

[Sample]

*The Magician's Nephew* (1955)

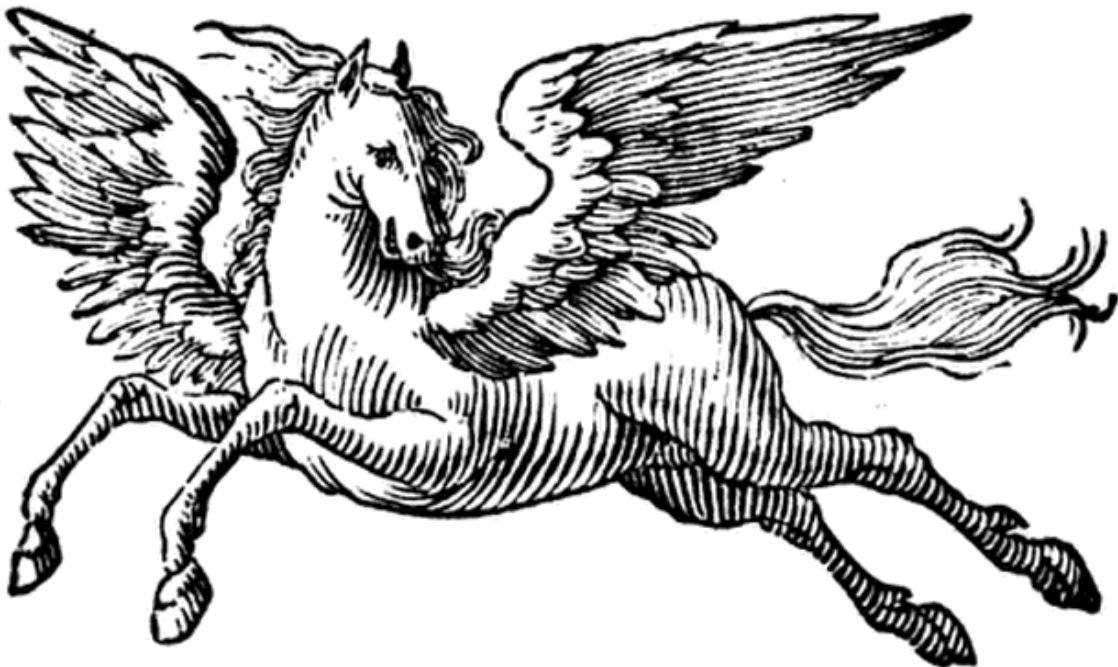
by C. S. Lewis (1898-1963)

Young Reader's Guide with Writing Activities and Quiz  
Questions

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## Note to Parents

In its full version (this is only a sample), this guide contains concise summaries of the most important aspects of *The Magician's Nephew*: plot, characters, themes and context. It will be used to enrich and consolidate students' knowledge of the text during the course.

You will get the best value out of this guide if you print it out in booklet form so that your child can refer to it easily in class.

This guide is not, of course, a substitute for reading the novel itself. Chapters will be set for reading between classes. Your child can do this either by reading on their own, by listening to you read the novel, or by listening to an audiobook. I recommend the unabridged audiobook read by Kenneth Branagh, which you can find on Audible here:

<https://www.audible.co.uk/pd/The-Magicians-Nephew-The-Chronicles-of-Narnia-Book-6-Audiobook/B004EEWWZ4> (UK)

<https://www.audible.com/pd/The-Magicians-Nephew-Audiobook/B002V0JTCW> (USA)

There are writing activities and quiz questions at the back of the guide which will be used at regular intervals during the course. You could also use the quiz questions with your child if you wish to help them review and embed their knowledge more securely.

## **Plot Summary**

### **Chapter One: The Wrong Door**

Polly and Digory live next door to each other in 1900 London. Digory has come to live in London because his father is away in India and his mother is very ill. They are living with his unmarried uncle and aunt. His uncle, Andrew, is a very peculiar old man who spends large amounts of time in his study in the attic doing mysterious things. Polly knows of a passage which allows you to crawl along the terrace of houses in which they both live, and enter any one of them through the attic. They decide to explore along the passage and get into a house which is empty, but they misjudge the distance and end up in Uncle Andrew's study. Uncle Andrew will not let them out, but instead, lures Polly into touching a yellow ring, which causes her to disappear instantly.

## **Context**

### **C. S. Lewis and Digory**

The novel's hero, Digory, reflects aspects of C. S. Lewis' own life. The novel is set at the time when Lewis was a boy himself, so the descriptions of Digory's life in 1900 are based upon his own experience. Also, C. S. Lewis lost his own mother when he was a boy, which is something that Digory is facing as the novel begins.

## Writing Activities

### Chapter One: The Wrong Door

#### Extract: Polly Meets Digory

*When Polly meets Digory for the first time, he is not in the best of moods.*

The face of the strange boy was very grubby. It could hardly have been grubbier if he had first rubbed his hands in the earth, and then had a good cry, and then dried his face with his hands. As a matter of fact, this was very nearly what he had been doing.

"Hullo," said Polly.

"Hullo," said the boy. "What's your name?"

"Polly," said Polly. "What's yours?"

"Digory," said the boy.

"I say, what a funny name!" said Polly.

"It isn't half so funny as Polly," said Digory.

"Yes it is," said Polly.

"No, it isn't," said Digory.

"At any rate I do wash my face," said Polly. "Which is what you need to do; especially after——" and then she stopped. She had been going to say "After you've been blubbing," but she thought that wouldn't be polite.

**"All right, I have then," said Digory in a much louder voice, like a boy who was so miserable that he didn't care who knew he had been crying. "And so would you," he went on, "if you'd lived all your life in the country and had a pony, and a river at the bottom of the garden, and then been brought to live in a beastly Hole like this."**

"London isn't a Hole," said Polly indignantly. But the boy was **too wound up to take any notice of her**, and he went on—

"And if your father was away in India—and you had to come and live with an Aunt and an **Uncle who's mad (how would you like that?)—and if the reason was that they were looking after your Mother—and if your Mother was ill and was going to—going to—die."**

Then his face went the wrong sort of shape as it does if you're trying to keep back your tears.

"I didn't know. I'm sorry," said Polly humbly.

<b>Starting Sentence</b>	<b>Vocabulary</b>
In the novel's opening scene, Lewis creates sympathy for Digory.	misery, suffering, alienation, pause, control

## Quiz Questions

### Plot

1. **Chapter One: The W D**
2. Why has Digory come to live with his uncle and aunt in London?
3. What exploration do Polly and Digory decide to make?
4. What happens to Polly at the end of Chapter One?