

**J. R. R. Tolkien: *Lord of the Rings* (LOTR)  
One Semester Course  
(Course of Study Scope and Sequence  
by Dr. Sharon Bridwell and Mrs. Naomi Neuman)**

**SCOPE OF CONTENT**

Dr. Bridwell and Mrs. Neuman have written a high school literature course that will help prepare the college-bound student for most 200 to 300 series literature classes. Students are expected to work at a college level in their writing skills, assignments, exams, oral sharing, and book reviews throughout the semester. **Assignments will average 5+ typed pages a week. On average, students may take 6-8+ hours a week to prepare for essay assignments and 4+ hours for writing brief book reviews, style analyses, and poetry/song analyses—outside of time spent reading the material. The exact number of hours depends on how fast the student reads, comprehends, and writes.** Students will weekly complete written assignments that include responding to essay questions, creative responses, author themes, fantasy themes, fantasy and literary motifs, Biblical allusions, critical thinking issues, and character studies. The course allows students to review all major areas of literary study in preparation for college placement and advanced placement exams and allows students to develop critical analysis skills within the fantasy genre.

**SCOPE OF PRESENTATION**

The J. R. R. Tolkien: *Lord of the Rings* (LOTR) course is taught as a live videoconference class, meeting once a week online for 1.5 hours. Students submit all assignments directly to Mrs. Neuman for grading, critiquing, and comment. To excel in this particular class, students must meet a tough grading standard and produce all work on time. **Students cannot fall behind in this class and remain in it; we move along too quickly.** If questions arise, students contact Mrs. Neuman by email or phone. Mrs. Neuman strives to keep in constant touch with her students and their parents.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Mrs. Neuman expects students to attend each weekly class, log in promptly, and maintain a working microphone. If a family knows their student must miss a particular class because of a mission trip, debate tournament, conference, family commitment, or another reason, the family should contact Mrs. Neuman early to obtain class materials so the student can submit assignments before the due date. Students should work ahead whenever possible rather than fall behind. Although Mrs. Neuman plans to record weekly class sessions, these do not take the place of live classes. As The Potter's School's policy states, "If for any reason a student plans to miss or ends up missing more than three live class sessions in a semester, the family must obtain concurrence from the teacher and director for the student to continue in the course. We will consider more general exceptions with prior approval, particularly for overseas students with

limited Internet connections.” Mrs. Neuman reserves the right to grant extensions and excused absences at her discretion.

## **SCOPE OF EXAMS**

Students take three exams—one over each book in *The Lord of the Rings* series. These exams cover class notes, book quotes, author quotes, author themes, general literary themes, fantasy themes, fantasy and literary motifs, Biblical parallels, and character studies. The format for each exam is fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and essay response. Each college-level exam takes two hours to complete.

## **SCOPE OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN LOTR COURSE**

### **Goals:**

Mrs. Neuman has the following goals for this class—students will:

1. Examine *Lord of the Rings* series as fantasy genre.
2. Familiarize themselves with literary terms and poetic devices used at the college level.
3. Discover religious, political, mythical, and fantasy thinking that occurs within Tolkien’s LOTR.
4. Understand Tolkien’s aesthetic and philological philosophies.
5. Gain valuable analytical and writing skills for college.
6. Apply writing techniques learned from Tolkien to their own writing.
7. Learn discernment for reading and examining any work of literature.

### **Objectives:**

Mrs. Neuman has the following objectives for this class—for students to:

1. Improve critical reading and peer critique skills.
2. Polish writing and literary analysis skills.
3. Discuss and evaluate Tolkien’s Christian worldview and aesthetic.
4. Identify and evaluate author themes and fantasy themes found in LOTR.
5. Identify and evaluate literary plot motifs, fantasy motifs, and archetypes found in LOTR.
6. Understand and successfully analyze Tolkien’s poetry and songs by looking for poetic purpose, use of rhyme and meter, use of poetic tools, theme, anthropomorphism, metaphor, mixed metaphor, paradox, positive/negative binary patterns, and repeated images, mood, tone, and prophetic message.
7. Identify and evaluate types of characters, author characterization, author point of view, author focus, author diction, and the use of literary devices found in LOTR.
8. Competently analyze Tolkien’s literary style.
9. Write college-level book reviews and analytical essays on the books.

## **J. R. R. TOLKIEN LOTR COURSE SEQUENCE**

### **Second Semester:**

**Week 1:** Introduction to Fantasy Lit and LOTR and Explanation of  
Advanced Literary Terms, Class Syllabus, and Class Letter

- Week 2:** Introduction to Tolkien and Explanation of Assignments  
**Week 3:** Cover *Fellowship of the Ring Book One*  
**Week 4:** Cover *Fellowship of the Ring Book Two*  
**Week 5:** Cover Poetry/Songs from *Fellowship of the Ring*  
**Week 6:** Open Forum on *Fellowship of the Ring*  
**Week 7:** **Exam** over *Fellowship of the Ring*  
**Week 8:** Cover *The Two Towers Book Three*  
**Week 9:** Cover *The Two Towers Book Four*  
**Week 10:** Cover Poetry/Songs from *The Two Towers*  
**Week 11:** Open Forum on *The Two Towers*  
**Week 12:** **Exam** over *The Two Towers*  
**Week 13:** Cover *The Return of the King Book Five*  
**Week 14:** Cover *The Return of the King Book Six*  
**Week 15:** Cover Poetry/Songs from *Return of the King*  
**Week 16:** Open Forum on *Return of the King*  
**Week 17:** **Exam** over *The Return of the King*

### **COURSE MATERIALS LIST**

**Software:** Students must use MS Word to write all their assignments in this course. Mrs. Neuman only accepts assignments uploaded in .doc or .docx format.

**Required books:** *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien. (You may purchase the three books in one volume or purchase the three books separately: *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers*, and *The Return of the King*.) Recommended but not required: *The Silmarillion* and *On Fairy Stories*

You can order the books for this class from the TPS virtual bookstore (<http://direct.mbsbooks.com/pottersschool.htm>) or any local bookstore. Because students will mark them up, I would try to find them used.

If a sibling has already taken this course, please purchase unmarked used or new books for your child. Otherwise, your child has the advantage of someone else's hard work.