



Quicklet - J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit

Taryn Nakamura

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Our Hyperink Quicklets are usually 5,000-8,000 words and includes an overall summary, chapter commentary, key characters, literary themes, fun trivia, and recommended related readings.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The New York Times writes that while grading papers, Tolkien wrote the opening line of *The Hobbit* at the top of one of the exams. He then had to write the book to discover exactly what a hobbit was. (J. R. R. Tolkien Dead at 81; Wrote *The Lord of the Rings*)

Tolkien began writing *The Hobbit* in 1937 and found encouragement from meetings with friends, C. S. Lewis and Charles Williams; this group of writers met in pubs around Oxford and called themselves *The Inklings*. (J. R. R. Tolkien Dead at 81; Wrote *The Lord of the Rings*)

He created a world called Middle Earth and filled it with its own language, creatures, and history. The inspiration for his imagined world springs from his childhood in Sarehole, a small village near Birmingham. In an interview with the New York Times, Tolkien said that the hobbits have some of the characteristics of Sarehole people: gentle amblers, not really fond of adventures but very fond of their food. (*The Prevalence of Hobbits*).

MEET THE AUTHOR

For the first two weeks of her life, Taryn had no name. During her brief stint as a common noun ("the baby"), she compensated for proper noun deficiency by learning to love language a little too much. Born and raised in Hawaii, she's recently returned home after receiving a B.A. in English at Yale University. As a writing concentrator at Yale, Taryn focused on fiction, but as a Hyperink writer, she has learned that nonfiction can also be fun. In her free time, she likes to run at walking pace, haunt libraries, and eat pickles.

EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien was born in South Africa on January 3, 1892, but he had his true homecoming when his mother brought him back to the English countryside. While in South Africa, Tolkien was once temporarily kidnapped by an African who wanted to show off a white baby to his friends. After the dry lands and heat of Africa, Tolkien compared the calm, pleasant Sarehole to a Christmas tree. (*The Prevalence of Hobbits*)

Tolkiens father died when he was three, and his mother brought him and his brother home to Sarehole. There, Tolkien received an education in the beauty of the land and the beauty of words. He attributed his love of philology to his mother, and the love of the earth to Sarehold, which he called a lost paradise (*Tolkiens Shire*)

Tolkien received a B.A. in 1915 at Oxford, served in WWI, and then returned to Oxford for an M.A. He became a Professor of English Language at Leeds University and Oxford, where a former student said that

he displayed some hobbit-like qualities. (J. R. R. Tolkien Dead at 81; Wrote The Lord of the Rings).

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CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Quicklet On J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit
- J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit
 - About the Book: The Hobbit
 - J. R. R. Tolkien: The Original Hobbit, Master Linguist, Creator of Middle Earth
 - Overall Summary for The Hobbit
 - List of Important Characters in The Hobbit
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