

Press Release



The Lord of the Rings: 50th Anniversary Edition

Written by J.R.R. Tolkien

- [About the Book](#)
- [Special Event Suggestions](#)

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CELEBRATES FIFTY YEARS OF *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*

About the Book

October 21, 2004, marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first U.S. publication of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, the first part of J.R.R. Tolkien's epic *The Lord of the Rings*. It has been called the greatest book of the twentieth century, an unforgettable adventure story that has captivated nearly 100 million American readers since it was first published in 1954, and continues to find new readers every day. (More than 25 million Tolkien books have been sold in the United States alone over the past three years.)

To commemorate this historic occasion, Houghton Mifflin, Tolkien's official U.S. publisher for over sixty years, will publish a beautiful new one-volume collector's edition befitting the stature of this crown jewel of our list. This volume is the finest we've ever produced, featuring a text fully corrected by Douglas A. Anderson, under the supervision of Christopher Tolkien, to meet the author's exacting wishes, two large-format fold-out maps, and exceptionally elegant packaging.

Bookstores across the country will host anniversary celebrations on October 21, and renowned Tolkien illustrators Alan Lee and Ted Nasmith will tour nationwide this fall. Nasmith is the illustrator of Tolkien's best-selling book *The Silmarillion*, which tells the oldest tales of Middle-earth and foreshadows the conflict in *The Lord of the Rings*. Houghton Mifflin will be publishing a major new edition of *The Silmarillion*, featuring twenty-six new paintings by Nasmith, in November.

This holiday season fans will want to complete their Tolkien collections with a new edition of the classic *Letters from Father Christmas* and lavish illustrated books from the blockbuster

film trilogy: *The Lord of the Rings: The Complete Visual Companion* and *The Best of the Art of The Lord of the Rings*.

Special Event Suggestions

GREAT EVENT DATES:

- Bilbo's and Frodo's Birthdays, **September 22**
- Fiftieth Anniversary of *The Lord of the Rings'* publication, **October 21, 2004**
- J.R.R. Tolkien's Birthday, **January 3**

EVENT ACTIVITIES:

TRIVIA GAMES

An excellent icebreaker to involve all different levels of knowledge and enthusiasm. Ask participants to write their answers on paper and then announce the correct answer; or run the competition like a game of *Jeopardy*.

READING GROUPS

Read one volume each month — October through December.

The Lord of the Rings Reader's Guides (0-618-16815-X / pack of 5 / no charge)

MOVIE NIGHT

Three blockbuster films, one 9-hour film marathon spectacular! Consider screening a movie each night of the weekend, building up to Tolkien's birthday on Monday, January 3.

TEACHERS' NIGHTS

Teachers' Guide for *The Lord of the Rings* (0-618-12011-4 / pack of 5 / no charge)

Teachers' Guide for *The Hobbit* (0-618-16816-8 / pack of 5 / no charge)

COSTUME CONTEST

Hobbits, Wizards, Orcs — a bit of makeup and fake fur will get you far. Masks can be made in-store or contestants can arrive already costumed and ready to compete in age- or subject-based categories.

MARATHON READINGS

The Lord of the Rings is a loooooong book, but it's fun to act it out, read different parts, sing the songs, or take a turn in front of the mike. You might award prizes for "Most Dramatic Reading," etc., to break up the event.

JURIED ART SHOW

Like the costume contest, entries categorized by age or subject (characters, place) invite greater participation.

MAPS

Making maps is also a great way to involve different ages because participants can either make original drawings or color in copies of the designs in the book.