**English 11/12 Honors: Tolkien Name:**

**Mr. Fisher**

**Background Essay: Makin’ It Up As You Go**

Introduction: In case you haven’t noticed, it seems like J.R.R. Tolkien wrote more background information for *The Lord of the Rings* than he did actual text in the trilogy. However, Tolkien didn’t write *everything*. How could he? He was, after all, human. At least I think he was human. Anyway, Tolkien left a few “blanks.” It’s our job to fill them!

Your Task: You are going to write your very own background-information story for *Lord of the Rings.*

Parameters: Your story should:

* **BE WRITTEN IN THE STYLE OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN.**
* Help to better explain the plot, locations, characters, or items found in either *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy.
* Be 2-5 pages long (double-spaced).
* Be in MLA style (heading and page numbers).
* It should fit into the existing structure of the books (and not contradict them).

**Following Your Story: After the end of the story, you should write a short paragraph (only a few sentences) explaining how your story connects to either *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy.**

What Could A Bad Paper Look Like?

* Blank.
* Have a story that does not clearly connect to or enrich the stories of the book in some way.
* Be written in the style of a robot. (“Leg-o-las. Come. Here. Zar-con is lone-ly. Love. Still. A. Mystery. Sigh.”)
* Go on for 10 pages.
* Read like an encyclopedia entry.

What Would A Good Paper Look Like?

* It would follow the “Parameters” listed above.
* It would sound like Tolkien himself could have written it.
* It would be creative and interesting.
* It would have a clear connection to the trilogy or *The Hobbit* that in some way enriches those stories.
* It would be well-paced.
* It would be a *story* with a *plot*.
* It would use dialogue.

Rules for Good Usage of Dialogue

* It should both help the progression of the plot and characterize its speakers.
* For every new speaker, you should start a new paragraph.
* Two quotation marks for speech; one mark for speech within speech.
* The speaker of the quotation should be obvious.
* Punctuation goes inside the quotation.

Grade: You will be graded based on the following rubric:

Failing Poor Flawed Good Nearly Perfect

Imitation of Tolkien’s 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Writing Style

Structure/Pace of 1 2 3 4 5

Story

Use of Dialogue 1 2 3 4 5

Enriches 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Tolkien’s books

Creativity 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Explanation of

Connection 1 2 3 4 5

Grammar, Punctuation 1 2 3 4 5

and Syntax

Grade: /50 🡪 /100