



A READING COMPANION FOR

The Hobbit

READER:

What is it about?

The Hobbit follows the journey of Bilbo Baggins, a mild-mannered hobbit who lands unexpectedly in an epic adventure involving dwarves, goblins, an enigmatic wizard, and a terrifying dragon. Set in the richly imagined world of Middle-earth, *The Hobbit* is beloved for its whimsical tone, thrilling episodes, and relatable themes.

Who wrote it?

J.R.R. Tolkien, a professor of medieval literature, first started imagining hobbits when he was supposed to be grading papers. As Tolkien shaped the story, he drew inspiration from mythology, linguistics (the study of languages), folklore, and his own experiences in World War I.

Why read it?

Even if fantasy is not your cup of tea, the story structure, vivid world-building, lyrical prose, and compelling characters make *The Hobbit* a masterpiece.

As you read this novel, you will...

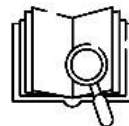
- Expand your vocabulary.
- Practice active reading strategies to improve comprehension and critical thinking.
- Study literary elements like imagery, point of view, characterization, and symbolism.



= Before you read



= While you read



= After you read

Chapter 1: An Unexpected Party

Reader: _____

Bilbo Baggins' quiet life in the Shire is upended when Gandalf the wizard and a company of strange, rowdy dwarves arrive with a proposition.



Warm-up: Are you the type of person who takes risks and craves adventure, or do you prefer to stay in the predictability of your comfort zone? Explain.



Vocabulary:

Write an original sentence with each.

Depredations (noun): Acts of attacking or plundering. (Same root as *predator*)

Hoard (noun): A store of valued objects, typically one that is carefully guarded.

Audacious (adjective): Showing a willingness to take surprisingly bold risks.

Prudent (adjective): Acting with or showing care and thought for the future.



Reading Focus: INDIRECT CHARACTERIZATION is when subtle details help you fully understand a character's characteristics, or TRAITS. As you read, identify the clues that suggest that the main character, Bilbo Baggins, may be more adventurous than he seems.



Reading Quiz:

1) How does Bilbo react when Gandalf first mentions an upcoming adventure?

- A. He is excited and ready to go.
- B. He eagerly asks for more details.
- C. He expresses zero interest.
- D. He asks for time to think it over.

2) What does Gandalf do before leaving Bilbo's home after their first meeting?

- A. He gives Bilbo a map.
- B. He scratches a mark on Bilbo's door.
- C. He tells Bilbo to expect three ghosts.
- D. He steals an umbrella.

3) How might one describe Bilbo's reaction to the arrival of the party of dwarves?

- A. Angry and insulting
- B. Stingy and selfish
- C. Joyful and jolly
- D. Polite and confused

4) What is the purpose of the dwarves' visit to the Shire?

- A. To hire Bilbo.
- B. To celebrate Thorin's birthday.
- C. To deliver a letter from Gandalf.
- D. To purchase horses, wagons, and supplies.

5) What does the dwarves' song tell Bilbo (and the reader) about the purpose of the quest?

- A. They are seeking a new home.
- B. They want to reclaim their lost kingdom.
- C. They plan to plunder (rob) the Shire.
- D. They need to find Gandalf's stolen staff to repay him and lift the curse.

6) What does Gandalf give Thorin?


- A. A magic whistle
- B. A phial (little bottle) of poison
- C. The key to a secret door
- D. His father's crown



Reflection:

1. Gandalf's intentions are mysterious. Why do you think he has involved himself?

2. INDIRECT CHARACTERIZATION: Record two subtle clues from this chapter that suggest that Bilbo Baggins may secretly be more adventurous than he appears.

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Clue: | Clue: |
|  | |
| Explanation: | Explanation: |

Chapter 2: Roast Mutton

Reader: _____

Thorin and company trek into the wilds, and Bilbo takes on his first challenge as a professional burglar.



Warm-up: Imagine you are being sent on a hiking journey one hundred miles through a forest wilderness. What will you bring in your pack? (NOTE: No engines or electronics allowed.)



Vocabulary:

Write an original sentence with each.

| | |
|---|--|
| Mutton (noun): The meat of a sheep, especially when used as food. | |
| Paraphernalia (noun): Miscellaneous items, especially for a particular activity. | |
| Glum (adjective): Looking or feeling dejected; sad; without spirit. | |
| Plunder (verb): To steal goods, typically using force and in a time of disorder. | |



Reading Focus: TENSION AND HUMOR

Tolkien uses TENSION AND HUMOR in tandem (together as a team). As you read, identify the comical situations and word jokes that interrupt the danger and tension of the story.



Reading Quiz:

- 1) Why does Bilbo leave for the quest without any proper preparation?
 - A. He didn't realize he was expected to go.
 - B. Gandalf abducts him in a large crate.
 - C. Some hobbit boys steal his supplies.
 - D. He leaves in a hurry to avoid the sheriff.
- 2) What does Bilbo attempt when he first encounters the trolls in the forest?
 - A. To negotiate (make a deal) with them
 - B. To pick their pockets
 - C. To ask for directions
 - D. To scare them with "hobbit wizardry"
- 3) What do the trolls mostly argue about?
 - A. Which of them is the greatest warrior
 - B. Where to hide from Gandalf
 - C. What makes the stars twinkle
 - D. How to cook
- 4) Which character is responsible for defeating the trolls and saving the entire company?
 - A. Thorin
 - B. Elrond
 - C. Bilbo
 - D. Gandalf
- 5) What does the company discover at the very end of Chapter 2?
 - A. A pool of magic water
 - B. The skeleton of a dead dragon
 - C. A cave full of treasure
 - D. The secret to cooking tender mutton
- 6) In Chapter 2 Bilbo demonstrates that...
 - A. He is a gifted burglar.
 - B. He is a terrible burglar.
 - C. He can save the day when he must.
 - D. He has no courage at all.



Reflection:

1. An antihero is a hero who does not possess the qualities of a stereotypical or ideal hero. Based on Bilbo's misadventure with the trolls, what are his shortcomings (flaws) as a hero?

2. HUMOR AND TENSION: One way to ruin a joke is to spend time explaining it. Nevertheless, identify two funny elements from Chapter 2 and explain the humor of each.

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The face you make when you realize that the guy named **Baggins** was the only person who was **NOT** in a bag.

Chapter 3: A Short Rest

Reader: _____



Gandalf guides the company to a wise elf who sheds light on the particulars of the quest.



Warm-up: Imagine the most soothing and peaceful place. This could be a real place or a completely fictional setting. Experience it in your mind. Now describe the location in detail.



Vocabulary:

Write an original sentence with each.

| | |
|---|--|
| Ford (noun): A shallow place in a river or stream where it can be crossed. | |
| Homely (adjective): Cozy and comfortable (referring to a place). | |
| Venerable (adjective): Commanding respect due to age, dignity, or wisdom. | |
| Vex (verb): To irritate, annoy, or provoke. | |



Reading Focus: IMAGERY refers to the use of descriptive details (sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches) that activate the reader’s IMAGINATION — the “mind’s eye.” As you read this chapter, pay attention to the descriptive details that create the IMAGERY.



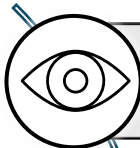
Reading Quiz:

- 1) Where does the company stay in this chapter?
 - A. The Lonely Mountain
 - B. Rivendell
 - C. Mirkwood
 - D. Lake-town
- 2) Which choice best describes the song that the elves sing to the arriving visitors?
 - A. Sad and mournful
 - B. Heroic and inspiring
 - C. Shocking and scary
 - D. Light and teasing
- 3) What is the name of the lord of the elves that hosts Gandalf and Thorin and Company?
 - A. Galadriel
 - B. Thranduil
 - C. Elrond
 - D. Legolas
- 4) In Chapter 3 the narration explains that...
 - A. Wizards do not like hobbits.
 - B. Elves do not like hobbits.
 - C. Dwarves do not like elves.
 - D. Wizards do not like dwarves.
- 5) What is the secret to reading the hidden messages on the map of the Lonely Mountain?
 - A. Holding the map up to moonlight
 - B. Chanting an ancient spell
 - C. Folding the map in a certain way
 - D. Viewing it through a piece of crystal
- 6) Why does the leader of the elves forbid the company to continue their quest?
 - A. He says they cannot succeed and will die.
 - B. He claims the treasures for himself.
 - C. He fears that they will start a war.
 - D. Trick question! He does not forbid them.



Reflection:

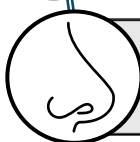
IMAGERY: List some of the words and phrases that create the **IMAGERY** of visiting Rivendell.



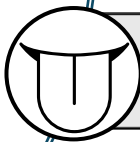
SIGHT



SOUND



SMELL



TASTE



TOUCH / FEEL