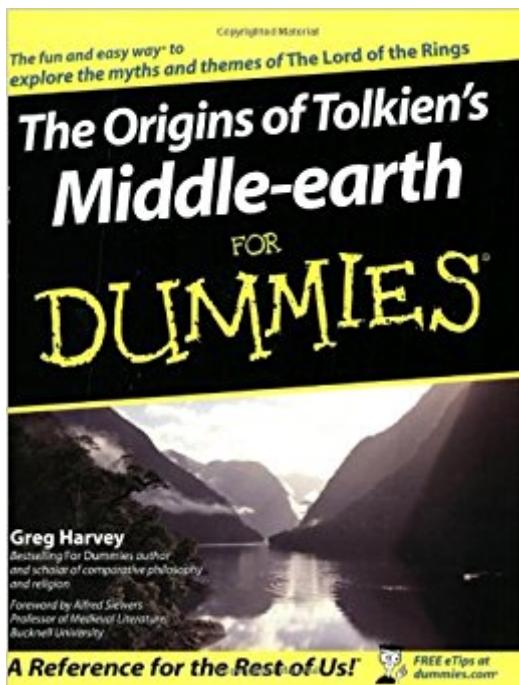


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The Origins Of Tolkien's Middle-earth For Dummies



Synopsis

J.R.R. Tolkien's novels of Middle-earth—The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings trilogy, and The Silmarillion—have become some of the most famous, and most beloved, literary works of the twentieth century. And the Lord of the Rings films by director Peter Jackson have re-ignited interest in Tolkien and his works, as well as introduced his stories to a new generation of fans. Even if you've never read the novels and have only seen the films, you know that the world of Middle-earth is a complicated one. Tolkien took great care in representing this world, from creating new languages to including very particular cultural details that add to the richness of the world's fabric. Many other books have been written about Tolkien and his works, but none have come close to providing the kind of reference needed to comprehend the world of Middle-earth. That's what veteran Dummies author and unabashed Tolkien fan Greg Harvey attempts to do in *The Origins of Tolkien's Middle-earth For Dummies*. As the author says in his introduction to the book, this is not an encyclopedia or quick guide to all the diverse beings, languages, and history that make up Tolkien's Middle-earth. Nor is it a set of plot outlines for the novels. Rather, what you'll find in *The Origins of Tolkien's Middle-earth For Dummies* is a basic guide to some of the possible linguistic and mythological origins of Middle-earth, plus a rudimentary analysis of its many themes and lessons for our world. This book can help enrich your reading (or re-reading) of Tolkien's novels, and it will challenge you to think about the themes inherent in Tolkien's Middle-earth and their implications in your own life. Here's just a sampling of the topics you'll find covered in *The Origins of Tolkien's Middle-earth For Dummies*:

- Exploring the main themes in Tolkien's works, including immortality and death; the heroic quest; love; fate and free will; and faith and redemption
- Investigating the diverse lands of Middle-earth—including the Shire, Gondor, and Mordor—and their significance
- Examining the different cultures of Middle-earth, such as Hobbits, Elves, Men, and those wily Wizards
- Touring the history of Middle-earth
- Understanding Tolkien's creation of new languages to enrich the story of Middle-earth
- Top Ten lists on the battles in the War of the Ring, online resources, and the ways the films differ from the novels
- So, whether you're reading Tolkien's novels or watching the films for the first time, or you've been a fan for many years and are looking for a new take on Tolkien's works, *The Origins of Tolkien's Middle-earth For Dummies* can help you enhance your reading or viewing experience for years to come.

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Customer Reviews

"...a great book...helps readers make sense of the creatures, language, geography and richly-detailed history of Middle earth..." (Shields Gazette, Dec 03) "...a mine of information?a must-have for anyone interested in exploring the epic tales of the four ages of Middle earth..." (Dundee Evening Telegraph and Post, Dec 03)

Demystifies key players, their relationships, and their motivations Understand the mythology, characters, and themes of Middle-earth Don't know Gollum from Gandalf? This plain-English guide helps you make sense of the creatures, language, geography, and richly detailed history of the fascinating world of Middle-earth. From the Shire to Mount Doom, from the hobbits to the Ringwraiths, you'll discover the varied sources and inspirations behind Tolkien's stories and comprehend the meanings that lie beneath the surface. Discover: The differences between the books and the movies The historical background of Middle-earth The origins of Tolkien's mythology in European folklore Middle-earth's diverse languages Why the Elves were Tolkien's favorites The Dummies Way Explanations in plain English "Get in, get out" information Icons and other navigational aids Tear-out cheat sheet Top ten lists A dash of humor and fun

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For those who love The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings, this book gives you a fairly thorough look into the history of Middle-Earth leading up to the events of the books and the films. From the creation myth, to the first Dark Lord, to possible origins of the Hobbits, this proves accessible to those who found the labyrinthine Silmarillion a little difficult to get through. An enjoyable read that gives one a new appreciation to the meticulous thought JRR Tolkien put into his creations and what we the reader see in his books and films.

Only recently have I been interested in the Lord of the Rings and the Hobbit. They are both addicting. I have been consumed with watching the movies and reading the books. Such fun but also confusion. When I came across the Kindle book, I read the sample and reviews. While some feel the author made a few errors, based on the large amount of material and interpretations, I feel he did a good job. It was money well spent and an enjoyable read. In fact, I devoured it all today. The comparison between book and movie was valuable as was the backstory. Unless you are an expert all ready with these books, I recommend this book. I certainly learned a lot and think you will, too. My only problem now is what should I read next to prepare for the Hobbit movie two this Christmas?

Having read many books about Tolkien and the themes he so richly presents in "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings", I have been eagerly awaiting the release of this book for several months. I was not disappointed ! Greg Harvey has taken a very complex trilogy, and along with "The Hobbit", managed to put together an enjoyable and easily readable book which explores all the many facets of Tolkien's world and the characters in it. In the humorous and entertaining style of all the "Dummies" books, we are treated to detailed explanations of the places, beings, and beasts which inhabit the very imaginative mind of the greatest author of the 20th century. If this wasn't enough, Mr. Harvey goes into great detail about the underlying themes in the books, the motivations of the

characters, and how the story is relative to our modern world. Touching on philosophy and religion, themes of friendship, good vs. evil, love and loyalty, human frailty, lust for greed and power --- it's all here, and in an intelligent, unbiased presentation. Not too hard to understand or follow, and not "dumbed down" for the lowest common denominator. A superb book that will entertain and provoke you to think. Not at all for dummies ! You'll be glad you bought a copy --- you won't be disappointed. Money well spent for the Tolkien fan !!!

Tons of info for Middle Earth nerds. Most you can of course find online, but this is a nice primer on the history and lore of Middle Earth. Love being the nerd that knows random ME stuff at a party.

I agree with the various reviewers below who say this a wonderful book, especially for beginners. It has been very useful to me in a number of ways. However, I have a major caveat: THERE ARE ERRORS IN THIS BOOK. Just one example, to keep this review short: Harvey says on page 92 that the name "Aragorn" means "Lord of the Trees" when Tolkien's letter #347 says specifically that it does NOT. (Similarly, on Harvey's website, he also says that the sword "Narsil" means "Red Flame," when in the same letter Tolkien says that while "nar" is fire, the "sil" refers to a white light). When I find a very obvious error like this, I worry about how many more there might be and indeed there are other mistakes as well. I feel sad about this criticism, because Harvey is such an open, generous writer, completely respecting Tolkien's Catholic faith (and any reader of the whole corpus, including the Silmarillion, letters, etc. will see how deeply Catholic the work itself is) while not holding it himself - very refreshing. So three stars for being an awesome resource for beginners, but for those care deeply about Tolkien and are looking for accuracy, readers need to know that they need to double-check the facts before taking anything Harvey says as "gospel."

What I really like about this book is that it provides information on how Tolkien developed his Middle Earth countries. (I haven't finished the book yet.) As all the books in the "for Dummies" series, the text is well organized with titles and subtitles. The map of Middle Earth does not give enough detail of Middle Earth. Additionally, a character analysis would be desirable.

This book is a must for anyone looking for an easily understood addition to the saga. You can quickly understand the interactions of each of the people and they're part in the overthrowing of Sauron from beginning to end.

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