

The Two Towers Summer Reading



Eighth Grade Edition

(Book 3, chapters 1 -5 have been read in Language Arts at the end of 7th grade)

The Two Towers by J.R.R. Tolkien (ISBN: 9780547928203, Houghton Mifflin 2012)

In 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 easily be discerned at a first glance, but rather 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's Humanities Department Mission Statement:

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 is to be written on your own notebook paper and inserted into the green bradded folder (no other format will be accepted).
- These must be written in **blue or black ink**.
- Handwriting must be **neat** and in **cursive**.
- **Skip one line** between each question.
- 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.

Facts:

This summer work will be counted as two quiz grades. The grading rubric begins at a 90. Points will be added for well-written answers that include insight and detail. Points will be taken off for the following: missing key events and information, wrong information, and missing chapters. Late summaries, wrong format, or incomplete answers will be docked points.

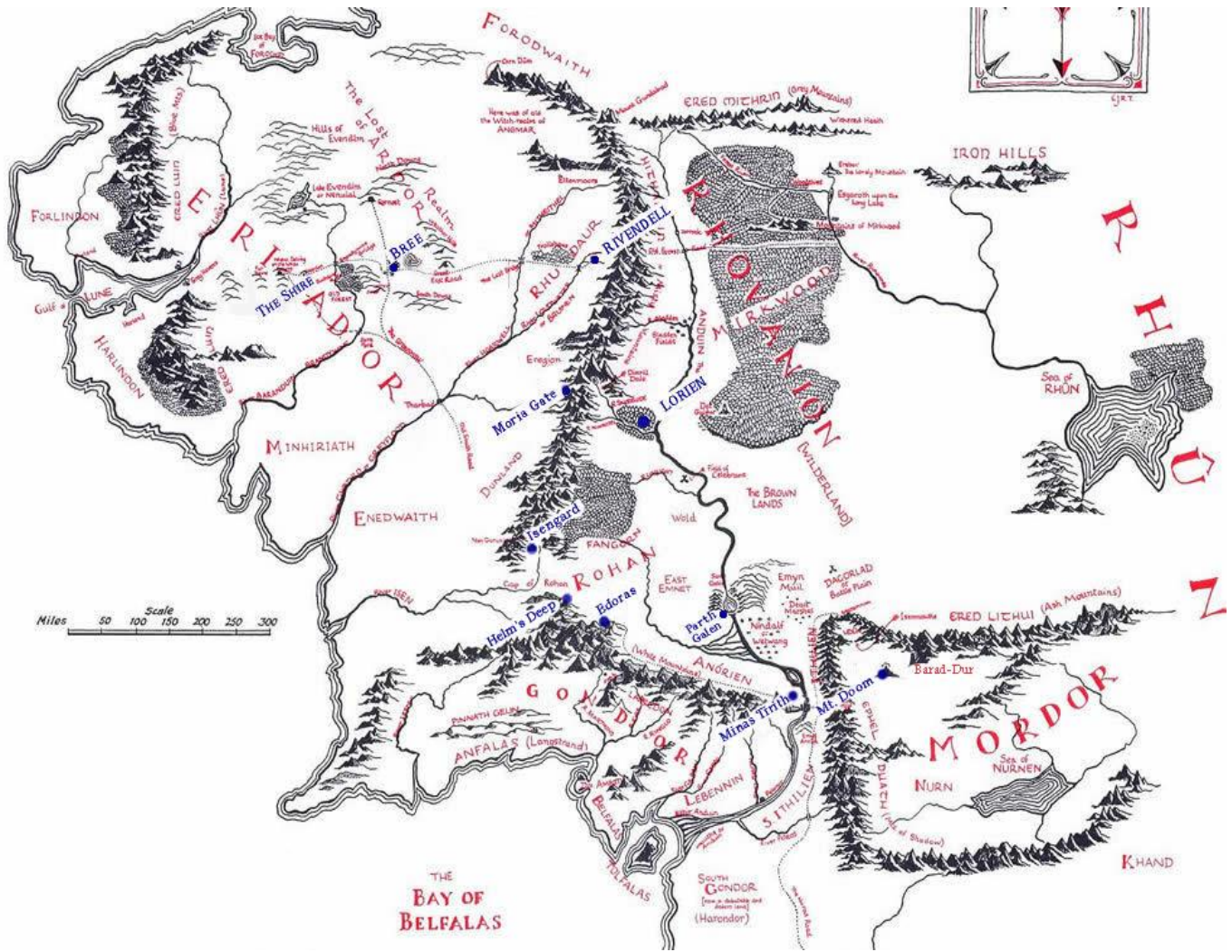
Learning to tackle difficult reading is one way your mental muscle is developed. Relying on someone else to figure it out for you is much like having someone do your push ups so you can get stronger. This is mental work that is sharpening your abilities. Do not approach this as leisure reading. With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

Helpful Hints:

Answer your questions for each chapter immediately after reading it. Do not watch the movies. These do not follow the books 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 multi-sensory learners.
2. Keep notes in your book 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 with a parent or fellow student.





The Two Towers

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.

Reading Guide for *The Two Towers*

In brief, *The Two Towers* is about a man, an elf, and a dwarf chasing down two hairy-footed young guys before joining a super-powerful wizard and going on an epic campaign to defeat another wizard and his army of vicious, man-eating goblin-creatures. Then there are two more hairy-footed youngsters doing some seriously strenuous mountaineering, all so they can chuck a perfectly nice ring into a volcano. But we all know that is not enough to drive so many to read this great work time and time again. While the plot of *The Two Towers* doesn't actually sound ripped from the headlines, it really is. In fact, all three books of the *Lord of the Rings* series are.

When Tolkien published *The Two Towers* in 1954, war was on everybody's mind, whether it was the recent, real war of World War II with Hitler, Mussolini, and the Emperor Hirohito, or Tolkien's fantastical, fictional war against Saruman and Sauron. In *The Two Towers*, we see battles of truly huge scale. Middle-earth is experiencing a World War of its own, and we readers witness the drama, action, and bloodshed that come with it. Tolkien has taken the smaller, more personal scale of *The Fellowship of the Ring* and multiplied it tenfold to give us an epic clash with thousands of players.

Clearly, by the second book of the series, Tolkien is trying to raise the stakes. This isn't just a story about a couple of guys trying to complete a quest anymore. All of Middle-earth is getting involved in the War of the Ring, and we get the giant battle scenes to prove it.

This build-up of momentum, from the smaller-scale events of *The Fellowship of the Ring* to the huge face-offs in *The Return of the King*, only becomes possible with *The Two Towers* to act as a bridge between the other two parts of the trilogy. But because *The Two Towers* is a bridge, it doesn't truly stand on its own.

The author J.R.R. Tolkien set out to create a myth for England similar to the myths of the Roman gods and the Greek gods and wove a beautiful tale of beauty, adventure, bravery and fellowship.

A note on Summaries. Written by Mrs. Jennifer Blackstone, former Geneva Rhetoric School Humanities Instructor:

I was once asked why it wasn't acceptable to read the online summaries rather than the story itself since she would essentially get the gist of the story anyway. While the summaries may be a useful tool for reading after having read the original text, solely reading them will ultimately be to the disadvantage of the student. The price of a Geneva education isn't merely tuition; it is time, discipline, and hard work. The result is, hopefully, a thoughtful and educated disciple of Christ. You read the book to learn the moral of the story, to be drawn into the characters, the plot, and the excellent use of words. The book itself is a piece of art. The summaries are just a description of that artwork, not the art itself. Reading online summaries rather than reading the text is like traveling all the way to Paris to go to the Monet museum, standing in the lobby and asking the docent to give you a 20 minute description of Monet's best paintings because you are too busy to go look at them yourself. While you may get a good idea of what is in the paintings and be able to tell your friends that you went to the museum, you will be the one missing out.

(Book 3, chapters 1-5, were read in Language Arts at the end of 7th grade)

Book 3

Chapter 6: The King of the Golden Hall

“No counsel have I to give to those that despair. Yet counsel I could give, and words I could speak to you. Will you hear them? They are not for all ears. I bid you come out before your doors and look abroad. Too long have you sat in shadows and trusted to twisted tales and crooked promptings.” ~ Gandalf

1. How long has the Golden Hall of Meduseld stood?
2. Tolkien often uses the setting to establish the mood of the story. How is the mood already different here than in the forest of Fangorn?
3. What difficulties do Gandalf and our friends have entering the hall of Theoden?
4. Who is Grima Wormtongue?
5. How does Gandalf rescue Theoden?
6. Why was Eomer imprisoned when he returned home to Edoras? What does Eomer do upon his release from prison? What does this tell us about Eomer?
7. What chance does Theoden offer Grima to prove himself worthy?

Chapter 7: Helm’s Deep

“Come,” said Aragorn. “This is the hour when we draw swords together!”

1. As the group travels to Helm’s Deep, what news is brought to them?
2. After reading the description of Helm’s Deep, either write some key phrases that give a clear picture or draw a sketch of what you think it looks like.
3. Gimli and Legolas, along with others in this chapter, prepare for battle with eagerness and excitement. Recall a time in your life that you had this same kind of energy and enthusiasm. A big game, competition, hunting, a vacation?
4. Aragorn states, “Yet dawn is ever the hope of men.” How do his words prove true in the novel?

Chapter 8: The Road to Isengard

“I have lived to see strange days. Long we have tended our beasts and our fields, built our houses, wrought our tools, or ridden away to help in the wars of Minas Tirith. And that we called the life of Me, the way of the world. We cared little for what lay beyond the borders of our land. Songs we have that tell of these things, but we are forgetting them, teaching them only to children, as a careless custom. Now the songs have come down among us out of strange places, and walk visible under the Sun.” ~ King Theoden

1. Tell the difference between a *parley* and a *fight*.
2. What had the men of the hills and Dunland heard about men of Rohan?
3. What do you imagine happened to the orcs since all the dead bodies had vanished?
4. What promise do Gimli and Legolas make to one another?
5. How do they notice Isengard has changed since Saruman took over?
6. What seems to have happened to Isengard as they approach the doors?
7. Whom do they find, much to their surprise?

Chapter 9: Flotsam and Jetsam

“Why, your hair is twice as thick and curly as when we parted; and I would swear that you have both grown somewhat, if that is possible for hobbits of your age.” ~ Gimli

1. Using a dictionary, define *flotsam* and *jetsam*.
2. As noted by the quote above, Gimli notices a change in Merry and Pippin. What does Legolas believe has made this difference in their small friends?
3. Write some of the remarkable feats of the Ents in this attack on Isengard (at least 3 details required).
4. Tolkien writes of Isengard: “A strong place and wonderful was Isengard, and long it had been beautiful...But Saruman had slowly shaped it to his shifting purposes, and made it better, as he thought, being deceived—for all those arts and subtle devices, for which he forsook his former wisdom, and which fondly he imagined were his own, came but from Mordor; so that what he made was naught, only a little copy, a child’s model or a slave’s flattery, of that vast fortress...the Dark Tower.”

Read Romans 1:20-25. How does Saruman bring these verses to life?

Chapter 10: The Voice of Saruman

“We will have peace...when you and all your works have perished – and the works of your dark master to whom you would deliver us. You are a liar, Saruman, and a corrupter of men’s hearts. You hold out your hand to me, and I perceive only a finger of the claw of Mordor?” ~ King Theoden

1. What specific warning does Gandalf give the others about Saruman?
2. Two of the visitors quickly see through the words of Saruman. Who are they?
3. What breaks the spell of the men when Saruman offers to have a private conversation with Gandalf?
4. Under what conditions does Gandalf offer to let Saruman go free?
5. What is thrown at Gandalf, and by whom?
6. How long does Treebeard promise to watch over the new forest called Watchwood?

Chapter 11: The Palantir

“He has grown, or something. He can be both kinder and more alarming, merrier and more solemn than before, I think. He has changed; but we have not had a chance to see how much, yet. Remember, Saruman was once Gandalf’s superior: head of the Council, whatever that may be exactly. He was Saruman the White. Gandalf is the White now. Saruman came when he was told, and his rod was taken; and then he was told to go, and he went!” ~ Merry

1. What is keeping Pippin curious?
2. Does Pippin know he is doing something he should not? How do we know?
3. Give 5 details of what Pippin saw in the Palantir.
4. What are the nine-winged things?

5. Who is given watch over the stone?
6. Who goes with Gandalf; who goes with Aragorn?

Book Four
Chapter One: The Taming of Smeagol

“One Ring to rule them all and in the Darkness bind them.”

1. How do Sam and Frodo use the Elven rope given to them in Lothlorien?
2. In dealing with Gollum once he is discovered, Frodo is reminded of words spoken by whom?
3. How do they “tame” Smeagol?
4. Consider how Smeagol is used to being treated and how Frodo treats him. Contrast the differences here.
5. Why can they trust his “oath” on the ring?
6. Biblical Connection: Compare Gollum’s response to the Elven rope to the way demons respond to the name of Jesus.

Chapter Two: The Passage of the Marshes

“The tricky lights. Candles of corpses, yes, yes. Don’t you heed them! Don’t look! Don’t follow them!” ~ Gollum

1. Mark in your book and write on your paper at least three of each of the following:
 - a. Personification
 - b. Simile
 - c. Alliteration
2. What is Frodo’s outlook on their completion of the mission to destroy the ring?
3. Why is it important that Sam overhears the “debate” of Gollum?
4. Who do you think “She” is?

Chapter Three: The Black Gate is Closed

“If there is only one way, then I must take it. What comes after must come.” ~ Frodo

1. What changes (more than one) do we (and Sam) notice in Frodo? What might we blame for this?
2. How many times do Frodo and Sam ask Gollum if this new path is guarded?
3. As the men are marching toward Mordor, Gollum says, “Always more people going to Mordor.” Why is this happening?
4. On page 629, Gollum speaks of Aragorn. Go back to Book Two chapter two in *The Fellowship of the Ring* and give a few details of Aragorn’s recount of his own experience with Gollum.

Chapter Four: Of Herbs and Stewed Rabbit

“Po – ta – toes!” ~ Sam

1. Note the landscape change between Mordor and the present location. Provide some distinct details that make this landscape different from where they have been.
2. What food does Gollum desire and how does he like it prepared?
3. What are the “nassty red tongues?”
4. When Sam decides to cook, what is Gollum’s contribution?
5. How do these men know Boromir?
6. What do they know of the legend and lore of Middle Earth? Provide two to four details they share.
7. What is “Isildur’s Bane?” Why is the “sword that was broken” significant?
8. What does Sam get to see?

Chapter Five: The Window on the West

“The Lady of Lorien! Galadriel! You should see her, indeed you should, sir...I wish I could make a song about her!” ~ Sam

1. Why is the chapter entitled “The Window on the West?”

2. How do Faramir and his men know Boromir is dead?
3. By the way he and his men treat Sam and Frodo, what do we learn of Faramir's character traits?
4. From page 662, tell three more details of the legend and lore that these men, especially Faramir, share.
5. What is the significance of the Rohirrim? Who else in the novel has met them? How did that interaction go?

Chapter Six: The Forbidden Pool

"You cannot yourself, you say, guide me to the mountains, nor over them. But over the mountains I am bound, by solemn undertaking to the Council, to find a way or perish in the seeking." ~ Frodo

1. Why does Faramir wake Frodo?
2. As they depart, what warnings (note at least three) does Faramir give each of the travelers?
3. How does Gollum feel about Frodo now?
4. How does the scene of the fallen statue on page 687 offer Sam and Frodo hope?
5. Describe the relationship between Frodo and Faramir.

Chapter Seven: Journey to the Cross-Roads

"Nice Master! Smeagol was only joking. Always forgives, he does, yes, yes, even nice Master's little trickses. Oh yes, nice Master, nice Smeagol." ~ Gollum

1. Why does Frodo trust Gollum?
2. What do they notice about the ground? (not that it is steep, something more unsettling)
3. Tell of a time when you felt uneasy or frightened. Write two or three sentences.
4. Where do you think Gollum has gone?
5. What do they notice about the broken artifact, other than the fact that it is broken? Give at least two details.

Chapter Eight: The Stairs of Cirith Ungol

“And Frodo wouldn’t have got far without Sam, would he dad?” ~ Frodo

1. How does Frodo fight the temptation to put the ring on when the Ringwraith looks at him?
2. Describe the stairs where Gollum is leading. Give five specific details of these stairs.
3. Why does it become more difficult for Frodo to carry the ring?
4. What are Sam’s nicknames for the two personalities they encounter in Gollum? Distinguish the two names by describing Gollum.
5. What does Sam imagine may happen years after their time is finished? Give two quotes you especially like from this section.

Chapter Nine: Shelob’s Lair

“O yes, it may well be that when She throws away the bones and the empty garments, we shall find it, we shall get it, the Precious, a reward for Smeagol who brings nice food.” ~ Gollum

1. Define a “lair.”
2. What do they notice about the place Gollum has led them? Give at least three details.
3. What other place does the lair bring to mind? What major event occurred there?
4. How do you suppose that memory affects Frodo and Sam as they continue in this current place?
5. How are Frodo and Sam helped after they lose Gollum?
6. Whose words do they remember? Write those words. Connect these words to a scripture reference and share how they are similar.
7. Describe the trouble they encounter. This will take three to five sentences to do it well. Don’t be skimpy.

Chapter Ten: The Choices of Master Samwise

“Frodo, Mr. Frodo! Don’t leave me here alone! It’s your Sam calling. Don’t go where I can’t follow!” ~ Sam

Pages 711-716

1. What is Sam's reaction when he sees the spider over Frodo?
2. How does Sam get the best of Shelob?
3. How does Sam gain new strength?
4. Why is this Sam's most difficult moment yet in the story?
5. What is Sam's one wish?

Page 717-end

6. What unexpected choice does Sam make right away? What are some of the consequences of this decision?
7. How do the orcs describe Gollum? Shelob?
8. Why do the orcs think the intruder is a large warrior?
9. What is Sam's greatest shock as he listens to the orcs describe an attack by Shelob?
10. Share a time in your life when you exhibited courage or selflessness.

Final Questions

Please answer the following question with a full paragraph of complete sentences. Remember to use your best handwriting, topic and conclusion sentences, and include transitions. It should be 5-8 sentences.

1. Several times, references to danger or dangerous characters are made. One is of Fangorn where Gandalf replies:

“Dangerous! And so am I, very dangerous; more dangerous than anything you will ever meet, unless you are brought alive before the seat of the dark Lord. And Aragorn is dangerous, and Legolas is dangerous. You are beset with dangers, Gimli; for you are dangerous yourself, in your own fashion. Certainly the forest of Fangorn is perilous—not least to those that are too ready with their axes; and Fangorn himself, he is perilous too; yet he is wise and kindly nonetheless.”

How have you seen this be true of these characters and of others throughout the journey? How are characters both dangerous and kind?

2. Develop an ANI (Affirmative/Negative/Informative) for the following statement:

Whether or not seemingly evil or corrupted characters are redeemable in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Two Towers*.

(List at least five points from the novel in each category.)

Affirmative: Corruption/evil is redeemed and explain how

Negative: Evil is not redeemed and explain how

Informative: What facts surround the proposition that evil/corruption is redeemable