

The Lady of Shalott

These activities were produced by Pamela Green and Sheila Davies who worked in a fruitful partnership at Sion Manning RC Girls School in LB Kensington and Chelsea. They were one of the results of a workshop we held to develop poetry activities in 1994. At this time there was funding to support local initiatives to develop accessible materials. Paradoxically, at the same time the government were closing down the LINC and ORACY projects: a case of giving with one hand and taking away with another. Like LINC and ORACY, these resources have stood the test of time and we can currently find nothing better on the poem. We have updated the photos (difficult to imagine that at this time most of our work was paste up and we distributed by samizdat), but kept Pam and Sheilas' drawings. Please let us know whether you find any mistakes, since we have scanned these activities and if you would like to send us more drawings they would be very welcome!

The webaddress for this activity is:

<http://www.collaborativelearning.org/ladyofshalott.pdf>

Last updated 15th March 2009

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PROJECT

Project Director: Stuart Scott

We support a network of teaching professionals throughout the European Union to promote inclusive education. We develop and disseminate accessible talk-for-learning activities in all subject areas and for all ages.

17, Barford Street, Islington, London N1 0QB UK Phone: 0044 (0)20 7226 8885

Website: <http://www.collaborativelearning.org>

BRIEF SUMMARY OF BASIC PRINCIPLES BEHIND OUR TEACHING ACTIVITIES:

The project is a teacher network, and a non-profit making educational trust. Our main aim is to develop and disseminate classroom tested examples of effective group strategies that promote talk across all phases and subjects. We hope they will inspire you to develop and use similar strategies in other topics and curriculum areas. We want to encourage you to change them and adapt them to your classroom and students. We run teacher workshops, swapshops and conferences throughout the European Union. The project posts online many activities in all subject areas. An online newsletter is also updated regularly.

*These activities are influenced by current thinking about the role of language in learning. They are designed to help children learn through talk and active learning in small groups. They work best in non selective classes where children in need of language or learning support are integrated. They are well suited for the development of speaking and listening . They provide teachers opportunities for assessment of speaking and listening.

*They support differentiation by placing a high value on what children can offer to each other on a particular topic, and also give children the chance to respect each other's views and formulate shared opinions which they can disseminate to peers. By helping them to take ideas and abstract concepts, discuss, paraphrase and move them about physically, they help to develop thinking skills.

*They give children the opportunity to participate in their own words and language in their own time without pressure. Many activities can be tried out in pupils' first languages and afterwards in English. A growing number of activities are available in more than one language, not translated, but mixed, so that you may need more than one language to complete the activity.

*They encourage study skills in context, and should therefore be used with a range of appropriate information books which are preferably within reach in the classroom.

*They are generally adaptable over a wide age range because children can bring their own knowledge to an activity and refer to books at an appropriate level. The activities work like catalysts.

*All project activities were planned and developed by teachers working together, and the main reason they are disseminated is to encourage teachers to work more effectively with each other inside and outside the classroom. They have made it possible for mainstream and language and learning support teachers to share an equal role in curriculum delivery. They should be adapted to local conditions. In order to help us keep pace with curriculum changes, please send any new or revised activities back to the project, so that we can add them to our lists of materials.

"THE LADY OF SHALOTT" TEACHERS' NOTES

This pack has been prepared for students at Key Stage 3. It is probably most suitable for Year 8/9 students.

Activity One: Legend or History?

The teacher should introduce / discuss definitions of legend and history with the class before doing this activity.

There is a picture sheet to accompany this activity.

Activity Two: King Arthur and Camelot

This activity aims to elicit knowledge the students may already possess about King Arthur and Camelot as background to the poem.

Follow on with "How Arthur became King" to set the story clearly in their minds.

There is an optional research activity on the Knights of the Round Table which can be done at this point.

Activity Three: Power Pyramids

**** Read the poem at this point. ****

Then pupils do the activity on the task sheet.

Activity Four: Storyboard

This activity concentrates on the narrative element of the poem so that students have a clear idea of the story within the poem before they look closely at the language.

Each pupil will need a sequencing sheet and a storyboard grid.

Activity Five: Crimes and Curses

Photocopy one task sheet, one set of place cards and one set of character cards for each group.

Activity Six: Response to the Poem

These notes are for the teacher only. Not to be distributed to pupils. It is an introduction to the two task sheets – Activity Six (1) and (2)

Rhythm and Rhyme

Raise the following points with pupils after reading the poem through again:

1. “The Lady of Shalott is a narrative poem (i.e. it tells a story). It is meant to be read aloud.

2. This poem is well-known for its rhythm. The rhythm reflects the movement of the poem. What movements can the pupils “hear”?

(Examples they might give are written below)

- the steady flowing of the river
- the people walking by
- the reaping of corn in the fields
- the bridle bells ringing
- the beat of horses’ hooves
- the Lady weaving at her loom

3. In Parts 1, 2 and 3, the rhythm is fast. In Part 4 the rhythm is slower. Can pupils think of a reason for this? (The curse has come on the lady and she is dying.)

4. The rhyme supports the rhythm. Look at the last syllable of every stanza. What do pupils notice? (They have the same sound Shalott, Lancelot, Camelot)
What effect does this repetition have?

Practical Activity

To bring out the pupils’ awareness of rhythm, divide the class into groups of 4. Allocate 2 stanzas to each group to present to the whole class. Using bells, triangles, tambourines and other percussion instruments borrowed from the Music Department, each group should decide on how they will present their part of the poem to best show the rhythm.

Activity Six (continued):

There are two task sheets for the students following on from rhyme and rhythm.

Task [1] is self-explanatory.

For Task (2), it is essential that students are familiar with the figures of speech on this sheet and have already done some work on them in the past.

Additional background material

The film "Excalibur" is available on video/DVD and provides more background information on the lives of Sir Lancelot and King Arthur.

We advise the teacher to watch it first to check for suitability, if doing some of the work with younger pupils. The scene showing Arthur's conception leaves little to the imagination!

ACTIVITY ONE: Legend or History?

We know about characters from legend through songs, ballads, poems and popular stories.

We know about characters from history from text books, documents, photographs, pictures, eye-witness accounts, diaries and other sources of information.

Below are 10 names, but only 5 of them are historical characters. The others are from stories or legend.

Robin Hood and his Merry Men	Napoleon Bonaparte	Cleopatra
Finn McCool	The Three Musketeers	The Pied Piper of Hamelin
Mary Seacole	King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table	
	Henry VIII	Adolf Hitler

1. In groups or pairs, decide which you think are the 5 historical characters.
2. Draw a chart like the one below and complete it with your group's findings.

HISTORICAL CHARACTERS	CHARACTERS FROM LEGEND



HISTORICAL
CHARACTERS OR
CHARACTERS FROM
LEGEND?



ACTIVITY TWO: KING ARTHUR AND CAMELOT

What do you already know about King Arthur and Camelot?

1. In groups or pairs, choose an answer for each of the questions or statements below.

2. Copy the questions/statements and write your answers in your books.

1. King Arthur was a figure from:

- a) Legend
- b) History
- c) possibly a mixture of both
- d) a fairy story

2. He is said to have lived in:

- a) the 18th century
- b) the 10th century or before
- c) the 16th century
- d) the 13th century

3. Arthur became king by:

- a) running a race
- b) answering 3 riddles
- c) pulling a sword out of a stone
- d) being the eldest son of a king

4. His queen's name was:

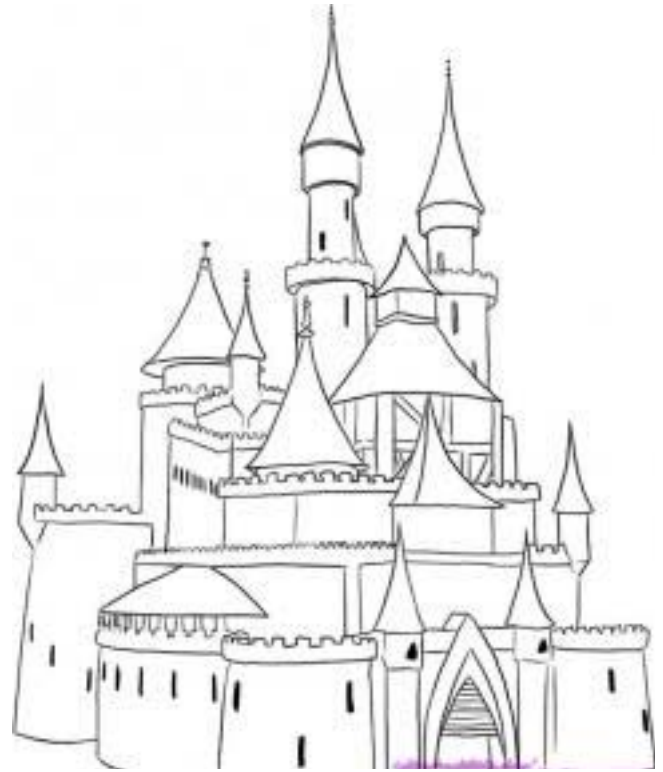
- a) Anne Boleyn
- b) Elizabeth
- c) Guinevere
- d) Sharon

5. Arthur's famous sword was called:

- a) Camelot
- b) Champion
- c) Lancelot
- d) Excalibur

6. What shape was Arthur's famous Table?

- a) square
- b) round
- c) oblong
- d) triangular



7. Camelot was the name of Arthur's:

- a) horse
- b) capital city
- c) sword
- d) favourite camel

8. Arthur's table was round because:

- a) it was cut from a tree trunk
- b) his palace was also round
- c) he liked circles
- d) he wanted everyone to feel equal

9. The most famous Knight of the Round Table was:

- a) Sir Winston Churchill
- b) Sir Lancelot
- c) Sir Gawain
- d) Sir Galahad

10. Arthur's half-sister was called:

- a) Guinevere
- b) Elaine
- c) Cruella Deville
- d) Morgan Le Faye

11. Arthur was befriended by a wizard called:

- a) Merlin
- b) Bilbo Baggins
- c) Gandalf
- d) Paul Daniels

HOW ARTHUR BECAME KING

Arthur was the son of King Uther Pendragon and Igraine, wife of the Duke of Cornwall.

The magician Merlin agreed to make King Uther appear to be the Duke of Cornwall so that he could spend one night with the Duke's beautiful wife, Igraine. This was on condition that, if any child was born, he would be given to Merlin. Igraine did, indeed, give birth to a son as a result of King Uther's trickery.



The child, Arthur, was taken away by Merlin and brought up by a knight called Sir Ector. It was Merlin's plan that the future king should grow up not knowing who he was. He would reveal his true identity as a young man by performing some great deed.

Many years later, King Uther died. Sir Ector and all the other knights were summoned to London for a Tournament. Sir Ector took his son, Sir Kay, and Arthur with him. Sir Kay left his sword at his lodgings and sent Arthur back to fetch it.

A few days before, a stone with a sword stuck into it had mysteriously appeared in a churchyard near to the lodgings. Around the stone were the words "Whosoever pulls out this sword is the trueborn King of England". Many knights had tried to pull the sword from the stone, but none had succeeded.

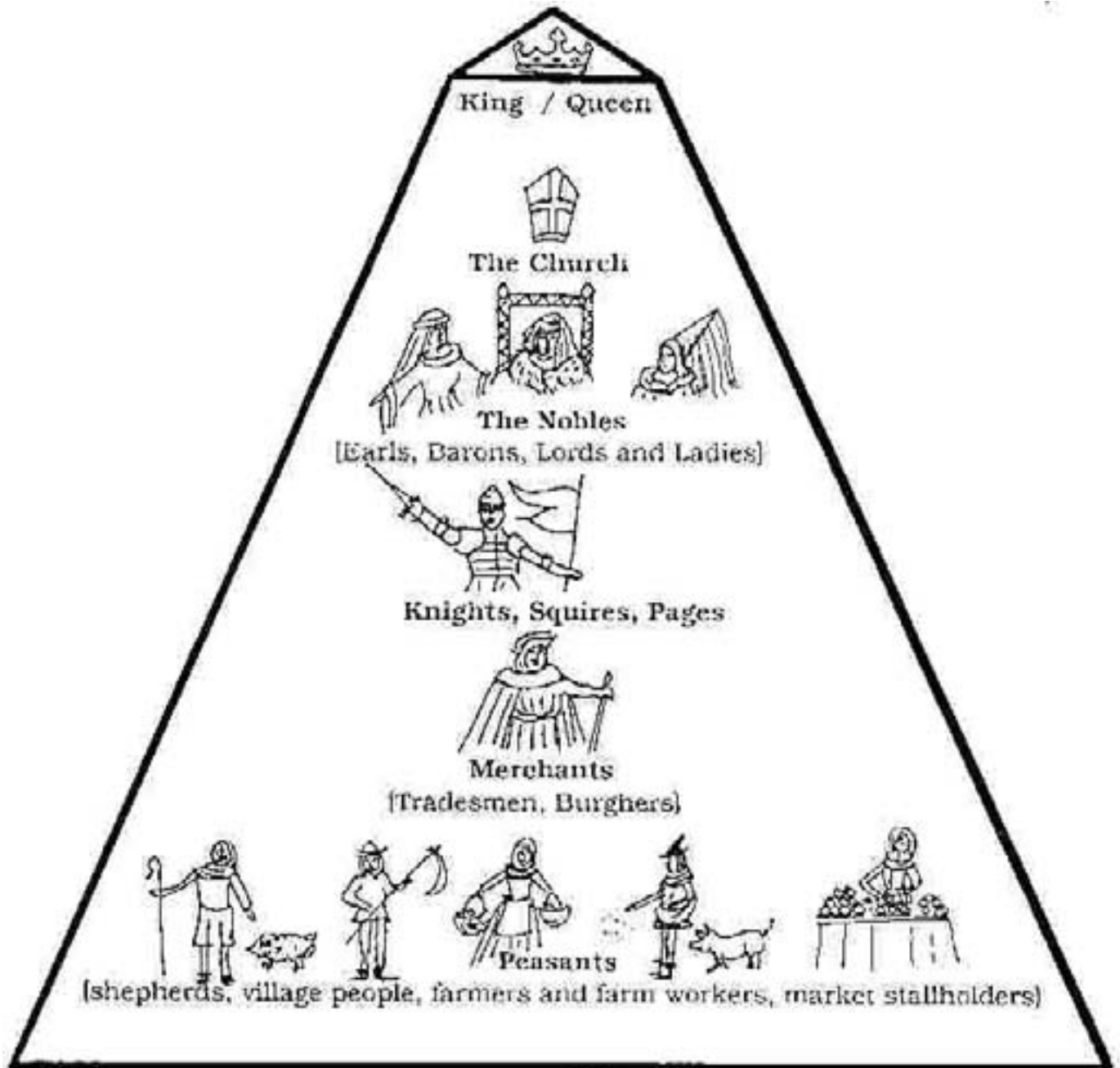
The lodgings were locked up and Arthur couldn't get Kay's sword. He remembered the sword in the stone and ran to the churchyard. Arthur pulled the sword out easily, and took it back to Sir Kay for the Tournament.

Sir Ector and Sir Kay were astonished when Arthur told them what had happened for they knew what it meant. The other knights were very angry, but had to accept the truth: Arthur was meant to be the next King of England. Soon afterwards, he was crowned King just as Merlin had predicted and he ruled the kingdom from Camelot, his capital city.



ACTIVITY THREE: Power Pyramids

This pyramid shows the people in power in historical medieval England.



1. Draw a pyramid like the one above using the same headings.
2. In your groups, find examples of each group of people in the poem and write them on your pyramid under the correct headings.

Example: Peasants village churls, damsels

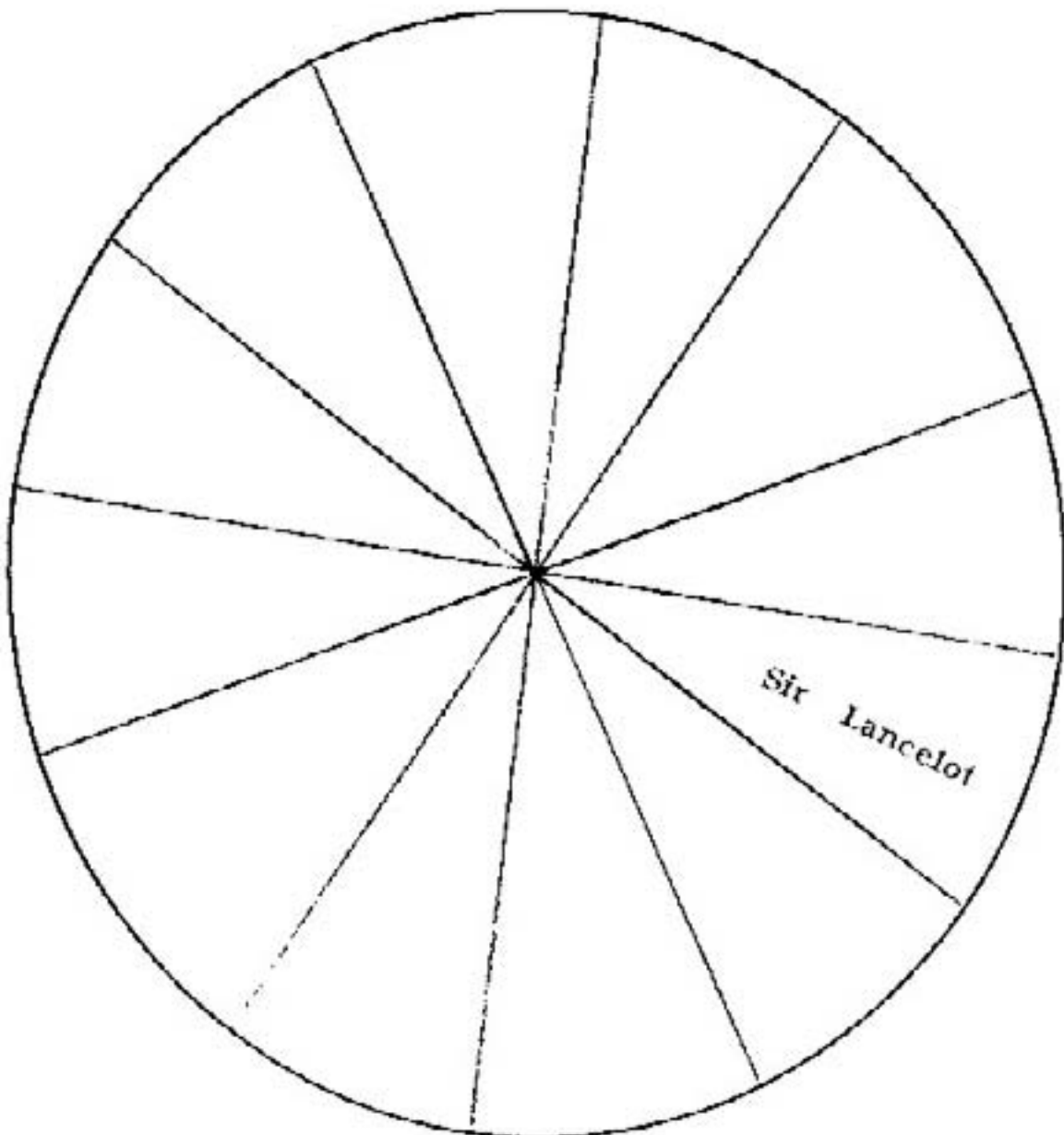
Research Activity

In the legend of King Arthur, there is a Round Table. When Arthur chose Guinevere to be his wife, her father gave Arthur a present of the Round Table, along with 100 knights to serve him. The Table was big enough for all these Knights to sit around and, because the Table was round, no knight could feel more important than any other. The best-known of these knights was Sir Lancelot.

* On the Table below, write the names of as many of the other knights as you can find.

* Members of your group will need to go to the Library and find books about the legend of King Arthur.

You will not find 100 names! Try to find about 11 other knights.



ACTIVITY FOUR: "THE LADY OF SHALOTT" STORYBOARD

You will each need a storyboard grid for this activity.

The main events in the story are written for you below BUT they are not in the correct order.

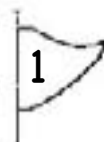
1. In your groups or pairs, decide in which order the events happen and then number the flags. The first one has been done for you.
2. On the storyboard grid, copy the events into the numbered boxes.
3. Complete the pictures yourself.



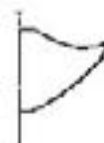
The people pass the island on their way to the town of Camelot. They never see the Lady; they only hear her singing.



The Lady is not allowed to look through the window. She sees the outside world only through her mirror. Whatever she sees, she weaves into her web (a tapestry).



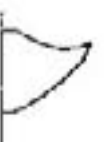
The Lady is imprisoned in a tower on an island in a river.



The Lady floats down the river past Camelot in a boat with her name written on the bows.

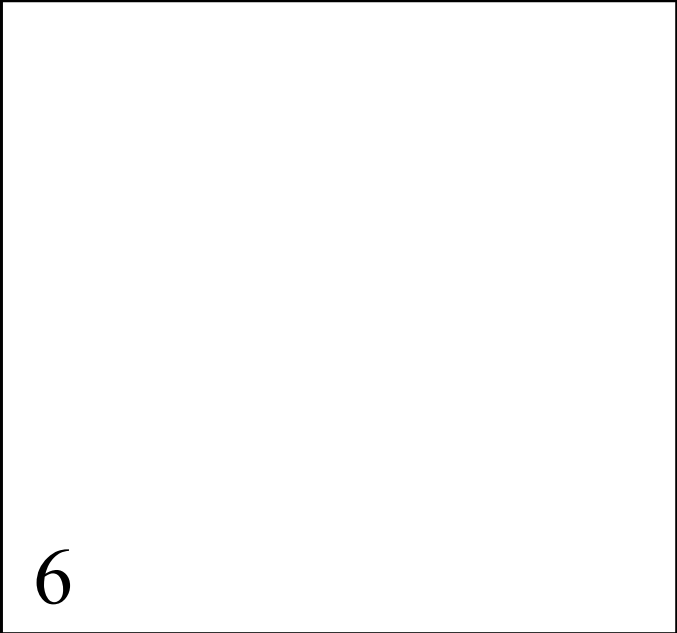
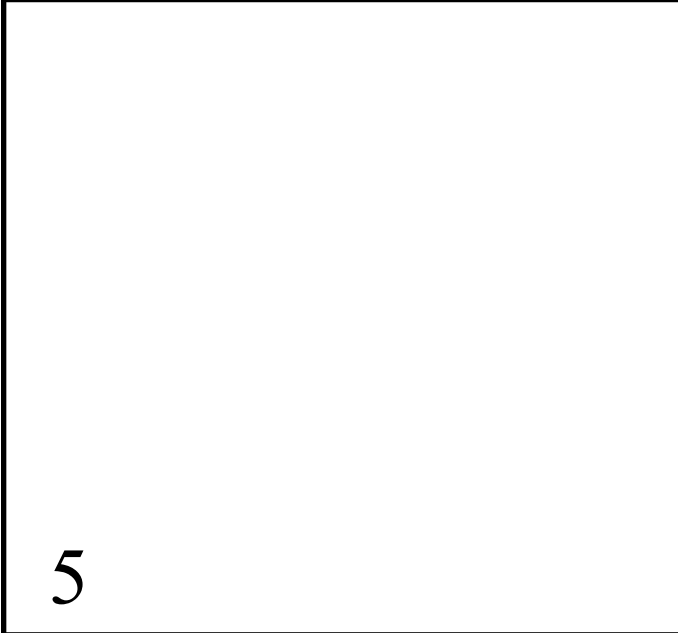
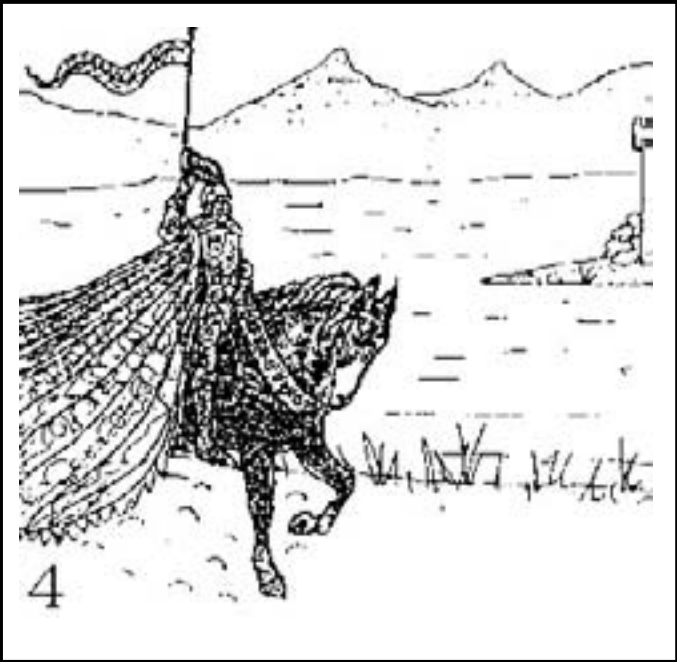
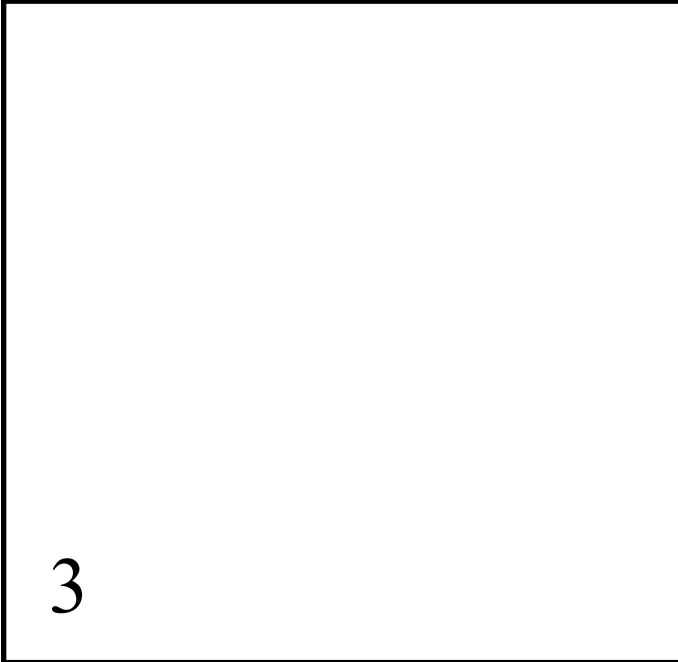
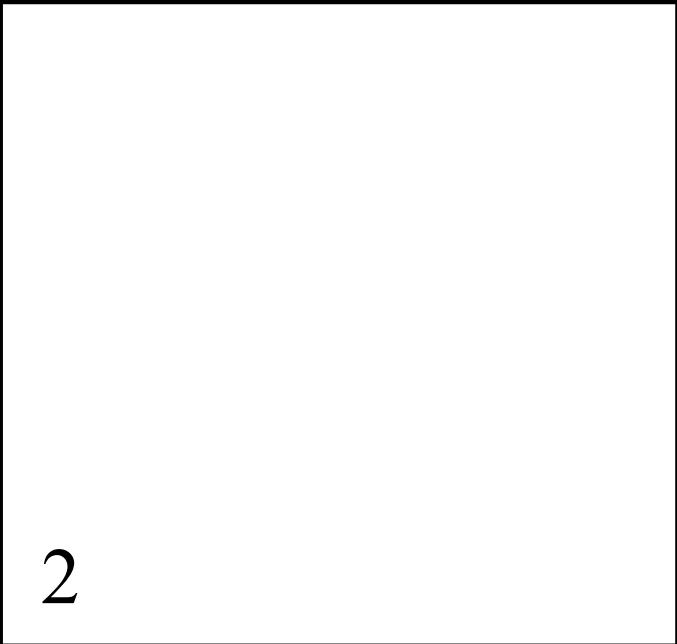
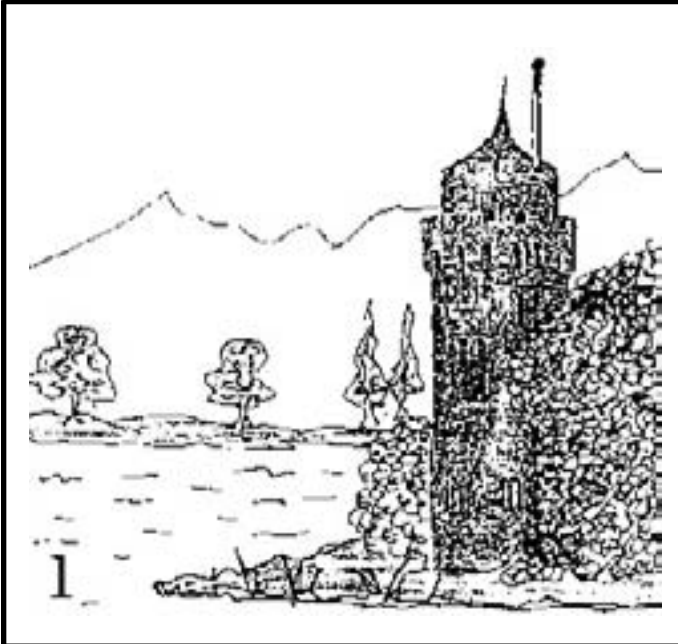


The handsome, dazzling figure of Sir Lancelot rides by in his shining armour. The Lady sees him in her mirror and can no longer bear her imprisonment.



She leaves the web she has been weaving, and looks out of the window to see Sir Lancelot more clearly. The mirror cracks from side to side.

The Lady of Shalott - STORYBOARD



ACTIVITY FIVE: CRIMES AND CURSES (Drama Activity)

★ Who is the Lady of Shalott?

We know very little about the Lady in the poem. We don't even know her name. We do know that she has been put under a curse but we don't know the reason why.

Some popular reasons for people being put under a curse in fairy stories and legends are:

- as revenge for something
- as a punishment
- because of another person's jealousy.

★ At the end of the poem, Sir Lancelot sees the Lady as she floats by Camelot in her boat. He must have wondered who she was and how she died.

Imagine that he goes off to consult a wizard to find out these things. The wizard looks into his crystal ball



In groups, you are going to present a possible story about what happened to the Lady of Shalott.

Your teacher will give each group a character card and a card with the name of a place. Your story must use both the character and the place.

You may find some of these questions and ideas helpful:

Why is she not allowed to leave the Tower or to look through the window?

Why does nobody try to rescue her?

Why is she weaving what she sees in the mirror?



a magic mirror



a magic potion

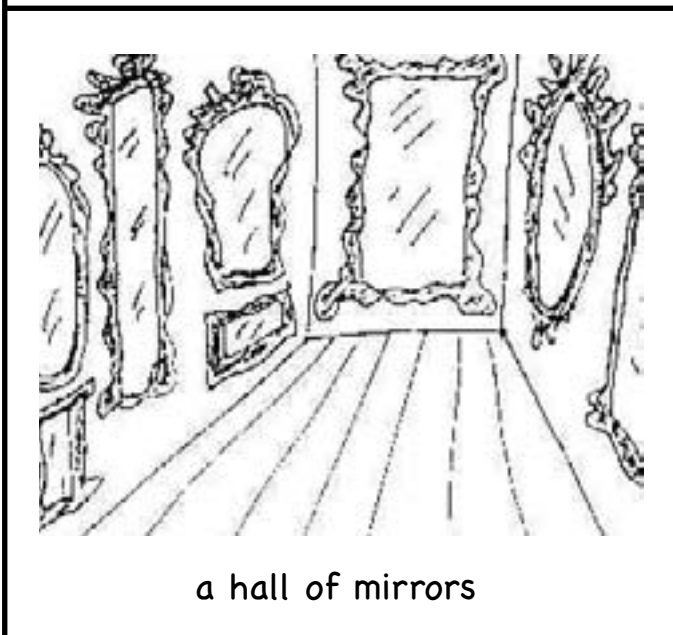
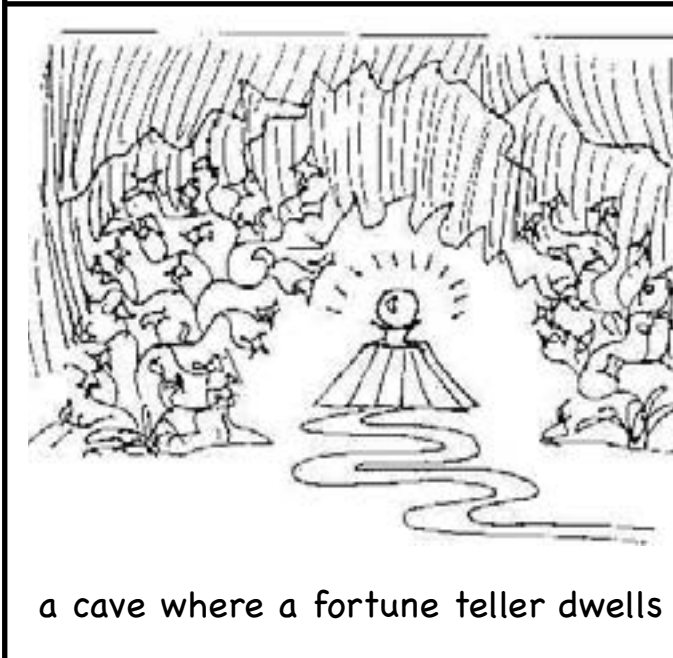
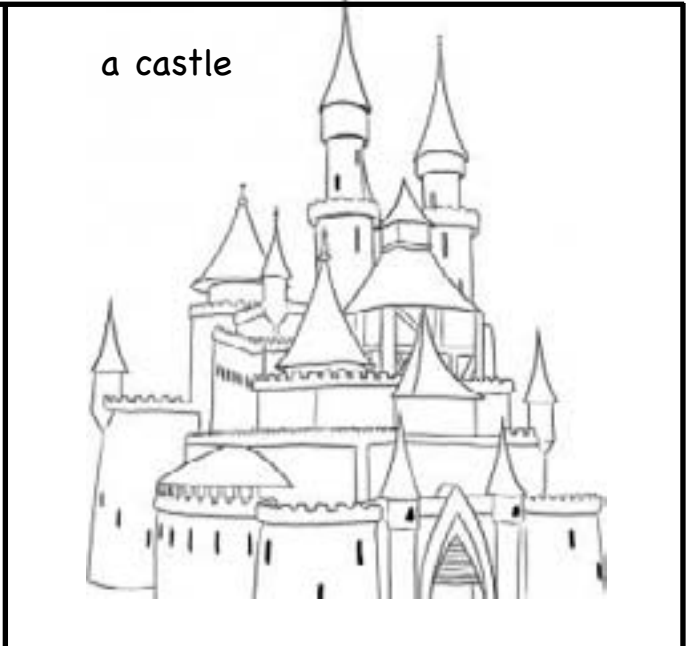
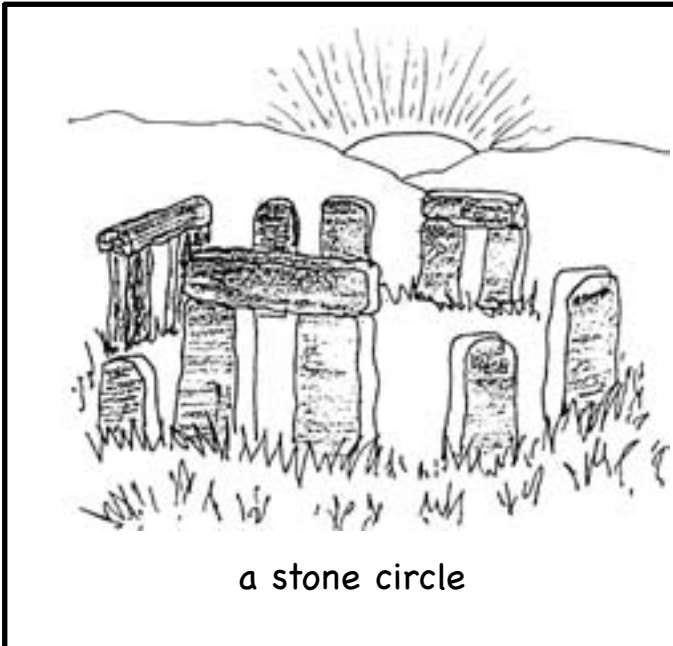


a magic wand



a spell

The Lady of Shalott - PLACES

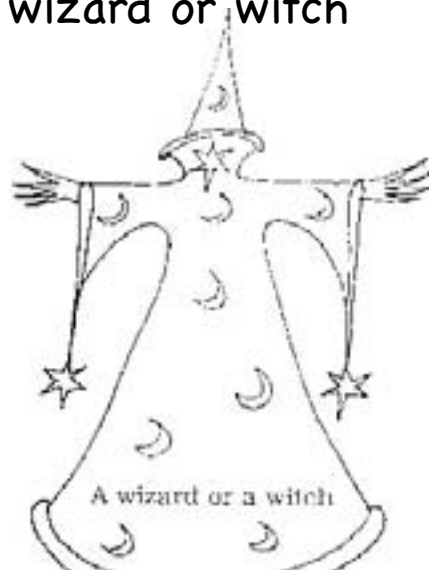


The Lady of Shalott - CHARACTERS



Lady of Shalott's mother
and stepfather

A wizard or witch



Lady of Shalott's younger
brother or sister



Lady of Shalott's future
husband



The person who made the
mirror



A knight at King Arthur's
court.

ACTIVITY SIX: RESPONSE TO THE POEM (1)

In Part 3, the sight of Sir Lancelot is so powerful and magnificent that it makes the Lady take the risk of looking out of the window. This is what brings the curse upon her and causes her death.

Read that part of the poem again to see how the language used creates a bold and vivid description of Lancelot in contrast to her dull and empty life.



In Part 3 there are many words that describe Lancelot in terms of colour, light, fire, jewellery and astronomy (stars, etc.). In pairs, try to find these words and write them under the headings below:

Colour	Light	Fire	Jewellery	Astronomy

ACTIVITY SIX: RESPONSE TO THE POEM (2)

★ Each group needs an envelope containing some figures of speech from "The Lady of Shalott".

★ In your groups, read what is written on each piece of paper and decide which figure of speech it is. Then put it in the correct box below.

★ Report back to the class and check yours are all correct. Then copy the figures of speech into the boxes below.

SIMILE	METAPHOR
PERSONIFICATION	ASSONANCE
ONOMATOPOEIA	ALLITERATION

Further Work: Pick 4 or more figures of speech from the completed chart above and try to say why they are effective (why you think they are good and why you like them).

delights, sights, nights, lights	But in her web she still delights
caves, sheaves, leaves, greaves	A red-cross knight forever kneel'd To a lady in his shield
slung, hung, rung	The reaper... whispers, "Tis the fairy Lady of Shalott."
loom, room, bloom, plume	crimson clad
holy, lowly, slowly, wholly	bearded barley
Long fields of barley and of rye, That clothe the worlds and meet the sky	Till her blood was frozen slowly
The broad stream in his banks complaining	The helmet and the helmet feather Burn'd like one burning flame together
Little breezes dusk and shiver	She left the web, she left the loom
Overlook a space of flowers	Like some bold seer in a trance Seeing all his own mischance
A magic web of colours gay	With a glassy countenance
Hear a carol, mournful, holy, Chanted loudly, chanted lowly	The gemmy bridle glitter'd free; Like to some branch of stars we see Hung in the golden galaxy
The mirror crack'd from side to side	Flowing down to Camelot, Four gray walls and four gray towers
Here a song that echoes cheerly	silken-sail'd