



King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table

by Roger Lancelyn Green

Teacher's Guide

Written By Mary Ellen Snodgrass

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Synopsis

BOOK ONE: THE COMING OF ARTHUR

1. The Two Swords

The coming of the Saxons to England during the reign of Vortigern begins an era of wars. The first break in the pattern is the rule of Uther Pendragon, who pacifies southern England. Uther's love for Igrayne, wife of Gorlois of Cornwall, results in bloodshed and Uther's marriage to Gorlois' widow, who has two grown daughters and Morgana le Fay, a young child schooled in magic. The breakdown of Uther's authority precipitates more warfare with the Saxons.

To bring peace, Merlin, a Welsh wizard, calls a gathering of knights on Christmas Day. A sword appears in an anvil above a prophecy of a true-born king, before the jousts on New Year's Day. An unforeseen hero, 16-year-old Arthur, the foster son of Sir Ector, innocently pulls the sword from the stone. Ector proclaims Arthur king of Britain. Arthur names his foster brother Kay his manager.

With Merlin's aid, Arthur establishes a capital at Camelot. After a joust against Pellinore, Arthur receives from the Lady of the Lake a magic sword, Excalibur, made by the fairies of Avalon. Merlin prophesies that a female relative of Arthur will try to steal the sword.

2. Balyn and Balan

King Ryan of North Wales challenges Arthur. During the assembly of knights to protect Avalon, Balyn proves himself worthy, but he shames his king by beheading the Lady of the Lake. Merlin pronounces a death curse on Balyn, who rides toward North Wales with his brother Balan. Merlin meets them on their ride and predicts the rise of

Galahad, the searcher for the Holy Grail.

Balyn seeks the invisible knight Garlon, whom he slays at a banquet at Castle Carbonek. King Pellès attempts to kill Balyn, who seizes a weapon in a tower room and strikes his attacker, producing an unhealable wound. The fight reveals the power of the Holy Grail. Balyn wounds the Black Knight, who identifies himself as Balan. The brothers die and share a common grave.

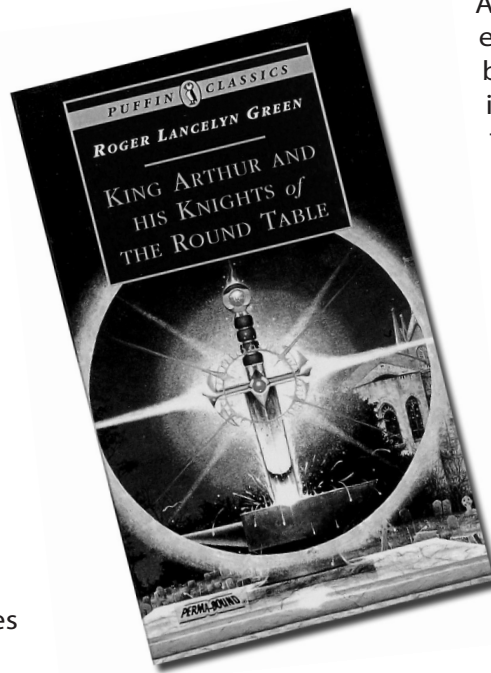
3. The First Quest of the Round Table

Arthur conquers King Ryon, then establishes Camelot. To halt squabbling among his 150 knights, Merlin installs a Round Table. Added to the company are King Pellinore, Tor, and Gawain, Arthur's cousin, all of whom depart after a white stag interrupts the wedding feast of Arthur and Guinevere. Arthur predicts that Gawain will become a noble, brave, and merciful knight. At the feast of Pentecost, Merlin establishes the rule of chivalry, which demands high virtues of mercy, truth, self-restraint, and kindness to women.

4. The Magic of Nimue and Morgana le Fay

The next day, Merlin predicts that an evil woman will steal Excalibur and her son will vanquish Arthur at Camlann. After following Nimue into the forest, Merlin blesses Launcelot and sends him to Camelot. Merlin, who is still living, lies in his grave in a deep sleep. With a harp, Nimue enchants him, robbing him of his magic and leaving him moribund.

King Arthur abandons a day of hunting to sleep on a magic ship and awakens in Damas' dungeon. Freed by the servants of Morgana le Fay, Arthur fights Accolon, who wields Excalibur. After Arthur ends the fight, Morgana le Fay attempts to behead her husband, Urience. Their son Uwayne intervenes. While Arthur sleeps, Morgana steals Excalibur.



BOOK TWO: THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE

1. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

After the defeat of the Saxons, Arthur sets up the Realm of Logres, an old Celtic name for southern England. On New Year's Day, the Knight of the Green Chapel rides into the court and challenges Gawain, who beheads him. The Green Knight restores his head and promises to meet Gawain a year later in the Forest of Wirral. On his way, a king's lady tricks Gawain into accepting magic lace. For keeping it secret, the Knight of the Green Chapel strikes Gawain on the neck. Gawain survives and returns to Camelot.

2. The First Quest of Sir Launcelot

A year after the creation of the Round Table, Launcelot arrives with Nimue and receives knighthood from Arthur. Launcelot refuses Morgana's command that he choose a wife. For a year, he fights bravely and well. He trades armor with Kay and, his identity concealed, jousts against Gawain, Uwaine, Hector, and Segramour. In a year's time, Launcelot acquires the greatest reputation in the land for adventure and honor.

3. Sir Gareth, or the Knight of the Kitchen

At a feast at Pentecost, an unidentified young man seeks food for a year. Arthur names him Beaumains and sets him to work in the kitchen under Kay's management. Linnet demands rescue for her sister, Liones. Because Beaumains asks for the quest, Linnet is insulted. Facing the Black Knight of the Black Lawns, Beaumains rescues Linnet. He reveals that he is Gareth, Arthur's nephew, and weds Linnet.

4. Sir Tristram and the Fair Iseult

Gawain muses on the fame of Tristram, nephew of King Mark of Cornwall. A minstrel sings a ballad about Tristram, who is raised as the foster son of Rual. Sailors capture Tristram to sell into slavery, then leave him at Tintagel at the court of his uncle Mark. To save the kingdom, Tristram accepts the challenge of the bully Marhault. After killing Marhault, Tristram sickens with a wound that only Queen Isaud of Ireland can cure.

Disguised as a minstrel, Tristram seeks cure from Isaud. He agrees to escort her daughter Iseult the Fair to wed Mark. On the sail from Dublin to Cornwall, he shares a love potion with the Irish princess. After the royal marriage, Mark learns of Iseult's love for Tristram and banishes him. The minstrel at Arthur's hall confesses he is Tristram.

Tristram marries Iseult of the White Hands, but he dies of lovesickness and is buried with Iseult the Fair.

5. Geraint and Enid

At Caerleon, Arthur meets Geraint, who begins the quest for knighthood. After facing the evil Duke Yder, who struck Guinevere's maidservant, Geraint is still unable to marry Enid because he has not been knighted. Oringle courts Enid and strikes her in the face. Although Geraint is wounded, he beheads Oringle and rides with Enid to join Arthur. Geraint marries Enid and becomes Arthur's knight.

6. Sir Gawain and the Lady Ragnell

On Christmas Day at Carlisle, Arthur begins his march home after defeating the Saxons. On the way, he assists a damsel and finds himself under the power of Morgana. The hideous Ragnell aids Gawain in facing Morgana's knight Gromer Somer Joure. He repays her with marriage. Because of his goodness, she turns into a beautiful bride and, according to one legend, bears a son named Percivale. Mother and son move to Wales.

7. Sir Percivale of Wales

For 15 years, Percivale lives with his mother in Wales until Launcelot recruits the boy for the knights of the Round Table. Percivale requites the insult of the Red Knight, who steals Arthur's cup. Gonemans teaches Percivale to fight like a knight. Percivale reunites with Lady Blanchefleur, with whom he exchanges rings. Veiled women introduce Percivale to the quest for the Holy Grail. He is parted from his lady for years until the grail comes to Camelot.

8. The Story of Launcelot and Elaine

The knights make peace throughout Arthur's land. Amid boredom, Launcelot falls in love with Guinevere. Nacients the Hermit predicts that a knight will locate the Holy Grail and occupy the Siege Perilous, an empty seat at the Round Table and save a lady from the Dolorous Tower. At the haunted castle of Pelles, Launcelot sees the procession of the Holy Grail. Enchantment tricks him into the bed of Elaine, who bears the likeness of Guinevere. From their union comes Galahad. Pelles declares that Launcelot is not worthy of touching the grail. Launcelot awakens from a period of madness and hurries back to Camelot. When Elaine dies of grief, a barge bears her corpse to Camelot. Launcelot confesses his shame.

BOOK THREE: THE QUEST OF THE HOLY GRAIL

1. How the Holy Grail Came to Camelot

Launcelot encounters Galahad, whom he knights. An inscription on the Siege Perilous names the year 454 A. D. as the time that the seat will be filled. A floating stone bears a sword to be claimed by the best knight. A hermit introduces Galahad as a descendant of Joseph of Arimathea, the man who provided a burial tomb for Jesus. Galahad claims the Siege Perilous and pulls the sword from the floating stone. The Holy Grail appears at the Round Table, but Mordred is too ashamed to look at it. When knights set out to find the grail, Arthur realizes that his company of knights will never again be complete.

2. The First Adventures of Sir Galahad

Galahad, the holy knight, seeks the red cross shield at an abbey. He learns that Joseph of Arimathea made the cross on the shield with his own blood. A damsel summons Galahad to an enchanted ship crewed by Bors de Gannis and Percivale.

3. The Adventures of Sir Percivale

Percivale suffers wounded pride after losing in combat to Galahad. Galahad saves Percivale, who battles twenty men. When a damsel tries to seduce Percivale, he wards off temptation. Led by his sister Dindrane, he enters the Enchanted Ship and sails toward Carbonek.

4. The Adventures of Sir Bors de Gannis

Bors de Gannis, Launcelot's cousin, seeks the grail through education by Naciens the Hermit. In a dilemma between rescuing a maiden or saving his brother Lionel, Bors prays for guidance. After saving the maiden, Bors returns home to find Lionel angry. Naciens saves Bors from his anger. Bors joins Percivale on the Enchanted Ship and sails away to find Galahad.

5. The Adventures of Sir Launcelot

At a stone cross, Launcelot witnesses Naciens healing a wounded knight. The grail disappears. Launcelot lies on the ground from the weight of sin. He fights a stranger and, for the first time, is unseated. Realizing that the stranger is his son Galahad, Launcelot joins the knights and Percivale's sister Dindrane on the Enchanted Ship. With her blood, Dindrane heals a dying lady, but Dindrane bleeds to death.

6. How Launcelot and Gawain Came to Carbonek

In the Waste Lands, Gawain meets Hector, Launcelot's brother. Gawain has a vision of the defeat of Logres. Naciens sends Galahad to Carbonek to view the grail. Pelles, still suffering the wound that Balyn inflicted, welcomes Launcelot, who begs forgiveness for sinning against Elaine. Gawain sits silently at dinner and partakes only of bread and water. He and Launcelot follow the grail procession. Launcelot sees the grail, but can't approach the altar. Naciens predicts the arrival of the Grail Knight.

7. The End of the Quest

Parcivale, Bors, and Galahad ride toward Carbonek, where Naciens greets them. The grail procession passes Parcivale, who recognizes the Grail Maiden as Blanchefleur. Galahad leads the procession and drinks from the cup. Drops from the grail spear cure Pelles. Parcivale reunites the broken sword and kisses Blanchefleur. Galahad replaces Naciens as Priest of the Grail and serves the sacrament, then dies and goes to heaven. The grail and spear disappear. Percivale and Blanchefleur rule over Carbonek. Bors returns to Camelot to find many empty places at the Round Table.

BOOK FOUR: THE DEPARTING OF ARTHUR

1. Launcelot and Guinevere

After the grail quest, Arthur fears the end of Camelot. Guinevere accuses Launcelot of avoiding her. He hopes to spare Arthur shame and dissension. Launcelot cures Urry of three cruel wounds. After Melliagraunce kidnaps Guinevere, Launcelot finds her and kills her captor. When Guinevere thanks Launcelot in private, she invites him to her room. Mordred and Agravain eavesdrop on the scene.

2. The Plots of Sir Mordred

Agravain summons his brother Gawain to the queen's tryst with Launcelot. Gawain predicts civil war. Twelve knights corner Launcelot in the queen's room. With armor and weapons stripped from Colgrevaunce's corpse, Launcelot kills his accusers and rides away. To Arthur, Mordred accuses the queen of treason. Led to the stake, she awaits immolation when Launcelot seizes her and kills Gareth and Gaheris. Launcelot rides toward the Castle of Joyous Garde. Gawain swears revenge for his brothers' slaughter.

King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table Roger Lancelyn Green

For 15 weeks, Arthur lays siege to Launcelot's castle. In hand-to-hand combat, Launcelot saves Arthur from harm and returns Guinevere, claiming that she is innocent. Gawain rejects the peace initiative. An army follows Launcelot to Armorica in France. Mordred claims Arthur's crown. Guinevere retreats to the Tower of London. Mordred challenges the Archbishop of Canterbury, who flees to Glastonbury. In a final clash, Gawain lies dying and forgives Launcelot.

3. The Last Battle

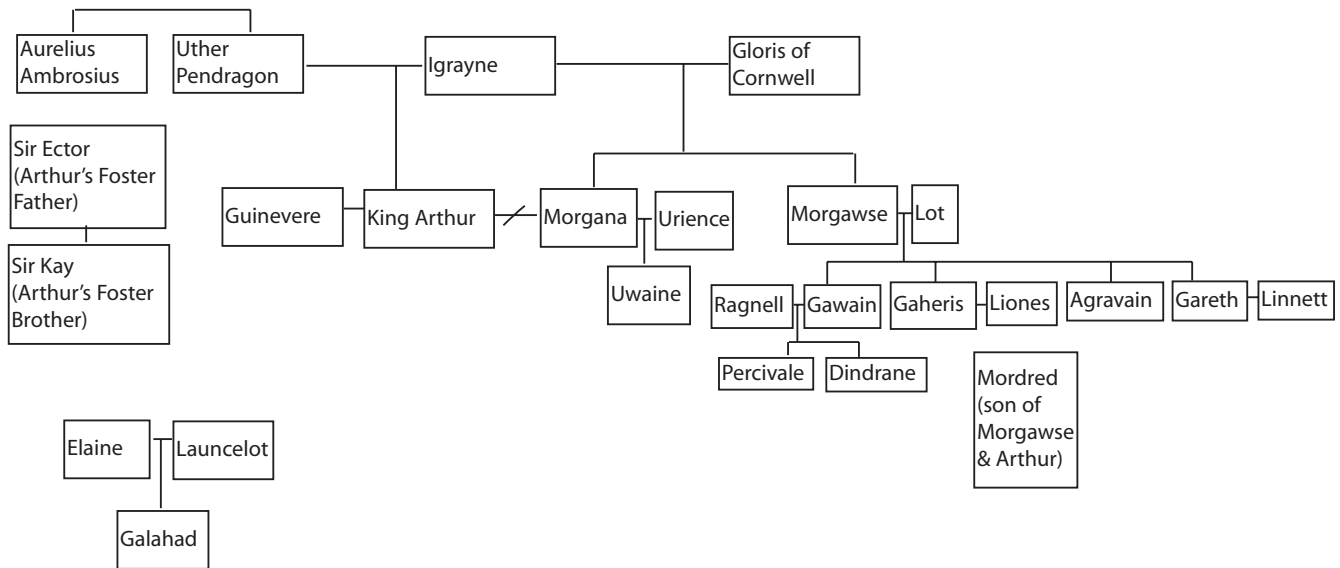
At Camlann, while Arthur awaits Mordred, Saxons take advantage of the civil war. Gawain's spirit urges Arthur to seek a one-month truce. Mordred agrees to take Kent and Cornwall and to become

high king after Arthur's death. When a soldier strikes a snake with his sword, the truce ends and the battle begins. Arthur and Mordred wound each other; Mordred dies in agony. Arthur sends Bedivere to throw Excalibur back into the lake. Bedivere supports Arthur to the barge of Nimue, Morgana, and other veiled ladies, who tend him in the Vale of Avalon. Arthur promises to return when Britain needs him most.

Epilogue: Avalon

Launcelot prays at Gawain's grave at Dover and reunites with Guinevere at a convent in Almesbury. The lovers part forever. Launcelot joins the monks at Glastonbury. He brings Guinevere's remains to Glastonbury for burial.

Arthurian Genealogy



Author Sketch

Famed biographer, mythographer, and antiquarian bookseller Roger Gilbert Lancelyn Green was a major contributor to scholarship on children's literature from the Victorian era. Born in Norwich, Norfolk, on



November 2, 1918, he was the first of the five children of Helena Mary Phyllis Sealy and Major Gilbert Arthur Lancelyn Green. Reared at Poulton Hall, an 11th-century family estate in Wirral, Cheshire, he was fond of fairy tales and theater, but ill health limited his outings. At age 19, he visited Greece, which fueled his love of ancient lore. After attending Dane Court and Liverpool College, he completed a degree in English language and literature at Merton College, Oxford, where he befriended lecturer Clive Staples Lewis.

After World War II, Green worked as an actor, playing the part of a pirate in J. M. Barrie's play *Peter Pan*. Green joined the Inklings, a society of Oxford scholars that included Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien. During a five-year stint as deputy librarian of Merton College, Green married June Burdett, a drama teacher. In 1950, he began a three-year research project in English literature at the University of Liverpool. He specialized in the golden era of children's fantasy literature, which began in 1865 with the publication of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. The fantasy novel broke with previous moralistic and pedagogical approaches to children's reading. From 1957 to 1959, Green edited the *Sherlock Holmes Journal*. He established the Lewis Carroll Society and served on the Council of the University of Liverpool. One of his sons, writer and Oxford scholar Richard Lancelyn Green, mirrored his father's literary interests by editing *The Unknown Conan Doyle*.

Critic's Corner

At his death in 1987, Roger Lancelyn Green held a position of authority in literary scholarship on children's literature. His interest in authentic stories and in biographies of writers elevated his importance during a shift toward child psychology and psycho-social needs as bases for recreational reading. Of over 100 titles he wrote and edited, his chil-

dren's works cover the mythology of Egypt, Israel, and Greece as well as Norse tales, science fiction, and English stories of King Arthur, Robin Hood, and Sherlock Holmes. The author's biographies of Hans Christian Andersen, James M. Barrie, Lewis Carroll, Andrew Lang, C. S. Lewis, and A. E. W. Mason, and his editing of Rudyard Kipling's journals and of Carroll's diaries and letters preserve backgrounds of classic young adult reading.

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Green's Published Works

The Lewis Carroll Handbook (1931)
Andrew Lang (1946)
The Lost July and Other Poems (1946)
The Ichneutai of Sophocles: The Searching Saturs (1946)
Tellers of Tales (1946)
The Singing Rose and Other Poems (1947)
From the World's End (1948)
The Story of Lewis Carroll (1949)
The Wonderful Stranger (1950)
A. E. W. Mason (1952)
King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table (1953)
The Diaries of Lewis Carroll (1953)
Fifty Years of Peter Pan (1954)
The Theft of the Golden Cat (1955)
Modern Fairy Stories (1955)
The Book of Nonsense (1956)
Robin Hood (1956)
Two Satyr Plays (1957)
Into Other Worlds (1958)
Old Greek Fairy Tales (1958)
The Land Beyond the North (1958)
A Century of Humorous Verse (1959)
Ten Tales of Make-Believe (1960)
The Saga of Asgard (1960)
Lewis Carroll (1960)
Heroes of Greece and Troy (1960)
The True Book about Ancient Greece (1960)
The Luck of Troy (1961)
Mrs. Molesworth (1961)
The Book of Verse for Children (1962)
Authors and Places (1963)
Tales from Shakespeare (1964)
Tales the Muses Told (1965)
The Works of Lewis Carroll (1965)
Myths from Many Lands (1965)
A Book of Myths (1965)
Kipling and the Children (1965)
Tales of Ancient Egypt (1967)
Stories of Ancient Greece (1967)
More Favorite Fairy Tales (1967)
Ten Tales of Detection (1967)
Jason and the Golden Fleece (1968)
Hugh Lofting; Geoffrey Trease; J. M. Barrie (1968)
Lewis Carroll; E. Nesbit; Howard Pyle (1968)
Tales of Ancient Israel (1969)
Henry Treece; C. S. Lewis; Beatrix Potter (1969)
A Cavalcade of Dragons (1970)
The Hamish Hamilton Book of Dragons (1970)
Thirteen Uncanny Tales (1970)

Tales of Terror and Fantasy (1971)
Double Phoenix (1971)
Kipling: The Critical Heritage (1971)
Ten Tales of Adventure (1972)
Rudyard Kipling (1972)
A Cavalcade of Magicians (1973)
Strange Adventures in Time (1974)
C. S. Lewis (1974)
The Tale of Thebes (1977)
The Letters of Lewis Carroll (1979)
The Pendragon Chronicles (1990)
"Isis and Osiris," *Cricket* (October 1996): 11-16
The Mammoth Book of Arthurian Legends (1998)

Approximate Chronology of the Arthurian Age

- 43-410 A. D.** Roman Britons create a Celtic-Christian culture.
360 Barbarians overrun Britain
367 A second wave of raids begins.
383 Magnus Maximus withdraws Roman troops.
406 Barbarians overwhelm Britain.
408 Saxons raid the British coast.
410 Rome abandons Britannia to its own defenses.
428 Vortigern imports German mercenaries.
440 Invasions leave towns in ruins.
441 Saxons establish a power base in Britannia.
450s Vortigern spars with Aurelius Ambrosius.
460 Ambrosius dies.
465 Arthur is born at Tintagel.
485-496 Arthur wins twelve battles.
500 Tintagel becomes a pilgrim center
516 Arthur wins the battle of Badon.
537 Arthur and Mordred fall at the battle of Camlann.
597 St. Augustine establishes a mission in Kent.

Related Reading

Richard Adams, *Watership Down*
Marion Zimmer Bradley, *The Mists of Avalon* and *The Forest House*
Karen Cushman, *The Midwife's Apprentice* and *Catherine Called Birdy*
Erik Christian Haugaard, *The Samurai's Tale*
Felicia Hemans, "Joan of Arc in Rheims"

Nancy Springer, *Rowan Hood, Outlaw Girl of Sherwood Forest and I Am Morgan le Fay*

Mary Stewart, *The Crystal Cave, The Hollow Hills, and The Last Enchantment*

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Gareth and Lynette"

J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*

T. H. White, *The Sword in the Stone*

General Objectives

1. To understand the nature of a power struggle
2. To analyze why leaders form alliances
3. To note evidence of hospitality, mercy, and kindness
4. To discuss the theme of purity
5. To discuss myths about dragons and magic
6. To catalog unfamiliar terms and define them
7. To define episodic style
8. To note symbolic actions and events based on the seasons
9. To comment on individual achievement
10. To assess the role of women in medieval lore

Specific Objectives

1. To analyze the effect of Agravain and Mordred's disloyalty to King Arthur
2. To contrast the advice of Merlin, Nimue, and Naciens the Hermit
3. To explain the significance of prophecy to recovery of the Holy Grail
4. To outline the trials of Gareth, Galahad, Tristram, and Percivale
5. To contrast the two stories of the sword in the stone
6. To account for the kidnap of Guinevere
7. To research the genealogy of Uther Pendragon and King Arthur
8. To characterize Launcelot and Galahad as contrasting role models to knights
9. To summarize the downfall of Logres
10. To explain the roles of Morgana le Fay, Ector, Gorlois, and Kay

Media Versions of Green's Work

Audiocassette (Abridged)

King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, Penguin Audiobooks, 1997

Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Roger Lancelyn Green's Arthurian lore, present the following terms and applications:

Allegory: a literary work that functions on multiple levels of meaning by comparing objects to symbols beyond the scope of the work. The purification of knighthood and the emergence of a second generation of knights precedes the recovery of the Holy Grail, the chalice from which Jesus drank. The two-stage kingdom represents the Christianization of Britain and the establishment of a pure class of knights who rid themselves of blood-lust, pride, and vengeance of the Iron Age to achieve a divine quest.

Episode: a coherent event, digression, or incident in a narrative or serial that stands out on its own merit, for example, Gawain's challenge to the Knight of the Green Chapel and the kidnap and recovery of Guinevere. In the Tristram and Iseult episode, the doomed love story has no direct implications for the lore of King Arthur, but the story shares with British quest tales the melancholy Irish romance that becomes the minstrel's plaint, which he sings at Arthur's court as an evening's entertainment.

The Importance of Setting

The milieu of Roger Lancelyn Green's Arthurian lore comprises both real and fantasy settings. The basic story of the Celtic wars against Saxon invaders derives from the vacuum of authority left when Roman occupation forces crumbled, then abandoned Britannia. In the late sixth and early 7th centuries A. D., in order to survive, petty Celtic rulers had to establish an alliance headed by a high king. The image of a young warrior withdrawing a sword from a stone and seizing control of Logres romanticized the building of a defense system to protect southern England from a Saxon takeover. Suitably, Arthur was born at Tintagel, a rocky peninsula off the western shore of Cornwall that rises from the wind and waves of the Atlantic Ocean.

Essential to Arthur's myth is the building of his headquarters at Camelot, a site still undocumented in archeology. At the court of the high king, he shares a throne with Queen Guinevere and oversees a round table built by Merlin to end squabbles about seating order of Arthur's knights. From the capital city, Arthur dispatches knights on quests to fantasy encounters in the Waste Lands with enemies at magic castles built atop grim dungeons and in enchanted ships and towers. Surrounding these episodic adventures are long rides into undesignated woods, an image of menace representing the banditry that still plagued England's sparsely settled areas. As knights complete their quests and vanquish or kill evil giants and dragons, barbarism gradually recedes from Arthur's realm.

The spread of Arthurian lore to Scotland, Wales, Ireland, the Orkney Isles, and France added episodes in other geographic locales. From Welsh lore came stories of Merlin, the Welsh wizard. King Ryan challenges Arthur from a stronghold in northern Wales. Tristram travels to Dublin to seek cure for a wound by Queen Isaud of Ireland. The quest for the Holy Grail begins at Caerleon. Arthur spends Christmas at Carlisle, Scotland.

In innocence of knighthood, Percivale lives with his mother in Wales. Additional lore connects Camelot with Joseph of Arimathea, the Palestinian who provided a burial tomb for Jesus and who brought the Holy Grail to England. The Arthur myth returns to real territory in the epilogue, which pictures Gawain buried on the southern coast at Dover, Guinevere immured in a convent in Malmesbury, and Launcelot joining monks at Glastonbury, a tourist mecca for fans of the Arthur stories.

Cross-Curricular Sources

For more information about Roger Lancelyn Green, Arthurian literature, Camelot, medieval quest lore, epic, sacrifice, Tintagel, and other subjects and issues deriving from the book, consult these sources:

Articles

Harry, Rachel, and Kevin Brady, "Early Medieval Tintagel," *Heroic Age* (Spring/Summer 1999).

Walker, Amelie E., "King Arthur Was Real?," *Archaeology* (23 September 1998).



Audiocassette

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, Naxos Audiobooks, 2001

Books

The Crystal Cave, by Mary Stewart

The Hobbit, by J. R. R. Tolkien

Watership Down, by Richard Adams

Fairy Tales

Beauty, Robin McKinley

Little Red Riding Hood Uncloaked, Catherine Orenstein

White As Snow, Tanith Lee

Fantasy Adventure

Alice in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll

Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH, by Robert C. O'Brien

Internet

Tintagel

<http://www.cornwall-info.co.uk/details.asp?listid=1723>

Tintagel Castle

<http://www.heritage-trail.com>

Legend

The Outlaw Princess of Sherwood, by Nancy Springer

Rowan Hood, Outlaw Girl of Sherwood Forest, by Nancy Springer

Narrative Poems

Gareth and Lynette, by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

"The Pied Piper of Hameln," Robert Browning

Reference Books

The Annotated Classic Fairy Tales, W. W. Norton

From the Beast to the Blonde: On Fairy Tales and Their Tellers, Noonday Press

The Maid of the North: Feminist Folk Tales from Around the World, Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Medieval Myths, Mentor

Once Upon a Time When the Princess Rescued the Prince, Dragon Tree Press

World Shores and Beaches, McFarland

Short Story

"The 51st Dragon," Heywood Hale Broun

Video/DVD

Camelot

Excalibur

First Knight

King Arthur

The Lord of the Rings

The Mists of Avalon

Robin Hood

Watership Down

Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table*, should include these aspects:

Themes

- invasion
- leadership
- alliance
- valor
- sacrifice
- quest
- disloyalty
- separation
- forgiveness
- downfall

Motifs

- establishing a kingdom
- reflecting on personal faults
- testing limits
- assuming the role of rescuer
- coping with a moral dilemma

Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the story. Explain the meaning each has in this book. Part, chapter and page numbers indicate the context in which each item appears.

1. After wicked King Vortigern had first invited the Saxons to settle in Britain and help him to fight the Picts and Scots, the land was never long at peace. (I, 1, p. 3)
(Vortigern, who ruled from 425 to 450, plotted with the Saxon leaders Hengist and Horsa. In exchange for protection from northern invaders, Vortigern gave the Saxons land in Kent, Essex, and Sussex. The settlement of Saxons was the beginning of the end for Celtic England.)
2. Vortigern was dead, and Aurelius Ambrosius, last of the Romans, was dead too, when Uther

Pendragon, whom some call the brother of Ambrosius, led the Britons. (I, 1, p. 3)
(The house of Pendragon connects Uther with Ambrosius, the last Roman ruler of England, thus passing to Arthur both Roman and Celtic strengths. The Pendragon rule extends from London to Winchester and Cornwall, Arthur's birthplace.)

3. Merlin came to London and spoke with the Archbishop; and a great gathering of knights was called for Christmas Day—so great that all of them could not find a place in the abbey church, so that some were forced to gather in the churchyard. (I, 1, p. 5)
(Symbolically, Merlin joins Celtic Druidic power with the Christian faith of the archbishop of Canterbury. The stream of onlookers overfills the abbey church, a suggestion that Christianity could not contain or suppress the Celtic people and traditions under a single Middle Eastern faith. Suitably, Arthur pulls the sword from the stone outside the walls of the abbey church, thus connecting his power to the militarism of the Iron Age.)
4. In this way peace came to the whole island for a great many years: though still there were robbers and outlaws, cruel knights and evil magicians dwelling in the depths of forests and deep among the mountains, ever ready to break the peace and stain the realm of Logres in one wicked way or another. (I, 3, p. 45)
(The alliance of rulers under one high king and the establishment of knighthood as a policing mechanism gives Arthur a means to quell pockets of barbarism among outlanders. Symbolically, cruelty and evil reside in the Waste Lands, forests, and mountains, the strongholds of Druidic worship.)
5. Yet she shall be with you at the last, her evil purged away, and she, with others, shall bring you to Avalon. (I, 4, p. 63)
(Prophecy sets up dilemmas in Arthur's rule. He knows in his youth that he will face the cunning of his half-sister, Morgana le Fay, a sorceress schooled in the old ways. To round out the book with Christian virtues in ascendance, the author indicates that Morgana will undergo a Christian conversion from evil plotter to nurse and attendant of Arthur after his last great battle.)
6. But year by year the fame of his court grew, and spread far and wide, and the bravest and noblest knights in the world came to his court and strove by their deeds of courage and gentleness to win a place at the Round Table. (II, 1, p. 81)

(Membership in Arthur's elite fighting force at Camelot requires demonstrations of chivalry, a code of conduct that ranges in demands from courage in battle to gentleness and mercy. From this system of proving oneself come the great warriors—Launcelot, Gawain, Gareth, Tristram, and Percivale.)

7. On the day before the Feast of Pentecost one year after Merlin had made the Round Table, King Arthur with some of his knights rode out early from Camelot to hunt in the forest. (II, 2, p. 102)
(To Christianize the knighting of worthy fighters, Arthurian lore connects deeds of courage with Christian feasts, particularly Christmas, New Year's Day, and Easter. Pentecost, the 50th day after Easter, celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit on Christ's disciples. Because the feast day commemorates the Christian mission, it is a suitable time for Launcelot to join Arthur's knights.)
8. In the wild forests of Wales there lived once a boy called Percivale, with his mother. (II, 7, p. 198)
(To supply the myth with a pure hero, Arthurian lore depicts Percivale's upbringing as an isolated hermitage with his mother for the first 15 years of his life. Unspoiled by worldly ways, he is the most suitable knight to undertake the grail quest.)
9. And for you, Launcelot, they pray, that you may escape from the sins of this world. (III, 7, 287)
(Launcelot, Arthur's most prestigious knight, bears the mortal failings of the first generation of warriors. Because Launcelot lusts after Guinevere, he lacks the purity to attain the second stage of Arthur's greatness, the retrieval of the Holy Grail. Launcelot's faults precipitate a melancholy story of unrequited love for an unattainable woman.)
10. So Launcelot knelt down beside Sir Urry, and when he had prayed a while he laid his hands on the three cruel wounds: and at once Sir Urry was as whole and as well as if he had never been wounded at all. (IV, 1, p. 294)
(For all his weaknesses, Launcelot possesses the power to heal, a laying on of hands that is a focal religious ritual in Christianity. As though expending the last of his mortal strengths, Launcelot performs his final great deed before exiting from Arthurian legend.)

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important. Defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Style

1. Why is Arthurian lore episodic?
(Individual episodes of Arthurian lore emerged from different regions of the British Isles, including the Orkney Isles, Tintagel in Cornwall, Caerleon, northern Wales, Carlisle, Dublin, London, Dover, and Armorica in France. No chronology or union of the events exists to explain how the elements fit into one epic. Roger Lancelyn Green makes no effort to create a unified story. However, by reporting the episodes in four separate sections and by overviewing episodes that he omits from the book, he presents a semblance of order.)

Motivation

2. Why does England need a high king?
(In the absence created by the death of Roman ruler Aurelius Ambrosius, England has no unified leadership or military force. Saxon invaders take advantage of the vacuum and assault Celtic shores and inner realms. The birth of Uther Pendragon's son Arthur satisfies a prophecy that a single high king will unify the country and will launch a strike force at Saxon outlanders. Through alliances with lesser rulers, Arthur is able to centralize power at his headquarters at Camelot and to bring peace to the realm of Logres, the old name of Celtic England.)

Character

3. Why is Naciens important to grail lore?
(Like Merlin, the Celtic enchanter who launches Arthur's career, Naciens the Hermit is a prophet and the mastermind of the return of the Holy Grail to England. The hermit's powers include prophecy, magic, healing, and education, which he dispenses to knights who lack piety. As the arrival of the Grail Knight draws near, Naciens is essential to the orchestration of events that guide Galahad to his place as holiest and most deserving knight.)

Symbolism

4. How do swords alter in symbolic meaning?
(As evidence of Iron Age smithy, swords enable Arthur's fighting force to defeat invaders and criminals and to restore order to Logres. The raising of the sword by the blade departs from the aims of the Round Table to take on Christian significance. Appearing as crosses, swords represent the power of pious humans to defend Christianity against barbarism.)

Atmosphere

5. How does atmosphere shift in the final scenes?
(At the end of the collection of episodes, the atmosphere shifts from leadership, valor, and active militarism to somber depictions of shame, guilt, piety, and forgiveness. The sad parting of Launcelot from Gawain at Dover concludes with a restoration of brotherhood. Launcelot's withdrawal from Guinevere at Almesbury ends his pursuit of a married woman, the wife of the high king. After his settlement among monks at Glastonbury, he remains celibate. His final honor to Guinevere is the retrieval of her corpse and her burial at Glastonbury. The scenarios exhibit the redirection of Arthurian lore from noble deeds in service to the king to pious lives dedicated to Christianity.)

Interpretation

6. Why does the story of Elaine and Launcelot imply his lack of interest in marriage and fatherhood?
(Because of the code of chivalry and the defense of knights of the Round Table, Launcelot can never possess Queen Guinevere as his wife. Elaine's trickery allows her to unite with Launcelot, who thinks he is bedding Guinevere. The deception results in an empty marriage, Launcelot's disillusion, and his lack of devotion to Elaine and his son Galahad. Thus, mother and son survive outside the normal social sphere of Camelot. Because Galahad has no experience with knight errantry, he grows up innocent of the faults that keep Arthur's Round Table from achieving a high level of morality.)

Theme

7. Why are chivalry and courage related themes?
(To win places at the Round Table, would-be knights must pledge loyalty to King Arthur and must beg a boon to prove their courage. After each man succeeds in combat and acquires knighthood, he lives his life according to the values of Camelot. From courtesy and devotion to pure womanhood, each knight develops a reason for performing courageous deeds, particularly if their assignments involve rescuing women from evil captors. Thus, the greater the commitment to chivalry, the more likely the performance of great feats of arms and daring.)

Motif

8. Why is Arthurian lore replete with episodes of unrequited love?
(The story of Launcelot's all-consuming passion for Guinevere echoes throughout Arthurian lore with other versions of the motif of unrequited love. A brief episode of unrequited love separates Enid and Geraint until he can be knighted. On the order of the fairy tale is Ragnell's unlikely pairing with Gawain, who proves himself worthy by wedding the hideous damsel and

fathering Percivale. The most touching echo of Launcelot's suffering is Tristram's unfortunate taste of a love potion during a sea voyage from Ireland. The result is doomed love for Iseult the Fair, who is destined to marry King Mark of Cornwall. To attest to the undying quality of unrequited love, Tristram dies of lovesickness and is buried beside Iseult the Fair rather than by his wife, Iseult of the White Hands. Because of the frequency of failed loved matches in medieval episodes and tales, yearning for the unattainable women became a standard feature of chivalric literature.)

Purpose

9. What qualities does Green's work inspire in readers?

(Roger Lancelyn Green balances the action and daring of Arthurian lore with the serious issues of establishing Christianity among knights and of restoring the Holy Grail to England. Unlike most print and electronic resettlings of Arthur's legends, Green's version gives equal coverage of the second generation of knights and of the piety and purity of Percivale and Galahad. Green's work inspires readers to think of the era of King Arthur as the end of barbarism and militarism and as the foundation of Christianity in the British Empire.)

Comparative Literature

10. How does Green's view of Arthur's story compare with that of Mary Stewart?

(Perhaps the widest read among late 20th-century Arthurian fiction are Mary Stewart's three quest novels, The Crystal Cave, The Hollow Hills, and The Last Enchantment. She, like Green, restores order to disparate tales by creating a viable genealogy that links Merlin, the bastard of Aurelius Ambrosius and an unmarried Celtic princess, with Arthur, the bastard of Uther Pendragon and Ygrayne (or Igraine), wife of Gorlois of Cornwall. The episodes involving the two black sheep cousins creates unity and sympathy. Emerging from their friendship is a tension between Merlin's ability to predict the future and Arthur's willingness to be directed by a celibate wizard. Unlike Green's aura of Christian virtue and piety, Stewart sticks to the dangers of the era and the historical significance of Arthur's kingship.)

How Language Works

Green carefully words violent episodes to stress courage and honor over bloodshed. For example:

1. Of the wound that troubles King Pelles throughout most of the tales, Green describes its infliction as the result of insanity: "But Balyn, in his madness, took the spear and struck the Dolorous Stroke, wounding King Pelles deeply in the side."

2. The killing of Gawain seems like an afterthought: "King Arthur found Sir Gawain lying mortally wounded, for the last wound which Sir Launcelot had give him had broken out afresh."
3. Of King Arthur's stroke that fells Mordred, the text provides more grisly description: "The King smote Sir Mordred under the shield with a feint of his spear and ran him through the body. . . . Sir Mordred fell to the ground and died screaming."
4. In the aftermath of Arthur's defeat, the book concludes peacefully with Launcelot's passing at the monastery at Glastonbury: "He too fell sick, and passed away quietly as one who had no longer any will to live."

Across the Curriculum

Literature

1. Read aloud Mary Stewart's explanation of Merlin's parentage in *The Crystal Cave*. How does kinship between Merlin and Arthur enhance their relationships?
2. Listen to a recorded version of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's *Gareth and Lynette*. How does the poet express sympathy for Beaumains? Why does the poem end with two possible brides for Gareth?

Composition

1. Compose a tourist's guide to Logres, Tintagel, the Tower of London, Cadbury, Camlann, Carlisle, Dublin, Malmesbury, Glastonbury, Armorica, and Caerleon, highlighting the most historic features. Include details that connect the region to Arthurian lore.
2. Write a final conversation between between Launcelot and Guinevere at Almesbury. Determine how both lovers propose to cleanse themselves of guilt and restore honor to Arthur.
3. Write a report on post-Roman Britain's defense system. Describe the Saxon invasions that force petty Celtic rulers to form an alliance and to merge troops. Account for the need of a high king.

4. Describe the festivities that honor Christmas Day, Easter, Whitsuntide, and Pentecost. Propose menus for feasting and music for dancing.

Language

1. Create a glossary to accompany the text. Include definitions and applications of these terms to Arthurian lore: lineage, gra'mercy, impious, fosterling, joust, girth, rebuke, a-maying, parry, palfrey, prowess, boon, cromlech, Michaelmas, dissension, litter, wrath, blithe, minstrel, oratory, harrying, churl, hart, tarry, leech, buffet, tryst, parapet, absolution, drawbridge, squire, minster, penance, lychgate, brachet, cwyth, grovel, chid, beer-butt, fie, glade, wayfarer, hind, samite, bulwark, sacrament, vizor, craven, scabbard, homage, questing, smitten, behest, pavilion, scullion, safe-conduct, portcullis, Whitsun, Pentecost, siege, dolorous, flank, moor, chivalry, moat, seneschal.

Speech

1. Explain how King Arthur's story could be adapted to the stage, a puppet theater, ballet, animated film, musical stage production, video game, radio play, comic book, pantomime, or a television miniseries.
2. Propose a charge from the king and the knight's vows to be spoken at a knighting ceremony.

Drama

1. Create a tableau of Launcelot's quarrel with Gawain following the deaths of Gareth and Gaheris. Conclude the short drama with Launcelot's grief at Gawain's grave in Dover.
2. Improvise a scene in which the Lady of the Lake joins Morgana and Nimue on the barge to Avalon to treat Arthur's battle wounds. Suggest herbal cures for damaged muscles, bruises, and sword cuts, for example, arnica for bruising and achillea for infected cuts.

Art

1. Sketch cells of an animated cartoon of the two versions of *The Sword in the Stone*. Indicate how a floating stone creates a more mystic atmosphere than the stone before the chapel in London.

2. Draw a mural of the most memorable scenes in Arthurian lore. Feature unusual happenings, such as the sharing of the love potion, Guinevere's burial at Glastonbury, Dindrane's death from loss of blood, Gawain facing a huge green man, the attack of an invisible enemy, the kidnap of Guinevere, Bedivere's return of Excalibur to the Lady of the Lake, Kay's rudeness to Gareth, Nimue's victory over Merlin, the departure of Tristram and Iseult the Fair by ship from Dublin, Gawain's siege on Joyous Garde, Joseph of Arimathea's drawing of a red cross on the Grail Knight's shield, and the Procession of the Grail with Galahad in the lead.
3. Choose an intriguing symbol for a book cover or book mark, such as a dripping spear, seven-branch candelabrum, shield marked with a red cross, a barge to Avalon, Naciens the Hermit, a trap door over a dungeon, an arm clad in Samite, a cloth covering the Siege Perilous, a tower room, or veiled women. Describe the colors and lettering best suited to medieval lore. Explain why contrast and action make a lasting impression on potential readers.

Geography

1. Propose the geographic outlines of Camelot and Logres. Include Guinevere's room, a jousting arena, the great hall, and the placement of dual throne and the Round Table. Note the cloth covering the Siege Perilous.

Religion

1. Explain in a paragraph the meaning of religious allegory. What aspects of Christianity does Green use as a basis for the allegory? Why are a round table, knighting ceremony, red cross on a shield, a ray of light, a stone cross, bloody spear, crown, and Holy Grail particularly symbolic? What does the broken sword symbolize?
2. Discuss the importance of humility and forgiveness to chivalry and brotherhood. Why does Gawain's rage at Launcelot presage the fall of Camelot? What does Launcelot indicate by kneeling at Gawain's grave at Dover?

3. Contrast the rituals and beliefs of Christians with those of the Celts. How does life change in southern Britain after Christianity overthrows Druidism?

Social Studies

1. Make an extended definition of one of these terms: power struggle, alliance, high king, council, leadership, banditry, siege, knight-hood, and invasion force. Apply each to the story of King Arthur.

Psychology

1. Discuss in a short speech how Launcelot's longing for Guinevere results in the siring of Galahad. Why does the story indicate that Elaine tricks Launcelot? How is Elaine punished for her deception of Launcelot?
2. List scenes in which cooperation and external aid help the knights cope with dangers, for example, the intervention of Ragnell in Gawain's mission, the siege at Joyous Garde, and Liones' assistance to Gareth. Which knight seems best able to work out a nonviolent solution to problems? Which is bravest? most cautious? most loyal to Arthur? kindest? most chivalric?

Mathematics and Logic

1. Discuss the passage of time in the story. What religious terms delineate seasons of the year? Why does time seem less important in Camelot than in British history?
2. List examples of numerology, for example, a year for Gawain's quest of the Knight of the Green Chapel, Percivale's 15 years in Wales, twelve knights attacking Launcelot in Guinevere's room, and Ragnell's disappearance after seven years.

Science and Health

1. Describe the dangers of jousting in full armor. Discuss the weight and limitations of vision through a vizor as well as the encumbrance to war horses, which also bore armor.

Journalism

1. Compose a list of questions to accompany a televised interview of knights returning from quests. What details might convince an audience that the expeditions are real?

Alternate Assessment

1. List experiences that help knights learn values such as valor, loyalty, compassion, kindness, humility, truthfulness, forgiveness, respect, piety, and courtesy.
2. List the ten most important knights of the Round Table and their deeds.
3. Compose an epitaph explaining King Arthur's significance to English history.
4. Describe the courtship of these couples: Launcelot/Elaine, Geraint/Enid, Tristram/Iseult the Fair, Tristram/Iseult of the White Hands, Percivale/Lady Blanche fleur, Gareth/Linnet, Ragnell/Gawain, Uther/Igrayne, and Arthur/Guinevere.

Vocabulary

Choose words from the list below to complete each sentence. You will have words left over when you finish.

lineage, gra'mercy, impious, fosterling, joust, girth, rebuke, a-maying, parry, palfrey, prowess, brandished, boon, cromlech, Michaelmas, dissension, litter, wroth, blithe, minstrel, oratory, harrying, churl, hart, tarry, leech, buffet, tryst, parapet, absolution, drawbridge, squire, minster, penance, lych-gate, brachet, vault, cwyth, grovel, chid, beer-butt, fie, glade, archbishop, wayfarer, hind, samite, bulwark, sacrament, vizor, craven, scabbard, homage, quest, smitten, behest, pavilion, scullion, safe-conduct, portcullis, Whitsun, Pentecost, siege, dolorous, flank, moor, chivalry, seneschal, moat

1. Have good care of the sword Excalibur, and of the magic _____ of it.
2. A vile _____ this dwarf is.
3. When Launcelot trod upon it, it opened under his feet and he fell a great way into a dark _____ filled with straw.
4. Three times it _____ the sword on high, and then vanished with it beneath the water.
5. Arthur the good King and his knights were the flower of _____.
6. He could not break through the _____, but instead he ran up the nearest stairway.
7. Then the _____ set the crown upon Arthur's head, and the people cheered him once more.
8. They had pitched their _____ not far from the castle where Launcelot had lodged.
9. Mordred was marching into the west country, _____ the lands of all those who would not fight for him.
10. One _____ spring day at the Feast of Easter there came a hermit into the great hall.
11. Percivale set out from Camelot in _____ of the Holy Grail.
12. With Sir Launcelot he would not _____, nor with Sir Gawain his brother.
13. The _____ brought out Gringalet, well fed and well groomed.
14. The _____ ceased from his tale, and a great silence was over all who sat in the great hall at Camelot.
15. This _____ was laid on me; that I should live beyond the span of mortal men to be the Priest of the Grail.

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Matching (30 points)

Match each quotation with its speaker. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left.

- | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------|
| A. Merlin | F. Naciens | K. Percivale |
| B. Launcelot | G. Ragnell | L. Gawain |
| C. Morgana | H. Enid | M. Green Knight |
| D. Bedivere | I. Tristram | N. Mordred |
| E. Guinevere | J. Galahad | O. Arthur |

- _____ 1. It were but evil pride in me to think I might succeed where so many noble knights have failed.
- _____ 2. I will not eat until the man that is under yonder bier shall eat likewise.
- _____ 3. Oh, I knew he would come! I knew he would come!
- _____ 4. This must be the Green Chapel!
- _____ 5. I would that you loved another; for by her very beauty shall come the end of Logres.
- _____ 6. Traitor knight! Coward! When I am whole again I will do battle with you once more.
- _____ 7. My time is short. But now, while yet I am with you, you may do me one last service.
- _____ 8. My words you may believe, for I am the Hermit of Carbonek.
- _____ 9. My brother Kay must have a sword.
- _____ 10. God keep you, my lovely Iseult the Fair.
- _____ 11. Lady Blanchefleur, I have loved you these many years.
- _____ 12. Ah, my dear lord King Arthur, what shall become of me now that you go and leave me here alone?
- _____ 13. Through Wales shall you seek me, and in the Forest of Wirral.
- _____ 14. I require a shield.
- _____ 15. Kiss me now, as a bridegroom should his bride.

Part II: True/False (30 points)

Mark each statement either T for true or F if any part is false.

- _____ 1. The Maid of the Grail marries the first Priest of the Grail.
- _____ 2. Vortigern is the first king to accept Arthur as high king of Logres.
- _____ 3. Merlin creates the round table to halt quarreling among the knights.
- _____ 4. Launcelot buries Guinevere at Glastonbury.
- _____ 5. Nimue places Arthur in his grave while he is still alive.
- _____ 6. Veiled women tend to Arthur's battle wounds on the way to Avalon.
- _____ 7. Iseult the Fair is unaware of the power of the wine.
- _____ 8. Launcelot falls through a trap door into a dungeon.
- _____ 9. Guinevere stands at the stake when Gawain condemns her to death for treason.
- _____ 10. Balyn shames his king by beheading the Lady of the Lake.
- _____ 11. Gareth feels belittled by the name "Beaumains."
- _____ 12. Merlin predicts that Arthur will never return from Avalon to power.
- _____ 13. At Dublin, Queen Isaud plots to poison King Mark of Cornwall.
- _____ 14. Geraint rescues Enid after Oringle strikes her in the face.
- _____ 15. Elaine's corpse on the barge causes Launcelot to confess his shame.

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III: Identification (10 points)

Identify the significance of these terms:

1. spear dripping blood
2. Mordred
3. Siege Perilous
4. Logres
5. Naciens

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

1. Describe the kidnap plot against Guinevere and her thanks to Launcelot for rescue.
2. Compare Elaine, Iseult of the White Hands, Guinever, and Morgana as wives.
3. Account for Gawain's great anger at Launcelot.
4. Describe the battle of Camlann.
5. Discuss the meaning and purpose of prophecy.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Multiple Choice (30 points)

Choose the answer that completes each statement. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. The flask from Dublin contains
- A. holy oil brought to England by Joseph of Arimathea.
 - B. a love potion.
 - C. a cure for King Pelles' wound.
 - D. water from the Lady of the Lake.
- _____ 2. Launcelot returns to
- A. claim Guinevere's corpse and bury it at Glastonbury.
 - B. Carlisle to confront Gawain at Joyous Garde.
 - C. Armorica and never sees Arthur again.
 - D. the battle of Camlann to challenge Mordred's killer.
- _____ 3. Bedivere disappoints Arthur by
- A. summoning Morgana to join the ladies on the barge.
 - B. leading the Procession of the Grail.
 - C. stealing the magic scabbard.
 - D. lying about returning Excalibur.
- _____ 4. At the crowning, Merlin joins
- A. Arthur's hand with that of Uther Pendragon.
 - B. the royal couple in wedlock.
 - C. the Archbishop of Canterbury.
 - D. the eastern and western realms of Logres.
- _____ 5. The Knight of the Green Chapel
- A. retrieves his head.
 - B. hides 20 knights in the dungeon.
 - C. rides on the woodsman's cart.
 - D. destroys the king's gold chalice.
- _____ 6. Saxons take
- A. Guinevere from Camelot.
 - B. advantage of the civil war.
 - C. Kent and Cornwall from Mordred's forces.
 - D. Gawain's corpse to Dover for burial.
- _____ 7. The law condemns
- A. Urry for cursing Launcelot.
 - B. the outlaws of Orkney.
 - C. the rule of Percivale and Blanchefleur at Carbonek.
 - D. Guinevere to death for treason.
- _____ 8. Launcelot needs
- A. a blessing from his father, King Pant.
 - B. to conceal Gareth under the name Beaumains.
 - C. Colgrevaunce's armor and weapons.
 - D. proof that the Holy Grail exists.
- _____ 9. Igrayne is the mother of
- A. Morgana le Fay.
 - B. Gorlois' only son.
 - C. the purest knight.
 - D. Ector's two sons.
- _____ 10. The fairies of Avalon
- A. make Excalibur.
 - B. cure Arthur of battle wounds.
 - C. place a death curse on Balyn.
 - D. summon the Black Knight.
- _____ 11. Merlin predicts
- A. the beheading of Urience by his wife.
 - B. the defeat of the Saxons on New Year's Day.
 - B. the capture of the Questing Beast.
 - D. the theft of Excalibur.
- _____ 12. Launcelot trades
- A. Armorica for Joyous Garde.
 - B. insults with the captor of Lionnes.
 - C. armor with Kay.
 - D. his seat for the Siege Perilous.
- _____ 13. Tristram disguises himself
- A. in Arthur's cloak.
 - B. as a minstrel.
 - C. with invisibility.
 - D. aboard the Enchanted Ship.
- _____ 14. Ragnell
- A. lies in north Wales.
 - B. helps Gawain face Gromer Somer Joure.
 - C. jousts against Pellinore.
 - D. saves a lady from the Dolorous Tower.
- _____ 15. In 454,
- A. Galahad finds the red cross shield in Camelot.
 - B. Joseph of Arimathea marks a shield with his blood.
 - C. Dindrane sails for Carbonek with Bors de Gannis.
 - D. a sword appears in a floating stone.

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part II: Completion (20 points)

Fill in the term that completes each statement. Place your answer in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. At a stone ____, Launcelot witnesses Naciens treating a wounded knight.
- _____ 2. With her _____, Dindrane heals a dying lady.
- _____ 3. In the Waste Lands, Gawain meets Hector, _____'s brother.
- _____ 4. Launcelot begs forgiveness for sinning against _____.
- _____ 5. _____ sits silently at dinner and partakes only of bread and water.
- _____ 6. Percivale recognizes Blanchefleur as the Grail _____.
- _____ 7. After _____ serves the sacrament, he dies and goes to heaven.
- _____ 8. After _____ kidnaps Guinevere, Launcelot finds her.
- _____ 9. After rescuing _____ from combat, Launcelot kills Gareth and Gaheris.
- _____ 10. Mordred claims Arthur's _____ as a symbol of royalty.

Part III: Identification (20 points)

Identify terms that describe Galahad. Place an X in the blanks at left.

- _____ 1. retreats to the Tower of London
- _____ 2. is knighted by his father
- _____ 3. joins Bors de Gannis and Percivale on the Enchanted Ship
- _____ 4. turns away from the Holy Grail
- _____ 5. predicts that the Round Table will lose its best knights
- _____ 6. defeats Percivale in battle
- _____ 7. studies under Naciens the Hermit
- _____ 8. defeats Launcelot
- _____ 9. leads the Procession of the Grail
- _____ 10. places Elaine's corpse on a barge

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

1. Contrast the powers of Naciens, Merlin, Nimue, and Morgana.
2. Describe Gareth's rise to knighthood.
3. Discuss the purpose of chivalry.
4. Summarize magical episodes in Arthurian lore.
5. Describe evidence of happy marriages among the characters.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1. scabbard | 6. portcullis | 11. quest |
| 2. churl | 7. archbishop | 12. joust |
| 3. vault | 8. pavilion | 13. squire |
| 4. brandished | 9. harrying | 14. minstrel |
| 5. chivalry | 10. blithe | 15. penance |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. L | 11. K |
| 2. H | 7. O | 12. D |
| 3. E | 8. F | 13. M |
| 4. L | 9. O | 14. J |
| 5. A | 10. I | 15. G |

Part II: True/False (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T | 11. F |
| 2. F | 7. T | 12. F |
| 3. T | 8. T | 13. F |
| 4. T | 9. F | 14. T |
| 5. F | 10. T | 15. T |

Part III: Identification (10 points)

- part of the Procession of the Grail as a remembrance of the wounding of Christ's side
- Arthur's nephew, who successfully destabilizes Camelot and ends his uncle's reign
- a seat at the Round Table reserved for a pure warrior
- Arthur's realm
- the hermit who orchestrates the recovery of the Holy Grail

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. B | 11. D |
| 2. A | 7. D | 12. C |
| 3. D | 8. C | 13. B |
| 4. C | 9. A | 14. B |
| 5. A | 10. A | 15. D |

Part II: Completion (20 points)

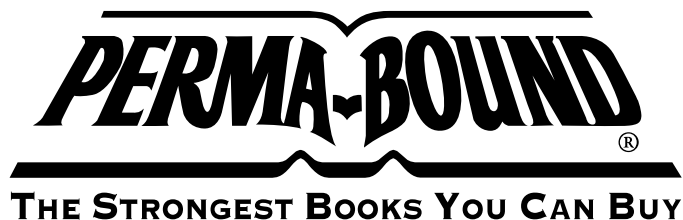
- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1. cross | 6. Maiden |
| 2. blood | 7. Galahad |
| 3. Launcelot | 8. Melliagraunce |
| 4. Elaine | 9. Guinevere |
| 5. Gawain | 10. crown |

Part III: Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. | 6. X |
| 2. X | 7. |
| 3. X | 8. X |
| 4. | 9. X |
| 5. | 10. |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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