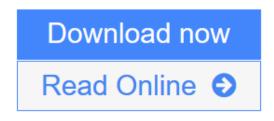


## J.R.R. Tolkien, The Hobbit & The Lord of the Rings: The Life and Legacy of the Author and His Books

Charles River Editors



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\*Includes a biography of Tolkien that explains which real-life experiences inspired his most famous stories and characters.

\*Includes pictures of Tolkien and important people and places in his life.

\*Includes characters spotlights on the books' main characters, including Bilbo, Frodo, Gandalf, Aragorn and other important characters.

\*Explains the origins of Middle Earth, its creatures, and its magic.

\*Comprehensively covers the plot and themes of each book.

"Nothing has astonished me more (and I think my publishers) than the welcome given to The Lord of the Rings. But it is, of course, a constant source of consolation and pleasure to me. And, I may say, a piece of singular good fortune, much envied by some of my contemporaries. Wonderful people still buy the book, and to a man 'retired' that is both grateful and comforting." – J.R.R. Tolkien

For more than half a century, the name J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973) has been synonymous with epic fantasy. Known across the world for his classic The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings trilogy, Tolkien both revived interest in fantasy literature and set the standard for the genre. Today he is widely acknowledged as the "Father" of modern fantasy and its most famous author.

While Tolkien made Middle Earth famous and vice-versa, Tolkien's works were influenced by a lifetime of Tolkien's own personal experiences. His tales concern creatures of myth, yet the plot lines and characters are human at heart. Tolkien drew his inspiration from war, nature, history, love, and language, and through the lens of fantasy he examined bravery, loyalty and friendship. That essential "humanness" at the core of his writing, whether it was displayed by a man, hobbit, or even a tree, struck a chord with readers that continues to resonate today.

"In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit." So starts one of Western literature's most epic journeys, The Hobbit, a fantasy novel that has delighted adults and children alike since it was published in 1937.

Ostensibly, The Hobbit is an adventurous tale about hobbit Bilbo Baggins, who leaves the cozy comforts of his home to try to win a share of a treasure guarded by a dragon named Smaug. The novel follows Bilbo and an assorted cast of magical characters and creatures, including dwarves, the wizard Gandolf, giants, goblins, and the mysterious Gollum. Tolkien brings so many different characters to life and keeps the plot moving at a fast enough pace that readers of all kinds have been easily engrossed reading the novel over the last 75 years.

The popularity of The Hobbit made Tolkien's publisher and audience want a follow-up involving his Middle Earth and hobbit creations. To say Tolkien eventually outdid himself in response would be a drastic understatement. What followed was the most famous trilogy of the fantasy genre, The Lord of the Rings. Tolkien drew upon his background and spent over a decade fashioning the history of his world and the characters, including some of the old (Gandalf and Bilbo) and a lot of the new (Frodo, Aragorn, Sam). Though Tolkien's epic fantasy was published more than 50 years ago, it remains a stalwart piece of writing today. More than 150 million copies have been sold in more than 30 languages, and the trilogy is among the top-selling novels of all time.

J.R.R. Tolkien, The Hobbit & The Lord of the Rings is the perfect resource for understanding Tolkien's classic books. In addition to exploring Tolkien's life and experiences, this guide explains the background of each book, including its characters and plot, its major themes, and its influential and enduring legacy.

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#### **Kelly Brooks:**

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