representation is not consistent with the jovial vision of Rivendell the book presents.

5. What kind of person did Tolkien want the reader to envision when thinking of Hobbits?

Discussion: Tolkien himself said of the Hobbits, "the Hobbits are just rustic English people, made small in size because it reflects the generally small reach of their imagination." Hobbits are a generally positive group, with simple needs, who enjoy gardening and smoking and eating.

Section 1 (Chapters 1-4) Classroom Activities

Map Reading in Middle-earth

Objective:

Familiarize students with the geography of Middle-earth

Structure:

Ask students to turn to the map that should be at the beginning of their copy of *The Hobbit*. Be sure to have print-outs of the map on hand, in case any students have an edition without the map included.

Lead students through exploring the map, which can be confusing. Ask students to imagine where Bilbo's journey will lead him - will he see all the locations on the map? Why doesn't it show any of the places that Bilbo travels through in the first few chapters? Students should notice that this is Thorin's Map - the one described at several points in the text.

Next, have students look at the map at the end of the book. (Provide print-outs if necessary.) This map, marked "Wilderland" in the bottom-right corner, covers much more terrain and is clearer about distance and scale. As a class, compare and contrast the two maps. Discuss how the first, Thorin's map, fills a function within the book's plot, while the second map exists outside of the book's universe and is designed for the reader. Encourage students to refer back to their maps as Bilbo and his friends travel, so that they will have a geographical reference. You may want to keep a class map on display that you keep up-to-date with the day's reading, by tracing Bilbo's route in pen or highlighter.

Finally, allow students to explore this [Interactive Map](#) of Middle Earth. Bilbo's route is outlined in blue, and it should be easy for students to follow it! Encourage your class to revisit this map and examine it in detail as you read further into the text.

Ideas for Differentiated Instruction:

- Students who have more extensive knowledge of Tolkien's stories (whether in film or book form) should look for familiar places on the interactive map.
- Less visually-inclined students may have less accurate maps - they should not be penalized, as long as it is clear they are drawing from the text.

Assessment Ideas:

- Have students create their own map of the territory covered only in the chapters you have read so far. The more detail from the text they can include, the better!

Structure:

Assign students to read [this](#) blog post, written about the lack of female heroes in the hobbit.

Ask students to choose one of the following prompts and, individually, write one-to-two page essay in response to it.

1. Is there something about Bilbo's character or story that might make him particularly easy to genderswap? Why or why not?
2. Did you notice the lack of female characters in *The Hobbit*? Do you think books should always have prominent female characters? Why or why not?
3. If you could rewrite *The Hobbit*, would you change anything about the gender of the characters? Which characters? Why?

Once students have completed and handed in their essays, encourage a class discussion about both the blog post

and the responses to it. Students may connect both to their own experiences as well as other literature they may have read.

Ideas for Differentiated Instruction:

- You may wish to have a class discussion about the article before assigning the prompts.
- Provide more information, as necessary, about the lack of women in fiction (particularly adventure stories).

Assessment Ideas:

- Grade student essays on coherence, analysis of the text and proper textual support.

Sample Preview

Sample Preview

Section Worksheets
& Answer Keys

Name: _____

Section 1 Review (Short Answers)

1. In what kind of dwelling does a hobbit live?

2. How many dwarves visit Bilbo?

3. Who is in charge of "The Last Homely House"?

4. How does Gandalf defeat the trolls?

5. What is the full name of the sword Thorin takes from the troll hoard?

6. According to the runes on the map, on what day will the mountain's secret entrance reveal itself?

7. What was Bilbo's mother's name?

8. What is something that Bilbo leaves behind when he rushes off to join the dwarves?

9. What is the name of the mountain range that Bilbo and the dwarves must cross after they leave Rivendell?

10. Where does Gandalf get the map and key?

1. A hobbit hole.
2. Thirteen.
3. Elrond.
4. He tricks them into arguing with each other until dawn, when the sunlight turns them to stone.
5. Orcrist, the Goblin Cleaver.
6. On Durin's Day.
7. Belladonna Took.
8. His pocket handkerchiefs and his hat.
9. The Misty Mountains.
10. From Thorin's father Thrain

Sample
Preview

Name: _____

Section 2 Review (Short Answers)

1. Who calls the dwarves, “murderers and elf-friends”?

2. How does Bilbo know his weapon was made by the elves?

3. What is Gollum’s “birthday present”?

4. What does Bilbo lose while escaping the goblin tunnels?

5. What does Bilbo keep secret from Gandalf and the dwarves?

6. Who are the Wargs?

7. How do our heroes keep the Wargs at bay?

8. Why do the eagles offer to help?

9. What forms can Beorn transform between?

10. Why does Gandalf introduce the dwarves to Beorn two-at-a-time?

1. The Great Goblin.
2. It glows when goblins are nearby.
3. His magic ring, or his “precious”.
4. His buttons.
5. He doesn’t tell them about the magic ring.
6. Big wolves that are allied with the goblins.
7. They climb trees and hide in them, then Gandalf throws flaming pine cones at the Wargs.
8. Because Gandalf once healed the Great Eagle from an arrow wound.
9. He can transform from a man into a bear, and a bear into a man.
10. Beorn doesn’t like to have visitors

Sample
Preview

Sample Preview

Vocabulary Worksheets
Quizzes & Answer Keys

The Hobbit - Vocabulary (Chapters 1-4)

Complete the crossword below



Across

- 2. To drink
- 4. Overly responsive, easily disturbed
- 11. To scream (from old Norse)
- 13. Plundering
- 14. A mob of people
- 15. Wealthy

Down

- 1. To act with thought to repercussions
- 3. Payment
- 5. Stubbornly
- 6. To cut grass and then cure it into hay
- 7. Esteemed, respected
- 8. Dull, matter-of-fact
- 9. A large cabinet for storing clothing
- 10. Cozy and home-like
- 12. A type of bread loaf

The Hobbit - Vocabulary (Chapters 1-4)

Complete the crossword below

1 p
r
2 q u a f f
d
3 r
4 e x c i t a b l e
n
t
m
u
n
e
5 o
6 h
7 e
8 p
9 w
a
r
10 h
o
m
a
y
a
t
o
s
k
r
i
k
i
n
g
t
i
s
12 b
13 d e p r e d a t i o n
m
y
a
n
n
14 t h r o n g
b
e
y
i
n
t
b
15 w e l l - t o - d o
l
e
y
c
k
s

Name: _____

Date: _____

Vocabulary Quiz (Sections 1-5)

Answer on a separate piece of paper.

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. A moss-like plant that grows over rocks. | A. Smithereens |
| 2. An exclamation of frustration, like "darn". | B. Quaff |
| 3. A grating that blocks entry to a building (usually a fortress) and may be raised up to let people in. | C. Deposed |
| 4. A place where food is stored. | D. Ravening |
| 5. A group of cows. | E. Oddments |
| 6. Opposition towards someone or something. | F. Grievous |
| 7. Very serious; a cause for concern. | G. Mustering |
| 8. Tiny pieces. | H. Precipice |
| 9. Decayed; falling apart. | I. Caper |
| 10. Attacking and plundering. | J. Vanguard |
| 11. To be removed from office. | K. Bannocks |
| 12. To converse. | L. Parley |
| 13. To be intensely preoccupied with dark thoughts. | M. Lichen |
| 14. Bits and pieces. | N. Pinnacle |
| 15. To prance or frolic. | O. Brood |
| 16. Beautiful or pleasing to look at. | P. Mouldered |
| 17. To feed violently; rabidly. | Q. Marauding |
| 18. The forefront of an advancing army. | R. Commotion |
| 19. Territory that belongs to a government. | S. Dominion |
| 20. A cliff or steep rock structure. | T. Enmity |
| 21. To accumulate or assemble. | U. Kine |
| 22. An auditory disturbance. | V. Drat |
| 23. Payment. | W. Comely |
| 24. A type of bread loaf. | X. Portcullis |
| 25. To drink. | Y. Larder |
| 26. The peak of a pointed rock. | Z. Remuneration |

1. M
2. V
3. X
4. Y
5. U
6. T
7. F
8. A
9. P
10. Q
11. C
12. L
13. O
14. E
15. I
16. W
17. D
18. J
19. S
20. H
21. G
22. R
23. Z
24. K
25. B
26. N

Sample
Preview