



## STUDENT MATERIALS

## LITERARY INTRODUCTION

Suppose that you have been shipwrecked on a desert island with a few hundred others, and the only books you have are the Bible, a book on geometry, and *The Adventures of Winnie the Pooh*? If you were to build a community based on these books, what would it be like? Would future island-dwellers who grew up reading *Winnie the Pooh* believe that there are talking animals in the country from which their ancestors came? Would they ever discover algebra or astronomy? Might they write stories in which Christopher Robin is associated with God and Pooh represents mankind?

After the fall of the Roman Empire, Europeans were like that shipwrecked group of refugees. Few of them had the ability to read or write at all, but men treasured the few precious volumes that survived, even though they were quite a strange mixture of stories and beliefs—much stranger than *Winnie the Pooh* mixed with *Narnia*. From the Bible and the growing Christian faith, medieval men learned of God, angels, and demons. From the influence of their ancestors—the German, Gaul, Celtic, Viking, and other European peoples—they learned about many other gods and supernatural beings such as dwarves, giants, and fairies. From the stories of Greece and Rome came philosophy and tales of goddesses like Natura and Fortuna. Adventure, unpredictability, warfare, heroes, princes, warriors, treacherous ladies, and noble-hearted princesses were all part of their stories. Who could hope to make sense of such a mess?

The medieval Christian's one great comfort was the belief that all other supernatural beings who might or might not exist were firmly subject to God and under His authority. All these things shaped medieval stories, in which God and fairies were both firmly believed, and people expected enchantments as much as they hoped for miracles. Out of this fantastical mixture of beliefs was born the story of King Arthur and his knights, which you will begin this week.

**Basic Instructions for Students**

You may only need to fill out the worksheet section. Ask your teacher before moving to Preparation for Discussion. You should also ask your teacher before working on sections, readings, or exercises marked **OPTIONAL**, if there are any.

In the Preparation for Discussion section, you will find activities of two kinds: written exercises and thinking questions. The written exercises, obviously, require you to give your best written answers. Feel free to use an extra piece of paper or a computer document to write these out. Your teacher may also require you to write answers to thinking questions, but mostly what is required for thinking questions is that you think about them,<sup>1</sup> and maybe write a few notes to yourself about them so that you will remember your thoughts for class.

As you work on these activities, remember that you should include direct quotes and page number references from the book (or ebook location number) as much as you can when writing answers. If you are simply listing the characters or summarizing the plot for a story, then direct quotes and page numbers are unnecessary, but if you are giving an answer that comes from any one page or could be explained in the wording that the book itself uses, be sure to include those. This will teach you how to do work that is well-grounded in the text, and will also be useful for quick reference in class.

**Reading**

- The Sword and the Circle*, by Rosemary Sutcliff, p. 9-84 (Week 1 of 2)
- Read or Review the following as needed from *The Literary Toolbox*
  - NOTE: You can most easily find these by searching for the article titles on the *Literary Toolbox* page.
  - “Biblical Poetics: A Theory of Language and Literature” (including both sub-sections)
  - In “Worldview, Purposes, and Literature”: “Worldviews and the Correspondence Theory of Truth”
  - In “Frameworks” “Mode: A Definition” through “Realistic and Romantic Modes” under “Modes”
  - In “Content”: “Reality, Morality, and Values”
- Student Supplement: Influences on the Medieval Worldview



## Defining Terms

Your teacher may ask you to write out vocabulary flashcards for the following new words this week:

- Artistry: The selection and arrangement of elements in such a way that the artist's purposes for the whole are fulfilled.
- Literature: The portrayal and interpretation of reality, in a verbal artistic form for a purpose.
- Mode: A speaker's attitude towards what he is speaking.
- Morality: Beliefs about what is right and wrong.
- Realistic Mode: Emphasizes the horizontal and natural elements of reality.
- Reality: Beliefs about what is real and true, or not real and not true.
- Romantic Mode: Emphasizes the vertical and supernatural elements of reality.
- Values: Beliefs about what is valuable, or not, and to what degree.
- Worldview: A person's view of the world, consisting of the set of beliefs on which he bases his life.

## WORKSHEET

1. This week you learned the definition for a "worldview" as well as the definitions for "reality," "morality," and "values." The stories of King Arthur reflect the mixing of ancient polytheistic and biblical worldviews that you read about in the supplement this week. Try to find examples of beliefs from each of these two worldviews in *The Sword and the Circle*. Some sample answers have been included, but you should find at least six examples of your own. Remember to include page numbers just as you see done in the samples:
  - Examples of Biblical Worldview Beliefs:
    - Reality:
      - Sample: Sir Accalon says, "I see that God is with you" (77), which shows that in this story there is some belief in the reality of God.*
      - Your Example:
    - Morality:
      - Sample: It is right for rulers to serve God, as when Arthur says "I will serve God and the realm of Britain with the best that is in me" (29).*
      - Your Example:
    - Values:
      - Sample: The Knights of the Round Table make an oath to "keep faith" with God, showing that to them it is valuable to have a faithful relationship with God (66).*
      - Your Example:
  - Examples of Ancient Polytheistic Worldview Beliefs:
    - Reality:
      - Sample: In the beginning of the story, Vortigern tries to make a human sacrifice of Merlin to his gods (11). This shows that in the story the old gods are considered real.*
      - Your Example:
    - Morality:
      - Sample: Merlin does not describe Utha's adulterous love for the married Igraine (17-18) as wrong. Instead of trying to stop Utha, Merlin helps him to deceive Igraine. Merlin seems to feel that this is simply part of the will of God, since Arthur is "God's choice" for king (31).*
      - Your Example:
    - Values:
      - Sample: When Vortigern decides to sacrifice Merlin to the gods so that his fortress will be strong, he shows that he believes having the favor of the gods is valuable (11-12).*
      - Your Example:



2. A mode is a *speaker's attitude towards what he is speaking*. It is made up of things like mood, tone, manner of talking, and what the speaker chooses to emphasize. This week you learned in the *Literary Toolbox* about two modes that focus on what a speaker chooses to emphasize: the realistic and romantic modes.<sup>1</sup>
- Realistic Mode: A mode that *emphasizes the horizontal and natural elements of reality*.
    - The realistic mode might be described as horizontal, dealing with people on earth and their relationships.
    - The realistic mode tends to describe the natural earthly realm as it usually seems to our earthly senses, in concrete, vivid, specific detail.
    - Realism concentrates on the horizontal and the earthly. It does not tend to focus on the reality, power, influence, and (or) significance of the supernatural realm as it touches life (including human life) on earth.
    - It also tends to portray people from the middle or lower classes and shows them as they ordinarily are, with typical strengths and weaknesses.
    - It emphasizes history, community (especially social issues), and human thoughts, feelings, and motivations.
  - Romantic Mode: A mode that *emphasizes the vertical and supernatural elements of reality*.
    - The romantic mode is called vertical in that it emphasizes man's interactions with the supernatural.
    - Tends to use a lavish, emotionally intense, and lyrical descriptive style, often rich with imagery
    - It tends to focus on supernatural beings and events and on their effects on earthly people and events.
    - Tends to portray people from the upper classes and shows them with extraordinary strengths and (or) weaknesses.
    - Tends to emphasize heroism, redemption, clear presentations of good and evil, and romantic love.
  - In at least two sentences and not more than four sentences, explain whether you think *The Sword and the Circle* is written more in the realistic or romantic mode, and why. Be sure to name the characteristics of either mode that you see in this story!

## PREPARATION FOR DISCUSSION

3. Thinking Question: In the Literary Introduction, you learned about how the medieval world was shaped by at least three different worldview beliefs that were strongly held by different cultures: 1) Christians, 2) Non-Christian European peoples, such as the Celts, Saxons, Welsh, Danes, Gauls, etc., and 3) Ancient Greeks and Romans. After reading through this week's Student Supplement, try to give examples of these different cultures in *The Sword and the Circle*. The last one has already been done for you as an example.
- Christian:
  - Non-Christian Europeans:
  - Ancient Greeks and Romans: *Utha and Ambrosius are descended from Constantine, a Roman ruler (15). This means that Arthur's ancestors are Romans (37).*
4. Written Exercise: The study of artistry means trying to find out what literary elements the author has chosen and arranged. Below is an example from one episode in *The Sword and the Circle*: the story of Merlin's encounter with Vortigern over the red and white dragons (see p. 9-15):
- Choice: What people, places, and things does the author choose for this story?
    - People: *Vortigern, his wise men, and Merlin*
    - Places: *The place where Vortigern wants to build his new palace*
    - Things: *The red dragon and the white dragon*
  - Arrangement: How does the author arrange the things he has chosen?  
*The writer arranges his story so that readers meet Vortigern first and find out how ruthless he is, then meet Merlin and find out how powerful he is, then finally learn from Merlin what will happen to Vortigern.*
- Try to decide what Sutcliff's purpose might have been in telling this episode about Vortigern and Merlin, which occurs before Arthur is born?
- To be pleasing or interesting:
  - To show readers something that the writer thinks is important:

<sup>1</sup> We are indebted for a few of the following observations to Leland Ryken in *Words of Delight* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992) 36-37.



## 5. Thinking Questions:

- What kind of worldview beliefs—about reality, morality, and (or) values—do you think the following passages show? (One of these has been answered for you as an example.)
  - “Merlin and the Archbishop” (23-24):
  - “The Lordly Ones Simply Are” (64): *In this section, Merlin says that the Lordly Ones are neither wicked nor good, but that they simply exist. This statement shows how people in the Middle Ages believed in other supernatural beings besides God who did not specifically fit into the moral biblical scheme of good and evil, but—they believed—nevertheless existed.*
  - “Mistaking the Actions of a Lordly One for the Actions of God” (77, 82):
- Do you have any concerns about the passages above, from a biblical perspective? If so, what bothers you?

## 6. Thinking Questions:

- According to the definition in the *Literary Toolbox*, is *The Sword and the Circle* literature?
- Why do you think we *study* literature at all? Why not just read it?



STUDENT SUPPLEMENT: INFLUENCES ON THE MEDIEVAL WORLDVIEW

		ANCIENT POLYTHEISTIC WORLDVIEWS	BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW
REALITY	THE SUPERNATURAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There are gods and goddesses who are much like human beings.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The gods are not holy; they may lie, murder, commit adultery, etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes the gods do good, acting with love, kindness, and wisdom. Other times they do evil and quarrel with one another.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The gods are sometimes kind towards man, but may also be careless of human life or even cruel.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The gods care much more about themselves than about mankind.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The gods are above mankind in that they are immortal and have great powers, either to punish or bless.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> None of the gods have absolute control over the others or over creation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nature and Fortune are considered goddesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God exists: He is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-sufficient, infinite, and yet personal.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God has no need of mankind to serve Him</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God is graciously inclined towards us in love, despite our wickedness (John 3:16, Ephesians 2:7, Luke 1:78-79, Acts 17:24-25).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God is absolutely good and without flaw.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God is perfectly holy and totally just. He hates injustice, evil, and sin, and holds mankind to the standard of His own nature (Deuteronomy 10:17, Exodus 34:6-7, Acts 17:25).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all the same Person. There is never any quarrel or hint of discord between them.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There are no multiple gods and God did not create any other gods: He is One.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God has all power to enforce His will. He needs nothing and judges all other “gods” without fear of being tricked or overcome (Psalm 135:6, Exodus 15:11, Deuteronomy 10:17, Matthew 10:29-30, Acts 17:25).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God not only tolerates no rivals but easily overcomes them. (Satan was never a real threat to Him.)</li> </ul>
	THE NATURAL WORLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The world began in chaos.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The world is a creation of the gods.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The gods generally do have power over their creations, though not absolute power.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God is the Creator, who gives life to all things that have it and spoke all creation into existence (Acts 17:28, Genesis 1-2).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nature is separate from God and is His creature, over which He has absolute and unlimited power.</li> </ul>
	MAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Human beings are created by the gods. They exist in order to serve the gods, housing and feeding them, and removing any need for the gods to work.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Humans are mortal.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Man is seriously flawed, but there is no idea of him having fallen from an original perfect state.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Humans can never be sure whether the gods are pleased with them.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Women were created separately from men and do not have the same nature; they are at best a pleasure and comfort to men, at worst a curse.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Although men do evil things, there is much honor, courage, loyalty, and friendship among them, making them worthy of glory.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God created man specially in His own image from the dust of the earth for a specific purpose: to glorify and enjoy God forever.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Human beings were created good, but sinned against God and fell. God gave man a clear commandment, but man disobeyed God in the garden of Eden.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> As a result, mankind fell from his created state and is now subject to death and born with a sin nature that separates him from God.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Each person is born with a sin nature and thus a rebellious, wicked hatred for his Creator.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Human beings live and die once. After death, the righteous who have trusted in Christ will enjoy eternity in heaven; the unrighteous will suffer eternity in hell.</li> </ul>
	SALVATION	<p>When a person dies, he dies. That is all, unless perhaps the gods grant him immortality (which almost never happens), or he can earn or win it for himself. There is no god who lays down his life to redeem mankind as a whole, or even individual men.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God gives salvation, restoring people to Himself through the work of Christ.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> At death, each person faces judgment. Based on whether or not he has received God’s grace through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, a person will either spend eternity enjoying and glorifying God in heaven or experiencing God’s wrath in hell.</li> </ul>



	ANCIENT POLYTHEISTIC WORLDVIEWS	BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW
MORALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is a double standard at work: The gods can act as they choose without punishment and often do wrong. But, men must act virtuously if they wish to escape punishment.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There seem to be three authorities for right and wrong: conscience, divine decree, and tradition.                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conscience: Each man knows in his heart that some things are right and others wrong, like murder or adultery.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Divine decree: The gods or fates declare what pleases them, and what pleases them is either “right” or at least “not wrong,” simply because they decree it, even if it would ordinarily be considered wrong.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tradition: It is right because ancestors did it that way, such as the traditional virtue of showing hospitality to strangers, honoring one’s parents, and protecting one’s friends.</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wrongdoing consists of going against any of these three authorities and may be punished by the gods, who generally approve of right and wrong as defined by conscience and tradition. It must be atoned for through sacrifice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> It is good that God alone should be worshiped.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God’s character is the standard of right and wrong. His example and law tell us what is good or bad to do, and He never breaks the laws that He himself has made. What is good and evil are measured according to God’s standards.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sin—which is seeking to attain good or avoid evil apart from God—is foremost an offense against the holy God, and must always be punished.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Good is what pleases God, and He has made it known by writing it on our consciences (Romans 1) and by giving us His Word.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ultimately, however, no one can please God apart from Christ (Romans 8:8).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Christ is the sacrifice for our sins; He took the punishment we deserve, and through faith in Him, we are pure in God’s sight and given power to walk in increasing holiness.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Physical enjoyments are good if they are rightly oriented toward God.</li> </ul>
VALUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The gods’ favor in this life is valuable.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Triumphant over obstacles that the gods throw into one’s path is valuable.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Winning glory and (if possible) immortality is extremely valuable.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Skill in war and in ruling is valuable.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Virtues such as justice and honor are precious.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Most valuable things can be found in this life: honor, friendship, hospitality, courage, a happy life at home, wealth, and glory that remains to your name on earth after you have died. NOTE: Friendship is seen as more valuable than romantic love.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Favor with the gods is also greatly valuable; if you win extreme favor, you may possibly be granted immortality, which is of the greatest value (though only a handful attain it).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> God Himself is of supreme value, and man’s greatest good is to glorify and enjoy Him forever.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Each individual person has great value because every human is made in the image of God.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wealth, luxury, and physical pleasures have some value, since God made them, but of greater value is treasure in heaven, since all who are in Christ will live with Him forever.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Knowing the truth is valuable, and it is only through personally knowing Christ the Truth that salvation is possible.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Justice, mercy, humility, love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are all valuable to Christians.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Relationships, communication and language, and distinctions between truth and lies, good and evil, valuable and not valuable, are all important.</li> </ul>



## STUDENT MATERIALS

### LITERARY INTRODUCTION

This week, you will learn about the term “Genre,” which means a type of literature. There are three main kinds of fictional literature: drama (play scripts), poems, and stories. So far you have only read stories, but did you know that stories can be written as poems (called “Narrative” or “Storytelling” Poems), and that medieval people wrote most of their stories in poetry? In fact, most of the stories that you read about Arthur this week were originally poems, some of them quite beautiful. For example, this week’s story of “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight” comes from a narrative poem by the same name that is considered one of the world’s most beautiful medieval poems.

Why were these stories originally written as poems? In the Middle Ages, where there were no televisions and few written things, a lot of stories were handed down as poetry so that they would be easier to memorize and more interesting to hear. People would recite them to each other for fun. The medieval people who did know how to write were good at making poetry, and they used special literary tools to make their poems even more interesting. So, as you read this week, remember that many of these stories have been translated from English poetry into English prose stories!

### Reading

- The Sword and the Circle*, by Rosemary Sutcliff, p. 85-148 (Week 2 of 2)
- Read or Review the following as needed from *The Literary Toolbox*
  - “Believers and Unbiblical Literature” (including both sub-sections)
  - “How Imaginative Literature Works” (including all four sub-sections)
  - In “The Study of Literature”: “Look to Learn and Like” through “Our Major Activities and Goals”
  - In “Frameworks”: “Genre: A Definition” through “The Story”
  - In “Characters”: “Character: A Definition”
  - In “Plot”: “Plot: A Definition”
  - In Settings: “Setting: A Definition” through “Cultural Settings”
  - In “Content”:
    - “Content: A Definition” through “Topic and Theme”
    - “Topic, Theme, and Worldviews in Stories”

### Defining Terms

Your teacher may ask you to write out vocabulary flashcards for the following new words this week:

- Character: A personality, whether human or non-human, in a story.
- Content: Meaningful information expressed in literature.
- Form: The artistic forms through which content is embodied, expressed, and enhanced in literature.
- Form Follows Function: An author chooses and arranges literary forms to function in support of his artistic work.
- Genre: A type of literature.
- Meaning through Form: The audience receives meaning through artistic forms chosen to embody and convey it.
- Plot: The arrangement of events in a story such that they have a beginning, middle, and end (from Aristotle’s *Poetics*).
- Setting: A location or situation in time, space, and culture that forms the background for a work of literature.
- Story: A piece of literature that has at least one character, plot, and setting, and uses narrative as its primary medium of expression.
- Theme: A message or meaning in literature.
- Topic: A subject(s) addressed in literature.



## WORKSHEET

1. This week you learned that a story must include character, plot, and setting. Below is an example of the characters, plot, and setting in this week's "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight." Write down what you think are the characters, plot, and setting for "Beaumains, the Kitchen Knight":

"Sir Gawain and the Green Knight"

- Characters: *King Arthur, Sir Gawain, the Green Knight, and the Green Knight's Lady.*
- Plot: *Sir Gawain accepts a challenge from a Green Knight that it seems he cannot lose but soon finds himself oath-bound to die. While on his way to keep his deadly appointment, Sir Gawain meets the Green Knight (in disguise) and his lady. They test Sir Gawain and, finding him mostly faithful to his code of knighthood, spare his life.*
- Setting: *Camelot, the Green Chapel, the home of the Green Knight, England, the Middle Ages.*

"Beaumains, the Kitchen Knight"

- Characters:
- Plot:
- Setting:

2. Consider the story summary and the sample topics and themes below for *The Story of the Three Little Pigs*:

Story Summary: Three little pigs, who are brothers, each build a house. Two of the pigs make foolish experiments in living: one builds his house out of straw, and the other out of sticks. As a result, the Big Bad Wolf is easily able to knock over their houses, and the Wolf eats up each of the two little pigs. By contrast, the third little pig makes a wise experiment in living: at a cost of extra time and effort, he builds his house out of bricks. When the Big Bad Wolf comes, the brick house stands strong and the third little pig is safe.

- Topic: *It is correct to say "this story is about three little pigs and the houses they build, and what happens when the Big Bad Wolf comes," or to say "this story is about foolishness and wisdom."*  
NOTE: The first way of describing the topic helps us to understand the plot of the story, while the second way begins to help us identify themes. In our studies, we will mostly use the second way.
- Themes:
  - "It is foolish to build and trust yourself to defenses that cannot truly protect you from danger, but it is wise to build and to trust defenses that are truly strong."*
  - "It is wiser to think ahead, plan, and work hard for a safer home, rather than to take the short-sighted, easy, and foolish approach to making a home."*  
NOTE: As you see in the sample answer above, there can be more than one way of describing one theme, or two similar themes.

Based on what you learned about content this week in the *Literary Toolbox*, try to write down theme(s) for at least two of the following topics in *The Sword and the Circle*. Because this is a more complex story, we have helped you by writing down some of the topics. Your job is to decide what you think Rosemary Sutcliff is saying about each of these topics and write down some themes. Remember that a theme cannot be single word or a phrase: it should be a complete sentence that expresses the author's comment on a given subject, like the theme for *The Story of the Three Little Pigs*. One has been done for you as an example, and for each topic we have provided some page numbers where the topic is discussed:

- Knighthood
  - Fighting in a Just Cause/Justice/Fairness (44, 60-61, 66, 89):
  - Honor (55, 76):
  - Courage (41, 98):
  - Showing Mercy (55, 57, 92, 100-101):
  - Keeping Faith with God (66):
  - Taking Adventures (72):
  - Loving Another Man's Wife (122):
  - Serving and Protecting Ladies (53, 55, 62, 65): *A true knight serves and protects all ladies who are in distress, and if he does not, or worse, if he harms a lady needlessly, it is to his everlasting shame (65).*





- Kingship (32):
- Treachery to Friends and Family (36-37, 79-82):
- The Lordly Ones (23-24, 37, 64, 77, 82): *Beings who are “neither good nor evil” exist and influence the lives of men on earth, sometimes in such a way that their actions are mistaken for those of God. They have wisdom and power, and it is not wrong to accept their help or seek their advice, even though they have no explicit allegiance to Christ.*

#### PREPARATION FOR DISCUSSION

3. Thinking Questions: Do you agree with any of the themes in *The Sword and the Circle*? If so, which ones, and why?
4. Thinking Question: This week you learned about Meaning through Form and Form Follows Function:
  - Meaning through Form: This principle tells us that when an author is trying to communicate his beliefs about what is real, right, wrong, and (or) valuable, he does it by embodying his meaning in particular forms such as characters, settings, and plot.
  - Form Follows Function: This principle tells us that an author will always pick out and arrange such characters, settings, and things that happen in the plot, so that he can communicate what he wants to say.

Could any of the exercises you did last week or this week serve as examples of these principles? If so, how so?
5. Thinking Question: This week you read about literature written by unbiblical authors, and about how we can value it even while disagreeing with the worldviews in it. Consider the following questions and be prepared to offer your thoughts in class.
  - Why would we choose to study a story that shows polytheistic beliefs tangled together with biblical beliefs?
  - Do these stories also offer us any hints of common grace, or help us to develop discernment and strength in any way? If so, how so?
  - Do these stories in *The Sword and the Circle* give us a vicarious experience of the worldviews that came together to form medieval beliefs? If so, is that useful?
  - Are there ways in which you can be grateful for this book? If so, what are they?
6. Thinking Questions: This week you read in the *Literary Toolbox* about our three big goals for literature studies: understanding, evaluating, and enjoying. Consider the following questions about those three big goals and the story that you read on this week:
  - Did you notice that we took time this week to study and try to understand what is going on in *The Sword and the Circle*, and to evaluate its worldview from a biblical perspective?
  - Did you enjoy this week’s reading in *The Sword and the Circle* more or less than other stories that you have read, because we took extra time to understand and evaluate it?