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Teacher's Edition  
**WALKING  
TO WISDOM**

LITERATURE GUIDE SERIES

**The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe**

C.S. Lewis



by Kelly Warner



*Inklings* Collection



*Walking to Wisdom Literature Guide: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Teacher's Edition*

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# WALKING TO WISDOM LITERATURE GUIDE: THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

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# INTRODUCTION TO STUDENTS

## *Dear Students,*

We are excited that you have the privilege of reading *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 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. Feel free to double that to 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 Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, 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!

# INTRODUCTION TO TEACHERS

## *Dear Teacher,*

An editor and an author, both teachers, worked together to create the Walking to Wisdom Literature Guides: The Inklings Collection. Both of us grew up loving the books featured in these guides, but we have also had the chance to study them academically and to teach them. After teaching them for a number of years at various levels, we became aware of the repeating themes and deeply shared concerns of these writers. It is truly remarkable that they had such commonality, given that their interests were not only vastly different, but even opposed to the governing literary interests of their own period (modernist). Two Inklings, J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, attended Oxford as students, and also taught there (and met there); several members exchanged letters (collected in volumes); they encouraged one another's work; they were all writing both non-fiction and fiction as well as scholarly work and poetry. This is highly unusual. Many writers write in only one genre, and if they do cross genres, they do not tackle the same ideas there. Tolkien, Sayers, and Lewis all wrote down their ideas in both fiction and nonfiction. This is why we have included essays by Lewis and Sayers, as well as fiction. The fiction includes dramatic literature, short fiction, long fiction, epistolary satire, and allegory. We strongly encourage you to take the year and use this course as a twentieth-century British literature course. If you don't have the time for that, teaching through one guide will tide you over until you can invest more time.

The guides share a similar style and elements, though these are slightly tailored to the literature itself. For instance, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and the *The Man Born to Be King* are slightly different in their goals, means, and materials; hence we have tweaked the template slightly according to the book we are studying. We have, in our teaching method, instructed students in taking notes in their books, keeping notes (quotes and page numbers) book-wide on the themes and motifs, answering reading questions (which help them to pay attention to important particulars as they read), and answering discussion questions which tend toward more thematic material. We have taught them to create their own questions, to memorize important quotations, and to write essays after thoroughly digging into the book over the course of several weeks. We have encouraged creative enrichment activities for individuals and groups. Sometimes we cross-reference other books in the Walking to Wisdom Literature Guide: The Inklings Collection in sidebar comments. So you'll see that we believe we are teaching, through these guides, how to read both carefully and syntopically, how to think and make connections, and how to write. But we are also concerned that these books would impact the way your students live—their virtue not only as students, but also as human beings.

## Modify the Workload

As you approach the questions and assignments, please keep in mind that we have tried to supply you with all you need, but **you are always free to modify or reduce the workload according to the level of your student(s)** or the amount of time that you have to spend on these books. You may reduce the number of questions they answer, and you have the final say on which questions they write and which ones they engage orally. You also are free to assign final projects that fit your needs.

## Adapt Your Expectations

**We expect your students' answers to these questions to be far less developed than ours, but we also believe that they will be educated critically as they read ours.** Hence we see the process of answering the questions and reading our answers as educative. You will probably need to encourage them and to make your expectations clear in terms of how long and developed their answers should be. These expectations will vary according to the level of each student. We wrote these hoping that students as young as seventh grade and as old as twelfth grade would equally benefit, but **the level of your students will require you to adapt the expectations accordingly.**

We have designed these guides with several types of questions. There are reading questions for which answers will certainly be written down as a kind of accountability for students. There are discussion questions which may well only be entertained in conversation, but for which you may also want to sometimes require a written answer as a way of observing what students can build and synthesize on their own in answer to one of these more complex and thorough questions. We have allowed space after discussion questions for students to take some notes and record bullet points and page numbers as they prepare for a discussion of these subjects. We encourage you to require them to be prepared so that they are ready to contribute to fruitful discussions. Also, while students have been given space in the books to respond to questions, they are encouraged to keep a three-ring binder (or to use the computer) to take notes and muse on the material. They are also encouraged to keep a journal of their responses to the life questions for use in meditative contemplation and a journal of new vocabulary words and definitions.

### Adjust the Schedule

We have suggested two versions of a daily reading schedule for your convenience only. **Please feel free to adapt the schedule to your students as well.**

We recommend the following Scope and Sequence for the Walking to Wisdom Literature Guides: The Inklings Collection, though you may tailor the order of your reading to your needs and curriculum. Please note that C.S. Lewis read Sayers's play cycle *The Man Born to Be King* each year for the Lenten season.



# 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*,<sup>1</sup> *The Weight of Glory*,<sup>2</sup> *On Stories: And Other Essays on Literature*,<sup>3</sup> and “Theology in Stories” by Gilbert Meilaender<sup>4</sup>

- *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*<sup>5</sup>
- *The Last Battle*<sup>6</sup>
- *The Screwtape Letters*<sup>7</sup>
- *Till We Have Faces*<sup>8</sup>

## Dorothy Sayers

Context Essays: excerpts from *Letters to a Diminished Church*<sup>9</sup>

*The Man Born to Be King* (twelve-play cycle integrating the four gospels)<sup>10</sup>

## J.R.R. Tolkien

- *The Fellowship of the Ring*<sup>11</sup>
- *The Two Towers*<sup>12</sup>
- *The Return of the King*<sup>13</sup>

- 
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](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 Diminished 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.”<sup>2</sup> 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 Inklings, 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 other. Lewis even read Sayers’s play cycle, *The Man Born to Be King* (which is included in our literature guide 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 one another. 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.<sup>3</sup>

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 ([classicalacademicpress.com/online-courses/](http://classicalacademicpress.com/online-courses/)).

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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: Praeger, 2007), 279.
  3. “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&crpg=1>>.

# DAILY READING OUTLINES FOR C.S. LEWIS'S *THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE*

## Schedule 1<sup>A</sup>

This schedule requires you to read two to three chapters per day of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* for six days, in addition to the context essays.

Day 1: Context essay excerpt from *The Weight of Glory*: “On Forgiveness”

Day 2: Context essay excerpts from *Mere Christianity*: “The Great Sin” and “Charity”

Day 3: Context essay excerpt from *The Weight of Glory*: “The Weight of Glory”

Day 4: Context essay “Theology in Stories” by Gilbert Meilaender<sup>1</sup> for grades 10 through 12 *or* context essay from *On Stories*: “Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What’s to Be Said” for grades 7 through 9

Day 5: Chapters 1–3

Day 6: Chapters 4–6

Day 7: Chapters 7–9

Day 8: Chapters 10–12

Day 9: Chapters 13–15

Day 10: Chapters 16–17

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

## Schedule 2

This schedule will double your time on each assignment and take two days for each unit to make a twenty-day program. Your teacher may choose to add another week for the final writing assignment.

Days 1–2: Context essay excerpt from *Mere Christianity*: “On Forgiveness”

Days 3–4: Context essay excerpts from *Mere Christianity*: “The Great Sin” and “Charity”

Days 5–6: Context essay excerpt from *The Weight of Glory*: “The Weight of Glory”

Days 7–8: Context essay, “Theology in Stories” by Gilbert Meilaender<sup>2</sup> for grades 10 through 12 *or* context essay from *On Stories*: “Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What’s to Be Said” for grades 7 through 9

Days 9–10: Chapters 1–3

Days 11–12: Chapters 4–6

Days 13–14: Chapters 7–9

Days 15–16: Chapters 10–12

Days 17–18: Chapters 13–15

Days 19–20: Chapters 16–17

<sup>A</sup>While we have estimated the reading time in several schedules to the best of our ability, student reading speeds and classroom goals will differ. The amount of time you will need to complete the writing and discussion work of the literature guides alongside the reading will likely double the amount of time you use. This will vary according to the goals of the teacher and the development of the students.

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

1. This essay can be found at <[http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/1-3\\_Experience/1-3\\_Meilaender.pdf](http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/1-3_Experience/1-3_Meilaender.pdf)>.

2. This essay can be found at <[http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/1-3\\_Experience/1-3\\_Meilaender.pdf](http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/1-3_Experience/1-3_Meilaender.pdf)>.

# 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 the following 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 Quotes pages, answer questions, hold discussions, and support points you make in your writing assignments. Here is a simple marking system that we have found effective:

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

## Tracing the Great Ideas

As you read, choose quotes related to the following 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 8 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

**Myth, rhymes, legends as knowledge:** Lewis believes the real purpose of myth, rhyme and legend is to communicate truth. Understanding the purpose of myth also helped Lewis accept Christianity.

**Virtue and moral choice:** Virtue isn't an innate quality, but something that develops every day when we make decisions. Each decision builds momentum; it's easier to continue choosing virtue if you have already made a good decision. However, anyone can choose to do the right thing. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, virtue is shown by a character's choice to love another person, or by his choice to seek forgiveness.

**Education/The testing or ordeal:** Traditional education models failed Lewis, and he remains unsurprisingly critical of those schools in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* which don't teach logic or engage the imagination. As an alternative method of education, Lewis suggests learning occurs through experiences and ordeals.

**Evil and vice:** In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* we see the characteristics of vice mainly through two characters: the White Witch and Edmund. From their stories, we can see that evil is a deceptive, lesser substitute for good, and ultimately destructive force.

**Landscape:** The dynamic changes of the land parallel the dramatic shift of power from the queen to Aslan. Lewis uses the metaphors and winter and spring to illustrate the spiritual change sweeping over Narnia with Aslan's return. The landscape imagery is powerful, because we have personal experience with both winter and spring.

**Responding to Aslan/Sehnsucht:** Characters' responses to Aslan—or even just the name of Aslan—reveal their spiritual state. Additionally, every character's response is unique, highlighting Lewis belief that the relationship to God is highly personal. Our longing for Aslan is part of our relationship to Aslan.

**Multiple worlds:** *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* spans two worlds—ours and Narnia. The children are sent to the professor's house during London bombing raids of WWII, while Narnia is under the oppressive

rule of the White Witch. What is the relationship between these two worlds? How does the narrator help us bridge these worlds? What are some images or symbols in Narnia that parallel things in our world? Look also for the references to history—such as the totalitarian state, the secret police, the bombing in London.

**Deep magic:** The deep magic was a set of laws placed into Narnia by the Emperor-beyond-the-Sea at the time of its creation. It was written on the stone table, the firestones on the Secret Hill, and the scepter of the Emperor-beyond-the-Sea. This law states that the White Witch is entitled to kill every traitor, and if someone denies her this right, then all of Narnia would be overturned and perish in fire and water. However, unknown to the queen, a deeper magic from before the dawn of time existed, which said that if a willing victim who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor’s stead, the stone gable would crack, and death would start working backwards. This term refers to the spiritual reality of Aslan’s work in Narnia.

**Forgiveness:** Lewis discusses the importance of forgiveness—a forgiveness that is quite different from an excuse, a forgiveness that is costly. In Narnia, Lewis dramatically illustrates forgiveness through Edmund.

## 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 Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 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 Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. 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.

# INTRODUCTION TO *THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE*

Lewis wrote *The Chronicles of Narnia* quickly—the first five in less than three years. The whole process lasted from 1948 to 1954. He wrote them at a difficult time in his life when he was caring for the mother of a close friend, Paddy Moore, whom he had met on the battlefield. Before Paddy died they promised each other to care for the other's family should they die in the war. C.S. Lewis and Mrs. Moore had a complicated relationship; at this point in time it was challenging for him to care for her. He wrote to a friend during this time, "I feel my zeal for writing, and whatever talent I originally possessed, to be decreasing; nor (I believe) do I please my readers as I used to."<sup>1</sup> It goes to show that we are not always the best judges of ourselves, because the coming decade was to be a fruitful one for Lewis. It was during this time he wrote *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Mere Christianity*, *The Oxford History of English Literature*, and *Surprised by Joy*. Most of us would be happy to have written just one of these books in our lifetime.

Many people point to the morals and the allegory as the starting point for *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, but Lewis insisted that it all began with a picture of a faun carrying an umbrella and parcels in a snowy wood, and that he'd carried that picture since he was sixteen years old. The presence of evacuated children from London during the air raids in September 1939 in his home must have helped to stir his imagination. Some of his influences in children's literature included E. Nesbit and George MacDonald. He also loved Beatrix Potter. But, of course, he'd read most of the great classics of western literature at this point and was a professor of English Language and Literature at Oxford.

There are many books that function as sources for *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, which is a good example of how the creation process works for most writers. We are always standing on the shoulders of giants—borrowing plots and words and characters and making them our own. The pale, cruel queen, the White Witch, has precedents in Hans Christian Andersen's *Snow Queen* as well as the sorceress Circe in Homer's *Odyssey*, according to Lewis. But he also believed in the idea of archetype. An archetype is a figure that dwells in everyone's unconscious—all readers who share a similar culture also share universal images and meanings that come out in stories and dreams. This idea was first articulated by psychologist Carl Jung.

In the lion, Aslan, Lewis intended to combine the paradoxical nature of a good but fear-inducing God that inspires awe in the presence of others. In a wonderful essay from his book *On Stories* titled "Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to Be Said" (we have the option to study this essay in this guide as well), Lewis explained his idea that fantasy would re-present the gospel in all its glory and inspire love in the readers as opposed to simple obligation. The imagination, he believed, is powerful and essential to faith. That said, however, he didn't intend these to be simply allegories for the Bible. He stated it bluntly once, saying,

You are mistaken when you think that everything in the books "represents" something in this world. . . . I did not say to myself "Let us represent Jesus as He really is in our world by a Lion in Narnia": I said "Let us *suppose* that there were a land like Narnia and that the Son of God, as He became a Man in our world, became a Lion there, and then imagine what would happen."<sup>2</sup>

Lewis believed in educating the moral imagination, in moral education. He believed that the world we live in and the people we are have a nature, a way in which things objectively are—that certain attitudes are true and certain are false. In this way of thinking, moral laws are as universal and fundamental to our existence as physical laws. Teaching children to conform to what is true—such as taking up one's duties and turning away from impulses that are harmful—is the right aim of education and adults. Lewis believed there is a consensus among most religious traditions on many issues and he considered moral relativism to be dishonest. He spoke of this more explicitly in *Mere Christianity*, a book from which we use excerpts in these literature guides to help

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1. David Downing, *Into the Wardrobe* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 27. This is a book worthy of reading in conjunction with the literature guides.  
2. Downing, 64-65.

us study the fiction. In particular, he was interested in moral choices, and we see that again and again in the world of Narnia, to which we are fully introduced in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and in the lives of Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy—children who become kings and queens in the course of this book.

## 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.

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## TRACING THE GREAT IDEAS

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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 *Myth, rhymes, legends as knowledge***

“A door. A door from the world of men! I have heard of such things. This may wreck all.’” (124)

**shorthand version:**

“A door. . . . I have heard of such things.’” (124)

**GREAT IDEAS QUOTES THROUGHOUT THE BOOK  
FOR THE THEME *MYTH, RHYMES, LEGENDS*  
AS KNOWLEDGE**

“ . . . a Daughter of Eve?” (115)

*“The Life and Letters of Silenus or Nymphs and Their Ways or Men, Monks and Gamekeepers: A Study in Popular Legend or Is Man a Myth?”* (116)

“A door. . . . I have heard of such things.” (124)

“That is the very thing that makes her story so likely to be true.” (131)

“ . . . a robin. . . . They’re good birds in all the stories.” (138)

“He’ll put all to rights as it says in an old rhyme in these parts.” (146)

“For that’s another of the old rhymes.” (147)

“You won’t get into Narnia again by *that* route.” (196)













## GREAT IDEAS QUOTES THROUGHOUT THE BOOK FOR THE THEME *MULTIPLE WORLDS*

*"Is Man Myth?"* (116)

"And presently instead of rough branches brushing past her she felt coats." (119)

"And they all saw—Lucy herself saw—a perfectly ordinary wardrobe." (121)

"For by this time she was beginning to wonder herself whether Narnia and the Faun had not been a dream." (121)

"He . . . went towards the light, which he thought was the open door of the wardrobe." (122)

" 'And what, pray, are you?' . . . 'Please, . . . I don't know what you mean.'" (123)

"A door. A door from the world of men!" (124)

"She is a perfectly terrible person. . . . She calls herself the Queen of Narnia.'" (127)

"If there really is a door in this house that leads to some other world . . . any of our time.'" (131–132)

"This house of the professor's . . . stranger than the one I am telling you now." (132)

". . . or that some magic in the house had come to life and was chasing them into Narnia . . ." (133)

"Why, I do believe we got into Lucy's wood after all." (134)

"And through the eastern door, which was wide open, came the voices of the mermen and the mermaids." (194)

". . . for it will not go out of my mind that if we pass this post and lantern either we shall find strange adventures or else some great change of our fortunes.'" (195)

". . . they all remembered that the thing they had seen was called a lamp-post." (196)

"But don't go trying to use the same route twice. . . . And don't talk too much about it even among yourselves.'" (196)





## SUMMARIZE THE CONTEXT ESSAYS

Before you start reading *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, you will read and summarize the excerpts we have selected from *Mere Christianity*, *The Weight of Glory*, and *On Stories* books, as well as the Gilbert Meilaender essay. 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 45–225 words, with the exception of “The Weight of Glory,” which is longer (400 words). 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 Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. 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. Please note: if you would like to spend extra time in discussion about the essays, there is an appendix at the back of this guide with questions related to them. Otherwise, a summary will do.

### “On Forgiveness” Summary (from *The Weight of Glory*, Essay 8)

In the essay “On Forgiveness,” Lewis places emphasis on several points: in order to be forgiven we must forgive, and forgiveness is not the same as excusing something. Excusing says, “I see that you couldn’t help it or didn’t mean it; you weren’t really to blame.” Forgiveness says, “Yes, you have done this thing, but I accept your apology; I will never hold it against you and everything between us two will be exactly as it was before.” He sums up the whole argument, after talking about how difficult it is to forgive and to believe in forgiveness, this way: “We are offered forgiveness on no other terms. To refuse it is to refuse God’s mercy for ourselves.”

### “The Great Sin” Summary (from *Mere Christianity*, Book III, Chapter 8)

Pride is spiritual cancer. It is the complete anti-God state of mind—it elevates itself and pays no heed to any good it receives outside of itself or any reverence it owes to anyone or anything else. It compares itself and competes with others—the pleasure of being above all the rest. It always looks down and cannot look up. It is the foundation for all other vices and sins. Lewis says, “As long as you are proud you cannot know God.”

## “Charity” Summary (from *Mere Christianity*, Book 3, Chapter 9)

Charity is love and the effort that leans toward love. The practice of charity allows us to see God and rescues us from pride. We can learn to treat others with charity by treating them kindly even when we do not feel charity toward them.

## “The Weight of Glory” Summary (from *The Weight of Glory*, Essay 1)

“The Weight of Glory” is Lewis’s keystone essay that begins by describing how the promise of reward does not invalidate the claims of Christianity. Lewis describes the significance of a reward whose object is proper to the desire (a general who fights for victory versus money) and explains how our understanding of the object of our longing develops. In us desire begins as a wish to go to heaven and migrates to a desire for glory—that of the loving approval of our God as well as sheer radiance itself. In this essay Lewis makes reference to the inconsolable longing that we all have for an object we aren’t entirely sure of; elsewhere he uses the German word *Sehnsucht* to try to get a handle on this slippery fish. He calls it a “desire which no natural happiness will satisfy,” not yet attached to its proper object.

Hence we go in search of this desire and attach our depth of longing to various objects—whether it be a person or a thing that has brought us this sensation of longing. For Lewis this included a tin garden (planetarium) when he was a child that brought him, inexplicably, the enormous bliss of Eden. He argues that these experiences of joy still include the feeling of a “chasm that yawns between us and reality,” the sense that though we long for total union with the object of our desire, we are outside it, and cannot reach it. These feelings, he insists, suggest that we are dimly conscious that heaven with God our Creator and Redeemer awaits us—that we can’t long for something that doesn’t exist. If we can conceive of a thing we are likely made for that thing, but not fully involved in it yet.

Our neighbor is the experience of the eternal that we have now. We are to take on the glory of our neighbor, to realize that the way we relate to that person will determine whether she moves toward godlikeness or monster-likeness, that this person is eternal

and the closest thing we have to God and being in the presence of God now. There are no ordinary people. We experience the Savior through the live human beings we love now. Our unsatisfied longing comes closest to its satisfaction in relation to those around us. We can take heart at desire which goes unsatisfied—it means we are made for more—for God’s pleasure, for union with God—and will have it.

### “Theology in Stories” Summary (Online Essay by Gilbert Meilaender)

The paradox of our existence is that we are both temporal and transcendent—we live in time and in the minute-by-minute daily life, but we also have the sense that we are made for something beyond our daily experience. Stories, which contain both realities, come closest to helping us to understand ourselves as well as the nature of our existence. On the one hand there is plot and on the other there is theme. These parallel the sense that our lives, too, have things that happen in time but also have a meaning that knits them all together. For instance, the fact that we have memory and can think about the future is already significant in relation to our own meanings beyond what happens to us in the moment. Myth, unlike story, is nakedly about transcendence, and all the details are nearly incidental to the meaning. Historically the meaning of a myth organized the culture that believed in it; hence it lacks some of the quotidian (everyday or daily) characteristics that stories have, or “the narrative quality of experience.” “The very nature of human existence—conceived in Christian terms—is best understood within narrative” (Meilaender, 223). We are always trying to capture something, to “get in.” We are both finite and free, body and spirit, finite and infinite. Story catches theme by plot and unites the temporal and eternal.



## 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 *Myth, rhymes, legends as knowledge*

“A door. . . . I have heard of such things.” (124)



### 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

1. Why have the four children been sent to live with the old professor?

They've been sent to live with the professor in the countryside for protection because there are bomb raids happening in London during the war (World War II) (111).

2. Mr. Tumnus tells Lucy that it's always winter in Narnia now, and never Christmas. What does this description tell readers about what it's like to live there?

Mr. Tumnus's description tells us that the rule of the White Witch, who is responsible for its always being winter and never Christmas, is cruel and harsh and doesn't allow for any reprieve or happiness (118).

\*You'll see these icons at the beginning of each unit as a reminder to make notes, trace great ideas, and tell back what you've read.

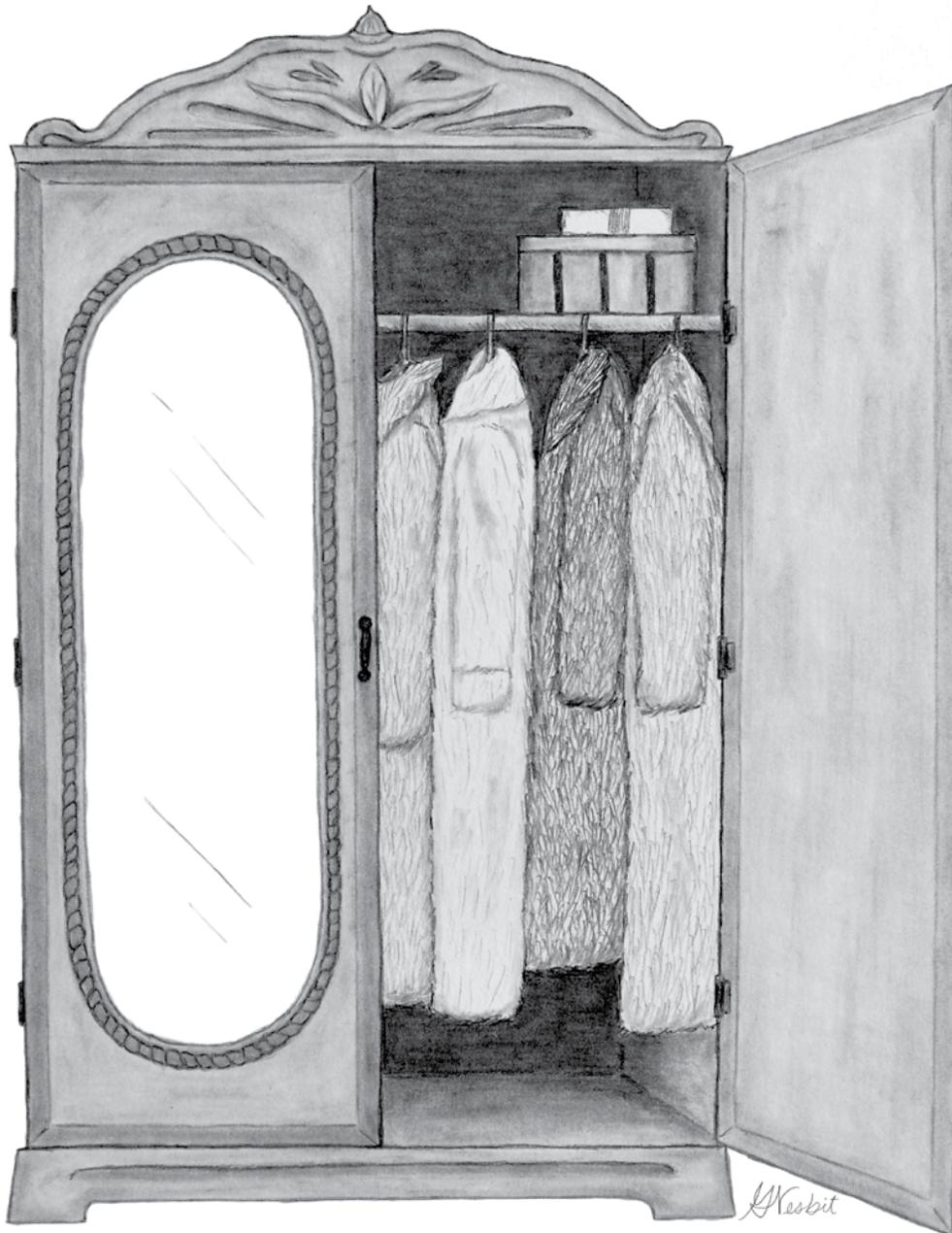
3. Who does Edmund meet in Narnia? Give several details about their meeting.

Edmund meets the White Witch/Queen of Narnia and her dwarf servant. The witch has bells on her sleigh. She is fierce and about to cast a spell on Edmund, but changes her mind. She becomes sickeningly and falsely sweet, giving him sweets that make him sick. Edmund intuits that something is not right about their interaction, but he first has trouble putting his finger on the discomfort, and then he wants to ignore it because of the benefits (123–125).

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## Discussion Questions

1. Is Mr. Tumnus a morally good or bad character? Keep in mind Mr. Tumnus's planned cooperation with the White Witch. Explain your position.

At first, Mr. Tumnus is guilty of cooperating with the White Witch and her evil plans.

Mr. Tumnus invites Lucy into his cave with the intention of handing her over to the witch.

When Mr. Tumnus first sees Lucy, he has the option of ignoring her, and thus choosing not to work with the White Witch. His cooperation with the White Witch is planned and he even acts upon it.

Mr. Tumnus's decision to work with the White Witch is still wrong, but it is motivated by fear. If the witch were to find out Mr. Tumnus disobeyed her, he would be in mortal danger: "She'll have my tail cut off, and my horns sawn off . . . if she's extra and specially angry she'll turn me into stone . . ." (118). Mr. Tumnus's intended betrayal of Lucy stems from tremendous coercion by the White Witch. Many judges in our world forgive crimes done by a person under extreme duress.

However, Mr. Tumnus's conscience catches up to him, and he does not completely carry through with his betrayal of Lucy. Bursting into tears, he admits to Lucy his plan and the consequences should he fail. Before meeting Lucy, Mr. Tumnus had never met a human before. His abstract idea of humans could have made it easier for him to cooperate with the White Witch. When Mr. Tumnus meets Lucy in person and realizes she is a kind person, he can't hand her over (119). Mr. Tumnus finds the courage to protect Lucy and disobey the White Witch.

Mr. Tumnus goes through an amazing moral journey in one chapter. He starts out as fearful, collaborating with evil, but ends up disobeying the White Witch's orders, emboldened by his compassion for Lucy.

2. Mr. Tumnus tells Lucy that it's always winter in Narnia now. What could the winter weather represent, and what are some of the ways that Lewis demonstrates its significance?

Mr. Tumnus says that the White Witch is responsible for its always being winter and never Christmas. The weather can represent the queen's cruel and harsh reign, which hurts every living thing in Narnia (118). An important feature of winter is the cold temperature. Besides a physical description, cold also carries connotations of lack of positive emotions. We often call people cold who are aloof, unfriendly, and uncaring. All Narnians live disconnected from other people in an atmosphere of distrust. Mr. Tumnus remembers how fauns used to dance with nymphs and dryads but now don't (117). Under winter's cold, Narnia lacks the warmth of trust and kindness.

Winter also represents an absence of life. Trees have lost all their leaves and nothing is in bloom. Food becomes scarce and a prolonged winter can mean starvation. The White Witch's rule also stamps out life. She turns people into stone. Additionally, winter brings stillness to the forest. Many animals hibernate and don't roam about. Under the White Witch, creatures aren't hibernating but hiding from the witch. Worse, the relative stillness of winter becomes an absolute stillness when the White Witch turns creatures into stone.





2. Did you make a good choice or not? What happened? What were the consequences? What would you do now if faced with a similar situation?

Answers will vary.

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### Write Your Own Discussion Questions

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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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## UNIT 2: CHAPTERS 4–6



Make Notes in Your Book



Tracing the Great Ideas



Tell It Back

### Reading Questions

1. How is the queen's Turkish delight enchanted?

Once someone starts eating the Turkish delight, the eater will never get full. Unless stopped, a person will continue to eat the dessert until he dies (126).

2. What agreement does Edmund make with the queen and what motivates him to do it?

Edmund agrees to bring all of his siblings to Narnia and to the queen. In return, the queen promises that Edmund can eat more Turkish delight, and that he will be a prince (and eventual king) of Narnia, while his siblings will have the lesser positions of duke and duchess. Edmund's pride, desiring to lord over his siblings, especially Peter, motivates him to agree to the queen's plan (126).

3. When Peter and Susan tell the professor Lucy's story, he says there are only three possibilities for Lucy's behavior. Explain the three possibilities.

The first possibility is that Lucy is lying. She is purposefully making up stories about Narnia in order to gain attention. This doesn't seem likely since Lucy is usually honest.

The second possibility is that she has gone mad. Narnia is not real, but Lucy thinks it is. However, the professor doesn't see any other evidence that Lucy has lost her sanity.

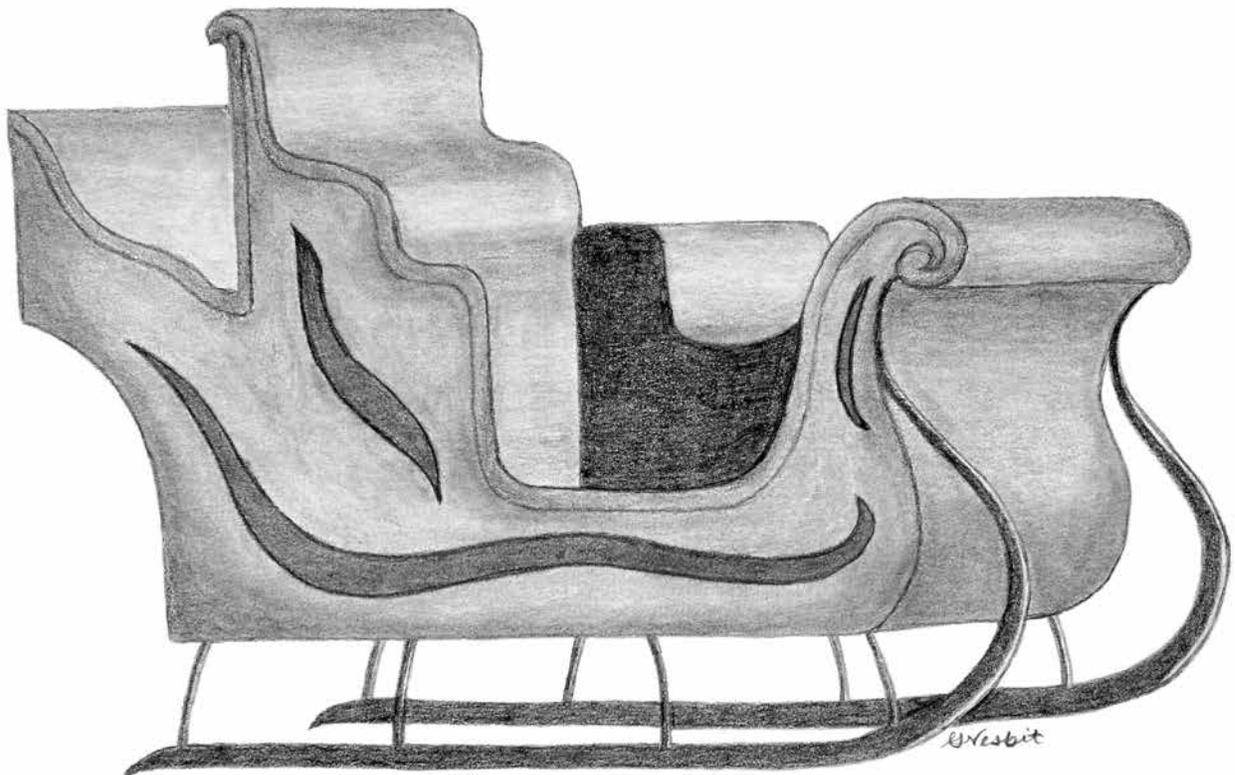
The last possibility is that Lucy is actually telling the truth. Since the first two options are ruled out, the professor concludes that Lucy is telling the truth.

## Discussion Questions

1. The professor walks Peter and Susan through logical reasoning when they ask about Lucy. Can the professor's logical reasoning be applied to other educational situations or arguments?

The professor's three possibilities work in any debate over facts. His reasoning assumes that a fact is either true or false. Any statement could be true, a purposeful lie, or an unintentional lie. The professor's logic, however, does not work for arguments about opinions, because opinions are not true or false.

This system for evaluating facts seems to be an important part of becoming educated. Who tells Peter and Susan how this logic works? A professor, a title reserved for a highly educated person. People use the same argument in relation to Christ—either He was who He said He was (Lord), He was a liar, or He was a lunatic. It is called the trilemma. Lucy's logical trilemma is the same.



2. Unlike Lucy, Edmund has not heard the stories about the White Witch before he meets her. Could Edmund have realized in spite of his ignorance that the White Witch shouldn't be trusted and made a different choice?

During his interactions with the White Witch, there are several signs that reveal the witch's true nature. First of all, the White Witch's proud attitude should have concerned Edmund. Before she knows Edmund is human, the White Witch becomes very offended when Edmund doesn't properly greet her as queen (123–124). Additionally, the extreme change of her attitude should have raised Edmund's suspicions. One moment the witch's "eyes were flaming" and "Edmund felt sure that she was going to do something dreadful" and the next she's offering Edmund something to drink and eat (124–125). Another hint Edmund could have noticed is the witch's excessive curiosity regarding his siblings and her determination for him to bring his siblings to her. Although they just met, the White Witch is already bribing Edmund to do her a favor. Trustworthy people do not try to manipulate others or immediately demand favors. Although Edmund does not understand the situation in Narnia, he could have noticed that the witch's intentions are not pure.

3. Do the children have a responsibility to help Mr. Tumnus, or should they have returned to the spare room?

Lucy explains to her siblings that Mr. Tumnus is only in danger on her account. Because he protected Lucy from the witch, Lucy feels she owes him a favor (137). Edmund objects. He argues that the faun could have lied about the danger and the queen could be a good person. However, the ransacked cave and letter seem to prove Mr. Tumnus's claim. Lucy and her siblings are under no external obligation to rescue Mr. Tumnus, but their compassion pushes the children to accept the responsibility.

## Life Questions—Journaling Assignment

Feel free to respond to the life questions here or to keep them in a separate journal used for meditative contemplation.

1. Reflect on the trilemma presented through Lucy's character and the professor's reflection—Christ was either telling the truth about Himself in the gospels (which is a strange truth indeed, like Lucy's), He was lying (and a scoundrel to deceive people on such a serious matter), or He was crazy (because you can't claim you are God and not be God and still be sane). What does this conclusion suggest about the claim that Christ was a good man, a moral model for us, or even a prophet?

Answers will vary.

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2. Our own faith is conveyed to us in stories too. Are there aspects of the stories that make up our faith that are difficult for you to believe, or that create doubt in you? Does the fact that they are told as stories and not written like a science textbook help or hinder as you try to make sense of them? How does the choice of form (story versus textbook) instruct you as you work with these doubts and difficulties?

Answers will vary.

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### Write Your Own Discussion Questions

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2. 

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## UNIT 3: CHAPTERS 7–9



Make Notes in Your Book



Tracing the Great Ideas



Tell It Back

### Reading Questions

1. The beavers share two poems or rhymes with the children. How do these poems/rhymes communicate knowledge?

The first poem is about the return of Aslan. According to the beavers, Aslan is not a man, but a lion. He is the son of the great Emperor-beyond-the-Sea, and will return to Narnia to right all the wrongs done by the White Witch. He isn't safe, but he is good (146). The first poem describes how wrong will be set right when he returns, and spring will return.

The second poem also discusses the end of the evil time; however, it focuses on the return of Adam's flesh and bone. It says when Adam's flesh and bone sits on the throne at Cair Paravel, the evil time will be done (147).

2. How does Edmund justify his decision to leave his siblings and motivate himself to continue traveling to the White Witch? You might want to consider the essay "The Great Sin."

Edmund doesn't want his siblings turned to stone, but he does want the power of being a prince, the delicious Turkish delight, and to get back at Peter. He also tries to convince himself that the queen is nicer than Aslan. When he is suffering in the cold and could turn back, Edmund keeps thinking about everything that he would do as king. His desire to become a king and have more power than his brother reveals Edmund's own pride (151–152).

3. Describe the White Witch's castle in detail. What information about the witch can you get from this setting?

The castle is situated in a valley between two hills. In literature, the high and low location often represent good and evil. It's significant that Edmund must travel down to reach the castle. Additionally, the way down is rocky and steep. This communicates the dangerous nature of Edmund's decision to join the witch. The castle itself communicates the nature of the evil there. The towers have spires that look sharp like needles (again, emphasis on the danger), but they also look like a sorcerer's and dunce's caps. The term "sorcerer" carries connotations of evil magic, while "dunce" implies a lack of intelligence. This combination implies that the evil path is never the intelligent choice.

The queen also populates her courtyard with her stone statues. These statues were once alive, but now they are frozen. This stasis is a type of death, and thus the witch's castle is full of death. Through analyzing the setting, we're reminded of the witch's dangerous capacity to bring about evil and death (152–154).



## Discussion Questions

1. What do the children feel at the mention of Aslan's name? Why might Edmund respond differently from his siblings?

Peter, Susan, and Lucy all experience positive feelings when hearing Aslan's name. Peter feels brave and adventurous, while Susan feels as if she smells something delicious or hears wonderful music, and Lucy feels an excitement similar to waking up during the beginning of a holiday or summer. Edmund, on the other hand, experiences a negative feeling when he hears Aslan's name—he feels horror. Edmund's reaction is different from the other children because he is the only one to have met the White Witch, Aslan's enemy, and to have made a deal with her (141).

2. Mr. Beaver shows the children Lucy's handkerchief to prove that they can trust him. Besides this token, what details does the author give about the beavers that let us know the beavers are virtuous?

Mr. Beaver invites the children into his home, and they are greeted warmly by his wife, a "kind-looking old she-beaver" (142). Additionally, the beavers give the children a wonderful meal of fresh-caught fish. Unlike the witch's Turkish delight that never satisfies, the beavers' meal leaves the children feeling full and happy. Moreover, the beavers don't demand favors from the children. In fact, they are willing to risk their own lives to help the children. First, Mr. Beaver takes them home despite all the spies in the woods, and then they agree to help the children search for Aslan. Mr. and Mrs. Beaver are depicted as generous and self-sacrificial creatures.

3. When Edmund enters the queen's courtyard he finds stone statues. He uses a lead pencil to scribble on the stone statue. Why do you think Edmund feels compelled to make fun of the statue?

Edmund thinks the stone is Aslan. As he scribbles on the stone, he mocks Aslan and asks, "Who's afraid of Aslan?" (154). Instead of appearing brave and confident, Edmund comes off as a scared little boy who is trying to hide his fear. He doubts his decision to help the White Witch and worries about Aslan's power. Despite the scribbles, the stone lion still appears terrible, sad, and noble (154). Edmund tries to suppress his conscience, but he can't completely convince himself he is doing the right thing.

## Life Questions—Journaling Assignment

Feel free to respond to the life questions here or to keep them in a separate journal used for meditative contemplation.

1. Describe a meal experience that was wonderful on account of the food, the company, and the atmosphere.

Answers will vary.

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2. Reflect on a moment when you felt compelled to mock something sober because of your own misdeeds. If you can't think of such a moment, reflect on the things that inspire you to mockery or sarcasm. Why do you think they do this?

Answers will vary.

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## Write Your Own Discussion Questions

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