

# AN EPIC ADVENTURE

In *The Hobbit*, J.R.R. Tolkien tells the story of a danger-filled quest to recover a lost kingdom and its treasures. His story follows a pattern we can find in ancient epics and folktales, and many of the characters in his story fit the pattern of characters from these old stories as well. They are archetypal (ark-i-type-al) characters, which means they play roles that have been part of epic adventure stories since the dawn of time.

**PART 1** Read these descriptions of some archetypal characters. Then match each archetype to one of the main characters from *The Hobbit*, listing one or two attributes of the character that explain why he fits that archetype.

## THE ARCHETYPES

- |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>a. <b>The Questing Hero</b><br/>On a mission to obtain some goal, he must overcome the obstacles that stand in his way.</p> | <p>b. <b>The Reluctant Hero</b><br/>Called to perform great deeds, he discovers that he possesses powers he never suspected.</p> | <p>c. <b>The Mentor</b><br/>Old and wise, he guides the hero with his knowledge and often protects him with magical powers.</p> | <p>d. <b>The Monster</b><br/>A destructive force that threatens civilization, he presents the hero with his ultimate test.</p> |
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## THE CHARACTERS



\_\_\_ Bilbo Baggins



\_\_\_ Gandalf



\_\_\_ Smaug



\_\_\_ Thorin Oakenshield

## ATTRIBUTES

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**PART 2** Can you think of characters from other stories that fit these same archetypes? They might be characters from literature, movies, comic books, or even video games. Use the back of this page to list some archetypal characters from other stories you know. Then share your ideas in class.

**PART 3** Now use your imagination to create an archetypal character for your own epic adventure story. Base your character on one of the archetypes described above. Give your character a name and, on the back of this sheet, describe in a few sentences how the character comes into your story and the role he or she plays in the adventure. Be sure to include attributes for your character that fit the archetype.



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