



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Fellowship of the Ring

J. R. R. Tolkien

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Fellowship of the Ring

J. R. R. Tolkien

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NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Compare/contrast, brainstorming, research, analysis, critical thinking, evaluation

Comprehension

Predicting, inference, cause/effect, plot development, thematic development

Writing

Essay, poetry, prose, TV script

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, music, drama

Vocabulary

Target words, definitions, application

Literary Elements

Symbolism, metaphor, simile, personification, irony, characterization, plot development, setting, theme, genre, mood

Across the Curriculum

Geography—map; Music—ballad, mood; Art—sketch, caricature, design, collage

Genre: fantasy

Setting: Middle-earth; Third Age

Point of View: third-person omniscient

Themes: good vs. evil, courage, friendship/loyalty, strength, wisdom, maturation, adventure

Conflict: person vs. person or force; person vs. nature; person vs. society; person vs. self; good vs. evil

Protagonist: Frodo Baggins

Antagonist: Sauron, the Dark Lord, and all his forces of evil

Style: narrative

Tone: informal, adventurous, serious

Mood: ranges from joyful to solemn and gloomy

Date of first publication: 1954

Summary

In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, the first book of the trilogy *The Lord of the Rings*, the hobbit Frodo Baggins inherits the One Ring of power from his cousin Bilbo Baggins. The Ring had originally belonged to Sauron, the evil Dark Lord, and Sauron's primary desire is to recover the ring and use it to enslave the inhabitants of Middle-earth. Frodo assumes the task of taking the Ring inside Mordor, Sauron's evil domain, and casting it into the only place it can be destroyed, the Cracks of Doom in the depths of the fire-mountain, Orodruin. Eight others, including hobbits, an elf, a dwarf, men, and the wizard Gandalf, form a fellowship to join Frodo in his quest. The Fellowship encounters multiple calamities on their journey as they are pursued by ruthless agents of Sauron, including Nine Black Riders and other evil forces.

Characters

Members of the "Fellowship," a.k.a. the "Company"

Frodo Baggins: protagonist whose timidity and love of the comforts of home seem to make him ill-suited for the quest; eventually demonstrates the courage and ingenuity of a true hero

Gandalf the Grey: one of five notable wizards of Middle-earth, second in power only to Saruman; assisted Bilbo Baggins in *The Hobbit*; wise, intuitive leader of the Company; leads others and fights against evil at great costs

Sam Gamgee: son of Bilbo's gardener; loyal to and protective of Frodo

Peregrin Took and Meriadoc Brandybuck (Pippin and Merry): relatives and close friends of Frodo

Aragorn (Strider): one of the Rangers (the Dúnedain); a descendant of Isildur, king of the royal race of Numenor; courageous, strong, wise; becomes leader after Gandalf disappears

Boromir: man from Minas Tirith, a city in Gondor; eventually attempts to take Ring from Frodo, thus breaking the "Fellowship"

Legolas: an elf from Mirkwood whose expertise with a bow and arrow proves invaluable

Gimli: a dwarf; son of Glóin, who traveled with Bilbo in *The Hobbit*

Foreshadowing Chart

Foreshadowing is the literary technique of giving clues to coming events in a story.

Directions: Think about *The Fellowship of the Ring*. What examples of foreshadowing do you recall from the story? If necessary, skim through the chapters to find examples of foreshadowing. List at least five examples below. Explain what clues are given, then list the coming event that is being suggested.

Foreshadowing	Page #	Clues	Coming Event

Note: Examples of metaphors and similes found in each section are included in the Supplementary Activities. Guide students to identify these devices as they read the novel and to list 2-3 from each section, using the graphic organizer on page 9 of this guide.

Prologue, pp. 1–18

This section describes the hobbits and other creatures of Middle-earth and gives information about the Shire. It mentions the successful quest by Bilbo, Gandalf, and the 13 dwarves from *The Hobbit*, the finding of the Ring, and Bilbo’s preparations for his birthday party.

Vocabulary	
	elusiveness (2)
	inimitable (2)
	antiquity (9)
	portended (12)
	conjectural (18)

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the attributes and description of the hobbits. Elicit students’ responses concerning the suitability of a hobbit for an adventurous quest. (*Description: 2–4 feet tall; inclined to be fat; dress in bright colors; feet covered with thick, curly hair; broad faces. Attributes: love peace, enjoy comforts of home, enjoy farming atmosphere, love to eat and drink, not mechanically minded, quick hearing, sharp eyes, unobtrusive, elusive, shy around men, hospitable, love to learn. Responses will vary. pp. 1–2*)
2. Examine why the hobbits migrated across the Misty Mountains to the Shire and their relationships with other residents of Middle-earth. Note the future importance of a Dúnedain, Aragorn. (*In the distant past, they crossed the Misty Mountains into Eriador because of the increasing number of men and a shadow that fell across their forest, now named Mirkwood. A remnant of Dúnedain, kings of men, dwelt in Eriador. The hobbits patterned their writing and speech after the Dúnedain. They loved the new land and isolated themselves from the rest of Middle-earth, eventually choosing their own chief. pp. 3–5*)
3. Analyze the isolationism of the hobbits and discuss whether or not isolationism is possible in the modern world. Note the foreshadowing of reports and complaints of creatures around the Shire. (*The hobbits developed their own land, the Shire, where they lived, prospered, and multiplied happily and peacefully for a thousand years under the rule of their own chieftains. They passed from the history of men and elves. Those who survived the disastrous winter and famine rebuilt their lives. Hobbit families govern themselves, and the hobbits now live peacefully in the Shire and pay little heed to the world outside. Responses will vary, regarding the modern world. Their police officers, Shirriffs, a.k.a. Bounders, strive to keep outsiders away or under control. Bounders have increased because of reports of strange persons and creatures prowling around the borders of the Shire. pp. 5–12*)
4. Discuss the information about Bilbo Baggins and his quest with Gandalf and the 13 dwarves as told in *The Hobbit*. (*The group’s quest to destroy Smaug, the dragon, and retrieve the hoarded treasure was successful. While on the journey, Bilbo became lost and found a ring, which he now has with him in the Shire. This is the One Ring of Power spoken of in the rhyme at the beginning of the book, i.e., the Ring around which the novel revolves. pp. 12–15*)

Supplementary Activities

1. Have a group of students prepare a map of Middle-earth, using the maps included in the front of the book. Display the map and chart the quest.
2. Have students sketch a hobbit.
3. Have students begin a list of metaphors and similes. Example: **Simile**—The light in his eyes was like a green flame (p. 14).