

8th Grade Summer Reading

This summer you will be reading *The Hobbit* by J. R. R. Tolkien, a fantasy story told in the form of a “quest” or a “hero’s journey.” Your reading project consists of two parts - reading the novel and taking notes on the elements of a quest story. Specific directions as well as a list of the elements of a quest story are listed below. Please feel free to email Mrs. Westman or Mrs. DeLozier if you have questions.

Elements of a Quest Story

- a character that is a “hero” or “quester” (protagonist)
- at least one character that serves as a “guardian angel” of the hero
- a number of characters that serve as enemies to the hero (antagonists)
- a difficult journey for the hero that involves many obstacles and/or tests
- a great deal of travel and exposure to exotic locations and cultures
- supernatural properties - other worlds and dimensions
- quest objects - Examples of quest objects would include a magical sword, ancient treasure, or a book of mystical spells.
- a storyline that is centered around the growth and development of the hero - a hero that is changed for the better by the end of the quest

The Summer Reading Project

Reading - This novel contains eight sections that are fairly uniform in length and correspond to natural divisions in the story. You will need to divide up your reading into the following sections:

Section #1 Chapter 1

Section #2 Chapters 2-4

Section #3 Chapters 5-6

Section #4 Chapters 7-8

Section #5 Chapters 9-10

Section #6 Chapters 11-13

Section #7 Chapters 14-16

Section #8 Chapters 17-19

Notes - While reading each section, you will be responsible for taking notes on at least three elements of a quest story that you notice for each set of chapters. These notes can be done using the format of your choice (outline, headings with corresponding bullet points, or any type of graphic organizer). If you purchase your own book, you may want to consider highlighting and writing notes in the margin. Writing your ideas on post-it-notes and attaching them to individual pages would be another option for the note-taking portion of this assignment.

You will not find all of the elements of a quest story in each section; however, you will be able to identify multiple examples in each set of chapters. Although you are not required to write your notes in complete sentences, you must support your ideas with specific details from the novel. The following are examples from chapter 1:

Section #1 - Ch. 1

*Bilbo Baggins - hobbit (little person, smaller than dwarf, no beard, fat stomach, wears bright colors, hairy feet with leathery soles) **supernatural creature***

*Third Age of Middle Earth (Hobbiton) - setting **other world/dimension***

Due the First Day of School:

*notes on paper clearly labeled with the section including at least three examples of quest elements for each section (supported with specific details from the book)

OR

*evidence of highlighting, post-it-notes, and/or notes in page margins throughout the novel (if you have a personal copy)

Whichever option you choose, you'll want your notes to be organized and neat, so that they can be easily used for follow-up work/discussion and a project when we return to school.