Planner

- Monday 09/19:
  - Medieval Romance – Notes set #2

Get out a piece of paper and set it up for Cornell notes.
Set up a paper for Cornell Notes!

The Medieval Romance

Notes set #2
Objective

After viewing the powerpoint and taking notes, students will demonstrate understanding of the elements of a Medieval Romance by summarizing the main points in their Cornell notes.
Objective

You Will:

- Understand the elements of a Medieval Romance

Show me by:

- Summarizing the main points in your Cornell notes.
Romance (definition)

- a medieval tale based on legend, chivalric love and adventure, or the supernatural
  - treats imaginary characters involved in events which remote in time or place and usually heroic, adventurous, or mysterious

- Romantic:
  - imbued with or dominated by **idealism**, a desire for adventure, chivalry, etc.
King Arthur

- There is no solid evidence for/against the reign of a historic “King Arthur.”
- Arthur is more important for the legends that developed around him and his “Knights of the Round Table”
- Even more importantly, it is around the legendary King Arthur that the chivalric tradition of the middle ages developed.
- Arthurian legends reach height in/around 12th century A.D.

A statue of King Arthur from around 1400 AD
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

- Written in the late 14th century (late 1300s) in a language called Middle English
- Author is unknown
  - Noble/Aristocracy
  - West Midlands dialect
  - Part of or familiar with the court of Richard II
Why do we have to read this?

- The Gawain-Poet is considered to be one of the finest literary artists of his time.
  - Gawain is one of the most celebrated poems of English Medieval Literature.

- It encompasses many of the artistic and literary traditions of the period:
  - Arthurian romance poetry
  - medieval alliterative poetry
  - epic poetry
What is the difference between a Medieval Romance and an Epic?

**Epic**
- reflects an heroic age
- tragic seriousness
- love usually absent
- characters speak for themselves
  - (dramatically...while the Vikings polish the horns on their helmets)

**Medieval Romance**
- reflects a chivalric age
- lighter-hearted romance
- love is supreme
- the reader of a romance remains conscious of a narrator
What is a Medieval Romance about?

- Topics include:
  - Heroic deeds
  - Fantastic, or supernatural events
    - Fairytale-ish
  - Knights errant on a quest

- Characters are motivated by:
  - Love
  - Religious faith
  - The desire for adventure
What is the setting?

- The setting is often vague or imaginary
  - Vague: perceptible or recognizable only in an indefinite way
- Once upon a time in a land far, far away...
What kinds of characters are there?

- Archetypes: a character that represents universal patterns of human nature
  - Knights
  - Famous kings
  - Damsels in distress etc...

The hero is a sort of a modified epic hero. Gawain will share significant similarities with Byrhtnoth.
Chivalry
The rules of knighthood
What is chivalry?

- The code of behavior that was expected of knights (all noblemen)
- Knights were members of the aristocracy, or privileged upper class
- Knights were expected to follow a list of unwritten rules called the Chivalric Code.

Chivalry in stories is idealized and exaggerated.
- Lots of so-called knights were still jerks.
Chivalric Code Basics

- Honor God as a faithful Christian.
- Respect the king. Do nothing to bring him dishonor.
- Respect women. Do nothing to bring dishonor to any woman.
- Protect the poor and the weak.
Chivalric Code Basics

- Fair play
  - Never attack an unarmed foe
- Nobility
  - Obey the law
  - Respect women
- Valor
  - Exhibit courage in word and deed
Chivalric Code Highlights

- Honor
  - Avoid deception
- Courtesy
  - Be polite and attentive

Most importantly:

Loyalty

- To God, Sovereignty, Country, and the Code of Chivalry (in that order!)
Chivalry and Religion
How are chivalry and Christianity related?

- Medieval world view focused on religion and the afterlife
- Almost every aspect of Medieval life was tied to Christianity
How are chivalry and Christianity related?

- The origins of knighthood are the religious wars of the 11th-13th centuries known as Crusades.
  - Christian knights fought a religious war for control of the Holy Land.
  - Ex. Knights Templar

The Crusades created the soldiers that became knights, so ideal knights are warriors for God.
Courtly Love

A ritualistic flirtation between a knight and a noble lady
What is courtly love?

- A *ritualistic* flirtation between a knight and a noble lady
  - *ritual*: formal, ceremonial acts established by tradition; something that's done the same way every time

- More often than not, the lady was MARRIED and the relationship was unconsummated
  - NO SEX!
Courtly Love

- The lady was wooed according to elaborate conventions of etiquette and was the constant recipient of songs, and other ceremonial gestures.
- And the lady need only return a hint of approval...
Why was it unconsummated?

- A woman’s virtue was incredibly important. She would be seen as “tarnished” by an extramarital affair.
- She would have been ruined and her husband probably have dismissed her and sent her to a convent.
- She would lose all her social standing and would have been shunned by everyone she knew, including her family and friends.
Was courtly love real?

- Courtly love is mostly a literary device used in stories to convey an ideal.

That is used in stories and not practiced in real life.
Closure

- Write your summary.
  - 4-5 sentences
- Consider including:
  - A Medieval Romance is...
  - It is about...
  - Chivalry is...
  - Courtly love is...