

NARNIA

IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

(late elementary/early middle school level)

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Course Description

In this course, we'll discuss how to approach a narrative like serious literature, while still having fun. In fact, once you figure out how the events of a story connect to one another, hopefully you'll have even more fun than you would've before!

You'll also learn how pieces of real-world history and important real-world ideas can secretly be mixed into a story, even if that story is imaginary.

This is a **three-month online course for 90 minutes**, meeting **once a week** offering complete coverage of the material listed in this document.



Course Content



C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

How does the context of World War II influence this story? What is allegory, and when does the idea of allegory emerge within this story? How do the earliest events in the plot influence us to anticipate the way the plot unfolds?



The Magician's Nephew

- How does the context of the atomic bomb and the Cold War influence this story?
- Is this story allegorical as well?
- In what ways is its approach to allegory similar and/or different from that of book 1?
- How is this book connected with book 1?



The Horse and His Boy

- How does the context of British Imperialism influence this story?
- What doctrinal implications are brought in by the developing allegory?
- How is this book connected to the other books in the series?



Prince Caspian

- How does this book define a good or rightful ruler?
- Does this perspective only make sense in a fantasy context, or can we think about this definition working in the real world too?
- How does the plot link up to other books in the series?



The Voyage of the Dawn Treader

- Each island or destination has a different lesson for the characters-- and for us as readers. What are those lessons?
- At the same time, what the characters are doing is exploring their world and expanding their country's knowledge of it. What real-world historical parallels might that have?



The Silver Chair

In reading this book, we'll work with the concept of the implied author and authorial perspective: this book "wants" us to end up having certain moral ideas.

- So, do you agree with Puddleglum?
- Does the book "agree with Puddleglum"? How do we know?
- How is this book connected with *Dawn Treader* and *Prince Caspian*?



The Last Battle

This book has less history and more allegory than others in the series, so figuring out what the book is interested in showing us involves less outside knowledge and more puzzling out what the book is saying.

- Where do our characters end up at the end of the story?
- How did they get there from our world?
- As readers, do we define this as a happy ending, and for whom?

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