

# **The Magician's Nephew**

by C.S. Lewis

## **A Reading Guide**

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## **Reading Questions**

The following reading questions will help you notice important aspects of your reading. The application questions will help you connect your reading to your own life.

### **Chapters 1-4**

#### *Chapter 1 - The Wrong Door*

1. Why is this an important story, according to the author?
2. How do Digory and Polly meet? What's wrong with Digory's mother?
3. How do Digory and Polly discover Uncle Andrew's study? How does he frighten the children?
4. How does he trick the children? How does Digory know his uncle is up to no good?

#### *Chapter 2 - Digory and His Uncle*

5. How is Uncle Andrew like Adam in the garden of Eden?
6. What does Digory say to his uncle that actually worries Uncle Andrew?

### *Chapter 3 – The Wood Between the Worlds*

7. What is the Wood between the Worlds like? How are the magic rings connected to the Wood?
8. When it comes to exploring the Wood, how is Polly like the yellow ring and Digory like the green ring?
9. What do the children notice about the color and smell of the soil in the Wood?

### **Chapters 5-7**

#### *Chapter 4 – The Bell and the Hammer*

10. How is the ruined city different from the Wood?
11. What is odd about Charn's sun? What is the only other thing in the sky?
12. How does Digory behave exactly like his Uncle Andrew in this chapter?

#### *Chapter 5 – The Deplorable Word*

13. What is Polly's first impression of Jadis? What is Digory's? How do we know right away that Jadis is evil?

14. How is Jadis like Uncle Andrew? How is she worse?

15. What is the Deplorable Word? How does Digory's opinion of her change?

16. What very wrong opinion of Uncle Andrew does Jadis form in this chapter? What does this opinion reveal about her?

*Chapter 6 - The Beginning of Uncle Andrew's Troubles*

17. What happens to the witch in the Wood between the Worlds? How does she get to London?

18. What does Jadis think of Uncle Andrew? How does Uncle Andrew respond to meeting a real magician?

19. What is wrong with the apology Digory gives Polly after Jadis leaves them by themselves?

20. What does Uncle Andrew dress up in his finest clothes?

*Chapter 7 - What Happened at the Front Door*

21. What happens when Aunt Letitia confronts Jadis, calls her a hussy, and tells her to get out of her house?
22. While waiting for Jadis to return, what does Digory overhear Aunt Letitia say that gives him great hope?
23. What is Digory's chief concern once Jadis returns?

**Chapters 8-11**

*Chapter 8 - The Fight at the Lamp-post*

24. What is the Cabby like? How do we know he is a good man?
25. How does Digory describe the music? What are the first two wonders the song causes?
26. What do Jadis and Uncle Andrew think of the music and the lion? How do the cabby and the children respond?

*Chapter 9 – The Founding of Narnia*

27. What connection does Polly see between the music and what was happening to the new world?
28. How do the children feel about the Lion?
29. What does the Lion do to two of almost every type of animal?
30. Who gives the animals the gift of speech and rationality (carefully reread the last few pages of this chapter for the answer)?
31. What are Aslan's first commands to the animals? How does he call them to participate in his work of creation?

*Chapter 10 – The First Joke and Other Matters*

32. According to Aslan, what two things come with speech? How does this statement connect with *The Horse and His Boy*?
33. What does Uncle Andrew hear when the Lion first begins singing? Why can Uncle Andrew hear nothing but roaring by the time the Lion finishes?

34. Lewis says, “what you see and hear depends a good deal on where you are standing: it also depends on what sort of person you are” (136). How does Uncle Andrew’s response to the animals’ hospitality demonstrate Lewis’s statement?

*Chapter 11 – Digory and His Uncle Are Both in Trouble*

35. Who become the first king and queen of Narnia? What are their qualifications?

36. When Digory asks Aslan for magic fruit, what does Aslan make him talk about instead? Why is this so important?

37. What does Aslan ask Polly? Why is this important?

**Chapters 12-15**

*Chapter 12 – Strawberry’s Adventures*

38. What does Aslan say to comfort Digory?

39. What does Aslan ask Digory to do? How does Digory respond?

40. What do Digory, Polly, and Fledge repeat to each other before going to sleep?

*Chapter 13 – An Unexpected Meeting*

41. What is the garden like? How does Lewis describe it?
42. How is Digory tempted when he smells the fruit? How does the fruit change Jadis's face?
43. In what two ways does Jadis tempt Digory? Which two of Digory's loves does Jadis put in conflict in her second temptation?
44. How does Digory escape Jadis's temptation? What does he think about his choice? What assures him that he made the right choice?

*Chapter 14 – The Planting of the Tree*

45. What does Aslan say to Digory when he returns with the silver apple?
46. How does Aslan bless Uncle Andrew?
47. Why is Jadis terrified of the silver apple tree? How did she receive her heart's desire *and* despair at the same moment?



48. What would have happened if Digory had stolen an apple for his mother? What does Digory learn about love here?

*Chapter 15 - The End of This Story and the Beginning of All the Others*

49. What happens to Digory, his mother, Polly, and Uncle Andrew?

50. How does Digory's mother begin resembling Venus?

51. What happens to the apple tree that grows from the core Digory planted?

**Application for *The Silver Chair***

Reread the Venus section of Lewis's poem "The Planets". Then answer these questions.

*from "The Planets":*

In the third region  
VENUS voyages...but my voice falters;  
Rude rime-making wrongs her beauty,  
Whose breasts and brow, and her breath's sweetness 30  
Bewitch the worlds. Wide-spread the reign  
Of her secret sceptre, in the sea's caverns,  
In grass growing, and grain bursting,  
Flower unfolding, and flesh longing,  
And shower falling sharp in April. 35  
The metal copper in the mine reddens  
With muffled brightness, like muted gold,  
By her fingers form'd.

1. How does Lewis use this description of Venus to create the atmosphere of *The Magician's Nephew*?
2. What does Lewis teach us about Christ in this novel? How does he use the symbolism, attributes, and influences of Venus to teach these things?
3. What are the two most important things you learned from reading this book? What must you do or think differently, now that you've read it?