

3. The Silver Chair Discussion Group

WK	Days	Reading Assignment	Chapter Titles
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

“At *Luna* we cross in our descent the great frontier which I have so often had to mention; from aether to air, from ‘heaven’ to ‘nature’, from the realm of the gods (or angels) to that of daemons, from the realm of necessity to that of contingency, from the incorruptible to the corruptible.

C.S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image*

“Men had realized that movement towards the centre of the earth from whatever direction was downward movement. For ages men had known, and poets had emphasized, the truth that earth, in relation to the universe, is infinitesimally small: to be treated, said Ptolemy, as a mathematical point (*Almagest*, i.v). Nor was it generally felt that earth, or Man, would lose dignity by being shifted from the cosmic centre. The central position had not implied pre-eminence. On the contrary, it had implied, as Montaigne says (*Essais*, n xii), ‘the worst and deadest part of the universe’, ‘the lowest story of the house’, the point at which all the light, heat, and movement descending from the nobler spheres finally died out into darkness, coldness, and passivity. The position which was locally central was dynamically marginal: the rim of being, farthest from the hub.

C.S. Lewis, Introduction to *English Literature of the Sixteenth Century* (excluding drama)

“...But other country
 Dark with discord dins beyond him,
 With noise of nakers, neighing of horses,
 Hammering of harness. A haughty god
 MARS mercenary, makes there his camp
 And flies his flag; flaunts laughingly
 The graceless beauty, grey-eyed and keen,
 Blond insolence – of his blithe visage
 Which is hard and happy. He hews the act,
 The indifferent deed with dint of his mallet
 And his chisel of choice; achievement comes not
 Unhelped by him – hired gladiator
 Of evil and good. All’s one to Mars,
 The wrong righted, rescued meekness,
 Or trouble in trenches, with trees splintered

And birds banished, banks fill'd with gold
And the liar made lord. Like handiwork
He offers to all – earns his wages
And whistles the while. White-feathered dread
Mars has mastered. His metal's iron
That was hammered through hands into holy cross,
Cruel carpentry. He is cold and strong,
Necessity's son.

excerpt from C.S. Lewis' poem, "The Planets"

Questions for Chapters 6, 7, 8

1. What happens in chapters 6, 7, and 8?
2. How does 'moonishness' show itself in these chapters?
3. How does the lady in the green kirtle speak to the children? Of what does she speak and what effect does that have on them? Compare the children with Puddleglum at this point.
4. How would you describe the company's approach to Harfang?
5. In *The Discarded Image*, Lewis describes moving between the translunary and sublunary as, "from the realm of necessity to that of contingency, from the incorruptible to the corruptible...." Where have you seen necessity, contingency, incorruptible, and corruptible in *The Silver Chair* so far?
6. What do you think Lewis is trying to show us about life lived in the realm of contingency and the corruptible?
7. How does the martial show up?
8. How does the company come to see?
9. How many kinds of giants are there in *The Silver Chair* so far?
10. Where is Aslan?