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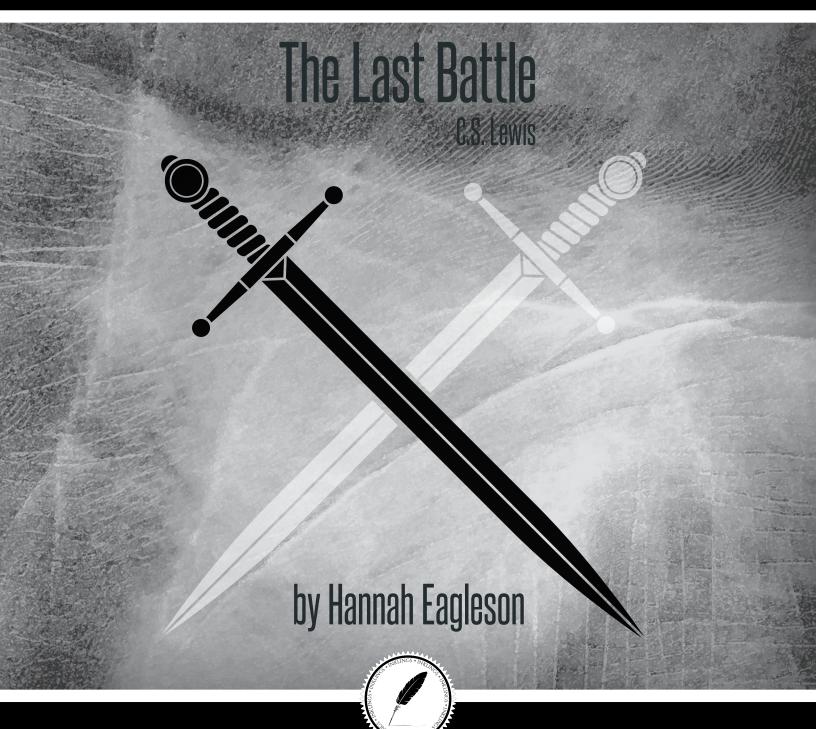
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WALKING TO WISDOM

LITERATURE GUIDE SERIES



Inklings Collection



Walking to Wisdom Literature Guide: The Last Battle

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WALKING TO WISDOM LITERATURE GUIDE: THE LAST BATTLE

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Introduction to Students

Dear Students.

We are excited that you have the privilege of reading *The Last Battle* alongside a mentor (the writer of this guide) who will lead you "further up and further in" (C.S. Lewis's words in *The Last Battle*). We aim to give you a delightful experience with this book and, in the process, to share practices that we have learned that will help you become a good reader:

- reading carefully
- taking time to absorb a book
- paying attention to details as well as to great ideas over the whole book
- learning to mark up a book
- taking a few notes while reading
- · learning to ask and answer good questions
- synthesizing those questions together in a piece of writing or an engaging project

If you spend a year doing all of the Inklings courses, you will not only collect some of the most important books and thoughts, but you will also have increased your abilities and pleasures as a reader.

C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Dorothy Sayers (three members of the Inklings whose work you will study in the Walking to Wisdom Literature Guides: The Inklings Collection) wrote nonfiction as well as fiction, and we begin your reading of fiction with a few select nonfiction essays they wrote on topics that overlap with the topics in the book you are reading. Part of their remarkable legacy is that they wrote about many of the same great ideas in stories, plays, and poems and in nonfiction essays. This means that reading the ideas without the stories in these nonfiction works, or "context essays," will be a significant help to you in understanding them and in fully exploring the characters, plot, and imagery. American writer Flannery O'Connor said, "Our response to life is different if we have been taught only a definition of faith than if we have trembled with Abraham as he held a knife over Isaac." This is what stories do—they give us an experience of certain knowledge, which is why how we feel about the book is part of what the book is teaching us. We have kept these things in heart and mind while making this guide for you.

We have suggested two reading schedules—one that allows ten days to study the book and the other that allows twenty days. Feel free to double that or add extra time for writing and enrichment activities (found at the end of the book). Your teacher will know what is best for your schedule. We have provided you with some space for answering questions, but we recommend that you also keep your thoughts, notes, and musings in a three-ring binder (or on the computer). For the life questions, you may want to keep a separate journal for meditative contemplation. We would like you to have as much room as you need, because you will find that the Inklings writers require a lot of space! It is highly recommended that you look up unfamiliar words found in C.S. Lewis's *The Last Battle*, and keep a journal of these new vocabulary words and definitions as you work through the book and the guide.

You have the option of studying one guide or a few, or taking a year to study them all to fulfill your British literature requirement for high school English. Enjoy the study!

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE FOR THE WALKING TO WISDOM LITERATURE GUIDES: THE INKLINGS COLLECTION

C.S. Lewis

Context Essays (selections from these are read at the beginning of each guide): excerpts from *Mere Christianity*, ¹ *The Weight of Glory*, ² *On Stories: And Other Essays on Literature*, ³ and "Theology in Stories" by Gilbert Meilaender⁴

- The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe⁵
- The Last Battle⁶
- The Screwtape Letters⁷
- Till We Have Faces⁸

Dorothy Sayers

Context Essays: excerpts from Letters to a Diminished Church⁹

The Man Born to Be King (twelve-play cycle integrating the four gospels)¹⁰

J.R.R. Tolkien

- The Fellowship of the Ring¹¹
- The Two Towers 12
- The Return of the King¹³

^{1.} The Walking to Wisdom Literature Guides: The Inklings Collection is keyed to the following editions listed in these footnotes: C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: HarperOne, 2009).

^{2.} C.S. Lewis, The Weight of Glory (New York: HarperOne, 2009).

^{3.} C.S. Lewis On Stories: And Other Essays on Literature (San Diego: Harcourt Books, 1966).

^{4.} Gilbert Meilaender, "Theology in Stories: C.S. Lewis and the Narrative Quality of Experience," *Word and World* 1/3 (1981): 222, http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/1-3_Experience/1-3_Meilaender.pdf.

^{5.} C.S. Lewis, The Chronicles of Narnia (New York: HarperCollins, 2001).

^{6.} Lewis, Chronicles.

^{7.} C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters (New York: HarperOne, 2009).

^{8.} C.S. Lewis, Till We Have Faces (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Brace, & Co., 1980).

^{9.} Dorothy Sayers, Letters to a Dimished Church (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004).

^{10.} Dorothy Sayers, *The Man Born to Be King: A Play-Cycle on the Life of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, Written for Broadcasting* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1943). Reprinted with permission by Classical Academic Press, 2014.

^{11.} J.R.R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring (Boston: Mariner Books, 2005).

^{12.} J.R.R. Tolkien, The Two Towers (Boston: Mariner Books, 2005).

^{13.} J.R.R. Tolkien, The Return of the King (Boston: Mariner Books, 2005).

THE INKLINGS

The Inklings was an informal literary discussion group associated with the University of Oxford, England, for nearly two decades between the early 1930s and late 1949. The Inklings were writers, including C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Dorothy Sayers, and Charles Williams, who shared a love of similar stories and a remarkable commitment to ideas they shared. Their literary philosophies tended to depart from the period in which they were writing (modernist, 1900–1950), as did their cultural values. They liked to walk together and meet regularly to read their work aloud to one another.

"Properly speaking," wrote Warren Lewis (brother of C.S.), "the Inklings was neither a club nor a literary society, though it partook of the nature of both. There were no rules, officers, agendas, or formal elections." While Dorothy Sayers did not attend the meetings herself, partly because she didn't live in the same town or teach at Oxford, she is often claimed as an Inkling, as a friend of Lewis and Charles Williams. Her correspondence with both was avid and their work concerned with many of the same subjects, characters, and plots. They were a great encouragement to one another. Lewis even read Sayers's play cycle, *The Man Born to Be King* (one of our series), each year during the Lenten period.

Readings and discussions of the members' unfinished works were the principal purposes of meetings. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, Lewis's *Out of the Silent Planet*, and Williams's *All Hallows' Eve* were among the first novels the Inklings read to each other. Tolkien's fictional Notion Club (see *Sauron Defeated*) was based on the Inklings. Meetings were not all serious; the Inklings amused themselves by having competitions to see who could read notoriously bad prose for the longest without laughing.³

Until late 1949, Inklings readings and discussions usually occurred during Thursday evenings in C.S. Lewis's college rooms at Magdalen College. The Inklings and friends were also known to gather informally on Tuesdays at midday at a local public house, The Eagle and Child.

We hope that you will keep the spirit of the Inklings alive in your own study of this guide by working out your own responses to their work in community and conversation as well as laboring over your writing and sharing it with fellow travelers seeking to walk a similar path. Consider studying this course online at Scholé Academy (classical academic press.com/online-courses/).

^{1.} Clyde S. Kilby and Marjorie Lamp Mead, eds., *Brothers and Friends: The Diaries of Major Warren Hamilton Lewis* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982), 230.

^{2.} Bruce L. Edwards, Apologist, Philosopher, and Theologian, vol. 3 of C.S. Lewis: Life, Works, and Legacy (Westport, CT: Praegar, 2007), 279.

^{3. &}quot;War of Words over World's Worst Writer," *Culture Northern Ireland*, May 9, 2008, http://www.culturenorthernireland.org/article/1739/war-of-words-over-world-s-worst-writer?search=inklings&rpg=1.

DAILY READING OUTLINES FOR C.S. LEWIS'S THE LAST BATTLE

Schedule 1

This schedule requires you to read two to three chapters per day of *The Last Battle* for six days, in addition to the context essays. Your teacher may give you still more time by adding a day or two to each segment.

- Day 1: Context essay excerpts from *Mere Christianity*: "The Law of Human Nature" and "Is Christianity Hard or Easy?"
- Day 2: Context essay excerpts from *Mere Christianity*: "Hope" and "Faith" (book 3, chapter 11)
- Day 3: Context essay excerpt from The Weight of Glory: "The Weight of Glory"
- Day 4: If necessary, finish "The Weight of Glory." Read the context essay excerpt from *Mere Christianity*: "Time and beyond Time"
- Day 5: Chapters 1-3
- Day 6: Chapters 4-6
- Day 7: Chapters 7–9
- Day 8: Chapters 10-12
- Day 9: Chapters 13-14
- Day 10: Chapters 15-16

Your teacher will take as many extra days as needed to work on essay and enrichment activities.

Schedule 2

This schedule requires you to read one chapter per day for sixteen days, in addition to the context essays.

- Day 1: Context essay excerpts from *Mere Christianity*: "The Law of Human Nature" and "Is Christianity Hard or Easy?"
- Day 2: Context essay excerpts from Mere Christianity: "Hope" and "Faith" (book 3, chapter 11)
- Day 3: Context essay excerpt from *The Weight of Glory*: "The Weight of Glory"
- Day 4: If necessary, finish "The Weight of Glory." Read the context essay excerpt from *Mere Christianity*: "Time and beyond Time"
- Day 5: Chapter 1
- Day 6: Chapter 2
- Day 7: Chapter 3
- Day 8: Chapter 4
- Day 9: Chapter 5
- Day 10: Chapter 6
- Day 11: Chapter 7
- Day 12: Chapter 8
- Day 13: Chapter 9
- Day 14: Chapter 10
- Day 15: Chapter 11
- Day 16: Chapter 12
- Day 17: Chapter 13
- Day 18: Chapter 14
- Day 19: Chapter 15
- Day 20: Chapter 16

Your teacher will take as many extra days as needed to work on essay and enrichment activities.

ELEMENTS IN THE LITERATURE GUIDE

Make Notes: Possess the Book

Becoming a reader is all about learning to pay attention and gather the details to relish and realize the significance and unity of what you are reading. Try using these symbols or making up your own system that covers the same basics. Underline interesting passages. Write in the margins so that you can go back to reference what you wrote to make your Great Ideas Quote pages, answer questions, hold discussions, and support points you make in your writing assignments. The following is a simple marking system that we have found effective:

- * This is important or delightful.
- ? I have a question.
- ?? I'm confused.
- ! This is surprising or exciting to me.
- T This could relate to one of the themes or motifs of the book.
- ✓ This relates to something else I have read.
- X This is part of the conflict or the problem of the story.
- C This is significant in defining this character.

Tracing the Great Ideas

As you read, choose quotes related to the six given great ideas topics (or themes) so that you can trace them all the way through the book. (Please remember that you are welcome to find your own great ideas themes in addition to ours.) Then be on the lookout for how they are worked out in each particular context. Some chapters may contain quotes relating to only one great ideas topic, or may contain several topics. Write the quotes on the Great Ideas Quotes pages. See page 7 for an example of how to record the quotations. At the end of the guide you will reflect upon the themes of the course and choose one from which you will develop an argumentative essay. You may use our great idea definition for your essay's thesis or create a thesis of your own.

Great Ideas

Friendship: Serving one another and bearing difficult times in fellowship is one of the sweetest pleasures and gifts. Even, and perhaps especially, in dark times the faithful love of friends is an essential element in the good life. When two creatures use each other and call it friendship it is evil. We play a role in the beauty and ugliness of our fellow creatures.

Utopian visions versus the Old NarnialAslan's country: Utopia refers to an ideal place or state or to any visionary system of political or social perfection. Dystopia is what often happens to a place where someone has imposed his ideal vision on others. This has happened in history and it happens in Narnia. The old Narnia is swallowed up in one creature's idea of what is ideal for himself, which he imposes on the land.

Courage and nobility: While we are not able to control the times in which we live, the only thing shameful is not fighting the long defeat. Courage has to do with facing difficulty, danger, and pain. It comes from the Latin word for heart—*cor*. Nobility has to do with exalted, principled, and honorable behavior in the face of said difficulty.

Truth and lies: Lies have a close relationship to the truth; they twist what is true and use it as part of their claim. Sorting out the difference requires wisdom, stories, friendship, conviction, and courage.

Stories and history: Stories, which are often about the past, are essential to reminding us what is true, and help us to hold it close in dark and unhappy times.

Longing and the transcendent¹: Our longing for the good and our sense that the ultimate good (in this case, Aslan) is real are central to our friendships and the way that we conduct ourselves in difficult times. All of us have a longing for that which is beyond, and respond in one way or another to our encounters with holiness.

Tell It Back

This is a summary exercise, a method of narrating the chapters orally, or "telling it back." It is a wonderful option that allows you to narrate the content of each unit by oral summary—with or without a partner(s). Others have acted it out with props or sock puppets. This is a basic element of learning to read which never loses its delight and capacity to delight others. It also helps to develop a strong mental outlining ability and memory.

(Optional) We like it when people make their own illustrations for a book to enter more fully into the lives of the characters. Feel free to do so as you make your way through the book, as a chapter unit summary exercise, or afterward, when you have finished. How you feel about the book and what you are able to imagine about the book is part of what it is teaching you. Tolkien made drawings for many of his own characters.

Reading Questions

Reading questions encourage close reading of the text by asking comprehension questions. All answers are found in the text.

Discussion Questions

Discussion questions require you to synthesize the main ideas of the text that may be either explicitly or implicitly stated. Your answers to these should explain Lewis's perspective, not your own. Depending on your level, learning needs, or preference, the in-depth discussion questions may be written as short answers (one to two paragraphs), discussed with the teacher/fellow students, or simply read to inspire critical thinking.

Life Questions-Journaling Assignment

It's difficult to read any of C.S. Lewis's writing without thinking about applying his ideas to your own life. *The Last Battle* is no exception. After each reading section, several "life questions" help you reflect on your own personal experiences and examine your own life in light of ideas from *The Last Battle*. You may write informal responses to the life questions in a separate journal.

Write Your Own Discussion Questions

At the end of each section, create two discussion questions that you think would make for good discussion among classmates, friends, and family. These should not chiefly be questions that have a sentence-long answer, but rather questions that would stimulate a longer exchange of ideas. Use our discussion questions and life questions as guides for writing yours.

^{1.} *Transcendence* comes from the Latin prefix *trans*-, meaning "beyond," and the word *scandare*, meaning "to climb." When you achieve transcendence, you have gone beyond ordinary limitations. The word is often used to describe a spiritual or religious state or reality, or a condition of moving beyond physical needs and realities (http://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/transcendence).

INTRODUCTION TO THE LAST BATTLE

The Last Battle is the final story of The Chronicles of Narnia. In it, C.S. Lewis imagines the end of the world for Narnia. As an apocalyptic story (one about the end of the world), The Last Battle is shaped by several elements. One is the tension between alternate visions of the world, especially the technological utopia that Shift the Ape and many of the Calormene soldiers seem to want, and the Narnia that Aslan created and ultimately restores in his own country. Another is the sense of courage and nobility put to the test by the degradation of a world falling apart in the face of dishonesty and evil. In addition, the importance of stories and history is clear as the characters look to the stories of Narnia's history to give them courage and hope. Finally, the book describes a crucial experience of confronting the transcendent in Aslan. The word "transcendent" refers to something beyond mortal experience, which in Aslan's case is something so incredibly beautiful and desirable that it shatters all previous experience and satisfies our deepest longings.

As you read, pay attention to the alternate visions of the world being offered. Shift the Ape desires a technological utopia, a Narnia in which the strength of the creatures is harnessed to produce things for Calormen and to make money, in which nature is replaced by human artifice, and in which exotic imports such as oranges and bananas are readily available. King Tirian and Jewel the Unicorn desire a Narnia like the one readers have known in the other books, a place where forests and streams are celebrated and the creatures are free to pursue their lives under the kind authority of good kings and queens and ultimately of Aslan himself. At the end of the book, we meet a fuller-yet vision of the world in Aslan's country.

In response to the degraded vision of the world encouraged by Shift the Ape, the virtue of characters such as Tirian and Jewel shines bright. Shift wants a world in which trees are cut down and animals whipped to produce more money, and in which a few selfish masters profit from the enslavement of most of the creatures of Narnia. The old Narnia is terribly defiled by the things that Shift and many of the Calormene leaders choose to do. But the virtues of characters such as Tirian and Jewel and many of the small animals of Narnia show more clearly against this background of degradation. They remain noble even when they are sorely tested, and they are willing to give their lives if necessary for the pursuit of good. Especially evident are the virtues of friendship, courage, and commitment to truth. The characters fight for these good things even though it seems hopeless in most of the book. They commit to what Tolkien calls "the long defeat," the choice to keep fighting for good even if it seems hopeless.¹

One thing that helps the virtuous characters to be courageous is remembering the stories of Narnia. Revisiting Narnia's history helps them to recall what they love about Narnia, and to have hope that Aslan will help them. Recounting the stories of the past provides delight and hope in very dark times.

When the stories are proved true and Aslan does come, the characters confront one of the most central experiences Lewis describes in the Narnia books. They come face to face with the transcendent or numinous and recognize that they have always had a longing for it. The word "numinous" comes from a word meaning "spirit" or "god," and it refers to a category of beings that is beyond human experience. In Lewis's work, the transcendent or numinous is most fully present in the glory of God, represented in the Narnia books by the lion Aslan. The experience of the transcendent brings people to a kind of holy fear or reverence, but also a deep delight. It satisfies their deepest longings, sometimes longings they knew but didn't understand themselves until finding them met in Aslan.

For Further Biographical Study

Please see the following resource: http://www.cslewis.org/resource/chronocsl/. This website—created by the C.S. Lewis Foundation—suggests and links to a number of excellent sources.

^{1.} J.R.R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring (Boston: Mariner Books, 2005), 443.

TRACING THE GREAT IDEAS

You may record your Great Ideas Quotes on the pages that follow or you may want to consider placing copies of the Great Ideas Quotes pages in a three-ring notebook at the beginning of your guide work to keep a "map" of your reading.

You should feel free to shorthand quotes by listing the quote's beginning and end, then its page number, on the proper Great Ideas Quotes page.

Examples:

Great Ideas Quotes throughout the book for the theme Friendship

"Shift had one friend and neighbor who was a donkey called Puzzle. At least they both said they were friends, but from the way things went on you might have thought Puzzle was more like Shift's servant than his friend." (669)

shorthand version:

"Shift had one friend. . . . Puzzle was more like Shift's servant." (669)

About King Tirian and Jewel the Unicorn:

"There was no one with him that spring morning except his dearest friend, Jewel the Unicorn. They loved each other like brothers and each had saved the other's life in the wars." (675)

shorthand version:

"Tirian and Jewel loved each other like brothers." (675)

When Eustace, Jill, and Tirian are planning in the tower:

"All three of them agreed that the very first thing they must do was to go back to Stable Hill and try to rescue Jewel the Unicorn." (699)

shorthand version:

"Go back . . . try to rescue Jewel." (699)

Note that this quotation does not say anything directly about friendship, but it clearly shows that friends make each other's well-being a central commitment.

FOR THE THEME FRIENDSHIP

GREAT IDEAS QUOTES THROUGHOUT THE BOOK FOR THE THEME UTOPIAN VISIONS VS. THE OLD NARNIA/ASLAN'S COUNTRY

FOR THE THEME COURAGE AND NOBILITY

FOR THE THEME TRUTH

FOR THE THEME STORIES AND HISTORY

SUMMARIZE THE CONTEXT ESSAYS: THE WEIGHT OF GLORY AND MERE CHRISTIANITY EXCERPTS

Before you start *The Last Battle*, you will read and summarize the excerpts from *Mere Christianity* and *The Weight of Glory* we have selected. Then cross-check your summaries with ours (in the teacher's edition) to make sure you have covered the topic adequately. Our summaries range from around 50 to 400 words, but your teacher will assign a word count for yours. These "context essays" will help you to understand and gain insight into many of the ideas that arise in *The Last Battle*. An important part of becoming a good reader involves being able to summarize your reading in such a way that someone else can understand what you have read.

Law of Hur	nan Nature"	Summary (1	from <i>Mere l</i>	Christianity,	Book 1, Cha	pter 1)	

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ne an	d beyond Time'	' Summary (fro	om <i>Mere Christi</i>	ianity, Book 4, C	hapter 3)	

UNIT 1: CHAPTERS 1-3



Make Notes in Your Book

Don't forget to make notes in your book!

Tracing the Great Ideas

Find quotes in these chapters that relate to the great ideas, or themes. Write down the quote with its page number on the corresponding Great Ideas Quotes pages provided (at the beginning of this guide). Keeping track of quotes will help you write the final theme essay(s)!

Example quotes and their themes:

Great Ideas Quotes throughout the book for the theme Friendship

"Shift had one friend. . . . Puzzle was more like Shift's servant" (669)

"Tirian and Jewel loved each other like brothers" (675)

Tell It Back

Do an oral summary of your reading on a recording device or to another human being. Narrate the most important events in order while sharing the elements of the characters' development that are important.

Reading Questions

What word is mentioned in the first phrase of the first sentence of chapter 1, and again in the first phrase of the first sentence of chapter 2 (besides "Narnia")? To expand your answer, consider the significance of this repetition.

reason d	rian and Jewel kill the Calormenes who are abusing the talking horse, Tirian is remorseful. Whoes he give for feeling sorrowful?
How do	bes Shift the Ape define freedom when he is talking to the Narnians about working for the Tisro

Discussion Questions

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	ons—Journaling Assignment
free to Wha	espond to the life questions here or to keep them in a separate journal used for meditative contem are some examples of true friendship in your own life? How are they like the friendship bet and Jewel? How are they different (since true friendships can be good in different ways)?
free to Wha	espond to the life questions here or to keep them in a separate journal used for meditative contem are some examples of true friendship in your own life? How are they like the friendship bet
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UNIT 2: CHAPTERS 4-6



Make Notes in Your Book

Tracing the Great Ideas

Tell It Back

Reading Questions

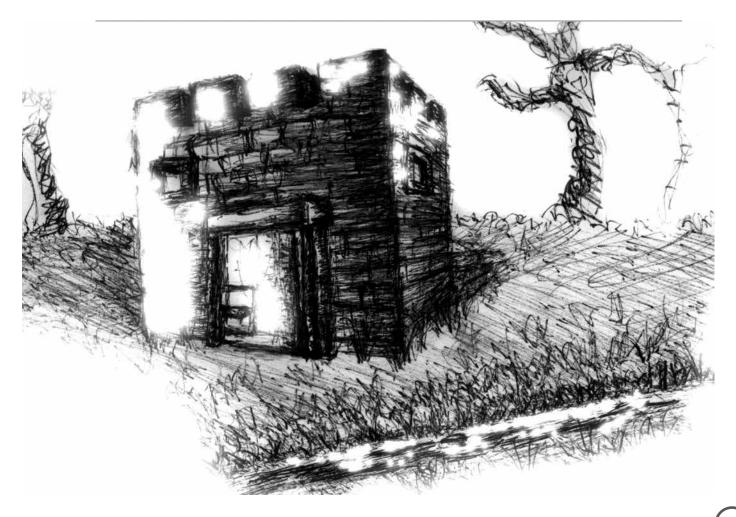
1.	Who comes to help Tirian when he is tied to the tree?
2.	When Tirian, Jill, and Eustace are navigating the woods, who turns out to be the best pathfinder among them:
3.	Tirian, Eustace, and Jill all agree on the very first thing they need to do after preparing themselves to take on Shift. What is it?

Discussion Questions



2. Whe	en Tirian ties up the Calormene sentry, what does he say? What does Tirian's language tell us abou ast king of Narnia?
the is	or king of Parina.
3. At the	ne end of the chapter, Tirian is so hopeful that he is moved to laughter. What gives him hope? He his hope affect everyone else?
	tions—Journaling Assignment or to keep them in a separate journal used for meditative con it.
1. Wha	t would you do if you found yourself in another world?

4. F	Have you ever cried out intensely for God's help? What happened?
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'1	V 0 . D'' . Ol'
e))	Your Own Discussion Questions
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UNIT 3: CHAPTERS 7-9



Make Notes in Your Book



Tracing the Great Ideas



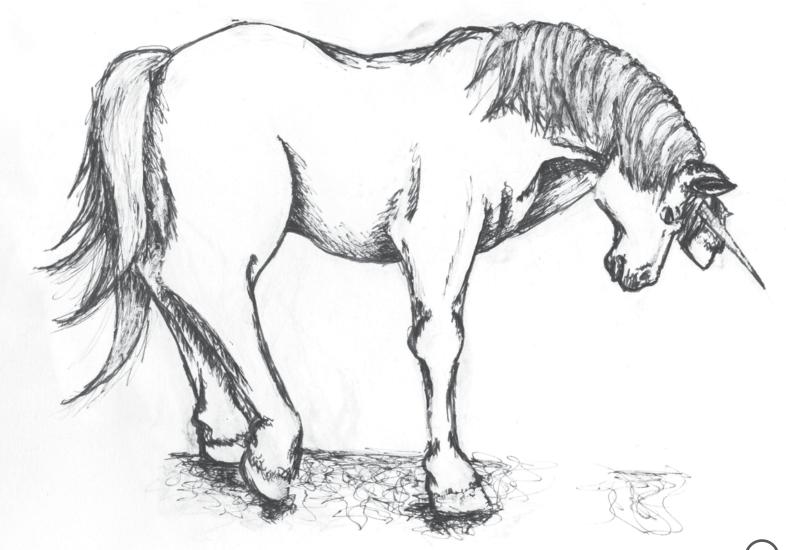
Tell It Back

Reading Questions

1.	What answer does Tirian give when the Calormene guard asks him for the password?
2.	What does Eustace tell Puzzle about being clever?
3.	What season is it? Does the season remind you of anything from <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> , which began The Chronicles of Narnia series?

Discussion Questions

b	ll says that it is a pity that so much is always happening in Narnia, and she wishes for more restful and eautiful adventures in Narnia, rather than the distressing kind. What does the unicorn tell her? Why is hat he says important?
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Z.	What is Jill's response to these stories of good times in Narnia's history? What does Jewel tell her?
	Shift and the other people trying to deceive the Narnians tell a dishonest version of the story of the lion skin. Why do they do this?
ife Q	uestions-Journaling Assignment
	ee to respond to the life questions here or to keep them in a separate journal used for meditative contemplation
	Is it true in your experience that lies are more dangerous when there is a bit of truth in them? Why do you think that is?

	What are good and peaceful and ordinary times you have experienced in your life? What would you hope for in good and ordinary times?
-	
Nrite	Your Own Discussion Questions
1.	
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2.	

