

The Two Towers

The Second Part of *The Lord of The Rings*



Summer Reading Guide for Logic School Eighth Grade Edition

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

In the Logic School, we start the adventure of Bilbo Baggins in sixth grade, watch Frodo take the sought-after ring on a journey in seventh grade and then in eighth grade we watch the forces of good and evil battle as the journey continues. These books are not 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 humanities department mission statement is:

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. This packet of information provides a summary of each chapter and questions to answer each chapter.

Requirements:

- All work is to be written in **blue or black** composition books.
- Use only **blue or black ink**
- Handwriting must be neat and **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

Facts:

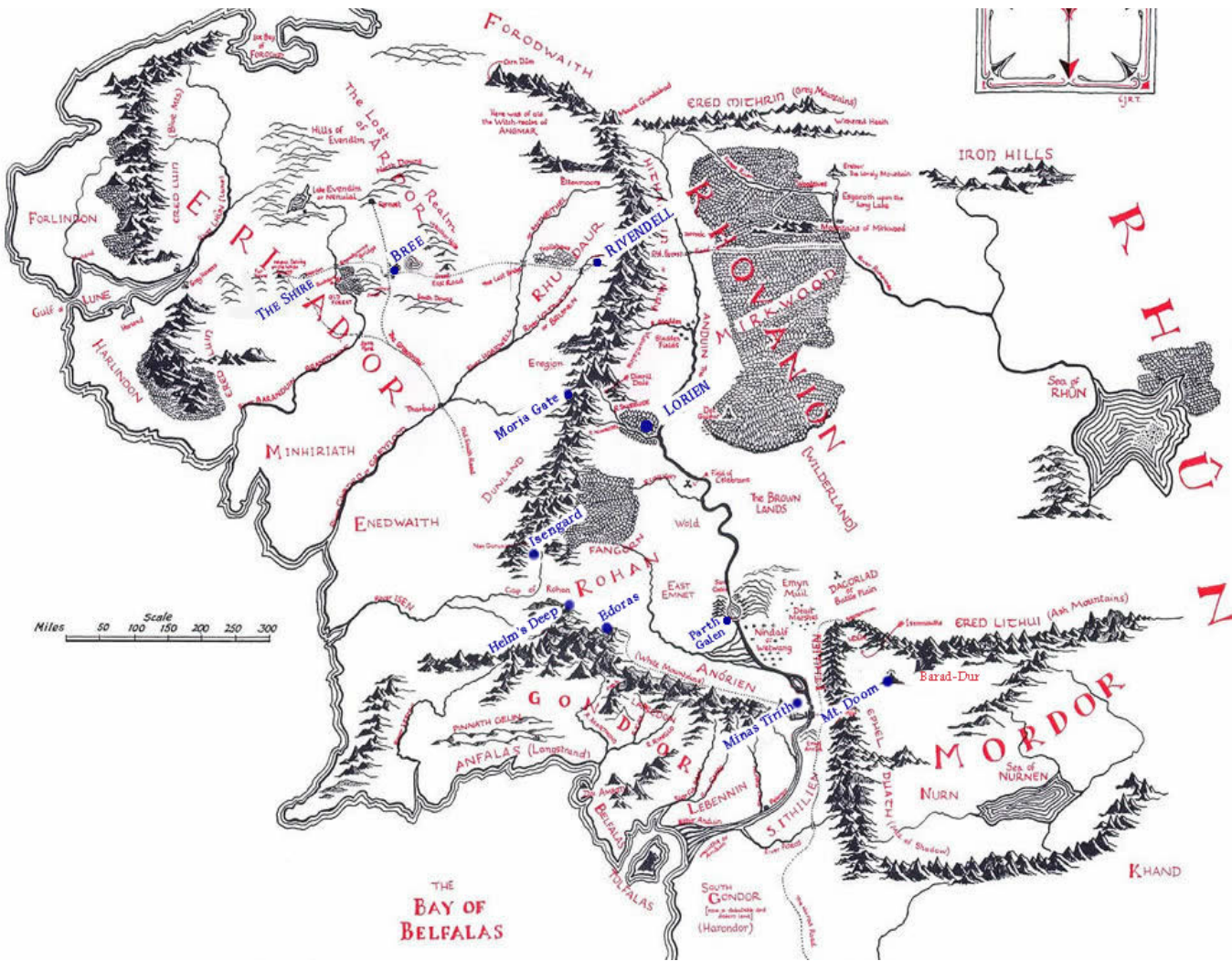
The summaries will be a homework/quiz grade. The grading rubric begins at 90. Points will be added for well-written answers that include insight and detail. Points will be taken off for the following: missing key events and information, wrong information and missing chapters. Late summaries, wrong format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

Helpful hints:

Answer your questions for each chapter immediately after reading it. Do not see 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. Revisit previous chapters once you have a greater understanding of the story
5. Discuss 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 sharpens your abilities; do not approach this as leisure reading; with great work comes great reward.



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 Three

Chapter 1: The Departure of Boromir

“Thus passes the heir of Denethor, Lord of the Tower Guard! This is a bitter end. Now the Company is all in ruin. It is I that have failed. Vain was Gandalf’s trust in me. What shall I do now? ... How shall I find them and save the Quest from disaster?”

Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli discover Boromir mortally wounded after defending Merry and Pippin from Orcs. After honoring him with a funeral boat, they pursue the Orcs across Rohan.

1. How is the funeral of Boromir different from those in our culture? Be sure you give details of both.
2. After discovering that the hobbits are missing, Aragorn says, “An evil choice is now before us.” What is the choice they must make, and why does Aragorn call it “evil?”
3. What observation does Legolas make of the orcs?

Chapter 2: The Riders of Rohan

“The counsel of Gandalf was not founded on foreknowledge of safety, for himself or for others,” said Aragorn. “There are some things that it is better to begin than to refuse, even though the end may be dark.”

The trio meets Éomer and the Riders of Rohan, who have destroyed the Orc band. Aragorn learns Merry and Pippin may still be alive.

1. We come upon the second poem/song that Aragorn sings as a tribute to great cities of Middle Earth. What are some details you would include in a song about Boerne?
2. What news of Rohan does Eomer and the Riders give to our traveling friends?
3. When they meet the riders, Eomer and his men refer to “old tales” that make him suspicious of our traveling friends, the lady Galadriel, and the hobbits. From what we know, are Eomer’s opinions reliable? Why or why not?

Chapter 3: The Uruk-hai

“You will get almost a chapter in old Bilbo’s book, if ever I get a chance to report to him. Good work; especially guessing that hairy villain’s little game and playing up to him. But I wonder if anyone will ever pick up your trail and find that brooch. I should hate to lose mine, but I am afraid yours is gone forever.” ~Merry

Merry and Pippin endure captivity among fighting Orc factions until the Rohirrim attack, allowing them to escape into Fangorn Forest.

1. In chapter 3, we finally catch up with Merry and Pippin, discovering the details of their own adventure while Aragorn and Company have been searching for them. Why have they not been killed by the orcs?
2. We also discover there are two groups of orcs. Only a couple of them are named. Who is Ugluk? Who does he report to? Where does he plan to take the hobbits? What is the symbol they wear?
3. What does Pippin remember about Rohan?
4. How are Merry and Pippin able to escape?

Chapter 4: Treebeard

"...I've lived a very long, long time; so my name is like a story. Real names tell you the story of the things they belong to in my language, but it takes a very long time to say anything in it, because we do not say anything in it, unless it is worth taking a long time to say, and listen to." ~ Treebeard

The hobbits meet Treebeard, an ancient Ent, and tell him of Saruman's destruction. Treebeard begins to rouse the Ents against Isengard.

1. What is an Ent? How is it different than a tree?
2. Who taught them to speak?
3. What sparks Treebeard and the other Ents to action?

Chapter 5: The White Rider

"That is not the road that you must take. I have spoken words of hope. But only of hope. Hope is not victory. War is upon us and all our friends, a war in which only the use of the Ring could give us surety of victory. It fills me with great sorrow and great fear: for much shall be destroyed and all may be lost." ~ Gandalf

Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli encounter Gandalf, now returned as Gandalf the White after his battle with the Balrog.

1. What does Legolas say about the way the horses sounded as they disappeared in the night?
2. Who is Shadowfax?
3. What affirmation does Gandalf give to Aragorn following Merry and Pippin?

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

Gandalf frees King Théoden from Saruman's influence in Edoras, restoring courage and leadership to Rohan.

1. How long has the Golden Hall of Meduseld stood?
2. Who is Grima Wormtongue?
3. How does Gandalf rescue Theoden?

Chapter 7: Helm's Deep

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

Théoden leads his people to the fortress of Helm's Deep as Saruman's huge army marches to war.

1. As the group travels to Helm's Deep, what news is brought to them?
2. Gimli and Legolas, along with others, prepare for battle with eagerness and excitement. Describe a time in your life when you had a similar kind of energy and excitement.
3. Aragorn states, "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

After the battle, the company rides to Isengard and finds it flooded and ruined by the Ents.

1. What do you imagine happened to the orcs since all the dead bodies had vanished?
2. What promise do Gimli and Legolas make to one another?
3. What seems to have happened to Isengard as they approach the doors?

Chapter 9: Flotsam and Jetsam

"Why, your hairs 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

Merry and Pippin recount how the Ents attacked Isengard and trapped Saruman in his tower.

1. Using a dictionary, define flotsam and jetsam.
2. Gimli notices a change in Merry and Pippin. What does Legolas believe has made it?
3. Write some of the remarkable feats of the Ents in this attack on Isengard. (at least 3 details)

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

Saruman attempts to manipulate Théoden and Gandalf with his persuasive voice, but Gandalf breaks his staff and casts him down.

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 on the men when Saruman offers to speak with Gandalf privately?

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

Pippin secretly looks into a magical seeing stone and glimpses Sauron, prompting Gandalf to ride with him toward Minas Tirith before greater war begins.

1. What is keeping Pippin curious?
2. What are the nine-winged things?
3. Who goes with Gandalf; who goes with Aragorn?

Book Four

Chapter 1: "The Taming of Sméagol"

"We want it, we need it. Must have the Precious. They stole it from us. Sneaking hobbitses, wicked, tricky, false!" - Gollum

Gollum's divided personality becomes increasingly clear in this chapter. One side of him longs for the Ring and distrusts everyone, while another side seems capable of loyalty and even kindness. Tolkien presents Gollum as both dangerous and pitiable.

1. Is Gollum completely evil, or is there still hope for him? Explain how Tolkien creates both sympathy and fear around his character. Use specific examples from the chapter.
2. In what ways are we all like Gollum?
3. Frodo makes Gollum swear an oath "on the Precious" instead of on his own life or honor. Is this a legitimate form of binding promise, or is it flawed from the start?

Chapter 2: "The Passage of the Marshes"

"The Dead Marshes, yes, yes: that is their name. You should not look in when the candles are lit." -Gollum

The Dead Marshes are filled with haunting reminders of an ancient battle. Frodo and Sam must continue forward through a place overwhelmed by death, despair, and temptation. The setting itself almost becomes another character in the story.

1. How does Tolkien use setting to shape the mood of the chapter? Explain how the Dead Marshes affect Frodo, Sam, and Gollum differently.
2. The Dead Marshes hold unburied warriors from long-past battles. Does leaving them there show a lack of justice or respect for the dead?
3. What does Gollum's fear of the Ringwraiths reveal about him, and does that fear make him more trustworthy or less?

Chapter 3: "The Black Gate Is Closed"

"I am commanded to go to the land of Mordor, and therefore I shall go," said Frodo. "If there is only one way, then I must take it. What comes after must come."

Frodo reaches the entrance to Mordor only to realize that the obvious path is impossible. The chapter emphasizes discouragement, uncertainty, and the need to trust others even when the future is unclear.

1. How do characters respond when their original plans fail? Describe how Frodo and Sam react differently to disappointment and uncertainty in this chapter.
2. Frodo chooses not to approach the Black Gate after seeing its defenses. Is avoiding confrontation with evil a just decision when the mission is urgent?
3. Gollum offers a "secret way" into Mordor. How should a just person weigh the risk of trusting an untrustworthy guide against the certainty of failure?

Chapter 4: "Of Herbs and Stewed Rabbit"

"What a hobbit needs with coney," he said to himself, "is some herbs and roots, especially taters not to mention bread. Herbs we can manage, seemingly." -Sam

Sam's humor and ordinary habits stand in sharp contrast to the growing darkness around the travelers. Even while danger increases, Sam continues to care about food, stories, and simple comforts.

1. Why are ordinary comforts important during difficult times? Explain how Tolkien uses Sam to remind readers of what the characters are fighting to protect.
2. Sam's insistence on cooking a proper meal seems small, but does preserving normal life in dark times have moral value?
3. When the Southrons march by, Sam wonders about their lives and whether they might have been good men on another path. What does this moment say about justice toward enemies in war?

Chapter 5: "The Window on the West"

"I would not take this thing, if it lay by the highway. Not were Minas Tirith falling in ruin and I alone could save her." -Faramir

Faramir refuses the Ring even after learning what it is capable of. Unlike Boromir, he recognizes that some forms of power should not be used, even for good purposes.

1. Compare Faramir and Boromir. What different ideas about leadership, strength, and temptation do they represent? Which brother demonstrates greater wisdom, and why?
2. Faramir refuses to take the Ring even though it might help Gondor. Is that justice toward his people, or is it putting personal honor above their safety?
3. How does Faramir's handling of Frodo and Sam reflect justice tempered by wisdom?

Chapter 6: "The Forbidden Pool"

"Now that I see him, I do pity him." -Frodo

Frodo's understanding of Gollum deepens as he recognizes the suffering and corruption caused by the Ring. Frodo's pity shapes his actions even when others believe Gollum deserves punishment.

1. Why is mercy such an important theme in Tolkien's work? Discuss whether Frodo's pity toward Gollum is wise, dangerous, or both.
2. Faramir tells Frodo that Gollum must die for entering the Forbidden Pool. Was he right to require Frodo to lure Gollum in, knowing it might betray Gollum's trust?
3. When is it just to enforce a law without exception, and when should mercy overrule it?

Chapter 7: "Journey to the Cross-roads"

"The brief glow fell upon a huge sitting figure, still and solemn as the great stone kings of Argonath. Years beyond count he had sat there upon the hill." -Tolkien

The travelers encounter the ruined statue of an ancient king crowned with flowers by nature itself. The image becomes a surprising sign of hope in the shadow of Mordor.

1. What does the fallen king symbolize in this chapter? Explain why Tolkien includes moments of beauty and hope even while the story grows darker.
2. The fallen statue of the king is crowned with fresh flowers. Does this symbolize justice that endures even when kingdoms fall?
3. What might Tolkien be saying about rightful authority in a time when evil reigns?

Chapter 8: "The Stairs of Cirith Ungol"

"Hold up, Mr. Frodo!" muttered Sam in Frodo's ear. "Come back! Not that way. Gollum says not, and for once I agree with him."

Sam experiences exhaustion and despair, yet a glimpse of beauty reminds him that darkness does not last forever. This moment becomes one of the most famous expressions of hope in the novel.

1. Why does Tolkien place moments of beauty in the middle of suffering? Explain how the image of the star changes Sam's perspective and strengthens his resolve.
2. Sam overhears Gollum debating with himself and ultimately deciding on treachery. Does knowing a person's intentions justify preemptive action against them?
3. Is it just to judge Gollum by his thoughts, or only by his actions?

Chapter 9: "Shelob's Lair"

"The star-glass?" muttered Frodo, as one answering out of sleep, hardly comprehending. "Why yes! Why had I forgotten it? A light when all other lights go out! And now indeed light alone can help us."

Shelob represents a different kind of evil from Sauron or Saruman. She is ancient, isolated, and consumed only by hunger and destruction. The chapter emphasizes fear, darkness, and sacrifice.

1. How does Tolkien create suspense and fear in this chapter? Discuss how Shelob differs from other enemies in the story and why that difference matters.
2. Shelob attacks out of hunger and instinct, not malice toward the quest. Should justice treat such creatures differently from those who act knowingly and willfully in evil?
3. How does Sam's stand against Shelob reflect justice for his master, and is it more about vengeance or protection?

Chapter 10: “The Choices of Master Samwise”

“Now come, you filth!” he cried. “You’ve hurt my master, you brute, and you’ll pay for it. We’re going on; but we’ll settle with you first. Come on, and taste it again!”

Sam faces grief, loneliness, and responsibility after believing Frodo is dead. Despite his fear, he continues the mission and chooses courage over despair.

1. What makes Sam heroic in this chapter? Explain how Tolkien portrays courage as perseverance and faithfulness rather than physical strength alone.
2. Believing Frodo to be dead, Sam takes the Ring to continue the mission. Is this an act of justice toward Middle-earth, or betrayal toward Frodo’s trust?
3. What does Sam’s decision reveal about the role of duty in Tolkien’s view of justice?

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 Two Towers by J.R.R. Tolkien.

(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