

WALT DISNEY PICTURES AND WALDEN MEDIA
PRESENT

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

STUDY GUIDE

Introduction

It was in 1950, five years after the end of the Second World War, that C S Lewis first published his magical tale of four brothers and sisters who were 'sent away from London during the war because of the air-raids'. From its opening sentences, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* wove a compelling tale of good's triumph over evil in a world filled with imagination and wonder, far from the grim reality of the war.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe is C S Lewis' extraordinary testimonial to the power of fantasy to deepen our understanding of reality. For those who thought that fantasy was simply pointless escapism, or believed that factual reading was somehow more edifying for children, Lewis had a ready reply:

'Far from dulling or emptying the actual world, [fantasy] gives it new dimensions of depth. The child does not despise real woods because he or she has read of enchanted woods: the reading makes all woods enchanted.'

Taking their cue from C S Lewis, Walden Media's film adaptation of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* celebrates the power of the imagination.

Overview

Activity One: The Blitz

Activity Two: Mr Tumnus Comes to Life

Activity Three: A Song of Narnia

Activity Four: Creating Costumes

Activity Five: Worlds Within Worlds - Creating Sets

How to Use this Guide

The cross-curricular activities in this guide are designed for students aged 8-12.



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OVERVIEW

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe tells the story of four siblings – Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy Pevensie – who are evacuated from London and the horrors of the WWII bombing, and sent to stay in the house of a mysterious old professor. While playing hide-and-seek, the youngest child, Lucy, stumbles upon an enchanted world, and soon all four children step through the back of a magical wardrobe to find themselves in Narnia. They discover a once-peaceful land inhabited by talking beasts, dwarfs, fauns, centaurs and giants, which has been cursed with eternal winter by the evil but beautiful White Witch, Jadis. Under the guidance of a noble but mysterious ruler, the lion Aslan, the children join, and eventually lead, the fight to free Narnia from the Witch's icy spell forever.

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

Clive Staples Lewis was accomplished in creating fantasy stories from a young age. As a young boy living in Ireland, Clive (known as 'Jack') and his brother Warren ('Warnie') used to make up stories about fantastic lands populated by heroic, talking animals. As well as making up many characters and stories, Jack invented a long history for 'Animal-land' and drew maps of its geography. He would often tell his brother these stories sitting in their grandfather's old wardrobe.

C S Lewis was inspired to write children's books when groups of evacuee children were sent to stay with him during the Second World War. As the children did not know many stories, Lewis decided to make up stories for them himself, using as a starting point the image of a fawn carrying parcels and an umbrella in a snowy landscape. One day, one of the evacuee girls saw a wardrobe in Lewis' house and asked him what was behind it. Thus the gateway to Narnia was born.

The film, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, is based on the second of seven books in the Chronicles of Narnia series. The other books in the series are called The Magician's Nephew, The Horse and his Boy, Prince Caspian, The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, The Silver Chair and The Last Battle.

C S Lewis wrote the seven Narnia books in seven years, publishing one book a year. The books were not written in chronological order; for example, although The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe was the first to be written, it comes second in the history of Narnia. Despite this, together, the books tell a history of Narnia, from its creation to its eventual end.

At first Jack's friends, including the Lord of the Rings writer, J R R Tolkien, discouraged him from writing for children, but he wrote anyway, and his books became some of the most popular children's books of all time, selling over 65 million copies.



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ACTIVITY 1: THE BLITZ

Mark Johnson, the producer of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, says: 'I think it's important to situate the movie in a specific time, and to tell a modern audience what it was like for children at that time, so that it explains why these kids are sent off into the countryside without their parents... Accuracy is important. To have authenticity at the beginning of the film will enable us to believe what happens in the rest of the film.'

COMPREHENSION EXERCISE

Read the passage below to understand how important it was to get Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy out of London – the trip that begins their journey to Narnia.

On September 7, 1940, Adolf Hitler's bombers appeared over the skies of London. Hitler wanted to invade Britain, and had now turned almost the whole might of his air force on London and its nine million inhabitants. Part of Hitler's reason for attacking London was to destroy business targets, but he also wanted to damage the morale, or spirit of the British people.

It was about five o'clock in the afternoon when the first bombers arrived to drop bombs on the London docks. The bombs were intended to start fires, and it was the light of the docks on fire that guided the other bombers to their targets throughout the night. The bombing continued until 4:30 the next morning. This was the start of the Blitz (Blitz is from the German word 'Blitzkrieg,' meaning 'lightening war').

The Blitz continued for around nine months, destroying countless shops, offices, churches, factories and homes, and claiming many lives. The sound of air raid sirens, falling bombs and explosions became very familiar to Londoners. The Blitz finally ended on May 11, 1941, when Hitler decided to send his bomber planes to Russia.

During the Blitz, more than 800,000 schoolchildren were sent away, or 'evacuated' from London, to live in safety in the countryside. Families in the countryside would agree to take in children and look after them until it was safe to return them to their own families in London.

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the four Pevensie children were sent to the countryside because their mother believed they would be safer there. Little did she know that the children were leaving one war behind, only to find themselves fighting in another kind of war altogether!



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QUESTIONS ON THE TEXT

1. What was the first target in London in the Blitz?

2. What does the German word 'Blitzkrieg' mean?

3. Why were the four Pevensie children sent out of London into the countryside?

4. When did the Blitz end?

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ACTIVITY 2: MR TUMNUS COMES TO LIFE

The first creature that Lucy meets when she steps through the wardrobe into Narnia is the nervous faun, Mr Tumnus. They become firm friends, even though Mr Tumnus knows that when he sees a human he must report it to the White Witch, the evil ruler of Narnia.

How C S Lewis Imagined Mr Tumnus:

He was only a little taller than Lucy herself and he carried over his head an umbrella, white with snow. From the waist upward he was like a man, but his legs were shaped like a goat's (the hair on them was glossy black) and instead of feet he had goat's hoofs. He also had a tail, but Lucy did not notice this at first because it was neatly caught up over the arm that held the umbrella so as to keep it from trailing in the snow. He had a red woollen muffler round his neck and his skin was rather reddish too. He had a strange, but pleasant little face, with a short pointed beard and curly hair, and out of the hair there stuck two horns, one in each side of his forehead. One of his hands, as I have said, held the umbrella; in the other arm he carried several brown-paper parcels. What with the parcels and the snow it looked just as if he had been doing his Christmas shopping. He was a Faun. And when he saw Lucy he gave such a start of surprise that he dropped all his parcels. 'Goodness gracious me!' exclaimed the Faun.

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YOUR TURN

Read the description above. List three details about Mr Tumnus.



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A Scene from the Movie Script

Suddenly, SOMETHING CRUNCHES IN THE SNOW BEHIND HER. She peers into the forest. Nothing.

Then suddenly, more crunching. Lucy spins and... SCREAMS.

A CREATURE STANDS BEFORE HER, goat legs rising to a horned head. A red scarf around his neck, he carries an umbrella and an armload of wrapped packages.

He yelps and dives behind a tree, scattering his parcels.

Lucy stands frozen, wide-eyed. Waiting...

She takes a tentative step forward...

The creature peeps out from behind the tree, brandishing his umbrella in self-defence.

Lucy nervously picks up a package, trying not to scare the skittish creature.

LUCY

Are you hiding from me?

MR TUMNUS

No... I was just... I didn't want to scare you.

They stand there in the light of the lamppost.

He stares at her curls.

She stares at his HORNS.

YOUR TURN

List two details in this scene that are the same as the passage in the book and one that is different.



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ACTIVITY 4: CREATING COSTUMES

Isis Mussenden, Costume Designer for The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe, began her task by reading the novel. Each time she read it she got new ideas. 'Everybody thinks C S Lewis wrote all these massive descriptions,' she says. 'But if you really read the book, which I do over and over almost daily, he doesn't. That's the gorgeous part of the writing. He left enough to the imagination of the reader.'

An important part of Isis' job is to create costumes for a character that shows how that character develops and changes during the course of the film. The character of Peter probably grows and develops most during the course of the film. Isis says 'He makes this progression, and we will see that progression in his clothing.'

YOUR TURN

Think about the character of Peter in the story of The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe. List three challenges he faces during the course of the story, and suggest what Peter's costume design should say about his character at each point.

Peter's Challenge

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What Peter's Costume Should Show

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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THINK ABOUT IT!

Look through the book *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* for a scene with your favourite character in it.

Carefully study the costume drawings on these pages.

Think about the choices that the Costume Designer has made. How do each of these costume elements help tell us what the character is like?

- The colour of the costume – colours, brightness and darkness
- The fabrics and textures of the costumes – cotton, wool, etc.
- The fit of the costume – loose or tight, etc.
- The style of the costume – modern or old, formal or informal
- The purpose of the costume – everyday clothing, battle gear, travel clothing



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ACTIVITY 5: WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS – SET DESIGN

Roger Ford, the Art Director for the film, worked very closely with director Andrew Adamson to transform the pages of the screenplay into the settings of the film as Andrew saw them in his imagination. Roger's team then turned these impressions into drawings, models, and finally, sets.

Set designers must also consider how sets will look when seen through the lens of a film camera, from many different angles. Often they will build small-scale models of the sets, called concept models, to use as tools to work out how the film camera will 'see' things.

YOUR TURN

Turn an important setting of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* into a tabletop model of a set for the film.

You can work either by yourself or with a partner.

Begin by drawing the model, and then build it.
Drawing the set may help you to plan more carefully.

When you have finished, look at your models through the lens of a video or digital camera. Does this change your view of your set model?

Why are model-making and set design important in movie making?

THINK ABOUT IT!

What do you think are the most important settings in *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*?

(Adapted from the guide written for teachers in the US by Walden Media)