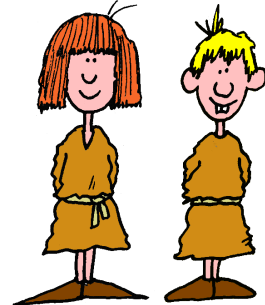


Why King Arthur Became King

Many years ago in an age long forgotten there lived two children who had a profound effect on the history of England. Indeed without these two children and their skills there would never have been a King Arthur... or a round table... or Lancelot... or all the stories that have been told about that magical time. I expect that you, who have heard much of King Arthur and his court, have never heard of Hildegard and Digbert Jones? Well I know that their names are strange but they did



live hundreds of years ago and there weren't the more usual names around then, like Brooklyn.

Well, Hild and Dig, as they called themselves, lived with their uncle, a very strange chap by the name of Marlin. He was a bit of an odd ball, always telling them that he was a magician and that he would be important one day. The children were used to his

boasting and took no notice of him until one day something rather odd happened to change their minds.

They were woken one night by the sound of voices in the kitchen and on creeping downstairs they saw a strange sight. Their Uncle was kneeling on the floor apparently talking to the table leg!! And even stranger than that the table leg was talking back!! The children rubbed their eyes...were they going mad?

'Where is he?' Uncle Marlin asked.

'In the Black Tower in the middle of the Original forest' replied the table leg in an oddly high pitched voice.

The children looked at each other in amazement...talking tables...whatever next?

'The Original forest!' gasped Marlin ' but no man who has ever entered there has been seen again. All the best knights in the country have tried...that's why we have no more fighters.'



'I have heard' squeaked the table, 'that children can enter.'
Hild and Dig looked at each other again; this was beginning to sound interesting.

'That baby,' whispered their uncle, 'is to be the King. He must be saved. Where, though, could I find children brave enough or intelligent enough to tackle the perils of the Original Forest?'

'Behind you!!' shrieked the table.

Marlin jumped up and cracked his head on the corner of the table. Rubbing the bump furiously with one hand he stepped towards the children. As he did so they could see that he had been talking to a small grey mouse.

Hild and Dig breathed out a sigh of relief.

They weren't going mad...a talking mouse after all, made complete sense.

Marlin glared at the children, 'How much did you hear?' he demanded.

'We know that you have a problem that only children can solve.' said Hild bravely.

'Yes,' Marlin replied, 'intelligent and brave ones. Do you know any?'

'Us!' exclaimed the children.

'Intelligent and brave.' Uncle Marlin stated sarcastically. 'Intelligent, Digbert, what happened when you were sent to collect firewood last week?' Dig shuddered. Well it wasn't his fault that the only dry wood that he could find was at the bottom of the wall of the new cottage that Marlin had been building to take advantage of the rising value of the property market. And he knew that he had had to pull at it hard. But how was he to

have known that the whole building would collapse around him? 'And brave?' added Marlin turning his steely gaze onto Hildegard. 'Wellit was a very big spider Uncle Marlin' said Hild.

'We don't have time to find anyone else' squeaked the mouse, 'they'll have to do.'

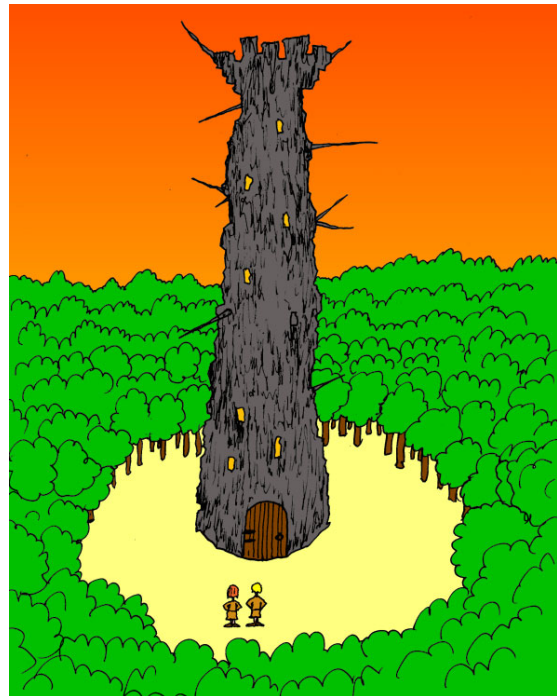


'Mmm' mused Marlin, 'I suppose so. You will have to enter the Black Tower in the Original forest and rescue the baby that is being kept there. We can point you in the right direction but can give you no further clues because we don't know what goes on there. You will have to leave immediately. There will be great trials and magical forces ranged against you. The future of your country will be in your hands. Are you prepared to embark upon this quest and face the challenges that are to come?'

Hild and Dig's eyes met. They could see what each was thinking. Neither of them had understood what on earth their uncle was talking about; but they both realised that it meant time off school!! 'Yes!' they replied together.

Taking nothing but a piece of paper and a pencil between them they followed Marlin and the mouse down the dark path to the edge of the forest. 'We are going to leave you here,' said Marlin 'good luck.' And with those faint words of encouragement he disappeared back towards the cottage.

The two children walked all night and as dawn was breaking they found themselves on the edge of a clearing gazing at the Dark Tower.



In front of the solid oak door was a courtyard of square flagstones.

'Come on,' said Dig, 'Lets ring the door bell'

'I'm not so sure' Hild murmured putting a restraining hand on her brother's arm. 'There is a notice over there, perhaps we ought to read it first.' Dig looked around and spotted the sign stuck on the edge of the clearing...'It probably says Trespassers will be Prosecuted' he muttered but went to look anyway. ''Ere Hild' shouted Dig to his sister as he read the notice, 'some joker has been writing poetry on this.'

'What does it say?' asked Hild.

'If you want to get the key

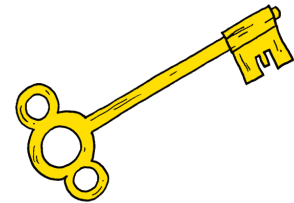
Stay on the lines or you will see

That centres are not what they seem

They are as solid as whipped cream' read Dig.

'Perhaps it's a clue.' mused Hild glancing idly at the tower.

Suddenly she caught a glimpse of gold from the corner of her eye. On the far side of the courtyard lay a shining golden key.

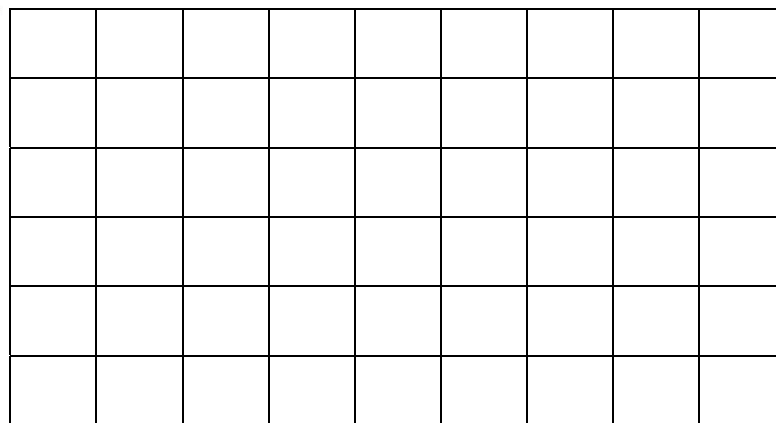


'Yes!' whooped Dig, 'let's go'

'Wait!' shouted Hild, as Dig was about to step

onto the first flag stone, 'Don't move!' Hild picked up a stone and tossed it onto the flagstone where it sank immediately with a rather satisfying squelch. Dig hurriedly took a step back. 'We have to move on the lines' said Hild. She took a step along the first line and as she did so Dig noticed that the key moved too! Hild took another step, the key moved two steps in the opposite direction.

'Hang on sis,' said Dig, 'this is going to take a bit of working out.'



(Can you work out what route children need to take across the courtyard in order to be able to collect the key and unlock the door. You could act it out on a grid on the floor or use equipment or diagrams to help you)



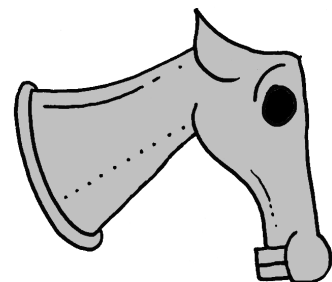
The heavy oak door slammed behind them and the children gazed around in astonishment. The whole room appeared to be moving. There were legs and heads in a mixture of colours running around blindly. The noise was incredible as the legs clanked and creaked and the heads chattered and clattered.

The children were trapped! The heads and legs were moving too fast for them to

cross the room with out being bowled over.

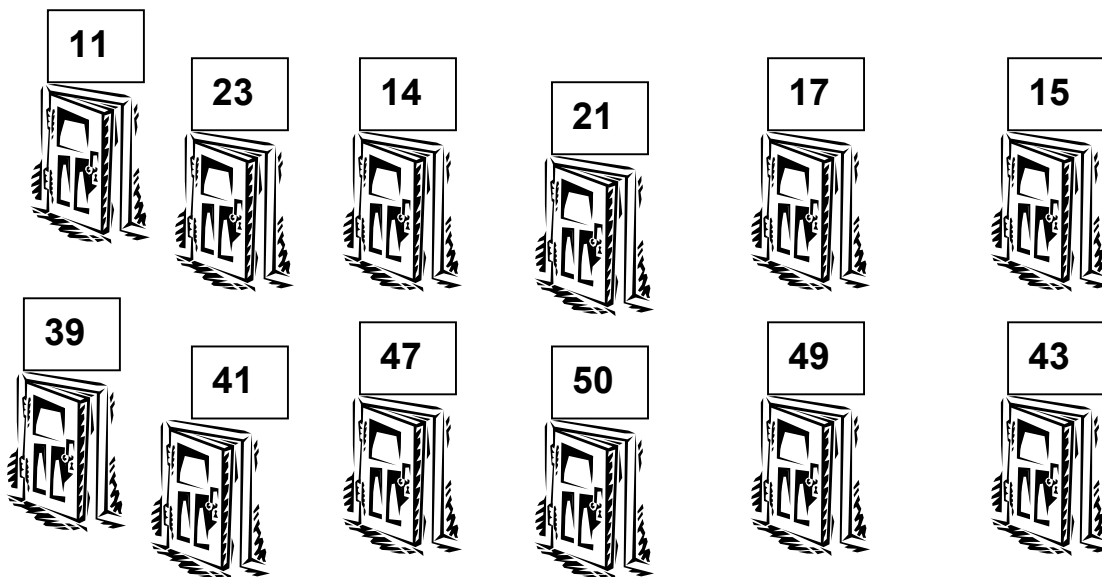
As they watched Hild realised that there were only eight different colours in the room. Blue, red yellow, green, white, gold, black and purple. Then they realised that there weren't real legs and heads they were the legs and heads of suits of armour. But where were the bodies and the arms? 'Look,' said Dig. Hild looked at where her brother was pointing. 'Armoury' she read. Sidling along the wall they pulled open the cupboard and out spilled the missing arms from the suits of armour. As the legs and heads ran passed the children managed to collect the missing bits for some of the armour. Soon they were able to count just 64 heads and 222 leg pieces. Now Dig was totally confused. Surely there should be twice the number of legs than heads?...at this rate they'd have legs left over. Then Hild noticed that some of the headpieces were horse shaped. 'Look,' she said, 'we have to make up horses and knights with the rest'

'Yes,' said Dig, 'but the question is where are their bodies?'

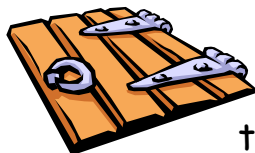


Just then Hild saw two doors appear in the room and at the same time a message was projected onto the wall.

*To leave the room you have one chance
To stop the crazy armoured dance
Behind ten doors there you will find
Witches and goblins who will not be kind
Behind two other the body suits sit
Waiting for legs and heads to fit
The doors themselves display a clue
Which pair to open is up to you*



(Can you help to decide how many horses' and how many knights' suits of armour there are? You may find that guessing and then improving your guess is a good way to solve this problem. Sometimes making a list will help)



As the last of the horses galloped away the children could see a trapdoor in the middle of the room. They lifted it gingerly and descended the long flight of stairs into a dungeon lit by flickering candles. In front of them they

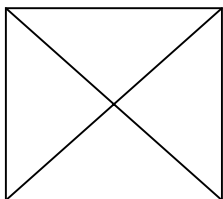


could see tins of red, yellow and green paint and hung about the walls were square sheets of white cloth attached to poles, each sheet was divided into four equal triangles. The children were puzzled but Hild began to look for a clue...after all there had been one for the other challenges.

Tucked into the corner was a message in a little frame containing the clue.

*Flags are used in many ways
But all are different so they say
Even if you turn them round
No other to match them will be found.
Using the colours red, yellow and green
How many flags could there be seen
If each cloth was divided into four?
Solve this and you can approach the door!*

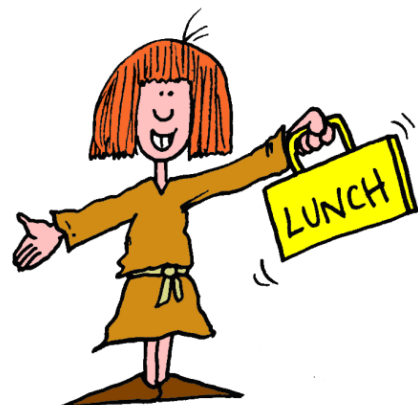
(Help the children to solve this problem. You need to make a list of all the different flags. Try to be systematic to ensure that you have covered all possibilities and not repeated any)



Hild noticed a stone pad with a message written on it.

*Here to place of equal weight
twice the number of flags in grams.*

They looked around for something to put on the pad but there was nothing, certainly nothing with any weights on it. The only thing they could see was a rusty old balance scale. Then Hild remembered her lunch box.



They placed the correct weight on the pad and slowly a section of the wall slid back and they were able to continue their journey.

The children crept slowly along a long dark corridor until they reached a wall.

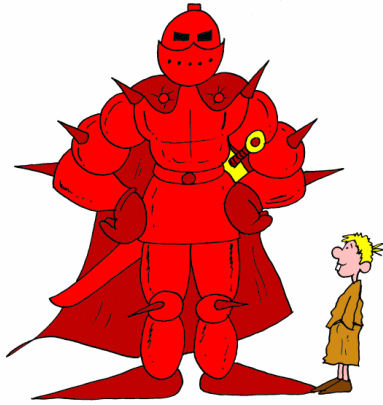
Set into the wall was a board full of small holes, and in another cavity they noticed an abundance of small coloured pegs.

*Your journey goes beyond the door
Each statement is a clue
The holes are filled with pegs galore
But all numbers must be true
Within the pattern six yellow pegs lie
And red is half the blue
Eight extra blue than yellow we spy
The solution is up to you.*

(Working backwards is a good strategy to use here)

As Dig pushed the last peg into place a door swung open and the children immediately heard the sound of voices raised in argument. They glanced at each other nervously and taking a deep breath they stepped through the door together.

What a sight met their eyes!! All of the lost knights of the realm were in the room, all were shouting at the tops of their voices. Flashes of red, blue, yellow, green, silver, white, black and purple reflected off the walls as periodically the knights raised the visors and even occasionally their fists!!! The children were dumbfounded; these were the bravest men in the whole land and they looked as though they were about to begin a free-for-all. Just then the Red Knight stomped past and Dig bravely caught his arm. 'Please sir,' he said, 'what is going on?'



'We, the best fighting men in England,' replied the knight loftily, 'have come to rescue the baby who will be the most famous king of all time. But this enchanted tower has us all riled up.'

'How did you get here?' asked Hild

'Ah!' said the knight, 'I approached the tower from the dark forest. I reached a clearing where I saw a courtyard leading to a

door. But as I stepped onto the first flagstone I sank- with I may add a rather satisfying squelch.'

The children looked rather smug.

The knight continued, 'I must have fallen into a deep sleep because when I awoke I was in this room and my armour was missing. Every now and again another knight appeared. Then suddenly as if by magic all our armour reappeared. But now we can't decide who should have the honour of leading us through the door to rescue the king.'

'Well, why not joust for it?' said Dig

'Well, that's what we were planning to do'

replied the knight, 'but we have to joust each other twice and we cannot work out how many jousts there must be or how long the competition will take.'

Hild looked at the knight thoughtfully, 'If you can get everyone to stay still I could probably work that out for you.'

'Hhmmph!' snorted the knight 'but you're *a girl!*' (sexist I know but that is what it was like back then!!)

'That is as it maybe,' replied Hild. 'Do you want my help or not?'

With a lot of disgruntled clanking and snorting all the knights and the horses were finally standing still and the children could see that there were eight knights who all agreed that a joust should last for five minutes.



(Can you work out how many jousts there will be? Remember that each knight joust all the others twice. How long will the competition last if each joust lasts for 5minutes and it takes 5minutes to set up every joust?)

Now that you have solved the problems find three friends so that you can take the place of the knights and joust to see who has the honour of rescuing the baby prince. You may choose two knights each, but you must decide your own rules for the joust. You must use dice or make your own spinners to use to decide the outcome of each battle.

The only rules are you must decide your own rules before you start and record all the results as you go so that at the end it is clear who has won.



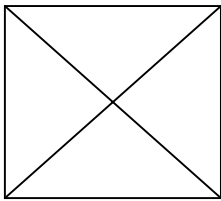
Answers

Which doors?

Horses	Legs	Knights	Legs	Total
43	172	21	42	214
44	176	20	40	216
45	180	19	38	218
46	184	18	36	220
47	188	17	34	222
48	192	16	32	224
49	196	15	30	226
50	200	14	28	228

1	R	R	R	R
2	R	R	R	Y
3	R	R	Y	Y
4	R	Y	R	Y
5	Y	R	Y	Y
6	Y	Y	Y	Y
7	R	R	R	G
8	R	R	G	G
9	R	G	R	G
10	G	R	G	G
11	G	G	G	G
12	G	G	G	Y
13	G	G	Y	Y
14	G	Y	G	Y
15	R	R	Y	G
16	R	R	G	Y
17	R	G	R	Y
18	Y	Y	G	R
19	Y	Y	R	G
20	Y	R	Y	G
21	G	G	Y	R
22	G	G	R	Y
23	G	R	G	Y

How many flags?



How many pegs?

6 Yellow 7Red 14 Blue

How many jousts?

	Silver	Red	Blue	Yellow	Green	White	Black	Purple
S	X							
R		X						
B			X					
Y				X				
G					X			
W						X		
BL							X	
P								X

Answer

(number of knights multiplied by number of knights) - number of knights = number of matches times 10minutes.

$(n*n)-n=\text{total}$ $(8*8)-8=56$ $56*10=560\text{minutes}$ 9hours
20minutes