

The Fellowship of the Ring

Summer Reading
Seventh Grade Edition



The Fellowship of the Ring by J.R.R. Tolkien
ISBN: 9780547928210, Houghton Mifflin 2012

Summer Reading Guide for Seventh Grade

In the sixth grade we start the adventure of Bilbo Baggins, in seventh grade watch Frodo take the sought-after ring on a journey, and in eighth grade watch the forces of good and evil battle as the journey continues. These books are not books that can be easily discerned at first glance, but require many levels of reading and understanding. The summer is a good opportunity to bring this literature to the student and have each one read and ponder the great questions of life.

The Geneva School of Boerne Humanities Department mission statement reads as follows:

We, the Humanities Department at the Geneva School of Boerne, desire to engage our students in the Great Conversation of Human Civilization and to enable them to see the beauty and power of the written and spoken word so that their minds may be sharpened to properly understand the world in which they live. To this end and for these reasons, the Humanities Department at Geneva is wholeheartedly dedicated to the worth of grammar mastery, the warrant of logical reasoning, and the weight of rhetorical skill.

Our desire is for our students to enter this “great conversation” with Tolkien’s literature, and thereby start to formulate the early muscle of sharpening their minds.

Requirements:

- All work should be completed directly in this study guide.
- Answer questions in blue or black ink and write in your neatest cursive.
- Please be attentive to spelling and punctuation.
- All questions need to be answered with complete sentences.
- Notes should be made in the book as well.
- Please use the required text. *The Fellowship of the Ring* by J.R.R. Tolkien (ISBN: 9780547928210, Houghton Mifflin 2012)

This assignment will count as two quiz grades. Points will be taken off for the following: not following directions, missing key events and information, wrong information and missing chapters. Late summaries, wrong format or incomplete answers will be docked points.

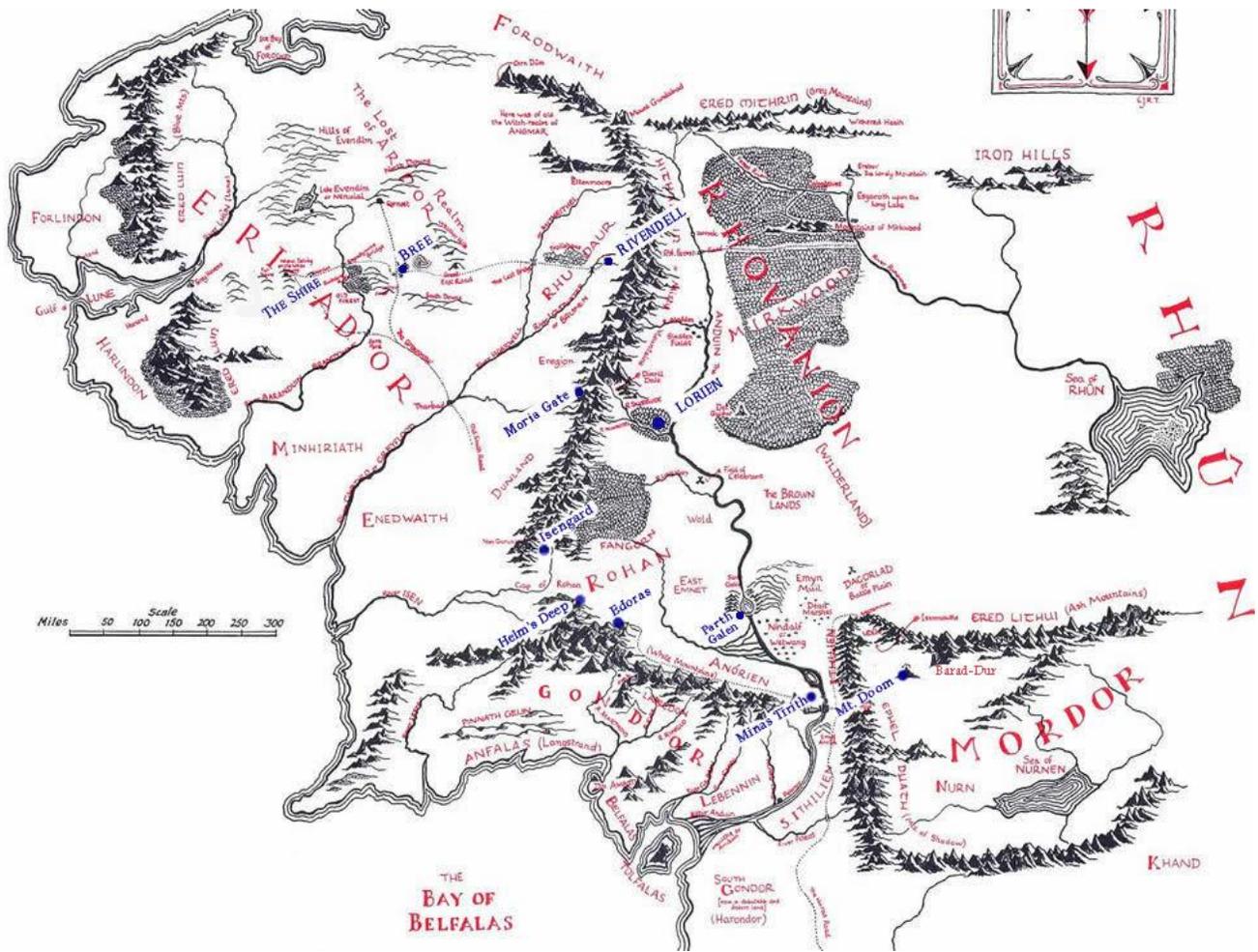
Helpful hints:

Answer your questions for each chapter immediately after reading it. Do not watch the movies. These do not follow the book and can confuse you. Do not rely on Spark notes to summarize information or enlighten understanding. If you find yourself drowning in the literature and feel you are having a hard time following the story, do the following:

1. Read aloud; this helps those who are multisensory learners.
2. Keep notes of key people and events.
3. Browse the chapter first and then read for detail.
4. Re-visit previous chapters once you have a greater understanding of the story.
5. Discuss and retell your reading with a parent or fellow student.

Learning to tackle difficult reading is one way your mental muscle is developed. Relying on someone else to figure it out for you is much like having someone do your push ups so you can get stronger. This is mental work that is sharpening your abilities; do not approach this as leisure reading.





The Fellowship of the Ring

Three Rings for the Elf-kings under the sky,
 Seven for the Dwarf-lords in their halls of stone,
 Nine for Mortal Men doomed to die,
 One for the Dark Lord on his dark throne
 In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.
 One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them,
 One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them
 In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.

Book One

Chapter 1: A Long-expected Party

The book opens many years after the events of *The Hobbit*. Bilbo is preparing to celebrate his 111th birthday but is still as robust as he was when he was younger. The book also quickly introduces a new character: Frodo Baggins, a cousin of Bilbo's who he has adopted as his nephew. They are preparing for a huge party to be thrown in Bilbo's honor. It is a huge affair, with plenty of food and drink to satisfy even the hungriest hobbit. Gandalf even arrives, bringing fireworks to enliven the affair. However, Bilbo throws a twist at the end. At the end of his speech, he puts on his magic ring and disappears. He returns to his house, where Gandalf is waiting for him. He reveals that he is leaving the Shire to travel to Bree and see the dwarves again. Before he goes, Gandalf asks him to leave his ring. Bilbo is very hesitant and has to be pressured into giving it up, but expresses relief upon doing so. This puts Gandalf into a thoughtful mood and when Frodo returns, Gandalf informs him of Bilbo's departure and then leaves himself, telling him to keep the ring secret and safe.

1. What does Tolkien do to connect this book with *The Hobbit*? (title of chapter, things he owns from the last adventure)

2. How are Hobbit birthdays different from ours?

3. How do you know that Bilbo does not want to leave the Ring behind? What affect has the Ring had on Bilbo?

4. Why do you think Bilbo ends up finally leaving the ring?

5. Gandalf says, "Let it go! And then you can go yourself and be free." What do you think he means by that? How will Bilbo be free?

Chapter 2: The Shadow of the Past

Gandalf has not been seen in the Shire for many years. Frodo shows little sign of aging, just like Bilbo. As he approaches his fifties, however, Gandalf returns. He reveals that he had spent his time finding Gollum, the creature from whom Bilbo got the Ring. From Gollum and from research he had undertaken in the Kingdom of Gondor, he discovered that the ring Frodo has is in fact the Ring which Sauron forged and stored his might in. Gandalf reveals that when Sauron was last defeated, the Ring was lost. Gollum found it and kept it with him under the mountains, until Bilbo found it. They discuss the history of the ring for a little while before Gandalf realizes that Samwise Gamgee is eavesdropping. Gandalf brings Sam into their discussion. They decide the ring must be taken to Rivendell where there will be a council to decide what is best to be done with the Ring.

1. What strange things are starting to happen in the Shire?

2. Give examples of what the ring does on its own or to people (this is throughout the whole chapter).

3. Write out the poem that explains the Ring. There is *one* line provided for each line of the poem.

4. Underline above the parts of the poem that are written about the One Ring.

5. *Read page 50 **aloud to a parent** at least twice. Work on your understanding of the passage and reading with fluency.

Then, **retell to your parent the information about the rings of power and the news Gandalf relates to Frodo about Sauron (The Enemy).

*****Parents**, please sign in the blank immediately below that your student has read aloud twice to you and retold page 50. _____.

6. Who owned the original 20 great Rings, and what happened to them?

7. Summarize the history of the Ring. Make sure you include text detail from pages 50-53.

2. Write down a thorough description of the black riders' appearance and their actions. (You can draw and color a picture in the box below if you would rather do that than write.)



3. What about the black riders' appearance and actions makes you think they are "evil?" Explain.

3. Using details from the book, describe the elves' appearance and their actions. (You should use information from chapter 4 as well.)

4. What about the elves' appearance and actions make you think they are good? Give specific details from the novel.

Chapter 4: A Short Cut to Mushrooms

When they awake, they continue their journey. Pippin decides to take a shortcut, only to get the group lost. They end up at the house of a farmer named Maggot. Farmer Maggot feeds them and gives them a ride to a ferry, where they meet Merry.

1. How do you know that Gandalf has chosen for Frodo a good companion in Sam?

2. What kind of qualities do you look for in a friend?

Chapter 5: A Conspiracy Unmasked

When the hobbits reach Frodo's new home, Frodo's friends reveal that Sam had told them all about the Ring and that they want to help him get to Rivendell. Frodo reluctantly agrees to their offer for aid. They then discuss their options and decide that the best option is to take the road through the Old Forest, an ancient forest filled with trees that are so old they still can think and talk to some degree, though not in a way obvious to anyone besides other trees. The path is risky, as the hobbits of the Shire had burned many of the trees years before. They end up agreeing to take the route, however, as they wager it is safer than running into the black riders again.

1. Using a dictionary, write the definition of the word *conspiracy*.

2. What **kind** of a conspiracy has been going on without Frodo's knowledge? Explain.

3. What does this say about Frodo’s friends? Explain their purpose in keeping their knowledge secret.

4. Frodo says, “This is no treasure-hunt, no there-and-back again journey, I am flying from deadly peril into deadly peril.”

What journey is Frodo referring to when he talks about the treasure-hunt, no there-and-back again journey? How is this journey different in essence than the previous journey? Give at least two differences between Bilbo’s and Frodo’s types of journey.

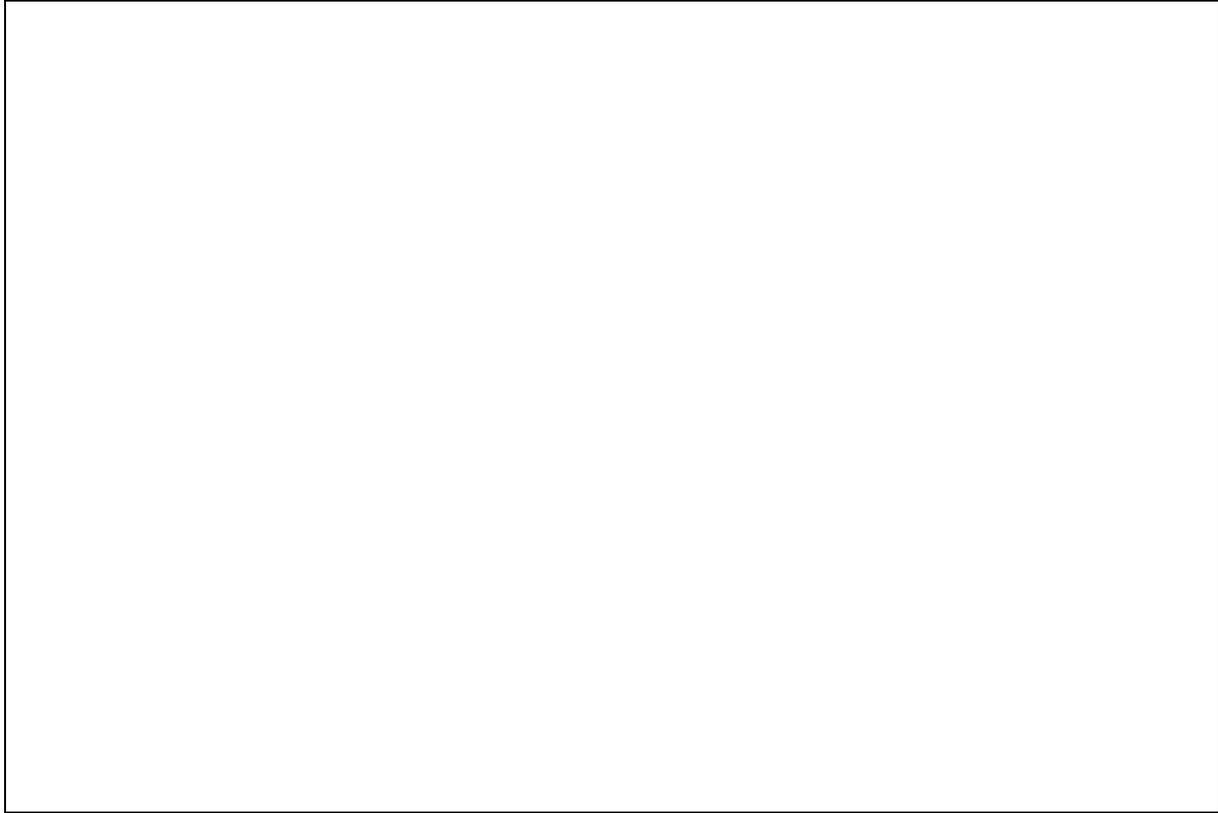
Chapter 6: The Old Forest

They wake up early in the morning and begin the journey through the forest. They lose their way, however, and end up next to a large ancient willow. There they fall asleep, only to wake up with Merry and Pippin trapped by the tree. Frodo and Sam call for help, and are surprised when a man calling himself Tom Bombadil appears and forces the tree to release the two hobbits. He then takes them all to his house.

1. Tolkien takes a long time to describe the forest. List five details you notice about the forest from the novel.

2. Why do you think Tolkien writes in such detail? Explain.

3. Describe Tom Bombadil's appearance or draw a picture of him.



Chapter 7: In the House of Tom Bombadil

When they get to the house, Tom reveals that he knows of the Ring, but shows it has no power over him. They quickly forget about all their troubles though, as Tom tells them many stories.

1. The hobbits have been journeying on a tough path up to this point and then end up in this place with Tom Bombadil. What about Tom's place makes it so restful for the hobbits? Describe it by providing details from the book.

2. Describe a time in your life that was difficult, and you then came to a restful part. How did it make you feel? For instance, you could relate a time about a camp/home or car drive/vacation.

3. Why doesn't the ring seem to have any control over Tom Bombadil? Be specific in your answer.

Chapter 8: Fog on the Barrow Downs

Tom gives them fresh supplies and sends them on their way. They begin traveling through an area called the Barrow Downs. They eventually reach a large stone pillar, where they eat and fall asleep again. When they awake, they find the Downs covered in fog. They try traveling through, only to get separated and lost. Frodo is left alone, trying to find his friends, when a strange apparition knocks him unconscious. He awakes to find himself in a cave, dressed in white. His friends lie beside him. A strange voice is chanting in the room next to theirs. A hand slowly extends towards a sword lying on Frodo's friends' necks. Frodo picks up another sword and cuts off the hand, calling to Tom Bombadil for help. Tom appears and destroys the cave, which is actually a tomb. He frees the hobbits and sets them on their way again, promising to escort them out of the Barrow Downs.

1. The Barrow-wights represent evil. What other creatures so far have been evil?

2. What creatures have represented good up to this point?

3. Explain how Frodo shows courage in this chapter. What does this say about Frodo?

4. What items does Tom choose for the hobbits to take from the Barrow Downs? Describe them.

Chapter 9: At the Sign of the Prancing Pony

The hobbit companions eventually reach a town called Bree. They proceed to an inn called The Prancing Pony. There they find rooms and a meal. After they eat, they go into the main room of the inn to drink and socialize. Bree has a hobbit population as well, and some of Frodo's friends begin to recite the story of the party. Frodo tries to stop them, only to accidentally put on the ring. (Among its other powers, the ring causes the wearer to disappear.)

1. In addition to Butterbur and Nob, who do they meet at the Prancing Pony? _____

2. Write out a description of his appearance.

3. Who do they not meet that they had hoped to find there?

4. What is the reaction of the crowd when Frodo reappears?

Chapter 10: Strider

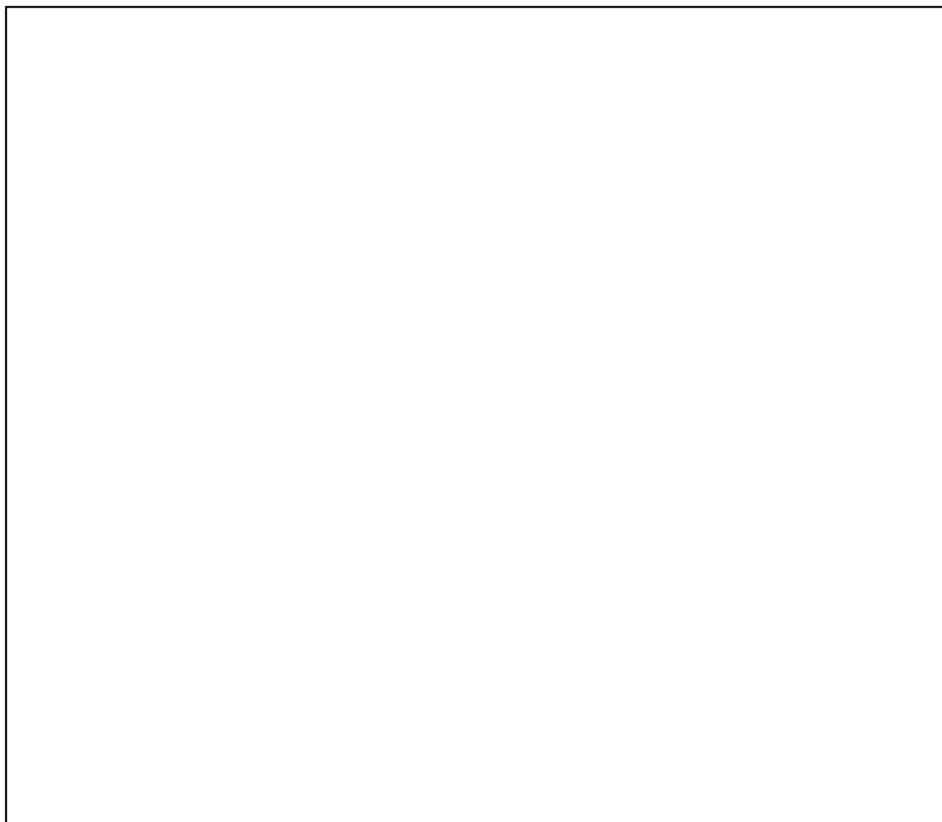
When they return to their rooms, a man named Strider is waiting for them. He says that the hobbits have drawn too much attention to themselves and offers to help them. Frodo and his friends are wary, until the innkeeper remembers to bring them a letter from Gandalf, which reveals that Strider is a man to be trusted. Not only is he a man to be trusted, he is a strong and noble ranger from the north, and his name is Aragorn. They accept his offer and Frodo reveals that Gandalf was supposed to have met them at the inn. Just then, Merry comes in and says that he saw a black rider. Strider tells them to go to his room and stay in there for the night.

1. Gandalf writes a letter telling them to trust Strider. What are several of Gandalf's instructions?

2. What about Strider makes him seem untrustworthy or trustworthy? Explain.

3. Write out the poem Gandalf includes in his note to Frodo. "All that is gold does not glitter..."

4. Gandalf has a seal for his name and so does Tolkien. (Go back to the title page and look at the top of the page. In the black oval, you will see J R R T as a form.) Design your own seal using your initials in the space provided.



Chapter 11: A Knife in the Dark

When they wake up in the morning, the group finds the room they were going to sleep in torn up. Strider tells them to prepare to leave immediately, but they are delayed when they discover their ponies are missing. They manage to find others, but unfortunately, the story of Frodo's disappearance has spread and they leave with many watching. Strider takes them off the road, however, and they manage to make good time. (Rangers have great skill maneuvering themselves through different landscapes). Eventually, after several days, they reach an ancient ruin called Weathertop, where they make camp for the night. The black riders find them, though, and the hobbits are driven to the top of the tower. There, Frodo puts on the Ring and sees through the riders' cloaks. They appear as pale men with keen, merciless eyes, clothed in robes and armor. One of them comes forward and stabs Frodo in the shoulder with a knife, and he passes out.

1. Where does the group get a pony? What does the pony look like?

2. Why does Frodo look "twice the hobbit that he had been?"

3. What does Sam do that surprises the company?

4. Where was the company ultimately traveling? _____

5. Give a brief summary of the story of Beren and Luthien. (You may write it below or use the space on the next page to tell it in a cartoon strip or in pictures.)

The Story of Beren and Luthien



6. How many ringwraiths are there at Weathertop?

7. What does Frodo do to protect himself? (There are several things.)

Chapter 12: Flight to the Ford

When he awakes, he finds the riders gone and his friends worrying over him. Strider gives Frodo temporary relief from the wound and then has the group move. They eventually stumble upon the trolls that Bilbo had stumbled upon, now turned to stone, of course. This cheers them up, but the hobbits and Strider soon return to worrying about Frodo, whose arm is completely numb, and who is starting to grow very weak. Soon, however, an elf lord by the name of Glorfindel finds them. He puts Frodo on his horse and directs the company towards Rivendell. But they are found by the riders again, who give chase. Glorfindel sends Frodo ahead on the horse, and Frodo manages to cross the river into Rivendell just ahead of the riders. The river then suddenly rises up and overwhelms the black riders, just as Frodo passes into unconsciousness.

1. What kind of effect does the stabbing wound have on Frodo? Describe using details from the book.

2. Name several things that make the journey difficult. Be specific.

3. What things do they find along the way that give them hope? (jewel, stones, people)

4. God also works that way in us. He never gives us more than we can handle. Describe a situation (must be a different circumstance than the chapter 7 question) in which you or your family had a difficult time but something good happened to get you through.
