

A Life of Legend

Once upon a time, in a place that is now Wales, a baby boy was born. His name was Arthur. He was the first son of King Uther Pendragon, and he was heir to the throne. But times were dangerous. Britain was not united, and many groups were fighting. The king was worried that the baby would be killed.

The king's advisor, a wise magician named Merlin, suggested that Arthur be taken away from his family. For his safety, his identity was kept a secret. Even Arthur himself didn't know that he was the prince.

When the king died, Merlin used his magic to put a sword in a stone. He named the sword Excalibur. He said that whoever could pull it out would be crowned king. Many people tried, but none had the strength to pull the sword from the stone. Until, one day, Arthur accidentally pulled out Excalibur to help someone in need. Arthur became King.

Arthur ruled for many years. He called his kingdom Camelot. He was a kind and benevolent king who united the warring groups and brought peace and prosperity to the realm. He married a queen named Guinevere and ruled with the help of his knights.

Two of the most famous knights were called Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawain. They accompanied Arthur on quests, such as the quest to find the

Holy Grail. They were known as the Knights of the Round Table, because they held their meetings at a round table. The shape of the table symbolized equality.

Arthur eventually died in a swordfight with his nephew, Mordred. Many tales have been told about his life. There is even a legend that he will rise again.

Is this story history or a fairy tale? Most scholars believe that the story is fiction. But there are some people who think King Arthur was real. If so, who was he? And where was Camelot? There are several theories. One theory says that he was King Alfred the Great of Winchester. Another thinks he was a descendent of King Cole in Cornwall. We may never know the truth for sure. But whatever the answer, it's fun to learn about the legend of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. We can all hope to find a peaceful and prosperous place like Camelot someday!



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. Which of the following is NOT a reason that Arthur was taken from his family?
 - a. Because Merlin advised that he be raised in secret
 - b. Because Uther Pendragon was afraid he would be killed
 - c. Because he could not pull the sword from the stone
 - d. Because Britain was not united and people were fighting

2. Which of the following is NOT a possible location of the real Camelot?
 - a. Wales
 - b. Cornwall
 - c. Winchester
 - d. Excalibur

3. Why do you think Merlin used his magic to put the sword in the stone?
 - a. Because he wanted Arthur to take his rightful place as king
 - b. Because he wanted to make it really hard to be king
 - c. Because he liked casting spells
 - d. Because he was wise

4. Why do you think the round table symbolized equality?
 - a. Because it was shaped like the sun
 - b. Because no one was at the head of the table, everyone had an equal space
 - c. Because it had no edges
 - d. Because it was made from wood instead of metal

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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