

THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER

VOCABULARY

The following is a selection of vocabulary words listed in order of appearance in THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER (written by C. S. Lewis, published in 1952). Review this list before reading the novel to assess the level of difficulty of the novel or simply to learn more words.

balmy	(of weather) mild and pleasant.
galley	low, flat-built seagoing vessel with one deck, propelled by sails and oars, formerly in common use in the mediterranean. the rowers were mostly slaves or condemned criminals.
forecastle	pronounced fok-s'l. the short, raised deck at the fore end of a vessel.
boatswain	pronounced bo-sun. the officer in a ship in charge of the sails and rigging, whose duty it is to summon the crew to their duties with a whistle.
cogs	broad ships with rounded prow and stern, used before the 15 th century primarily for cargo or transport.
dromonds	very large medieval ships used both in war and commerce.
carracks	large cargo ships also fitted for warfare.
galleons	ships of war, shorter but higher than a galley.
swank	pretentious attitude.
poltroon	coward; mean-spirited, worthless wretch.
liege	the superior to whom one owes feudal allegiance and service.
fief	contraction of fiefdom, the estate or domain of a feudal lord.
postern	a side door, not the main entrance.
pike	a shafted weapon with an iron point or spike.
jerkin	a close-fitting jacket, jersey, or short-coat, often made of leather and often sleeveless.

reef	to lower a sail and secure it by tying it down.
cataract	a violent downpour or rush of water, like that over a waterfall.
tiller	a bar or level attached to the head of a rudder, for turning the rudder in steering.
blighter	a contemptible or unpleasant person.
quoit	a ring thrown at an upright peg, in a game called quoits.
coracle	a small boat made of hide stretched over a wicker framework.
parley	a conference between enemies under a truce.
mead	an alcoholic drink of fermented honey and water.
astrolabe	instrument formerly used to take measurements and to solve other problems of practical astronomy.
orrery	mechanical model, usually clockwork, devised to represent the motions of the earth, the moon, and sometimes the planets around the sun.
sleeper	<i>british</i> a wooden or concrete beam laid transversely under railway track to support it.
grog	a mixture of rum and water, sometimes served hot.
quay	pronounced "key." a landing place for ships, a wharf.
shoal	a school of fish.
shrouds	ropes extending from a ship's masthead to keep the mast from swaying.
regent	a person appointed to administer a state because the monarch is a minor or is absent or unfit to rule.