

"Dress Like a Knight" Lesson Plan
Mark Twain Teachers' Workshop - Mark Twain Museum
July 23 - 27, 2007 – Hannibal, Missouri
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Novel: *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*

Summary: When Hank Morgan, an accidental time traveler found himself smack in the middle of King Arthur's kingdom/home of Camelot, he faced a number of difficulties. The first was that he was sent back in time over 1300 years. Gone were the niceties of 19th century America. The second problem was that he had not dressed for the occasion.

Grade Level: High School TMH (Trainably Mentally Handicapped (MR) through EMH (Educatably Mentally Handicapped (MR)
This lesson can be adapted to higher levels.

Name of Lesson: *A Knight on a Quest Has to Dress Like a Knight*

Time Frame for Lesson: Four or more days - Rule of Thumb:
Expect the lessons to take longer than you planned.

Background Information: At a tournament, Hank Morgan sat in a box with Sir Dinadan while Dinadan waited for his turn on the field. Dinadan's nerves were getting the best of him and so he began telling Hank the oldest joke in history. It was boring the first time it was told. It was even more boring now because Hank had heard it in Connecticut and now he was hearing it again. Hank had listened to Dinadan tell the joke umpteen times and could take it no longer. So when Dinadan took the field and was soundly whacked up the side of the head by Sir Gareth, Hank muttered a little prayer hoping that Sir Gareth would kill Sir Dinadan. The knight on the other end of Sir Gareth's gallantry, Sir Sagramour le Desirous, understood that Hank was wishing him dead. What a mess. Sagramour got well and let Hank know they had a score to settle when he, Sagramour, returned from his quest. Quests generally lasted three to four years. Hank was safe for a while. That is, until King Arthur decided Hank needed a quest of his own.

Literary/Language Arts Focus: comfortable, uncomfortable, light, heavy, appropriate

State Standards: Alternative Assessment

Reading State Goals:

- API 1.1 - Demonstrate understanding that spoken/signed words represent people, objects, or actions.
- API 1.4 Demonstrate understanding that pictures, symbols, signs, and objects have meaning.
- API 1.8 Demonstrate understanding that written words represent people, objects, or actions.
- API 1.10 Attend to oral reading of story from beginning to end.

API 1.16 Retell information from a story.
API 1.24 Sequence events from a story.

Assessment/Evaluation

When using Alternative Assessment goals, I typically rate student achievement on a 1 - 3 scale. The scoring page is quite easy to set up.

Lesson Name: I Receive My Quest Assignment

Exercise # 1 Minimal Effort ¹_____ Average Effort ²_____ Above-Average Effort ³_____

Exercise #2 Minimal Effort_____ Average Effort _____ Above-Average Effort _____

and so forth for a total of 12 exercises for first lesson

You just check off performance for each exercise and add up later.

Score for the Day: number of points earned _____ /36 possible points

Curriculum Connections:Life and Vocational Skills (appropriate dress);
Art, Reading & Writing (scrapbooks);

Vocabulary: Horse, knight, King Arthur, Hank, riding, chain mail, spurs, sword, gauntlets, helmet, breastplate, appropriate, tramps, tales, giants, princess, castle, knights

Materials: Novel -
Pictures of a knight in full armor
Free catalog of medieval armor www.medievalarmor.com
Full football uniform including shoes and helmet
Heavy paper and notebook for scrapbook
Copies of original illustrations from novel for each student:
P. 43, 88, 95, 97, 102.

Technology Support:

Internet jousting site: www.medievaljousting.com/index.htm
(This site is fantastic - color and variety - over the hill!)

Internet game: www.medievaljousting.com/JoustingGame/Game.htm

Movie Clip: [Young Frankenstein](#) - "Putting on the Ritz"

Internet jousting tournament site:
www.history.com/media.do?id=mc_jousting_broadband&action=clip

Digital camera

Content Objectives: Students will prepare a scrapbook of appropriate dress for both a knight and a football player.
Students will be able to find their city and England on a map.

Related Twain Quotes:

“It (armor) is troublesome to get into.” (p. 94)
“When I trotted, I rattled like a crate of dishes.” (p. 100)

LESSONS:

Day 1 **Brief Review of Last Week’s Set-up Lessons and reminder of why Hank Morgan was going on a quest.**

I RECEIVE MY QUEST ASSIGNMENT

| Time | Teacher Activity/Questions | Student Activity |
|---|--|--|
| 3-4 min. | Hook: Clip from movie, “The Wizard of Oz” –The movie scene just previous to and including the song: “We’re Off to See the Wizard” | Listen |
| 5 min. | What were the animals and the girl planning to do? Do you sometimes walk or skip to get from place to place? Why did the animals and girl want to visit the Wizard of Oz? Where do you suppose the Wizard lived? | Listen and respond |
| (Teacher may have to review parts of the clip to help students remember.) | | |
| 5-min. | At this point, teacher will review last week’s lessons | Listen |
| 10 min. | Discuss vocabulary and concepts needed to understand this excerpt: King Arthur, tramps, tales, giants, princess, castle, knights, quest. Students will be encouraged to share their knowledge about knights. | Listen and respond |
| 5 min. | Read aloud selected passages of Chapter 11, “A Yankee in Search of Adventures.” (The writing is far too complicated for students this level so teacher will have to choose what to read and what to relate. Abridged passage attached to plan.) | Listen |
| 7 min. | Ask students about what has happened so far. Questions should include: Who needed rescuing in this story? Where did the girl live? Can you describe the masters of the castle? How did Hank get the assignment to rescue the girl? What was Hank’s knight name? Look at the picture. P. 43 illustration Tap into students’ knowledge about castles and heros. | Listen and respond |
| 7 min. | Closure: Today, we have things we can use to get directions to a place we want to go. We can use an atlas, a GPS unit, or the Internet. Help students locate their hometown on a world map. Staff assists students as they draw pictures of the masters of the castle. | Listen, respond, and work on art project |

Day 2 If I Am a Knight, I Must Dress Like One, But Will I Be Comfortable?

| Time | Teacher Activity/Questions | Student Activity |
|-------------|--|-------------------------|
| 3-4 min. | Hook: Clip from movie, "Young Frankenstein" - Puttin' on the Ritz" the Ritz" | Listen |
| 5 min. | Ask students if they thought the monster was dressed appropriately. Did you notice what color his coat and pants were? What else was he wearing? Do you think black shoes match a black suit and a white shirt? What do you think was the neatest thing about the monster's outfit? (The clip may have to be shown a couple of times for students to notice specific details.) Appropriate dress. | Listen and respond |
| 10 min. | Discuss vocabulary: riding, chain mail, spurs, sword, gauntlets, helmet, breastplate, appropriate and concepts needed to help understand the excerpt covered in this lesson. Have pictures or actual armor to show students as you discuss the terms. Illustrations from pages 88, 95, 97, and 102. Students will be encouraged to share their knowledge about how knights had to dress when they were on a quest. | Listen and respond |
| 5-min. | Read excerpt from novel. Show illustrations from novel to explain the activities of Hank and Sandy. Review the two quotes: "Armor is troublesome to get into." "When I trotted, I rattled like a crate of dishes." | Listen |
| 7-min. | Discuss what had to happen for Hank to be completely ready to ride off on his quest. Show them step by step per the excerpt how the pieces had to be put on so the knight would be ready for battle. Hank became unbearably hot. What happened to all that water Lady Alisande poured down the neck of Hank's armor? | Listen and respond |
| 5-7 min. | Have two local football players bring their full uniforms into the classroom and put them on. Ask them to explain what each piece is supposed to protect. Ask them also: "Would you want to play in a football game without wearing all this protective gear?" | Listen and respond |
| 15-min. | Closure: Football players will help students try on full uniforms. Staff will take pictures of students & players for their scrap books. | Have fun |

Day 3 Jousting and Review

| Time | Teacher Activity/Questions | Student Activity |
|-------------|---|-------------------------|
| 3-4 min. | Briefly review information from last two days. Have students recite the "Quotes:" "Armor is troublesome to get into." "When I trotted, I rattled like a crate of dishes." | Listen and respond |
| 4-min. | Hook: Clip from History Channel explaining Jousting Tournaments www.history.com/media.do?id=mc_jousting_broadband&action=clip Note: Between mc_jousting and jousting_broadband – be aware of the underscore that disappears with address underscore. | Watch, listen, respond |

| | | |
|------------|--|---------------------|
| 5-7 min. | Look at the pictures we have. Do the knights in the clip look like the knights we have in our pictures? Freeze a scene on the clip in order that students can observe similarities and differences. | Watch & respond |
| 5-min. | Teacher will read both excerpts from our novel. "Did you enjoy reading about Hank's quest? What do you think was the hardest part of being a knight?" | Listen & respond |
| 20-30 min. | Preparing pages for scrapbook. With staff assistance, students will mount pictures of medieval knights and their equipment and pictures of them with football players, etc. Students will also include captions for each picture. Be sure to include the "Quotes" in the scrapbook. | Listen, work, write |

Day 4 **Tying up all the ends.**

| Time | Teacher Activity/Questions | Student Activity |
|--------------------|---|--|
| 2-3 min. | Teacher will review the lessons by doing a quick walk-through of the pictures and reciting the quotes used in the lessons. Students will be asked to share their favorite parts of what they learned. | Listen and respond |
| 10-minutes or more | Students will take the "Reader's Stool" and share their scrapbooks. Watch all or a portion of one of the many "King Arthur" movies. | Read, listen, and respond Watch and enjoy |

Note: Because TMH (MR) students generally have less prior knowledge to draw on, I wrote five lessons that I will present to my students before these lessons. If you would be interested in having those to use in your classroom, please feel free to contact me at coonsbillkitty@hotmail.com and I will send them to you.

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court
Abridgement of portions of Chapters 11 and 12

There never was such a country for wandering liars, and they were of both sexes (men and women). Hardly a month went by without one of these tramps arriving; and generally loaded with a tale about some princess or other wanting help to get her out of some far-away castle where she was held in captivity by a lawless scoundrel, usually a giant.

Now you would think that the first thing the king would do after listening to such a novelette from an entire stranger, would be to ask her for the locality of the castle, the best route to it, and so-on.

Well, one day when I was not around, one of these people came along—it was a **she** (a girl) this time—and she told a tale of the usual pattern. Her mistress was a captive in a vast

and gloomy castle, along with forty-four (44) other young and beautiful girls, pretty much all of them princesses. The masters of the castle were three huge brothers, each with four arms and one eye—the eye was right in the middle of the forehead.

Would you believe it?—the king and the whole Round Table - all the knights - were in raptures over this preposterous opportunity for adventure! Every knight begged for the chance to rescue this girl and the other princesses, but the king conferred it upon me! I didn't even ask for the adventure!!

Well, I was pretty upset about this assignment, but decided the best thing to do was send for the girl, and she came. I asked her name and she replied, "My name is Alisande." Later on, Hank changed her name to Sandy.

"Where is your castle?" I asked Lady Alisande. She replied, "It is easy to see from a distance. The castle is great and strong and sits in a far away country.

"How far?" I asked. "Exactly where is the castle? What's the direction from here? Do you have a map that we can look at and find your castle?"

"A map?" She puzzled out. "Is a map something you can boil in oil with onions and salt and then eat?"

I raised my voice a bit, "Don't you know what a map is? Oh, never mind. Run along, dear. Good-day! Clarence, my assistant, will show you to the door.

When Clarence came back from showing Alisande to door, he wondered why I had been asking Alisande all those questions. I blurted out, "Don't I want to find the castle?"

My adventure was all the talk, that day and that night. Everybody was good to me. They even gave me tips on how to stay healthy if I was wounded by fire-breathing dragons, but no one said I could stay at Camelot. I had to go on a quest.

Reread from yesterday: My adventure was all the talk, that day and that night. Everybody was good to me. They even gave me tips on how to stay healthy if I was wounded by fire-breathing dragons, but no one said I could stay at Camelot. I had to go on a quest.

Lesson 2 Continued (abridgement)

I was to have an early breakfast and start at dawn, for that was the usual way; but I had a terrible time with my armor, and this made me a little bit late. Armor is hard to get into and there are so many different pieces that have to be fastened on to each other.

1. You wrap a layer or two of blanket around your body. This is like wearing two pairs of insulated underwear-one on top of another. These blankets act like a pillow around the body and keep the cold armor off your body.

2. You put on your shirt with long sleeves. The shirt is made out of mail. When a knight takes off his shirt, it drops into a heap that looks like a fish net or a big pile of chain. This shirt is heavy and so uncomfortable.

3. You put on your flat-bottomed boots also covered by metal. You will also screw spurs onto the back of your boots.

4. You buckle your greaves on your legs, your cuisses on your thighs; then you buckle on your back plate and your breastplate.

5. After you get all that stuff on, you belt on your sword.

6. That is followed by your arm protectors and your gauntlets (long gloves).

7. Finally, you jam your helmet down over your head.

When it came time for me to get up on my horse, I couldn't lift my leg to the stirrup. A rig with a hook on it caught me on the back of my armor and sat me upon my saddle.

Lady Alisande climbed up behind me and off we rode out of Camelot on our way to find her castle - wherever that was.

In the early morning, my armor wasn't too bad to wear, but as the sun rose higher and higher in the sky, I began to be uncomfortable. Riding along in the bright sunlight, made me feel like I was sitting in an oven. I perspired (sweat a lot) and the blankets began to itch and I couldn't scratch where it itched.

When the horse moved slowly, there was no breeze. When the horse trotted along, I rattled like a crate of dishes and I didn't like that at all.

I wished that King Arthur had sent someone else on this journey. The weather was hot. A fly flew inside my helmet and bounced from nose to ear to eyebrows, to mouth. Ick! Sweat ran down my face. It was all too much bear.

I finally let Lady Alisande loosen my helmet and take it off. She ran to a nearby stream and filled it with water. I used the helmet like you might use a glass. I drank water until I was no longer thirsty. At this point, Lady Alisande used my helmet like a bucket. She poured helmetful after helmetful of the cool water into the neck of my armor. Aaaah, cool never felt so good. She continued to fetch and pour until I was well soaked, and thoroughly comfortable.