Analysis of major characters chapter

In this chapter you will give your analysis of the major characters in your story. If your story has only 1 or two major characters, you should write a lot about those two. If there are many characters that play an important role in your story, write as much as is needed (usually 3-5 sentences) to analyze the charater—what are their strengths, weaknesses? Why are they an important character? What distinguishes them from the other characters? You should list your characters in order from most major characters to “less” major (the main character should be first). These should be your OWN words and your OWN analysis.

**Bilbo**

The protagonist and title character of The Hobbit, Bilbo is by far the novel’s most important figure. Bilbo’s thoughts, feelings, and actions form the focus of the novel and shape its plot. Bilbo’s central role is underscored by his appeal—he is not only the most important but also the most likable and honorable character. Even as the other participants in his quest become corrupted by greed, Bilbo maintains his common sense, courage, and eagerness to please.

**Gandalf**

Though his history and character are more fully explored in The Lord of the Rings and The Silmarillion, Gandalf remains a looming mystery in The Hobbit, a constant reminder that Middle-Earth is more vast and cryptic than Bilbo realizes. A powerful wizard, Gandalf generally prefers to keep his powers and motives closely guarded. He never reveals, for instance, why he chooses to help Thorin in his quest; he certainly has no interest in the treasure, and he leaves the company in Mirkwood while he goes to fight against the Necromancer. Something both inspiring and dangerous defines Gandalf’s character—he is an unshakable bulwark against evil, and yet he seems to have an enlightened, almost godlike knowledge of every person’s place in the world.

Gandalf’s sweeping, epic personality separates him from the vast majority of characters that commercial fantasy literature has produced in the decades since The Hobbit was first published. Though Gandalf can be viewed as the source of the stereotypical figure of fantasy wizard, Gandalf himself is more than just an old man with powerful spells and a pointy hat. Tolkien imbues Gandalf with a sense of heightened awareness, ensuring that Gandalf always knows more about what is happening than we do, even when the other characters are left in the dark.

**Thorin**

The leader of the dwarves who embark on the treasure quest in Chapter 2, Thorin is in many ways a typical member of his race: brave, stubborn, proud, and greedy for gold. Though his birthright and noble bearing initially make Thorin seem like a fairly heroic figure, the dwarf’s status quickly declines as Bilbo’s rises. Soon after Gandalf leaves the party, it becomes apparent that Thorin is not a true leader: he is incapable of formulating a plan, makes hasty and poor decisions, and generally relies on Bilbo to see him through his adventures, all the while treating Bilbo like an insignificant underling. Once Thorin gets his hands on Smaug’s treasure, he becomes irrationally greedy and obsessed with wealth, to the extent that he would rather wage a violent war than give the men from Lake Town their fair share of the treasure. Thorin is partially redeemed by his dying apology to Bilbo, but not even this act of remorse can fully redeem him. In general, the arrogant Thorin works as a foil for the unassuming Bilbo, setting off Bilbo’s best qualities and creating a leadership void that provides Bilbo the chance to seize the initiative and become a true hero.