



## Who Is That Knight Anyway?

(A Lesson in Heraldry)

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Grade Level: 9-10

Time Allotment: Two 45 minute class periods



Overview: Heraldry has developed from a simple identification system for knights on the battlefield to an intricate art form passed down in families from generation to generation. Early geometric design has given way to symbolism representing individual character. Studying heraldry allows students to identify individual character traits of knights and explore both its history and the modern procedures of obtaining a coat of arms.

Subject Matter: Social Studies

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Explain how heraldry got its name.
- Outline the history and development of heraldry.
- Identify heraldry symbolism and divisions.
- Create their own coats of arms.

Standards:

From the Montana State Standards for Social Studies:

(Available on-line at [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us))

Standard 1: Students access, synthesize and evaluate information to communicate and apply social studies knowledge to real world situations.

Standard 4: Students demonstrate an understanding of the effects of time, continuity, and change on historical and future perspectives and relationships.

Standard 6: Students demonstrate an understanding of the impact of human interaction and cultural diversity on societies.

Media Components:

VIDEO

*Knights and Armor*. The History Channel. A&E Home Video. New York, 1994.

WEB SITES

*Heraldry*. By Dana Vick. <http://danaelayne.com/heraldry.html>

This site gives a brief history of heraldry and an alphabetical listing of symbols and their meanings. At the bottom of the page, printable worksheets are available that may be helpful for the culminating activity at the end of this lesson.

*Irish Surnames (Coat of Arms from Ireland and Worldwide)*.

<http://www.irishsurnames.com>

This colorful site allows students to explore the symbolism of heraldic charges and discover if their family names have an established coat of arms.

*Heraldry Game*. By Owl & Mouse Educational Software.

<http://www.yourchildlearns.com/heraldrygame/index.html>

This is a free on-line heraldry game that teaches students about shields, knights, and heraldry. Players role play as a young aristocrat that must recognize friends and enemies through heraldry.

*Shields, Knights, and Heraldry*. By Owl & Mouse Educational Software.

<http://www.yourchildlearns.com/heraldry.htm>

This site has information on heraldry, instructions for creating a shield, and free, downloadable patterns for coats of arms.

Materials:

*For each student:*

*Exploring Heraldry* worksheet to accompany video work

1 or 4 pieces of printer paper (your choice of size)

White poster board to fit behind 1 or 4 pieces of printer paper

Colored pencils, markers, crayons, or paint (your choice of medium)

Scissors

Glue stick

*For every two students:*

Cut out heraldry symbols in an envelope (see attached)

*Heraldry Symbol Identification* worksheet

Prep for Teachers:

Prior to teaching this lesson, bookmark the sites used in the lesson on each computer in your classroom.

Prep the video so that it is at the desired location for the video portion of the lesson.

Prepare the hands-on elements of the lesson by:

- Cutting out the heraldry symbols and place in enough envelopes for your class, split into pairs. (See attached.)
- Copying enough worksheets for each student and each pair. (See attached.)
- Gathering art supplies for the culminating activity.

When using media, provide students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, a specific task to complete and/or information to identify during or after viewing of video segments, Web sites, or other multimedia elements.

Introductory Activity:

Step 1. Have students individually log on to *Heraldry* at <http://danaeleyane.com/heraldry.html> and read the first two paragraphs. Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, asking the students to look for the following information: when and why heraldry was invented, who could have a coat of arms, by whom coats of arms had to be recognized, who had to memorize the symbols, and what the descriptive language of heraldry is called. (Suggestion: You may wish to write these topics on the board for students to refer to as they read.)

Step 2. After students have completed this task, check for comprehension by asking the questions in Step 1 again.

(Answers should include:

*When: Middle Ages*

*Reason: To identify allies during battle*

*Who could have: Any family of rank or peasants of middle class who performed a great deed or earned a nobleman's favor*

*Who recognized: The College (of Arms)*

*Memorized by: Heralds at a young age*

*Language: Blazon, which describes the shields)*

Step 3. Insert the video *Knights & Armor* into the VCR. Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, asking them to identify how heraldry got its name. START the tape at the point where men are bearing flags on the tournament field, and the narrator says, "Heralds in fine costumes would supervise the event..." STOP the tape at the end of the tournament scene just after the narrator says, "They became the experts about coats of arms, or what we think of today as heraldry."

Step 4. Check for comprehension by asking for how heraldry got its name. (Answer: *Heraldry got its name from the heralds who supervised tournaments and set the rules.*)

Learning Activity:

Step 1. Ask students to pair up and give each pair the *Heraldry Symbol Identification* worksheet and an envelope containing the cut out symbol squares. Hand out glue sticks.

Step 2. Ask pairs of students to log on to *Irish Surnames (Coat of Arms from Ireland and Worldwide)* at <http://www.irishsurnames.com> On the right, students can click on

plants, beasts, shields, birds, etc. to find the answers to their worksheets. Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, asking the students to attach the squares to the proper place on the worksheet with their glue sticks, using the web site as a guide. Stress that they WILL NOT use all of the cutout squares. (Answers may be found at the site. You may wish to make an answer key from your own cutouts. See attached for worksheet.) While students are working, reprep the video, *Knights & Armor* to the second cue.

Step 3. When students are finished with this task, ask them to turn their worksheets in to you.

Step 4. Give each student the *Exploring Heraldry* worksheet for video analysis. Insert the video *Knights & Armor* into the VCR. Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION by asking them to fill out the answers on the worksheet as they watch the video. (Suggestion: give a reliable student the remote control to pause the video at crucial spots for information.) START the video right after the armor segment when the video is showing standards hanging from the ceiling in Westminster Abbey, and the narrator is saying, “Westminster Abbey, in the heart of London, the home of one of the great knightly orders, the order of the Bath.” STOP the tape when the picture returns to the ceiling of Westminster Abbey and the standards, and the narrator says, “Sir Edward’s banner now hangs above his personal stall in the chapel alongside those of all other living members of the Order.”

Step 5. Check for comprehension by asking for feedback on a few of the questions before students hand sheets in to you. (*Answers attached.*)

Step 6. Have students get back in pairs and log on to *The Heraldry Game* at <http://www.yourchildlearns.com/heraldrygame/index.html> Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION by telling students that the game will only allow them to proceed if they give correct answers in the scenarios presented, so they should read carefully before clicking on “Start the Game”. (Suggestion: Tell the students that they will find it helpful in this game to click on the tutorials and to take notes as they proceed through the game.) You can assess their progress by determining if they make it all the way through the game. Instructions on this site are clear and easy to follow.

#### Culminating Activity:

Step 1. Tell students that they are going to make their own coat of arms on shields. Have them log on to *Shields, Knights and Heraldry* at <http://www.yourchildlearns.com/heraldry.htm> Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION by having them follow the precise instructions for making a shield and coat of arms on this site, using either one piece of printer paper or four. If students need a brush-up on Blazon, they will find the information on this site by clicking on “Read Roger the Herald’s Notes on Blazonry for Beginners”. If they are ready to begin creating their shields, have them click on “Go to Directions”, then on “Go to Making Your Shield”. If you want to download images to use on their shields, you can

find them on this site on the first page by clicking on “Download Shields, Knights, and Heraldry” or on the site *Heraldry* at <http://danaelayne.com/heraldry.html> by Dana Vick. If students wish to find out if there already is an established coat of arms for their family, they can research names on the *Irish Surnames* site mentioned earlier in this lesson plan.

Step 2. When students are finished, display their creations in your classroom.

Assessment:

Evaluate the students’ worksheets and final projects as an assessment of this lesson.

Cross-Curricular Extensions:

ART

Research medieval artwork that contains images of heraldry, and try to identify symbols, divisions, and colors on individual shields.

ENGLISH

Read medieval literature about knights such as *The Canterbury Tales* or *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table*.

HISTORY

Research a specific family (such as Cameron or Stewart) and determine how they arrived at their coat of arms, and how they contributed to history. The class could incorporate students’ families with a British background for special interest.

Research medieval warfare.

SHOP

Make a replica of a shield that a knight might have used in battle after researching materials, style, and building techniques.

Community Connections:

- Have a genealogy expert visit class and talk about researching family trees and heraldry.
- Write to the College of Arms in London with specific questions about heraldry.

Helpful Resource:

Honan, Linda. *Picture the Middle Ages*. Amawalk, NY: Golden Owl Publishing Company, Inc., 1994.

# Exploring Heraldry

(Worksheet to accompany second video segment)

Accompanies *Who is that Knight Anyway?* by S. Turk



1. What was heraldry's purpose?
2. List the differences in the development of heraldry:  
Early designs:  
1100:  
1130:  
3. When was the College of Arms established in London, and who do the heralds work for?  
4. What families do the six heralds at the College of Arms come from? These six families are directly descended from medieval times when their ancestors announced rules at tournaments.  
5. How do the heralds make new coats of arms?  
6. What five colors are most commonly used?  
What two metals are most commonly used?  
What two furs are most commonly used?  
7. List three traditional emblems used on coats of arms.  
8. Name two contemporary emblems that were created at the College of Arms.

9. What qualifications must a person have to receive a coat of arms? List at least two.
10. What do you receive when your coat of arms is sent to you?

## Answer Sheet for *Exploring Heraldry* Video Worksheet

1. *Heraldry's purpose was to identify knights (and allies) clearly in battle.*
2. *Early designs: Random and haphazard*  
*1100: More systematic and looked like they began following guidelines*  
*1130: Heraldry used consistently in all occasions and handed down (hereditary)*
3. *The College of Arms was established in 1555. The heralds work for the Queen.*
4. *The six families are: Lancaster, Chester, Somerset, Windsor, York, & Richmond.*
5. *The coats of arms are hand painted.*
6. *5 colors: Blue, red, black, green, purple*  
*2 metals: Gold & silver*  
*2 furs: Ermine & bear*
7. *Three traditional emblems: dragons, lions, griffins*
8. *Two contemporary emblems: hypodermic needle, boiler flue, tsetse fly*
9. *Coats of arms are granted to imminent people, people who hold professional or university diplomas, people who have performed charitable giving, veterans of the armed services, people who can prove they are from a British ancestry or from families that are pre-Revolutionary War, and people who can pay the fee!*
10. *When you receive your coat of arms, you receive a hand painted document that is signed by the herald and an official seal.*

# *Heraldry Symbol Identification*

For use with *Who is that Knight Anyway?* by S. Turk

Shield meaning dominion, authority, wisdom, achievement in battle.	Beast representing readiness for duty.	Bird representing beauty or pride.	Symbol representing poignant suffering.
Symbol of devotion or victory in tournament.	Shield signifying construction or building.	Beast representing affection or charity.	Beast representing one of high nature.
Symbol meaning readiness or affliction.	Plant representing the sign of the ninth son.	Symbol representing honor.	Plant representing hope, joy, and the symbol for the seventh son.
Shield marked like St. Andrew's cross, signifying resolution and resolve.	Beast representing fierce courage.	Beast representing the valiant and enduring warrior.	Bird representing love and peace.
Shield representing military strength and fortitude.	Plant representing plentifulness and achievement of hope.	Symbol representing the power to disperse evil.	Symbol representing glory, splendor, and authority.

Beast representing courage, fidelity, and loyalty.	Beast representing invulnerability.	Bird representing the protector, a person of action, noble nature, power, and strength.	A symbol representing the mark of honor and obligation.
A shield representative of a knight's scarf that signifies defense.	Beast that signifies wisdom.	Bird that represents a musical person, poetry, and harmony.	Plant that signifies antiquity and strength. Represents the most noble of the Chieftain trees.
Symbol that is the mark of a Baronet.	Bird that signifies one who has been dispossessed of land. Also the sign of the fourth son.	Symbol for one who is a successful commander or one who has made long journeys.	Beast representing the fierce fighter, or one who fights to the death.
Symbol for good luck.	Shield for the Christian, particularly one who has served in the Crusades.	Symbol for the sixth son. Sometimes called the "flower of light".	Beast signifying peace loving.
Symbol representing regal or senior authority, or a heavenly reward.	Beast representing hospitality.	Shield representing the roof of a house. Signifies protection and faithful service.	Symbol representing sincerity, truthfulness, and charity.
Beast representing perseverance in siege or effort.	Plant signifying truth.	Symbol representing God's goodness and superiority.	Beast representing one who is skillful, politic, and a lover of harmony.