

Teacher: Leslie A. Donovan

Dept., Course Number, Univ.: Honors College, 402-002, University of New Mexico

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Tolkien Studies for Advanced Readers
Oral Presentations
(2 presentations; each 10% of total grade)

Reading Report

During the first week of class, you will be randomly assigned an oral presentation topic on either medieval works that influenced Tolkien's fiction or one of Tolkien's essays/lectures from *The Monsters and the Critics* collection of some of Tolkien's academic works. For this presentation, you will be responsible for teaching your classmates about your topic. Although other class members are welcome to read the texts for your Reading Report, only one other class member assigned as your Responder will be required to read the works assigned to you.

These Reading Reports are meant to be informational and analytical; they are not to be simply reviews of the texts. In other words, do not structure your report around what is good or bad about the text. Instead, explain the text factually and give your ideas on it. You may also wish to place your assigned text into the context of other works by Tolkien or other related works you may know. For your Reading Report, you are required to:

- Take no longer than 20 minutes of class time (plus 10 minutes for questions and discussion);
- Organize your report, so that it is clear and coherent;
- Provide examples from your reading to summarize and explicate the content of your text(s);
- Discuss at least 2 specific ways your text helps readers better understand Tolkien's works;
- Address respectfully any questions and/or issues raised by your Responder;
- Be prepared to lead discussion and answer questions about your reading with the whole class; and
- Post a brief outline of your Reading Report (1-2 pages) on the assignment's page on our class website. The outline for your Reading Report must be posted on the appropriate website page no later than 12:00 midnight after you make your presentation in class. You do not need to provide handouts of the outline to the rest of the class. If you do not post your outline on time, 1 point will be deducted from your score for this assignment.

When preparing your Reading Report, keep your audience and the subject of our course firmly in mind in order to tailor your remarks for our purposes. Since your classmates will fill out anonymous evaluations of your report that will determine the points you earn for this assignment, your goal should be to effectively explain your material to them, rather than to please me. Consider what information your classmates need to know to understand and assess the importance of your assigned works to our overall course topic.

Responder Presentation

In addition to your Reading Report, you will be randomly assigned as a Responder for a topic on either medieval works that influenced Tolkien's fiction or one of Tolkien's essays/lectures from *The Monsters and the Critics* collection of some of Tolkien's academic works. For your Responder Presentation, respond to the Reading Report for your assigned reading by asking questions and engaging the person making the Reading Report in a discussion that will improve your classmates' understanding of the topic. If you disagree with anything in the Reading Report, it is up to you to present alternative views in a useful and constructive manner that will broaden discussion. It is also your responsibility to correct any obviously faulty readings of the texts in the Reading Report. In addition, you are expected to ask intelligent, useful questions about the Reading Report.

As a Responder, you must be as familiar with the assigned texts as the main presenter. Because your classmates will fill out anonymous evaluations that will determine your score for this assignment, your focus as Responder should be on how best you can aid in improving the audience's comprehension of your subject. Much like the presenter, you will need to know your assigned works well enough to assist the presenter in leading discussion with the whole class.

For your Responder Presentation, you are required to:

- Take no longer than 10 minutes of class time for your portion of the assignment;
- Ask at least 2 specific questions about the Reading Report;
- Add at least 1 comment that expands upon or further explains material presented in the Reading Report, or that broadens the Reading Report by challenging some interpretation it makes;
- Correct as needed any errors made in the Reading Report;
- Be prepared to discuss the topic in class along with the person making the Reading Report; and
- Post on the assignment's page on our class website the 2 questions you were prepared to ask for the Reading Report, even if you end up asking different questions in class. These questions must be posted on the appropriate website page no later than 12:00 midnight after you make your presentation in class. If you do not post your questions on time, 1 point will be deducted from your score for this assignment.