1999

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Melinda G. Nettles
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EFFECTS OF DRAWING DURING READ ALOUD
ON ELD STUDENTS

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Division of Teacher Education

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Melinda G. Nettles

May 1999

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ABSTRACT

EFFECTS OF DRAWING DURING READ ALOUD ON ELD STUDENTS

By Melinda G. Nettles

English Language Development (ELD) students often have difficulty listening and comprehending during sustained sessions of read aloud. Thirty predominantly 7th grade Hispanic students drew pictures daily related to a read aloud and labeled their drawings explaining events and characters. Teacher-devised instruments were used to analyze this process (e.g., written survey, checklist for determining the relation between text and drawings, interviews).

Students became motivated and attentive when provided with a task while listening, "reaction time" (from the time students were asked to listen to when they were settled and listening) was reduced, and labeled drawings demonstrated comprehension. The class listened attentively to the story, hearing reading strategies, English language structure and vocabulary, and literary elements being modeled.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Drawing During A Read Aloud : The Research Study Group

Students are talking as we enter the classroom after lunch for 5th period. I hear bits and pieces of gossip about who ate lunch with whom, who spilled food on whom, who was holding hands with whom, and other significant events in a typical middle school lunch time setting. Two students, Anh and Norma, look at me knowingly and walk to the table to get blank white paper to distribute to the class. When students receive their piece of paper, they write their names and the date on them. Conversations begin to lull.

I wait for my class of 30 English Language Development (ELD) students to label their papers and transition from lunch to classroom activities¹. When I hear complete silence and feel stillness in the room, I briefly review story events of the previous day from Rosemary Sutcliff's The Sword and the Circle (1981). I resume our read aloud from where we left off last time. Students are now settled in and are listening attentively as they wait for Sutcliff's images to inspire them to draw.

The only restriction I put on students for this activity is that they need to label the characters and events as they draw so they do not forget who and what they drew. I remind them to relax and listen until they visualize in their minds something they want to draw. They may draw one big picture or a variety of smaller pictures. They may even draw stick figures. I encourage

¹ Woodland Middle School has beginning and advanced ELD classes. This study was conducted in an advanced ELD class where student language proficiency levels (limited English proficient--LEP) were 3's and 4's. Advanced ELD students receive Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) in their core classes, with one period of ELD to provide support in English language development.

spelling if they are unsure of the standard spelling, and they know I will not mark them down for misspellings.

Students know that listening is the essence of their drawings and that I will collect them at the end of the period. They listen very carefully. It is quiet, save for the light sounds of pencils on paper, a student whispering to another for materials, or asking a neighbor for clarification on something they did not understand in the story. If someone begins talking too loudly, there is a rush of “sshh’s” and “be quiet’s” from others in the class. Students know that they will eventually organize all of their drawings into personal folders according to the order of events. As I read, I occasionally glance around the room to see what students are doing. The majority of students are looking down at their papers, although I see a few faces watching me and a few gazing about the room. I feel that most students are as eager to hear the next events in the story as I am to read them.

It would be misleading if I said that students were always this motivated to listen and that things ran this smoothly even from the beginning of the read aloud. One year prior to this research study, I conducted a pilot study, which I will describe in the next section. I will explain how my study came about, describe my second year as a Specially Designed Academic Instruction (SDAIE) social studies teacher in a 7th grade class, and describe a time when my read alouds were very different.

How This Study Came About: A Pilot for Research

Reading Aloud an Historical Fiction Novel (and a True Confession). I wanted to read a novel aloud to my 7th grade Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) social studies class that would breathe some life

into the curriculum. I had a copy of The Sword and the Circle in our classroom library, but had not yet read it myself. All I knew was that it was about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table and that it was geared for older students. It seemed to be one of those books that students avoided as the print was fairly small and the language was difficult for them to handle when reading on their own. I often wondered why I even had it on the shelf since no one seemed interested in reading it.

Since we had recently read about King Arthur in our social studies book and no one wanted to read Sutcliff's book independently, I decided to use it for our next read aloud. I introduced the book, told them why I chose it (simply because it looked interesting and that we had recently covered the content), and that I had never even read the book myself.

I know a lot of teachers might say that I should have read the book before introducing it to my students, but I asked myself, "How many times have I sent students to choose a book from the shelf and expected them to do a cold reading based sometimes on my recommendations and reviews, sometimes relying only on the back cover? Why not model a 'cold' reading for them?" Of course, as I read to the class, I skimmed ahead for any inappropriate language or content, but there were no parts that needed to be skipped. On the back cover of the book, there is an excerpt from The Times Literary Supplement which states that the book "stands far beyond any Arthurian collection for young readers," and I trusted Sutcliff to write appropriately for students who might be studying its content.

I told the class that I did not know what adventures were covered by Sutcliff, as there are many different versions of King Arthur's life and times, but

that we could explore it together. I read from the back cover and told them that we should give it a fair chance. We would abandon it if we did not like it, just as students are free to do with any books they chose to read during Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). I instructed them to sit quietly and to listen carefully as we read the first chapter together.

The Early Part of the Read Aloud. After the first few paragraphs, I noticed that some students were interested, some were trying to show interest, and others were completely bored. For those who were bored, I tried to pinpoint exactly what it was they were doing, so I might learn what I could do to make them want to listen for the next reading. Typical bored behavior consisted of chit-chatting, rummaging through backpacks, leafing through papers, poking or jabbing other students, getting up to drink water, and asking me questions about the school dance in the middle of the story.

I stopped reading several times to quiet those who were being disruptive. When I returned to the read aloud, I had to figure out where I had left off and refamiliarize myself with what was going on in the story. This became quite distracting for me as well as for those students who were paying attention to the story.

What exactly was it that caused students to be so uninvolved in the read aloud? Was it my reading? Was it the content of the book? Was it lack of a copy of the book or something to do while listening? Why was I feeling like I had to beg and bribe in order to get them all to pay attention long enough to get into the story with me? How could we tell if the book was interesting or not if I could not read through a paragraph without being interrupted? I wanted to read a few chapters before deciding if we should continue with it or not, and did not

want to abandon the book too quickly. I began thinking of ways to get students focused on the story.

I remembered during my student teaching days that my resident teacher distributed paper with outlines of different designs for students to color as he read (see Appendix A). This seemed to keep his students occupied, so I did the same with my classes. It helped quiet the room so my students could hear my soft voice. Students seemed to enjoy the stillness and calmness of the room as they colored during read aloud, and I appreciated the quietness. It was comfortable for me to read while they were focused on coloring. I could actually get down to business and concentrate on reading aloud, without having to stop the read aloud to remind students to pay attention.

Doodle Paper is Introduced. After the first week of reading, I ran out of coloring sheets. My monthly copying allotment was running low and I nearly panicked. No coloring? Would I have to go back to reminding them to be quiet and to focus on the story? I asked if they would like to have plain white paper as an alternative and several students accepted. At that time, I did not think it would be nearly as interesting for them as the pre-designed coloring sheets, but it was all I could do.

Eventually most of the class wanted what became known as “doodle paper.” I did not realize at the time that these early days of doodling during read aloud would become the focus of my research. I was simply doing it for the sake of those who needed something to touch, to hold, and to work on while they listened to me read.

I came to realize after several more read alouds that it would not hurt to give the entire class doodle paper. They did not have to use it, but it was at their

desks if they wanted it. I allowed students to draw about anything. It seemed that the white doodle paper was a fair substitute for the pre-designed coloring sheets, and I did not have to make any copies. I left it open for them to create, and gave no directions to them as far as labeling or writing on their drawings.

An Interesting Discovery: A Pilot Begins. After several days of giving out doodle paper, Gabriel, a student who needed frequent reminders to listen, showed me what he had drawn. The words I read from Sutcliff's book were transformed into a detailed picture of the Excalibur sword, which I had read about that day. I was surprised with the level of thought and the concentration that went into the drawing. I shared it with the class, and suggested that they might try doing something similar. The next day about 90% of the students were motivated to draw about the story. Not long after, drawing pictures about the story became standard procedure during our read alouds.

I did not force students to draw, but recommended it. While they were drawing, it was quiet enough that if there was something in the book I did not understand, it was not because of losing my train of thought in order to deal with behavior. It was because I was trying to figure out the path that Sutcliff was paving for me as a reader. I was letting the class into my thoughts as I read through the text, clarifying, making connections, summarizing, predicting, and questioning. Students were seeing what real reading looks like from the inside, as I demonstrated what I truly think about when I read.

The following year after the pilot study in my SDAIE class, my teaching assignment changed to six periods of ELD. For my research study, I wanted to read aloud the same novel while students drew pictures because of the high-interest level of the students the first time around (see The Sword and the

Circle's Impact on the Pilot Group: Reasons for Reading it to the Study Group).

I chose the class which had the most 7th graders to conduct my research study with since The Sword and the Circle corresponded with their social studies curriculum.

Modeling Real Reading: An Important Part of Teaching Reading to ELD Students. Porter and Roberts (1981) comment that language learners seem to believe that “ ‘unless I understand everything, I won’t understand anything,’ and expect ‘total comprehension’ of all texts as a prerequisite to interpreting worthwhile meaning;” this is a reality I have observed, also. I have found that ELD students think they are supposed to just read and understand everything, instead of being aware that experienced readers question for clarification, predict, make connections, and summarize when reading. ELD students may feel they are not quite getting it right if they have to stop and do these things because, when teachers read, it seems that they know all the answers, all the words, and that is what students should be doing, too. Students may not be aware that teachers often read the same books many years in a row, as well as refer to teaching guides for questions, answers, and topics for discussion.

ELD students need to know strategies they can use to help them understand their way through texts, that it is not a case of “getting it” or not. If they read just to complete the reading and do not understand or connect the pieces, they are bound to become confused and detached from the text. I see many students who pretend their way through SSR by getting a new book each day, starting the reading of a chapter book in the middle, and simply waiting for SSR to be over, not actually using the time for reading. These students need to see reading models and learn strategies used by experienced readers.

I thought that the read aloud would be a good opportunity to show students what an experienced reader does while reading. I asked questions of myself aloud before, during, and/or after each day's read aloud, and all were authentic. When I did not understand something or when I got confused about who was who or what just happened, I said so. Students also asked questions when they did not understand, which were usually answered by other students.

This gave the class an unfeigned model of what readers think about and the questions they ask themselves as they read. I was not making up test questions or testing to see if they were listening. I knew they were listening when they helped me clarify. I knew they were interested when they begged me to read another page or two, even when it was time to stop for the day. I knew they understood when I looked at their pictures.

Internal Questions: The Efficacy of Drawing During Read Aloud. At the outset, it may have appeared that students were drawing with no real benefit. I wondered if I would be questioned by administrators or parents about the benefits of, or rationale for spending so much time on this activity. I wondered what I would tell them if they asked. I had some general responses, but I did not have any research with which to back them up. I knew that it was good to read aloud to students, that students were learning in-depth about one aspect of the Middle Ages time period, and that as a teacher, I prefer depth over breadth (also recommended by the California State Board of Education, 1988). I knew that none of the students complained about the read aloud and that they were motivated and engaged listeners. They were asking me questions such as, "Do we get to draw today?" or "When do we get to hear the story?" When I began reflecting on students' drawings and labels, I stopped having doubts and

realized that what we were doing was worthwhile.

As I read aloud The Sword and the Circle, I knew that students were learning about how books work, how stories develop, and how you have to read a little every day if you ever want to finish a book (several of them get a different book for SSR each day and start in the middle of the book, never finishing an entire one). They were also learning about critical issues they could relate to, such as compassion, love, animosity, hate, war, etc. I knew students enjoyed drawing and sharing their drawings with their peers. I knew having the class draw helped quiet them so everyone, myself included, could concentrate. But as a teacher, I still had unanswered questions about having students drawing during the read aloud, and on spending so much time on reading from the same book.

I wondered what students were thinking about as they drew their pictures. I wondered if they became so involved with their drawings that they stopped listening to the rest of the book once they had selected the scene they were drawing. I wondered if these drawings would serve as a legitimate assessment of comprehension, and if so, how? I wondered what parts, if any, of Bloom's Taxonomy for higher levels of thinking were being utilized by students. But most of all, I wondered who this activity was helping more: them (by having something to do) or me (by having it quiet)? I knew that I wanted to explore drawing during read aloud further and that my research would eventually help me answer some of these questions.

Pedagogy: My Thoughts on This Study and Teaching ELD Students

I feel it is my responsibility as a teacher to provide students with experiences that will promote conscientious habits, strategies, and skills that

will be helpful to them later when they reach high school, college, and beyond. Therefore, I am not concerned with only the here-and-now of teaching students so they can do well in my classes: I also strive to teach strategies and skills they can use in future academic courses.

Why Read Aloud Rather Than Assign the Reading to ELD Students? I

would like to be able to assign my students an interesting content-area novel to read, and then discuss it. However, when ELD students come to me, most of them have not had the practice necessary in order to complete whole novels appropriate for their grade. Before I expect students to read novels on their own, it might help them to see more examples of what reading longer texts looks like. They seem to need more practice on what goes on in the mind of the reader; not just excerpts from longer texts, but entire works from beginning to end. Since it is my responsibility as a teacher to provide students with the core curriculum, a read aloud of an historical novel seemed an appropriate choice.

Some teachers will not read a book like The Sword and the Circle because they believe that their students do not have the vocabulary for comprehending it. However, if the language encountered in books is frequently overly-simplified for students, how will they be challenged to grasp the target language (TL) at higher levels? Of course, we should not overdo it and read books that students may not understand at all. Rather, I think that ELD students should be taught strategies that help them make sense of what they hear when they encounter unfamiliar parts of the TL.

By reading aloud The Sword and the Circle, students were exposed to rich language in an authentic context. When I read to them, I did not simplify or skip parts of the text that seemed too hard for them to understand. I simply

allowed them the opportunity to understand what they were capable of in a casual, relaxed setting. I wanted them to hear the way the English language sounds without having to simplify.

The students in my class were Limited English Proficient (LEP) Levels 3 and 4, and were able to understand English speech at fairly fluent rates. However, I knew that there would be some vocabulary and parts of the story they might not understand, but I did not want them to become too anxious about those parts. In general, I stopped to clarify meanings on significant words, or those that would not be evident from context clues, but I did not want to over-explain or interfere too much with the flow of the story. I wanted students to focus on what they did understand, for the exposure to English structure, vocabulary, and for the listening practice.

The read aloud option offered a rich language experience for my ELD students by providing them with an opportunity to hear the English language and to foster conceptual understanding of the social studies curriculum. Students were encouraged to get the gist of the readings each day, and were not held accountable for unfamiliar words, although we did stop and define words that were essential to understanding (such as a "hart," a male deer).

Indirect Teaching of Literary Elements. It is important to teach students about literary conventions (e.g., character, plot, setting, climax, conflict, dialogue, point of view, theme), as it is difficult to have an interesting story line with under-developed characters and plot. Once they learn the ingredients for what makes interesting reading, students may be more likely to transfer the necessary skills into their own writing (which will benefit them once they reach high school and college).

By exposing students to stories with rich examples of the literary elements, the less isolated teaching of these elements a teacher needs to do. For example, in context, I might say, “Notice the way that Sutcliff reveals her characters . . .” and then point out some of the features as characters are introduced. This can be done with all of the elements in an integrated way, without having students do contrived worksheets, for example, on “How to Develop Characters.” I am not saying that one should never give worksheets to teach about literary elements, nor to neglect the teaching of specific strategies and skills. If teachers read aloud stories that have rich examples of these elements already in place, students may develop an understanding or reinforce understanding of literary elements, when the teacher highlights them as they arise.

I believe students (especially second language learners) appreciate having concepts presented in an integrated way, as opposed to isolating grammar. I aim to teach language parts in context and break them down after the big ideas are presented. When I read aloud to students, I point out literary conventions and other story features, as well as make connections between reading and writing.

The Sword and the Circle’s Impact on the Pilot Group: Reasons for Reading it to the Study Group. During my read aloud with the pilot group (see Introduction--How This Study Came About), our entire classroom evolved into a 15th century castle, complete with charcoal gray tag board turrets around the top of all four walls, a drawbridge at the door (a very serious attempt), and a dungeon area (where students would recommend sending those who were not behaving as they should). We kept a list of things we could do to make the

classroom as Medieval as possible as ideas crossed our minds, most of them student-generated.

Students had time in class to work on the castle and had access to materials. They worked together and used various learning modalities. Low readers and high readers mingled together and recreated history. Swords and weapons were made out of tag board and displayed on the "Royal Weaponry" bulletin board. Instead of posting classroom rules, we had a chivalry code written in Old English style. Students adopted titles before their names, such as Lady and Sir. Words such as "palfrey," "dismounted," "squire," and "Eastertide," became common language.

On the surface, middle school students may appear to be mature, but on the inside, they still need guidance and nurturing. It is important to get into their hearts and demonstrate that it is okay to feel empathy in times of suffering, and joy in "happy times," as one student phrased it. When I teach about history or social studies, I want students to care because they are a part of the human race. During the read aloud of The Sword and the Circle, it was not necessary for me to stop and explain how certain events affected certain characters. Students understood the impact of events on characters as they listened. For example, I could feel sadness in the stillness of the room as I read the parts about Elaine the Lily who was despondent, after Lancelot left her to return to his life at Camelot, and she "drooped and dwindled away like a lily starved of the sun and rain," and later when she died, "like a bird taking wing, her spirit flew from her body and was gone" (Sutcliffe, 1981, p. 163).

At times, my voice quivered when I read as I became deeply involved in the story and tried to fight back tears. We talked about the fact that it is okay to

feel when you read--that is the effect that good literature has on readers. We also discussed the importance of people developing their own sense of being, regardless of whether they are in a relationship or not. I saw students empathizing; they looked away and brushed away a tear or two when I read the part in the story when Lily floated lifeless down the river after she died. I was heartened to see students feel.

The students in the pilot group seemed to enjoy The Sword and the Circle for its adventures and interesting, age-appropriate topics. I wanted to read the same book for the study group because I liked the story's tone, mood, and it provided a context related to what students were learning in social studies.

CHAPTER 2

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

My study of drawing during read aloud touches on many elements. Many sub-topics were intertwined in this simple, yet involved study. In this chapter, I will review the related literature. I will discuss the following key components: 1) listening--students were listening during the read aloud, 2) reading aloud to ELD students--benefits of reading aloud, 3) mental imagery--students were drawing images they envisioned in their minds as they drew pictures related to the read aloud, and 4) teaching social studies through literature--The Sword and the Circle is an historical novel that helped students become involved with the time period.

Listening

There are many definitions and interpretations of listening. For purposes of this study, I will use Floyd's (1985) definition for listening, which is:

Listening may be defined as a receiver orientation to the communication process; since communication involves both a source and a receiver, listening consists of the roles receivers play in the communication process (p. 9).

Floyd continues that the process of listening includes hearing, understanding, attending to evaluating, and responding to spoken messages. He asserts that, in the process of communication, listeners should be active participants and that as listeners learn to carry out these behaviors more effectively, improvement in listening can occur. With this definition in mind, I will discuss the relevance of teaching listening skills, and then briefly review academic listening skills.

On Teaching Listening. People of all ages spend much of their time engaged in some form of listening. Wilt (1949) reported that elementary school students are listening around 57.5% of their classroom time, with 54% of that time listening to the teacher. Markgraf (1957) found that in secondary school, 46% of students' time is spent on listening in the classroom, and 66% of that time is devoted to listening to the teacher. Flowerdew (1994) notes that academic listening skills are an important part of communicative competence in a university setting.

In a business communication study by Weinrauch and Swanda (1975), 46 adult participants recorded the time they spent at work communicating with others (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). The investigators found that listening was the primary activity for direct communication, and concluded that an emphasis in training and developing listening skills is essential for students entering the business field.

Lundsteen (1979) states that as children are engaged in mass media experiences where they do not receive opportunities to answer back (e.g., to the TV or radio), listening becomes a passive act, and listening skills suffer. According to Landry (1969), listening abilities of most people decline from elementary school through the upper grades if they do not receive listening improvement instruction. Since children arrive at school already speaking and listening, Winn (1988) reports that it is assumed that those skills need not be formally taught to students. She cautions that it is a serious error to ignore the direct teaching of listening, and that it is an important skill in a society that is heavily reliant on information transfer.

Floyd (1985) points out that there is no question that students who listen

effectively will learn better than those who do not. With so much time in school and the workplace spent on listening, it is evident that students should be taught critical skills in listening. However, in an eight-year longitudinal study of K-12 teachers in Minnesota, Ridge (1984) found that teachers felt they could not teach listening because they lacked time, knowledge of concepts and pedagogy, materials, and they did not know how to assess the progress of students' listening.

Ridge (1984) also claims that teachers must take on the responsibility of teaching students to listen and that listening is a behavioral act, and like all behavioral acts, effective, competent listening improves with practice. Nichols and Stevens (1957) report that in their studies at the University of Minnesota, every group of freshman students receiving instruction in listening improved in listening by at least 25 percent, while some groups improved by as much as 40 percent.

Developing Academic Listening Skills. ELD students may often find lectures more difficult to understand than if they were hearing them in their native language. Krashen, Terrell, Ehrman, & Herzog (1984) state that important goals in the beginning stages of listening in the new or target language (TL), are to listen for the main ideas, and that language learners must develop strategies and tolerances (coping methods) for listening to speech that is not understood. They continue that language learners should not be overwhelmed by the amounts of the TL they do not understand; rather to learn to work with what is understood using context clues and what prior knowledge they already have about the TL.

Richards (1983) notes a contrast between “academic” (e.g., lectures) and

“conversational” (e.g., social interaction) listening, and he provides taxonomies for listening in both settings. These can be useful for teachers when deciding what to use as a basis for assessing listening skills in the classroom. It is noted that these do not happen in linear order, rather as simultaneous processes.

Some of the academic listening skills from Richards’ taxonomy are:

- ability to identify purpose and scope of lecture (overall theme)
- ability to identify topic of lecture and follow topic development (main idea)
- ability to deduce meanings of words from context (vocabulary)
- ability to recognize function of intonation to signal information structure (pitch, volume, pace, key).

Powers (1986) surveyed 144 faculty members in the United States to find out what their views were on the relative importance of 21 lecture-related micro-skills, as they related to academic performance. According to results of the surveys, nine of the most important micro-skills were found to be:

- identifying major themes or ideas
- identifying relationships among major ideas
- identifying the topic of a lecture
- retaining information through note-taking
- retrieving information from notes
- inferring relationships between information
- comprehending key vocabulary
- following the spoken mode of lectures
- identifying supporting ideas and examples.

Reading Aloud to ELD Students

Helps Develop Independent Readers. Before a student learns to read, it is important that he or she wants to learn to read. Being read to is a vital part of developing a story schema (Feitelson, Kita, and Goldstein, 1986). Teale (1982) says that the tendency of children to request repeated readings of the same stories fosters enjoyment and appreciation for those texts.

Lane and Miller (1972) found that underachieving students between the ages of eleven and thirteen who followed along in the text as the teacher read aloud (from Ian Serrailler's Murder at Dunsinane and Other Stories from Shakespeare, written at a sixth to seventh grade level), were intrigued and continually wanted to hear more. The investigators conclude that a listening program may be vital for students who have been "indifferent and intermittent learners" if it is incorporated into the general curriculum as it raises interest levels and increases thinking skills. In a study of the effects of story reading on language development, Vivas (1996) reports that preschool and first-grade students who listen to interesting and meaningful stories develop the habit of listening and receive specific training in comprehension through exposure to stories that are interesting and meaningful to them.

Feitelson et al. (1986) state that one of the benefits of being read to is that children are exposed to literary devices such as metaphor and that they will carry over when students encounter them in different contexts. They note that listening to stories frequently may help extend children's attention span for hearing stories. In their study, Feitelson et al. (1986), found that Israeli first-grade students hearing stories read aloud became acquainted with literary language which had such a strong impact on students that it affected their active

use of language. They also found that students who were read to (by mediating adults, or adults who read to them and explained the story) were able to respond to factual and inferential questions in story texts and in an expository passage which seemed to imply that there was a positive effect on a range of interrelated comprehension skills.

Cohen (1968) studied the effects of literature on reading achievement of second grade students, ranging from low to high levels of reading. One group of teachers participating in the study read a story each day of the school year from quality books. Books were selected that took age group into consideration, as well as allowance for emotional identification with story characters and events, natural flow of language, and no vocabulary limitations. The other group of teachers was not given carefully selected books for reading aloud, and only read aloud occasionally, if at all.

Findings from the Cohen study (1968) show that regular read alouds provide a necessary transition bridge for beginning readers between comprehending oral language to the final use of symbols in reading. Reading aloud was also found to aid in development of student's attention spans and promoting listening skills. The researchers also found that quality of vocabulary, increase in reading comprehension, and word knowledge were higher than that of the control groups.

In a study of reading aloud to eight-year-old children and vocabulary acquisition by Elley (1989), children were divided into three groups: one group was read to with target vocabulary explained; a second group had read aloud, but with no explanation, and the last group did not hear any story read aloud, but took the same vocabulary tests as the other groups. Pre- and post-

intervention vocabulary tests were administered. The findings indicate that new vocabulary can be learned incidentally by young children through listening to read alouds, learning is relatively permanent, students starting out with less vocabulary knowledge gained at least as much from the readings as other students, and texts must contain some vocabulary that is beyond students' present understanding for new learning to occur.

Coincides with Krashen's Input Hypothesis. If we constantly expose students to stories written at their current levels of comprehension, reaching higher levels of reading and comprehension could not be achieved. Krashen (1985) states that there is a natural order in which language is acquired, and that by understanding messages (receiving "comprehensible input") that has input containing language structures at the next "stage," (structures just beyond the current level of competence), humans are able to acquire language. In this comprehensible input hypothesis ($i+1$), new forms of language are acquired with the help of extra-linguistic help (that is, additional explanation using familiar language to help learners understand), and by understanding messages containing the new language forms presented. According to Krashen, students acquiring a second language should be exposed to language that is just beyond their present level of competence in order for language growth to occur (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

By offering authentic language practice (activities that are for real or a useful purpose rather than contrived activities), students are encouraged to perform at higher levels, rather than being limited to only levels that the teacher feels they can reach. Byrnes (1984) reveals that many times "the classroom . . . burdens the listener unnaturally and unnecessarily by tidying up the language"

(p. 324). Krashen et al. (1984) conclude that students must be given the means to work with oral and written authentic texts that are slightly beyond their current level of competence. Porter and Roberts (1981) state that if we are to help language learners cope with bridging the gap between authentic language they hear and that which they are able to produce (in the TL), they should be taught strategies for dealing with authentic language.

It is important that language teachers strive to encourage language learners to become motivated, interested, and to offer activities that will not cause high levels of anxiety or stress. Joiner (1984) acknowledges that ideally the English teacher-caretaker should help to lower anxiety and motivate students by capitalizing on their interests and needs. Krashen and Terrell (1983) explain that affective filters (attitudinal variables) must be low for language learners to acquire language successfully. If filters are low, learners are more open to the input they receive while acquiring new language. Importantly, they will be encouraged to try to get more input, interact with speakers of the new language, and be receptive to input they receive.

Mental Imagery

Drawing Pictures During Read Aloud. Gambrell and Bales (1987) found that in listening and reading situations, it is helpful for teachers to inform students that when something is difficult to understand, making mental pictures helps. For readers who find it difficult to obtain and organize meaning from texts, Rathet (1994) maintains that imagery helps. Rasinski (1985) suggests that imagery activities should combine sign and symbol and should also connect language to images and images to language.

Gambrell and Bales (1986) found mental imagery used by below-

average fourth- and fifth-grade readers was positively associated with comprehension-monitoring performance. In this study, two groups were given instructions: one was told they would be reading something silently, and that one good way to understand and remember what they read would be to make pictures in their heads. In the second group, they were told to do whatever they could to understand and remember what they read. The authors found that poor readers did not spontaneously utilize mental imagery as a strategy for monitoring comprehension even when they struggled with comprehension difficulties, whereas mental imagery was frequently used when students were told to use it as a strategy for aiding in comprehension.

Kulhavey and Swenson (1975) studied effects of mental imagery in fifth- and sixth-grade students in Arizona. They divided students into two groups that were to read various paragraphs silently and to answer questions choosing one of two responses at the end of each passage. The image-instructed students were told to form mental pictures before responding to the questions and the second group was told simply to read the material and answer questions correctly at the end of each passage. Two types of posttests were randomly given to each group: some tests related to what they read, other tests were unrelated placebos. One week later, both groups again received the tests that were randomly assigned. The authors found that students remembered more from a text if they had formed mental images as they read, and that imagery instructions increased story retention over time.

Drawing during a read aloud is an activity that listeners can do to help them focus on the story. Lund (1990) uses the term "listener response," which is defined as what the listener does in order to demonstrate successful listening.

Whitin (1996) explored the idea of students sketching as she read aloud to her seventh-grade language arts classes in which students responded to a novel by using symbols, colors, lines, shapes, and textures. Whitin notes that students invented symbols to signify meaning, drawing ideas from their own cultural contexts, and she found that non-linguistic sign systems could help learners deepen their understanding of conflict, theme, and character relationships. Rathet (1994) acknowledges that students seem to enjoy drawing, or at least feel active as they receive information from a tape, test, or the teacher.

Possible Impact of Drawing on Note-Taking. To be successful in listening to a lecture or read aloud, students should be able to organize information for purposes of their own understanding. Krashen et al. (1984) say that “students often expect material to be organized for them” (p. 269) and that in the language learning classroom, the teacher must restructure the course so that teaching elicits student performance.

James (1977) documents that the note-taking process of lecture comprehension can be difficult for postgraduate students, especially when English is not their primary language. In his paper, he maintains that there are three main problem areas which include decoding, comprehending, and taking notes. He goes on to say that in the process of taking notes, students must be able to identify main points, decide when to record them, and write quickly and clearly for purposes of later review.

Lund (1991) points out that, unlike a reader who can reread for clarification and pause on unfamiliar words, if the listener misses several key words or phrases, the meaning may be lost. A listener is forced to comprehend material at the same time that it is being received, since spoken text exists in

time rather than space and since the listener does not usually control the pace.

Ridge (1984) comments, "The 'product' of listening rests in the head of the listener. It is the conclusion drawn, or the fact heard, or the mood of the speaker guessed at, or the music appreciated" (p. 6). Rathet (1994) finds that having Japanese ESL students draw their own pictures (English by Drawing as she labels it) rather than using the more prevalent tool of prepared pictures allows students to create their own visuals. She also says that while receiving information from the teacher, a tape, or a text, many students enjoy drawing, or at least the opportunity to feel active during that time, and that offering listening tasks to Japanese students learning English as they listened to conversational English might keep them more alert.

Teaching Social Studies through Literature

A Novel Idea (and Providing ELD Students with Access to the Core Curriculum). McGowan and Guzzetti (1991) note that teachers and students of social studies gain the tools to function as informed, thoughtful citizens as they read critically and explore how people live and form relationships. They continue that high-quality literary works contain many examples about the human condition which can supply meaningful content for skill-building experiences in the classroom. Lawson and Barnes (1991) maintain that one of the best ways to encourage students to get involved with the people and events of the past is by using children's literature. They claim that children are eager and responsive to learning about life in earlier times when great books are used as a key resource for exploring issues of the past. Also, they continue that children are able to develop a deep understanding of characters' lives, values, conflicts, and stresses when they become involved with and relate to the

characters in the stories.

Heath (1982) advocates that literature helps teachers and students learn about history and that creative word choice from an historical novel paints an historical picture that gets students involved. He comments that history (e.g. through literature) becomes more than mere past events, but rather experiences that students are a part of; he regrets that social studies teachers tend to rely too heavily on single textbook approaches, thus ignoring the historical novel and its impact on student performance. With empathy, students form internal feelings, and Heath (1982) states that those feelings will stay with them much longer than cold, hard facts.

In this review, I have discussed the literature that relates to different components that make up my study of effects of drawing during read aloud, including listening, reading aloud, mental imagery, and teaching social studies through literature. Overall, the literature suggests that drawing during the read aloud was benefiting students in various ways. Students were being exposed to written English grammar and syntax as they were engaged in effective listening, they were activating mental imagery which helps further comprehension of the text, and they were learning in-depth about the Middle Ages time period in Europe. I became confident that the results of this study would be relevant for my future teaching practices, and I began to carry out the study with great interest.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Context of the Study

School Demographics. Woodland Middle School is located in a low-income neighborhood in the Oakwood School District². Gangs are a reality for children in the neighborhood and their presence is apparent through graffiti, vandalism, and colors. The school is tucked away in a quiet cul-de-sac at the end of the road. Next to the park, across the street from the school, there is a small community center where students can go for after-school activities such as homework tutoring, games, and dances. In back of the campus there is a large Mexican-American community center which offers more of the same services, but also includes social, health, and gang-prevention/task force services.

Based on a school district report (figures extrapolated from the district totals) in the year prior to this study, of the 761 students enrolled at Woodland Middle School, 22% of the students were Fully English Proficient (FEP), 60% were Limited English Proficient (LEP), and 18% were English Only (EO). Of these 761 students, 81% received free or reduced lunch. Schoolwide absenteeism was documented at 7.01% over the course of the year.

Classroom Setting. Located on the east side of the campus, my classroom faces the freeway and the hills, overlooking the grassy area and running track of our school. I enjoy a view of the hills from my room. The P.E. department and locker rooms are directly across the blacktop. When the classroom door is open, we can hear the P.E. classes. When it is hot around

² All school, district, and students' names are pseudonyms to protect the identity of students.

the beginning and end of the school year, our classroom door has to stay open so air can circulate through the room, and the noise level outside can interfere with what we are doing inside. During read aloud, for example, students need to be able to block out the heat or the noise, or both, in order to listen to what I am reading. Fortunately, during the time of this research study, the weather was moderate, and outside noise was not a factor.

The desks are very old, scratched up, banged up, and have tops that open up so students can put belongings in them for the class period. Desks are arranged so they face forward in pairs. I prefer this arrangement so I can see all students' eyes and faces; they are also close enough to another person in case they need to clarify any instructions or directions. When we do group work, students their move desks together.

If you look around the room, you will see a classroom library with shelves made of white rain-gutters so books can be displayed face-forward. Above the sink and its counter top, there is a student work bulletin board where group center work is displayed. The cupboard doors are covered with students' drawings, artwork, and class work from all six classes that I teach. As you continue to look around, you will also see an overhead screen, the daily schedule, and the clock. One wall is made up of partially boarded-up windows, the result of frequent vandalism during non-school hours.

Students gossip in clusters near the classroom door after lunch. I expect students to enter calmly, as they transition from lunch behavior to classroom behavior. There are, of course, times when I have to remind them that "lunch is over, take your seats, and get focused." Once they are settled in, most of them are usually ready to get on with things.

Participants

Who. Thirty ELD students from my 5th period class participated in the study. As I look into the sea of faces, I see mostly Hispanic students (83%), and some Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander students (Chinese, Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Philipino). They all have LEP levels of 3 and 4, and are fairly fluent in speaking and listening in English. Their reading and writing skills vary, ranging from 2.5 to 5.5 grade levels, with the majority of the class at about 3.0 or 4.0 grade levels.

Many of the students can be hard to motivate as far as getting their homework turned in and striving to do their very best. Some students who do get their work done seem embarrassed and turn it in discreetly. There are a few, however, who always do their work, do their best, and are always ready to listen and get started on class work. The majority of students in this class need a lot of in-class time to complete work, and lots of reminders to work more and socialize less during class time.

Selection of Students. I chose this class because they were predominantly 7th graders, and it seemed a good way to support their social studies teacher in her curriculum as she taught about the Middle Ages. Of the 30 students, I randomly selected seven to be interviewed in order to provide me with a deeper understanding of what effect drawing during read aloud had on individual students.

After students were selected, I used a modified version of a Listening Rubric Assessment Scale to determine each student's listening ability (see Appendix B). I added a comprehension item on the scale to clarify for myself student's comprehension at the various stages; you will find these written in by

hand. In the beginning of the assessment process, I thought one student was a Strong Listener (3), three students were Capable Listeners (2's), and three students were Developing Listeners (1's). After I had completed interviews, I discovered that some students were in different categories than initially presumed (see Findings--Student Sketches).

Availability was also a factor when selecting students to be interviewed. I needed students who would be able and willing to come on a regular basis. There is a high rate of absenteeism at Woodland Middle School. In my classroom, it is not uncommon to have anywhere from one to six students absent per period each day, and it is very rare for all 30 students to be present. Absences can be due to a number of reasons, from needing to babysit younger siblings, having to go with a family member to an appointment for translation, illness, or trips out of the country for extended lengths of time.

Data Collection/Analysis

In this section, I will describe the process of data collection and data analysis ranging from the read aloud, student drawings, written surveys, field notes, and interviews.

The Read Aloud. I read almost daily for about seven weeks from Rosemary Sutcliff's historical novel, The Sword and the Circle, which is written at about a 9th grade reading level (Fry's Readability Formula, Fry, Polk, and Fountoukidis, 1984). I chose this book because it provided colorful, rich language as well as exciting accounts of King Arthur and his Knights during the Middle Ages (see Appendix C for an example of the text, pp. 10-11). Before the reading each day, I usually had students tell their neighbor what happened in the prior day's reading, and then one volunteer would recap for the whole class.

I reread the paragraph where we left off, explaining that it is useful when reading novels to “get your head where it was when you left off last” (recap). As a reader, this is a strategy I find helpful, especially when returning to a text that I have had a break from. I was honest about what I think about when I read so students could see real reading strategies. Once we got our minds caught up with the story, I began reading the new text.

Readings usually lasted anywhere from 15 to 50 minutes, with an average of about 30 minutes per day. There were only a few short sessions, and those were usually times I extended Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) so students could get more practice reading independently. I tried to read to the end of a scene (a good closing place where a particular event had just ended) before it was time for students to leave. The number of pages I read to them each day (based on 10 days analyzed) ranged from two to 16, with an average of nearly seven pages per session. A seven-page reading lasted about 30 minutes, and a 16-page reading lasted about 50 minutes. Our class time usually consisted of about 20 minutes of SSR, 30 minutes of read aloud, and three minutes turning in/filing away drawings and packing up to go to the next class.

During our read aloud, I encouraged students to wait until they saw something in their minds that they wanted to draw. Not everyone drew every session, and I told them that was okay. If they did not “see” anything, they were not forced to draw. I wanted drawing during read aloud to be an enjoyable and stress-free activity where students were able to relax and acquire the language, feeling little or no pressure to produce the “correct response.”

Drawings. Students labeled their paper with their names and the date.

Some students titled their papers with the current chapter. I read aloud as they drew pictures about what they were hearing in the story. Students were not limited as to how they could do their drawings. I left it open-ended, and told them to draw as they envisioned it, whether it be one large picture on the whole page or many smaller pictures that changed as rapidly as the events in the story. I also told them that they could draw stick figures if they did not feel comfortable drawing. I asked them to label their pictures (names, events, what was happening in their pictures, etc.) before they handed them in.

File folders containing the drawings were carefully marked with the date, what number of reading it was, and the page numbers I read from that day. Labels on the file folders provided me with easy access if I wanted to look at their pictures regarding a certain day's reading. I also marked in the book where we began and left off in each day's reading, and noted in margins if interviews were held on those days. This helped me when I needed to refer back to something in the story; I could locate it quickly, and I did not have to search for notes on what we read about on a certain day, or on what day interviews took place.

About half way through the book (nearly one month into it), we took a week off from reading so we could recap all we had been doing. During this break, I gave them a written survey related to what they were thinking/drawing as I read to them. The remainder of that week was devoted to passing back drawings they made up to that point and having students color them. Before I released the drawings back to individuals, I went through the file folders I had been saving their drawings in and numbered the back of each picture in the lower-right corner (i.e., for the first day's reading, #1, for the second day's

reading, #2, etc.). That way it would not be an ordeal if we needed to group the drawings according to the whole class again.

As students had their drawings spread out in front of them at their desks, I walked around the room, noting the care that each student put into their work. They seemed to enjoy coloring and visiting with those around them. I saw them share their drawing with their neighbors, and I heard compliments being given to each other. Coloring the pictures seemed to make the students want to do even better in future drawings, since they now knew what they would be doing with all of their pictures at the end of the story. I did not want to risk losing any drawings, so I discouraged students from taking them home, although I knew many were anxious to share their work at home. I assured them they would be able to take them home when we finished our study.

It was important for students to keep their drawings in a safe place as they worked on coloring at intermission, so I passed out large yellow construction paper for them to make folders by folding them in half, like booklets. I told them their folders would be graded after the story was finished, and that neatness, organization (drawings should be in order of events), and labels on their drawings counted. They needed to write their names on folders, and include the title, author, and draw any picture related to the story on the front of their folder. Students seemed to appreciate the chance to be artistic and free to design the front of their folders. They kept all of their drawings in them for one week.

I realized that if I wanted to see what the class was drawing about, I would need to look at the drawings as a whole class for each day's reading. I did not want to think about having to spend the hours it would take pulling them

from their folders sequentially on my own, even though I put numbers on the back of each. Therefore, our next task was to get the drawings out of individual folders, and filed back as a whole class, in order, by number on the backs of their pictures. We spent an entire class period passing forward their now-colored drawings according to number so that I could refile them sequentially. Over the course of the entire read aloud, I collected a total of 35 drawings per student from those who handed one in each day. Some students had fewer drawings depending on their absences and whether they drew.

Check-Off Lists: Coding the Content of the Drawings. When analyzing the student drawings, I devised 13 Check-Off Lists (see Figures 1a and 1b for an example--Check-Off List #6) in order to systematically check off what each student drew about from each day's read aloud³. Only 10 of these Check-Off Lists were used for analyzing student drawings because they represent the days when I interviewed students, making it easier to cross-reference student interviews and their drawings. To create the Check-Off Lists, I went through the text from each day's reading and listed sequentially five elements (or categories) that were mentioned in the story: Characters, Animals, Objects, Action, and Setting--Indoor/Outdoor (to more accurately distinguish different settings in the story, I chose to specify between outdoor and indoor settings). The elements were the same for each Check-Off List, but the items are specific to each day's read aloud. These category headings filled the column down the left side of the Check-Off Lists, with all elements that were present in those particular day's readings. Student names were listed alphabetically across the top of each list so I could quickly reference what elements each student

³It is important to note that these check-lists allowed only for literal comprehension.

included in their individual drawings.

I went through each student drawing and placed a dot (check-off or tally) on each Check-Off List in appropriate categories. This showed me how the student drawings were directly related to each day's reading. Many of the drawings reflected multiple categories and were tallied in each category represented. Any drawings that had elements not present on the Check-Off Lists were disregarded as they did not accurately reflect the story. If there were elements that were not explicit, I did not tally them. For example, for Action: if "riding" was mentioned in the text, but the student drawing showed a person simply sitting on a horse with no indication of a riding motion, I did not assume this was "riding." Each mark indicates student understanding for the part they drew about, as the drawings were specifically related to what happened in the story that day (e.g., Carol drew about Lancelot as he was described in the story, David drew about the four queens who came along to cast a spell on Lancelot).

Complete sections of the text read on days relating to the following Check-Off Lists (#6 and #8) will be found in specified appendixes. Short excerpts from the story that relate directly to the drawings are attached to the figure drawings. Some drawings have been reduced in size. Figures 1a-1b illustrate how categories of randomly selected student drawings were tallied on Check-Off List #6 (on the sixth day several students were interviewed about that day's reading) (see Appendix D for the text, pp. 92-97). Tally marks relating to the following examples have been enlarged for easy reference.

Several students drew about an event when Sir Lancelot was sleeping under the apple tree and four queens (Morgan La Fay and three other queens) approached him (Appendix D--text pp. 92-93). Stephen's drawing (Figure 2) is

about Morgan La Fay as she cast a spell on Lancelot, who is under the apple tree, and uses lines flowing from her fingertips to demonstrate “magic.” The elements in Stephen’s drawing represent categories of Characters (Lancelot and Morgan La Fay), Objects (apple tree), Action (casting spell) and Setting (general outdoors). The bird in the tree was not mentioned in the story in prior days’ readings nor on that particular day’s reading; therefore, it was disregarded in the check-off.

Still in reference to the Check-Off List in Figures 1a-1b, Roberto’s drawing (Figure 3), shows Lancelot sleeping under the apple tree with his head on his “helm;” Morgan La Fay is kneeling by him as she casts a spell on him, with “magic” flowing from her fingertips to Lancelot. The elements found in Roberto’s drawing represent categories of Characters (Lancelot, Morgan La Fay, four queens), Objects (apple tree and helm), Action (casting spell), and Setting (general outdoors).

In reference to a different day’s reading, Check-Off List #8 (Figures 4a-4c) illustrates further examples of checked-off student drawings (see Appendix E--text pp. 129-138). In Figure 5, Marcos drew a cross-section of the inside of the castle to show the kitchen where Beaumains, the Kitchen Knight, was cooking while being mocked for his large hands and his lack of experience. The text that inspired this drawing is attached to the drawing (p. 131). Marcos’ drawing represent categories of Characters (Beaumains Fairhands and scullions, or kitchen help), Animals (horses--since a specific type of horse was not specified, I tallied this in the general grid of “Types of Horses”), Objects (food--it appears that there was some type of food on the stove), and Setting (kitchen and general outdoors).

When drawings were not labeled fully or when inferences were made about the story (student drawings that included elements not directly mentioned in the story), it was sometimes difficult to determine exactly what was meant by the student. Still in reference to the Check-Off List in Figures 4a-4c, Stephen's drawing (Figure 6) shows how I checked this drawing (which Stephen did not label as to what was happening in the drawing, and contains an object he inferred) in comparison to the story. The text is attached to the drawing (p. 131). Stephen drew the Kitchen Knight (Beaumains Fairhands) holding an object in his hand. However, it is not clear to me if this is a pot of steaming water or a cutlery knife (both of these objects would be appropriate inferences) and neither of the objects was mentioned in the text. Therefore, nothing was tallied under Objects. If the object is a cutlery knife, it may seem that the lines represent movement; or the Action of a swinging down motion which was not mentioned in the text and was not tallied. Stephen's drawing received only one check-off mark; Character (Beaumains Fairhands).

An explanation of the story events is necessary to provide clear examples of how some items were checked off on Check-Off List #7 (Figures 7a-7c). Characters and Action in the story the day prior to this read aloud (text pp. 119-123) were very intense as the Lord of the Castle and Gawain maintain their promise to each other: to give each other what they each received/earned throughout the day (the Lord, hunting; and Gawain, waiting around the castle for three days). At the end of each of the three days, Gawain gives what he received to the Lord (first one kiss, then two, then three on the third day, without revealing that these were from the Lord's wife), who in turn gives Gawain his spoils from hunting (a deer, a boar, and a fox-skin). Later in the chapter, it is

learned that the Lord has magic powers and was testing Gawain's will-power and integrity with this scheme. I believe that the recap of the story before we began reading may have inspired some students to draw characters that were from the day prior; not from events specifically mentioned in the text that day.

Check-Off List #7 (Figures 7a-7c) shows how I checked off items that were drawn about that were included in the oral recap of the day (not specifically mentioned in the text). On the Check-Off List, I placed an asterick by category items that were drawn about, but mentioned in the prior day's reading. Norma's drawing (Figure 8, pp. 120-121 in the text) exhibits Character (Lord of the Castle), Animals (boar and deer), Object (knife--tallied under "axe"), Action (hunting), and Setting (forest--tallied in "outdoors" grid for general outdoors). Roberto's drawing in Figure 9 (inspired by the text on p. 124) includes Character (Gawain), Animals (horse-- fish were inferred and not tallied), Object (sword), Action (questing and riding), and Setting (outdoors and Green Chapel). Marcos' drawing (Figure 10) shows Characters (Gawain, the Lady of the Castle, and the Lord of the Castle), Animals (horse and deer--the rabbit was inferred and not tallied), Object (interpreted by me to be a sword, although it could be a rifle; at any rate, a hunting device), and Setting in two places (inside the castle and outdoors with surrounding forest--both settings received tally marks).

After I checked-off the elements from each drawing I received, I then counted how many of the student drawings contained one or more of each element (if one student's picture included all five elements, each element received a tally mark for that student). For example, Check-Off List #6 has 18 student drawings containing one or more characters (Figure 1a). Further examples relating to Figures 1a-1b are: four drawings had animals in them, 12

drawings had objects, 11 contained action, and 17 drawings reflected setting. Then I divided each of the numbers by 30 (there were 30 students enrolled in the class) in order to get the daily percentage drawn about in each category. For example, in Figure 1a, 18 student drawings contained “Characters.” Eighteen divided by 30 is 60%. Therefore, 60% of the student drawings for that day contained at least one or more characters. Percentages are based on the number of students enrolled in the class and do not take into consideration absentees or those who did not turn in drawings on certain days.

Master Frequency Graph: An Overall Look at the Drawings. I input the averages from each category into a Master Frequency List (see Figure 11). I did this by adding all percentages from each category found in student drawings (i.e., percentage of “Characters” from each of the 10 days, percentage of “Animals” from each of the 10 days, etc.) and then divided those numbers by the total number of days analyzed (10). It is important to note that there were certain days when one or more of the categories mentioned in the text was extremely high or low. For example, on a day when there were no animals described, students did not usually include animals in their drawings. However, on a day when hunting was mentioned, the frequency of animals drawn would be higher. The averages found in Figure 11 show that overall, sixty percent of the drawings included characters (e.g., King Arthur, Queen Guenever, Lancelot, dwarves), 20% included animals (e.g., horses, deer, dogs, bird), 30% included objects (e.g., swords, horns, Holy Grail Cup, armor), 35% included action (e.g., jousting, riding, hunting, talking), and 50% included setting (e.g., castle, forest, kitchen, dungeon).

Written Surveys. Twenty-six students were present when the class

responded in writing to six open-ended questions asked of them at about midpoint in the novel. I asked questions that I was curious about, such as, what they were thinking and doing during the read aloud; how they perceived they were understanding the story; what was helping them understand; what would help them understand the story better; and how they decided what to draw. I grouped similar student responses together for each question and made categories based on the general theme of each group. Categories are specific to each question and were derived from the majority of responses within each group.

Results from the survey questions are represented in pie charts (see Figures 12-17). When responses did not fit under distinct categories, they were placed in a "Miscellaneous" category. Any responses that were unclear, or could be interpreted in more than one way, were categorized as "Unclear Response." Any questions that were left blank were categorized as "No Response." Blank responses could be due to various reasons, such as the student ran out of time, did not understand the question, or could not think of anything to write. If students responded in more than one category, their responses were counted under the most appropriate category.

Percentages were derived from the number of student responses in similar categories divided by 26 students. These percentages were rounded to the nearest tenth, which may cause some of them to be over 100%. For example, Figure 12 shows that 13 of the students (13 divided by 26 is .50, or 50%) said that they think about "Plot" when listening to the story. Seven of the 26 students (27%) had various responses under "Miscellaneous," three students (12%) fit under the "Unclear Response" category, and another three

students (12%) had “No Response.” The sum of the raw numbers (13+7+3+3) equals 26 students (100% of the students). However, if you add the percentages in decimal form (.50+.26+.12+.12), the sum is 1.01, or 101%.

Field Notes. I gathered extensive field notes during the process of the study. These were written generally once a week to record interesting or important reflections and student attitudes or behaviors. At the end of each day, I jotted particulars of the day to refer back to and reflect on such as when the class seemed calm or not calm, what certain students seemed to be doing during the read aloud, reasons I thought those behaviors might be happening, who came to interviews and why others did not, and general feelings regarding the study.

Interviews. I did not begin interviews until the seventh day of reading aloud, so that students would be familiar with the story and with the process of drawing during read aloud. It also gave me time to determine which students to interview. I wanted to interview students who seemed to be average listeners, or those whom I could not quite classify on the Listening Assessment Rubric. I wanted to find out what these students were thinking about during the read aloud, how they were responding to drawing, and what they were comprehending from the text.

Interviews occurred after school with a total of 13 interview days, although substantial information from only 10 of those days was used for analyzing. All interview sessions were transcribed for further review and analysis. In the interviews, I asked students to tell me what they could remember from the story that particular day. After the third interview session, I suggested that students use their drawings to retell, and had them describe

what they drew about. I prodded with questions or comments about the story, inquired about what helped them understand the story, and asked them to describe their pictures. On some days, students sat alone and recorded their responses into a tape recorder when I was not able to sit with them as I began overlooking the homework center after school each day and needed to give attention to students coming in.

Although there are limitations to the interviews (e.g., they were quite sporadic, some days were student monologues without me there to redirect or prod further), they provided additional data that helped me better understand the impact of drawing during reading aloud on the students. Of the seven students that I interviewed, I focus on Michael, Raul, and Dora in the study (see Findings Part Two--Student Sketches) since their attendance was most consistent and they were each interviewed at least seven times.

Once the drawings, coded Check-Off Lists, Master Frequency Graph, written surveys, field notes, and interview transcripts were completed, I began searching for patterns and behaviors that would show me what effects drawing during read aloud was having on ELD students.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS--PART ONE

Drawings

Drawing During Read Aloud. I encouraged students to draw a picture of what they heard and then to describe in writing what was happening in their picture and label characters they drew about; this was something that all students in my class were able to do, albeit at different levels. Even the lowest readers could feel successful writing simple labels, and I noticed that these students responded positively to drawing. In fact, the lower readers were usually the first ones to help clarify any questions that I, or other students, had about the text we read.

Some students are better at taking tests than others, and low test scores do not always mean poor comprehension. I believe that educators should provide students with ways to demonstrate their understanding in alternative ways (especially for students who are acquiring English), that is, other than through traditional comprehension/recall questions. Drawings appear to be a non-threatening way to assess literal comprehension of text being read aloud.

Elements. When I looked through student drawings, I saw that each student understood at least the part they drew and labeled. When I first devised the Check-Off Lists to examine how the drawings related to the story, I did not realize the categories were related to literary elements (plot, setting, characters, events, etc.). Once I began focusing on these elements, I found that they were represented in most, if not all of the student drawings, in one way or another. This indicates that students were paying attention to and drawing about the

different elements as they heard the story being read.

Comprehension. Almost 100% of the 30 students' drawings represented at least one aspect from that day's reading. I say "almost 100%" of the drawings because of the drawings of two students, Elisa and Jaime, both Resource Specialist Program (RSP) students with district-designated LEP levels of 4. Their drawings were not consistently related to each day's reading. This may be because of their special needs as learners. It may also be related to other factors, such as absences, where they sat in the room (on days when Jaime sat in front of the room his drawings usually followed the story), who their neighbors were (i.e., if they talked to/shared what they would be drawing about, etc.). Although Elisa and Jaime showed some comprehension on certain days, they did not demonstrate comprehension through their drawings and labels on a regular basis.

In the case of Elisa, she drew the same background each time with a house, a tree, and a woman (Figure 18). This particular drawing was done on the day I read from text pp. 53-60 (Appendix F). She labeled her drawings either with the title of the book, words of her own that did not relate to the book, or notes I had jotted on the overhead to clarify confusing characters or points in the story. Elisa may have been drawing about the text, but since all of her pictures look similar, I wonder if she only drew what she knew how to draw. Comprehension of the text was not evident in her drawings.

Most days, Jaime's drawings consisted of "manking," "womanking," and some type of a castle setting (Figure 19 and Figure 20; Appendix G and Appendix H--text pp. 224-237 and text pp. 205-214, respectively). However, he did not always demonstrate in his drawings that he knew what was going on in

the story. He could have known, but it was not clear from his drawings or labels.

With the exception of Elisa and Jaime, the rest of the students clearly demonstrated in their drawings that they understood what was happening in the story. Students usually drew about at least one element from each reading. For example, several students drew small pictures about the scene where King Arthur was suiting up for a battle, which had been arranged by Morgan La Fay (see Appendix I for the text, pp. 75-79). In Figure 21, Stephen drew four small pictures (a-d): one with the servant carrying Arthur's sword (a); one with Arthur, his foot on a stool being helped by a servant (b); one of a horse (c); and one of a shield (d). In Figure 22, Carol drew three small pictures (a-c): one in which King Arthur is being helped with suiting up for the battle (a); one of Arthur realizing he held an imitation sword in place of Excalibur; and one other drawing with an event from the next day's reading, when Morgan La Fay thinks that Arthur is dead (c). For the last drawing, Carol may have held on to her paper until the next day and then added to it rather than beginning on a new page, or in a brief discussion at the end of the reading, I (or a student in the class) may have figured out that it was Morgan's wish to have Arthur dead rather than Accalon.

Several students drew about the actual battle between Arthur and Sir Accalon, from the same day's reading as Arthur's preparation for the battle (pp. 76-79). In this battle, Arthur thought his adversary was an evil man, not realizing it was a friend of his, Sir Accalon. Monique's drawing (Figure 23) shows Arthur bleeding from his head and nose, taking a break in the fight; Accalon is standing next to him with the real Excalibur in his hand (note here the faces on the flower and the sun as they observe the battle in dismay). In Figure 24, Carlos drew Accalon pointing his sword at Arthur, with blood coming

from King Arthur's chest. In the same drawing, Carlos drew Morgan La Fay standing to the side, as she was the one who arranged for the battle to take place.

With the exception of Elisa and Jaime, 87% of the drawings were specifically about the story. Each of the items checked on the Check-Off Lists were from the story they heard on those days (otherwise they did not receive a tally mark). The marks show that the drawings reflect the story, thus indicating that students understood those parts. Student drawings demonstrate comprehension of the text, at least for the parts students drew about.

Written Surveys

Student surveys provided me with feedback from students regarding their thoughts during the read aloud. The following section states each written survey question from 26 students who were present that day, discusses student responses in percentages (see Figures 12-17), and reveals my overall findings based on student responses.

Question #1 (Figure 12). What do you think about when you are listening to the story? Fifty percent of the 26 students (thirteen students) present the day of the survey answered this question with comments relating to events in the story plot. This shows that half of the students were focusing on the plot of the story as they listened. For example, one boy said he thinks about Arthur fighting bad guys. Another boy responded by saying, "I think about a kid that put a sword out of the anvil and became king." Other responses included: "action long ago in England," "knights," and "happy stuff." I presume this student meant happy times or good times in the story, such as the feasts, weddings, dinners, and so forth.

I grouped 27% of the student responses (seven) for the first question under the “Miscellaneous” category because these responses were more general to the overall read aloud, rather than being specifically related to that day’s read aloud. This shows that rather than focusing on the main ideas in the story, these students were thinking about things aside from the story. Although these students may have been focusing at times on the main plot, they may not have recalled it at the time of the survey. One student, Iris, responded here that “It’s hard to listen and draw at the same time.” Another student answered, “I have to concentrate.” Two students said that they think about how good the overall book is. For example, Roman commented that he thinks, “it sure is a good book.” One girl who attended class only once every few chapters responded that while she is listening to the story, she thinks about how “it’s boring sometimes, but good.”

Twelve percent of the student responses (three) were “Unclear,” mostly due to grammatical, syntactical, and/or spelling errors. For example, one student wrote that “When I’m listening to the story most of the time I’m listening to the story.” I was not sure what was meant by this response, so I coded it as “Unclear.” The remaining twelve percent of the students (three) did not respond to the question, thus falling into the “No Response” category.

Question #2 (Figure 13). What helps you know what to draw? On this question, 27% of the student responses (seven) fell into the category of “Interesting or Important Events.” These responses show that these students drew about parts of the story they found important, interesting, engaging, or satisfying. One student said that he draws what he likes, another that he draws “when it’s good,” and another, “if it’s important.” One girl responded with “what’s

interesting,” and another said he draws about “happy stuff.”

Twenty-three percent of the student responses (six) were grouped in the “Listen” category. This tells me that these students were concentrating on listening to the story and what I was reading while they decided what they would draw. The majority of responses for this category are very similar because they all commented on listening (e.g., they listened to what I was reading about, listened to what I was saying, or listened to what I said was happening in the book).

Twenty-three percent of the student responses (six) were classified in the “Visual/Memory” category. These students visualized images in their heads and/or drew about parts they remembered happening in the story. It was unclear if these are parts they remembered from prior read alouds, or from earlier parts of the story. This shows that these students used mental imagery (envisioning the story in their minds) or used memory recall to get ideas for their drawings. Four students said that they draw about what they see in their heads, and three responded that they draw about what the story describes. Two students relied on memory and said they remembered the parts and then draw one.

Twenty-three percent of the responses (six) fell in the “Unclear Response” category. Most of these were either not related directly to the question, or did not make sense to me. For example, one student wrote “It’s kind of easy to draw, it helps me a lot because I’ll know what happens.” Her response does not tell me how she knows what to draw. Another student wrote, “I ‘dinck’ on my head.” I was not sure if he meant “think in my head,” and I did not want to make any assumptions.

One student (4% of the responses) said that she asks a friend to help her know what to draw, and I categorized this response in the “Ask Others” category. I noticed during read aloud sessions that this particular girl frequently checked with her neighbor and wanted to see what her neighbor was drawing about before she would begin her own. Not surprisingly, her pictures were very similar to her friend’s drawings.

Question #3 (Figure 14). What do you do when you don’t understand the story? Twenty-seven percent of the student responses (seven) fell into the category of “Miscellaneous,” and includes one blank response. This category included a range of comments such as “Look at other people’s and get ideas,” “I don’t know,” “Review pictures after I’ve finished drawing them and then I find out what they mean,” and, “Just draw what I think it means.”

Twenty-three percent of the student responses (six) fell into the category of “Ask.” One girl responded that she tries to get my attention. Three students said they ask either a classmate or the teacher, one boy said he asks somebody for help, and one girl said she asks the teacher. Interestingly, I do not recall some of these students ever asking me for clarification either during or after class. These students may have answered that way because they knew they could have asked me if they did not understand; perhaps they were not having difficulty understanding.

Twenty-three percent of the students (six) indicate that when they do not understand, they “Wait for More Information.” Rather than tuning the story out, these students waited to hear more details until the story began to make sense for them. One student replied that he waits until the teacher reads a part he does understand. Other responses that fell into this category were: “I don’t

think too much about it and draw another thing,” and, “I try to understand and if I don’t, I ‘weit into’ [wait until] a other part.” This is a strategy that I encouraged students to do all along . . . not to be concerned with every detail and to get the gist from each day’s reading.

Nineteen percent of the responses (five) fell into the “Visualize or Think” category. One girl responded that when she does not understand, she tries to get the scene in her head. Another girl said she draws whatever comes to her mind, and one boy said that he thinks about yesterday’s parts (in order to connect the pieces, presumably).

Eight percent of the responses (two) were categorized as “Disregard.” This shows that these students did not worry about parts they did not understand. One boy said that he does not think about what he does not understand, and one girl said that she just keeps drawing and coloring regardless of not understanding.

Question #4 (Figure 15). What helps you understand the story? I was expecting students to say that drawing pictures during the read aloud helped them understand since I had been observing in their drawings how it seemed to help them sort information, but none of the student responses mentioned “drawing.” I wonder if the students assumed that the drawing helped them understand and organize the information, or if they did not think that drawing helped them at all? Michael and Raul mentioned in interviews that drawing helped them understand, although in their written surveys, they did not mention this strategy (see Findings Part Two--Student Sketches).

Thirty-five percent of the student responses (nine) were categorized under the “Concentrate or Think” category. These responses show that these

students were engaged in listening during the read aloud, and they concentrated on the story as a strategy to help them understand. Six students reported that they concentrated on listening to the story. One student said that she pays very good attention. Another wrote that he concentrates on what the teacher is saying, and another commented, "I listen a little more harder."

Nineteen percent of the student responses (five) were classified under the "Miscellaneous" category. These students employ different strategies to help them understand the story. One girl said that she takes the book home (she borrowed my extra copy on a few occasions, although she did not state if she reread or read ahead). Another student said that he helps himself by using the dictionary, presumably to look up words he did not understand. Three students responded that they look around at the ceiling, blank paper, or prior pictures to help them understand. I assume that while looking at the ceiling or blank paper they listen to the story, trying to gain understanding.

Fifteen percent of the student responses (four) indicated that students ask a friend or neighbor, or talk to someone to help them understand the story. These responses were classified under the "Seeks Clarification from Others" category. One student responded that he tells me and then I tell him and then he understands (clarification). Another student wrote that he asks the teacher, while another wrote that she asks her friend.

Eight percent of the students (two) revealed that they take notes to help them understand the story, and these were classified under the "Note-Taking" category. One of these responses indicated that the student writes something to go with the drawing in order to help her understand. One student wrote that if she writes something with her drawing, she could understand the drawing.

Another student wrote, “I think by wrighting a little stuff to helps me remember what happens.” Twenty-three percent of the students (six) did not respond to this question.

Question #5 (Figure 16). Would you say you understand: A) All of the story, B) Parts of the story, or C) None of the story? This question was a “choose the best answer” question. Sixty-six percent of the students (seventeen) said they understood “Parts” of the story, 15% of the students (four) responded with “All,” another 15% of the students (four) had “No Response,” and 4% (one student) said “None” (this was a student who attended class irregularly). Two students responded with a combination of Parts/None, which I placed in the “Parts” category and are reflected in the total percentage for that category. This shows me that more than half of the students (21 students) were understanding at least parts of the story (meaning they were not completely lost) and that the story was challenging them as listeners to stay focused on the story. Only one student reported not understanding any parts at all, but I attribute this to her lack of regular class attendance.

Question #6 (Figure 17). What would help you understand the story better? Thirty-nine percent of the students (10) responded in ways that led me to create the “Self” category, meaning how they could help themselves. This shows that almost half of the students take responsibility for their own understanding. For example, five students said they would understand better by concentrating more or listening better. One student said if he would study more he would understand better (I was not sure if he meant study his drawings or the book, but I still tallied his response in this category). Four students said that if they would review the story (e.g., with friends, neighbors, the teacher),

they would understand better.

Twenty-seven percent of the student responses (seven) fell in the “Teacher” category, indicating that they thought that support from the teacher would help them understand better. For example, students mentioned the following: if the teacher provided more word definitions (explain vocabulary); if the words in the story were not so hard to understand; if the teacher reread the story; and if the teacher would explain it better (i.e., what’s going on). While I did explain very important parts, or parts where I knew students were completely lost, I mainly wanted them to just listen for the exposure to the language, not so much to understand everything. I also wanted to see how much of the story they would understand on their own.

“Environment” was a category that accounted for 19% of the student responses (five). This category included responses that referred to moving student seats, and could have fallen under the “Teacher” category, as they are definitely under the teacher’s control. However, since several students responded specifically in this way, I placed them into an “Environment” category. One student who sat at a side table away from people, mainly to minimize his urge to talk, responded that “it would help if you moved some people next to me.” Four other students responded that if certain people were not sitting next to them they would be able to understand the story better. These may be students sitting next to those who reported that they “ask a friend or neighbor” to help them understand and they may have been disturbed by that. It may be similar to watching a movie and sitting near someone who is explaining or asking questions during the whole movie; while you want them to enjoy and understand, they may hinder your own enjoyment and

understanding. Fifteen percent of the student responses (four) had “No Response,” and were left blank.

Overall Survey Findings. One of the most important findings of this study was that drawing during read aloud created an atmosphere for listening. The majority of students surveyed said that they understood parts of the story, and several said that they understood all of it. Many of these students said that they concentrated on the story to help them understand. I think it would have been more difficult for these students to concentrate were the class not engaged with drawing during the read aloud, as there would have been more opportunities for distractions/ disruptive behavior to occur. Students needed to be with their own thoughts in order to process what they were hearing, drawing during the read aloud helped students channel those thoughts on the story, and concentration was attained.

It is important to mention that extended read aloud sessions were more settling than shorter sessions. For example, if students were aware that we did not have much time to spend on reading aloud, perhaps I had extended SSR time longer than usual which left us with 10-15 minutes until the end of the period, the atmosphere in the room seemed restless. It was almost as if they felt they did not have time to get into and carried away with the story, maybe their thoughts were already with what they needed to pack up before they left for their next class. Longer sessions, when we skipped SSR or reduced the usual time spent on it, seemed very calm with the students engaged in the story. These were times when we had ample time to recap and read for a substantial amount of time (25-50 minutes). We did not feel rushed to start and finish; rather, to recap, relax, and read aloud.

I found that drawing while listening to the read aloud did not interfere with the majority of students' listening capabilities. Almost half of the students noted in their surveys that they were thinking about the main ideas of the story as they listened and were following events in the story. This is what I found based on general observation as well; students were able to stay focused on the story plot and draw at the same time. It is worth noting that some students, such as Iris (see Findings Part Two--Student Sketches), may not be able to focus on two things at once, and find drawing during read aloud difficult. These students may get so caught up in the drawing of one scene that to mentally move on while still drawing about an earlier event is a challenge.

Mental imagery is an effective reading strategy that experienced readers employ to help them make sense of what they read (Gambrell & Bales, 1987; Rathet, 1994; Rasinski, 1985). Drawing during read aloud seems to help develop critical comprehension and reading strategies through visualization. When trying to decide what to draw about, several students revealed that they relied on visual images in their minds or memory to help them. Relying on memory to help students decide what to draw about helps them connect the parts of the story in order to pull it all together and make sense of the text. Based on student survey responses, they are learning reading strategies (if they did not know before) or receiving more practice in reading strategies (if they already knew), which experienced readers utilize.

Not specifically related to drawing during read aloud, but a finding that should not be overlooked for future read aloud situations, was that students wanted to understand better. Many students said that they wanted the teacher to explain better or clarify confusing parts for them. Before this study and during

the read aloud, I thought students might become annoyed if I kept stopping the read aloud to explain things, that perhaps they would appreciate my staying focused on the story. Student survey responses revealed that they wanted more explanations from me to help them understand and that they would not have minded more clarification about the story as we read along.

Another important finding, but not directly related to drawing during read aloud, was that students who did not attend class on a regular basis over the course of the read aloud did not show as much interest in story events, which I attribute to lack of background and connection to the characters and events. For example, if a student was absent on the day I read the part of the story where Gawain and the Lord of the Castle were engaged in keeping their promises to each other, the next day's events (effects of Gawain fulfilling his side of the promise) would probably not seem so interesting and meaningful. Also, the student who had the most absences during the read aloud claimed on her survey that she did not understand any of the story. All other students responding to the same question revealed that they understood (at least) parts of the story.

Teacher Observation

Upon careful review of my field notes, I found that having students draw during read aloud has some rewarding benefits. Some of these benefits were consistent with hunches I made as the study began, whereas others surprised me. First, I will list what I found, and then I will explain each finding in more detail.

I found that by having students draw during read aloud, it: 1) quiets the room to allow for effective listening to take place (as well as enabling the

teacher to concentrate), 2) reduces “reaction time” (from the time they come in and get ready to listen, to the actual time they are ready to listen), 3) lengthens attention spans, 4) sharpens listening skills, 5) provides students with a purpose for listening, 6) encourages note-taking, and 7) develops independent reading.

Quiets the Room. Before my study began, I noticed that some students had a difficult time sitting and listening during read alouds. Researchers such as Krashen (1985) recommend that teachers provide input that is just beyond students current levels of understanding. It may be overwhelming at times for ELD students to listen to streams of words they may not always understand. I found that when students were given blank paper to draw on, they were able to channel their energy into the task at hand. It helped minimize much of the extra noise of students talking, and leafing through papers, binders, and backpacks.

As students drew about the story as they listened, I did not see any bored faces, or wonder who was paying attention. I knew that students were involved in the read aloud, as opposed to being passive listeners. Students did not roll their eyes and ask me, “Do we have to listen to the story today?” They were listening to an exciting story and drawing pictures of what they envisioned about history. They were anxious to hear about Sir Lancelot’s adventures, and grew curious when new strangers entered King Arthur’s court.

Reduces “Reaction” Time. In the beginning of the study, I waited an average of at least five to seven minutes for everyone to get situated and focused for a read aloud (i.e., conversations ending, pencils sharpened, backpacks set aside). With nearly 10 minutes to get situated and focused in a 53 minute period, I felt there was too much time being wasted, especially if one looks at the overall minutes spent on getting ready to listen--10 minutes per day

is 50 minutes per week (almost one class period). However, I found that once students became familiar with the story and became eager to draw pictures about the story, conversations ended, pencils were sharpened, and backpacks were set aside much faster than before. I attribute this to student interest in the story, as well as student motivation to begin their drawings.

Lengthens Attention Spans. In the beginning of the read aloud, it was difficult to read for 20 minutes as some students who had already finished their drawings began to get restless. They either began talking or digging in their backpacks and it made it difficult for the rest of the class to remain focused, which may have been due to the lack of connection students felt since it was the beginning of the story and it often takes time to become involved in a book. However, once the story was underway and students became interested in the story, recognized characters, and could relate to the story, they wanted to begin the read aloud and drawing as soon as possible.

There were periodic times of restlessness, especially during transitions or lulls in the story, but for the most part, students grew intolerant of those who were not listening when I was ready to begin reading. They wanted to hear what was coming next in the story and draw about it. About three-fourths of the way through the story, it became easy for me to read for 40 minutes without students becoming disruptive. The only problem with my reading for so long was that I occasionally needed to pause to catch my breath. Students understood, though, and waited patiently. It was a good time for them to catch up on their drawings, to label, add details, or share them with their neighbors.

Sharpens Listening Skills. After the book was completed, I noticed the overall listening skills of the students were better than they were before. They

seemed to be more attentive to what I said the first time around, and questions they had were mainly to clarify understanding. When I was ready to read aloud, it seemed that they were ready to listen within one minute or so. Students became more mindful of any noise they were creating. The read aloud did not eliminate extra talking and noise altogether, but it minimized it a great deal. There were still students who needed directions to be repeated more than a few times, but it was not mass confusion, as before, when I asked them to follow oral directions. They also became experts at helping each other, and helping quiet each other as I waited for their attention.

Provides a Focus While Listening. Providing students with a specific task, such as drawing about the story, helped engage the class and created an atmosphere for listening. Students were the ones who chose what to attend to in the story and they were able to focus on understanding (instead of being told what they should have understood). They were allowed to respond via how they were perceiving the story and to demonstrate what they comprehended through their drawings.

Encourages Note-Taking. I rarely saw students taking notes for their own reference during lectures or presentations, unless they were asked to do so. Drawing pictures or symbols (like taking notes on lectures or readings) can help students when they need to go back and review for a test, to clarify meaning, or to reflect on points made in class at a later time. Having students draw during read alouds seems an effective way to foster note-taking skills, which may help them when they reach high school and college.

When students drew their pictures during the read aloud, they needed to decide which pictures to draw and how to make them. They needed to listen to

what I read and interpret the words into their drawings, similar to taking notes during a lecture. Instead of being told what to write, students were in control over what they heard and what they thought should be recorded. The thought processes that are used in note-taking may be the similar to those used in drawing or sketching during lectures or read alouds.

In the written survey, many students revealed that they drew only when the story got good, important, or interesting. This seemed to help students focus on relevant story parts as they discerned what was important or interesting to them. Once in the habit of drawing pictures during listening, further steps might help students transfer skills into note-taking.

Develops Independent Reading. I observed that students who were “pretend” reading during SSR before we began our read aloud with drawings (e.g., choosing any book off the shelf and starting it on page 60, playing with books, watching the clock), were beginning to show some improvement during SSR about midway through reading The Sword and the Circle. I noticed these students began to carefully read the back of books on the shelf, began on the first page, and followed the words with their eyes. They seemed to be getting the idea that reading requires a bit of concentration and that it goes beyond sounding out the words. This could have been due to students observing me as I read aloud; stopping to clarify, review, predict, summarize, and the need for complete concentration.

After we finished Sutcliff’s novel, several students asked me to read aloud the next book in the trilogy, and one asked if he could borrow it since we did not have time to read it aloud in class. Even one year after I completed data collection for this study, some students referred back to the novel I had read

aloud. Jonathan, a boy I had in the study group who seemed to enjoy the read aloud, frequently asked me when we would be doing what we did the previous year with the “drawing thing.” It was interesting to see that one year later, it was not something he had forgotten.

Michael used to complain about reading “long books.” The following year, he read and compared/contrasted as many Arthurian tales as he could find and he could not wait to tell me about and compare books he had read with Sutcliffe’s novel. He brought books that were two or three inches thick and I knew he had read them by the way he shared them with me.

It seemed that visualizing what was happening in the story and transferring images onto paper helped students move from abstract visualization (in their minds) to concrete visualizing (drawing images onto paper), which provided a model: reading is like seeing in the mind. Interestingly, I noticed that some of the lowest readers in the class were among the most motivated to hear the story. It could be that being read to took the pressure off of these students to read and turned reading into an enjoyable experience. Drawing was a way they could interpret and demonstrate their understanding, and motivated some to do more reading on their own.

Interviews. Interviewees gave me insight into what it was like to be the listener to the read aloud, and they showed me that they were able to retell the story using their drawings. If I had not interviewed several students, I would have interpreted students’ behavior according to what I had observed and inferred, rather than what was really happening. Initial observations and my inferences about what students were attending to in class were not always parallel.

Interviewees shared some insights as to what they thought about drawing during read aloud. Michael commented several times that his pictures helped understand the story. In one interview, he said, "The picture helped me because when I see pictures in my head, then I write it down on paper." His drawings and interviews coincided with the story each day in great detail. Dora revealed several times that she did not need to draw during the read aloud, and seemed to think that drawing was only for those who did not understand the story. She did a fine job retelling the story each time she was interviewed, regardless of whether she drew pictures or not.

Some students, such as Raul, chose to draw about something early on in the read aloud, to seemingly get it over with, yet still demonstrated understanding of the story. Raul's interviews were very lively as he retold major and minor details of the story each day. When asked what helped him remember the parts, he told me in an interview, "What helped me was that I drew the lady that gave the sword to Arthur [Lady Nimue of the Lake]," as he pointed to the lady in his drawing, "and I put that down, and it helped."

I think that the interviewees would have been able to retell the story each day, even if they did not draw. Their retellings revealed information from the story parts that went beyond what each of them drew. These interviews show that students use drawing as a strategy to help them focus on the story, but not as a way to help with their comprehension of the story (they seemed to be understanding it just fine). However, there were other students interviewed (not discussed in this study) who could only use their picture to help them retell parts of the story.

A finding worth noting emerged from the interviews. After interviewing

these students, I realized that some of them were actually in a different listening category than I had initially placed them based on the modified Listening Rubric Assessment Scale. For example, based on my observations of Michael in class, he appeared to be a Capable Listener (2). During our read aloud, I would notice him staring into space, and wonder if he was listening or daydreaming. It was hard to tell. Once I began interviewing him and reviewing his drawings, I found that he was engaged in deep thought as he listened and that he was in the world where Sutcliffe led her readers. The details in his drawings indicated that he was paying attention. After conducting the interviews and reviewing his drawings, I found Michael to be a Strong Listener (3).

Similarly, in the beginning of the read aloud, I rated Raul a Developing Listener (1), as he was often inattentive and talked during instructional time. However, if I asked him to retell what we read during the time he was talking, he was able to retell everything. Raul became the person who wanted to recap the story for the class or remind us where “our heads were” last time we read, and he articulately did so. He turned out to be a Capable Listener (2), as he was able to hear what I read, even when talking with others. Based on the listening rubric I used when determining student listening capabilities, I do not think rating Raul a Strong Listener (3) would be accurate as he did not always maintain an appropriate attention span as the rubric suggests. He often needed reminders not to talk during the read aloud.

In the beginning, I rated Dora as a Developing Listener (1). I did not think she was listening to the story at all as she appeared to be distracted (e.g., fidgeting with her hair and make-up, resting her head on her desk). However,

during interviews she discussed details and main ideas of story events, and I realized that she was a very good listener. She was actually a Strong Listener (3) who could listen attentively while doing other things.

The findings show that student drawings demonstrate literal comprehension of the text, an alternative way to assess recall. The written surveys revealed what students were thinking about and the strategies they relied upon to help them understand the story, what would have helped them understand it better, and what their expectations were from me to help them understand better. However, were the room not so quiet and students so engaged in their drawings, I think it would have been more difficult for students to critically address the survey questions, which leads me to the most important findings in this study: when students are engaged in drawing, it is quiet enough in the room for everyone to concentrate on the story, or at least to be with their own thoughts rather than being distracted by another's actions. Also, for most of the students, drawing did not interfere with listening to and comprehending the story parts they did not draw about. Interviews were invaluable as they led me to change my initial placements for some students based on the Listening Assessment Scale.

Findings implicate that there is room for more research to be carried out. For example, what if students were not drawing pictures related to the read aloud, but engaged in coloring the pre-designed color sheets? Would interviewees still be able to recall as much information as they do while drawing? It is clear from this study that literal comprehension has been shown, but how would "beyond the text" comprehension be measured? Given students had the opportunity to decide if they drew or just listened during a read aloud,

what would the results be based over a period of time? These questions may be resolved in the future, but findings from this study seem to provide a rationale for having ELD students draw pictures during read alouds.

FINDINGS--PART TWO

Student Sketches

In the following Student Sketches, you will meet six students in my class, each with district-designated LEP levels of 4. The first three (Michael, Raul, Dora) are introduced because they attended interviews most regularly and they provide interesting overall composites that integrate data from all sources (written surveys, drawings, interviews, and my observations). The last three students (Juan, Iris, and Daniel) were not in the interview pool, but are included simply because their drawings represent a range of student drawings, and their interpretations of text in pictures are notable. For simplicity throughout this section, the appropriate text is attached to each drawing, unless otherwise noted.

Michael. Michael was an average Philipino student with a full head of dark brown, moderately wavy hair. Although he did not always pay attention to detail, he was dedicated to turning in his schoolwork. He attended the after-school homework center where he spent anywhere from one to two hours per day trying to finish his homework so he did not have to do it at home.

During SSR, Michael often pretended to be reading, and the books he checked out were usually returned within one week. I was not sure if this was because he preferred reading at home or because he was not reading the books in full. When asked how he liked the books, his usual reply was, "It was good" or "It was boring." When I asked him to tell me a little of what happened in the books, he repeated information from the back of the book or referred to what the pictures revealed on the cover. He did not demonstrate the enthusiasm that an engaged and interested reader might have exhibited after

reading those particular books. However, this could be due to his subdued personality that did not allow him to admit that he actually enjoyed reading.

Michael's personality was neither overly dominating nor timidly shy. He was not afraid to ask questions in class and would rather have asked a hundred questions than be told his work was not acceptable. However, Michael was not a perfectionist and did the minimum work to maintain a "B" in the class. He was reliable, and I knew he would come to interviews as scheduled. He attended interviews for a total of seven days.

Michael's drawings had simple lines, yet they included many details (Figure 25--text pp. 217). An interesting item to note in his drawings is that all of his characters' bodies are facing forward, and each of his male characters has the same body, face, and hair. The women always resemble each other in appearance, and they are always wearing dresses. It appears that Michael created "base" figures for all characters, adding appropriate details when necessary (e.g., adding a crown to a king's head).

In one part of the story, the Sparrow Knight's dwarf struck Guenever and her maiden with a whip, each at different times. Geraint fought the Sparrow Knight (Edem) in a tournament in order to right this wrong done by the dwarf. After Geraint won the battle, he sent Edem to apologize to Guenever back at Camelot, and to take the dwarf and Guenever's maiden with him. Michael's drawing (Fig. 26--text p. 206) corresponded to the text as he drew the Edem, the maiden, and the dwarf arriving at Camelot. Michael included significant details in this drawing which show he was listening carefully to the story. For example, the Sparrow Knight's armor is tattered to represent signs of battle and the dwarf is carrying the whip that was used earlier to strike Guenever and her maiden. In

his interview that day, Michael tape recorded his recollection of that part of the story. He included many details and he recalled events that he included in his drawing, as well as other events that occurred after the scene he drew about. He said that drawing pictures helped him because, "When I see pictures in my head, then I write it down on paper."

Another part in the story that Michael drew about was when the Green Knight magically revealed himself as the Lord of the Castle (with whom Gawain has just spend the last three days) (text pp. 126-127). Figure 27 shows Michael's drawing of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. The drawing shows the Green Knight's obscure shape as he transforms between two beings; that of the Green Knight, and of the Lord of the Castle. In his interview that day, Michael retold the events that happened in the story that day and he also talked about events that came during and after the events in his drawing. He recalled a lot from the story; interestingly, he did not mention events that happened in the story before his drawing, which may mean that he did not think the parts before he drew were important or interesting.

In another interview, Michael recalled with tremendous detail the episode of the Kitchen Knight coming into the Great Hall at King Arthur's court and asking for three gifts. In his drawing, he shows Beaumains, the Kitchen Knight, asking King Arthur for three gifts (Figure 28--text p. 130). The round table in the background shows that Arthur and his knights were almost ready to sit down and dine. At this point in the story it was customary for Arthur and his knights at Pentecost to wait until a strange thing happened or a marvelous sight had been seen or a quest had begun before they dined. Michael's interview revealed that he recalled parts that occurred before, during, and after those depicted in his

picture.

Michael said that he thought about action long ago in England while listening to the story, and that he imagined a movie in his head and then selected an event to draw. When he did not understand parts of the story, he waited until I read a part that he did understand, rather than dwelling on what he did not understand. He said that he understood parts of the story, and that he would understand the story better if he listened carefully.

Overall, I think that Michael enjoyed drawing during the read aloud. His drawings included details from the story, which showed he was paying attention to the story. His interviews confirmed that he understood it. I do not think that drawing was the key to Michael's understanding; rather, it was a demonstration of how he visualized the text and interpreted the text in his drawings.

Raul. With close to 200 students each day and no prep period during the day, it was difficult to get to each individual student on a daily basis. Raul fell in the very middle and did not elicit my full attention as he was neither a high nor a low student. He got along well with his classmates, and he was very helpful when it came to things such as straightening up the room, opening windows, and changing paper towels. At SSR, he knew how to select books that were appropriate for his level (about 4th grade) and seemed to enjoy the ones he read. Raul liked getting attention from his peers and was very sociable. He used humor effectively, and knew when joking was appropriate and when it was time to be serious. He carried about a "C" average in ELD, not because he was not capable of doing the work, but because he just "forgot" to do it, or he did it, but "left it at home."

When he finished a drawing during the read aloud session, he often

began talking with someone next to him (about the story, he always said). I noticed that this was usually during lulls in the story, or when the action was not so active. These times were minimal towards the end of the story. If I asked Raul to pay attention, he replied with comments such as, "I know, I was just telling him/her that . . ." and then he would repeat something from the story that told me that he knew what was going on in the story. The main problem with his talking during the read aloud was that the people around him were trying hard to concentrate, and he was upsetting their focus. I had to remind Raul of this, and he usually apologized, and then sat quietly. I often encouraged him to draw more pictures on the back of his paper, which he did.

I interviewed Raul ten times. Although I did not see him pouring his heart and soul into his drawings, my expectations for his drawings and labels were high, simply because his oral recaps for the class were excellent. I thought his pictures would be just as good as his recaps and that the drawings would be perfectly labeled with as much detail that characterized his retellings. However, once the study got underway, I often noticed him drawing during the early part of each day's reading, perhaps to get it over with, and he did not appear to dwell on drawing.

Raul's drawings were usually centered directly in the middle of the page, and were very small and poignant (see Figure 29--text p. 54). They were usually about events that happened early in the read aloud. He finished his drawing and then listened (or talked to others). It appears that Raul just drew the first thing that came to his mind, rather than waiting until the scene was set. After reviewing some of his early drawings, I was not sure that he enjoyed the drawing aspect of the read aloud as he did not appear to spend much time on it.

However, his pictures were always directly related to the story and indicated that he knew what was going on in the story. He never mentioned either liking or disliking drawing in his interviews.

Figure 30 shows a picture Raul drew when the Lady Nimue led Merlin to the hawthorn tree, where Merlin would fall into an enchanted sleep (text p. 71). Merlin's head in Nimue's lap and the words in the bubble, "She said the magic words," show that Raul paid attention to details. In our interview that day, Raul explained what he was thinking about as he drew his picture. He said, "I drew . . . this one right here [pointing to the lady in the picture], and I was still waiting for you to go on with the sentence, and she was . . . going to sit down with Merlin's head and say the magic words and he fell asleep . . ." He told the events of the story in sequence, and he told about events that happened before and during his drawing only. This could be because he became distracted after he finished drawing or only remembered the parts he drew about.

Note the correlation between Raul's drawing and the text when Lancelot is described in the story (see Figure 31--text p. 85). The drawing reveals Lancelot with one crooked eyebrow, one side of his face curved upwards, and one eye black, the other clear. Lancelot was described in the text, ". . . with two sides to his face that did not match each other, so that one side of his mouth ran straight and sullen and the other lifted towards joy and laughter, and one of his brows was level . . . and one flew wild and ragged . . ." In his retelling that day, Raul said, ". . . he [Lancelot] went in and he was sick or something like that, the eyes were different colors, one eye was green, the other was grey, one eyebrow was straight, the other was crooked. One mouth was straight, the other was a smile . . ." Although his retelling of the part in the story involving Lancelot's

eyes was not completely accurate (the text did not mention anything about eye color), he was correct in commenting that the two sides of Lancelot's face did not match; it is possible that Raul inferred that Lancelot's eye color would not match either. Raul's portrayal of Lancelot's eyebrows and the mouth were accurate and are reflected in his drawing.

An interesting drawing of Raul's is that of Gawain's horse, Gringolet, who "whinnied with pleasure at the sight of his master" (Figure 32--text p. 123), right before Gawain mounted on the horse to ride away. This was such a small detail in the beginning of the story that I thought Raul had drawn about something different than the story. He did not mention his drawing, nor the horse in his retelling that day, which was otherwise very detailed. I could not probe him further about it, as this was one of the days when he tape recorded his retelling without me present. He may have drawn the horse because it was one of the first things I read about that day and he tended to draw about what he heard first.

Raul said that he thought about the book while listening to the story. He said that he knew what to draw about by just remembering the parts and then drawing them. He said that when he did not understand the story, he would ask the teacher or a classmate, look at other things and the pictures, all of which I observed him doing at various times. He said he understood all of the story, but that it would have helped him understand the story better if he were to talk with a friend after the reading.

It seemed that Raul drew pictures during the early part of the read aloud just to fulfill the assignment each day. While he was engaged in drawing, he was not talking to others, but when he finished, he usually began whispering

with those around him, which distracted them. There were days when Raul was quiet for most of the period, but on days when the story was not at a high point, he was likely to talk. I do not think that drawing helped Raul understand the story, but it gave him a focus and allowed those around him hear the story more clearly.

Dora. Dora was a very sociable, very talkative teenager with long, straight black hair. She would come in from lunch talking excitedly (usually in English, but sometimes in Spanish) and chewing gum. I often had to remind her to stop both. At times, she got angry at having to follow orders, but if she was treated with respect, she usually followed directions. I suspected that if Dora had the opportunity, she would chit-chat with her friends for the entire period and not get bored. There was always something to talk about when Dora was around. She knew the latest news on who held hands at lunch, who was in trouble with the principal, who had been in a fight, etc. She was not a behavior problem, but tended to be moody at times.

When Dora volunteered to be interviewed, I was glad she wanted to. I thought it might help us bond on a personal level. Besides, I was interested in how she was comprehending the story. I rarely saw her drawing pictures as she usually played with her hair, brushing it or putting it into a ponytail, or was busy touching up her make-up. There were days when I thought Dora was not paying attention to the story at all.

Dora turned in only two papers with drawings on each side (four drawings total) over the course of the entire read aloud, even though she had almost perfect attendance and came to eight interviews. She said in her interviews that she did not need to draw because she remembered everything.

She may have felt that drawing was for those who did not understand, or that those who were drawing were not as smart as she was because they needed to draw. I did not want to force her to draw, although there were times on particularly “chatty” days that I would strongly advise her to draw so that other students could concentrate on the story. In these instances, she would usually stop talking, but did not draw. I reminded the class that their folders with drawings would be graded at the end of the read aloud and that it would be difficult to get a good grade with an empty folder, but Dora did not seem to mind.

Each drawing of Dora’s had very simple lines. The only day when Dora drew and I interviewed her was on the very last day of the read aloud. She came after school and sat alone with the tape recorder as I needed to take care of some last day of school details before the two-week winter vacation. I listened to her as she spoke into the recorder. She retold the ending in great detail, not leaving anything out. Figure 33 shows Dora’s picture of a lady and a boy, labeling it, “This is the lady of the story,” and “This is the boy!” (text pp. 248-249). She commented in her interview that day, “I drew a picture but it came out ugly.” Figure 34 shows another picture Dora drew on the back side (still from the same day’s reading, text p. 258) of the Holy Grail Cup and Percival walking to Caerleon Castle, both of which coincided with the text; she did, however, mislabel the name of the boy, “Tristan,” a character who appeared in a much earlier part of the story.

One day’s reading was about Sir Lancelot and Queen Guenever fell in love. In Figure 35, Dora’s picture has two separate drawings on it (text p. 87). On the upper half of the page, she drew two large faces of a man and a woman. The woman is labeled “Queen Guenever’s face!” but the man’s label is unclear

and I am not sure if it is Arthur or Lancelot. In between the two faces, Dora drew a heart with a jagged edge, perhaps to show the rift coming between Arthur and Guenever. The lower half of the page has two stick figures (Arthur and Guenever) in a castle with trees surrounding it.

Dora did not seem to like drawing very much as her drawings appeared to be done rather quickly and she only drew when I urged her to do so. Maybe she just did not like to draw in general, or did not feel comfortable doing it, even though I encouraged any type of drawing, including stick figures. Maybe it interfered with her comprehension of the story, or maybe she just wanted to relax and do nothing else while listening. However, in each interview with Dora, she proved that she understood and had been listening to the story, even while playing with her hair, chatting with a friend, or resting her head on her desk.

Juan. If there had been a contest on the friendliest boy in 5th period, Juan would probably have won. He was very well-liked and respected by others. I never saw him angry or being rude with others. He was an "A/B" student and usually turned in all of his work. With his light brown hair and light green eyes, it was hard to tell Juan's Mexican-American heritage. When he turned his work in, he did a good job. I noticed that he would turn to neighbors, either for clarification (e.g., on assignments or the story) or to clarify for others. He did not ask questions in front of the class, but if I happened to be walking near his desk, he might raise his hand and ask me privately. On days when he did not wear his glasses, I often confused him with his younger brother whom I had in another class, as they were very similar in manner and appearance.

During SSR, Juan almost always read a Goosebumps book by R. L.

Stine. I noticed that he had a different title every few weeks, and he progressed through the books steadily. Juan sat in the back of the room next to the door. He seemed able to focus on me and what was going on at the the front of the room, even when there were distractions. He kept his focus and I never had to remind him to focus on listening.

I wondered if Juan could hear me alright as I read aloud since my voice is fairly soft and he sat in the back of the room. Based only on my observation of Juan during the read aloud, I assumed in the beginning that he was a Capable Listener (2). When I looked at his pictures, I discovered that he heard me with precision and was actually a Strong Listener (3). Although I did not interview Juan, I wanted to share some of his drawings and labels. His drawings were very pleasant and his lines were clean. The labels on his drawings were outstanding, as he took the time to label them in detail. Figure 36 shows the departure of Merlin and Arthur, captured by Juan as a sad moment for Arthur (text p. 63). Note the tears on Arthur's cheeks and his pleas that he still needed Merlin's guidance, as well as the detail of the water (presented in the text that day as "the water-meadows"). The swan on the water was not mentioned in the story, and is a detail that Juan added on his own. Notice the detail he added to his drawings and the way he used balloons to show what the characters were thinking or feeling.

In Figure 37, Juan's drawing of Sir Lancelot coming to King Arthur to become a knight, note the detail given to Lancelot's face (text pp. 85-86). The two sides of Lancelot's face in the drawing reflect the image that is described in the text: one side of the mouth is straight and the other is lifted towards joy and laughter; one of his eyebrows is level and one is wild and ragged. Juan clearly

noted the setting as being in the castle (which it was), and he fully explained what was happening in his drawing.

Towards the end of the story, one part describes Percival's first encounter with men (he was being raised by his mother in the forest to protect him from the ways of the world) (text pp. 245-246). Percival thought they were angels as they were in their armor with the sun reflecting off them. Figure 38 demonstrates Juan's comprehension of the text as he drew about the knights in armor and how Percival asked them if they were angels (text pp. 245-246). Juan's label explains what was happening in his drawing, which coincides with events from the story.

On his written survey, Juan said that he thought about how he was going to do his pictures while he listened to the story. He wrote that he was deciding whether to "Make it little pictures in 'ich' [each] place, or the "hole" [whole] page." He turned in a variety of both--some days he turned in a full page drawing, whereas on other days he turned in several smaller drawings. He also noted in his survey that what helped him know what to draw was when he listened and the teacher said what was happening.

When Juan did not understand parts of the story, he drew what he thought that part was, and to help him understand the story better he said he would "listen a little more harder." He said he understood "mostly parts" of the story, and that it would have helped him understand the story better if the people who did not let him concentrate (i.e., Raul or others who talked during the read aloud) were moved away from him. This showed me that some students really needed it quiet so they could focus on the story without distractions; it was not just me who needed to concentrate.

Juan seemed to enjoy drawing during the read aloud and his drawings represented his comprehension of the story; his labels explained what was happening in each of his drawings and they coincided with the text each day. If he did not draw, I would not have known the depth of his perception of the story. Juan stated it very clearly in his survey that he needed to concentrate on the story to help him understand the story better. I think that when he drew pictures, it helped his focus on what was being read, thus allowing him to block out distractions that one sitting behind 29 other students might encounter (e.g., students playing with their hair, talking, or stretching).

Iris. Iris' long, straight, black hair often covered her face as she read silently or worked on assignments. I rarely saw her entire face as she sat to the left of the center of the class. She was fairly timid, but talked quietly to those sitting near her. If I moved her seat (never because she needed to be moved, but because I wanted to move someone to where she was sitting), I noticed it took her a few days before she felt comfortable talking with the new people surrounding her.

Once she opened up, her peers seemed to really like her friendly personality. I never heard her talking after I requested the students' attention. She did not ask or answer questions in front of the class, but occasionally came to me in private to ask or clarify something. If I asked a general question to the class, I noticed she joined in with them as they responded. She was an average student who usually earned "A's" and "B's" on most assignments she turned in.

Iris was always ready when I was ready to begin the reading each day. She waited patiently, and did not seem to get frustrated by those for whom we

waited. She was so quiet that I often forgot she was in the class. In the beginning of the read aloud, I assumed that she was a Strong Listener (3), since she was always waiting and ready and followed oral directions immediately. Her drawings were very detailed and confirmed my belief that she was a Strong Listener (3). During the read aloud, I noticed that Iris engaged in some pretty serious drawing, sometimes using a ruler to help her with her lines to get them perfect. I often wondered how she would interpret the text in her drawings, and looked forward to seeing her pictures. She concentrated during the entire reading and seemed to enjoy the story.

Iris' drawings were precise and her artwork was outstanding. Although her drawings were not always labeled, the detail in her drawings showed she understood those parts of the story she drew about each day. Her drawings were always large scenes, usually covering the whole page. She was a good model for what drawing during read aloud unleashes in artistic students.

Iris' picture of Gawain striking his adversary's head (Figure 39), shows the motion of the sword as it swung down (text p. 55). It was at the moment in the story that the lady jumped down to protect her lord, leaving Gawain with no time to stop his swing. The lady's head was severed instead, an event that Gawain deeply regretted for the rest of his days. The look on the lord's face in Iris' drawing shows that she inferred some of the details, such as the expression on the lord's face as these details were not mentioned in the story. The lord is about to feel the sword on his neck, his eyes are closed and his mouth shows great agony, as one might flinch when we know that something terrible is about to happen.

Figure 40 shows Iris' drawing of Sir Lancelot sleeping under the apple

tree after a hard day of riding on his horse (text p. 92-93). Although the text says that the helm (helmet) was under Lancelot's head as a pillow (text p. 89), Iris placed it beside his head (perhaps to show its presence without attention to where it was placed). Again, Iris inferred details about the story. Note the circles around Lancelot's eyes showing signs of weariness from his hard day of riding. Iris' label describes what was going on in the story at that time, as well as giving information as to what happened after that, when the four queens approached Lancelot as he slept. Though this drawing shows one scene, Iris' labels told of events after her drawing, so I gather she was able to understand the story beyond what she was drawing about.

In one part of the story, just before King Arthur and his knights sat down to dine, a stranger came to Arthur to ask for his knighthood (text pp. 85-92). Iris' drawing (Figure 41) shows food and drink on the table, items that she added herself as they were not specifically described in the text (p. 85). Notice the goblets, the chicken or turkey leg on the plate, and the details in Lancelot's "wryed" (meaning twisted or bent in this context) face--his eyebrow is flailing wildly, and his mouth is turned down on one side. Iris included a half of a person on the edge of the left side of the page to show that there were others in the room with Arthur and Lancelot as they spoke. Iris' label for this picture was very general; she wrote that Lancelot told Arthur something, rather than explaining the actual details of their conversation. Perhaps she was so caught up in her drawing that she did not pay attention to what they were talking about in the story, or maybe she spent more time on finishing her pictures than on explaining in writing.

In her written survey, Iris noted that while she was listening to the story,

she thought that it was too hard to listen and draw at the same time. She said she understood parts of the story, and that it would help her understand the story better if “I listen every time the teacher reads,” which I thought she did. Maybe she meant if she would pay attention more to the story and less to the drawing, she would understand it better. When she did not understand parts of the story, she said that she just kept on drawing, and that when she wrote something with her drawing, it helped her understand. Iris showed that she was listening and inferring the details that she thought would be a part of the scene about which she drew.

Overall, I think Iris enjoyed drawing during the read aloud. She seemed to take pride when other students discovered her drawings as they remarked how nice they were. Although she usually drew about one particular event or scene, she was able to remember the parts I read and drew them while adding her own special touches to capture the scene as it may have been. I understand why she commented on her survey that it was hard to listen and draw at the same time; she focused very heavily on her drawings and probably found it difficult to mentally move on with the story.

Daniel. Daniel’s wavy, brown hair was usually worn slicked back and he took pretty good care in making sure it stayed that way, even after lunch. He had good rapport with a group of about five other boys in the class, and they usually came back from lunch out of breath after playing soccer or basketball. They joked around a lot and had fun with each other. I would wait for them to get focused on what we were doing in class; there always had to be one last joke or one last comment. We would finally get down to business and then Daniel would ask for a pencil.

Daniel was not a “bad” student, but I wondered if he did not want to show that he was as smart as he was in front of his friends. The mood of the read aloud seemed to change when Daniel and his friends became engrossed. Once hooked, they were the ones who became annoyed if others in the class were talking while we waited to get started with the read aloud.

Daniel usually took a few minutes to get settled if his friends were there, but on days when they were not there, his reaction time was much faster. He did not really stand out in class. Instead, he blended in with the rest; when his friends were listening, he was also listening, and when they were talking, he was talking with them. He usually began talking or making signals to his friends if the story was in transition or at a lull. Once Daniel settled into the story, he did a good job of listening. In the beginning of the read aloud, I thought he was a Capable Listener (2), but after reviewing his drawings, I realized he was actually a Strong Listener (3) as his drawings reflected many main ideas from the story. I would notice him staring at me or into space as he listened to the story. It seemed that he was right there with the knights as they went charging off in search of adventures. It appeared as though he were envisioning the story in his head.

I often reminded Daniel to draw since, when he was focused, his friends were usually focused, too. I also wanted to know how he was perceiving the story. He did not seem very interested in drawing, but when I reminded to do it, he would do so. He did not spend too much time on his drawings and I would sometimes encourage him to draw another picture if he had finished and it was still early in the session. I would like to share some of Daniel’s drawings, not because they are glamorous or very detailed, but because they are very honest

and straightforward. He took the words I read and literally transformed them into simple pictures; often small pictures that moved along with the story, rather than one scene. Daniel's drawings were always symbols representing parts of the story rather than masterpiece creations. They were very simple, yet always about the story, and they demonstrated that he was in tune with what was going on. He always drew three symbols that coincided with main points in the story, which he numbered in the order they were drawn).

On the day I read about Sir Gawain's sad journey to the Green Knight's castle to uphold his end of a promise, the scenery described by Sutcliff was beautiful (text pp. 124-125). As I read this part, it felt as though we (the class) were actually riding with Gawain. Comparing the text with his drawing (Figure 42a-c--text p. 124), you will see how Daniel followed the flow of the story and simply captured the flavor of the scene; in this case the sight and sounds Gawain encountered as he rode. There are three symbols in Daniel's drawing (a-c): (a) a cliff (from the text "Gawain gentled his horse into the cliffpath"); (b) a stream (from the text "[he] saw a deep narrow stream"); and, (c) some trees labeled as "bushes" (from the text "on the far side [he saw] a low green mound covered with alder and hazel scrub"). He drew quick sketches to follow with the story, and elected to draw the scenery.

On the day I read about Merlin's last wandering with Lady Nimue before Merlin goes into a long enchanted sleep, Daniel drew three sketches (Figure 43 a-c--text pp. 65-70). His first sketch (a) was about when Merlin and the Lady Nimue visited Lancelot as he was introduced in the story for the first time as he schooled a young goshawk, which is shown on Lancelot's arm (text p. 68). This drawing reflects Daniel's comprehension of the text, as he drew the unmatching

sides of Lancelot's face as it was described in the text, with "a face under his thick arched crest of dark hair that looked as though it had been put together by someone who had not troubled to make sure that the two sides matched" (text p. 69). Daniel's second sketch (b) shows a symbol that looks like thorns which represent the hawthorn tree (in his label, he referred to it as the "thorn tree") where Merlin sank into his deep sleep (text p. 71). His third sketch (c) was about the part of the story when King Arthur awoke to find himself in a dungeon, a plot that was developing as Merlin and Nimue were on their wandering. He drew a picture of a man behind bars and labeled it "King Arthur in the dungeon" (p. 73). These sketches coincide with the story and show that Daniel was following the main ideas of the story, jotting images he imagined during the read aloud.

On his written survey, Daniel said he thought about "nights" [knights] while he listened to the story being read, and that he decided what to draw by drawing what he liked. When he did not understand the story, he remarked, "I wonder," (I understand this to mean two things: I wonder what I do when I don't understand, and "I wonder," as in he wondered about those parts). He said that when he thought about the story, he was able to understand it. He also said he understood the whole story, but that he would understand better if the teacher would explain it better.

Overall, Daniel's drawings show his understanding of the main points in the story. He followed along, drawing what he saw. I think he enjoyed the read aloud more than he did drawing, but his drawings seemed to help him stay focused on the story. Drawing during the read aloud did not appear to help him understand the story; rather, his drawings showed that he understood the main

points presented.

Overall Student Sketches

Based on the Student Sketches, I found that drawing during a read aloud provides a listening-related task that helps engage students in the read aloud and allows students to concentrate. Some students needed it quiet for them to focus on the story better; as Juan noted on his survey that it would help if those who distracted him would be moved away from him. Some students, such as Raul and Dora, may need a task to complete that will engage them, enabling others around them to concentrate better on listening. Before anybody could understand the story, it needed to be quiet and calm. Drawing during read aloud helped accomplish this.

The range in degree of details in the student's drawings did not seem to be a factor in their comprehension of the text. Drawings were as unique as the individuals who created them, and not all of them were extravagant. In Daniel's case, comprehension was still evident through symbolic representation of the text. This showed that Daniel was able to synthesize the bigger picture into concise, simple sketches. Iris' detailed drawings may have hindered her understanding somewhat as her drawings showed one event, even though there may have been many events on certain days. However, she did understand the parts she drew about, and they were major events rather than minor ones.

I was curious if students who were drawing would understand parts of the story that came before and after what they drew about, or if they were only focusing on parts of the story they drew about. It appears from the overall student sketches that drawing did not interfere with student's basic

comprehension of the text as they were able to understand parts they did not draw about. Interviews revealed that students were able to listen to the story and draw at the same time, maintaining focus on new information that was being read as they drew.

My perceptions of what I thought students were focusing on were inaccurate. I thought Dora did not understand the story because she always seemed preoccupied, I wondered if Juan could hear my soft voice okay from the back of the room, I thought Raul was talking more than listening, and I thought Daniel was bored and tuned out to the story. Interviews, drawings, and surveys showed that students who did not appear to be listening, were listening quite well. I could have given a written comprehension quiz to see what they understood, but I did not need to. Drawing during read aloud provided an opportunity for students to show me how and what they comprehended from the story. This is much more important to me than a grade on a comprehension test.

CHAPTER 6

REFLECTIONS

As a result of this study, I have 1) discovered what I would like to change for future studies and read aloud situations, 2) raised questions for possible further study, and 3) arrived at some interesting conclusions. All of these will be discussed in this section. However, overall findings show that ELD students drawing during a read aloud are focused on the story which helps quiet the room and allows for more student concentration. Student drawings provide an alternative way to show what and how students understand in the story as opposed to traditional comprehension/recall questions.

Limitations/What I Would Like to Change for Next Time

Overall. Limitations of the study include things I would like to do differently in future read alouds. For example, I would like to have given a pre- and a post-vocabulary test, assessing students' knowledge of words that frequently appeared in the book. After reading the entire book, I assessed students' definitions of contextualized words from the story. I did not include this information in this report as I did not have documentation of what students knew about these words prior to the read aloud. I could also have given an opportunity for students to write a summary of the complete story, and then checked for depth, breadth, and various levels of understanding of the book as a whole.

Written Surveys. The written survey could have been administered before and after the entire read aloud to see if any of the students' thoughts, strategies, or feelings had changed over the course of the read aloud. Also, I would have liked to have discussed the results of the student surveys with the

class in more detail, sharing various students' strategies for understanding so as to make a range of strategies available to the entire class. I could have also helped students with any questions regarding the written surveys in order to eliminate large percentages of "No Response" or "Meaning Unclear" responses.

Based on what students commented on in the surveys, I should have probably spent more time explaining words and parts of the story to them, but I did not want to interrupt the flow of the story. Also, I wanted to demonstrate that they could enjoy the story, even though they did not understand everything, which is something I would like them to integrate into their independent reading. Certainly in reading aloud in the future, I will ask students more frequently what they need from me (explaining, clarifying, mapping), in order to lower any frustrations and to increase comprehension of the story.

Interviews. As mentioned earlier, the interviews were not given under optimal circumstances, and they were not very consistent. I had planned to interview students after school two to three times a week until the end of the novel, but students often forgot to come to interviews or had other places to go. Originally, I planned to have 13 interview days, but for the study, I looked at only 10 days' worth as on some days no one came, or the recorder did not work, or student voices were too low to hear what they were saying on the recorder. If I were to do the study again (or for future interview sessions), I would ask another teacher or aide to come towards the end of class to do an activity with the class while I interview students during class time. In that way, problems with students not coming to interviews would be eliminated.

Providing Feedback to Students. Another limitation is that I did not provide written feedback on students' drawings. Many times I would sort

through them, just to see what they drew about, and did not take the time to comment on what they were doing. I was simply collecting and saving their drawings for future analysis, rather than to give them feedback on them. In the future, I will collect drawings periodically (perhaps weekly) in order to respond to their drawings and labels (or lack thereof) just to confirm that they are understanding the story or to help them further if they do not understand.

Lingering Questions

It would be interesting to investigate some of the questions that arose during my study of drawing during a read aloud. Although the interviewed students' comprehension did not appear to be impeded by drawing during the read aloud, Iris (who was not interviewed) commented on her written survey that it was hard for her to draw and listen at the same time, even though her drawings reflected that she understood the parts she had drawn about. If Iris was interviewed, would she be able to retell events that came after her drawings? Are there many other students who felt the same as Iris? Do many students become so engrossed in their drawings that they become oblivious to the rest of the story?

Other interesting questions raised are: Do large episode drawings prohibit comprehension of other parts of the story being read, or should students be encouraged to draw quick sketches to keep up with the flow of the story? If students were simply coloring the pre-designed color sheets, would the atmosphere/comprehension of students be the same as when they draw their own pictures? Would these color sheets be as effective in providing a calm and quiet atmosphere for listening, and would comprehension/engagement in the story be the same as when students draw

on their own imaginations?

What would students have understood from the story had they simply been listening? A comparative study could be conducted of student understanding when drawing and not drawing during read aloud. This could be done by alternating days on which students draw and do not draw, conducting interviews to find out which students prefer, and finding out on which days comprehension was better. A study could also look at gender issues: what do girls and boys tend to draw more about based on a book such as The Sword and the Circle that encompasses a wide variety of each? While these questions were not the focus of my research, I think it would be interesting and relevant to investigate them in more depth.

Implications For Other Teachers

I can listen to a book on tape, the television, or the radio while getting other work done. Why do teachers (myself included) assume that students will not be able to focus on more than one task at a time (e.g., listening and doing another task, such as drawing or even putting on make-up)? I found that students were capable of listening while drawing, drinking water, digging through backpacks, and fixing their hair or make-up; it may be distracting for the teacher and students around them, however. It may seem at times that students are not listening, but this can be a misleading assumption.

I learned that even if some drawings are not the best, the neatest, or the most creative, students can show that they are in tune with the author's words. Also, when students decide what to draw, when to draw, and how to draw, it engages them much better than simply having them color pre-designed pages. Is it worth the blank paper required each read aloud session? Yes. Would I go

back to the designed color sheets if I had unlimited Xerox copies? No. Is this something to do with each and every read aloud for the whole year? Probably not. I appreciated doing this in the beginning of the school year, and enjoyed the rewards of fine-tuned listening skills for the remainder of the year. In addition, drawing during read aloud does not need to be limited to longer read aloud texts. It may be done with shorter readings, books on tape, or even with picture books (have students create their own drawings before showing the illustrator's drawings). Some students may enjoy drawing on transparency overheads to share with the class.

Having students draw during read aloud time is a useful tool for checking student comprehension of the story. Whether students drew in great detail or with simple lines or symbols, drawings revealed what they focused on during the read aloud. I also learned, based on student responses on the Written Survey to the question "What would help you understand the story better?" that students truly want to understand the story and they rely heavily on the teacher in order to guide their understanding. Their responses told me that I needed to provide more explanations and scaffolding of story events.

Although many students seemed able to follow the story while drawing during the read aloud, there were some students such as Iris, who may find it difficult to concentrate on the story and drawing at the same time. These students might become frustrated if the story moves quickly when they are drawing about earlier events in the story; finding it mentally challenging to continue drawing as the story progresses. It may be helpful for these students to have several minutes in between scene changes in the story to finish drawings.

I feel that what I have learned from conducting this study of having students draw during read aloud sessions might be helpful for teachers who want to sharpen student listening skills, create an atmosphere for listening, and provide alternate ways for students to show what they understand.

Concluding Remarks

This was a wonderful experience for me as a teacher. Students were getting a full reading experience as they saw how to read from the same book each time, to summarize what had happened from the prior reading, and to become reacquainted with the story after time spent away from it. They saw what I had to ask myself in order to clarify what was not clear to me as a reader. And they were interested in what was coming next in the story.

On the last day of our read aloud, students clapped and cheered and we all felt triumphant in having finished. We also felt successful as one does whenever one finishes working closely with others for a significant amount of time, and as one finishes a process that is an extension of oneself. We shared a world of knights and ladies, fighting and peace, revenge and chivalry.

Students listened, created, and understood what they were able to from the story. They each have their own interpretations of story events in their folders where there are 35 labeled drawings that they can now share with friends and family. Each drawing has its own special care put into it and its own level of comprehension. I realize this was not my project, it was theirs. But I have their stories to share and reflect upon, and I will strive to perfect the art of having students drawing during read aloud in future ELD classes.

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Check-Off List #6 (cont'd)	ACTION: Sleeping Riding Talking Kneeling Casting Spell Suiting up (with armour) Mounting (getting on horse) Eating Jousting/Fighting Escaping	Anh	
		Carlos	
		Carol	
		Celia	
		Cesar	
		Daniel	
		David	
		Dora	
		Edna	
		Elisa	
		Gabriel	
		Glora	
		Iins	
		Jaime	
	Jesus		
	Jonathan		
	Joshua		
	Juan		
	Marcos		
	Mara		
	Mayra		
	Michael		
	Monica		
	Monique		
	Norma		
Raul			
Roberto			
Roman			
Stephen			
Yolanda			
SETTING: OUTDOORS: (General) Castle Forest			
INDOORS: Bedroom			

"We need not bide here making war over him," said Morgan La Fay at last. "I will cast a web of sleep upon him, that he shall not wake for three hours, and we will carry him back to my castle; and when he wakes, he shall choose among us for himself." For in her own dark heart she was sure that she had more beauty than the other three, and that if her beauty failed her she could win him to her by her spells.

So she dismounted, and kneeling beside him made the spell of sleeping, and laid it upon him with her two forefingers touching his closed eyes. And when she was mounted again, the knights laid Lancelot, sleeping now as deeply as Merlin beneath his hawthorn tree, upon his own shield, and so bore him between them, his own horse following aft, back to the Queen's castle, that was called the Castle Chariot, and laid him sleeping still upon a pallet bed in one of the castle dungeons.

Figure 3

"We need not bide here making war over him," said Morgan La Fay at last. "I will cast a web of sleep upon him, that he shall not wake for three hours, and we will carry him back to my castle; and when he wakes, he shall choose among us for himself." For in her own dark heart she was sure that she had more beauty than the other three, and that if her beauty failed her she could win him to her by her spells.

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Figure 4b

Check-Off List #8 (cont'd)	Anh	
	Carlos	
	Carol	
	Celia	
	Cesar	
	Daniel	
	David	
	Dora	
	Edna	
	Elisa	
	Gabriel	
	Gloria	
	Iris	
	Jaime	
	Jesus	
	Jonathan	
	Joshua	
	Juan	
	Marcos	
	Maria	
	Mayra	
	Michael	
	Monica	
	Monique	
	Norma	
	Paul	
	Roberto	
	Roman	
	Stephen	
	Yolanda	

Figure 5

© The sword and the circle ©
 They are now slow to
 case he saw now slow to
 case or do something
 otherwise

So for a full year he served in the kitchens, and the other scullions jeered at him because he did not know how to do the things that were easy and familiar to them—until he learned their skills himself, and then they learned the unwisdom of such jeering. And Sir Kay made his life a misery with petty punishments and waspish jests. Both Sir Gawain and Sir Lancelot offered to take him as their squire, even without knowing who he was; but he thanked them with a courtesy that was like the gentle courtesy of a great hound, and remained in the kitchens. He had his fill of food, and a warm place by the fire at night, but the only kindness he received was from the dogs, and from Sir Gawain who clapped him on the shoulder once or twice in

passing, and from Sir Lancelot, who gave him three silver pieces at Christmas to buy a warm cloak. And in all the while, he never returned evil words to Sir Kay, or complained, or seemed the least out of temper with his fellows, even when he tried, as he sometimes did, to teach them better manners by ducking one or other of them in the horse trough.

Figure 6

So for a full year he served in the kitchens, and the other scullions jeered at him because he did not know how to do the things that were easy and familiar to them—until he learned their skills himself, and then they learned the unwisdom of such jeering. And Sir Kay made his life a misery with petty punishments and waspish jests. Both Sir Gawain and Sir Lancelot offered to take him as their squire, even without knowing who he was; but he thanked them with a courtesy that was like the gentle courtesy of a great hound, and remained in the kitchens. He had his fill of food, and a warm place by the fire at night, but the only kindness he received was from the dogs, and from Sir Gawain who clapped him on the shoulder once or twice in

passing, and from Sir Lancelot, who gave him three silver pieces at Christmas to buy a warm cloak. And in all the while, he never returned evil words to Sir Kay, or complained, or seemed the least out of temper with his fellows, even when he tried, as he sometimes did, to teach them better manners by ducking one or other of them in the horse trough.

Figure 7b

Check-Off List #7 (cont'd)	Ianh	
	Carlos	
	Carol	
	Celia	
	Cesar	
	Daniel	
	David	
	Dora	
	Edna	
	Elisa	
	Gabriel	
	Gloria	
	Iris	
	Jaime	
	Jesus	
	Jonathan	
	Joshua	
	Juan	
	Marcos	
	Maria	
	Mayra	
	Michael	
	Monica	
	Monique	
	Norma	
	Raul	
	Roberto	
	Roman	
	Stephen	
	Yolanda	

ACTION:

Questing

Riding

•Hunting

Gift exchanging

•Kissing

Suiting up

Eating

Drinking

Dismounting

Hitching horse bridle to tree

•Talking

Standing

Taking off helm

Bending head

Swinging axe up

Ducking from blow

Grinning

Axe swinging down

Blood trickling from neck

Springing on to feet

Laughing

Figure 7c

Check-Off List #7 (cont'd)	Anh	
	Carlos	
	Carol	
	Celia	
	Cesar	
	Daniel	
	David	
	Dora	
	Edna	
	Elisa	
	Gabriel	
	Gloria	
	Iris	
	Jaime	
	Jesus	
	Jonathan	
	Joshua	
	Juan	
	Marcos	
	Maria	
	Mayra	
	Michael	
	Monica	
	Monique	
	Norma	
	Raul	
	Roberto	
	Roman	
	Stephen	
	Yolanda	

Figure 8

This is the part where he gose hunting for a pigand deer's to give to the King.

At evening, the lord of the castle came home with the carcass of a fine red deer slung across the back of a hunting pony. And he bade his huntsmen lay it before Gawain, who had come to meet him in the courtyard. "See, now, here is the fruit of my hunting, which I give to you according to our bargain."

That evening, the lord of the castle returned home at dusk, and his huntsmen laid at Gawain's feet the grizzly carcass of a boar. "Here, guest of mine, I bring you the spoils of my day's hunting."

Figure 9

This must be the Green Chapel, he thought, and green it is indeed; and no Christian chapel but some secret place of the Hollow Hills. And within it the Green Knight is making keen his weapon that must surely be the death of me this day.

But he set his horse to ford the stream at a place where it broadened and ran for a few yards shallow over a gravel bed, and came out close below the green mound; and there he dismounted and hitched Gringolet's bridle to an alder branch, standing in the strange grey light scarfed with mist, he called, "Sir Knight of the Green Chapel, I am here as I vowed, to keep our New Year tryst."

The women is want^{wanting} to give her a kiss in the cheek
to the man and his basket is catch^{high} ~~the~~ ~~man~~ ~~the~~ ~~man~~

So the lady took his face between her hands, and kissed him most sweetly, and went her way. And Gawain called for the chamber squires, for he would get up.

At evening, the lord of the castle came home with the carcass of a fine red deer slung across the back of a hunting pony. And he bade his huntsmen lay it before Gawain, who had come to meet him in the courtyard. "See, now, here is the fruit of my hunting, which I give to you according to our bargain."

What Do You Think About When You Are Listening to the Story?

Would You Say You Understand All, Parts, or None of the Story?

Figure 19

the clouds has same water to rain

and the same
light
Kasol
(Richter)

1. **Light** and the **Light**
 of the **Light** in the **Light**
 to the **Light**.

(one's)
No minus on the gas pits the lae's
(gross) (because)
eterns and tkge engine to h₁-e₁.

Figure 20

Then six squires came and led Sir Accalon into the Hall of the manor house, and set food and drink before him, and then armed him, and set him upon a fine warhorse, and led him to a fair level field that was midway between the manor house of Sir Ontlake and the fine castle of his brother.

And at the same time, six squires were doing the same thing for King Arthur. But to King Arthur, in the last moment before he mounted his horse, came another maiden, saying, "Sir, your sister Morgan La Fay has dreamed that you are to do battle this day, and sends you your sword."

This picture is about King Arthur getting ready to fight.

Figure 23

Arthur faces the Battie Chapter 5

Arthur Shit me
 man he the
 man Hit Arthur
 in the helmet
 Blood was
 Coming out
 of the nose
 Of Arthur
 Arthur could
 stand it
 so he took
 a brack
 Arthur fight
 the man

Arthur

man

Figure 24

Geraint going to fight the men

Geraint remained waiting in the midst of the road, looking towards the nearing dust-cloud out of which began to sound the drum of many hooves. And at the right moment he loosed the captured horses, slashing his spear butt across the rumps of the hindmost so that they sprang forward snorting from the blows and sweeping the rest in panic along with them, so that all nine went bucketing along the road, the armour clattering and ringing on their backs, towards the on-coming knights.

The Earl and his companions cursed and strove to pull their steeds aside, and then the runaways were in their midst, spreading confusion on all sides.

Figure 26

The dwarf and the
Maiden and The
Sparrow Knight
going to apologize
to Queen Guenevier

Some while after noon they saw coming across the bridge of Usk a dwarf on a tall horse, and behind him a maiden on a palfrey, and last of all a knight in hacked and battered armour, who sat slumped in the saddle of his warhorse with his head hanging down between his shoulders.

And one of the watchers went and told Guenever what he had seen; a dwarf and a lady and a sorry and battered knight. "But I know not who they may be."

"But I know," said the Queen. "Bring the knight and the lady to me when they have entered the gate."

The Green Knight stood leaning on his axe and laughing a little; and suddenly Gawain saw that though his garments were still green, they were but the garments in which a man rides hunting, and he was not the Green Knight at all, but his kindly host of the past week. And then he saw that he was both.

Figure 28

When the three of them had come the length of the Hall, and checked before the dais where King Arthur sat, the tall young man dropped his arms from the others' shoulders, and stood up straight as a tilting lance. And without waiting for the King to speak first, he said, "Now God save you, my Lord King, and all your fair fellowship. I am come to ask of you three gifts." The corners of his wide mouth tilted upward. "Not unreasonable gifts, but such as you may grant with honour. And the first I will ask of you now, and the other two I will ask of you this day a twelve-months."

"Ask," said Arthur, who liked the look of the young man on sight, "and you shall have what you ask for."

When he was killing the hounds,

Then out from the armoury doorway came the lord of the castle, fully armed all save his helmet, for he had been at practice, his sword naked in his hand; and he began slashing at the hounds, slaying them one after another, and shouting in grief and fury, "Die, you brutes that have slain my white hart! Alas, my white hart that my lady gave to me and that I have kept so ill!"

"Stop! Leave off from this butchery!" shouted Gawain, suddenly beside himself with fury at sight of the dead hounds. "Spend your rage upon me, not upon good hounds who do but follow their nature and their training!"

"That will I!" roared the knight of the castle. "I have killed the rest of the pack, now for the last of the whelps!"

the tree where Morleand is gon to go to sleep.

And Merlin lay down under the tree with his head in the Lady's lap; and she let down her straight dark hair so that it hung like a curtain about them both; and she made a singing magic, And listening to it, it was to Merlin as though he heard the humming of wild honey bees among the heather of the hills of his boyhood; and he sank into a sleep that was deeper and quieter than any sleep known to mortal man.

(a) the part when this guy came in, (cancel out)

So the young man came up the Hall and knelt wordlessly at the King's feet. He was a raw-boned and very ugly young man, with two sides to his face that did not match each other, so that one side of his mouth ran straight and sullen and the other lifted towards joy and laughter, and one of his black brows was level as a falcon's wing and one flew wild and ragged like the jaunty ear of a mongrel that has just come well out of a fight. But out from under those brows looked a pair of wide grey eyes that the King thought were the steadiest that he had ever seen.

Gringolet whinnied with pleasure at sight of his master, and Gawain fondled him a moment, then sprang into the saddle. "Fare you well; the sun and the moon on your threshold," he said to the lord of the castle, who had come down to take leave of him. Of the lady, there was no sign. "If I might, I would do aught in my power to reward you for your kindness. But I think that I shall not see the rising of another sun."

So early next morning that the birds were scarcely awake, Percival made ready to set out.

His mother took his face between her hands and kissed him for the last time, knowing that she would not see him again, and said, "Remember that your father was a true knight as well as a king, remember that I love you, and be worthy of us both. Have a care as to the friends you choose, and in whose company you travel, for you are simple-hearted, and so like to be over trust-

ing. Let no woman ever have cause to cry out against you for your treatment of her. Pray to God daily as I have taught you, that He may be with you in all your ways, and I think that one day you will indeed be a knight, and the knight that you would wish to be."

Percival promised, and returned his mother's kiss, and picking up his spear from where it leaned against the doorpost, went his way.

Thio lo triston waiting
in Camelot!

"Then I am glad," said Percival, "for now I have kept both my promise to him, and my promise to the King that I would return to him with his golden cup and wearing the golden armour of the knight who stole it."

So they returned to Camelot, with Sir Kay bringing up the rear and nursing his bruises. And when Percival had told his story to the rest of the assembled knights, and the five of them had been unarmed, and all went to take their places, there indeed was Sir Percival's name shining in fair new gold on the tall back of his waiting seat, the seat between Sir Gawain's and the Seat Perilous.

The buckle was stiff, and though she was well used to fastening Arthur's sword-belt for him, the Queen found it hard to make the tang go into the right place. And Lancelot, seeing this, put his own hand to help her, and so their fingers touched—and instantly they looked up from the buckle into each other's eyes. And having looked, they did not know how to look away again.

And after, two of the Queen's ladies buckled on his knightly spurs. But Queen Guenever herself buckled on his sword-belt; and this she did partly because he was a king's son, but mostly in kindness, because she had heard Sir Kay, the King's foster brother and Seneschal, sneering to another knight about the newcomer's ill looks and saying that he would not likely find a maiden's favour to wear on his crest at the jousts and tournaments.

Figure 36

(a)

"Soon, very soon now, I shall leave you," Merlin said. And Arthur turned from the distant forest to look at him with startled eyes. "Merlin, why?"

"Because it is the appointed time. I have told you often enough that the time would come."

"But not yet! Oh, Merlin, what will I do without your guidance and counsel? What will I do without *you*?"

"If I have taught you well, and you have learned well, you will do without me."

"But you are not old," Arthur said, seeing the man beside him as tall and upright as ever, his eyes as brightly golden, the darkness of his hair only beginning to be streaked with ash colour.

"My kind do not grow old according to the passing years—not as you understand growing old. But I am tired and the life grows thin within me, and I shall be glad to rest. And there are things that I have to do first. For many years I have shared your fate and your father's before you. Now I go to follow my own."

Sawn

"Who are you?" Arthur said. "And for what purpose do you come to me?"

And the young man said, "I am Lancelot, son of King Ban of Benwick, who fought beside you at Bedegraine. And I come because I have wished to for as long as I can remember, and because Merlin bade me, to ask for knighthood at your hands. He bade me tell you that I was his last bequest to you before he went to find his long sleep under his hawthorn tree."

"Knighthood you shall have, on tomorrow's morning, the fair morning of Eastertide," Arthur said; and gave his hand to the ugly young man, who bent his head for a moment to touch his forehead upon it.

So the young man came up the Hall and knelt wordlessly at the King's feet. He was a raw-boned and very ugly young man, with two sides to his face that did not match each other, so that one side of his mouth ran straight and sullen and the other lifted towards joy and laughter, and one of his black brows was level as a falcon's wing and one flew wild and ragged like the jaunty ear of a mongrel that has just come well out of a fight. But out from under those brows looked a pair of wide grey eyes that the King thought were the steadiest that he had ever seen.

"Nay, now," said the stranger, "pull your eyes back into your head, I pray you! Have you never seen our like before?"

Percival shook his head. "That have I not. And truth to tell, I do not know whether you be men from the world of men or angels out of Heaven. My mother has told me about the angels in Heaven; and you are so shining-bright. She said that the angels are shining-bright."

Perceval sees other
men shining and he
ask Sir Lancelot if he
was an angel and
Lancelot say no I
not I am a knight

Figure 39

Gawain knew that it was against all custom to slay a knight who cried his mercy, but the red mist was still before his eyes, and he swung up his sword for a mighty stroke that should sever the fallen knight's head from his shoulders; but in that instant, the lady of the castle, who had been watching from the window of her bower and come running, flung herself upon her lord's body to shield him; and Gawain could not check the down-sweep of the sword in time, and struck through her slender neck instead of his adversary's.

And under the apple tree meanwhile, Sir Lancelot lay sleeping until well into the afternoon. And while he slept, there came by four queens riding on white mules, and with four mounted knights in attendance on them, holding up a canopy of green silk upon the points of spears to shield their delicate complexions from the sun. And as they came near, Lancelot's horse caught the scent of the others and whinnied; and looking that way, they beheld a knee-hobbled warhorse, and hard by, a knight sleeping under an apple tree, fully armed save that his helm was off and serving him for a pillow. And one of them—it was Morgan La Fay—knew him by her magic powers. "It is Sir Lancelot of the Lake," she said, "he that shall be the greatest of all my brother's knights."

Sir Lancelot was sleeping under the apple tree and then four Queens came to him and pulled him in a spell for him to sleep for three hours.

Figure 41

Just as the High King and his knights were about to sit down to supper on the eve of Easter, one of Arthur's squires came to him, saying that there was a stranger at the threshold who wished for speech with him but would not give his name. And Arthur looked away down the Hall and saw a young man standing in the doorway, and said, "Bring him to me. It may be that he will tell me his name."

So the young man came up the Hall and knelt wordlessly at the King's feet. He was a raw-boned and very ugly young man, with two sides to his face that did not match each other, so that one side of his mouth ran straight and sullen and the other lifted towards joy and laughter, and one of his black brows was level as a falcon's wing and one flew wild and ragged like the jaunty ear of a mongrel that has just come well out of a fight. But out from under those brows looked a pair of wide grey eyes that the King thought were the steadiest that he had ever seen.

*King
Arthur*

*The wried man that would
say his only to King Arthur.
And he told him something.*

So Sir Gawain gentled his horse into the cliff path, and held on down, the rocks rising sheer on his right hand and dropping sheer into the mist on the other; and out of the mist came the sound of rushing water, rising to meet him. At last he came as it were down through the mist into the clear air below it, and reached the valley floor, and saw a deep narrow stream swirling its way in a tumble of white water among rocks and the roots of lichen-hung alder trees.

And to Lancelot he said, "When you come to be eighteen, before the next Feast of Eastertide, let you leave this place and go to King Arthur at Camelot, and pray him to make you a knight of the Round Table."

Lancelot held himself very still, that he might not disturb the goshawk on his fist.

Then again Merlin and the Lady Nimue with him wandered through this place and that, across water and among mountains and through valleys and forests, Merlin teaching her the last of his magic as they went. And so they came at last to Cornwall, where King Marc now ruled in place of Duke Gorloise of Tintagel. And at the appointed time they came to the hawthorn tree, all curdled with white blossom and the scent of it coming and going like breath upon the evening air.

And King Arthur awoke to find himself in a dark and dismal dungeon, and heard about him the groans and complaints of many other men.

Listening Rubric Assessment Scale

3 STRONG LISTENER

- Responds immediately to oral directions
- Maintains appropriate attention span
- Is interactive
- Focuses on speaker
- Listens to others
- *High comprehension (most)*

2 CAPABLE LISTENER

- Follows oral directions
- Usually attentive to speaker and discussions
- Listens to others without interrupting
- *Average comprehension (some)*

1 DEVELOPING LISTENER

- Has difficulty following directions
- Often inattentive
- Often interrupts
- Relies on repetition
- Short attention span
- *Poor comprehension (little)*

enough land nor rich enough harvests to feed them all; and after that Britain was never free of the Saxon-kind again.

They pushed further and further in from the coasts, sacking the towns and laying waste the country through which they passed, harrying the people as wolves harry the sheep in a famine winter; and many a farmer died on his own threshold and many a priest before his altar and ever the wind carried the smell of burning where the Saxons went by.

Then seeing what he had done, Vortigern drew back into the dark fastnesses of Wales and summoned his wise men, his seers and wonder-workers and begged them tell him what he should do.

"Build yourself a mighty tower and lie close in it. There is nothing else left to you," said the foremost of the seers.

So Vortigern sent out men skilled in such matters to find the best place for building such a stronghold, and when he had listened to their reports, his choice fell upon Erii, the Place of the Eagles, high in the mountains of Gwynedd. And there he gathered together workmen from the North and the South and the East and the West, and bade them build him a tower stronger than any tower that ever had stood in Britain before then. The men set to work, cutting great blocks of stone from quarries in the hillsides; and the straining teams of men and horses dragged them up to the chosen place. And there, on the cloudy crest of Erii, they began to set the mighty foundations that should carry such a stronghold as had never been seen in Britain until that time.

But then came a strange thing. Every morning when they went to start work, they found the stones that they had raised and set in place the day before cast down and scattered all abroad. And day by day it was the same, so that the stronghold on the Place of the Eagles never grew beyond its first day's building.

Then Vortigern sent again for his seers and magicians and demanded to know the cause of the thing, and what they should do about it.

And the seers and magicians looked into the stars by night and

10

the Seeing-Bowl of black oak-water by day, and said, "Lord King, there is need of a sacrifice."

"Then bring a black goat," said Vortigern.

"A black goat will not serve."

"A white stallion, then."

"Nor a white stallion."

"A man?"

"Not even a man who is as other men."

"What, then, in the Devil's name?" shouted the High King, and flung down the wine-cup that was in his hand, so that the wine spattered like blood into the moorland heather.

And the chief of the wise men looked at the stain of it, and smiled. "Let you seek out a youth who never had a mortal father, and cause him to be slain in the old way, the sacred way, and his blood sprinkled upon the stones, and so you shall have a sure foundation for your stronghold."

So Vortigern sent out his messengers to seek for such a youth. And after long searching they came to the city of Caermerddyn; and in that city they found a youth whose mother was a princess of Demetia, but whose father no man knew. The princess had long since entered a nunnery, but before that, when she was young, she had been visited, as though in a dream, by one of those who the Christian folk call fallen angels, fair and fiery, and lost between Heaven and Earth. And of his coming to her, she had borne a son and called him Merlin.

All this she told freely to the High King's messengers when they asked her, thinking no harm. But when they had heard all that she told, they seized the boy Merlin and brought him to Vortigern in the fine timber hall that he had caused to be set up in the safety of the mountains hard by Erii. And Vortigern sat in his great seat spread with finely dressed wolfskins and cloth of crimson and purple, and pulled at his meagre beard and looked at the boy through the smoke tendrils of the hearth fire. And the boy stood before him, lean and whippy as a hazel wand, with dark hair like the ruffed feathers of a hawk, and stared back at him out of eyes that were yellow as a hawk, also,

11

"That was well struck! A knightly blow!" said Sir Tarquine, and he laughed, and charged Sir Ector in his turn, and got him under the arm and lifted him clean out of the saddle and bore him away at a plunging gallop through his gates and across his courtyard and into his hall and flung him down all asprawl on the rush-strewn floor. "Now you are at my mercy," said the huge knight. "Do you cry quarter?"

"Never!" said Sir Ector through his teeth.

"You shall have it, none the less; prisonment instead of death, for your boldness pleases me," said Sir Tarquine; and he called his servants and men-at-arms and had Sir Ector stripped and beaten with thorn branches and flung into the dark stone place beneath the house. And there he found many knights before him, the owners of the shields he had seen hanging from the willow tree. And among them Sir Lional.

When they had greeted each other, sorrowfully enough, Sir Ector said, "But tell me, where is Sir Lancelot my brother, for it was told me that you two rode together."

"Alas!" said Sir Lional. "I left him sleeping under an apple tree this very noon, when I rode off to follow the tyrant lord of this place. And for all I know, he sleeps there still."

And under the apple tree meanwhile, Sir Lancelot lay sleeping until well into the afternoon. And while he slept, there came by four queens riding on white mules, and with four mounted knights in attendance on them, holding up a canopy of green silk upon the points of spears to shield their delicate complexions from the sun. And as they came near, Lancelot's horse caught the scent of the others and whinnied; and looking that way, they beheld a knee-hobbled warhorse, and hard by, a knight sleeping under an apple tree, fully armed save that his helm was off and serving him for a pillow. And one of them—it was Morgan La Fay—knew him by her magic powers. "It is Sir Lancelot of the Lake," she said, "he that shall be the greatest of all my brother's knights."

Then all four queens looked down at his sleeping face, seeing

in its ugliness what most women saw in it all his life, and began to quarrel over which of them should have him for her lover.

"We need not bide here making war over him," said Morgan La Fay at last. "I will cast a web of sleep upon him, that he shall not wake for three hours, and we will carry him back to my castle; and when he wakes, he shall choose among us for himself." For in her own dark heart she was sure that she had more beauty than the other three, and that if her beauty failed her she could win him to her by her spells.

So she dismounted, and kneeling beside him made the spell of sleeping, and laid it upon him with her two forefingers touching his closed eyes. And when she was mounted again, the knights laid Lancelot, sleeping now as deeply as Merlin beneath his hawthorn tree, upon his own shield, and so bore him between them, his own horse following aft, back to the Queen's castle, that was called the Castle Chariot, and laid him sleeping still upon a pallet bed in one of the castle dungeons.

When Lancelot awoke and found himself in his strange prison, he found also a young maiden standing beside him with a platter of bread and meat and a cup of wine.

"How is it with you, Sir Knight?" she asked, kindly enough.

And Sir Lancelot looked about him in bewilderment and said, "How did I come to be in this place, when I fell asleep under an apple tree?"

"Nay, there is no time now for words," said the maiden.

"Make what cheer you may; and you shall know more in the morning." And her voice was soft, for she was sorry for a young knight in the clutches of her mistress and her mistress's fellow queens. And she went away.

Lancelot did not touch his food, but lay hungry and wakeful and afraid and raging through the night.

In the morning the door opened again and the four queens came in, dressed each of them in her fairest silks and sparkling with her brightest jewels. And one of them, still beautiful but as old as his mother at home in Benwick—he did not know that she was Morgan La Fay—said to him, "Ah, Sir Lancelot of the

Lake, we know you, though you do not know us; we know that you are a king's son, and fated to be the greatest of all King Arthur's knights, and we know that there is one woman only in your heart, and she King Arthur's Queen. Yet now, you shall lose her and she shall lose you, for you shall never leave this place alive unless you choose one of us to be your love in her stead." And she smiled and arched her neck, sleek and purring as a well-fed cat, sure of what his choice would be. "Choose, then, sweet knight."

"This is a hard choice that you set before me," Sir Lancelot said, standing before them, "to die or to choose one of you for my love. Yet I do not find it hard to make. If it must be so, I will die in this place, rather than take one of you to my heart, for you are all false enchantresses, and with death at least I shall not lose my honour. As for the Queen, my Lady Guenever—give me back my horse and harness and I will prove in combat with any champion you may bring against me, that she is the truest lady to her lord the King that ever lived!"

"So you refuse us?" said Morgan La Fay, and she narrowed her eyes like a cat's before it spits. "You refuse me?"

And they turned and swept out, trailing the scent of musk and rose-oil behind them; and the prison door clanged shut once more.

Presently, when the light through the small high windows showed that the day was drawing towards evening, the young damsel returned with more meat and bread and wine, which she set down on the wooden stool beside the bed, and asked Sir Lancelot again, "How is it with you?"

"I think that it was never so ill with me as it is now," said Sir Lancelot, "for I have gained the anger of the four queens who hold me here, and they will be quick to take some ugly revenge unless I can escape from them."

The maiden looked at the food that she had just set down, and sighed a little. "That is true, for I have heard them talking; and for refusing their love indeed they love you not!" And then, as though making up her mind all in a breath, she turned and

looked into Lancelot's face. "Indeed it grieves me to see you in the power of these queens, for they have been the downfall of many good knights. I have no love for them nor duty to them, and I will help you, if you in turn will help me."

Lancelot returned her look searchingly, wondering if he could trust her, and thought he could. "Help me to escape," he said, "and I will do whatever you ask of me, if it be not against my honour."

"Then, sir, my father King Bagdemagus has cried a tournament for next Tuesday, between himself and the King of Northgalis, whose queen is one of the four who hold you here. A great tournament of many knights, and at the last such tournament three of those who are to fight on Tuesday overthrew my father. Fight on his side that day, and I will contrive your escape."

"I have heard of your father as a good knight and a just ruler," said Sir Lancelot, "and gladly I will fight in his ranks at this tournament."

"Then tomorrow morning before light, I will come for you and lead you out of this place, and bring you your horse and armour."

Next morning the maiden returned with a great bunch of keys in her hand. "I have given drugged wine to the guards," she said, "but they will not sleep long. Therefore come quickly!"

And she led Sir Lancelot out by twelve locked doors; and the last door of all was a narrow postern in the curtain-wall of the castle, so that outside it was the scent of the forest in the early morning, and the scent of freedom. Then she brought him across the open ground to a hidden place among the elder and wayfaring trees of the forest verge where his horse and armour were waiting for him, and helped him to arm and mount.

"Twelve miles north of this place," she said, "there is an abbey of Dominican monks. Wait for me there and I will bring my father to you."

"By the grace of God, I shall not fail you," said Sir Lancelot, and he urged his horse forward into the forest ways.

Towards evening, he came to the abbey, and the brethren made him welcome and stabled his horse and gave him supper and a place to sleep. And there he remained two days, waiting for the coming of King Bagdemagus. And on the third day came the maiden with the King her father and a brave company of knights. And that was on the Sunday; and on the Tuesday they rode together to the chosen tournament ground where the King of Northgalis and his knights waited for them, in a fair open meadow set about with pavilions striped and chequered in all the colours of a summer garden. And there Sir Lancelot fought so nobly and so strongly among the knights of King Bagdemagus—none knowing who he was, for he carried the white shield, the Virgescue as men call it, such as knights carry who have as yet no device of their own—that he brought down three knights of the Round Table as well as many others, and King Bagdemagus was accounted the victor in that tournament.

And when Sir Lancelot had spared the lives of those knights he had brought down, he bade them go and swear fealty to King Arthur, saying that the Nameless Knight had sent them. And this he did because he would have no ill feeling between himself and his fellows of the Round Table.

And when the day was over, he returned to their own castle with King Bagdemagus and the maiden his young daughter, who could never of course return to her place as one of Morgan's handmaidens, after aiding Lancelot to escape. And there they made him warmly welcome and offered him many rich gifts. But these he would not accept, saying, "Nay, the thing was a straight bargain between your daughter and me, and each of us has kept our side of it."

And in the morning, he took his leave, for he had no thought now but to go in search of Sir Lional his cousin, who had disappeared from him while he slept under the apple tree. But at parting, he said to the King's daughter, "If ever you should have need of my aid again, pray you let me know of it, and I will not fail you if I be yet living."

And he rode away, never knowing that the King's daughter

stood looking after him with the salt taste of her own tears on her lips.

For many days Sir Lancelot rode about the forest while the blackberries ripened on the bramble domes and the first gold kindled among the green fronds of the bracken, but could never come by any word of his cousin, until one day, following a narrow path among the trees, he came up with the forester whom Sir Ector had met, and asked him much the same question as Sir Ector had asked him, and received much the same reply. And so he came at last to the fortified manor house beside the ford, and the great willow tree leaning over the water, and the shields hanging like strange fruit from its drooping branches; and among them he saw the shields of his cousin Lional and his half-brother Ector.

Sir Lancelot rode in among the branches, and finding the copper basin, beat on it with the butt of his spear until the bottom fell out. But nobody came. He watered his horse at the ford, and then rode to and fro before the gates of the manor, working up a fret that made his horse fidget under him. At last he saw far off along the woodshore a huge knight in full armour and mounted on the tallest warhorse he had ever seen, and driving before him another horse with a knight lying bound across its saddle. And as they came nearer, Sir Lancelot recognised the device on the shield hanging from the saddlebow of the captive knight, and so knew him for Sir Gaheris, the younger brother of Sir Gawain.

So he turned from the manor gateway and rode to meet them. "Fair sir!" shouted Sir Lancelot, "set that wounded knight down off his horse and let him rest, while we two try our strength against each other, for you have caused shame and suffering enough to my brothers of the Round Table. Therefore defend yourself!"

"Willingly," shouted back Sir Tarquine. "The more so if you be of that fellowship. I defy you and all your brothers!"

"That is enough of words," said Sir Lancelot, "now is the time for fighting!"

Green Knight, who dies not when his head is struck from his shoulders?"

"My name is Sir Birtillack," said the other. "I was minded to test for myself the courage of Arthur's champions of the Round Table, having heard much of the High King's court, even here in my northern wilderness. For the rest—question not the ways of magic."

So they parted as dear friends who have known each other a lifetime. And Gawain rode back through the Forest of Wirrel and the wild border country of Wales, until he came again to Arthur's court, and his own place that he had fully earned among the foremost of the brotherhood of the Round Table.

8

BEAUMAINS, THE KITCHEN KNIGHT

It became King Arthur's custom that at Pentecost, when all of the Round Table knights who were free to come gathered each year to his court at Camelot, that he would not sit down to dine until some strange thing had happened or some marvellous sight been seen or a quest begun.

And on one Pentecost, a while before noon, Sir Gawain, looking from a window of the Great Hall, saw three men enter the inner courtyard on horseback, and with them a dwarf on foot. The three men dismounted, and left their horses in the dwarf's care; and as they turned towards the keep, one of the men leaned upon the shoulders of the other two; and he was taller than either of them by a head or more.

"Here comes your strange happening, if I mistake not, my Lord King," said Gawain, turning from the window, back to

where the King and his knights were waiting; and in a few moments more, the three men came into the Hall, the young giant in the centre still leaning on the shoulders of the other two, as though he was maybe too weak from his own height to stand without them. All three were shabbily dressed and journey-stained, but the tall one, for all his seeming weakness, was the goodliest young man to look upon that anyone present had ever seen, brown-skinned and barley-haired, with eyes as clearly blue as the sky on a March morning; long limbed and broad of shoulder, and with hands that, for all their huge size, Sir Lancelot, looking at him, recognized at once for a swordsmaster's hands and a horseman's hands. And Sir Lancelot was a judge of such matters.

When the three of them had come the length of the Hall, and checked before the dais where King Arthur sat, the tall young man dropped his arms from the others' shoulders, and stood up straight as a tilting lance. And without waiting for the King to speak first, he said, "Now God save you, my Lord King, and all your fair fellowship. I am come to ask of you three gifts." The corners of his wide mouth tilted upward. "Not unreasonable gifts, but such as you may grant with honour. And the first I will ask of you now, and the other two I will ask of you this day a twelve-months."

"Ask," said Arthur, who liked the look of the young man on sight, "and you shall have what you ask for."

"I ask that you give me food and shelter until the twelve months be up," said the young man.

"Nay, lad, ask for something better than that."

"There is nothing that I want—until this day a twelve-months."

"So be it, then, food and shelter you shall have. For I never denied that to any man," said Arthur. "And now, tell me your name."

"That I had rather not, until the proper time," said the strange young man.

"It must be as you choose," said Arthur. "Yet I would be

glad to know who you are, for you are one of the goodliest young men that ever I have seen." And he gave the young man over into Sir Kay's keeping, bidding him to give the boy food and lodging as though he were a lord's son.

"Assuredly he is not that," said Kay with a sniff, "nor even a gentleman's son, or he would have asked for horse and armour. I will give him warm lodging in the kitchen, and all the food he wants. And I make no doubt he will be as fat as a yearling pork-hog by the time the year is out. And since he will not tell his name, I shall give him one; I shall call him Beaumains, Fair-hands, for indeed I never saw bigger and finer hands—nor ones that looked less used to work."

At this, Sir Gawain frowned deep between his red brows, for he too liked the look of the young man, and did not much care for Sir Kay and his thin barbed wit; and Sir Lancelot said quietly, "I'd have a care there, Lord Seneschal, for the boy looks to me to have had other uses for his hands than chopping wood and turning a spit; and I'd not be surprised if one day he used them to make you regret that mockery."

But Arthur said nothing, for he thought, The boy has the look of endurance about him. If he must come to his knighthood by the hard way, it is of his own choosing, and I dare say he will take no harm by it.

And Beaumains said nothing at all.

So for a full year he served in the kitchens, and the other scullions jeered at him because he did not know how to do the things that were easy and familiar to them—until he learned their skills himself, and then they learned the unwisdom of such jeering. And Sir Kay made his life a misery with petty punishments and waspish jests. Both Sir Gawain and Sir Lancelot offered to take him as their squire, even without knowing who he was; but he thanked them with a courtesy that was like the gentle courtesy of a great hound, and remained in the kitchens. He had his fill of food, and a warm place by the fire at night, but the only kindness he received was from the dogs, and from Sir Gawain who clapped him on the shoulder once or twice in

passing, and from Sir Lancelot, who gave him three silver pieces at Christmas to buy a warm cloak. And in all the while, he never returned evil words to Sir Kay, or complained, or seemed the least out of temper with his fellows, even when he tried, as he sometimes did, to teach them better manners by ducking one or other of them in the horse trough.

So the time drew again to the Feast of Pentecost.

And on Pentecost morning, as the knights were gathered in the Great Hall, a damosel came running, and knelt before the King and begged him for aid.

"For whom?" said Arthur. "For yourself? What is this adventure?"

"For my sister, the Lady Lionesse," said the damosel, "who is held captive in her own castle, besieged there by a cruel tyrant, the Red Knight of the Red Lands, who has laid waste her estates, and now demands that she give herself to him."

Almost before she had done speaking, Beaumains, who had been standing by the inner archway that led from the kitchen stair, came forward eagerly to stand before the King. "My Lord Arthur, I thank you for the food and drink and lodging that I have had in your kitchens this twelve-months past. Now I ask for the remaining two of the three gifts you promised me."

"Ask, then," said Arthur.

"Sir, firstly I ask that you will give me the adventure of this damosel, for it is in my mind that I have earned it!"

"In mine also," said the King, "and the third gift?"

"That Sir Lancelot of the Lake shall ride with me until he judges that I have earned knighthood; for I would be made knight by him and by no one else."

The King glanced questioningly at his friend, the foremost among his knights, and Lancelot nodded. "It shall be as you wish," said the King.

But the damosel had risen from her knees. "So I am to have none but your kitchen page to aid me, when here in your Hall sit the best knights in Christendom?" And the colour burned in two fiery spots on her cheekbones, and her eyes were bright

with angry tears. "Then keep your aid, for I want none of it!" And she swept from the Hall, shrilly calling up the page who was walking her palfrey to and fro in the courtyard, and mounted and rode furiously away.

And while they still heard the beat of the palfrey's hooves, a page brought word to the King that the dwarf who had come with Beaumains last year stood in the forecourt, with a warhorse and a fine sword, and said that he waited for his master.

So, followed by most of the company in the Hall, Beaumains strode out, and greeting the dwarf as an old henchman, took and buckled on the sword, and mounting the great warhorse, rode away, the dwarf following on his sturdy cob.

And Sir Lancelot, sending for his own horse and his war gear, armed and mounted and in a while rode after him.

But he did not ride alone, for Sir Kay also had sent for his horse and armour, saying, "I also will ride after my kitchen knave, though not to give him knighthood, but a good drubbing for thrusting himself forward in this way!"

"Better you bide at home, man, and eat your dinner," said Sir Gawain. But Sir Kay was too angry to listen; and Sir Lancelot only smiled a little, his twisted half-sad smile inside his helmet.

Riding hard and alone—Lancelot had fallen behind a little to keep clear and watch what happened—Sir Kay caught up with Beaumains just as Beaumains caught up with the damosel. "Beaumains!" he shouted. "Hi! You kitchen knight, if you want to leave your cooking-pots and play at chivalry, here I come to teach you the game!"

And Beaumains pulled his horse round, and said in a voice quite different from the voice that anyone had heard him use before, "First learn that game yourself! Sir Kay, I know you for an ungente knight. Therefore, *beware of me!*"

Then Sir Kay set his spear in rest and spurred straight in upon him. But Beaumains, having no spear, drew his sword and at the last instant, wrenched his horse aside and struck up the other's spear with the flat of the blade, then thrust the sword

point under the fluted rim of the other's shoulder-piece, and tipped him from the saddle, with a wound trickling red into the summer dust. Then Beaumains dismounted, and taking up Sir Kay's spear and shield, swung back into the saddle and rode on his way.

Many small cruelties and injustices had been repaid with that blow.

And Sir Lancelot also dismounted, made sure that the wound was not serious, and heaving Sir Kay on to his horse again, patted the beast's neck, saying, "Take him home. You have more sense than he has."

Then he too remounted and rode on.

Meanwhile Beaumains had again overtaken the damosel; but he got no kind greeting, for indeed though she was fair enough to look upon, her name, which was Linnet, was the gentlest thing about her. "How dare you come following after me?" she cried. "Get back to your kitchen, Beaumains. Aye, I know your name, given to you by the knight you have felled by a foul blow. Given because your hands are so big and coarse—hands for plucking geese and turning a spit!" And then, growing shriller yet, "At least ride further off from me, for you stink of greasy cooking."

"Say what you will," said Beaumains steadily, "I shall not turn back, your adventure is mine to achieve, given to me by the High King, and I shall not swerve aside from it while the life is in me!"

"Achieve my adventure, you kitchen knight?" she jibed.

"Nay, but before long you shall meet with such a foe that you would give all the rich broth you ever supped in Arthur's kitchens rather than stand your ground against him!"

"I shall do the best I may, and we will see how it turns out," said Beaumains gently; and rode on, a little behind the damosel.

Before long they came to a dead thorn tree, from whose branches hung a black spear and a black shield. And under the tree sat a huge knight all in black armour, his raven warhorse grazing nearby.

"Now flee away down the valley before that knight can mount his horse," said Linnet, "for that is the Black Knight of the Black Lands, and none may stand against him."

"My thanks for your warning," said Beaumains, and held straight on as though she had not spoken it.

And when they drew near, the Black Knight got to his feet, and said, "Damosel, is this your champion, brought from King Arthur's court?"

"Nay, Sir Knight, this is but a greasy scullion, who follows me whether I will or no. Therefore I beg of you, teach him to turn back from me; for I am sick of the kitchen smell of him."

"Why then," said the knight, whistling up his black charger, "I will knock him out of that fine saddle, for a kitchen knave has no right but to go on foot—and his horse is a fine one and will be of use to me."

"You make mightily free with my horse," said Beaumains, "and indeed he is yours if you can take him! Come then and try, or stand aside and let us pass, this damosel and I."

"Nay," said the Black Knight, "that is not a fitting thing—that a kitchen knave should ride against her will with a fine lady."

"That would depend on the kitchen knight and on the lady," said Beaumains, stung out of his usual steady quietness. "But indeed I am no scullion, but a gentleman born, and of nobler blood than you!"

Then the Black Knight mounted his horse and took down his shield and spear from the dead thorn tree, and the two rode apart the proper distance and turned and thundered towards each other; and the black spear shattered on Beaumains's shield; but Beaumains's spear took his foe in a joint of his armour, piercing through mail and flesh, and the Black Knight pitched from the saddle all tumbled like an arrow-shot bird. When she saw the Black Knight lying dead, the damosel wrenched her palfrey round, and striking her heel fiercely into its flank, rode off without a word.

But Beaumains dismounted, and stripped off the dead

knight's armour—beautiful plain black armour with a blue-purple sheen where the sun caught it—and put it on. Only he kept his own sword and Sir Kay's spear. And while he was securing the last buckle with the help of his dwarf, Sir Lancelot, who had sat his horse quietly at a little distance, looking on, came up. "And do you judge that you have earned your knight-hood now?"

His vizor was up, and Beaumains looked him straight in his odd twisted face and smiled. "Yes, sir," he said, and knew that he had been right; there was nobody else from whom he would choose to receive his knighthood.

"I also, with all my heart," said Sir Lancelot. "But first tell me your name—I will keep it under my helmet for so long as you wish."

"Sir," said Beaumains, "I am Gareth, youngest son of King Lot of Orkney—youngest son but one of Queen Margawse."

There was a little silence in the forest clearing, and somewhere afar off sounded the alarm call of a jay.

"How comes it, then, that of Sir Gawain, and Sir Gaheris and Sir Agravane, all your brothers, none of them knew you when first you came to court?"

"It was eight years since any of them had seen me; and even a brother changes between nine and seventeen," said Beaumains, who was now Gareth, simply. "But truly, I think Gawain felt something for me from the first, for he has shown me kindness in this past year, even as you."

"Kneel then, Gareth of Orkney," said Lancelot.

And when the young man knelt before him with his brightsandy head bent, Lancelot gave him the light buffet between neck and shoulder which, when vigil and ceremony were stripped away, was all that was really needed for the making of a knight.

"Rise, Sir Gareth, and go on your way; when you return you will surely find a place at the Round Table, for already you begin to be a worthy knight."

Then Sir Gareth got up, and put on his helmet and mounted the black horse, leaving his dwarf to lead his own. And he and

Sir Lancelot parted, one to ride back to Camelot, the other to ride on after the Lady Linnet.

When Gareth caught up with the damsel, she cried out on him, shrill as a hawk, "You need not think to be my accepted knight because you have killed a better knight with a coward's blow! Faugh! Ride down wind of me, for your smell sickens me! But at least I shall not have to suffer that long, for in a while we shall meet with a champion who will treat you even as you have treated him whose armour you wear. Therefore flee while you may!"

"I do not flee from any man," said Gareth, "nor, while the life is in me, do I leave off from following you until the adventure is accomplished."

Before long as they rode, the damsel angrily in front, Sir Gareth a little behind and his dwarf bringing up the rear, they heard the beat of horses' hooves and a crashing in the undergrowth, and out on to the track ahead of them rode a knight all in green; green surcoat over his armour, green shield and spear, green housings on his horse, and the crest of cut silk that topped his helmet fluttering green like young beechleaves in spring-time.

"God's greeting to you, damsel," he said, reining across the way. "Is that my brother the Black Knight who rides with you?"

"Nay," said Linnet, "it is a mere kitchen knave who has slain him most foully and stolen his armour."

"Then you slew a good knight," said the man in green, "and I shall slay you, in payment for the foul blow!"

"No foul blow," Gareth said, "I slew him in fair fight—indeed the advantage was to him, for I had no armour but my jerkin. So did I take his armour which was mine by right, as the spoils of conquest."

Then the two set their spears in rest, and fell to most furious jousting, there upon the woodland track, until their spears were all in splinters and they betook them to their swords. And when Gareth unhorsed the Green Knight they fought on foot. And all the while the damsel Linnet mocked the Green Knight and

cried out upon him for being so slow to finish off a mere scullion in stolen armour, until in his rage he struck such a blow at Gareth that his shield was hacked in half.

Then Gareth shook the broken halves from his arm and, taking both hands to his sword, leapt in upon his foe, swinging the bright blade high, and brought it down in such a buffet upon the green crested helm that he dropped like a stoned hare, and lay half stunned, with his wits away. And lying so, he cried quarter.

"Whether you have quarter of me is for the damosel to decide," said Gareth, standing over him. "For unless she plead for you, you shall surely die."

"Then he must die," said Linnet, "for never will I plead with a scullion!"

"Fair Sir Knight," said the fallen man, "spare my life, and I will forgive you the death of my brother; I will be your man, and my thirty knights who follow me."

"Willingly will I spare it, if the damosel begs me." And slowly Gareth raised his sword as though for the death stroke, the eyes of the Green Knight straining up after the blade.

"Stop!" cried Linnet. "Do not slay him! I beg it of you, you—kitchen knave!"

Gareth lowered his sword, and bowed his head to her in all courtesy. "It could have been asked more kindly, but you have asked it, damosel, and it is my pleasure to do your will." Then to the fallen man, he said, "Sir Knight of the green harness, I give you your life. Go free and get you to Camelot, your thirty knights with you. Swear allegiance of King Arthur and tell him that the Knight of the Kitchen sent you to him."

"Truly I thank you for your mercy," said the Green Knight. "But the day draws on to evening. Come back with me to my manor and rest for the night; and in the morning we will go our ways, I and my knights to Camelot, and you and the damosel on the road of your adventure."

So that night they lodged with the Green Knight; and the damosel cast scorn upon Sir Gareth and would not suffer him to

eat with her at the same table. "Shame it is, to see you treat this scullion as an honoured guest," said she.

But the Green Knight said, "Worse shame would it be to treat him with dishonour, for he has proved himself a better fighting man at least than I am." And he set Sir Gareth to eat at a side table, but himself ate there with him.

Next morning they set out upon their separate ways. And as before, Linnet jibed at Sir Gareth for his kitchen smell and big hands, and bade him ride downwind of her. And as before, Sir Gareth bore it all quietly, giving her no angry retort, but saying only, "Damosel, you are uncourteous to mock me so; for I have served you well till now, and it may be that I shall serve you better in time to come."

"That," said the damosel, "we shall see!" But for the first time she looked at him as though he were human, and she herself a little puzzled; and she bit at her lower lip.

Presently the track they followed led out from the trees, and in the distance rose the walls and towers and crowding roofs of a fine city; and between the woodshore and the city was a fair meadow, newly scythed, and all about the meadow stood pavilions of dark blue silk, and all among the pavilions wandered knights and ladies in trailing silks and damasks of the same deeply glowing blue, and pages walking slender gaze-hounds whose collars were of fine blue leather, and squires exercising horses in rich trappings of the like colour. And in the midst of the meadow was a pavilion bigger and finer than all the rest, a blue spear standing upright beside the entrance, and a blue shield propped against it.

"Now indeed it is time for you to flee," said the damosel, "for there is the pavilion of Sir Persant of Inde, who men call the Blue Knight, one of the greatest champions in all the world, and his five hundred knights camped about him; and even Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawain would be hard put to face him under arms; therefore I bid you again to flee while there is yet time for fleeing."

But she spoke a little less harshly than before.

people at that time, that the men and women did not sit down to meat together upon state occasions.

And when they were all seated in their appointed places, the King turned to Merlin who stood beside his chair, and said, "What of the four places I see about this wondrous table that are yet empty?"

"They shall be filled at the appointed time," said Merlin. "The first by King Pellinore, who rests a while from his questing to be with you this very day; see, his name is already upon his seat, there where the sunlight falls. The second waits for Sir Lancelot, son of King Ban of Benwick your old ally; and he shall be with you before next Pentecost morning. He shall be the best and nearest to you of all your knights, and of all your knights he shall bring you the most joy and the bitterest of sorrow. And the third seat is for Percival the son of King Pellinore, and he is not yet born; but when he comes it shall be as though he were a herald, for by his coming you shall know that in less than a year the Mystery of the Holy Grail shall come to its flowering, here in Camelot, and the knights shall leave the Round Table and ride out upon the greatest quest of all time; and it shall be as though all things draw to the golden glory of sunset, beyond which is the dark. But now it is yet morning."

And for a moment it seemed that a stillness fell upon the Hall. Then Arthur said, "Yet one empty seat remains. Who shall sit there?"

"That is the Seat Perilous," said Merlin. "It is death for any man to sit there, until he who it was made for comes to claim it. He shall come at the appointed time—and he shall be the last comer of all."

And even as he spoke, King Pellinore stood in the doorway. When King Pellinore had been welcomed and brought to his waiting seat, and the feasting that began immediately after was drawing to a close, there broke out a great baying of hounds in the forecourt, so that for a moment all men thought that it was Pellinore's questing beast, but even as the latest comer half rose from the table to follow it as he must whenever it called him, a

white hart came running into the Hall, fleet-footed and touched to silver by the light of the high windows; and hard behind it a milky white brachet, a small hunting-dog almost as fair and fleet; and after them thirty couple of great black hounds in full cry.

The hart fled round the huge table, and after it the brachet, and the black hounds, belling as they went. And as they came towards the door again the hart gave a great bound and swerved towards it, oversetting a knight called Sir Abelleus who was not of the Round Table but among those eating at a side-board. And Sir Abelleus seized the brachet, and springing up strode from the hall. They heard his horse's hooves outside as he rode away. And the hart also fled out through the palace gates, with the black hounds baying and belling after it. And almost in the same instant, while the blood-music of the pack still hung upon the air, a maiden rode into the hall upon a white palfrey, and cried to the King, "Sir, let me not be so wronged, for the brachet is mine that yonder knight carried away!"

But before Arthur could answer her plea, another rider crashed into the hall, a knight, darkly armed and mounted upon a mighty war horse, who seized the palfrey by its bridle and wrenched it round and so dragged horse and maiden away, she crying and making shrill protest all the while.

For three heartbeats after she was gone, Arthur sat unmoving and stared down at the table before him; for she had made a great clamour, and no man wishes to be embroiled in quests and marvels upon his wedding day. But Merlin brought his strange golden gaze back from following the damosel, and said, "That was not well done, that a maiden should be dragged from this hall crying for succour, and no men moving to her aid. Such an adventure must be followed to its end, for to leave it lying is to bring dishonour upon you and your knights."

And Arthur knew that Merlin was in the right of it, and he said, "I will do as you advise me."

"Then," said Merlin, "send Sir Gawain to bring back the white hart, and Sir Lamorack to bring back Sir Abelleus and the

bracket, for it is right that both of them should follow the first quest of their knighthood this day. And let King Pellinore ride after the damsel and bring her back, and bring back also, dead or living, the knight who carried her away."

So King Pellinore and the two young knights were armed, and their horses brought from the stables, and they rode away.

Sir Gawain took his younger brother Gaheris with him to be his squire; and together they rode through the town and across the bridge and away through the forest, following the distant dwindling music of the hounds, until they came at last to a great castle. The hart fled across the causeway and in through the castle gate, followed by the few hounds that were still on the hunt; and after the hounds rode Sir Gawain, with Gaheris following hard behind. And in the castle courtyard the hounds overtook the hart and brought it to bay and killed it.

Then out from the armoury doorway came the lord of the castle, fully armed all save his helmet, for he had been at practice, his sword naked in his hand; and he began slashing at the hounds, slaying them one after another, and shouting in grief and fury, "Die, you brutes that have slain my white hart! Alas, my white hart that my lady gave to me and that I have kept so ill!"

"Stop! Leave off from this butchery!" shouted Gawain, suddenly beside himself with fury at sight of the dead hounds. "Spend your rage upon me, not upon good hounds who do but follow their nature and their training!"

"That will I!" roared the knight of the castle. "I have killed the rest of the pack, now for the last of the whelps!"

Gawain swung down from his horse, and in the midst of the courtyard the two met, as though they had indeed been two hounds springing at each other's throats. Their blades hacked through the chain-mail again and again, and the red smell of battle came into the back of Gawain's nose and a red mist before his eyes, until at last, he did not know how it happened, the knight of the castle crashed down at his feet and lay crying his mercy.

Gawain knew that it was against all custom to slay a knight who cried his mercy, but the red mist was still before his eyes, and he swung up his sword for a mighty stroke that should sever the fallen knight's head from his shoulders; but in that instant, the lady of the castle, who had been watching from the window of her bower and come running, flung herself upon her lord's body to shield him; and Gawain could not check the down-sweep of the sword in time, and struck through her slender neck instead of his adversary's.

The red haze cleared from Gawain's eyes, and grief and horror came upon him for what he had done. "Get up," he said to the knight. "I give you mercy."

"I no longer ask for it," said the lord of the castle, "for you have slain my lady, my love, who was more to me than all the world, and it is not in me to care whether I live or die."

"Grief is on me for that," said Gawain, "for I meant the blow for you, and had no thought to harm your lady. I cannot kill you now; therefore rise and go to King Arthur at Camelot, and tell him truly all that has happened. Say that the knight who followed the Quest of the White Hart sent you."

The silent servants brought their master his horse; and silently he mounted and rode away. And looking after him Sir Gawain said hoarsely, "I am but an ill knight after all, for I have slain a lady, and had I shown proper mercy to her lord, it would not have come to pass."

"This is no place to stand grieving," said Gaheris, "for I am thinking that we have few friends here!"

And in the same instant four of the household knights came upon them with drawn swords. "Stand and fight now, you who shame your knighthood!" cried one. And another, "A knight without mercy is a knight without honour!" And the third, "You have slain a fair lady! Carry the shame to the world's end!" And the fourth, "You shall know what it is like to need mercy, before you go from us!"

And all the while they were thrusting in upon Gawain and young Gaheris who stood back to back and fought them off as

beat they might. But the odds were two to one, and in the end both were wounded sore and taken captive; and the household knights would have slain them on the spot, beside the dead hounds and the dead lady, had not the ladies of the household come and begged mercy for them, so that they were flung living into a narrow chamber in the bowels of the castle, and there left for the night.

And in the morning the oldest of the ladies, whose hair was silver beneath her veil, came and hearing them groan from the pain of their wounds, asked Sir Gawain how it was with him.

"Not good!" said Sir Gawain.

"It is your own doing," said the ancient lady, "had you not slain the lady of this place, you had been less sorely hurt this morning. But tell me now, who you are."

"I am Gawain, son to King Lot of Orkney, a knight of Arthur's court, and this is Gaheris my brother."

Then the silver lady went and spoke with the household knights, telling them that their captives were near kinsmen of the High King's, and for Arthur's sake they were set free and given leave to return to Camelot. Only the penance was laid upon them that Gawain should carry the body of the slain lady across his saddlebow, and her head hung by its yellow hair about his neck.

And so those two rode sadly back the long way through the forest that they had come the day before.

Sir Lamorack, meanwhile, had ridden after Sir Abelleus and the brachet; and he had not gone far when suddenly a dwarf stood in his path, and struck his horse such a blow on the muzzle with the staff he carried that the poor beast shook his head and squealed, backing a full spear's length before Lamorack could get him under control again.

"Why did you strike my horse?" demanded Lamorack.

"For that you may not pass along this way until you have jousted with the knights in yonder pavilions," said the dwarf.

And Sir Lamorack noticed for the first time that two pavilions stood back among the trees beside the way, and beside each

pavilion a brightly coloured shield and spear, and a horse standing ready saddled.

"I have no time to spare for such a jousting," said Lamorack, "for I am on a quest that may not be left lying."

"Nevertheless, you shall not pass," said the dwarf, and raising the horn that hung from his shoulder on a silken baldric, he sounded an echoing blast.

Out from the first of the pavilions strode a fully armed knight, who leapt upon his waiting horse, and taking down his shield, set lance in rest and came spurring towards Sir Lamorack. And Sir Lamorack swung his horse to meet the attack and received him with a spear thrust that tipped him over the crupper of his steed. And before he could rise, another knight came from the second pavilion, and Sir Lamorack received him in the same manner. Then Sir Lamorack dismounted, and stood over the two fallen knights as they lay sprawled on the turf.

"Do you cry my mercy?"

"We cry mercy," said they, with what wind was still left in them.

"Then mercy you shall have. What are your names?"

"I am Sir Felot of Landluck," said one.

And the other, "I am Sir Petipace of Winchelsea."

"So then, Sir Felot and Sir Petipace, get up, and back on your horses, and ride you to the court of King Arthur, and tell him you were sent by the knight who follows the Quest of the White Brachet. Now God speed you and me."

And when they were gone, swearing to do as he demanded, and Sir Lamorack was about to ride on, the dwarf, who had stood by watching all this while, came to him and said, "Sir, pray you grant me a gift."

"Ask it," said Sir Lamorack.

"I ask only that you will take me into your service, for I would no longer serve such sorry knights as those. If I were your man, I could tell you where rode the knight with the white brachet."

"Choose yourself a horse, then," said Sir Lamorack glancing

at the spare mounts that stood under the trees, "and ride with me."

So they rode together through the early summer forest. Towards evening they came upon two more pavilions pitched beside the way; and beside the entrance to one pavilion leaned a shield that was as white as milk, and beside the other, one that was as red as a corn-poppy.

Then Sir Lamorack dismounted, and giving his bridle to the dwarf, went to the pavilion of the white shield and looked in. And there lay three maidens sleeping. He went to the pavilion of the red shield; and there lay a lady sleeping with the white brachet at her feet, which barked at sight of him so that the lady awoke, and her maidens also and came running. And Sir Lamorack caught up the brachet as it sprang towards him, and carried it out and gave it to the waiting dwarf, the lady and her maidens following after.

"Sir Knight," cried the lady, "why do you take my brachet from me?"

"Because Arthur the King sent me in quest of it for another lady who claims it for her own," said Lamorack, "and so I must bear it back to him."

"She lies, that other lady! This is an ungentle thing you do, and you shall not go far without suffering for it!"

"Then I will abide what ill befall me as best I may," said Sir Lamorack. "But, lady, I must have the brachet," and he mounted, and he and the dwarf rode on their way back to Camelot.

They had not ridden far when they heard the furious drum of hooves coming hard behind, and Sir Abelleus ranged up beside them. "Sir Knight, give back to me the brachet which you stole from my lady!"

"Nay, if you want it, you must joust for it!"

So they set their spears in rest, and fought together, first on horseback, and then when both were unhorsed, on foot, until Sir Lamorack had the victory and Sir Abelleus lay at his feet. "Now yield and cry mercy!" demanded Lamorack.

But the other cried, "Never while the life is in me!"

And in that moment, again there came the sound of flying hooves, and out from the trees burst a damsel on a grey palfrey, who cried to Sir Lamorack, "Sweet knight, for King Arthur's love, grant me what I shall ask of you."

"Ask," said Sir Lamorack, still with his sword point at Sir Abelleus's throat. "And if it may be, I will grant it to you."

"Then give me Sir Abelleus's head, for he is the worst of living men, and a murderer most cruel!"

Then Lamorack was troubled. "That was a rash promise, and I repent me of making it," he said. "May it not be that he can make amends for whatever wrong he has done you, and win your forgiveness?"

"Never!" cried the lady. "For he slew my own brother before my eyes, though I kneeled in the mud an hour to plead his mercy; and for no more cause than that my brother had worsted him in a joust!"

Then Abelleus, hearing this where he lay on the ground, yielded him and cried his mercy.

"It is too late for that," said Sir Lamorack. "You could have had mercy, but you would not ask for it." And he stooped to pull off the other's helmet. But Sir Abelleus squirmed over, and leapt to his feet and ran, and Sir Lamorack after him; and among the trees Sir Lamorack caught up with him and smote off his head.

When he came back, cleaning his sword with a handful of grass, to the place where he had left the dwarf and the horse, the lady on the grey palfrey was still there, and she spoke to him gently, "Sir, my thanks are yours. And now—you must be weary; come therefore to my house, which is nearby, and eat and rest, and tomorrow return to Camelot."

So Sir Lamorack went with her, and she and the gentle old knight her husband made him and his dwarf and his horses warmly welcome, and gave him many thanks for his avenging of the lady's brother; and bade him remember that a welcome awaited him always in their manor. And in the morning, fed

and rested and with his wounds salved, Sir Lamorack set out once more for Camelot, the dwarf following him with the brachet across his saddlebow.

King Pellinore rode into the forest in yet a third direction, and he had not ridden far before, coming down into a gentle valley, he came upon a well bubbling out from beneath an archway of mossy stones, and beside the well a damsel sitting with a wounded knight in her arms. And seeing King Pellinore she cried out to him, "Help me, Sir Knight! Help me for Christ's sweet sake!"

But King Pellinore was half deaf in his helmet, and too eager upon his quest to stop, and scarcely heard her even when she cried out after him, "I pray God you may have as much need of help as I have, before your time comes to die!"

He rode on down the valley; and presently he heard the sound of fighting, and coming to an open space among the trees, he saw two knights, one black-harnessed and the other all in elfin green, locked in furious sword-combat, while a little to one side, the maiden he sought sat her white palfrey captive between two squires. He reined in beside her, and said, "Lady, I have sought you all the forest ways. Now you must come with me, back to King Arthur's court."

"That will I gladly, if only it may be," said the lady, "for it was by no wish of mine that yonder knight of the black armour dragged me from the King's Hall."

But one of the squires cut in, "Yonder two knights are fighting for this lady. Go you and part them and ask their leave, and if both give it to you, then may you take her with you back to Arthur's court."

Then King Pellinore urged his horse between the two battling knights, forcing them to break off, and demanded, "Why fight you for this lady?"

"I fight to save her from this foul knight who has carried her off by force, for she is the Lady Nimue, and distant kin to me," returned the knight in green.

"I fight for what is mine!" swore he of the dark armour. "For I bore her off by my strength and courage this day from Arthur's court!"

"You lie!" said Pellinore. "For you came in full harness when we were unarmed and at high feast, and carried her off before any man had time to take up arms against you! Therefore on the High King's order I ride in quest of her, and will take her or die in the attempt."

Then he of the black armour turned his sword upon King Pellinore's horse and drove it through to the heart, and laughed. "Fight for her then, but on foot as we do!"

Pellinore sprang clear as his horse crashed to the ground, and ripped his own sword from its sheath, and cried out in fury, "That will I! And for my poor horse as well as for the lady!" And as the black knight made at him, he swung up his sword, and brought it whistling down, through helm and mail coif and bone, splitting the man's head to the chin, so that he fell dead upon the trampled ground.

Then Pellinore turned to the other knight, but he looked up from staunching his own wounds, and shook his head.

"What? Will you not fight for her?" said Pellinore.

"Nay, there is no need. She will come to no harm at your hands. Take her back to Arthur's court, as your quest bids you."

"That will I do," Pellinore said, "and riding this dead knight's charger since he has slain mine."

"Nay, come back and lodge with me this night, and I will give you a better horse in the morning."

So King Pellinore and the maiden Nimue returned with the knight her kinsman to his dwelling-place, supped and slept, and in the morning a tall fine warhorse was brought for him, and he mounted, the lady on her white palfrey at his side.

"Tell me your name before you ride away with my kinswoman in your keeping," said the knight in green.

"I am King Pellinore of Wales, a knight of the Round Table. Now, in fair exchange for my name, do you give me yours."

"I am Sir Meliot of Logure."

me your help and save my lover from the black fate that has come upon him!"

"What I can do, that I will," said the King. "Tell me quickly what it is, this fate, which has caused you so much weeping." And he stooped to raise her, but she would not rise, only crouched the more closely.

"I was betrothed to a knight who was more dear to me than my own heart. But yesterday as we rode out making plans for our marriage, through the deep ways of the Forest of Ingleswood, we came upon a place where the trees fell back, and in the midst of it a dark lake all jagged with rocks along the shore, and on an islet in the lake, a castle, with black banners flying above the keep and the drawbridge down. And as we lingered there, wondering, for we had never come upon the place before, a terrible creature in full armour, twice the size of a mortal man and mounted on a horse twice the size of a mortal horse, came full gallop across the bridge towards us, and called upon my love to leave me to him and ride on his way alone. My love drew his sword to defend me, but some evil magic lies in that place, and in that moment the spell of it fell upon him so that the sword dropped from his hand and he was powerless against the wicked knight. And the knight hurled him from his saddle and took and bound him and flung him across his horse's back, while I must look on powerless. I tried to fight him, and got this in payment." She touched her bruised face and torn garments and showed her hands cut and bruised. "But he only laughed his terrible laughter and dragged my love's horse round to ride away. I called after him that I would go to Arthur's court and tell my wrongs and beg for a champion to save my love—or avenge him—maybe even the King himself. But he only laughed the more, and shouted at me, 'Tell your cowardly king that here at Tarn Wathelan he may find me when he will; but much I doubt that even he will find the courage to come against me!' And so he went, driving my dear love on his horse before him. And so do I come to you, my Lord Arthur, kneeling at your feet and praying for your aid!"

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GAWAIN AND THE LOATHELY LADY

One year, when there had been Saxon raiding, and a joining of spears between them and the Old People from the North, and when the barbarians had been driven back and the North was quiet again, the High King and his companion knights kept their Christmas at Carlisle, and Guenever and her ladies with them.

And on Christmas night when they were all gathered in the Great Hall, and the squires and pages were bringing in the feast, the boar's head wreathed in bay leaves before all, there came a clatter of hooves and a beating on the door. And when the door was opened, into the Hall, her hair pulled down and her cloak mired with her wild winter riding, ran a damsel who flung herself down at Arthur's feet. "My Lord King!" she cried. "Give

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Then an angry murmur ran round the Hall, and men looked at each other and their hands moved towards their daggers, and many a one was already half out of his seat.

But the King sprang to his feet and cried in a great voice, "Now by my knightly honour, I vow that the King indeed shall ride upon this matter, and avenge this maiden's wrongs in full measure!"

And some of the knights, especially the young ones, beat upon the table and gave tongue, applauding the vow. But Gawain said, "Uncle, let me ride upon this quest; for I smell some evil beyond what the maiden has told, and Britain cannot long be doing without her King!"

But though Lancelot also, and Bedivere and Gareth, and even in a rash moment Sir Kay, offered themselves to go in his stead, the King refused them. "My thanks to you all, but it is over long since the King himself rode on a quest instead of watching his knights ride out." And then, looking round on them, on a sudden, he added half in anger and half in something that was like appeal, "God's truth, my brothers, I am not yet old!"

And there was something in his voice that held them from protesting any more.

Only the Queen was not happy; for like Gawain, it seemed to her that she could catch the smell of some evil that she could give no name to.

Next morning when the King had heard Mass, his squires armed him and buckled on Excalibur and brought him Ron his mighty spear; and his most fiery-hearted warhorse was fetched from the stable. And with the maiden to guide him, he left Carlisle and headed deep into the Forest of Inglewood, the dark fleece of trees that covered all those parts.

Mile after mile they rode, until at last they came out from the trees into the fierce yellow flare of a stormy sunset; and before them spread the waters of a lake giving back its answering fire to the fiery sky; and all around rose the dark rocks of the shore; and set on its islet, a storm-dark castle with its banners streaming crow-black from the turret tops against the sunset light.

"This is the place," said the damsel. "Oh, my Lord King, save my love for me and avenge my wrongs!"

Then Arthur took the horn that hung at his saddlebow, and winded a long-drawn mighty call that echoed back from the rocks of the lake shore and set the ravens whirling on black wings from the crannies and ledges of the castle. Again he sounded his horn; and yet a third time, until the note seemed to fling back from the high sunset clouds above the ramparts, but no other answer came. Then he drew his sword, and cried out in his battle voice, "Come, Sir Knight of Tarn Wathelan! Your King bides here, and is not used to be kept waiting!"

And as he hurled his challenge, the great drawbridge dropped slowly to span the narrow gap of water between the castle and the shore; and there in the gate arch appeared the Knight of Tarn Wathelan, huge beyond the size of mortal man and armed from crest to toe in black armour, and mounted on a giant red-eyed warhorse the colour of midnight. "Now welcome, King Arthur!" he shouted. "For long and long I have wished for your coming, that I may defy you to your face as always I have defied you in my heart!"

Then anger rose in the King, and he spurred his horse full gallop down the track to the water's edge, while the huge knight spurred out as swiftly to meet him. "Yield you now to me!" shouted back Arthur, above the drum of horses' hooves. "Yield and make amends for your evil doing, or fight!"

But in the same moment his horse stopped dead, all but flinging him over its head, and stood stock still, neighing in terror; and as the King sought to urge it forward again, he felt it trembling under him. And like an icy shadow, a great fear fell upon him, the more terrible because it was not of the knight or of anything in this world; a black terror of the soul that came between him and the sky, and sucked the strength from him so that sword arm and shield arm sank to his sides and he was powerless to move.

"This is Devil's work!" said something deep within him. "Devil's work..."

And the Knight of Tarn Wathelan reined in his own horse not a spear's throw away, and fell to laughing, until his laughter rang and boomed back from the castle walls. "Now it is for you to yield or fight, my Lord King!"

And Arthur struggled to raise his sword arm until the cold sweat started on him, but could not move a muscle.

"You see!" bellowed the huge knight.

"What—would you—of me?" gasped Arthur.

"As to that, I could kill you now, or fling you into my dungeons to rot among other valiant knights who lie there, and take your realm for my own by means of the magic that is mine to wield. But I am minded to sell you back your life and freedom. How say you to that?"

"What is the price?"

"That you return to me on New Year's Day, bringing me the answer to this question: What is it that all women most desire? Swear on the Holy Rood to return, with or without the answer to the question, for if you have it not, then you will be still my prisoner, your ransom unpaid. And if it pleases me I shall slay you and fling your body into the dark waters of the lake."

And there was nothing that Arthur could do but swear, with shame and rage and humiliation battling with the terrible fear that held him captive like a fly meshed at the heart of a spider's web.

Then the Knight of Tarn Wathelan made a quick gesture with his spear; and Arthur's horse reared up and spun round on its hind hooves, and dashed off at such a desperate gallop that they were far and far into the trees before Arthur could rein it to a trembling halt.

It was then that he realised that there had been no sign of the maiden since they first rode out into the clearing and saw Tarn Wathelan ahead of them.

With the shame of what had happened eating into him, the King rode on his way. But not back to Carlisle. He could not look his companions in the face again until he had paid his ransom—if indeed his ransom was ever to be paid.

All that week between Christmas and the New Year, he rode the forest and moorland ways, North and South, East and West. And whenever he saw a girl herding geese, or an ale-wife in the door of a wayside tavern, a great lady amidst a train of servants, riding by on a white palfrey whose harness rang with little bells, or an aged nun by a holy well, telling her beads, he asked her the question that had been put to him by the Knight of Tarn Wathelan.

"What thing is it that all women most desire?"

And every one of them gave him a different answer. Some said riches and some said beauty, some said pomp and state, some power, some laughter and admiration, some said love.

And the King thanked each one of them courteously, and wrote down her answer on a long strip of parchment which he had obtained from an abbey on the first day of his quest, that he might forget none of them when he came again to Tarn Wathelan. But he knew in his heart that none of them was the right answer. And so at last it was the morning of New Year's Day, and he set his horse's head once more towards the castle of Tarn Wathelan with a heavy heart. And his thoughts turned back to Merlin, so long asleep under his magic hawthorn tree, for nobody else could help him now.

The hills looked darker than they had done when last he rode that way, and the wind had a keener edge. And the way seemed much longer and rougher than it had done before, and yet it was all too quickly passed.

But when he was not far short of his journey's ending, as he rode chin on breast through a dark thicket, he heard a woman's voice, sweet and soft, calling out to him, "Now God's greeting to you, my Lord King Arthur. God save and keep you."

The King turned quickly in the direction from which the voice had come, and saw, close beside the track, a woman in a scarlet gown. She sat upon a turf hummock between an oak sapling and a holly tree; and her gown was as vivid as the holly berries, and her skin as brown and withered as the few winter leaves that still clung to the oak tree. At sight of her shock ran

through the King, for in the instant between hearing and seeing, he had expected the owner of the soft voice to be fair. And she was the most hideous creature that ever he had seen, with a piteous nightmare face that he could scarcely bear to look upon. Her nose was long and warty and bent to one side, while her long hairy chin bent to the other. She had only one eye, and that set deep under her jutting brow, and her mouth was no more than a shapeless gash. On either side of her face her hair hung down in grey twisted locks, and the hands that she held folded in her lap were like brown claws, though the jewels that winked upon them were fine enough for the Queen herself.

In his amazement, the King could not at once find his tongue to answer her greeting. And the Loathely Lady raised her head and looked at him, a long full look that seemed to hold grief and anger and an old pride. "Now by Christ's Cross, my Lord Arthur, you are an ungentle knight, to leave a lady's greeting lying unanswered so! Be it remembered your manners, for I know on what dark adventure you ride, and proud as you are, it may be that I can help you."

"Forgive me, lady," said the High King. "I was deep in thought, and that, not lack of courtesy, was the reason I did not return your greeting. If you do indeed know the adventure that I ride on, and the question that I must answer, and if you can indeed help me, I shall be grateful to you all my life."

"It is more than your gratitude that I must have, if I am to help you," said the Loathely Lady.

"What, then?" said the King. "Whatever you ask, you shall have it."

"That is a rash promise," said the Lady, "and you shall swear it on Christ's Cross, lest later you repent. But first, let you listen to me. You are pledged to tell the Knight of Tarn Wathelan this very day what it is that all women most desire, or else yield yourself up to his mercy. And mercy he has none. That is so?"

"That is so," said the King.

"You have asked many women, in these past seven days, and

all of them have given you answers; and not one of them the right answer. I alone can give you that; the answer that shall pay your ransom. But before I give it to you, you shall swear by the Holy Rood, and by Mary the Mother of God, that whatever boon I ask of you, you will grant it."

"This oath I take upon me," said the King, with his hand on the cross of his sword.

"Then bend down to me—closer—closer, that not even the trees may hear," said the Loathely Lady. And as he did so, she got awkwardly to her feet and whispered the secret in his ear.

Then the King caught his breath in laughter, for it was such a simple answer, after all. But in a little he grew sober again, and asked the Lady what was the boon that she would have in payment. But she said, "Not yet—when you have given his answer to the Knight of Tarn Wathelan and proved that it is indeed the true one, then come back to me here, where I shall be waiting for you. And now, God go with you on your way."

So the King rode on towards Tarn Wathelan. And now the hills seemed less dark and the wind less keen, for he was sure that he had the true answer to the Knight's question.

In a while he came to the clearing in the forest, and sitting his horse on the lake shore, he sounded a long note on his horn. This time he did not need to sound more than once, for the master of the place was ready for him, and while the echoes still hung among the rocks, the drawbridge came clanging down, and over it the huge Knight on his huge black horse came riding, and reined up within a spear's length of the King.

"Well, now, little King, do you bring me the answer to my question?"

"I bring you many answers, given to me by many women, and among them must surely be the true one," said Arthur, and tossed the roll of parchment into the giant's mailed hand.

And sitting his horse there on the lake shore, the huge knight read them from the first to the last. And when he had read them all, he burst into a roar of laughter, and flung the scroll over his shoulder into the deep sky-reflecting waters of the Tarn. "Here

be many answers indeed! Some bad, some good, but none of them the true answer to my question. Your ransom is unpaid and your life and your kingdom are forfeit to me. Bend your neck for the stroke, oh, most lordly Arthur Pendragon, High King of Britain!" And his hand went to the hilt of his sword.

Then Arthur said, "Give me leave to try one more, before I yield up to you my life and kingdom."

"One more, then, but be quick," said the Knight.

"This morning as I rode here," said King Arthur, "I met with a lady clad in a scarlet gown and sitting between an oak and a holly tree, and she told me that the thing all women most desire is *their own ivory*!"

Then the Knight of Tarn Wathelan let out a great bellow of rage. "It must have been my sister Ragnell who told you this, for none but she knew the true answer. And a curse upon her for the telling! Was she hideous and misshapen?"

"She was indeed the most unlovely lady that ever I saw," said the King.

"If ever I catch her, I will roast her alive over a slow fire, for she has cheated me of the kingdom of Britain!" roared the Knight. "Nevertheless, go your way in freedom, for your ransom is paid."

Back over the moors and through the forest depths rode the King, all at once so weary that he could scarcely even feel relief. And when he came to the place where he had met her before, there between the oak and the holly tree sat the Lady Ragnell, waiting for him.

He reined up beside her, and this time was the first to speak in greeting. "Lady, your answer was indeed the true one. And I have my life, and kingdom, thanks to you. Now ask your boon, and I will assuredly grant it."

"Assuredly," said the Loathely Lady. "If you are a man of honour as well as a king. So then, this is the boon I ask: That you will bring to me from your court at Carlisle, one of your knights brave and courteous, and good to look upon, to take me for his loving wife."

At her words, Arthur felt as though he had taken a blow to the belly. "Madam," he said, "you ask a thing impossible."

"Then Arthur is not, after all, a man of honour?" said the Lady.

And the King said, "You shall have your boon, lady."

And with his head sunk on his breast, he rode away. And never knew how the Lady looked after him with a mingling of hope and fear and desperate pain in her one bleared eye.

On the second day of the New Year the King returned to Carlisle. Wearily he dismounted in the courtyard, and went through into the Great Hall, where his companion knights were gathered and the Queen came to greet him with hands held out and eager questions, for she had been torn with anxiety through the past eight days.

"I have boasted too much of my strength in arms, and I come back to you a beaten man," said the King heavily.

"My lord, tell us what has come to pass?" said the Queen, her face turning white under the golden circlet that bound her hair.

"The knight whom I rode against was more than a mortal man, and his castle and all the land about it held by black enchantments which suck the courage from a man's heart and the strength from his arm. So I fell into his power and was forced to yield myself to him. And he—bade me go, but return to him on New Year's Day with the answer to a certain question, or forfeit to him my life and kingdom."

For a moment there was no sound in the Great Hall but the crackle of the logs blazing on the hearth, and a hound under a table scratching for fleas. And then Lancelot said gently, "But, sir, you are returned to us, so it must be that you gave this wizard knight the true answer that he sought. And therefore you are honourably redeemed."

"I gave him the true answer, by the help of a lady; but her help was dearly bought, and I cannot pay *that* ransom myself."

Then Gawain spoke up, "So—what is it that must be paid to this lady?"

"She asked a boon, to be given her when the question had been answered; and I—I promised her whatever she asked. I swore that I would grant it." The King groaned. "And when the question was answered and I was free, and returned to her and bade her ask her boon—she asked that one of my knights should marry her."

Again there was silence in the Hall; and then Gawain said, "Och well, that might be none so ill a thing. Is she bonnie?"

"She is the most hideous and misshapen woman that ever I saw," said the King. "Crooked of nose and chin, old and withered, and with but one eye. A twisted thorn-tree woman, like something out of an evil dream."

And for the third time there was silence in the Hall.

"Would to God that I might pay the price myself," groaned the King. And Guenever reached him her hand like a mother reaching a consoling hand to her child. But she was careful not to look at Sir Lancelot, who was as careful not to look at her.

And a faint breath of relief was running through the knights who already had wives of their own and so were safe from what was coming.

"But you cannot, dear uncle, and so to keep your honour clean, another must pay it for you." Agravane, always a mischief-maker, leaned forward into the light, his eyes flickering. "How about you, dear brother Gawain? You are for ever protesting your loyalty to the King, as though it were greater than other men's; protesting yourself the King's champion as Lancelot is the Queen's!"

Lancelot was half out of his seat before the words were well spoken; but even swifter than he, Gawain sprang up, his hot blue eyes blazing and his red hair seeming to lift like the mane of an angry hound. "Little brother, you speak my very thoughts! My Lord Arthur, I will wed your beldame for you, and quit you of your ransom!"

"My thanks be to you for the offer," said the King, "but I shall not—I cannot—accept it until you have first had sight of her."

"Nay, my lord and uncle, my mind is set to do this in your service, for am I not the King's champion, as my brother Agravane says?" And Gawain caught up his wine-cup from the table beside him, and held it high, thrusting his defiant gaze among his fellow knights. "Drink, friends, to my bride!" And standing there, he drained the cup and crashed it down upon the table.

Nobody echoed the toast.

"Not without first seeing her," said the King again, his voice dull and hoarse but with no yielding in it. And Cabal, his huge grey wolfhound, nuzzled into his hand; and he looked down and gently pulled the great hound's ears. Then, abruptly, as a man making up his mind, he raised his head and looked around at the faces turned to him in the torchlight.

"Tomorrow, we ride hunting towards Tarn Wathelan, and Gawain shall see the Lady Ragnell in the cold light of day, with a cooler and clearer head on him than he has at this moment. And all of you who are not yet wed, shall look upon her too, before any of you choose her for his bride!"

So next day, in the first light of the winter morning, the horses were brought from the stables and the hounds from the kennels, and King Arthur and his companions rode hunting. The morning was crisp with frost, and they put up a noble stag and chased him far into the depths of Inglewood Forest, the winding of the horns mingling with the music of the hounds. He led them through dense thickets of holly and yew and bare oak and hazel; and at last, not so far from Tarn Wathelan, they made the kill.

And when the carcass of the deer had been gralloched and flung across the back of a hunting pony, and they turned back towards Carlisle, they rode merrily along with jest and laughter, though the led palfrey in their midst reminded them all too clearly why they had come hunting that way. And for that very reason they laughed the louder and called to each other under the trees to silence the trouble in their own hearts.

And then suddenly Sir Kay, riding out alone beyond the rest

as he often did, caught a glimpse of scarlet among the trees; and ducking under the branches of a great forest yew, he reined back and stayed looking at the woman who sat there in a gown of blazing scarlet, between an oak and a holly tree.

"God's greeting to you, Sir Kay," said the Lady Ragnell.

But the King's Seneschal was too much astonished to answer. He had heard what the King had said of the Loathely Lady, last night in Carlisle Castle. But he had not imagined anything so terrible as the face he saw turned towards him. He crossed his fingers for fear of witchcraft, and did not even hear her salutation. But by this time most of the other knights had joined him; and in their company Sir Kay felt bolder; and because he had been afraid, his manners were worse than usual, and he began to jibe at her most cruelly. "See now, here if I mistake not our King's description of her, is the lady we have come to seek. So now, which of us shall woo her to wife? Come, think of the sweetness of her kisses and do not be hanging back!"

And then King Arthur rode up, with Gawain at his side, and at sight of them Sir Kay fell silent; and the Loathely Lady, who had bowed her face, weeping, into her hands, looked up again, with a kind of pathetic and desperate pride.

"Since one of you must indeed marry her," said the King, harsh in his throat, "here is no cause for jesting, Sir Kay!"

"Marry her!" cried Sir Kay. "Well, it shall not be I! By the boar's head, I had sooner mate with the witch of Cit Coit Caledon!"

"Peace, Sir Kay!" said the King. "This is churl's treatment of a lady! Mend your speech, or you shall be knight of mine no longer!"

And the other knights watched in silence, sickened and in pity. Some looked away; even Sir Lancelot pretended to be busy with some adjustment to his horse's bridle.

But Sir Gawain looked steadily at the Lady, and something in that pathetic pride and the way she lifted her hideous head made him think of a deer with the hounds about it, and something in the depth of her bleared gaze reached him like a cry for

help. And he glared about him at his fellow knights. "Nay now, why these sideways looks and troubled faces? Kay was ever an ill-mannered hound! The matter was never in doubt, for last night did I not tell the King that I would marry this lady; and marry her I will, if she will have me!"

And so saying, he swung down from his saddle and knelt before her. "My Lady Ragnell, will you take me for your husband?"

The Lady looked at him for a moment out of her one eye, then she said in that voice so surprisingly sweet, "Not you, too, Sir Gawain. Ah, not you, too." And as he looked at her in bewilderment, "Surely you do but jest, like Sir Kay?"

"I was never further from jesting in my life," said Sir Gawain, with stiff lips.

"Then think you before it is too late. Will you indeed wed with one as ugly and misshapen and old as I? What sort of wife should I be for the King's own nephew? What will Queen Guenever and her ladies say when you bring such a bride to court?"

"No one will say anything that is not courteous to my wife," said Gawain. "I shall know how to guard you from that."

"Maybe so. But yourself? You will be shamed, and all through me," said the Lady, and wept again, more bitterly than before, so that her face was wet and blubbered and yet more hideous.

Gawain took her hand. "Lady, if I can guard you, be very sure that I can guard myself also," he said, and glared round him at the others with his fighting face upon him. "Now, lady, come with me back to Carlisle, for this evening is our wedding time."

"Truly," said the Loathely Lady, "though it is a thing hard to believe, you shall not regret this wedding, Sir Gawain."

And she rose and moved towards the white palfrey they had brought for her, and then they all saw that there was a hump between her shoulders and she was lame in one leg, beside all else. But Sir Gawain helped her into the saddle and mounted his own horse beside her; and the King ranged up on the other side. And so, with the rest of the company strung out behind

comfort there than you had last night, and my uncle and his ladies also."

And when Geraint with the old Duke Ynwl and his wife and daughter came again to the ancient manor house, they found the young Duke's servants had come there before them by a shorter way and were making ready the living chamber as though for a feast, and water was heating on a blazing fire for Geraint to wash off the blood and sweat of his fighting.

And when he came from his bath, the young Duke was there with his household knights and guests from the jousting for the sparrowhawk. And the old Duke in a new furred gown was looking about him as one in a dream, at the fine food and drink upon the table and the fresh water-mint strewn upon the floor, and the rich stuffs being spread over the poor furniture, and everywhere the glint of gold that had been his long ago. But of the old Duchess and the maiden Enid there was no sign, and when he asked where they were, the chamberlain told him, "They are in the upper chamber, putting on the new gowns that the Duke has brought for them."

And Geraint said, "Pray you send and ask the maiden to wear her old gown until she comes to Arthur's court, that the Queen may dress her in gowns of her choosing."

So Enid came down to the great chamber in her old threadbare gown; but in that, she looked as fair to Geraint as the other ladies in their brilliant silks and damasks.

They all sat down to supper. And over the table that night, peace was made between the old Duke and the young Duke; and the young Duke restored to the old one all the lands and riches that were his aforetime.

And next day the Lady Enid bade goodbye to her father and her mother; and still in her threadbare gown, but riding a sweet-paced bay palfrey which the young Duke had brought for her from his own stables, and carrying the sparrowhawk on her gloved fist, she rode out with Geraint upon the long road back to Caerleon.

Meanwhile, the King and his knights had had good hunting

against blade, until their armour was hacked and hanging loose, and the blood and sweat ran from them, and the light began to fade from their eyes. And at last it seemed that the defender of the sparrowhawk was gaining on Geraint, and the old Duke cried to him, "Remember the insults done to you and to Queen Guenever!"

And the red flame of his rage sprang up bright and fierce again and the darkness fell from his eyes, and summoning up the last of his strength, he swung up his sword and brought it crashing down upon the other's head in a blow that cut through crest and helm, and mail coif and flesh, and bit to the very bone.

The knight crashed to the ground, his sword spinning from his hand; and there on his knees he cried quarter, and asked mercy of Geraint.

"Mercy you shall have," said Geraint, standing over him, "on this condition, that you go to Guenever the Queen, and make amends to her for the injury done to her maiden by your dwarf; and tell her that Geraint, son of Erbin, sent you. For the injury done to myself"—he smiled grimly inside his battered helmet—"I have taken enough payment. Yet I demand one thing more, that now you tell me your name, which at the first I asked in all courtesy."

"I will go to the Queen as you bid me," groaned the knight. "And as for my name, Geraint, son of Erbin, I am Edern, son of Nudd."

Then came squires to help him away to have his wounds tended; and after, he was put back upon his horse, and drooping in his saddle, with his dwarf and his lady, he set out for Caerleon.

Meanwhile, Geraint said to the maiden Enid, "Go now and take up the sparrowhawk on its silver rod, for it is rightfully yours."

Then came the young Duke with his people, and greeted Geraint and bade him to come back with him to the castle. "My thanks to you," said Geraint, "but where I spent last night, there will I spend this night also."

"That must be as you wish; but at least you shall have more

and slain the white stag; and on the morrow, the Queen had look-outs set on the ramparts to watch for Geraint's return. Some while after noon they saw coming across the bridge of Usk a dwarf on a tall horse, and behind him a maiden on a palfrey, and last of all a knight in hacked and battered armour, who sat slumped in the saddle of his warhorse with his head hanging down between his shoulders.

And one of the watchers went and told Guenever what he had seen; a dwarf and a lady and a sorry and battered knight. "But I know not who they may be."

"But I know," said the Queen. "Bring the knight and the lady to me when they have entered the gate."

So Edern the son of Nudd and his lady-love were brought to the Queen in the Great Chamber. And kneeling at her feet, Edern told her all that had passed. And how Geraint had overcome him and sent him to her to make amends for the injury done to her and her maiden; and he humbly asked her pardon.

And the Queen granted it; and ordered that he be taken to the chief guest-chamber, and Morgan Tudd who was Arthur's own physician summoned to tend his many hurts. And she greeted his lady kindly, and gave her into the keeping of her maidens.

And she bade the look-outs on the ramparts continue their watch for Geraint.

On the edge of dusk, Geraint came riding, and the Lady Enid with him in her threadbare gown, drooping a little with weariness, but the sparrowhawk still on her fist.

And when word of this was brought to the Queen, she gathered all her maidens and went to greet them in the inner courtyard. "Now welcome and God's greeting to you," she said, "and to the maiden who rides with you, for whom you won the sparrowhawk."

And by her knowing so much of the story, Geraint knew that Edern, son of Nudd, must have kept his promise and reached Caerleon ahead of him. And he dismounted and lifted the maiden down, and while squires took their horses and the sparrowhawk, he took her by the hand and led her to the Queen;

and as she sank low before the Queen, Guenever stooped and took her in her arms.

"Lady," said Geraint, "I have kept my promise, and the name of the knight is Edern, son of Nudd; but I am thinking that you know that already."

"Surely," said the Queen, "for not many hours since, he rode in, asking my pardon and saying that you had sent him to make amends for the injury his dwarf did my maiden. And he told us all the story of the jousting for the sparrowhawk, so far as he knew it."

"Is it well with him? He was a good fighter," said Geraint.

And the Queen smiled, "As well as may be. He is in the guest chamber while the many wounds you gave him are tended to; and his lady is with him now."

Then came Arthur with his knights; and Geraint presented the maiden Enid to him, and told the rest of the story, and asked the King's leave that they should be married the next day.

"Assuredly you have my leave," said the King, "and seldom saw I a fairer maiden than this duke's daughter, even though she is so poorly clad."

But the Queen said, "I am thinking that my Lord Geraint brought her to me in her old gown, that I might have the joy of finding her gowns from among my own, that are more fitting to her beauty."

And she swept Enid away with her to her own apartments, while Geraint went with the King and his knights to the feasting in the Great Hall. And that evening it was decided that the head of the white stag should be awarded as a bride-piece to Geraint's lady.

Next day, in a gown of golden damask, Enid went to the castle chapel, and there the High King himself gave her hand into Geraint's before the high altar, and so they were wed. And after the marriage there were three days of rejoicing; jousting and hunting by day, and feasting with harpsong and dancing in the Great Hall by night.

But on the fourth morning Geraint went to the King and said,

"My Lord Arthur, now it is time that I was away into Cornwall, to my own place, to bring my Lady Enid before my father, that the sight of her may gladden his autumn days."

Then the King was sad, and the Queen and her maidens grieved for the loss of the Lady Enid, for in those three days her sweetness and gentleness had made her dear to all of them. But they knew that it was right that Geraint should take her back to his own people and his own place.

So all things were made ready, and the next morning after they had heard Mass, they rode out, with a knot of the King's best knights headed by Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawain to company them on their way. They crossed the Severn by the flat-bottomed barges that always lay there ready to ferry travellers and their horses to the other side, and they turned their horses' heads towards Upper Cornwall, and rode until in two more days they came to the castle of Erbin, Geraint's father.

The old lord greeted his son and his son's wife with great joy; and for three days there was hunting and hawking and jousting by day, and feasting and harping in the Great Hall at night, just as there had been at Caerleon; and then Arthur's knights took their leave and went back to their own lord.

And Geraint set himself to strengthen his borders, which his father, being old, had allowed to grow weak, and set to rights all things that were in need of it, and help his father in the ruling of his domain. And when ever and where ever there was a tournament or jousting or other such trials of skill, there he would be, eager to pit himself against the best knights that could come against him. But the time came when the borders were strong and secure and all was well with his father's lands and people, and he had overcome all the knights who came against him in joust or tournament, so that there seemed nothing to fight for and no one to try his skill against any more. And he began more and more to forsake his old companions and pass his time in his own apartments or in the castle gardens, with Enid, for being with the Lady Enid was the one thing that he never grew weary of.

So he began to lose his people's hearts, and there was a murmuring among his household knights, some saying that Enid had bewitched him, and others that he was no true son of his father after all. And the murmuring came to the ears of the old Lord Erbin, and he sent for Enid to his own chamber and told her of it, and asked her was it by her wish and her doing that Geraint had forsaken his heart-companions and a man's proper way of life, to spend all his time with her.

Grief and shock struck through Enid when she heard this, and she gripped her hands together and raised her face to the old man's, and said, "Truly, my lord, I am to blame in this, for I have thought only that it was sweet to have your son by me, when I should have found means to send him from my side. I had not thought that he was forsaking his companions and his courage and his proper way of life for love of me. But I swear that never have I asked this of him; and it is hateful to me that it should be so, for I would have him the valiant knight I loved and left my home and kin for."

"Then tell him so," said the old lord, gently.

But though she tried and tried again, Enid could not tell him so; she could not give him the wound that she knew it would be to him. And she was afraid of him too, a little; afraid of his fiery temper that was hotter even than Gawain's.

And then one summer morning, lying wakeful as she had lain all night, she looked at Geraint lying asleep beside her, the first sunlight lying across his breast, where he had pushed the coverings down; and she raised herself on her arm to look the better, and saw his sleeping face among the tangle of bright hair, and the way his breast rose and fell, and the way, even in his sleep, he had reached out towards her. And suddenly all her love for him seemed to rise into her throat and choke her, and she began to weep.

"Alas and alas!" she whispered. "If through me you have lost your valour and your strength as men say! Alas and alas that you are no more the knight that first I loved! An ill day for both of us, when I consented to wed with you!"

And her tears fell on Geraint's bare chest and roused him, so that he heard what she said, confusedly between sleeping and waking, and thought both that she accused him of having lost his knightly valour and that she wept for love of some other knight who she would have wed. And he sprang from the bed, blinded by rage and grief, and flung her aside when she would have clung to him, and shouted for his squire to bring him his armour and have his warhorse saddled and made ready.

Then looking down at Enid still crouching where he had flung her to the ground at his feet, he said, "Lady, have your mare saddled also, for we are going riding. And we shall not return until you have come to know whether or not I have altogether lost my knighthood. Until also, you have decided whether I am not so well worth loving as him you were weeping for just now."

And he would pay no heed to her weeping nor her protests that she loved no other man. And he strode off to seek his father and tell him that he was setting out upon a quest.

"So suddenly?" said the old lord. "And who rides with you?"

"Enid my wife," said Geraint, harsh in his throat, and strode out with no other word, back to the place where his squire waited for him with his armour.

Meanwhile Enid, not summoning any of her maidens for she could not bear anyone with her in her grief and bewilderment, had gone to the small chamber where her clothes-chest was kept. And first she thought, I will put on my finest gown and my golden bracelets for my pride's sake. But then she drew out the old threadbare smock, carefully treasured, and she thought, If he sees me in this gown, maybe he will remember how he first saw and loved me, and how I left my home and parents in it for his sake, and his heart will gentle and turn to me again.

And she put on the shabby gown and went down into the courtyard.

But when Geraint had been armed by his squire, and came down and found her waiting with her mare at a little distance from his own great warhorse, the face he turned to her was as though it had been carved from stone.

"Mount," he said, "take the road that leads uphill, from the tower gate, and ride ahead of me—*well* ahead of me. And do not turn back for anything that you see or hear."

And when she would have spoken one last plea, he cut her short, "And speak no word to me unless I speak first to you."

So Enid mounted and rode sadly out through the gate and turned into the track that led northward up on to the high moors.

Presently the road dipped towards a valley choked with forest, and as they came towards the woodshore, Enid saw two armed men sitting their horses in the shadow of the trees, hedge-knights who lived by robbery. And one said to the other, "Now here comes a fine chance for us! Two horses and a maiden, aye, and a fine suit of armour off that knight who rides with his head so sunk on his breast; for I am thinking that he will not be one to hold his own against us!"

And hearing, Enid thought, He bade me not to turn, nor speak with him; but I must warn him of this! And she turned her horse and rode swiftly back to Geraint and told him what she had heard.

But Geraint only said, "No need that you come back to me with such warnings, when I know that in your heart you would gladly see me dead at the hands of these men. Only one thing I require of you—that you obey me and keep silent!"

And at that moment the foremost of the hedge-knights came charging towards him. But Geraint wrenched his horse aside at the last instant, so that the other's spear-point passed him by, then turned and with his own spear laid crosswise swept him from the saddle, so that he crashed to the ground head down with his neck broken under him. Then charging to meet the second, he ran him through the throat-mail with his point, and hurled him to the ground as dead as his comrade.

Then Geraint dismounted and stripped the knights of their armour and bound it upon their horses' backs, and knotted up the reins. Then he remounted, saying to Enid, who had sat her mare looking silently on the while, "Now ride ahead of me once more, driving these horses ahead of you. And whatever you hear

or see, do not turn back or speak to me unbidden, for I vow before God that you shall be sorry if you do!"

And the Lady Enid did as she was bid.

Presently they left the forest country, and the road that they followed led out across bleak and open moors. And as they rode, Enid saw, small in the distance, three knights riding towards them through the heather and low thorn-scrub; and the wind was blowing from them towards her, and brought her the words of the foremost rider as they drew near. "Now this is our well-starred day! Four horses and three suits of armour—and the woman too, for it's little that lack-lustre knight will be able to do against us!"

Then Enid thought, He bade me not to speak to him; but if I do not, it may be his death, and I had rather that it was mine. And again she rode back to Geraint and warned him of what she had heard.

"Truly your warning means less to me than your disobedience to my orders!" said Geraint.

And in the same moment the first of the three hedge-knights came clattering down upon Geraint with levelled spear, but he swung his horse aside so that the spearpoint only glanced off the rim of his shield while his own drove true to its target and flung the man back over his horse's crupper, dead before he hit the ground; and in the same way Geraint served the second man and the third. Then he dismounted and, stripping the dead men of their armour, bound it across their horses' backs, and knotted up the reins, and gave them into Enid's keeping with the same grim orders as before. "Now ride ahead of me, driving these five horses, and do not again disobey me, for I think that I shall kill you if you do."

So they rode on, the land growing rough and thickety about them, and it grew more and more difficult for Enid to drive the five horses before her, but she held on, making no complaint. And Geraint saw the trouble she had, and his heart stirred within him for her sake, but he would not listen to the stirring of it, only rode on with his head on his breast.

And presently as they went, Enid became aware of four hedge-knights skulking on the tangled fringes of a blackthorn thicket. And as they drew near, one of them shouted with laughter, and cried out to the rest, "Now here is a fine chance come our way! Horses and armour—aye, and a maiden, too, and seemingly the knight who rides behind so spent with capturing them all that he'll have little more fight left in him for keeping them!"

And a great cold and a great fear came upon Enid when she heard the words, and she thought, If I disobey him again, my lord will surely kill me. And then she thought, But if I do not warn him assuredly he must be killed. And she turned as best she could with her five driven horses, and rode back to Geraint and told him what she had heard.

"Is there nothing I can say that will make you obey me?" said Geraint. "I see these men, and their purpose is plain, and I do not fear them."

And this time he did not wait for them to attack but struck heel to his horse's flank and spurred towards them, his spear in rest; and the foremost of them he took in mid-shield, flinging him from the saddle, and the second in the breast, piercing his armour and driving to the heart. And the third he took in the throat, breaking his neck before ever he touched the ground, and the fourth, by way of an ending flourish, he took by the hardest stroke of all, the crest stroke that tore his helmet from his head and broke his neck in the doing of it.

Then he dismounted, and disarmed the fallen knights and bound their armour upon their horses' backs, and again he handed the horses over to Enid and bade her drive them ahead of her as before.

Night came upon them while they were in forest country, and at last Geraint spoke to Enid of his own accord. "Turn aside under the trees; it grows too dark for safe riding, and in the morning we will be on our way again."

"Whatever you will," said Enid, and they headed in among the trees, where as they went deeper it was already night. Then Geraint dismounted and lifted Enid from the saddle; but there

was no gentleness in his hands as he set her down, and none in his voice. "Here is a wallet with food in it. Eat, and watch the horses, and take care that you do not sleep lest any of them stray."

And he stretched himself out with his head on his shield to sleep, while Enid, the food wallet untouched beside her, sat watching, and the moon rose and shone silver all about her, and the night sounds of the forest woke and an owl swooped by on furred wings, and somewhere a vixen cried to her mate, and something rustled in the undergrowth. And Geraint lay still, but slept no more than his lady whom he had left on watch. And as the horses stirred, Geraint's helm clanked softly where it hung from his saddlebow.

And the moon-watered darkness warmed to the summer dawn, and the ferns and foxgloves grew out of the shadows and somewhere a crack-voiced cuckoo called.

And Geraint shifted, cramped in his armour; and speaking no word of greeting to Enid, he set her on her mare again, and said, "Take the horses and ride on ahead as you did yesterday."

That day they rode through gentler country, and from time to time passed by meadows where long lines of men with scythes were getting in the hay. And they met with no more adventures. But towards evening they came to a town of many thatched roofs and the slender spire like an iris bud of a church, and at the end of the town a strong castle that looked as though it had grown from the ground on which it stood. And at the castle gate Geraint asked for lodging for the night.

The porter passed them through into the courtyard, looking somewhat aside at the damsel in the threadbare gown driving nine horses before her, and the knight who rode like a thunder-cloud behind.

And then, while squires and pages came to help them dismount and take the horses, the Earl of the castle and the town came out from his Great Hall to bid them welcome.

Presently they sat down to eat, and at table Geraint and Enid were set close to each other, but as soon as the meal was over and

the Earl's household broke up and began to move and mingle about their evening pastimes, the two shifted far apart. First the Earl spoke with Geraint, asking him the purpose of his journey.

"No purpose save to look for adventure and follow any quest that pleases me," said Geraint, looking down at his hands that hung lax across his knees. And his face was the face of a man who would find little joy in any quest that came his way. And as he talked with Geraint, the Earl looked across the Hall to where Enid sat sadly by herself with her face turned to the fire, and it seemed to him that she was the fairest maiden that ever he had seen. And presently he said, "Sir, have I your leave to go and speak with yonder maiden who sits sad and alone?"

"If you wish. It is nothing to me," said Geraint, not looking up from his hands.

So the Earl went, and drew up a cushioned stool, and with a "By your leave," sat him down beside Enid. "Sweet lady," he said, speaking to her gently as though she were a falcon that he did not wish to startle into bating from his fist, "forgive me—I am thinking that you have little pleasure in following yonder knight."

"His journey is my journey," said Enid.

"With neither servants nor maidens to accompany you?"

"It is pleasanter to me to ride with my lord than to have servants and maidens."

"Yet he must be a churl to treat you so," said the Earl. "I would not treat you in such a way, if you were to remain with me."

Enid looked at him as though she were not sure she had truly heard his words. And when she saw that she had, she said simply, "My troth is pledged to that man, and I have no thought to break faith with him."

"Think again," said the Earl. "If I slay yonder man, I can keep you for myself as long as I will, and when I weary of you I shall turn you away. But if you come to me of your own free will, you shall be my wife and the lady of all my lands, and I will keep faith with you and love you as long as I live."

and the feel of a horse under him; and he thought too of the twenty men around him in the gloom.

"I will fight for the lord your father," he said at last, "if I have his promise upon oath that whether I win or lose, the twenty knights here with me shall go free."

"You shall have his promise," said the damosel.

"Then I am ready—if I had but horse and armour."

"Horse and armour you shall have, none better in all the land."

It seemed to Arthur, looking at her face in the upward light of the lamp, that he had seen her somewhere before. "Were you ever at Arthur's court?" he asked.

"Nay, I am Sir Damas's daughter and nothing more. I was never at court," said the damosel; and in that she lied, for she was one of the maidens of Morgan La Fay.

But Arthur believed her, for he was a simple and trusting man; and the little warning whisper that had begun at the back of his mind died away.

And he followed her up the stairs towards the clear light of day beyond the stairhead door.

At the same time as King Arthur woke in his dungeon, Sir Accalon of Gaul woke to find himself beside a deep well in the courtyard of an old strong manor house; so close beside the well that if he had so much as turned in his sleep he must have crashed to the bottom and found his death there. When he saw and understood, Sir Accalon thought, Now God help the King, and King Uriens also, for it must be that the damosels in the ship were creatures of some foul enchantment, not mortal maidens, and have betrayed us all; and if I come out from this adventure with my life I shall slay such witches wherever I meet them!

And at that moment came a dwarf, very ugly, with a great mouth and a flat nose that spread all across his face, and saluted him. "Sir, I come to you from your love, from Queen Morgan La Fay herself."

Now Sir Accalon did indeed love Morgan La Fay, better than all else in the world, not knowing that she was even as the damosels of the ship, a witch and a worker of dark enchantments. And his heart leapt within him, and he said, "What would my lady with me, here in this strange place?"

"She begs you to fight for her against a knight whom she has good cause to hate for an ancient wrong he did her; and that you may fight the better, she sends you King Arthur's own sword Excalibur; and she bids you, if you truly love her, to do battle to the uttermost and show no mercy."

Then Sir Accalon reached out and took from the dwarf the sword which he held across his hands. It seemed to him strange that she should send him Arthur's sword instead of his own; but he thought that maybe she had done so for the power that was in it. And anyway, wherever Arthur was, it would not harm him to use his sword for this one time. And he felt the power in the sword as though it had been a live thing in his hands, and rejoiced in it. "Go back to Queen Morgan," he said to the dwarf, "and tell her I will fight for her as truly as ever a knight fought for his lady."

Then six squires came and led Sir Accalon into the Hall of the manor house, and set food and drink before him, and then armed him, and set him upon a fine warhorse, and led him to a fair level field that was midway between the manor house of Sir Ontlake and the fine castle of his brother.

And at the same time, six squires were doing the same thing for King Arthur. But to King Arthur, in the last moment before he mounted his horse, came another maiden, saying, "Sir, your sister Morgan La Fay has dreamed that you are to do battle this day, and sends you your sword."

And Arthur saw that she held Excalibur across her hands, and he unbuckled from his side the borrowed sword that he had belted on, and took his own sword to belt in its place. Then he mounted his horse and rode out, the squires and the twenty freed captives following after. He wished that it had been Guenever and not his sister who had dreamed of his danger and

sent him his sword. But he never doubted that it was indeed Excalibur that he carried at his side.

So then, the champions came to the field, and found it ringed about with folk who had come to watch. Their vizors were closed, and both carried maiden shields with no device upon them, so neither knew who the other was. They joustet against each other until both were dismounted, and then fell to with their swords. And great and many were the blows they gave each other, and often the sword in Sir Accalon's hand found the weak points in Arthur's harness and drew blood; but however strong and sure the blows that Arthur gave in return, it seemed that they drew scarcely any blood at all. Then the truth began to wake in Arthur's mind; the sword in his hand was not Excalibur. There was no potency, no battle-power in it, and no protection in the scabbard at his side; and seeing the ground growing red with blood, and none of it his adversary's, he began to be sure that the other knight wielded the true Excalibur. But there was nothing he could do save fight his best with the sword he held. So he struggled on, growing weaker from loss of blood. At last, far spent, he drew back a way, to fetch his breath and find fighting ground that was not yet blood-slippery under foot; and Sir Accalon leapt after him, shouting, "Nay, Sir Knight, this is no time to be taking your rest!"

Then in a sudden fury of near despair, Arthur stumbled to meet him, and by chance rather than skill, for he was past skill, smote him a side-cut on the helmet that almost brought him to the ground; but with the force of the blow Arthur's blade flew into a score of flashing sherds; and for the second time in his life he was left holding only a useless hilt.

Then Sir Accalon pulled off, and said, "You are unarmed and have lost much blood, and I am loath to kill you. Therefore yield now to my mercy."

"Nay!" cried Arthur. "That I may not, for I have vowed to do battle while the life is yet in me, and I had sooner die a hundred deaths with honour than live without it! If you slay me weaponless, to you is the shame!"

"I will accept the shame," said Accalon, and dealt him another mighty stroke; but Arthur took it on his shield, and stumbling forward dashed the heavy sword-hilt into his opponent's vizor with such desperate force that it sent him lurching three steps back.

Now among the gaily coloured crowd that thronged the edge of the field stood a lady who had not appeared until the fighting was well started, and no one had seen her come. The Lady Nimue, she who had given Arthur his sword, she who had left Merlin sleeping under his hawthorn tree, was late upon the scene, for time means little to the Lordly Ones, but she had known that the young King was in sore danger from his witch-sister that day, and she had come before it was too late.

And as Sir Accalon steadied himself and raised his sword for another blow, she made the smallest of flicking movements with the blade of grass that she was turning between her fingers, and the true Excalibur seemed to twist from the hand that held it, and landed at Arthur's feet.

Arthur flung aside the useless hilt and swooped upon it, and sprang back out of touch, with his own sword in his hand once more. "You have been away from me too long," he said, "and sore damage have you done me!" And then, seeing the scabbard still hanging at Sir Accalon's side, Arthur flung away his shield, and plunged forward under the other's guard, and grasping it, dragged it free, bursting straps and buckles, and hurled it far behind him.

Then he leapt upon Sir Accalon and dealt him such a blow on the head that he crashed to the ground, the red life-blood bursting from his mouth and nose and ears.

Arthur stood over him with sword upraised. "Now it is for me to slay you, unless you cry my mercy."

"Slay me then," groaned Sir Accalon, "I never fought with a better knight, and I see that God is with you. But I swore to do battle with you to the uttermost, and therefore I cannot cry your mercy."

And it seemed to Arthur that he knew the voice, which he had

not had time to do before. And he lowered his blade and said, "You are a valiant knight. Of what name and country are you?" "I am of King Arthur's court, a knight of the Round Table, and my name is Accalon of Gaul."

Then grief and dismay rose in Arthur, and he remembered the magic of last night's ship and the morning's awakening, and asked, "Ah, Sir Accalon, how did you come by Excalibur?"

"I had it from Morgan La Fay, whom I have loved above all else these many years. This morning she sent it to me, bidding me fight to the death for her sake against a knight who should this day come against me." He groaned again with the pain of his desperate hurts. "But tell me, who are you whom she would have had me slay?"

"Oh, Accalon," said Arthur, "I am your King."

Then Accalon cried out, for grief at what his lady would have done more than for any other thing. "Fair, sweet lord, now I cry your mercy, for we are both betrayed, and I did not know you."

"How should you?" said Arthur. "Alas, all this is the doing of my sister. Again and again Merlin warned me against her, telling me what she was, and what she would seek to do; but still I trusted her and delighted to have her about my court. But never again," said Arthur in a weeping voice, "never again."

Then all the people gathered about the field came and knelt to the High King, crying his mercy also; and Arthur gave it to them, and summoned together Sir Damas and Sir Ontzlake, and made judgement between them, that Sir Damas should give over to his brother all the manors and estates that were his by inheritance, but that Sir Ontzlake should pay fee for them with the yearly gift of a palfrey. "For that," said Arthur in contempt, "is a more fitting steed than a warhorse for such as you, Sir Damas the Valiant!" And he laid upon Sir Damas also that he should return to the twenty knights their weapons and armour and let them go free, and never again lay hand upon stray knights who came by following their own adventures.

And Sir Ontzlake he bade come to him presently at court.

Then, learning that there was an abbey of nuns nearby, he mounted, and with Sir Accalon drooping in the saddle beside him, he rode that way.

At the abbey they rested, and their wounds were tended. But from that last great blow dealt by Excalibur, Sir Accalon had lost so much blood that on the third day he died. Arthur recovered well and quickly, and in cold rage he had his friend's body laid on a horse-bier, and summoned six knights from Sir Damas's castle, and said, "Now bear this to my sister, Queen Morgan La Fay, and tell her that I send it to her for a gift. And tell her also that I have my sword Excalibur again."

Meanwhile, at Camelot, Morgan La Fay, knowing nothing of what had passed, thought that Arthur must by now be dead; and once she was wedded to Sir Accalon of Gaul they could seize the throne of Britain between them as she had always had it in her dark mind to do. And seeing King Uriens asleep on their bed, she decided that the time had come for the next thing that must be done. So she called to her softly one of her maidens, and said, "Go, fetch me the King's sword."

And the maiden looked into her face and saw the smile upon it and the darkly glittering eyes, and cried out in horror, "Madam, no! No, I beg of you! If you slay your lord, you will never escape!"

"That is not a thing you need to trouble for," said the Queen. "This is the day and the time I chose long since. Go now and fetch the sword."

But the damsel fled to Sir Uwaine, the Queen's son, who was newly made a knight of the Round Table, and begged him, "Come quickly to my lady your mother, for she is set upon slaying the King your father, and has sent me to fetch his sword that she may do it while he sleeps in his bed!"

"Go swiftly and do as she bids you," said Sir Uwaine. "I will see to the rest."

So in a little while the damsel brought the sword and gave it with shaking hands into the steady hands her mistress held out

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FROM: Serena W. Stanford *Serena W. Stanford*
AAVP, Graduate Studies & Research

DATE: March 14, 1997

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"What Effect Does Drawing During Read Aloud
have on English Language Development"

This approval is contingent upon the subjects participating in your research project being appropriately protected from risk. This includes the protection of the anonymity of the subjects' identity when they participate in your research project, and with regard to any and all data that may be collected from the subjects. The Board's approval includes continued monitoring of your research by the Board to assure that the subjects are being adequately and properly protected from such risks. If at any time a subject becomes injured or complains of injury, you must notify Serena Stanford, Ph.D., immediately. Injury includes but is not limited to bodily harm, psychological trauma and release of potentially damaging personal information.

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