

## Letter From the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the committee set in the rich and tumultuous world of Middle-earth during the critical events depicted in *The Hobbit* and the *Lord of the Rings* movies.

As representatives of the diverse races inhabiting this realm—Men, Elves, Dwarves, Orcs and others—you are convened to address the pressing issues arising from recent developments.

Delegates are expected to engage in thorough research of their assigned factions, as well as understand their histories, cultures, and perspectives. Diplomatic negotiation, strategic thinking, and collaborative problem-solving will be essential. While the setting is fictional, the skills and approaches employed mirror real-world international relations and conflict resolution.

We expect you to research your character and know their positions well. Be ready to debate on their behalf.

There are three Hobbit movies: *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*, *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*, and *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*. Our debate for Topic 1 will take place half way through the third movie. In addition, there are three Lord of the Rings movies: *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, and *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*. Our debate for Topic 2 will take place after the third movie. Your knowledge will be aided by watching these movies, which is, therefore, strongly recommended.

We look forward to your innovative solutions and spirited debates as we navigate these complex scenarios together.

Yours sincerely,  
Caroline & Ella

Caroline Schow: [schcm-26@rhodes.edu](mailto:schcm-26@rhodes.edu)

Ella Coleman: [coler-26@rhodes.edu](mailto:coler-26@rhodes.edu)

## Key Terms (For Topics 1 & 2)

**Bard the Bowman:** A key figure from Lake-town who played a pivotal role in the events surrounding Erebor.

**Dwarves:** A race known for their craftsmanship and mining skills, with a strong cultural connection to Erebor.

**Elves:** An intelligent race that typically resides in the forests of Middle-earth in seclusion. They are traditionally in dispute with dwarves.

**Erebor (Lonely Mountain):** A significant Dwarven kingdom and the central location of the treasure hoard contested in the debate.

**Fellowship of the Ring:** A group of nine formed to help Frodo Baggins destroy the One Ring in the fires of Mount Doom.

**Free Peoples:** The various races in Middle-earth including Elves, Men, Dwarves, and Hobbits, among others, united in the fight against Sauron.

**High Elves:** The most ancient and noble group of Elves in Middle-earth, often associated with wisdom, beauty, and immortality.

**Hobbits:** Diminutive beings who prefer peaceful, rural lives in the Shire, with a significant role in the broader events of Middle-earth.

**Lake-town (Esgaroth):** A settlement of Men situated on the Long Lake, south of Erebor, whose inhabitants have a legitimate claim to a portion of the treasure.

**Mirkwood:** A vast forest in Middle-earth, home to the Wood Elves and a significant location in the narrative.

**Middle-earth:** The fictional setting of The Hobbit, encompassing various regions inhabited by different races, including Elves, Dwarves, Men, and Hobbits.

**Men:** The most diverse and ambitious race in Middle-earth, including the inhabitants of Lake-town.

**Mount Doom:** A volcano located in the heart of Mordor, where the One Ring was forged by Sauron. Later, it is destroyed there by Frodo Baggins and Samwise Gamgee in the final act of the War of the Ring.

**One Ring:** A powerful and dangerous artifact created by Sauron to control all other Rings of Power, with the ability to corrupt the minds of those who wear the lesser rings, including the bearer of the One Ring itself.

**Orcs:** A race of corrupted creatures bred by dark powers, particularly Sauron, serving as the primary soldiers of evil in Middle-earth.

**Smaug:** The dragon who occupied Erebor, hoarding its treasure and causing the displacement of the Dwarves.

**Sauron:** The Dark Lord whose resurgence poses a looming threat to Middle-earth, influencing the political dynamics of the region.

**Shire:** A peaceful, rural region in Middle-earth, inhabited primarily by Hobbits, and the home of Frodo Baggins, Samwise Gamgee, and Bilbo Baggins.

**Thorin Oakenshield:** The Dwarven leader who led the quest to reclaim Erebor and its treasure.

**War of the Last Alliance:** A major conflict at the end of the Second Age, in which the Last Alliance of Elves and Men fought Sauron in a desperate bid to defeat him. It ended with Sauron's temporary defeat and the loss of the One Ring.

**War of the Ring:** The climactic conflict in the Third Age, where the Free Peoples of Middle-earth unite to overthrow Sauron's tyranny. The One Ring is destroyed and Sauron falls for good.

**Wood Elves:** Elves residing in Mirkwood Forest, led by Thranduil, who have their own interests in the treasure of Erebor.

# **Topic 1: *The Hobbit***

Caroline Schow

## Committee Introduction and Agenda

Middle-earth, the setting of "The Hobbit," is a diverse realm inhabited by various races, including Elves, Dwarves, Men, and Hobbits. The Elves, known for their immortality and deep connection to nature, have seen their influence wane over time. Dwarves are skilled craftsmen and miners who dwell in mountainous regions, while Men are the most diverse and ambitious race. Hobbits, diminutive beings who prefer peaceful, rural lives, reside in the Shire. The geography of Middle-earth is vast and varied, featuring regions like the Misty Mountains, Mirkwood Forest, and Erebor, also known as the Lonely Mountain.

In this committee, delegates will assume the roles of key figures involved in the events surrounding Erebor. Your primary objective is to navigate the complex political landscape, addressing the competing claims over the mountain's treasure and territory. This will involve strategic negotiations, forming alliances, and making decisions that balance the interests of your faction with the broader stability of Middle-earth.

Delegates will engage in discussions to resolve disputes among the Dwarves, Men, Elves, and other parties vying for control over Erebor's riches. This includes determining the rightful ownership of the treasure hoard, establishing trade agreements, and considering the future governance of the mountain. The committee will also address external threats, such as the looming presence of Sauron and his forces, and decide on collective defense strategies.

Throughout the proceedings, delegates are expected to uphold the principles of diplomacy and cooperation, striving to achieve a resolution that ensures peace and prosperity for all inhabitants of Middle-earth. Your decisions will have lasting implications, shaping the future of Erebor and the relationships among the Free Peoples. Your actions will be scrutinized by those who seek to claim the mountain's riches and by those who wish to prevent further bloodshed. The path you choose will shape the legacy of Erebor and the future of Middle-earth. The success of this committee hinges on your ability to collaborate, negotiate effectively, and make decisions that reflect the diverse interests and cultures represented.

## Historical Background

Erebor stands as a symbol of immense wealth and power in Middle-earth. Its treasure hoard, amassed over centuries, includes gold, jewels, and artifacts of unparalleled value. The mountain's strategic location and its riches have long been coveted by various factions, leading to conflicts that have shaped the history of the region.

In the Third Age, Erebor was the thriving kingdom of the Dwarves under King Thrain I. The Dwarves' prosperity attracted the attention of Smaug, a formidable dragon who, in the year 2770 of the Third Age, invaded Erebor, slaying many of its inhabitants and forcing the survivors into exile. Smaug's occupation of the mountain and its treasure hoard remained unchallenged for over a century, during which the surrounding lands suffered under his tyranny. In the year 2941 of the Third Age, Thorin Oakenshield, heir to the throne of Erebor, embarks on a quest to reclaim his homeland and its treasure.

This is where our story and debate begin. It all starts with Bilbo Baggins, a reserved Hobbit from the Shire. His tranquil life is disrupted when the wizard Gandalf the Grey and a company of thirteen Dwarves, led by Thorin Oakenshield, enlist him for a quest to reclaim their homeland from Smaug. Initially hesitant, Bilbo joins the expedition, embarking on a journey that leads them through treacherous terrains inhabited by Trolls, Goblins, and Orcs. Along the way, Bilbo encounters Gollum and inadvertently acquires a mysterious ring that grants him invisibility.

Continuing their journey, the company faces numerous challenges, including hostile Wood-elves, giant spiders in Mirkwood Forest, and the menacing Orcs led by Azog the Defiler. The Mirkwood Elves play a significant role in the narrative, particularly when they capture Thorin Oakenshield and his company, leading to their imprisonment in the Elvenking's halls. They escape and receive assistance from Bard, from Lake-town, who becomes an essential ally. Lake-town takes in Thorin and his company and Thorin promises a portion of Erebor's treasure to the town as thanks.

Upon reaching the Lonely Mountain, Bilbo confronts Smaug. Smaug, enraged by the intrusion of Thorin Oakenshield and his company into the Lonely Mountain, unleashes his fiery wrath upon the defenseless inhabitants of Lake-town. The town's wooden structures are swiftly engulfed in flames, leading to chaos and despair among its people.

In this dire moment, Bard the Bowman utilizes his exceptional archery skills and with a precise shot, he strikes the dragon's vulnerable spot, resulting in Smaug's dramatic demise over the town's ruins.

These key events set the stage for an impending conflict. Where alliances are tested, and the fate of Middle-earth hangs in the balance.

## Current State of Affairs

With Smaug defeated, the vast treasure hoard within the Lonely Mountain becomes the focal point of contention. Thorin Oakenshield, having reclaimed his ancestral homeland, succumbs to "dragon-sickness," a deep-seated greed and paranoia. He obsessively searches for the Arkenstone, a symbol of his rightful rule, unaware that Bilbo Baggins has secretly taken it. Thorin's growing obsession strains his relationships, leading him to fortify the mountain and refuse to share the treasure.

Meanwhile, the aftermath of Smaug's attack leaves the survivors of Lake-town in desperate need. Led by Bard, they seek refuge near the Lonely Mountain, hoping for assistance from its newfound wealth to rebuild their lives. Their plight garners the attention of Thranduil, the Elvenking of Mirkwood, who arrives with his army, not only to aid the people of Lake-town but also to claim treasures he believes are rightfully his.

As tensions escalate, an army of Dwarves from the Iron Hills, led by Thorin's cousin, Dáin Ironfoot, marches towards the mountain to support Thorin. The convergence of these forces sets the stage for a potential clash among Dwarves, Elves, and Men. However, the looming threat of a massive Orc army, dispatched by the dark lord Sauron, forces these factions to reconsider their enmities. Gandalf the Grey, having uncovered Sauron's plans, urges unity against this common enemy.

The reclamation of Erebor's treasure has far-reaching implications for the political landscape of Middle-earth. The Dwarves, under Thorin's leadership, assert their claim to the mountain and its riches. The Men of Lake-town, led by Bard the Bowman, seek a portion of the treasure to rebuild their town, which was destroyed by Smaug's wrath. The Elves of Mirkwood, under King Thranduil, also lay claim to a share, citing historical ties and the need to restore their realm. These competing claims set the stage for the Battle of the Five Armies, where Dwarves, Men, Elves, Orcs, and Wargs vie for control over Erebor's legacy.

Our debate starts here. This epic confrontation not only determines the fate of the treasure but also the future of Middle-earth itself. More information will be revealed as the delegates debate the next steps for Middle-earth.



## Further Considerations

In the context of the debate over Erebor's treasure, delegates should consider the following key points:

- How will the distribution of Erebor's wealth affect the economies of the various factions? Consider the potential for economic growth or instability resulting from the influx of gold and treasure into Middle-earth.
- What justifications do each of the factions have for claiming a portion of the treasure? How do historical agreements, such as Thorin's promise to Bard and the people of Lake-town, influence these claims?
- Who will assume control over Erebor? What form of governance will best serve the interests of the Free Peoples and ensure the mountain's prosperity?
- Given the looming threat of Sauron, how can the Free Peoples unite to defend Erebor and Middle-earth? What military alliances or strategies should be considered?
- How can internal conflicts over the treasure be resolved to prevent civil unrest or potential civil war?
- How do past conflicts and grievances influence current negotiations? What steps can be taken to heal old wounds and build trust among the factions?
- How do the common people of each faction view the distribution of the treasure? What measures can be taken to ensure that the distribution is perceived as fair and just?

By carefully considering these aspects, delegates can engage in a comprehensive and nuanced debate, striving to achieve a resolution that balances the diverse interests of Middle-earth's inhabitants and promotes lasting peace and prosperity.

## Delegates

These people and groups will come together to debate the fate of Middle-earth. Some individuals will argue their own priorities alone while others speak for a larger group as a whole.

**Bilbo Baggins**

**Thorin Oakenshield**

**Balin** representing the other dwarves in his company

**Gandalf**

**Galadriel**

**Elrond**

**Legolas**

**Tauriel**

**King Thranduil** representing the Wood Elves

**Dáin** representing the Dwarves of the Iron Hills

**Azog** the defiler

**Bolg** representing the Orcs

**Bard** representing the people of Laketown

## Sources

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## Videos

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[The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey in Minutes | Recap](#)[www.youtube.com › watch](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4WXre3N_UC0)

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## **Topic 2: *Lord of the Rings***

Ella Coleman

## Committee Introduction and Agenda

Middle-earth, the setting of “The Lord of the Rings,” has long been plagued by the struggle between light and darkness. Though many races of Middle-earth, such as Elves, Dwarves, Men, and Hobbits, have sought peace for Middle-earth and its beings, forces of evil have continuously threatened to undo the land’s progress. The Orcs, creatures controlled by Sauron as weapons of war, are finally free from the will of their dark master. However, the Orcs’ sudden freedom has sparked a *Rebellion of the Orcs*: a movement that demands a place for Orcs in Middle-earth—which they have never had before.

In this committee, delegates will assume the roles of key figures from various races in Middle-earth. Some may see the Orcs as a threat to be crushed, while others may see an opportunity for reconciliation and reform. Your main objective is to navigate this politically complex crisis by balancing Orcs’ demands for freedom with the safety and stability of Middle-earth and its inhabitants. To achieve such an objective, delegates must defend the interests of their own people, form alliances, exercise strategic negotiation, and make decisions that build a lasting peace for all races.

Delegates will debate potential solutions to the controversial question of the Orcs’ future in Middle-earth, including how Orcs might atone for past atrocities and integrate into society, while still considering external threats that remain.

It is up to delegates whether to use force or diplomacy to maintain peace. The success of the committee depends on delegates’ ability to balance justice with the diverse priorities of the Free Peoples. Your decisions will have consequences for the fate of the Orcs and the relationships among all of the races, influencing the direction of Middle-earth in the post-Sauron era.

Men, Elves, Dwarves, Hobbits, and Orcs each have different (and often conflicting) characteristics and histories. How can these differing viewpoints be reconciled to reach a peaceful resolution?

## Historical Background

Central to much of Middle Earth's history has been the rise of dark powers, particularly the Dark Lord Sauron. Sauron sought to dominate Middle-earth through the creation of the One Ring, an artifact that allowed him to control the minds of others and, thus, subjugate the Free Peoples. Another creation of Sauron's were the Orcs.

The Orcs were originally Elves who were corrupted into violent creatures and used as foot soldiers in Sauron's conquests. They served as a militia for millennia, fighting the wars and enforcing the will of Sauron across Middle-earth. Some of Middle-earth's most calamitous wars, such as the wars against Men and Elves during the Second and Third Ages, were carried through at the hands of Orcs. In these wars, Orcs slaughtered innocent civilians, raided villages, and perpetuated an endless cycle of destruction.

At the end of the Second Age, Men and Elves united forces to destroy Sauron's power in the *War of the Last Alliance*. Sauron was ultimately defeated, and his spirit was dispersed when Ilidur cut the One Ring from his hand. However, this victory was short-lived. The One Ring was lost for two-and-a-half millennia following Ilidur's death. During the third age, the ring was possessed by several ring bearers, eventually falling into the hands of Frodo Baggins. Sauron's spirit endured through the ring, corrupting those in its presence. Through this, Sauron's spirit rose again in the Third Age to rebuild his empire—including his army of Orcs.

The Orcs fought in numerous battles of the Third Age: for example, the wars against Gondor, Rohan, and the Elves. They were Sauron's primary soldiers in the final *War of the Ring*, where they engaged in sieges and attacks at the Battle of Helm's Deep, the Siege of Minas Tirith, and the skirmishes at Mount Doom. The war ended when Frodo Baggins, aided by the Fellowship of the Ring, destroyed the One Ring by casting it into the fires of Mount Doom. The destruction of the One Ring finally obliterated Sauron's spirit, also ceasing his dominion over Middle-earth.

With Sauron's fall, the power that controlled the Orcs for ages disappeared. Orcs had long been mindless creatures bred for violence, and they were now left without a guiding force. Faced with newfound freedom, the Orcs scattered. Some fled and formed



colonies, seeking to build their own societies. Others were embittered by their years of servitude and plotted for revenge against those who fought against Souran.

These events set the stage for the *Rebellion of the Orcs*, to which the Free Peoples are divided on how to respond to.



A Map of Middle-earth

## Current State of Affairs

After the *War of the Ring*, Middle-earth is in a period of tenuous peace, but the remnants of Sauron's legions—particularly the Orcs—remain a threat. While vengeful Orcs, such as Commander Shagrat, have not yet publicly declared aggression, rumors suggest that he is assembling an army of Orcs. The reliability of such information remains uncertain. In contrast, Commander Gorbag is more likely to negotiate with the Free Peoples, representing Orcs who hope for a peaceful and stable existence.

Gondor, under Aragorn's kingship, is rebuilding after its last defense against Sauron, but internal instability and the threat of Orcs complicate efforts. Though Faramir is concerned about the stability of Gondor, Boromir leans toward more militaristic measures than his brother. Rohan, recovering from the war, has limited resources. In Rohan, Éowyn is wary of further conflict but ready to protect her people if threatened.

The dwindling elves are represented by Galadriel and Legolas, as most leave for the Undying Lands. Galadriel is focused on preserving the Elves' wisdom. Legolas supports defending Middle-earth. But, both know that the elves' presence and resources are fading. Gimli leads the Dwarves. He is protective of the Dwarven realms and may take a more aggressive stance if the Orc rebellion jeopardizes their trade or lands.

Frodo represents the Shire, which is untouched by war. Frodo and Sam advocate for peace and protecting their homeland from Orc conflict.

Gandolf plays a crucial role in guiding the Free Peoples toward a lasting peace. With his understanding of the Orcs, he sees potential for dialogue with some—like Gorbag. Saruman, however, may seek to regain influence with the Orc factions he once controlled. Gollum, tainted by greed and obsession, might also exploit the chaos and ally with vengeful Orcs like Shagrat. Nevertheless, Gollum's stance remains uncertain, shaped by his internal struggle.

Fortunately, more information will be revealed as the delegates engage in deeper conversations with each other. It is now up to the delegates to determine how Middle-Earth must either embrace or confront an old enemy: the Orcs.



## Further Considerations

In the context of the debate over the *Rebellion of the Orcs*, delegates should consider the following questions and key points:

- Should Orcs remain viewed as dangerous enemies to eradicate, considering their historical relations with your race?
- What harm has come to your people at the hands of the Orcs, and is it a justification for barring the Orcs from society/using force against them?
- Should Orcs be held accountable for the destruction under Sauron? If so, how and to what degree?
- What security measures should the Free Peoples take to protect Middle-earth from the Orc Rebellion?
- Can the Orcs be trusted to coexist peacefully alongside the Free Peoples? Explore what conditions would be necessary for reconciliation and earning the Free Peoples' trust.
- Should Orcs be integrated into Middle-earth society or allowed to form a new one? Recall that the Orcs are fragmented, with some wanting revenge and others wanting to form a stable society. Also, consider *where* they would reside if granted autonomy.
- What form of governance should Orcs have? Can a unified leadership be trusted, or will they continue to splinter into factions? What kind of oversight needs to be provided to this emerging form of government by the Free Peoples?
- What is the economic future for Middle-earth after Sauron, and how would a potential society of Orcs fit into it? Could trade agreements benefit post-war reconstruction and serve as a diplomatic tool? What are the possible drawbacks?
- How should factions defend against external threats (e.g., Saruman's forces, uprisings from villainous factions) apart from the Orc rebellion? Should they cooperate with Orcs for mutual protection? Why or why not?

- More generally, how can the Free Peoples and Orcs work together in the future, and for what causes (e.g., security, trade, governance)?

By carefully considering these aspects, delegates can engage in a debate that aims to balance Middle-earth's varied interests and promote lasting peace and prosperity.

## Delegates

These people and groups will come together to debate the fate of Middle-earth. Some individuals will argue their own priorities alone while others speak for a larger group as a whole.

**Aragorn** representing the Kingdom of Gondor

**Boromir**

**Éowyn** representing the Kingdom of Rohan

**Faramir**

**Frodo** representing the Hobbits

**Galadriel** representing the High Elves

**Gimli** representing the dwarves

**Gollum**

**Gorbag** representing the Orcs in favor of peace

**Legolas** representing the Wood Elves

**Samwise**

**Shagrat** representing the Orcs in favor of vengeance

## Sources

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Boromir

Éowyn

Faramir

Fellowship of the Ring (Group)

Free Peoples

Frodo Baggins

Galadriel

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Legolas

Orcs

One Ring

Samwise Gamgee

Sauron

Shagrat

*Lord of the Rings* Film Trilogy

Third Age

War of the Last Alliance

Middle-earth Wars and Battles

Factions