

MAKING NEW WORDS YOUR OWN

Lesson 3 **CONTEXT: Literary Traditions and Beyond** *In Days of Old When Knights Were Bold*

Among the most popular figures in English literature are those of the legend of King Arthur. There may have been a real Arthur, but he would have had little to do with the Arthur of legend. Because the stories of Arthur and the knights of the Round Table have been retold by many writers for centuries, there are many versions of the stories of the king, of Queen Guinevere and Merlin, and of the court at Camelot. The most popular retelling in recent times has been *The Once and Future King*, by T. H. White (1906–1964).

In the following exercises, you will have the opportunity to expand your vocabulary by reading about the legend of Arthur. Below are ten vocabulary words that will be used in these exercises.

- | | | | | |
|----------|------------|----------|---------|-----------|
| amity | devout | medieval | prowess | sovereign |
| chivalry | hereditary | potion | quest | venerable |

EXERCISE 1 *Mapping*

Directions. In the item below, a vocabulary word is provided and used in a sentence. Take a guess at the word's meaning and write it in the box labeled **Your Guess**. Then look the word up in your dictionary and write the definition in the box labeled **Definition**. In the **Other Forms** box, write as many other forms of the word, such as adjective and noun forms, as you can think of or find in your dictionary.

Then, following the same procedure, draw your own map for each of the nine remaining vocabulary words. Use a separate sheet of paper.

1.

amity

→

According to legend, the residents of Camelot lived for many years in peace and **amity**. Eventually, however, that harmony was destroyed by bitterness and anger.

↓

Your Guess:

↓

Definition:

Other Forms:

←

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EXERCISE 2 *Context Clues* 

Directions. Scan the definitions in Column A. Then think about how the boldface words are used in the sentences in Column B. To complete the exercise, match each definition in Column A with the correct vocabulary word in Column B. Write the letter of your choice on the line provided; then write the vocabulary word on the line preceding the definition.

COLUMN A

- _____ 11. word: _____
n. bravery; daring; strength; unusual skill or ability
- _____ 12. word: _____
adj. deserving respect because of age, dignity, or character; honored above others; worthy of reverence
- _____ 13. word: _____
adj. belonging to the Middle Ages; characteristic of the Middle Ages; gothic
- _____ 14. word: _____
adj. of or passed down by inheritance from an ancestor; transmitted from parent to child
- _____ 15. word: _____
n. friendship; peaceful relations, as between countries
- _____ 16. word: _____
n. a liquid with special powers, especially one used as poison, medicine, or magic
- _____ 17. word: _____
adj. deeply religious; sincere; earnest; heartfelt
- _____ 18. word: _____
n. a medieval code of knighthood; a code of honor and courtesy
- _____ 19. word: _____
n. a ruler; king; queen; emperor;
adj. highest in power or rank
- _____ 20. word: _____
n. a hunt or search; a journey in search of adventure or a sacred or magical object
v. to go in search

COLUMN B

- (A) Sir Galahad, perhaps the most faithful and **devout** knight in Camelot, was also the purest of heart.
- (B) The code of **chivalry** required that Sir Gawain accept the challenge of the Green Knight, but it took exceptional courage to fight a being who could carry his head in his hands!
- (C) Even though Arthur was able to pull the sword *Excalibur* from the stone, many nobles at first refused to accept him as their **sovereign** ruler. However, he was eventually crowned king.
- (D) Merlin was a mighty magician whose **pro prowess** with magic was known far and wide; few others possessed his skill.
- (E) When the wounded Arthur left Camelot, he ordered Sir Bedivere to throw Excalibur, that **venerable** magic weapon that had served him so well, into the lake.
- (F) King Arthur chose a round table in order to promote **amity**. He did not want the knights fighting over who had the place of honor at the head of the table.
- (G) When Lancelot goes on a **quest** for the Holy Grail, he discovers that it is not his destiny to find it.
- (H) Princess Elaine's beauty and Sir Lancelot's courage prove to be **hereditary**: Galahad inherits his mother's looks and his father's bravery.
- (I) No tale in all of **medieval** literature is sadder than that of the Lily Maid of Astolat who dies for the love of Sir Lancelot. In the Middle Ages, few stories had happy endings.
- (J) Morgan le Fay, Arthur's sister, has magic powers. In some versions of the tales, she uses her spells and **potions** for good, but in other versions her charms are spoken and her liquids brewed primarily for evil.

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EXERCISE 3*Sentence Completion* 

Directions. For each of the following items, circle the letter of the choice that best completes the meaning of the sentence or sentences.

21. The code of _____ required that a knight respect his _____ above all other people.
 (A) prowess . . . potion
 (B) chivalry . . . sovereign
 (C) amity . . . quest
 (D) prowess . . . amity
 (E) chivalry . . . devotion
22. Guinevere is _____ and earnest in her regret for betraying Arthur.
 (A) sovereign
 (B) medieval
 (C) devout
 (D) venerable
 (E) hereditary
23. Like many other stories of the _____ period, the tales of Camelot inspired the knights of the Middle Ages.
 (A) sovereign
 (B) hereditary
 (C) devout
 (D) medieval
 (E) chivalric
24. The evil Modred did have some _____ rights to the throne of Camelot. In some versions of the tale he is Arthur's nephew, and in others he is Arthur's son.
 (A) sovereign
 (B) medieval
 (C) devout
 (D) hereditary
 (E) venerable
25. Morgan le Fay gave Lancelot a _____ to drink that caused him to fall into a deep sleep and allowed her to remove the ring that Guinevere had given him.
 (A) potion
 (B) prowess
 (C) quest
 (D) sovereign
 (E) chivalry
26. One might expect military _____ to be an important part of _____ since the code required knights to protect others.
 (A) prowess . . . sovereign
 (B) quests . . . sovereigns
 (C) chivalry . . . prowess
 (D) chivalry . . . amity
 (E) prowess . . . chivalry
27. When the knights set forth from Camelot on their _____, they often endured great hardships for the sake of their beloved _____, King Arthur.
 (A) quests . . . chivalry
 (B) chivalry . . . prowess
 (C) sovereigns . . . amity
 (D) potions . . . quest
 (E) quests . . . sovereign
28. Although Arthur was upset when Sir Lancelot betrayed him, the king eventually regained a feeling of _____ toward his old friend.
 (A) prowess
 (B) amity
 (C) sovereign
 (D) quest
 (E) chivalry
29. Even though he makes some foolish mistakes, King Arthur is well-respected; in fact, he is one of the most _____ of legendary English _____.
 (A) sovereign . . . potions
 (B) venerable . . . quests
 (C) venerable . . . sovereigns
 (D) medieval . . . quests
 (E) hereditary . . . sovereigns
30. After he went out to _____ for the Holy Grail, the _____ Sir Percival returned to become an even more devoted monk.
 (A) prowess . . . venerable
 (B) quest . . . devout
 (C) chivalry . . . devout
 (D) potion . . . venerable
 (E) quest . . . medieval

