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# ❧ FIT I ❧

## PRE-GRAMMAR | Preparation

*Prepare to think about the novel and its Central One Idea by drawing upon your prior knowledge, experience, or interests.*

1. Imagine being challenged to go on an arduous adventure. Where would you go if you had the opportunity?
2. Now imagine that your adventure has an important moral purpose, such as putting your own life at risk in place of a friend or a relative. Describe how this might change your adventure or what it might entail.

## GRAMMAR | Presentation

*Discover essential facts, elements, and features of the poem through the Reading Notes, Words to Be Defined, and Comprehension Questions.*

### READING NOTES

1. (**Stanzas 1-2**) – The first two stanzas feature a traditional medieval literary device of placing the story to come in actual history. However, the "history" is more a collection of legends, developed gradually since the classical period, which traces English origins to heroic classical times.<sup>1</sup>
  - **Troy** (1.1) – the classical city in Macedonia, and site of the Trojan War with Greece
  - **Aeneas** (1.3-5) – The Trojan hero in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Referred to here as the "treacherous trickster," which is based on a story from pseudo-classical writings in the early medieval period that tells of the treachery of Antenor and Aeneas at the fall of Troy.

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[1] Brian Stone, trans. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, second edition (London: Penguin Books, 1974), 163.

- **Romulus, Ticius, and Longbeard** (1.8, 11, 12) – legendary ancestors who gave their names to Rome, Tuscany, and Lombardy
- **Brutus** (1.13-15) – According to medieval historians Geoffrey of Monmouth and Nennius, Brutus was the grandson or great-grandson of Aeneas. Brutus landed at Totnes and then named the island Britain from his own name, and his fellow travelers he called Britons.<sup>2</sup>

"And far over the French flood Felix Brutus  
On many spacious slopes set Britain with joy  
And grace" (1.13-15)

2. **Arthur** – The legendary king of the Knights of the Round Table at Camelot in Arthurian romance. Historically, he was possibly a fifth- or sixth-century British general who fought against the Saxons and became a hero – and then during the Middle Ages gradually attracted a range of mythical and magical exploits appropriate to a national hero.<sup>3</sup> Nennius, in his *Historia Britonum* (eighth century), was mainly responsible for making Arthur a historical figure. Geoffrey of Monmouth, in his mostly fictitious *Historia Regum Britanniae* (twelfth century), was responsible for creating the legendary Arthur and other national king-heroes.<sup>4</sup>
3. **Camelot** – The location of King Arthur's court. Many parts of England and Wales claim to be the original location of Camelot, which suggests that it is more legend than factual.
4. **Round Table** – A large round table created for the knights of King Arthur's court, designed to avoid seating according to rank. In some accounts, Merlin is credited with making the Round Table.
5. **Guinevere** – King Arthur's beautiful wife and queen
6. **lay** (2.11) – a short lyric or narrative poem intended to be recited or sung by a minstrel
7. **Christmastide** (3.1) – the feasting and celebration of Christmas

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[2] *Ibid.*, 164.

[3] *Ibid.*, 153.

[4] *Ibid.*, 163.

## WORDS TO BE DEFINED

Definitions Bank		
accessories	denying;	polished
boasts	contradicting	prominent;
ceased	excelled	distinguished
to condescend; to lower oneself	following	raised platform
courageous	food and drink	respite; delay of sentence
discouraged	full of spirit	sharply
curt; snippy	gleaming	splendid; stately
delightful	made widely known	train of attendants
demeanor	merriment	
	outer garment	

1. A happening **eminent** among Arthur's adventures (2.10)
2. Jousted in **jollity** these gentle knights (3.6)
3. For lords and their ladies, **delectable** joy (3.13)
4. That day double on the **dais** were the diners served (4.2)
5. At every fine feast among his free **retinue** (5.17)
6. Erect stood the strong King, stately of **mien** (6.1)
7. For barely had the blast of trump **abated** one minute (7.5)
8. Who in height **outstripped** all earthly men (7.8)
9. And verily his **vesture** was all vivid green (8.11)
10. In ravishing array on the rich **accoutrements** (8.13)
11. **Mettlesome** in might (8.26)
12. And **brusque** with bit and rein (8.27)
13. Yes, garbed all in green was the **gallant** rider (9.1)
14. Many bright golden bells, **burnished** and ringing (9.17)
15. **Acutely** honed for cutting, as keenest razors are (10.11)
16. So even the **doughty** were daunted and dared not reply (11.10)
17. Please **deign** to dismount and dwell with us (12.5)

6. How is Guinevere described? Include a phrase or line from the text in your answer.
7. What important announcement did Arthur make that initiates the **plot**?
8. Was this unusual for Arthur to make this announcement?
9. Describe the Green Knight physically (but not what he was wearing because that is the next question). Include in your description at least seven details.
10. Describe some of the Green Knight's attire. Include in your description at least five items.
11. What does the Green Knight say about Arthur's court? Include a phrase or line from the text in your answer.
12. The fact that he had no hauberk, helmet, or combat armor reveals what about his **purpose**?
13. What challenge does the Green Knight present to Arthur's court?
14. What are the two reasons that Arthur responded to the Green Knight's challenge himself?

## LOGIC | Dialectic

*Reason with the facts, elements, and features of the poem;  
sort, arrange, compare, and connect ideas – and begin  
to uncover and determine the Central One Idea.*

### SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

May be verbally discussed or answered in written form in your Literature Notebook.

1. What features or aspects of the Green Knight suggest that he is an enchanter or something supernatural?
2. Did members of King Arthur's court also perceive him as something supernatural? Quote a line or two from the text which reveals their perception of him.

# RHETORIC | Expression

*Express in your own words the Central  
One Idea with supporting points.*

## RHETORICAL EXPRESSION:

To be answered in your Literature Notebook in preparation for your essay.

1. In a few sentences, briefly **summarize** the **plot** of Fit I.
2. Write the **Central One Idea** of Fit I in a precise, eloquent sentence.
3. List three or four points that **support** your determination of the Central One Idea.
4. Write a **lead** (1-2 sentences) that grabs the reader's attention—such as a *quote, question, startling fact or statistic, scenario, piece of dialogue*, etc.
5. Write an **amplification/importance** (1-2 sentences) that explains why your thesis is important in a larger or more universal sense.

◆ **Central Quote:** *Choose a quote from anywhere in Fit I that you think best embodies the Central One Idea and copy it down.*

① **Write the Central One Idea as expressed by the teacher.**

## ESSAY OPTION

Choose a topic below and respond with a 3-5 paragraph essay that includes an Introduction with a clear thesis; a Body with organized, logical, and specific support of the thesis; and a Conclusion with an amplification of the thesis/support.

The essay should feature appropriate tone, voice, and point of view; correct grammar, usage, and mechanics; a variety of sentence structures enhanced by subordination and parallelism; a balance of general and specific detail; and enhanced rhetorical effect through transition words, appropriate diction, strong verbs, descriptive adjectives, and other rhetorical devices.