

The Magician's Nephew

7. "Minions!" cried the Queen, turning in rage upon Polly and seizing her hair, at the very top of her head where it hurts the most.

A person's minions are his _____.

- a. followers
- b. enemies
- c. teachers
- d. guards

Part 2:

A word is *in context* if we see it in the sentence where it is used. The meanings of the following underlined words are shown in the context of the sentences where they appear. Try to determine the meaning of these words as they are being used below. Write down the meaning without using a dictionary. You should be able to make an accurate guess.

- 1. "I don't believe he knows anything about it. He never had the pluck to come here himself."

- 2. "Well don't keep on gassing about it," said Digory.

- 3. "I only thought you didn't seem very keen on exploring this place."

- 4. "I expect anyone who's come as far as this is bound to go on wondering till it sends him dotty."

- 5. "Why, it's absolute bosh from beginning to end."

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Mood:

1. The *mood* of a story is the feeling a person gets from reading it. One way an author will set the mood is by using certain words or phrases. What words or phrases does C.S. Lewis use to describe Charn? Do these words and phrases lead you to believe that Charn is a good place or a bad place?

2. What words or phrases would you use if you wanted to describe Charn as a good place?

Questions:

1. Describe the Wood between the Worlds.

2. How does Digory compare the Wood to the tunnel that connects the houses?

3. Before they set off exploring the other pools, what do Polly and Digory do to make sure they can find their way home again?

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Thinking About the Story:

9. How does satisfying their curiosity get the children into trouble in this section of reading?

10. *The Magician's Nephew* is written in past tense; events are told as if they have happened already. But when speaking of the Wood between the Worlds, C.S. Lewis occasionally switches to the present tense:

“What on earth’s gone wrong?” said Polly in a frightened voice; but not quite so frightened as you might expect, because it *is* hard to feel really frightened in that wood. The place *is* too peaceful. (italics added)

. . . they only got their feet wet and splashed their legs for the second time that morning (if it was a morning: it *seems to be* always the same time in the Wood between the Worlds). (italics added)

What does this change of verb tense mean to the story?

11. How do the faces of those in the Hall of Images change as Polly and Digory advance down the row of figures? If the first figures were the first rulers of Charn, and the last figures were the last rulers of Charn, what does this tell you about the history of Charn?

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Dig Deeper:

12. James 1:14, 15 says: “. . . but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” When Digory reads what is written on the pillar, he is tempted to ring the bell. What desire does he have that he didn't have before he read the words on the pillar?

13. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. These verses promise that when we are tempted, God will provide a way out. Think of a time when you felt tempted. How was a way out provided? (Optional discussion question: Is the way out of temptation always easy?)

14. Jadis calls herself, “the last Queen, but Queen of the World.” What did Jadis give up or sacrifice to become Queen of the World? Read Mark 8:34–36. In this passage Jesus says, “What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?” What does Jesus command in these verses?

Topics for Further Study:

In this section of the story we read that Charn's sun was huge, red, and cold. When the Queen hears that our world's sun is smaller, yellower, and warmer, she concludes that ours is a younger world.

Research what astronomers have discovered and theorized about stars. Write a short paper explaining the different kind of stars that have been discovered and the relationship between their sizes, colors, and ages. You may need to illustrate your report.