



Getting Started

Let's get on to what awaits to be discovered about King Arthur and his times. First, you'll need to take note of what you already know about the Middle Ages. To start your notebook, brainstorm and write down whatever comes to your mind when you think of the Middle Ages. Fill a whole page if you can.

Now, look over these notes.

- ❑ You have probably mentioned castles, kings, knights, and ladies—and in your mind the knights are wearing shiny armor and the ladies are probably wearing cone-shaped hats on their heads.
- ❑ Perhaps you even listed something about dragons and wizards or sword-fighting and jousting.

That shouldn't be surprising. Images of the Middle Ages appear across our culture every day, in cartoons and computer games, in advertising, and in countless movies and books about legendary heroes such as Robin Hood and King Arthur and his knights. All children hear fairy tales about knights riding horses, slaying dragons, and rescuing damsels in distress. At some point in their lives, most children have played at sword fighting or have arrayed themselves in exotic dresses and placed ornaments on their heads, playing at being royalty. Maybe you've spent countless hours drawing battle scenes or have gone as far constructing catapults! Even though the age of chivalry ended more than 600 years ago, the Middle Ages still attracts our imaginations and holds special meanings.

Where do your images of the Middle Ages come from? Make a list of all the references you can think of, from pop culture to literature.

After studying the Middle Ages in this unit, your image of this era will surely be changed by your new knowledge. It will be interesting for you to look back at your first impressions at the end of the unit and to see how your knowledge of this era has evolved.

Next let's think a bit about heroes. In your notebook, make a chart with three columns headed:

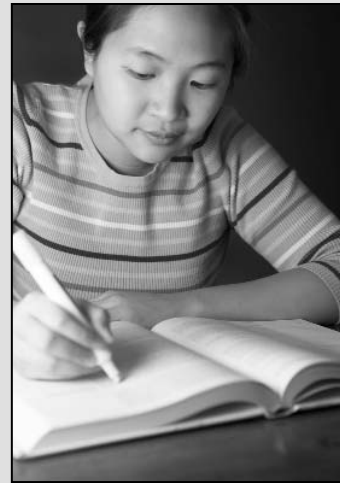
- ❑ Heroes
- ❑ Qualities
- ❑ Qualities in Common

In the first column (Heroes), list characters in films, books, and television shows, or people in history, whom you consider to be true heroes. In the second column (Qualities), list qualities that each of those characters or people have that you think make them heroic. Be sure to list these qualities separately for each character or person, and be as specific and complete as possible. Then in the third column (Qualities in Common), list all the qualities that at least two of your heroes have in common. This activity will provide you with a foundation for a definition of heroism which you will be referring to throughout the unit (when writing Final Journal entries at the end of each book).

Now that you have thought a while about the Middle Ages and about heroes, spend some time thinking about chivalry. In your notebook, make the heading Chivalry, and jot down all your impressions of what chivalry is. Most likely, you know less about this than about heroes. You may not have mentioned it at all above when putting down your impressions of the Middle Ages. Write down all your questions you have about chivalry. Doing this will give you an object for your own educational quest: to find answers to your questions. You will refer to these questions when writing each of your Final Journal entries. And you will be thinking of new ones all along the way. Remember, asking questions is the best way to begin discovering new things.

Skillbuilder: **Annotation**

Finally, arm yourself with pen, pencil, highlighter, and/or post-it notes. Why? Your challenge, should you choose to accept it, is to annotate the key topics mentioned on earlier pages as you read .



- ❑ Any time you see events, characters, settings, or other elements of the story that reference heroism, chivalry, the feudal system, knights, the quest, monarchy, women, the castle, daily life, and knowledge, make a note.
- ❑ Your notes can take the form of underlining, highlighting, numbering, questioning, or commenting. If you don't like writing on books, then use post-it notes or bookmarks. Use highlighting or other annotations in e-books.
- ❑ While this unit provides you with questions about the readings, we hope that you develop your own. Consider asking the kinds of questions listed below, and then be sure to take a stab at answering them yourself!
 - ❖ Dissection questions: What different aspects do you see in a character, a situation, or a setting?
 - ❖ Comparison questions: How do different characters compare?
 - ❖ Process questions: What are the different stages and steps of a process or an event?
 - ❖ Cause and effect questions: Why did this event occur? What were the causes and the effects? What are the motivations for a character to take a certain action?
 - ❖ Speculation questions: What if a different event took place? What if a character made a different choice?
 - ❖ Quality and worth questions: What is the quality or worth of something? How good is it? What standards are being used to judge it?
 - ❖ Ethics questions: Should certain choices be made? What is right? What is good? What is just? What is fair?
 - ❖ Empathy questions: If you were in the shoes of a certain character, how would you feel? How would you act? Why?

Now you are ready to begin
Discovering King Arthur: Medieval Mystery and Meaning.
Best of luck, young knights and ladies!



Part TWO

Lessons

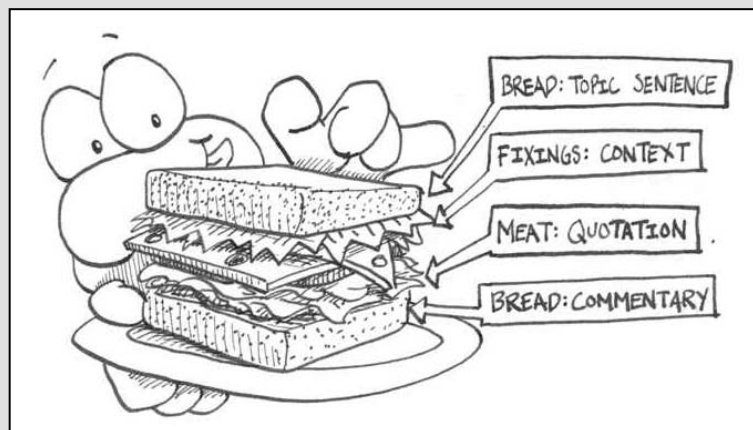
Now it's time to decide with your mentor which questions to answer and how you will answer them. We recommend a balance of written and spoken responses. Use the Scholar's TCQC Short Answer for written responses and try to combine all answers into a paragraph.

Writing a Scholar's TCQC Short Answer

A Scholar's TCQC Short answer is a short answer of 250 words or less that contains the following elements, just like a great sandwich:

- 1. Topic Sentence:** This is the summary sentence (sometimes two sentences) that mentions a general description of your response. You must find topic words that are comprehensive categories, summarizing your entire answer. Your topic sentence is a preview sentence that makes a promise about what the paragraph will discuss, which is your entire and complete answer. Sometimes it's a good idea to do this step last, since you may need to first look at your evidence (your quotations and paraphrases) before you summarize them.
- 2. Connectedness and Context:** This is a phrase or sentence that introduces each piece of evidence for your answer. You can't just list all your evidence like items on a grocery list; you must help the reader by transitioning into each detail. To connect sentences, you can use transitions such as “also,” in addition, however, etc. Your mentor can help you find a list of transitions at. Great context statements are “On page 5, author T. H. White mentions...” or other statements that help a reader understand the history and location of information in the paragraph.

- 3. Evidence: Quotations and Paraphrases:** These are all the specific details worth mentioning that prove your answer is true and that explain the categories mentioned in your topic sentence. You can quote the text directly or paraphrase it. If you quote, copy the quotation exactly and provide the page number where you found that quotation in parentheses. If you paraphrase, use your own words and write them in a different order than the original text. Then put a page number in parentheses right after your paraphrased sentence. Whenever you quote or paraphrase, you have to avoid plagiarism, which is also known as academic dishonesty. In other words, give credit to T. H. White, the original author of the text. You can use several quotations and paraphrases, but in 250 words, you will probably paraphrase more.
- 4. Commentary:** This is the elaboration on this quotation or paraphrase where you explain how your evidence proves your topic sentence. Connect any words from the quotation or paraphrase back to the topic sentence, or main idea, of this short answer paragraph. Commentary is also an opportunity to share interesting ideas that further analyze and evaluate the evidence you have found.
- 5. Keep in Mind...a Scholar's TCQC Short Answer is like a quadruple-decker sandwich!** You will repeat the context-connectedness-evidence layers again and again until the sandwich (paragraph) is done. You only need one topic sentence, but most people like to wrap up their sandwich summary with a final layer, a culminating sentence that sounds like the topic sentence.



Scholar's TCQC Short Answer Rubric

 *Note to mentors:* Evaluate the student's work based on

- ❑ The quality of the topic words in the topic sentence: Are they strong, comprehensive generalizations that include all the evidence? Is the topic sentence a preview of the whole paragraph?
- ❑ The flow of the paragraph: Do sentences connect well with transitions with one piece of evidence leading into another?
- ❑ The quality of the evidence: Has the writer chosen salient details that best represent the key facts? Has the writer balanced paraphrasing with quoting?
- ❑ The academic honesty: Does the writer follow the rules of citing as specified in the guidelines?
- ❑ The quality of the commentary: Has the student shared interesting insights about the evidence? Does the commentary connect the evidence to the topic sentence?



The Once and Future King

Lesson 1: The Sword in the Stone, Chapters 1–3

Reading Questions

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

- ❑ How would you compare and contrast the way Wart is treated with the way Kay is treated?
- ❑ How much are those differences based on who Kay's parents are and who Wart's parents are or are not?
- ❑ How do these differences show us the importance of family background to the feudal system?

KNIGHTS

- ❑ What traits does Wart have which will make him a better knight or hero than Kay?



- ❑ What traits does Kay have that will prevent him from becoming a great hero?
- ❑ How do you know these differences will affect these boys' futures?

THE QUEST

At the end of this segment, Wart says, "I must have been on a quest!"

- ❑ How does Wart know he has been on his first quest.
- ❑ What can we assume, based on Wart's first quest, are characteristics of all quests?

- ❑ What are your first impressions of King Pellinore?
- ❑ Why is King Pellinore on a quest for a beast he never catches or even comes close to catching?
- ❑ Based on King Pellinore's example, explain why might a knight go on a quest?
- ❑ How would you compare and contrast Pellinore's quest for the beast with Wart's quest for a tutor?

MONARCHY

Since we know that Wart's real name is Arthur, we can assume that he will grow up to be King Arthur.

- ❑ What do Wart's first adventures reveal about his personality?
- ❑ What traits does he show even at his young age that you think a good leader should have?

WOMEN

Very few women are present in this section.

- ❑ Based on what we do see, what kinds of jobs were available to women in the Middle Ages?
- ❑ Why do you think women weren't very visible in the world of knights and chivalry?
- ❑ Why would or wouldn't you have wanted to be a woman living in this time period?

THE CASTLE

- ❑ What are some reasons why the people who live in the castle, especially Sir Ector, so upset that Wart spent the night away from the castle?
- ❑ How does this reaction show that the castle is a safe place to be?
- ❑ How does the castle compare to homes of the current day in this respect?
- ❑ What are the mews, and why are they so important to the castle and to daily life there? How do the mews show that the castle is more than just a big house?

DAILY LIFE

- ❑ What activities does a normal day in the castle include for children of Wart's and Kay's age?
- ❑ Do their lives in the castle sound like a fun way to live?
- ❑ What are some of the advantages and some of the disadvantages for a child growing up in a castle like this one.
- ❑ Why would you want to live in a medieval castle environment or not live in one?

KNOWLEDGE

- ❑ What qualities does Merlyn have that make him a great wizard?
- ❑ How would you describe the relationship that Merlyn has with nature and with animals?
- ❑ How might this understanding of nature help make him a good wizard in the eyes of the people around him?

Journal

Use the questions below to help you get started on your journal reflection for this lesson. You may answer all the questions or focus on just one or two that interest you. Your journal entry should be written in paragraph form and should take up about one page.



- ❑ Even if we didn't know that Wart's real name is Arthur, what other clues do we have in this section that let us know Wart is destined to do greater things with his life than most people around him expect?
- ❑ How do you predict Merlyn will help Wart become more prepared for his future?
- ❑ How are the qualities of a good knight or monarch also valued in our leaders today? Use Wart's actions in this section to help you develop a definition of the code of chivalry.

The Once and Future King **Lesson 2: The Sword in the Stone, Chapters 4–7**

Reading Questions

Remember to use the Scholar's TCQC Short Answer format for some of these questions.

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

- ❑ List the different class levels for the fish in the moat. How would you describe these different class levels?
- ❑ What qualities define which fish is the leader and which fish are the followers?
- ❑ Among these, which fish would you most like to be and why?
- ❑ How does the division of classes of fish in the moat reflect the divisions among the people in Wart's world?

KNIGHTS

In chapter 7, we are given a great deal of information on the education of knights.

- ❑ What skills would knights need to learn in order to be successful?
- ❑ How does the match between Pellinore and Grummore show that these skills are important?
- ❑ Describe the ceremony and set of rules that Grummore and Pellinore are required to follow in their tournament. Why are these rules necessary? What character traits do they encourage?
- ❑ What do these rules tell us about the code of chivalry?

MONARCHY

- ❑ When Wart meets the king of the fish, why does the fish tell him “Might is Right”?
- ❑ What does the expression mean? Do you believe that this idea is true?
- ❑ How does Merlyn treat the smaller, less powerful fish when he asks for help with his sick mother?
- ❑ What does Merlyn's example teach Wart about being a good leader?
- ❑ Among the lessons Wart learns in the moat, which is the more important? Give reasons for your choice.

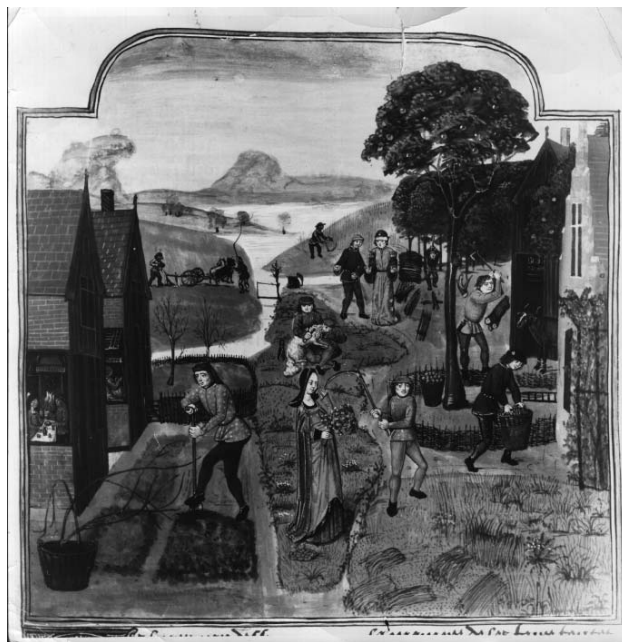
THE CASTLE

This chapter features a lengthy description of the parts of a castle. Look back at that description.

- ❑ Name, describe, and explain the purpose of each of the parts of the castle.
- ❑ Based on the presence of all of these parts, what can you infer about the functions of a castle? List those functions in order from most to least important.

DAILY LIFE

- ❑ What is daily life like in the castle as it is described in this section?
- ❑ How do the people of the castle provide for their basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and entertainment?
- ❑ How does the daily routine in the castle compare to your daily routine at home?



KNOWLEDGE

T.H White makes an important and fascinating change to traditional legend by having Merlyn educate Wart in the ways of the world through experiencing life with various animals.

- ❑ Why do you think Merlyn does this rather than simply teaching Wart himself?
- ❑ How are Merlyn's methods of teaching different from the methods of Wart's other teachers, such as his archery instructor?
- ❑ Which type of lessons do you think the people at the time would have found more important? Give evidence from the chapter and from your personal experiences to explain your response.

Journal

Use the questions below to help you get started on your journal reflection for this lesson. You may answer all the questions or focus on just one or two that interest you. Your journal entry should be written in paragraph form and should take up about one page.



- ❑ What traits does Wart think are important for making a good knight?
- ❑ How would you compare Wart's ideas about what makes a good knight with Merlyn's ideas and teachings about knighthood and leadership? Pay special attention to the conversations in chapter 7 between Wart and Merlyn.
- ❑ What can we add to our understanding of chivalry based on Merlyn's ideas about what makes a great knight?
- ❑ Is Merlyn right that chivalry is about more than just winning battles? Explain your conclusions.