

# king arthur character sketch essay sample



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Was King Arthur a true, historical figure or only a hero of legend? That is truly up to each and every one of us to decide for ourselves. However, undoubtedly Arthur represents a man who was the epitome of good against evil, light against darkness, and that eternal, never-ending struggle between what is right and that which is wrong.

Historically King Arthur is the figure at the heart of the Arthurian legends. He is said to be the son of Uther Pendragon and Igraine of Cornwall. He is a near mythic figure in Celtic stories such as Culhwch and Olwen. In early Latin chronicles he is presented as a military leader. In the later romance he is presented as a king and emperor. Though people continue to debate about whether King Arthur is a historical figure or not, what cannot be denied is the influence of the figure of Arthur on literature, art, music, and society from the Middle Ages to the present. As O. J. Padel states in "The Nature of Arthur" that "historical attributes of just the kind that we find attached to Arthur can be associated with a figure who was not historical to start with."

Dozens of legends and romantic images have grown up around King Arthur: the knights of the Round Table, Merlin the wizard, and the Holy Grail, to name a few. According to the main Arthurian legends, the king wielded a magical sword, Excalibur; lived in a glorious kingdom called Camelot with the help of the wizard Mordred and was married to the beautiful Queen Guinevere. He conquered a wide empire and eventually went to war with the Romans. In the war against the Romans, Arthur defeated the Emperor Lucius and became emperor himself. However, his most illustrious knight, Lancelot, became enamored of Guinevere. Their romance came to light as the Quest for the Holy Grail began. Eventually Lancelot fled and Guinevere was

sentenced to death. Lancelot rescued her and took her to his realm. This led Arthur to crossing the channel and making war on his former knight. While away from Britain, he left Mordred in charge. Mordred rebelled and Arthur returned to quell him. This led to Arthur's last battle on Salisbury Plain, where he slew Mordred, but was gravely wounded.