Below is a list of possible paper topics for your research paper in the course. Please note that ALL topics below are quite general and require diligent narrowing and focusing before you can arrive at a strong research claim. Once you sign up for a topic, search, read, and research BROADLY, and do not neglect socio-cultural, historical, theoretical, and philosophical sources that might ground your paper.

The Inklings

Tolkien’s Medieval Roots

Tolkien and the Great War

Maps, Verse, Poetry, Art in Tolkien

Geography, place, space

Tolkien’s Creation Myth, Arda Marred, Creation-Fall

Tolkien and Material culture – material objects and their function/purpose

Anthropological studies in Middle-earth

Epic Genre, Epic Hero & The Quest Archetype in LotR

Modernism and Tolkien’s place therein

Languages and their function

Tolkien as “green” author

Race in Middle Earth

Immortality, Time

The Nature of Evil in Tolkien

Predestination, Choice

Tolkien’s Christian Perspective [theological]
Tolkien’s philosophical perspective
The feminine and its absence
Tolkien & pop culture
LotR and the First Age
Christopher Tolkien’s History of Middle-earth [13 volumes]
The body as represented in Tolkien’s texts
Magic in Arda, Middle-earth, texts
“On Fairy Stories” and Middle-earth
Fantasy form, genre and Tolkien
Landscape, literal-metaphorical-spiritual
Colonial-Imperial perspectives in/on Tolkien
The uncanny in Tolkien – monstrous, alien, other
Words, Memory, History
Animal-human-spirit in Arda
Linguistics-philology and Tolkien
Teaching Tolkien – pedagogical perspectives
Boundaries, borders, membranes, and ‘beyond’