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Prestwick House
Literature
Teaching Unit
Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



Lost Horizon

by James Hilton

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms



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Lost Horizon

Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. develop critical thinking skills by evaluating the relevance of Hilton's utopia to our present reality.
2. write an essay which compares, point by point, Shangri-La to the student's own "vision" of an ideal world.
3. relate the imagery used in the novel to Wordsworth's poem "The Prelude" (Book VI, lines 561 – 615 Book XIV, lines 11 – 65).
4. explain how the novel *Lost Horizon* is an experience of the imagination.
5. discuss the two functions of the novel's Prologue:
 - To arouse the reader's interest and sense of mystery.
 - To establish reader credibility by creating a distance between the reader and the story.
6. describe and illustrate Hilton's method of characterization, which develops characters by showing and contrasting their reactions to events.
7. point out how each character's motivation is consistent throughout the novel with the initial traits, attitudes, and values of each.
8. discuss the following themes:
 - Because tension arises in our society from a tendency to go to excesses, our goal should be to strive for moderation in all things.
 - We are in such a hurry that we have no time to "live."
 - If we can see success in terms of quality, not quantity, each person can achieve a personal ideal and strive for a personal goal.
9. discuss the pros and cons of the following assertions: "The danger implicit in escaping to a utopia is that one gives up a personal responsibility for personal happiness and a considerable degree of personal freedom since, by definition, a utopian society involves giving up personal freedom for a common good."

The Prologue

1. Identify the following:

A. Wyland

B. Rutherford

C. Sanders

D. "I"

E. "Glory" Conway

2. What brings Wyland, Rutherford, and the neurologist together?

Chapter 1

1. What is the point of view in this chapter?

2. What is the situation in Baskul?

3. Why do the four Westerners believe that they have been kidnapped?

4. Describe the reaction of each of the four passengers to the situation.

5. Characterize Conway and Mallinson.

6. What is the cause of Conway's present fatigue? What, specifically, he faced?

7. According to Baldassare Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, a true gentleman must preserve his composure and self-control under all circumstances and behave with unaffected nonchalance and effortless dignity. In what ways is Conway a "true gentleman"?

Chapter 7

1. What is the history of the lamasery?

2. Describe Father Perrault. How is Conway similar to him?

3. Where does the philosophy of moderation come from?

4. Who was Henschell?

5. Why is Lost Horizon considered “escape literature”?

6. Father Perrault is still alive. Describe your reaction to this news.
