

from **Sir Gawain and the Green Knight**
Medieval Legend Retold by Michael Morpurgo

Is CHIVALRY dead?

COMMON CORE

RL 1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RL 10 Read and comprehend literature.

In the ninth century, chivalry was a set of rules that gave knights guidance about how to engage in battle, how to serve rulers, and how to behave toward women. Today *chivalry* refers to the personal qualities that were important to knights: bravery, honor, courtesy, and service. In this legend, an act of chivalry gets one knight into a terrible predicament.

SURVEY In our rough-and-tumble modern world, does chivalry still exist? Conduct a survey to find out how often your peers witness people acting chivalrously. Use your results to discuss what modern people are doing well and what they could do better.

	<i>Often</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Never</i>
<i>Sacrificing for Others</i>			
<i>Keeping Promises</i>			
<i>Being Polite</i>			



Meet the Author

Michael Morpurgo

born 1943

Storyteller with Heart

When Michael Morpurgo became a teacher, one of his favorite parts of the job was making up stories for his students. Their interest convinced him that he could become a writer. Now the British author has published over 50 books. In his spare time, Morpurgo runs three farms in England, where kids from the city can stay. In 2003, he was named the third Children's Laureate of England.

BACKGROUND TO THE LEGEND

The Chivalric Code

In the Middle Ages, young men from well-to-do families often became knights. As knights, they served a family of a higher social rank. Knights were expected to be extremely courteous and brave, as well as loyal to their lords.

Knights of the Round Table

Stories of Arthur were first told before the age of chivalry, but during the Middle Ages, the stories changed. Arthur and his followers began to be pictured as knights who lived in an ideal kingdom called Camelot. An English writer, Sir Thomas Malory, wrote about the Round Table, where the knights sat in perfect equality.

● TEXT ANALYSIS: CULTURAL VALUES IN LEGENDS

Most popular movies focus on a hero—a person who is unusually brave. Long before people filmed stories or wrote them down, a hero was often the basis for a legend.

In a legend, the hero's main traits usually reflect the **cultural values** of the society, or the standards of behavior the society wants to promote. In medieval Arthurian legends, knights and their code of chivalry represent these ideals, which may also be themes in the story:

- Be loyal to those you serve and be courteous to all.
- Always be truthful and keep your word.
- Face danger with courage and show mercy to the weak.

As you read, look for examples of chivalry.

● READING STRATEGY: PREDICT

Predicting is making a reasonable guess about what will happen next in a story. To predict, follow these steps:

- Ask yourself, "What do I know about the characters and plot?"
- Combine your answers with your own experience, and make a logical guess about what might happen next.
- Adjust your prediction as new information is presented.

As you read, track your predictions on a chart.

Text Evidence	Prediction	What Happens
King Arthur wishes for a challenge.		

▲ VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

The words listed help describe a knight and his challenge. In your *Reader/Writer Notebook*, write a sentence for each of the vocabulary words. Use a dictionary or the definitions in the following selection pages to help you.

WORD LIST

cumbersome	integrity	sever
daunting	lanky	unperturbed
demeaning	revere	

Author
Online



Go to thinkcentral.com.
KEYWORD: HML7-691



Complete the activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.



Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

Retold by Michael Morpurgo

It was Christmas time at Camelot, that time of the year when all King Arthur's Knights gathered to celebrate the birth of their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. For fifteen joyous days, after holy Mass each morning there was nothing but feasting and dancing and singing, and hunting and jousting too. Jousting was the favorite sport, each Knight striving to unseat the mighty Sir Lancelot—but rarely succeeding of course. And all was done in fun, in a spirit of great comradeship, for they were happy to be all together once more at this blessed time. During the year, these lords were often parted from one another, and from their ladies, as they rode
10 out through the kingdom on their dangerous missions. So this was a time when love and friendship were renewed, a time to celebrate with their young King all their achievements and their great and good purpose: to bring peace to the land, and make of it a kingdom as near to a heaven on earth as had never before been achieved in Britain, or in any other land, come to that. **A**

Analyze Visuals ►

How does the knight in this painting **compare** with your image of a knight?

A CULTURAL VALUES

Reread lines 10–15. On the basis of this description, what can you **infer** about the kind of behavior people admired during the Middle Ages?



On New Year's Eve, after evening Mass had been said in the chapel and generous New Year's gifts exchanged, the High King and Guinevere,¹ his Queen, came at last into the great hall where all the lords and ladies were waiting to dine. No one could begin the feasting until they came, of course, so as you can imagine, the lords and ladies cheered them to the rafters when they saw them. Guinevere had never looked so gloriously beautiful as she did that evening, and there were gasps of admiration from around the hall.

With Arthur on one side of her and Gawain² on the other, Guinevere sat down at the high table, which was set on a splendid dais draped all about with silk and richly hung with the finest tapestries from Toulouse³ and Turkestan.⁴ Then, with drummers drumming and pipers piping, the servants came in carrying the food on great silver plates, piling each table high with roasted meat, capons and venison and pork, and fish fresh-baked in sea salt, and baskets of crusty bread, and steaming soups too. Truly there was enough to feed five thousand, but there were only five hundred there to eat it. As they poured out the wine and ale, filling every goblet to the brim, the scents of the feast that lay before them filled the air with succulence,⁵ and their nostrils too, so that, their appetites whetted, they were all longing now to begin. But the High King and his Queen sat there, not touching their food, or their drink either. Everyone knew that if they did not begin, then out of respect nor could anyone else. And everyone knew also why it was that the king was refusing to let the feast begin.

The great hall fell silent as Arthur rose to his feet. "You know the custom," he began. "I will not take one mouthful, or one sip of wine, until I am told of some new and stirring tale, some wonderfully outlandish adventure, some extraordinary feat of arms so far unheard of. And it must be true too. I don't want you to go making it up just so you can get at the food—some of you are good at the tall stories." They laughed at that, but as they looked around, it became clear that none of them had a tale to tell. "What?" cried the High King. "What? Not one of you? Well then, I see we must all go hungry. Such a pity. Isn't it strange how food you cannot eat always smells so wonderful? It needn't be a story, of course. It could be some new happening, some weird and wondrous event. If I can't have a story, then you'd better hope, as I do, that maybe

VISUAL VOCABULARY



dais (dā'īs) *n.* a raised platform for speakers or honored guests

Language Coach

Homophones

Homophones are words that sound the same but have different spellings and meanings. In line 33, the word *scents*, which means "smells or aromas," is a homophone of *cents*, which means "more than one penny."

1. **Guinevere** (gwīn'ə-vīr').

2. **Gawain** (gə-wān').

3. **Toulouse** (tōō-lōōz').

4. **Turkestan** (tūr'kī-stān'): During the Middle Ages, trade occurred between Britain and many countries in Asia. Tapestries from the historical region Turkestan were prized objects that only the wealthy could afford.

5. **succulence**: juiciness and tastiness.

some stranger will come striding in here right now and challenge us face to face. That would do. I'd be happy with that. Then we could all begin our feasting before the food gets cold." And with that, he sat down. **B**

At that very same moment, just as the High King had finished speaking, they heard a sudden roaring of wind, the rattle of doors and windows shaking, and then outside, the clatter of a horse's hooves on stone. The great doors burst open, and into the hall rode the most awesome stranger anyone there had ever set eyes on. For a start, he was
60 a giant of a man, taller by two heads than any knight there, but not **lanky** and long, not at all. No, shoulder to shoulder he was as broad as any three men stood side by side, and his legs were massive—like tree trunks they were. And you could see the man's arms were about as thick and strong as his legs. But that wasn't all. This giant was green, green from head to toe. Yes, bright green, I tell you, as green as beech leaves in summer when the sun shines through. And when I say the man was green, I don't just mean his clothes. I mean him. His face. Green. His hands. Green. The hair that hung down to his shoulders. Green. Only his eyes, horror of horrors, glowed red, blood red and glaring from under his
70 heavy eyebrows, which were as green as the rest of him. Everyone in that hall simply gaped at him, at his hugeness and his greenness, and at his grimness too, for the man had a thunderous scowl on his face that struck terror into every heart.

Grim he may have been, but the giant was gorgeous too—if such an apparition can ever be said to be gorgeous. He wore a tunic of green velvet with buttons of gleaming gold. Stirrups and spurs were all of gold, both encrusted with the brightest emeralds of the deepest green. And his horse! His warhorse was a monster of a creature—he had to be, just to carry this giant. The horse was green too, green from nose to hoof, from
80 mane to tail. He was pawing at the ground, tossing his head, foaming at his bit; at least the foam was white. And he looked just as bad-tempered as his master. They suited each other, those two. **C**

Yet fierce though he seemed, the Knight in green wore no war helmet and no armor either. He held no shield before him, and carried no spear, not even a sword at his side. Instead, the hand clutching the reins held a sprig of holly—green naturally—which might have been laughable had everyone not already noticed what he was carrying in his other hand. It was an ax, but it was no ordinary battle-ax. This weapon was a real head cruncher, yet the handle was most delicately carved—bright green
90 of course, as was the cord that looped about it and the tassels that hung from it. Only the huge blade itself was not green. Curved like a crescent moon at the cutting edge, it was made of polished steel—a hideous

B PREDICT

Reread lines 40–54.
Why does Arthur refuse to let the feast begin?
Predict what will happen next.

lanky (lǎng'kē) *adj.*
tall and thin

C CULTURAL VALUES

Recall what you've learned about knights and chivalry. Does the Green Knight seem like a chivalrous type? As you read, note how chivalry influences his behavior and the reactions of others.

widow maker if ever there was one. Even the dogs, usually so fierce with any stranger, shrank back whining under the tables, their tails between their legs.

There came no cheery New Year greeting from this green man, not even a ghost of a smile. In a thunderous, booming voice as terrifying as the man himself, he said, “So, who’s in charge here?” No one answered him. “Well, come on. Speak up. Which of you is the King? It’s him I’ve come to talk to, no one else.” But as he rode around the hall, his blazing eyes scanning the lords and ladies on every side, no one spoke up. And you can understand why. Many of the knights sitting there in that hushed hall had come across all kinds of astounding and alarming looking creatures on their quests⁶—dragons and monsters, goblins and ghouls—but never anything quite like this. Most sat there stunned to silence. Others kept quiet out of respect for their High King, wanting to hear how he would reply.

No one doubted for a moment that he would have the courage to speak up, and so he did. Indeed, as he rose to his feet, he was smiling broadly. After all, hadn’t he just been hoping for such a happening as this? “Welcome to Camelot, Sir Knight,” he began. “I am the King you are looking for, I think. My name is Arthur. Believe me, you could not have arrived at a better moment. So please dismount and join our New Year’s feasting, and afterward you can tell us perhaps why you have come here to our court.” **D**

The knight in green rode toward the dais and spoke directly to the High King, but more courteously now. “My thanks, great King. But I will not stay, or keep you from your feasting. I will speak my purpose plainly. I cannot tell you how honored I am to meet you at last, the great Arthur, High King of all Britain. I have heard, as all the world has heard,

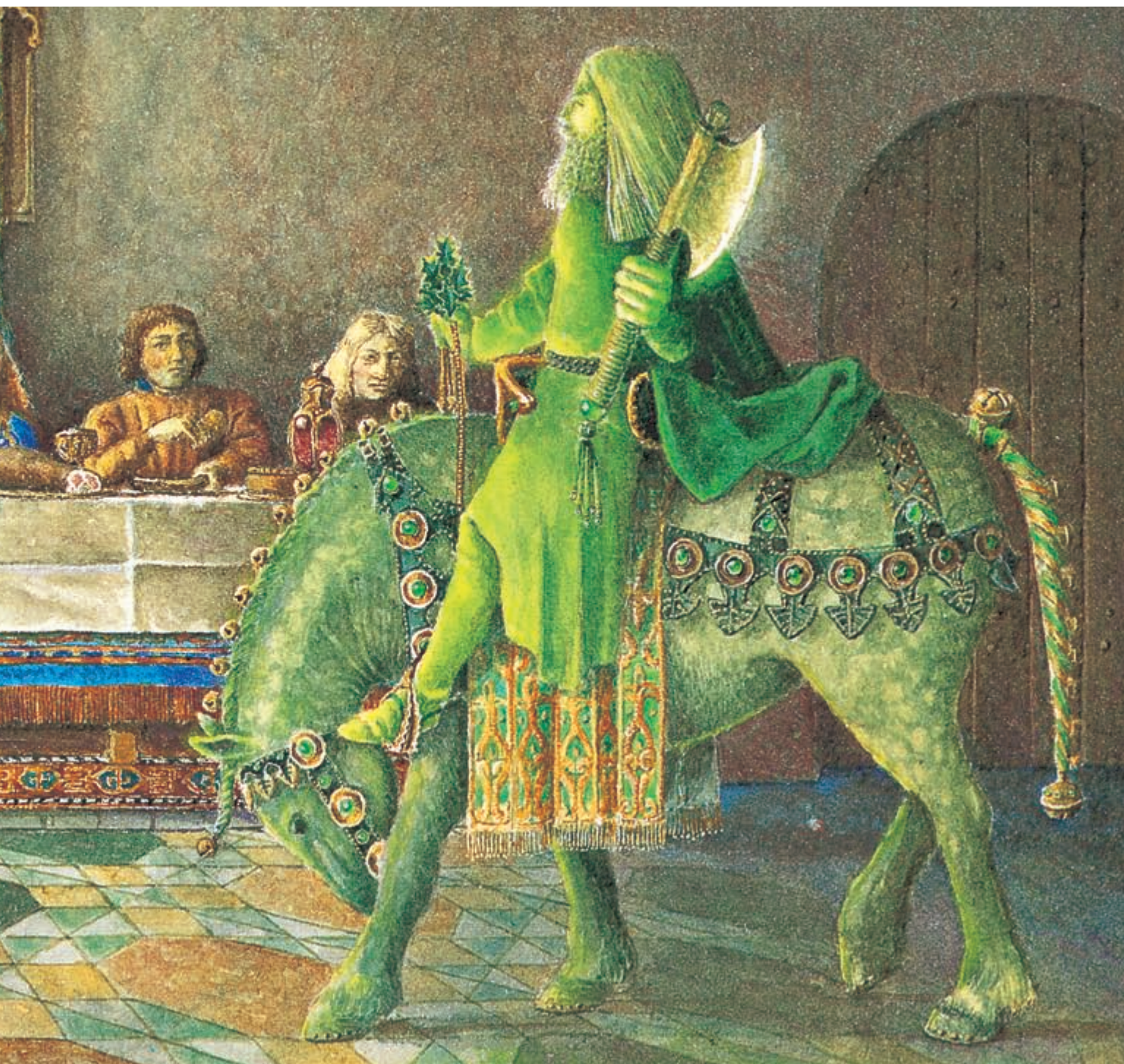


D CULTURAL VALUES

Reread lines 116–127.

What can you **infer** about how people in the Middle Ages believed guests should be treated?

6. **quests:** adventurous journeys made by knights.



how you have made of this place the most wondrous kingdom on earth, and gathered around you the most worthy, courageous, and chivalrous knights that ever lived. Looking around me, I begin to wonder whether you deserve this glowing reputation at all. I mean no offense, great King. As you can see from the sprig of holly I carry, I came in peace. If it were otherwise, I'd be armed for a fight, would I not? But you see no armor on me, no helmet, no sword or spear, because it is not war I come for, but sport—well, a sport of sorts, anyway.” **E**

E PREDICT

As you read, check your predictions against what actually happens. Did the prediction you made on page 695 come true?

“If it’s jousting you’re looking for,” the High King replied as politely as his irritation would allow, “or wrestling maybe, then **daunting** though you may look, Sir Knight, you’ll find no lack of sport here, I assure you.”

“But I joust and wrestle only with men,” replied the Green Knight. “I see here nothing but beardless boys. It would be no contest. None of you would stand a chance against me. No, I have in mind something much more testing of a man’s courage, and much more interesting for everyone. But I cannot imagine there will be anyone here brave enough to take me on.”

150 “We’ll see about that,” the High King cried, his face flushing with sudden anger at the stranger’s insulting tone. “Just get on with it for goodness’ sake and tell us what game it is you want to play. Our soup is getting cold.”

The Green Knight laughed. “Why don’t we just call it a New Year’s game,” he said. “I don’t think any of you will ever have played it before, and nor have I. We’ll soon see what stuff your Knights of the Round Table are made of, whether you’re all you’re cracked up to be.” So saying, he held high his great ax. “Here is my battle-ax,” he went on. “Is there anyone here in this hall brave enough to take it, I wonder? Whoever does will have
160 one chance, and one chance only, to strike my head from my shoulders. I shall not resist or fight back. I shall not even flinch, I promise.”

“Is that the game?” the High King asked, as incredulous as everyone else in the hall.

“Not quite,” replied the Green Knight. “Here’s how the game goes. If any Knight has the courage to take up the challenge, then he will have to promise, on his honor, that in a year and a day from now he will submit himself to . . . let’s call it a return match, shall we? Then it will be my turn to strike the same single blow, and it will be one of you who has to kneel there, bare his neck, and take it—without resisting, without
170 flinching. Well, who dares?” **F**

If there was a hushed silence when he first came into the hall, the place was now as still as death as he glared all around, waiting for someone to speak up. But even the bravest of the Knights lowered their eyes. This was one challenge they all wanted to avoid if they could. The Green Knight ♦ wheeled his great warhorse and clattered around the hall, looking down at them, a supercilious sneer on his lips. “I thought so, I thought so,” he said, his mocking laughter ringing in the air. “Where’s your courage now? Where’s that spotless honor, that perfect chivalry I’ve heard so much about? Is there no one here who has the stomach to take me on?” Still no
180 one spoke. “Chickens, the lot of you. Worse than chickens too. At least

daunting (dôn’tĩng) *adj.*
frightening; intimidating
daunt *v.*

F PREDICT

Use what you know about the **plot** and **characters** to predict what you think will happen next.

♦ **GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT**

In line 174, *if they could* is a dependent clause. It has been added to an independent clause to form a complex sentence.

chickens cluck. I can see I'm in the wrong place. This can't be the court of King Arthur. It's a court of cowards." **G**

Stung to fury now, the High King had had enough. "Cease your insults!" he shouted. "None of us here is frightened of you. We're just speechless at the sheer stupidity of such a ridiculous duel. It's obvious that with an ax like that, whoever strikes the first blow is bound to be the winner. But since you insist upon it and are so brash and rude, I shall take up your challenge myself. So get down off that horse, hand me your ax, and I'll give you what you asked for." And with that, King Arthur

190 sprang down from the dais and strode across the hall toward the Green Knight, who dismounted and at once handed over his ax. "Make yourself ready, then," cried the High King, swinging the ax above his head, testing his grip, feeling the weight and balance of the weapon. The Green Knight looked on. He stood head and shoulders above the King, dwarfing him utterly. **Unperturbed** by the swishing ax, the Green Knight turned down the neck of his tunic and made himself ready.

At that moment, Gawain stood up. "No!" he cried. And leaving the table, he hurried across the hall to his uncle's aid. He bowed low before him. "Let me take your place, Uncle. Give me this fight, please, I beg
200 you. I shall teach this green and haughty man that in a fight there are no Knights braver than your own. It is true that I am no braver than any other man here, I know that, but I am your nephew. Make this an uncle's gift to his nephew. Because the truth is, good Uncle, that if I do lose my life, I would not be much missed compared to you. You are our King, and this is too silly, too **demeaning** a venture for you. Lose you and we lose the kingdom. Lose me and there will always be others to come in my place." **H**

"For goodness' sake, make up your minds," said the Green Knight, shaking his head, "I do not have all day."

210 Ignoring the man's boorishness, Gawain knelt before the King. "Let me prove myself worthy, Uncle, worthy of being your Knight and your nephew too." There was much applause at this and many loud voices raised in support of Sir Gawain's plea. After thinking for a while, the High King lifted his hand for silence, and taking Gawain's hand, helped him to his feet. "As you wish, Nephew," he said. "There's nothing I'd like better than to separate this man's great green head from his great green shoulders, but I willingly give the task to you. Strike boldly, Nephew. If you do, I really cannot see, short of a miracle, how you will ever have to face him again in a year and a day. Here's the ax. You'll find it a bit
220 heavy and **cumbersome**, but it'll do the job."

G CULTURAL VALUES

On the basis of what you've read so far, is the Green Knight chivalrous? Explain why or why not.

unperturbed

(ŭn'pər-tŭrbd') *adj.* not troubled or distressed

demeaning

(dĭ-mē'nĭng) *adj.* lowering one's dignity or standing **demean** *v.*

H CULTURAL VALUES

How does Gawain demonstrate that he is chivalrous? Explain.

cumbersome

(kŭm'bər-səm) *adj.* awkward; hard to manage

Gawain took the ax from him, gripped it firmly and turned now to face the Green Knight, who stood towering above him, his hands on his hips. To everyone there they looked like David and Goliath—and all were hoping and praying for the same unlikely outcome. “So,” said the giant Knight, “so we have a champion at last. Let’s get on with it. But before we do I must know your name and make sure we both understand and agree on the rules of the game.” **I**

“My name is Sir Gawain, and I already know the rules of your foolish game,” came the blunt reply.

230 “Good Sir Gawain, I’m glad it is you,” said the Green Knight then, altogether more polite now than he had been so far. “I’ll be honored to take the first blow from a knight as noble and worthy as yourself, for you are known and **revered** throughout all Britain as a man of not only the greatest courage, but also the greatest **integrity**. Believe me, you will need both, and in full measure, for what I have in store for you. And just so there can be no misunderstanding, you must promise on your honor, and in the hearing of everyone in this hall, that a year and a day from now you will seek me out and find me so that I can pay you back in kind for whatever you do to me today.”

240 “I promise you willingly, on my honor as a Knight of the Round Table,” Gawain replied. “But how shall I be able to find you? I don’t even know your name or from what part of the country you come. Just tell me, and I’ll be there—you have my word.” **J**

“Afterward I shall tell you all you need to know,” said the Green Knight. “Once you have done your worst, I’ll tell you exactly where to come and who I am.” And with a smile that sent shivers even into brave Gawain’s heart, the Green Knight went on, “I’ll be looking forward to you calling on me in a year and a day. I’ll be looking forward to it very much indeed.”

250 With the smile still on his face, the Green Knight went down on one knee before Gawain and bared his neck. “Do the best you can, Sir Gawain,” he said. “Remember, you have only one chance.”

“Make your peace with your Maker,” Gawain replied, running his finger along the blade.

Then, grasping the handle tight and putting his left foot forward, he took a deep breath and raised the great ax high above his head, the blade flashing blood red in the flames of the fire. Down it came and sliced right through the Green Knight’s neck, cutting clean through bone and flesh and skin, **severing** the terrible head entirely and sending

260 it rolling hideously across the floor toward the lords and ladies at their

I PREDICT

Reread lines 223–224.

How do King Arthur and the others in the hall think the match will turn out? Make your own prediction about the outcome.

revere (rĭ-vîr') v. to honor or worship

integrity (ĭn-tĕg'rĭ-tē) n. honesty or sincerity

J CULTURAL VALUES

Do you think that others in the hall believe Gawain will keep his promise? Why or why not?

sever (sĕv'ər) v. to cut off or apart

table. And the blood was not green, as you might have imagined, but bright red like any man's, and it spurted freely from head and body alike.

But instead of toppling over, as everyone expected, that grotesque headless body rose up onto his feet and strode across the floor to where his head lay bleeding, the eyes closed in death. Snatching the baleful⁷ head up by the hair, he went straight to his horse, set one foot in the stirrup, and swung himself up easily into his saddle as if nothing at all had happened. Suddenly those eyes opened and glared most horribly around the hall. Everyone was struck dumb with terror.

270 But worse was still to come, for then the mouth began to speak. "Well struck, Sir Gawain. Now I'm afraid you have your side of the bargain to keep, a promise you made freely and openly, in front of everyone here and in front of your King too. You must seek me out and find me at the Green Chapel, a year and a day from now. There I shall **K** repay you, a blow for a blow, as we agreed. I am known everywhere as

7. **baleful**: foretelling evil.

COMMON CORE RL 10


K CULTURAL VALUES

A **legend** is a story handed down from the past about a specific person, usually someone of heroic stature. Like an epic, a legend may also feature a **quest**, a journey that the hero takes in order to achieve a goal. What quest must Gawain undertake?



the Knight of the Green Chapel. Look into the sky as you go and follow where your eyes and your ears lead you. I shall be waiting. Be sure you come, Sir Gawain, or the world will know you forever as a coward.”

280 He said nothing more, not one goodbye, but turning his horse about, set spurs to his side and galloped from that hall, sparks flying from the horse’s hooves as he went. Where he had come from no one knew. Where he went to no one knew. But as you can well imagine, I think, all were glad to see him gone. **L**

It was some time before anyone in the hall found voice to speak, and then it was the High King himself who at last broke the silence. He was as amazed and horrified as everyone else by what they had just witnessed, but he did not like to see his queen and his court so downhearted on this festive evening. “Come on now. Let’s not be upset,” he said. “After all, this was just such a marvel as we were waiting for, was it not? And
290 marvels like this are as much a part of new year at Camelot as carols and feasting. Like it or not, and I agree it wasn’t a very appetizing spectacle, you have to admit we’ve never seen anything quite like it before, have we? And best of all it means we can now begin our feasting. So hang up your ax, Gawain, somewhere where we can all see it and be reminded of your courage, and come and join us. Let’s eat, my friends. Let’s drink. Let’s be merry.” And so they were—all but Gawain, whose thoughts, as ours must now do, ran on ahead of him to New Year’s Day a year hence, to the dreaded day when he would meet that Green Knight once again at the Green Chapel.  **M**

Eventually, Sir Gawain did indeed set out to find the Green Chapel and fulfill his promise. On his journey, he encountered three temptations that tested his character. By the time he stood before the Green Knight, he had proven himself a worthy, though not perfect, knight. For this reason, the Green Knight injures Gawain slightly but does not take his life.

L PREDICT

Did the prediction you made on page 700 come true? Describe what happened after Gawain struck the Green Knight.

M CULTURAL VALUES

What reasons does King Arthur have for choosing this moment to invite his knights to the feast?

Comprehension

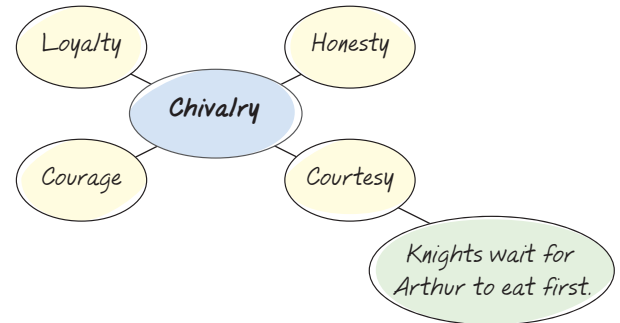
1. **Clarify** What has to happen before the feast can begin?
2. **Recall** Whom does the Green Knight come looking for?
3. **Represent** What does the scene in the great hall look like before the Green Knight appears? Make a drawing illustrating the description.



RL 1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. **RL 10** Read and comprehend literature.

Text Analysis

4. **Predict** Review the chart of predictions you made as you read. What events were the most difficult to predict? Why?
5. **Make Inferences About Culture** What details in this legend reflect what people ate, what they wore, and how they celebrated? Tell what you infer about how the wealthy lived during the Middle Ages.
6. **Analyze Suspense** The growing tension, or excitement, that you feel as you read is called suspense. Which passages in this legend were especially suspenseful? Give the line numbers of at least two passages. Then explain your choices.
7. **Draw Conclusions About Cultural Values** People following the code of chivalry were expected to demonstrate the qualities shown in the web. Make a similar web and expand it by giving examples from the legend for each type of behavior. What conclusion can you draw about which of these qualities was most important to the people of the Middle Ages?
8. **Compare and Contrast Legends** How does the king Arthur portrayed by Michael Morpurgo compare with the young Arthur portrayed by Robert D. San Souci in the legend on page 682? Think about characters' attitude toward others, their confidence in themselves, and the courage they display. Decide whether the young Arthur is more similar to or more different from the adult he becomes.



Extension and Challenge

9. **Reader's Circle** Which character is the true hero of this legend? Discuss your thoughts, giving details from the legend to support your opinion.

Is CHIVALRY dead?

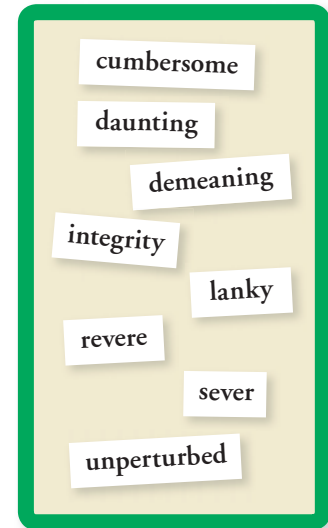
Do you think a society can survive without chivalry?

Vocabulary in Context

▲ VOCABULARY PRACTICE

Answer the questions to show your understanding of the vocabulary words.

1. Would a large package or one pair of socks more likely be **cumbersome**?
2. In which sport, basketball or football, might it be more important to be **lanky**?
3. If Ann is **unperturbed**, is she sitting calmly or shouting angrily?
4. Would being criticized publicly or being elected class president be more **demeaning**?
5. Would it show respect or disrespect to **revere** a person?
6. Is a telegram sent to **sever** a business deal meant to continue it or cut it off?
7. Who might be a better role model for **integrity**, an honest politician or a popular singer?
8. Which is more **daunting**, climbing a peak or resting in the backyard?



ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN SPEAKING

• attribute • conduct • physical • status • task

What are some situations that might call for a hero's **task** today? Discuss your ideas with a small group. Use the Academic Vocabulary words in your discussion.

VOCABULARY STRATEGY: USING A GLOSSARY

A **glossary** is a list of specialized terms and their definitions. It is usually found at the back of a book. A glossary sometimes includes pronunciations and syllabication. Many textbooks contain glossaries. This textbook has four glossaries: an Academic Vocabulary Glossary, a Glossary of Literary and Nonfiction Terms, a Glossary of Reading and Informational Terms, and a Glossary of Vocabulary Words in English and Spanish. You will find glossaries useful when

- you cannot find a definition or context clue for a key term
- you are studying for a test
- you do not have a dictionary available

PRACTICE Use the three glossaries beginning on page R100 to answer the following questions.

1. In which glossary would you find the pronunciation for *aptitude*?
2. A question at the end of a selection asks you to clarify a paragraph in a selection. In which glossary will you find the meaning of *clarify*? How do you clarify information?

COMMON CORE

L4c Consult general reference materials (e.g., glossaries) to find the pronunciation of a word or determine its precise meaning.
L6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic words.

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Language

GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT: Add Variety with Complex Sentences

Review the Grammar in Context note on page 698. A **dependent clause**, also known as a subordinate clause, is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb but cannot stand alone as a sentence. Dependent clauses begin with words such as *because, even though, if, that, when, while, and who*. When a dependent clause and an independent clause, or main clause, are combined, they form a **complex sentence**. Use complex sentences to help clarify the relationships between your ideas and to add variety to your writing.

Complex: Gawain accepts the Green Knight’s challenge because Gawain is brave. (A *dependent clause* is joined to an *independent clause* with the subordinating conjunction *because*.)

PRACTICE The paragraph below has only simple sentences. Combine some sentences to form at least two complex sentences.

Gawain faces the Green Knight. Gawain is frightened. Gawain must face the Green Knight again in a year. Gawain promised he would. Gawain proves to be a good nephew. He sacrifices himself for his uncle.

READING-WRITING CONNECTION



Explore this legend further by responding to the prompt. Then use the **revising tip** to improve your writing.

WRITING PROMPT	REVISING TIP
<p>Short Constructed Response: Explanation</p> <p>Why do you think Gawain accepted the Green Knight’s challenge? Write a one-paragraph explanation of his motivation.</p>	<p>Review your paragraph. Did you use complex as well as simple sentences? If not, revise your paragraph by combining some of the sentences.</p>



L 1b Choose complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas. **W 2** Write explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas.

Interactive Revision

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