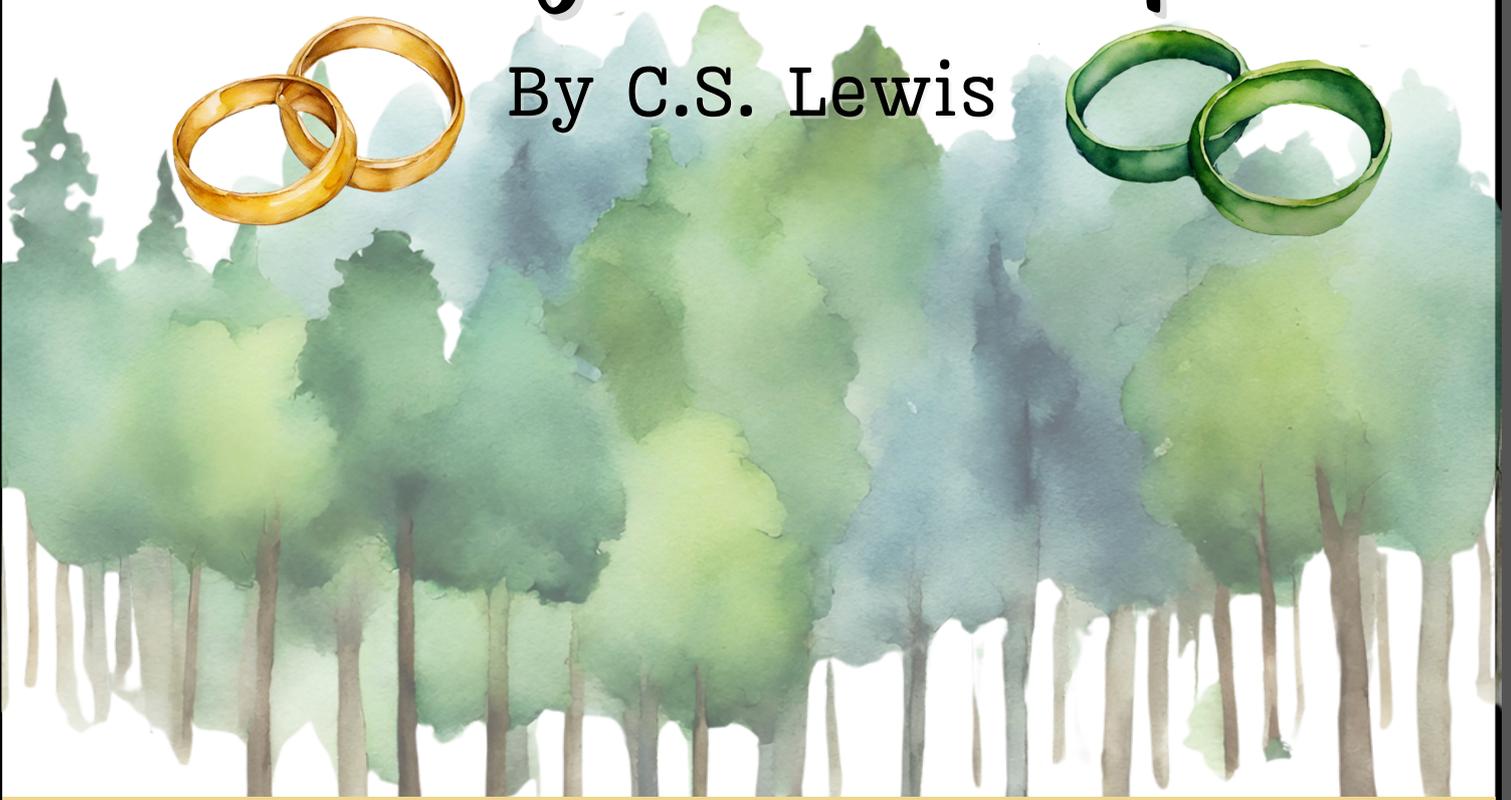


# The Magician's Nephew

By C.S. Lewis



## NOVEL STUDY UNIT (ch. 1-2)

- ✿ Close Reading Analysis Worksheets
- ✿ Reading comprehension
- ✿ Character analysis
- ✿ Vocabulary
- ✿ Writing tasks

**ANSWER KEYS  
INCLUDED!**



# The Magician's Nephew



## CHAPTERS 1-2

### Reading Comprehension

Search the text for the answers to the following questions and underline them.

1. Why does Polly find the boy's arrival surprising?
2. Why has Digory been "blubbing" (p. 10)?
3. What does the room look like when Polly and Digory arrive? What catches Polly's eye?
4. What do they discover about the room in the abandoned house?
5. After spotting Polly and Digory, what is the initial step Uncle Andrew takes?
6. Why does Uncle Andrew say he needs Polly and Digory?
7. What does Uncle Andrew give Polly?
8. What happens to Polly?
9. Who was Mrs. Lefay?
10. What did Mrs. Lefay give to Uncle Andrews before she died? What request did she ask of him?
11. What revelations come to light regarding Mrs. Lefay?
12. Where did the magic box come from? What did it contain?
13. According to Uncle Andrew, what power do the yellow and green rings have?
14. What kind of "trap" has Digory fallen into now?
15. What truth about fairy tales does Digory remind Uncle Andrew of?
16. Why does Digory hesitate? How does his uncle persuade him to carry on with the mission?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## Interpretation



*Answer the following questions.*

1. "The horrible meanness of getting at a chap in *that* way, almost made him sick" (p. 21): what is the author referring to?

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2. Why do you think Uncle Andrew says that "profound students and great thinkers and sages" and men who "possess hidden wisdom" should not keep their word?

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3. Why do you think Uncle Andrew is not willing to attempt the journey to the other world? What justifications does he give?

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## Character analysis



*Based on these two chapters, write a brief description of the three primary characters in the boxes below*

Polly

Digory

Uncle Andrew

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## Vocabulary



### Exercise 1

Rewrite the meaning of the following expressions using your own words, as in the example. They are all taken from the chapters you have already read.

Page	Idiom or expression	My own explanation
14	I'm game if you are	<i>I'm ready, if you are too</i>
15	It's all rot to say	
19	Talking to an old buffer like me	
25	I took jolly good care not to touch it	
28	Showing the white feather	
29	I'm sick of this jaw	
30	By gum!	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## Vocabulary



### Exercise 2

Perhaps you've read some of the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien, great friend of C.S. Lewis, such as "The Hobbit". If you've explored these fantasy novels, you may have noticed that Tolkien's created world is entirely distinct from our own, with no ties to any place, time, or historical figures from reality. In contrast, Lewis chose to connect his fantasy world to ours by subtle links.

Search within these two chapters for **all the references to our world** and **list** them below, mentioning the **page number**, as shown in the example.

Page	Reference	What is this reference about
9	Sherlock Holmes	<i>It refers to the famous english detective</i>





# The Magician's Nephew



## CHAPTERS 1-2: ANSWER KEYS

### Reading Comprehension

**1. Why does Polly find the boy's arrival surprising?**

Polly is surprised to see a boy climbing on the wall of the house next to hers, because she was convinced that only two elderly unmarried siblings lived in that house.

**2. Why has Digory been "blubbing" (p. 10)?**

Digory has been shedding tears due to the sadness of being far from his countryside home. To him, London was nothing but a "beastly Hole."

**3. What does the room look like when Polly and Digory arrive? What catches Polly's eye?**

The room into which the two boys enter is brightened by daylight and is not as empty as they initially thought: it is an attic that has the appearance of a living room, filled with bookshelves. A fire crackles in the fireplace, and an armchair sits in the center. Adjacent to it, a table holds an assortment of items, among them two sets of rings in green and yellow. These rings catch Polly's eye with their gleam.

**4. What do they discover about the room in the abandoned house?**

It appears that the place is not abandoned at all; in fact, it is the attic of Digory's house! This revelation occurs as the armchair rotates, revealing Uncle Andrew seated on it.

**5. After spotting Polly and Digory, what is the initial step Uncle Andrew takes?**

Uncle Andrew rises and walks over to lock the door, causing Polly and Digory to feel uneasy as they don't grasp his intentions. Upon securing the lock, he mentions that his sister won't be able to interrupt their conversation. Then, noticing them hesitating to leave, he proceeds to shut the door they used to enter.

## **6. Why does Uncle Andrew say he needs Polly and Digory?**

He says he is in the midst of an experiment, which he has already begun with guinea pigs. A guineapig, however, "can't tell you anything and you can't explain to it how to come back".

## **7. What does Uncle Andrew give Polly?**

Uncle Andrew suggests that Polly take one of the rings on the tray on the table. Intrigued, she agrees. As she gets closer to them, the humming noise she heard at the entrance becomes louder, almost as if it came from the rings themselves.

## **8. What happens to Polly?**

The moment she touches the rings, Polly disappears.

## **9. Who was Mrs. Lefay?**

Mrs. Lefay was the godmother of Uncle Andrew, who has an old photograph of her hanging on his wall. Digory had already seen a photo of her in the past but was unable to find out more because his mother didn't like talking about her. She had been put in prison for "making a little trouble".

## **10. What did Mrs. Lefay give to Uncle Andrews before she died? What request did she ask of him?**

Shortly before her death, Uncle Andrew had started seeing the lady. She gave him a little box, making him promise that he would burn it immediately after her death; Uncle Andrew, however, did not keep his promise.

## **11. What revelations come to light regarding Mrs. Lefay?**

Uncle Andrew reveals that she had a fairy blood.

## **12. Where did the magic box come from? What did it contain?**

The magic box came from Atlantis and contained dust that had been brought from another world, which existed when ours was not yet born, and which could only be accessed through magic.

## **13. According to Uncle Andrew, what power do the yellow and green rings have?**

Yellow rings transport people and creature that touch them to another world, while green rings bring them back to our world.

## **14. What kind of "trap" has Digory fallen into now?**

Digory realizes that he has only one option left: he must travel to the other world with the last yellow ring and the two green ones, to bring one to Polly and make her come back. Uncle Andrew is certainly not willing to go and save the girl, so everything is in his hands.

### **15. What truth about fairy tales does Digory remind Uncle Andrew of?**

Digory mentions that he had never believed in magic before, but now he must reconsider. He points out to his uncle that in fairy tales, the wicked magician always meets a grim fate. By clearly labeling his uncle as the villain, he is cautioning him. This statement surprises and unsettles the uncle.

### **16. Why does Digory hesitate? How does his uncle persuade him to carry on with the mission?**

Digory hesitates because he fears that his mother will worry about his absence. His uncle blackmails him morally by pointing out that without Digory's intervention Polly would be dead or missing.

## Interpretation

### **1. "The meanness of that low blow almost made him sick" (p. 19): what is the author referring to?**

The author refers to the fact that his uncle used Digory's sick mother to push him not to cry; in fact, it is petty to use someone's illness as an argument for blackmail.

### **2. Why do you think Uncle Andrew says that the "wise men and thinkers", the "knowledge holders" should not keep their word?**

Uncle Andrew reveals his presumptuous nature by considering himself superior to others in terms of abilities, such as witchcraft, and entitlement, believing he is exempt from honoring promises. His arrogance is evident as he believes he can act without restrictions simply because he possesses unique powers.

### **3. Why do you think Uncle Andrew is not willing to attempt the journey to the other world? What justifications does he give?**

Uncle Andrew says he cannot go to the other world due to his health conditions and also because, if he died, all his work would go up in smoke. In truth he does not want to attempt the journey to the other world because he is cowardly and fearful: aware of the risks and uncertainties in the other world, he opts to sacrifice another individual instead to reap the benefits of the exploration.

## Character analysis

**POLLY:** Girl who is the neighbor of Digory's uncle and aunt and lives in London. She is very curious and fascinated by rings.

**DIGORY:** Boy whose mother is sick. When he first appears, he is dirty and crying. His dad works in India, so Digory has moved to London to live with his aunt and uncle. He has spent his life in the countryside and does not like the city, where he does not have a pony (which he had in the past) nor can he reach the river a stone's throw from the garden.

**UNCLE ANDREW:** disturbing step when walking, awful eyes, sister always shushes him when he tries to talk to Digory. People say he's crazy. Tall and very thin; pointed nose, clean-shaven face, light eyes, gray hair. Long white fingers. He appears as an arrogant man, capable of doing anything to achieve his goals; he believes that he is not subject to the duty to respect his word, since he has powers that other people do not possess. He uses guinea pigs as if they were objects, nothing more than mere laboratory guinea pigs: in this too, he appears unscrupulous, interested only in his own profit.

## Vocabulary: exercise 1

Rewrite the meaning of the following expressions using your own words, as in the example. They are all taken from the chapters you have already read.

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14	I'm game if you are	<i>I'm ready, if you are too</i>
15	It's all rot to say	<i>It doesn't make sense</i>
19	Talking to an old buffer like me	<i>Chatting with an old chap like me</i>
25	I took jolly good care not to touch it	<i>I made sure not to touch it</i>
28	Showing the white feather	<i>Surrendering</i>
29	I'm sick of this jaw	<i>I'm tired of these sermons</i>
30	By gum!	<i>My goodness!</i>

## Vocabulary: exercise 2

Perhaps you've read some of the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien, great friend of C.S. Lewis, such as "The Hobbit". If you've explored these fantasy novels, you may have noticed that Tolkien's created world is entirely distinct from our own, with no ties to any place, time, or historical figures from reality. In contrast, Lewis chose to connect his fantasy world to ours by subtle links.

Search within these two chapters for **all the references to our world** and **list** them below, mentioning the **page number**, as shown in the example.

Page	Reference	What is this reference about
9	Sherlock Holmes	<i>It refers to the famous english detective</i>
9	Bastables	<i>It refers to the characters of the novel "The story of the Treasure Seekers" by E. Nesbit</i>
9	Eton collar	<i>It refers to a collar that was part of the students' uniform at the beginning of the XX century</i>
9	London	<i>It refers to the city</i>
10	India	<i>It refers to the country</i>
12	Treasure Island	<i>It refers to the novel by Robert Louis Stevenson</i>
17	Hoover	<i>It refers to the to vacuum cleaners from the brand with the same name</i>
24	Greek, Egyptians, Babilonian, Hittite, Chinese	<i>It refers to the ancient populations in Europe and Asia</i>
24	Atlantis	<i>It refers to a legendary island, which Plato spoke about in antiquity.</i>
24	Europe	<i>It refers to our continent</i>



## ABOUT ME

As a middle and high school literature teacher, I am deeply passionate about my profession. I enjoy sharing with you the educational resources I have created over the years, hoping to provide engaging ideas for classroom activities.

"Sic hobbitur ad astra" is (half) a Latin phrase that translates to: "Thus, walking like the hobbits, one reaches the stars."

This is how I aspire to teach and live: progressing one step at a time, embodying the hobbits' enthusiasm for life, and knowing that every step leads towards a significant destination.



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