

The Silver Chair Discussion Group

WK	Days	Reading Assignment	Chapter Titles
Wk 1	March 5	Chs 1, 2	1. Behind the Gym 2. Jill Is Given a Task
Wk 2	March 12	Chs 3, 4, 5	3. The Sailing of the King 4. The Parliament of Owls 5. Puddleglum
Wk 3	March 19	Chs 6, 7, 8	6. The Wild Waste Lands of the North 7. The Hill of the Strange Trenches 8. The House of Harfang
Wk 4	March 26	Chs 9, 10, 11	9. How They Discovered Something Worth Knowing 10. Travels without the Sun 11. In the Dark Castle
Wk 5	April 2	Chs 12, 13	12. The Queen of Underland 13. Underland without the Queen
Wk 6	April 9	Chs 14, 15, 16	14. The Bottom of the World 15. The Disappearance of Jill 16. The Healing of Harms

“I think Gaius and Titius may have honestly misunderstood the pressing educational need of the moment. They see the world around them swayed by emotional propaganda—they have learned from tradition that youth is sentimental—and they conclude that the best thing they can do is to fortify the minds of young people against emotion. My own experience as a teacher tells an opposite tale. For every one pupil who needs to be guarded from a weak excess of sensibility there are three who need to be awakened from the slumber of cold vulgarity. The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles but to irrigate deserts.”

C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*

“There then comes to you a person, saying, “Here is a new bit of the manuscript that I found; it is the central passage of that symphony, or the central chapter of that novel. The text is incomplete without it. I have got the missing passage which is really the centre of the whole work.” The only thing you could do would be to put this new piece of the manuscript in that central position, and then see how it reacted on the whole of the rest of the work. If it constantly brought out new meanings for the whole of the rest of the work, if it made you notice things in the rest of the work which you had not noticed before, then I think you would decide that it was authentic.”

C.S. Lewis, ‘The Grand Miracle’

“Looking along the beam, and looking at the beam are very different experiences.”

C.S. Lewis, “Meditation in a Toolshed”

from C.S. Lewis’ poem, “The Planets”

Lady LUNA, in light canoe,
By friths and shallows of fretted cloudland
Cruises monthly; with chrism of dews
And drench of dream, a drizzling glamour,
Enchants us—the cheat! changing sometime
A mind to madness, melancholy pale,
Bleached with gazing on her blank count’nance
Orb’d and ageless. In earth’s bosom
The shower of her rays, sharp-feathered light
Reaching downward, ripens silver,
Forming and fashioning female brightness,
—Metal maidenlike. Her moist circle
Is nearest earth.

Questions for Chapters 1 and 2

Chapter 1, Behind the Gym

Who is the The Head? What are they like? What sort of school are Eustace and Jill?

What do we know about Eustace?

Describe the day in this first scene? (the sky, weather, and geography)

How would you describe Eustace and Jill's classmates?

How do Eustace and Jill escape? Into what land do they enter? How is it described?

*...the 'happy climes that ly
Where day never shuts his eye
Up in the broad fields of the sky.'*

He quoted Milton's words to himself lovingly, at this time and often."

C.S. Lewis, *Out of the Silent Planet*

What happens next?

Chapter 2, Jill is Given a Task

What do we know about Jill? What does she seem to always be doing?

Whom does Jill meet? What do we know about Him?

What does He "draw" out of Jill?

What task or mission does He give to Jill and Eustace?

How does He send Jill and how has He already sent Eustace?

About what does He warn Jill? Why?

How does the chapter end? In what condition do they arrive?

What wisdom or spiritual lessons does Lewis communicate?

How is he helping us to look at and "look along the beam"?

For next week, compile a list of "moon" stories or songs.