



Understanding  
and Analyzing  
Legends &  
Chivalry in  
Medieval  
Literature

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Unit 2 Lesson 1



# Understanding Chivalry in Legends

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- **Definition:** A legend is a traditional story or group of stories told about a particular person or place. Legends often blend historical facts with imaginative elements.
- **Examples:** King Arthur, Knights of the Round Table
- **Understanding Chivalry**
- **Definition:** Chivalry refers to the medieval knightly system with its religious, moral, and social codes. It includes ideals such as bravery, courtesy, honor, and gallantry toward women.
- **Examples:** The Knights of the Round Table, Code of Conduct in "Le Morte d'Arthur"



# Examples from "Le Morte d'Arthur"

- **Legends**
- **King Arthur:** The central figure in "Le Morte d'Arthur," Arthur's rise to power, his establishment of the Round Table, and his ultimate downfall are key elements of the legend.
- **Sir Lancelot:** A legendary knight whose love for Queen Guinevere and exemplary knightly qualities are central to the Arthurian legends.
- **Chivalry**
- **The Knights of the Round Table:** Exemplify the chivalric code through their quests, bravery, and loyalty to King Arthur.
- **Sir Gawain:** His adherence to the chivalric code is tested in various stories, including the tale of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.



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# Analyzing Chivalry in "Le Morte d'Arthur"

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- **Historical Context:** Understand the societal norms and values of the Middle Ages as depicted by Sir Thomas Malory.
- **Character Traits:** Evaluate how characters like Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawain embody chivalric virtues like bravery, loyalty, and honor.
- **Moral and Ethical Lessons:** Identify the ethical dilemmas and moral lessons conveyed through the narrative, such as the conflict between love and duty.
- **Impact on Plot:** Consider how the chivalric code influences the actions and fate of characters, particularly in key events like the fall of Camelot.

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# Incorporating Chivalry

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- **Character Development:** Craft characters who adhere to or challenge the chivalric code, as seen in "Le Morte d'Arthur."
- **Conflict and Resolution:** Use the ideals of chivalry to create internal and external conflicts within your story, such as loyalty versus betrayal.
- **Moral Lessons:** Embed moral and ethical lessons through characters' adherence to or deviation from chivalric ideals, as Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawain demonstrated.

