

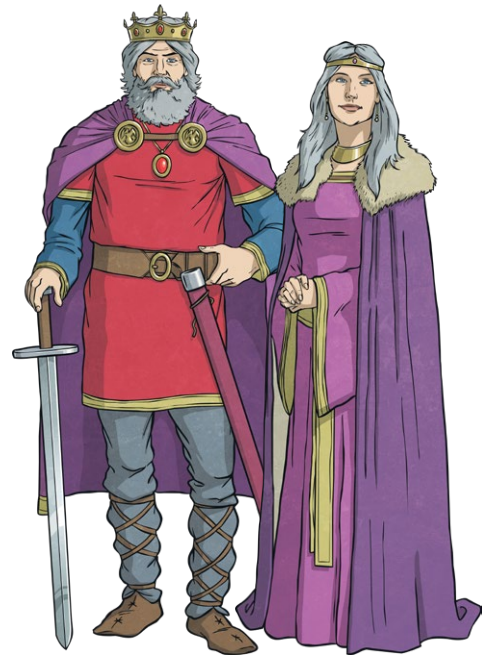
The Legend of King Arthur

Many hundreds of years ago, King Uther of the Britons and his wife Lady Igraine had a son called Arthur. Because of the many wars with the Saxons, Uther gave his son to Merlin so that he could be raised in safety. Merlin gave him to Sir Ector, who raised him in the safety of the countryside.

When King Uther died, nobody knew that he had a son. Therefore, there was much arguing about who should be the next High King of the Britons.

At this time, a mysterious stone appeared outside St Paul's Cathedral in London. An enormous sword was sticking out of the stone with a message on it. The message said that whoever pulled the sword out of the stone was the rightful High King of the Britons. Although many tried, no one could pull the sword from the stone.

When Arthur was fifteen years old he went to St. Paul's Cathedral. When he saw the stone, he approached it and pulled the sword out easily! Soon after, Arthur was crowned High King of Britain and his father's old wizard, Merlin, became his advisor.



The Saxons were still battling against the Britons at this time. Therefore, Merlin took Arthur to see the Lady of the Lake who gave Arthur a sword named 'Excalibur'. With the help of Excalibur, and his trusted knights, Arthur defeated many Saxons and Britain became a peaceful land.

Arthur settled in Camelot and hosted his royal court there. He married a beautiful princess called Guinevere. Arthur and Guinevere were given a large round table, which Arthur used to meet with his bravest and most-trusted knights. These knights were known as 'Knights of the Round Table' and were adventurous and brave. The bravest knight of all was Sir Lancelot.



Sir Lancelot and Guinevere fell in love and would meet secretly, away from the palace. When Arthur discovered this, Sir Lancelot and Guinevere escaped to Brittany. Arthur pursued them, leaving Mordred, one of his trusted knights, in charge of his kingdom while he was gone. Arthur found and killed Sir Lancelot and sent Guinevere to a nunnery.

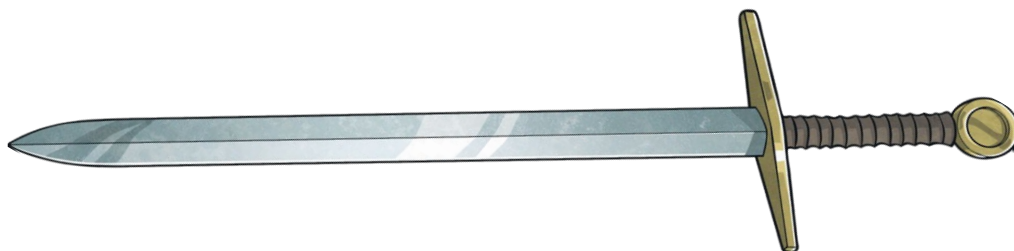
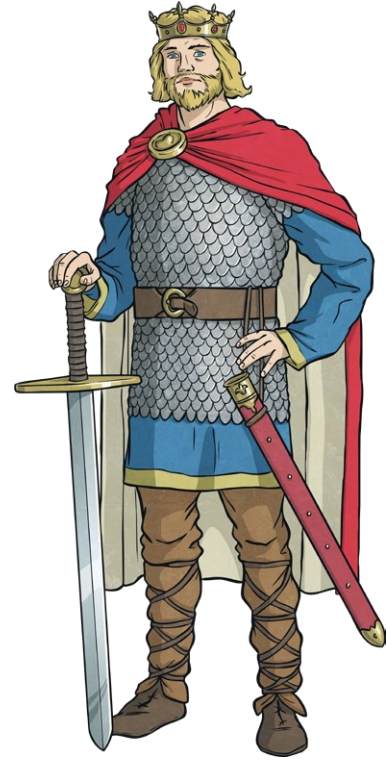
While Arthur was away, Mordred declared himself High King and built his own army. Upon his return, Arthur's army battled with Mordred's. Arthur finally killed Mordred with his sword, Excalibur.

Unfortunately, Arthur himself was badly wounded. He knew he would die very soon, so he gave Excalibur to his knight, Sir Bedivere, and told him to return it to the Lady in the Lake.

Sir Bedivere could not bear to throw Excalibur into the lake and so he hid it instead. When he returned to Arthur, he told him that he had thrown it into the lake. Arthur did not believe him and ordered him again to return Excalibur to the lake. As Sir Bedivere threw Excalibur, he was astonished to see a hand emerge from the water to catch the sword. It was the hand of the Lady of the Lake.

When he returned to Arthur, he told him what he had seen. Arthur knew then that Excalibur had been returned to the Lady of the Lake.

Arthur was placed in a boat which sailed away to the isle of Avalon. His body was never recovered. According to legend, he is awaiting the call of the Britons, ready to return in their time of greatest need.



Questions

1. Who was Arthur's father? Tick **one**.

- Merlin
- Sir Ector
- King Uther
- Sir Lancelot

2. Explain why nobody knew who the next High King of the Britons should be once King Uther died.

3. Where did the sword in the stone appear?

4. **Find** and **copy** a word which shows us **how** Arthur pulled the sword from the stone.

5. Explain why the Lady of the Lake gave Arthur Excalibur.

6. What did Arthur host at Camelot?

7. Explain why Sir Lancelot and Guinevere ran away to Brittany.

8. Who did Arthur entrust his kingdom to while he was away? Tick **one**.

- Merlin
- Mordred
- Sir Bedivere
- Excalibur

9. Why do you think Arthur commanded that Excalibur be thrown into the lake.
