

# A Homeschooler's Journey Through The Hobbit: A 4-Week Writing Adventure

**Materials Needed:** Copy of J.R.R. Tolkien's 'The Hobbit', Notebook/digital document, Writing tools (pen/pencil/computer), Highlighters/sticky notes (optional), Dictionary/thesaurus.

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## Overview:

This four-week plan guides an eleventh-grade student through reading 'The Hobbit' while focusing on developing analytical and creative writing skills. Each week includes reading assignments, discussion/reflection prompts, and specific writing tasks.

## Week 1: An Unexpected Beginning (Chapters 1-5)

**Focus:** Introduction, Setting, Character Introduction (Bilbo), Narrative Hook, Descriptive Writing.

- **Reading:** Read Chapters 1-5. Pay close attention to the descriptions of Hobbiton, Rivendell, the Misty Mountains, and the characters introduced, especially Bilbo.
- **Discussion/Reflection:** What makes Bilbo an unlikely hero initially? How does Tolkien use description to create the atmosphere of Middle-earth? What is the initial conflict or call to adventure?
- **Writing Assignment 1 (Descriptive Paragraph):** Choose a location from Chapters 1-5 (e.g., Bag End, Rivendell, Goblin-town). Write a detailed descriptive paragraph focusing on sensory details (sight, sound, smell, touch) to bring the place to life. Aim for vivid imagery and precise language.
- **Writing Assignment 2 (Character Sketch):** Write a short character sketch of Bilbo Baggins as he appears in these early chapters. What are his defining traits, motivations, and fears at this stage? Use textual evidence to support your points.

## Week 2: Out of the Frying Pan (Chapters 6-10)

**Focus:** Rising Action, Conflict, Character Development, Narrative Perspective.

- **Reading:** Read Chapters 6-10. Note how Bilbo changes and adapts to challenges (e.g., riddles in the dark, spiders, escaping the Wood-elves). Track the major obstacles the company faces.
- **Discussion/Reflection:** How is Bilbo changing? Identify specific moments showing his growth in courage or cleverness. What external and internal conflicts does he face? How does the pacing of the story feel in this section?
- **Writing Assignment 1 (Narrative Perspective):** Choose a significant event from Chapters 6-10 (e.g., the escape from the goblins, the encounter with the spiders, the barrel ride). Rewrite a short section (1-2 paragraphs) from the perspective of one of the dwarves or Gandalf (if present). Consider how their viewpoint might differ from Bilbo's.
- **Writing Assignment 2 (Conflict Analysis):** Write a paragraph analyzing a key conflict in this section. Identify the type of conflict (man vs. nature, man vs. self, man vs. man/creature) and explain its significance to the plot and Bilbo's development.

## Week 3: Inside Information (Chapters 11-15)

**Focus:** Approaching the Climax, Theme (Greed, Heroism), Symbolism, Analytical Writing.

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- **Reading:** Read Chapters 11-15. Focus on the arrival at the Lonely Mountain, the encounter with Smaug, and the growing tension surrounding the treasure.
- **Discussion/Reflection:** How does the treasure (and the Arkenstone) affect the characters, particularly Thorin? What does Bilbo's decision regarding the Arkenstone reveal about his character? Discuss the different forms of bravery shown. What might Smaug or the treasure symbolize?
- **Writing Assignment 1 (Symbolism Exploration):** Choose an object or character (e.g., the Arkenstone, Smaug, the Ring) and write a short analysis (1-2 paragraphs) exploring its potential symbolic meaning within the story.
- **Writing Assignment 2 (Thematic Essay Outline):** Brainstorm and outline an analytical essay exploring a major theme in 'The Hobbit' (e.g., the nature of heroism, the corrupting influence of greed, the importance of home). Your outline should include a clear thesis statement, main points, and ideas for textual evidence you would use to support each point.

## Week 4: The Return Journey (Chapters 16-19)

**Focus:** Climax, Falling Action, Resolution, Character Arc Completion, Essay Writing & Creative Response.

- **Reading:** Read Chapters 16-19. Analyze the Battle of Five Armies, the resolution of conflicts, and Bilbo's return home.
- **Discussion/Reflection:** How has Bilbo changed from the beginning of the story to the end? Was the quest successful? In what ways? What are the main messages or lessons of the book? How does the ending provide closure?
- **Writing Assignment 1 (Analytical Essay):** Develop your outline from Week 3 into a complete analytical essay (suggested length: 2-3 pages). Focus on clear arguments, strong textual evidence, and proper essay structure (introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion). Allow time for revision and editing.
- **Writing Assignment 2 (Creative Response):** Choose one:
  - a) Write a poem from the perspective of Bilbo reflecting on his journey after returning home.
  - b) Write a short 'missing scene' or alternate perspective piece related to the ending chapters.
  - c) Design a 'travel brochure' for one of the locations visited, using descriptive language learned throughout the unit.

### Assessment:

Progress can be assessed through the completion and quality of the weekly writing assignments, the depth of reflection shown in discussion/notes, and the final analytical essay and creative piece. Focus feedback on the development of writing skills (clarity, organization, use of evidence, descriptive language, narrative voice) and understanding of literary concepts.