



English II: Summer Reading Assignment: J. R. R. Tolkien: *The Hobbit: or There and Back Again* Guide to Annotating the Text

Instructions:

Please purchase J. R. R. Tolkien's *the Hobbit* (published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012, the 75th Anniversary edition, ISBN: 9780547928227). This version is available on Amazon.com.

Use the questions provided in this reading guide to help you mark your text to prepare you for our discussions and writing assignments when you return to school this fall. Simply put, you will be transforming the question into a note that you write in the margin of your text.

Marking a text as you read helps you locate important information about characters and plot events. Efficient "text-marking" also helps students see narrative patterns, allusions, and literary devices at work.

Below is an example of how to use the questions provided to mark your copy of *The Hobbit*. The first two questions are marked for you. As you read, continue to mark your text with "answers" to each question along the way.

In the fall, your instructor will randomly check twenty questions in your copy of *The Hobbit*; each notation in the margin will be worth 5 points, and this assignment will count as your first major grade in English II.

Chapter I

AN UNEXPECTED PARTY

Bilbo is well-to-do (lots of nice/expensive things in house). He likes people. He likes food (pantries), clothes, gardens, nice things. He likes comfort. Seems comfortable and content

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort.

It had a perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle. The door opened on to a tube-shaped hall like a tunnel: a very comfortable tunnel without smoke, with panelled walls, and floors tiled and carpeted, provided with polished chairs, and lots and lots of pegs for hats and coats—the hobbit was fond of visitors. The tunnel wound on and on, going fairly but not quite straight into the side of the hill—The Hill, as all the people for many miles round called it—and many little round doors opened out of it, first on one side and then on another. No going upstairs for the hobbit: bedrooms, bathrooms, cellars, pantries (lots of these), wardrobes (he had whole rooms devoted to clothes), kitchens, dining-rooms, all were on the same floor, and indeed on the same passage. The best rooms were all on the left-hand side (going in), for these were the only ones to have windows, deep-set round windows looking over his garden, and meadows beyond, sloping down to the river.

The Bagginses are an "old" family, rich, well-respected, and non-adventurous.

This hobbit was a very well-to-do hobbit, and his name was Baggins. The Bagginses had lived in the neighbourhood of The Hill for time out of mind, and people considered them very respectable, not only because most of them were rich, but also because they never had any adventures or did anything unexpected: you could tell what a Baggins would say on

As you read the text, be sure to mark:

- 1) The use of various forms of the word and concept of **Luck**;
- 2) The use of terms meaning **Fate** or **Fortune**; and
- 3) Places where you see **Bilbo making choices**.

Chapter I: An Unexpected Party

- What do we learn about Bilbo from the description of his house in the first few paragraphs?
- What are Bagginses like?

These first two questions were “transformed” into marginal notes in the examples above. Now use the rest of these questions to annotate your text as you read this summer.

- What are you told Bilbo will lose by the end of the story?
- What are you told about what he will gain?
- What are the Tooks like?
- What did Bilbo get from his Took side and what is it waiting for?
- What are we told about Gandalf when he is first introduced?
- What does Bilbo think of adventures?
- Bilbo remembers that Gandalf “was responsible for so many quiet lads and lasses going off into the Blue for mad adventures” and then says, “Bless me! Life used to be quite inter---I mean you used to upset things badly in these parts....” He cuts off in the middle of a word – what do you suppose that word was going to be?
- What do we learn about Thorin when he first arrives?
- What do we learn about the dwarves from their songs and music?
- Of the two sides of Bilbo, which side finally wins?
- What pushes him to choose that side?
- What does Gandalf say about Bilbo in his defense?
- What do we learn about dragons in this first chapter?

Chapter II: Roast Mutton

- What are the terms of the agreement between Bilbo and “Thorin & Co.”?
- What is Bilbo thinking about during the first rainy day of the journey?
- Who is not with the company when they go to investigate the light they see during that rainy day?
- Who does Bilbo discover when he gets to the source of the light?
- What are these creatures like?
- Why does Bilbo decide that he needed to try picking a pocket?
- What happens to him?
- How do the others get caught?
- Who is responsible for rescuing the company?
- How does he do it?
- What do they find? What does Bilbo take?

Chapter III: A Short Rest

- What is Bilbo told when he asks if the first tall mountain he sees is *The Mountain*?
- What does he think in response to the answer?
- What do we learn about Elves from their song (and the text right after it)?
- What do dwarves think of elves?
- What is the “strange thing” the narrator tells us on p. 48?
- What is Elrond like?
- What do the dwarves learn about their weapons?
- What does Elrond discover about the dwarves’ map?
- What instructions are given on the map?

Chapter IV: Over Hill and Under Hill

- What leads the company to seek shelter as they're trying to cross the Misty Mountains?
- What happens to Bilbo and the dwarves in the cave?
- Who escapes capture and how?
- What do you learn about goblins from their song?
- What are goblins skilled at making?
- What does the narrator speculate that they are responsible for inventing?
- What so enrages the Great Goblin?
- Who helps Bilbo and the dwarves escape?
- What happens to Bilbo at the end of the chapter?

Chapter V: Riddles in the Dark

- What does Bilbo find?
- What does the narrator tell us about his discovery?
- What does he do with what he finds?
- What does he discover about the blade he got from the troll hoard?
- Who lives in the underwater lake? How is he described?
- Why does Gollum become very polite with Bilbo?
- What activity does Gollum suggest?
- What are the terms of the competition? What happens if Gollum wins? If Bilbo wins?
- When Gollum asks, "*This thing all things devours...*," how is Bilbo able to avoid losing the game?
- What is Bilbo's final question?
- What did Gollum go back to his island for?
- Why did he want this thing?
- Why does Gollum cry out? What upsets him?
- What does Bilbo feel in response to Gollum's distress?
- What does Gollum suspect?
- After Bilbo starts running up the passage from Gollum, what does he do with his hands?
- What does Bilbo learn about the object he found?
- After Gollum sits in the passage leading out, what does Bilbo first think he ought to do?
- Why does he decide not to do this to Gollum?
- What "wells up" in Bilbo's heart?
- What does Bilbo understand about Gollum?
- What does Bilbo do to get past Gollum?
- How does Gollum feel when Bilbo escapes?

Chapter VI: Out of the Frying-Pan into the Fire

- After escaping from the tunnels, what does Bilbo think that he must do?
- What does Bilbo choose not to tell the dwarves and Gandalf?
- How do the dwarves view Bilbo at this point in the story?
- What does Gandalf tell the dwarves about Bilbo?
- What animals come out of the forest after the company?
- What do they do to keep away from them?
- Who are the animals in league with?
- What does Gandalf do to chase the animals away?
- Why does the Lord of the Eagles set off to investigate?
- What do the goblins try to do to Bilbo and the dwarves?
- How do they escape?
- How did Gandalf know the Lord of the Eagles from before?

Chapter VII: Queer Lodgings

- After the eagles set the company down on the large rock, what does Gandalf tell the dwarves and Bilbo he needs to do?
- With whom does Gandalf plan for them to stay?
- What are some interesting things about him?
- Though he's suspicious of dwarves, why is Beorn willing to host Thorin and co.?
- What does Bilbo realize about Gandalf's cleverness in having his telling their story to Beorn constantly interrupted by small groups of dwarves?
- Why is Beorn so happy the next morning?
- Why will he think more kindly of dwarves?
- What advice does Beorn give the company as they prepare to go into Mirkwood?
- Where does Gandalf leave them?
- What begins with the company's entrance into Mirkwood?

Chapter VIII: Flies and Spiders

- How did they soon come to feel about the forest?
- What happens to Bombur when he falls in the stream?
- What do they sometimes hear in the distance?
- Who climbs a tree and why?
- Why do the dwarves do the one thing Beorn warned them not to?
- Who do they encounter?
- How do these people react to their appearance?
- What happens to Bilbo after he's separated from the others and dozing thinking about bacon and eggs?
- What is significant to Bilbo about killing the giant spider?
- What has become of the dwarves?
- What does Bilbo do first to try to help the dwarves?
- What does he do next?
- How does he free the dwarves?
- Why does Bilbo decide now to reveal the existence of the ring?
- How has the dwarves' opinion of Bilbo changed?
- What happened to Thorin?
- Where do the Wood-elves live?
- What question causes Thorin to shut his mouth?
- What does the King of the Wood-elves do with Thorin?

Chapter IX: Barrels out of Bond

- What do the dwarves think of being captured by the Wood-elves?
- What about Bilbo—was he captured?
- When the others are led into the Wood-elves' cave, what does Bilbo decide to do?
- What is life in the caves like for Bilbo?
- How does Thorin respond when he hears Bilbo at his keyhole?
- How do the dwarves view Bilbo by now?
- What other entrance to the caves does Bilbo learn about?
- What lets Bilbo try out his "desperate plan" for their escape?
- What is Bilbo's plan?
- How do the dwarves first respond when he tells them his plan?
- What calms them down and convinces them to go with Bilbo's plan?
- Before escaping, what does Bilbo do that is "kind-hearted"?
- What is the weak point in Bilbo's plan?
- What does Bilbo do to rectify this weak point?

Chapter X: A Warm Welcome

- What does Bilbo think of it when he first sees The Mountain (the Lonely Mountain, the goal of their journey)?
- What turns out to have been the only road through the forest that was any good?
- What did Gandalf decide to do when he heard of the dangers of the roads through Mirkwood?
- What did the Men of Lake-town still sing songs about?
- How does Thorin introduce himself to the guards?
- Why is the Master hesitant to help the dwarves at first?
- How was the matter settled for him?
- Does the Master believe that Thorin is who he says he is?
- Why is Bilbo not very cheerful?
- What surprises the Master?
- Why is the Master not sorry to see the dwarves leave?
- Who is the only unhappy one?

Chapter XI: On the Doorstep

- Why are the dwarves in a somber mood as they approach the Mountain?
- They are at the end of their journey, but not at the end of what?
- Who at this point actually has more spirit for the quest?
- In their frustration, what does Dwalin suggest Bilbo, their burglar, do?
- Who figures out how to open the secret door?

Chapter XII: Inside Information

- What does Thorin say it is time for Bilbo to do?
- How does Bilbo respond?
- Who agrees to go with him?
- How far does that dwarf go with Bilbo?
- What does our narrator tell us about Bilbo after he slips on his ring?
- What does Bilbo reflect on about the party from chapter one?
- How does the narrator describe what Bilbo does next? Where is the real fight fought?
- What does he see at the bottom of the tunnel?
- What response does Bilbo have when he sees the treasure?
- What does Bilbo take from the treasure hoard?
- How do the dwarves respond?
- How does the dragon respond?
- What does the dragon know “to an ounce”?
- How does Smaug compare to rich people?
- How does Bilbo save them all again?
- What does the dragon do when he comes out of the mountain?
- What is the weak point in their plans?
- What does Bilbo say when asked what they should do?
- What does he offer to do?
- He’s the leader of the adventure now?
- How does Bilbo talk to the dragon?
- What do dragons like to hear from people?
- What can no dragon resist?
- Who does Smaug believe is backing the dwarves?
- How does Smaug try to make Bilbo suspicious of the dwarves?
- How does Bilbo come near to falling under the dragon’s spell?
- How does the dragon further try to make Bilbo suspicious of the dwarves?
- What “nasty suspicion” starts to grow in Bilbo’s head?
- What does he tell Smaug they’ve really come for?

- How does Smaug react?
- What does the dragon boast of?
- Where does Bilbo say dragons are most vulnerable?
- What does Bilbo notice when Smaug rolls over?
- What does Smaug do when Bilbo turns to run up the tunnel?
- What advice does Bilbo give himself about dragons?
- What listens to Bilbo telling the dwarves of what he said and what he saw?
- What one gem does Thorin obsess over?
- What does Bilbo suggest they do?
- Why does that turn out to be a good idea?

Chapter XIII: Not at Home

- What mood are the dwarves in?
- What mood is Bilbo in?
- What do they decide to do in desperation?
- Who is sent to explore?
- What does Bilbo find?
- What does he do with what he finds?
- What does he feel when he makes his choice?
- How do the dwarves respond to seeing all the treasure?
- What does Thorin give Bilbo as part of his share?
- What does Bilbo keep his head clear of?
- How does Bilbo convince the dwarves to leave the caverns of the mountain?
- What does all their talk come back to?

Chapter XIV: Fire and Water

- What do the people of Lake-town think is causing the lights they see coming from the Mountain?
- What does the grim voice suggest the light is?
- What does the grim-voiced man do?
- What is the grim-voiced man's name?
- What do the men the grim-voiced man leads do?
- What do many of the people of Lake-town do when Smaug attacks?
- What does the Master do?
- How does Bard learn about the spot on Smaug's breast?
- What happens to Smaug?
- Who do the people of Lake-town complain about?
- Who does the Master tell them to blame?
- Who saved the people of Lake-town during the following winter?
- Why had the Elvenking left his home?
- Why did the King turn away from the Mountain?

Chapter XV: The Gathering of the Clouds

- What things do the dwarves and Bilbo learn from the old Raven?
- What do they learn about the elves and a group of men from lake-town?
- Who does the raven tell them to trust?
- What does Thorin say in response?
- What do the dwarves do to the front gate?
- What does Bilbo long for?
- What does Bard say to the dwarves?
- How does the narrator describe Bard's words?
- What did Bard not reckon with?
- How does Thorin respond?

- What terms does Bard's representative lay out to Thorin and the dwarves?
- What is Thorin's response?

Chapter XVI: A Thief in the Night

- What does Thorin say about the Arkenstone?
- Who does Bilbo ask to see when he slips out of the caverns of the Mountain?
- What does he tell the Elvenking and Bard he wishes?
- Why does he tell them about Dain's expected arrival?
- What does he give them? Why?
- How does Bilbo justify that it is his to give them?
- What does the Elvenking say in response?
- Why does he want to go back to the dwarves?
- What does Gandalf say to Bilbo?

Chapter XVII: The Clouds Burst

- What does Bard use as a bargaining chip?
- How does Bilbo justify to Thorin what he had given to Bard?
- What does Thorin agree to for the return of the Arkenstone?
- What does he call Bilbo?
- What does the "bewilderment of the treasure" lead Thorin to hope for?
- What prevents war from breaking out between Dain and the combined forces of Lake-town and the elves?
- What groups fight in the Battle of the Five Armies?
- Why are all quarrels forgotten between dwarves, men, and elves?
- What does the narrator tell us about Bilbo's experience of the battle and his importance in it?
- What does Thorin do in the battle?
- What does Bilbo cry out?
- What happens to Bilbo at the end of the chapter?

Chapter XVIII: The Return Journey

- Who wins the Battle?
- What does Thorin say to Bilbo about how he wants to part?
- What does Bilbo say in response?
- What does Thorin say to Bilbo?
- How does Bilbo react to this last visit with Thorin?
- How does Bilbo feel about his adventure now?
- What becomes of the Arkenstone?
- Who else died in the Battle?
- What does Bard say to Bilbo?
- How much treasure does Bilbo decide to take with him?
- What does Bilbo give the Elvenking when he leaves his company?
- What does the King say in response?
- Who does Bilbo travel with after leaving the King?
- What is happening to Bilbo's Tookish part? And his Baggins part?

Chapter XIX: The Last Stage

- What do we learn about Bilbo from his song?
- What does Bilbo discover when he gets home?
- What does Bilbo lose?
- What does he get?
- What does he think of losing what he lost?
- What becomes of most of Bilbo's gold and silver?

- Who comes to visit Bilbo at the end of the story?
- What do they tell Bilbo about Dale and lake-town?
- What became of the old Master?
- What songs are they singing in lake-town?
- What does Bilbo say?
- What does Gandalf say about prophecies?
- What does Gandalf tell Bilbo about his adventures?