

# Ascent Classical Academy of Grand Junction



## 7th Grade Summer Reading Assignment

All incoming 7th grade students will come to the first day of school having read the selected summer reading text. Summer is a great opportunity for students to leisurely read a story (or many stories!).

7th grade students will read and annotate the following text:

- **The Hobbit, J.R.R. Tolkien**
  - ISBN 978-0618260300

**Assignment:** Students will be expected to take reading notes and annotate the text. Notes and annotations will be due on **Friday, August 21** upon returning to school. Students will discuss the text and prepare an essay during the first weeks of the school year.

### Background

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, the author of this book, was a major scholar of the English language. Living from 1892-1973, he was contemporaries with C.S. Lewis, and part of the group known as *The Inklings*. You can learn more about Tolkien [The Tolkien Society](#).

In *The Hobbit*, J.R.R. Tolkien tells the story of Mr. Bilbo Baggins and his unexpected and rather uncomfortable adventure over the edge of the Wild. Roused from a comfortable life in his hobbit hole by the wizard Gandalf, Bilbo joins a company of dwarves as they seek to reclaim their home far away in the Lonely Mountain. Along the journey, Bilbo has one adventure after another and meets many extraordinary creatures including goblins, trolls, elves, wargs, giant eagles, and even the fearsome dragon, Smaug. At the end of his adventures, Bilbo Baggins returns to life in his hobbit hole, but with an understanding that he has been forever changed by his journey “there and back again.”

### Read with a friend!

C.S. Lewis once said, "we read to know we are not alone." There are many ways we might interpret this statement, however, shared experience and discussion

surrounding shared experience has a direct amplifying effect on our understanding. While this may feel a bit awkward at first, books are best enjoyed with others! Consider creating a meet-up with a group of friends or classmates who are reading the book. Identify which segments will be discussed and take turns answering the following:

1. Summarize the main theme/interesting turns/pivotal events (no spoilers!)
2. Who was your favorite character and why? How does the author create this persona?
3. Discuss/describe some beautiful language you encountered?
4. Was there anything that stirred, inspired, confused, or disturbed you?
5. Do you detect any foreshadowing (again - no spoilers! Discuss only the segment agreed upon!)

### **Reading notes**

The following recommendations will help you remember/be able to review the characters, plot, and any questions you had as you read. You can use a notebook (if so, make sure to bring it to school!), the back of the book itself, page margins, or blank spaces at the beginning/end of chapters.

1. Take note when a new character is introduced or when you learn something new about a main character. By the end of reading each book, you should have a list of the main characters and some of their personal qualities, actions, and relationships throughout the story.
2. At the end of each chapter, summarize the important events of that chapter in bullet points. This way you can review your summaries before the first week of school and be prepared for the question: "what happened in this book?"
3. Write down any questions you have about each chapter. These may be comprehension/clarification questions about the situations and characters, or "should" questions about the character's decisions and actions.
4. Circle or underline unfamiliar vocabulary. Define words as you read.

These notes should not take you much extra time to jot down and will form the groundwork for our in-class discussions.