

Paper Topics for *Le Morte d'Arthur*

- In the introduction, Robert Graves writes, “The Round Table is Christian in name only.” Defend or disprove this statement.
- One of the criticisms leveled at *Le Morte D'Arthur* concerns its portrayal of women. How are women portrayed in this book?
- Examine how King Arthur’s knights adhere to, or depart from, behaving in accordance with the code of chivalry.
- An epic hero represents the values of a particular society. Since King Arthur fits the mold of the epic hero, what values does he represent?
- In any work of fiction, characters change over the course of the work. Pick a character and show his/her development over the course of the story.
- How significant is the father-son relationship in this story? Compare the three primary father-son relationships (Arthur & Mordred; Launcelot & Galahad; and Pellinore & Torre) in the story and what they symbolize or attempt to teach us.
- Choose a specific item or event from the story and explain the symbolism of that item/event in as much detail as possible.
- Criticize or defend Malory’s choice to ground the stories of Arthur and his knights in the more “modern” world of fifteenth century chivalry.
- Select a “modern” (post-Malory) interpretation of the Arthurian Legend (no movies!) and compare it to Malory. Focus on interpretation of the myth, complexities within the works such as literary devices, plot development, character, etc. This paper should include a bibliography.
- Research Malory’s life and the sources he drew from for his interpretation of Arthur. Explain the influences his experiences, environment, and possibly his politics had on his work. This paper should include a bibliography.
- Choose a mythic/epic hero from another culture/society (post-4th century A.D.) equal in “stature” to Arthur. Compare the two figures and their portrayals. This paper should include a bibliography.
- Choose one of the following topics and develop a statement of theme relevant to the story. Construct a paper outlining the portrayal of that theme throughout *Le Morte D'Arthur*.

Sin

Faith

Loyalty

Honor

Man vs. Man

Man vs. self

Man vs. Society

Virtue

Religion