

This hobbit was a very well-to-do hobbit, and his name was Baggins. The Bagginses have lived in the neighbourhood of The Hill for time out of mind, and people considered them very respectable, not only because most of them were rich, but also because they never had any adventures or did anything unexpected: you could tell what a Baggins would say on any question without the bother of asking him. This is a story of how a Baggins had an adventure, and found himself doing and saying things altogether unexpected. He may have lost the neighbours' respect, but he gained – well, you will see whether he gained anything in the end.

The mother of our particular hobbit – what is a hobbit? I suppose hobbits need some description nowadays, since they have become rare and shy of the Big People, as they call us. They are (or were) a little people, about half our height, and smaller than the bearded dwarves. Hobbits have no beards. There is little or no magic about them, except the ordinary everyday sort which helps them to disappear quietly and quickly when large stupid folk like you and me come blundering along, making a noise like elephants which they can hear a mile off. They are inclined to be fat in the stomach; they dress in bright colours (chiefly green and yellow); wear no shoes, because their feet grow natural leathery soles and thick warm brown hair like the stuff on their heads (which is curly); have long clever brown fingers, good-natured faces, and laugh deep fruity laughs (especially after dinner, which they have twice a day when they can get it). Now you know enough to go on with.

As I was saying, the mother of this hobbit – Bilbo Baggins, that is – was the famous Belladonna Took, one of the three remarkable daughters of the Old Took, head of the hobbits who lived across The Water, the small river that ran at the foot of The Hill. It was often said (in other families) that long ago one of the Took ancestors must have taken a fairy wife. That was, of course, absurd, but certainly there was still something not entirely hobbitlike about them, and once in a while members of the Took-clan would go and have adventures. They discreetly disappeared, and the family hushed it up; but the fact remained that the Tookes were not as respectable as the Bagginses, though they were undoubtedly richer.

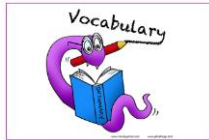


Do you predict that Bilbo Baggins will be more Took-like or Baggins-like in the story? Will he be a quiet and respectable hobbit like a Baggins, or seek adventure like a Took?



1- In the first paragraph, what do you think is meant by the phrase “for time out of mind”?

2- From reading the extract, we can infer that hobbits would prefer NOT to be seen by ‘Big People’. Which sentences in the text imply this?



1.
‘they dress in bright colours
(chiefly green and yellow)’

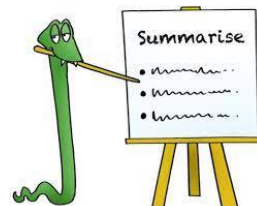
In this sentence, what is the meaning of ‘chiefly’ is it

- a) Importantly?
- b) Mainly?
- c) Unusually?
- d) Rarely?

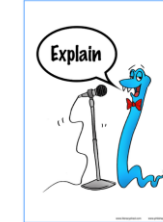
2.
‘though they were
undoubtedly richer.’

Can you think of another word
that could replace
‘undoubtedly’ in this sentence?

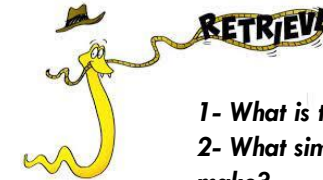
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Draw a picture of a hobbit. It doesn't have to be Bilbo, or even a Baggins. You could draw a picture of you as a hobbit, or even a family member (be kind!). Label your picture using information from the text. Try and include labels to show their personality as well as their unique appearance.



What explanation is offered by “other families” for the Took family’s un-hobbitlike behavior?



- 1- What is the difference between hobbits and dwarfs?
- 2- What simile is used to describe the noise ‘big people’ make?
- 3- What is unusual about a hobbit’s feet?
- 4- What is the name of Bilbo’s mother?
- 5- What is the name of Bilbo’s grandparent?



Draw a picture of a hobbit-fairy wedding. Try and show the married couple and their guests. Would all the guests be pleased about this marriage? If not, try and show that in your picture.