



# Study Guide

# THE HOBBIT

Adapted for the stage by  
**Patricia Gray**  
Based on the book by  
**JRR Tolkien**

## Common Core & Arts Curriculum Standards In Focus

### **READING STANDARD FOR LITERATURE 7: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

### **SPEAKING & LISTENING STANDARD 1: Comprehension and Collaboration**

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade appropriate topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

### **ARTS EDUCATION—THEATRE Standard 3: Analyze, describe and evaluate works of art.**

ART.T.III.1 Understand characters' thought process during dramatic scenes.

ART.T.III.4 Suggest and implement alternative characters, settings, or events after viewing or participating in a performance.

ART.T.III.7 Question emotions and thoughts evoked by performance.

## Big Ideas...

The Hero's Journey. Courage. Finding support from friends. Family History.

# Welcome to



## 2014-2015 Season

The Civic Youth Theatre season is thrilled to be bringing this time-honored adventure to our community! An unlikely hero, Bilbo Baggins, is all but dared to go on a dangerous journey to reclaim the treasure stolen by the dragon, Smaug. Through the persistence and support of a wizard and a motley crew of dwarves he finds himself doing things he never would have dreamed he was strong enough to do... but he finds out that he is strong enough! He can do it!

Sometimes all we need is that little push from someone who believes in us. We may think something is possible but that extra support helps us take the step, go on the journey, and see how much we can accomplish if we just take that first step. Bilbo learns that exact lesson.

Research has shown that as the brain develops there is a need to educate the whole child through shaping key academic, social and critical thinking skills. The Arts are vital to the teaching of empathy, emotional intelligence, imagination, creativity and introducing ideas that challenge us to see the world in a different way. By exposing yourself, family, and students to live theatre, you are helping to expand their imagination and education.

We at the Civic (and the over 70 volunteer youth that are involved as actors and crew members on this production!) hope that your audience experience sparks discussion between friends, classmates and families that will get imaginations working and put a creative component in your communication!

**Nicki Poer**

Director of Education & Outreach

## The Life of J.R.R. Tolkien

**John Ronald Reuel Tolkien**, CBE (/ *tol-keen*) was born on January 3, 1892 and died on September 2, 1973. He was an English writer, poet, and professor, best known as the author of the classic high fantasy works: *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Silmarillion*.

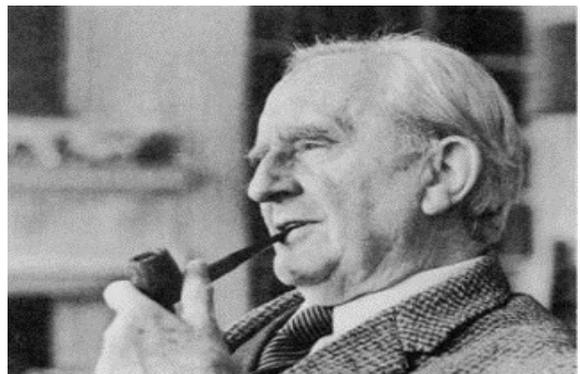
He served as Professor and Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford, from 1925 to 1945 and Professor of English Language and Literature and Fellow of Merton College, Oxford from 1945 to 1959. He was at one time a close friend of C. S. Lewis (*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*)—they were both members of the informal literary discussion group known as the Inklings. Tolkien was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II on March 28, 1972.

After Tolkien's death, his son Christopher published a series of works based on his father's extensive notes and unpublished manuscripts, including *The Silmarillion*. These, together with *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* form a connected body of tales, poems, fictional histories, invented languages, and literary essays about a fantasy world called Arda, and then Middle-Earth within it. While many other authors had published works of fantasy before Tolkien, the great success of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* led directly to a popular resurgence of the genre. This has caused Tolkien to be popularly identified as the "father" of modern fantasy literature—or, more precisely, of high fantasy.

In 2008, *The Times* ranked him sixth on a list of "The 50 Greatest British Writers Since 1945". *Forbes* ranked him the 5th top-earning "dead celebrity" in 2009.

This Patricia Gray adaptation of *The Hobbit* is the only adaptation approved by Tolkien!

*(Biography taken from The Tolkien Society & Wikipedia.)*



## **BEHIND THE SCENES OF *The Hobbit***

**All of the actors that you will see onstage are between the ages of 9-18 years old; all of the people on the crews are also between the ages of 9-18—read below to find out more information on what the crews do.**

### **Stage Management**

The Stage Manager and Assistant Stage Managers begin their job generally about 8 weeks before auditions by attending design meetings for the production. They also help facilitate auditions and callbacks. During the early part of rehearsals, the Stage Manager's primary responsibility is to record *blocking*, which is the movement of the actors on the stage. Throughout rehearsals it is also the stage manager's responsibility to help coordinate the placement and movement of all hand props as well as the placement and movement of furniture. The Stage Manager is the communication hub of a production.

### **Lights/Sound/SFX Crew**

The Lights/Sound/SFX Crew for productions are usually focused on the hanging and focusing of lights prior to tech week. They could also cut all of the color for the lights, set up sound equipment and serve as master electricians. This crew may serve as the light and sound technicians for the run of the production.

### **Costume/Makeup Crew**

The Costume & Makeup Crew is responsible for helping to construct costumes and help out with quick changes and repairs during the show run. For this production, they are responsible for all of the specialty hair and makeup on the fantastical characters!

### **Paint Crew**

The Paint Crew has participated in the complete process of painting set and props. This crew's job is finished prior to the run of the show and they are able to watch the production from the audience.

### **Properties Build Crew**

The Props Crew had the task of collecting and building the props used in the show. This can include anything from reupholstering furniture to helping create the large puppet of Smaug, the dragon which was originally used in our production of *Shrek, the musical*.

### **Scenery Build Crew**

We are proud to say that the Set Crew was very active in the construction process. The Set Crew works on building the entire set that you see. This crew is very active in the Scene Shop and learned how to use many different tools—they even welded!

### **Scenery/Props Run Crew**

This crew runs the show behind the scenes as they move scenery and keep track of props. They also operate the fly system bringing things in and out from above.

### **Front of House Crew**

This hard-working crew began their work over four weeks before the production opened. This crew put together the activity book that you will receive after the production. This crew becomes the front of house staff for the run of the production. They usher every performance and help to ensure that the audience (patrons) have an enjoyable experience.

**These hard-working crews keep the production running!**

**Do you think that you would like to be onstage performing or backstage on a crew?**

**If you are between the ages of 9-18 years old—go to [www.kazoocivic.com](http://www.kazoocivic.com) for more info!**

# Before, After, & In Between

## Before

*Prepare to see the play...*

- Read the book of *The Hobbit*. This play does not tell the entire story from the book. It starts at the beginning and goes through the encounter with Smaug, the dragon. Discuss what you think will be in the play and what maybe was skipped or changed.
- Draw how you think the characters might be portrayed. For example, Gandalf is an old wizard—draw what you think he might look like onstage.
- Design the scenery and back up the choices that you make by using the book.
- Make sure everyone understands proper audience etiquette—sit quietly but laugh or clap when appropriate.
- And make sure everyone knows that the lights go out in theatre but they always come back on!

## In Between

*Engage as an audience...*

- Are you a little spooked by some of the special effects, makeup, and/or combat? Describe how they make you feel at intermission with your friends and family. Ask them how they feel about it, too!
- Choose one actor to follow throughout the show—does he/she change characters? How? What differences do you notice? (HINT: The dwarves never change characters.)

## After

*Reflect on your experience...*

- Did anything during the play surprise you? Was anything totally different than you expected? What was it and what did you expect?
- Bilbo writes in his journal a lot though much of that was not in the play. Write a journal entry the day after the end of the play. Where do you think Bilbo is? How does he feel about what he just did and went through? What do you think he will do next?



There have been several film adaptations of *The Hobbit* including the above 1977 animated film and the newest version in 2012, below.



### Contact Us...

Encourage your students to contact us and tell us what they thought of the play.

We would love to read some of the writing inspired by the prompt in this study guide!

#### **Kalamazoo Civic Theatre**

**ATTN: Nicki Poer**

**329 S. Park Street**

**Kalamazoo, MI 49007.**

The Director of Education & Outreach is available for workshops before or after the production. Please contact Nicki Poer at [education@kazoocivic.com](mailto:education@kazoocivic.com) or (269) 343-2280 X 1117.