“A little while after his birth at dark Tintagel, Uther, who hearkened to my words, gave the child into my care, and I bore him to Avalon, the Land of Mystery.”

Reading Notes

Camelot: capital of Arthur’s kingdom; modern-day Winchester, England
Uther Pendragon: king of Briton; father of Arthur
Igrayne: mother of Arthur; unfaithful wife of Gorlois
Avalon: Land of Mystery; place where Merlin took Arthur as an infant
Excalibur: Arthur’s sword with magical scabbard
Logres (Lów-gris): the name given to the land over which Arthur ruled
King Pellinore: killed knights for traveling on a road; nearly killed Arthur, and then began to chase the “Questing Beast”
Britons: a Celtic people inhabiting Britain before the time of the Roman invasion
Saxons: Germanic tribe that invaded Britain in the 5th and 6th centuries

Vocabulary
Write the meaning of each bold word or phrase.

1. set a rich pavilion over it __________________________________________________________
2. bowing his head in reverence ______________________________________________________
3. did homage to Arthur ________________________________________________________________

Comprehension Questions
Answer the following in complete sentences.

1. Describe the state of Britain just before King Arthur claims the throne. ____________________________

2. Where does Merlin take the baby Arthur, and what gifts does he receive there?________________________

3. What is Arthur’s first goal as king? ________________________________________________________

4. What is King Pellinore doing that causes a problem?___________________________________________
5. How does Arthur come to possess Excalibur?

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

6. Why is Arthur's scabbard worth more than his sword?

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

Discussion Questions

1. Who said the quotation? _______________________ To whom? _________________________

2. Look at the picture on the page preceding Chapter 1 in your book. Who is in the picture? What castle is in the background? What is happening?

3. If you had to divide this chapter into two different parts, where would you divide it, and why?

Enrichment

1. Scholars debate the historicity of King Arthur. It is not implausible that a warlord led a successful uprising against barbarian settlers around 500 A.D. Perhaps that man was Arthur. There is no evidence that disproves such a thesis. Think of what evidence would convince you that the legends of Arthur are true or false. Write a paragraph explaining what such evidence would look like.

_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Write a summary of Arthur and Merlin’s relationship. Why is it significant?

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________