

The Chronicles of Narnia:

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

By C.S. Lewis

Dramatized by Adrian Mitchell

Composed by Shaun Davey

Recommended for Kindergarten and up

Synopsis

To escape the bombs of the Nazi Blitz on London, the Pevensie children, Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy, are sent to live with a professor in the country. Once there, Lucy, exploring an old wardrobe filled with fur coats, realizes that she has walked into another world—a world where it is always winter but never Christmas. This is Narnia. Confused and afraid, she stumbles across a kindly faun who shows her the way back to the wardrobe. When she returns to the manor, no one believes her story, until Edmund happens into Narnia himself.

Edmund finds himself faced with the White Witch, the woman who claims to be queen and who wants to kill the Pevensie children before they can fulfill the prophecy that says the thrones of Narnia are rightfully theirs. The Witch tricks Edmund into believing that she is good and that the creatures of her land are plotting against her. She convinces him to bring his siblings to Narnia so that she can crown them kings and queens.

Back in Narnia, Lucy takes her siblings to meet her friend, the faun, only to discover that the Witch has arrested him. Not ones to let a friend down, they decide to stay in Narnia long enough to save the faun. Edmund, profoundly sorry for his mistaken trust in the Witch, rejoins his brother and sisters in the fight against her. With the help of Aslan, the Lion King, and the good creatures of Narnia, they vanquish the Witch and her minions. Aslan crowns the children kings and queens of Narnia. Together they rule in peace and fairness for many years, until they happen upon the wardrobe again and step back into England—where time has not passed.

RESOURCE LIST

For Children

The Book of Three

Lloyd Alexander

The Secret Garden

Frances Hodgson Burnett

The Enchanted Castle

E. Nesbit

Bedknob and Broomstick

Mary Norton

Around the World in Eighty Days

Jules Verne

The Magic City

E. Nesbit

★ *Spotlight*

Over Sea, Under Stone

Susan Cooper

The three Drew children are excited about spending a holiday in Cornwall with their Great-Uncle Merry. But Great-Uncle Merry isn't quite what he seems, and when they discover an ancient map in the house, they find themselves in a dangerous battle between good and evil.

For Adults

Crafts From Your Favorite Fairy Tales

Kathy Ross

The Land of Narnia

Brian Sibley

The Lord of the Rings

J. R. R. Tolkien

The Neverending Story

Michael Ende

<http://geocities.com/raycrawley/ww11pt2>

<http://members.fortunecity.co.uk/naylander/mwindex.html>

★ *Spotlight*

Touch Magic: Fantasy, Faerie & Folklore in the Literature of Childhood

Jane Yolen

Jane Yolen is a well-known storyteller, poet, playwright, and the author of over 200 books for children and adults. In this collection of essays she explores the many aspects of fantasy literature and how it can be used to enrich children's lives.

Booklist prepared by J.T. Isch, Pierce County Library System

A DIFFERENT WORLD ALTOGETHER: THE STORY OF ONE CHILD'S EVACUATION DURING WWII

In The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe the adventures of the Pevensie children begin when they are evacuated from London during WWII, to escape the bombs of Nazi air raids. In reality, well over one million British children were evacuated from London during the war—and each of them had their own adventure. In the following excerpt, Geoff Geier tells his story of being taken from the inner city and moved to the village of Hebden Bridge:

I remember that morning in July 1944 as if it were only yesterday. I was just 5 years old and had gone to sleep in the cold and damp candle-lit [bomb] shelter in the back garden...During the night the air raid sirens had wailed and many bombs had dropped...The bombs had blown one or two of our windows in. Outside, the air was thick with smoke from the bombs that had dropped during the night. Houses were in flames and the sound of fire engines could be heard . . .



Some of London's children being evacuated to the countryside to keep them safe from German bombing raids during WWII. Photo from *An Illustrated History of World War II*. Crisis and Courage: Humanity on the Brink.

My mother told me that we would be meeting other children at school and would be going to the countryside for a picnic . . . With our gas masks slung over our shoulder and clutching a small bag of sugar sandwiches, we soon found ourselves at the school. . . . Each child was given a piece of paper with his or her name on it . . . Coaches (buses) began to arrive . . . I was told to climb aboard one of them, but my mother remained outside . . . The coach was soon packed with children and suddenly it started to move off. My mother was still outside waving good-bye. What was happening? Where were we going? Why was she crying? . . .

After a while, we arrived at a train station and thousands of other children had gathered at the same station, each with their own gas mask, bag of food and identification pinned to their coat...I must have fallen asleep because the next thing I can remember was seeing green fields with cows and sheep. I had never seen cows or sheep before, nor had I even seen green fields! I looked out of the window in wonderment as my "Farmyard Picture Book" seemed to come to life before me...

Suddenly the train stopped. One of the uniformed ladies started calling out children's names, instructing those called to step forward . . . My name was finally called and I went to the front. My world had fallen apart . . . I remember getting into a car, but I was so drained and tired that I just fell asleep.

I awoke in the morning in a strange room to the most unusual and pleasant sound of birds singing and the sight of sunbeams streaming through the clear window. I couldn't hear the fire engines or ambulances, nor the sounds of aircraft dog fighting which were so familiar to me . . .

I remember getting out of bed in this unfamiliar room and looking out of the window. There was a river with a rope bridge going across it, and there were trees everywhere—a different world altogether from the one I was used to...I can remember the sweet shops and having my first real bath with hot and cold running water.... I became attached to the two ladies who looked after me, as if they were my own family. Indeed I had the same feelings of sadness at having to leave my friends, my new family and beautiful Hebden Bridge when I finally went home as I had at the start of my evacuation.

For the complete story of Geoff Geier's evacuation, visit the Hebden Bridge website at <http://www.hebdenbridge.co.uk/features/geoff-geier.html>



ACTIVITY:

EALRs: Writing 1.1, 2.3

Pretend you are a child being evacuated from London during WWII. Make a diary, picture journal, or scrapbook describing your imaginary experiences. What new sights, sounds, and smells are around you? Are there many other children with you? Are you afraid, excited, or confused?

THE RETURN OF THE KINGS

At the beginning of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Narnia suffers under the rule of the wicked White Witch, hoping for the return of the true king, Aslan, the “Son of the Emperor over the Sea.” Aslan does return and helps bring to power the good monarchs: Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy, the “Sons of Adam and Daughters of Eve.” The desire for rulers who are, by virtue of blood descent, the legitimate rulers of their countries remains strong all over the world today.

Far from fading away, hereditary monarchy—leadership by a king, queen, or emperor who is a direct descendant of the previous leader—continues to be common. According to www.infoplease.com, monarchs are the heads of state in 43 countries. Their roles vary widely from country to country, however. The Emperor of Japan and the Queen of England (also the queen of 15 other nations) are laden with ceremonial duties and status but have no power, whereas the power of the King of Saudi Arabia is unquestioned and absolute.



Queen Elizabeth II of England being crowned in 1953. Today she is still the official head of state of 15 nations all over the world. Photo from *The Queen* by Ben Pimlott.

Leaders often pass on power and influence to their descendants even if they are not monarchs. Kim Jong Il, the “Dear Leader” of North Korea, is the son of Kim Il Sung, who was known as that country’s “Great Leader.” Megawati Sukarnoputri, the president of Indonesia, is the daughter of Sukarno, the first president of that country; and Bashar al-Assad, the ruler of Syria, is son of Hafez al-Assad, who ruled that country for over 30 years. Leaders all over the world derive their legitimacy and power by direct descent from a former ruler.

The U.S. has a strong tradition against monarchy. It was founded through a revolution against a king (George III of England), and against the idea that hereditary monarchy was the supreme form of government. George Washington was offered a crown, but refused to become a king, becoming instead the country’s first president. However, for the second time in U.S. history, the son of a former president leads the country: George W. Bush is the oldest son of former President George Herbert Walker Bush.

However, the hunger for monarchs remains strong. Democracy, which means rule by the people, requires all the people to take responsibility for the difficult decisions that every nation must make about war and peace, safety and freedom, wealth and poverty. It may be easier to let someone else decide these things; someone who, by their birth, seems destined for that role. In some cases, however, kings have been instrumental in bringing democracy to their lands. After Francisco Franco, the fascist dictator of Spain, died in 1975, King Juan Carlos helped to peacefully usher in a successful democratic government. King Norodom Sihanouk strives to play a similar role in Cambodia today.

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy come to rule in Narnia not because they descend from queens and kings, but because they descend from Adam and Eve. They are destined to face hard choices between good and evil, truth and lies, death and life because they are, like us, human.

ACTIVITY:



On a map of the world, mark all of the countries headed by monarchs with a flag or sticker bearing a royal symbol, such as a crown. Use a different symbol to mark the countries where the leader is a son or daughter of a former leader; or the countries that are democracies.



Costume Design

Below you can see Cathy Meacham Hunt's design for the White Witch's costume. On the form to the right you can design your own costume for the White Witch.



What colors do you think represent her character? Do you think she would dress like anyone you know?