

**Teacher Guide**

**Grades 7–8**

# **The Hobbit**

**J. R. R. Tolkien**

 **NOVEL UNITS**



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# THE HOBBIT

by  
J. R. R. Tolkien

## Teacher Guide

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### Note

The Ballantine paperback (revised edition) published by Ballantine Books was used to prepare this guide. The page references may differ in the hardcover or other paperback editions.

**Please note:** Please assess the appropriateness of this book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading and discussing it with your class.

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## Skills and Strategies

### Thinking

Brainstorming, classification,  
visualizing, information  
gathering, decision-making

### Vocabulary

Dialect, semantics, sensory  
words, context clues

### Comprehension

Predicting, comparison/  
contrast, causality

### Literary Elements

Motif, conflict, story  
elements, characterization,  
point of view, conflict

### Writing

Journaling, cinquain,  
narrative, riddle, research

### Listening/Speaking

Semantics, role play,  
interview

## Chapter 17: "The Clouds Burst" - Pages 273-285

### Vocabulary:

alter (273)                      hauberk (276)                      mattocks (277)  
reconciliation (278)              scimitars (282)

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why was Thorin so angry at Bilbo? (Page 274, *Bilbo had taken the Arkenstone.*)
2. What terms did Thorin and Bard come to? (Page 275, *"Thorin says, 'I will give one fourteenth share of the treasure silver and gold, setting aside the gems...and with that reward he shall appoint you as my ally and you can divide it as you will.'"*)
3. In the battle of the Five Armies, who were the participants? (Page 279, *Goblins and Wild Wolves versus Elves, Men and Dwarves.*)
4. What stopped Thorin's advance? (Page 283, *the bodyguard of Bolg, the goblin leader*)
5. What sight made Bilbo sneeze? (Page 284, *He saw that the Eagles were coming.*) How have the eagles helped him in the past?

### Prediction:

Bilbo is hit by an arrow and is unconscious. What will happen to him?

## Chapter 18: "The Return Journey" - Pages 286-294

### Vocabulary:

helm (287)                      mauling (289)                      wench (289)

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why wasn't Bilbo found until the day after the battle? (Page 287, *He had his magic ring on and was invisible.*)
2. Who won the battle? (Page 289, *Beorn and the Eagles appeared and they were ten.*)
3. What lessons had Thorin learned? Why do you think Thorin and Bilbo parted as friends? (Page 288, *"If none of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world." Thorin realized how good Bilbo was and showed he appreciated all that Bilbo had done for the dwarves.*)
4. Was it necessary for Thorin to die in this story? If you were the author, what other ending might there have been?



5. What does Bilbo mean when he says, "The Tookish part was getting very tired, and the Baggins was daily getting stronger"? (Page 294) How had Bilbo changed in the novel?

**Supplementary Activity:**

**Writing and/or Art:** Write an obituary notice and a tombstone for Thorin.

## Chapter 19: "The Last Stage" Pages 295-303

**Discussion Questions:**

1. How was Bilbo received when he reached his hobbit-hole? (Page 301, *His friends were shocked because they thought he had died.*)
2. What do you think Gandalf meant when he said, "You are not the hobbit that you were." (Page 300) How had Bilbo changed?
3. How did Bilbo bring luck to the expedition? (*finding the troll's key and the ring and many of his choices*) Much of Bilbo's luck comes from, or is the result of, his courage and determination. Give some examples of this. (*Bilbo's attempt to find his way out of the goblin tunnels, meeting Gollum; avoiding the orc guard, escaping from the spiders, etc.*)
4. What do you think Gandalf meant when he said, "Surely you don't disbelieve the prophecies, because you had a hand in bringing them about yourself? You don't really suppose, do you, that all your adventures and escapes were managed by mere luck, just for your sole benefit"?

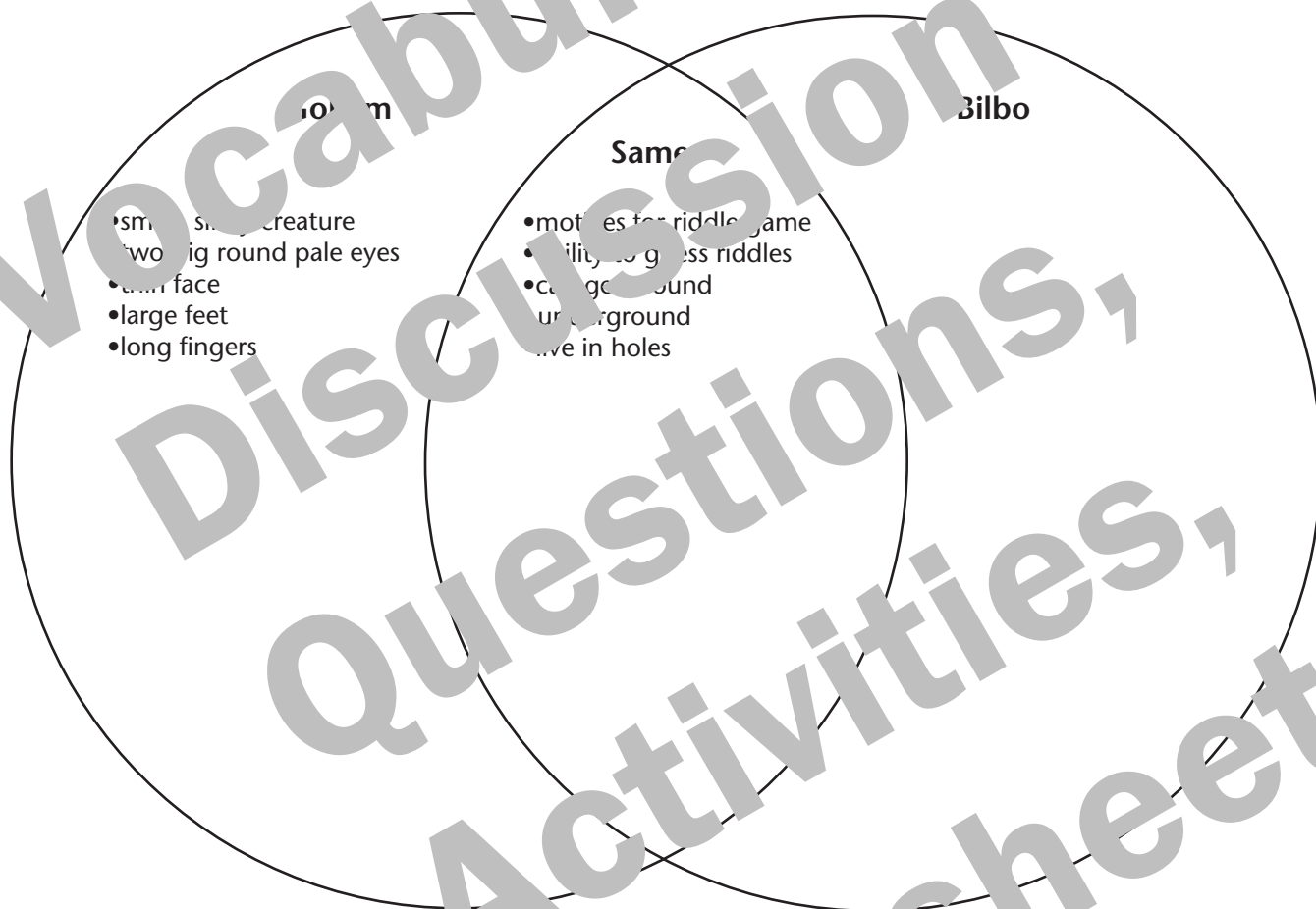
## Post-reading/Assessment Activities

**Literary Analysis:**

1. Story maps are chart summaries of the story. For example, the following story map. They pretend that you are the teacher, and make up a test on the book. Use the chart to make up 10 important and interesting questions you would ask your students.

Setting	Theme	Plot	Resolution
Section 1—Pages 1-27—where is the setting?	Bilbo's motivation	Summary of events in Section 1	How Bilbo accomplishes his goal

3. Why is it good that Bilbo lost his matches? (Page 69, "...Goodness knows what the striking of matches and the smell of tobacco would have brought on him out of dark holes in that horrible place.")
4. What do you think Gollum is like? How is he like Bilbo? How is he different? Compare by using a Venn diagram.



5. Are the riddles hard? Are they good riddles? Why or why not?
6. When Gollum lost the riddle game, how did he pay his debt? (Pages 79-80, He planned to become invisible and then kill Bilbo.) What skills does Bilbo show in dealing with Gollum? Add to the Venn diagram.

## Decision-making Grid

The decision-making grid below is supposed to make it easier to find the best solution to a problem. Give examples of other questions you should ask yourself when you are trying to “weigh” different solutions. Then fill in the grid for the following problem: My best friend has been telling lies about me. See if classmates agree with the solution you decide is best.

Problem	Criterion #1	Criterion #2	Criterion #3
State the problem.	Will the solution hurt someone?	Will it make me feel better?	
Solution #1			
Solution #2			
Solution #3			
Solution #4			