



Lesson Plan Summary

Magic Tree House #29: Christmas in Camelot A Royal Celebration

DURING THIS BOOK STUDY, EACH STUDENT WILL:

- Write an invitation inviting a guest to a classroom celebration including essential parts of an invitation that answer the questions who, what, when, and where
- Learn more information about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table from additional sources
- Plan a Medieval-themed celebration in honor of the 20th anniversary of the Magic Tree House book series
- Design a knight's shield that displays the cover of a Magic Tree House book, and write main events of the book in a sequential order
- Decorate a knight's helmet or a lady's headband to wear at the celebration
- Act as hosts and hostesses to guests from another class at a classroom celebration
- Present information from a Magic Tree House book of choice to guests

COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

Art:

- Apply personal choices while creating art

Reading:

- Foundational Skills
- Read and Comprehend Fiction
- Make connections between the text and a visual or oral presentation
- Build Vocabulary
- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure

Language:

- Conventions of Standard English

Writing:

- Text Types and Purposes

Speaking and Listening:

- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
- Comprehension and Collaboration

29-1S112

Created by: Paula Henson, 2007 Magic Tree House Teacher of the Year Knoxville, Tennessee



Lesson Plan

Magic Tree House #29: Christmas in Camelot A Royal Celebration!

An activity to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Magic Tree House in 2012!

After reading Christmas in Camelot, your students will discover that a dove led Jack and Annie to the tree house expecting to find Morgan. In her place was a royal invitation to spend Christmas in Camelot! The invitation not only sends them to Camelot to spend Christmas Eve with King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table but also to complete a mission to save this special mythical place from being forgotten forever! Christmas in Camelot presents the perfect opportunity to practice the skill of writing a letter of invitation to another class to join in on some Magic Tree House fun as your students celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Magic Tree House series in 2012! Follow the directions below to turn your classroom into a mini Camelot as your students become the Knights of the Round Table – Magic Tree House style! You will need a large round table cloth to serve as the “Round Table” – This should be large enough to allow all students to be seated comfortably around the perimeter of the table cloth. You could also use bulletin board paper to make a paper table cloth.

Materials:

- Blank scroll invitation template for writing a letter of invitation (provided) or a copy of the fill-in-the-blank invitation (provided) on parchment paper or other decorative paper
- Colored pencils
- Shield template (provided) copied onto white construction paper
- A copy of the knight’s helmet template (provided) for boys
- Sentence strip
- Access to a set of Magic Tree House books

Procedures:

- First discuss the intent of a letter of invitation and read the invitation as a class on page 6 of Christmas in Camelot. Identify the crucial questions that should be answered when writing an invitation: Who?, What?, When?, and Where?

29-1LP112

Created by: Paula Henson, 2007 Magic Tree House Teacher of the Year Knoxville, Tennessee

Copyright © 2012, Mary Pope Osborne, Classroom Adventures Program, all rights reserved.

It reads:

Dear Jack and Annie,

Please accept this Royal

Invitation to spend Christmas

In the Kingdom of Camelot.

M

- Ask students what part is missing in this invitation? (When?) Ask why they think the **When** has been omitted? Could it be that time is not relevant in a mythical place such as Camelot? Time stands still in Frog Creek Woods when Jack and Annie are on their “missions”. Ask children how they know this? (They may recall events from previous books that reveal that Jack and Annie’s parents never realize they are “away” because no time passes when they are gone.) Explain that in the real world, time **IS** very relevant so all invitations must state a date and time.
- Next, discuss the fact that 2012 marks a HUGE milestone for the Magic Tree House series and is cause for celebration! It is the 20th anniversary of the series! Dinosaurs Before Dark, the first book in the series, was written by Mary Pope Osborne twenty years ago in 1992. Since that day, over 45 Magic Tree House books have followed! Explain that your class party theme will be Camelot and the Knights of the Round Table since the series is based on this mythical place where Morgan and Merlin exist. (If your class holds a celebration in December the theme could include a touch of Christmas by using a red or green round table cloth and sprigs of holly on the “Round Table”.) Tell students that throughout the histories of Britain and France, some people believe that a person called Arthur was a leader or king and that knights really did (and do!) exist but today they don’t wear armor or carry swords. When people are “knighted” they receive a ribbon from the Queen of England. She uses a sword to “knight” them as she taps them on each shoulder with a sword in a special ceremony as the recipient kneels on a

stool. People are knighted today for acts of chivalry or special accomplishments. In 1997, Paul McCartney, the former Beatles rock star was knighted Sir Paul McCartney for his extraordinary accomplishments in music. Your students will be able to make a connection if they are familiar with the music of this modern day knight.

- There is no real evidence to suggest that King Arthur actually existed but the stories (or myths) have gradually merged with historical facts and have become a symbol of British history. To give students additional background information, read other books to your class such as:
 - Knights of the Round Table by Gwen Gross
 - The Legend of King Arthur by Howard Pyle
 - King Arthur and The Knights of the Round Table by Benedict Flynn
- Allow your students to choose a favorite Magic Tree House book to read or review and represent at the party. Children will cut out the shield pattern (provided) and draw the book cover on their “shield” while describing six main points or ideas from the book that they will list in the six sections on the back of the shield. They should number the events to show appropriate sequential order.
- Copy the knight’s helmet template (provided) for each child. Allow them to color and cut out the helmet shape and attach to a sentence strip/headband that fits around the child’s head. Secure with staples. Girls in the class might prefer to make a headband like Morgan le Faye wears in which case, they will only need a sentence strip.
- Prepare the invitations in one of the two following ways:
 - Copy the printed invitation onto parchment paper or other decorative paper and allow students to fill in the blanks with the appropriate information. Roll the invitation up like a scroll and tie with ribbon.
 - Have children copy the following invitation in their fanciest writing on the scroll template (provided) and cut out.

"Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Mrs. _____'s Class!

Desires to honor the Magic Tree House book series

On this the 20th year anniversary!

Sir/ Lady _____

Of the house of

Mrs. _____'s Class

Requests your presence at our castle,

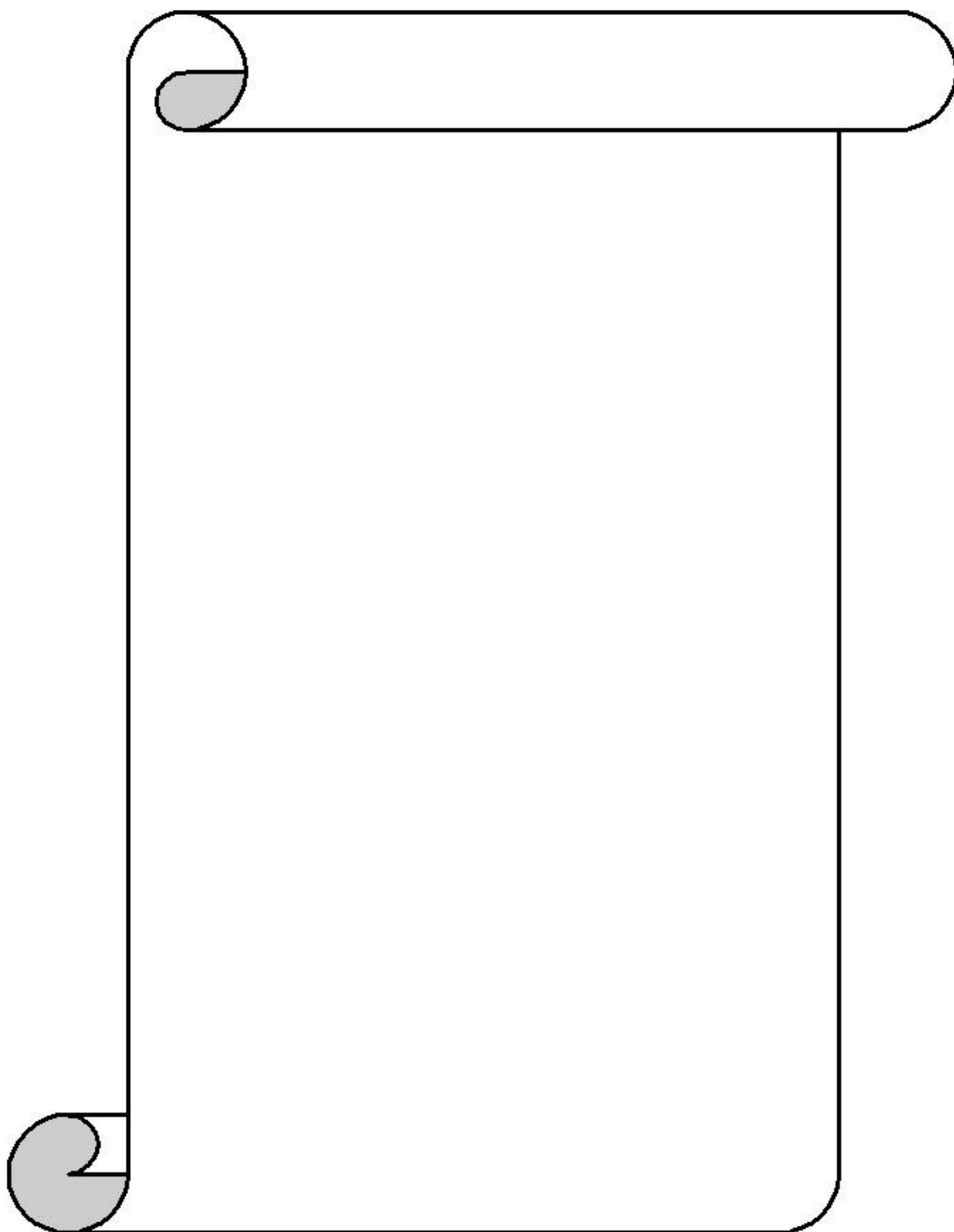
Room _____

On _____ at _____

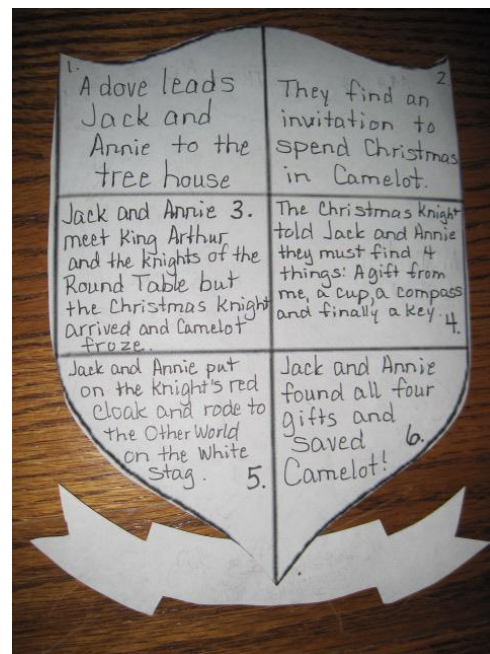
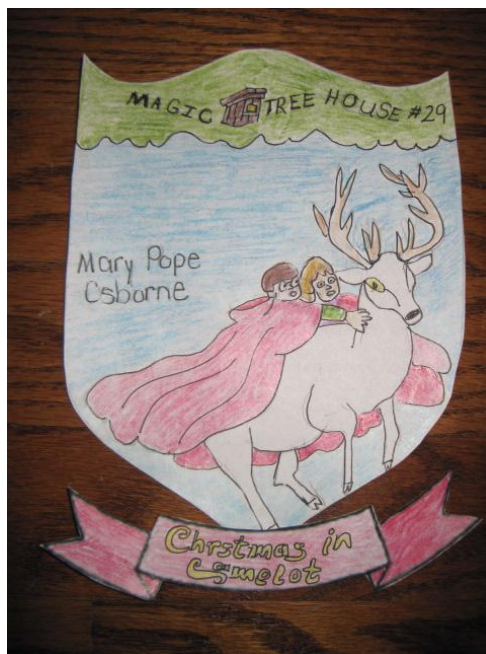
RSVP to Sir or Lady:

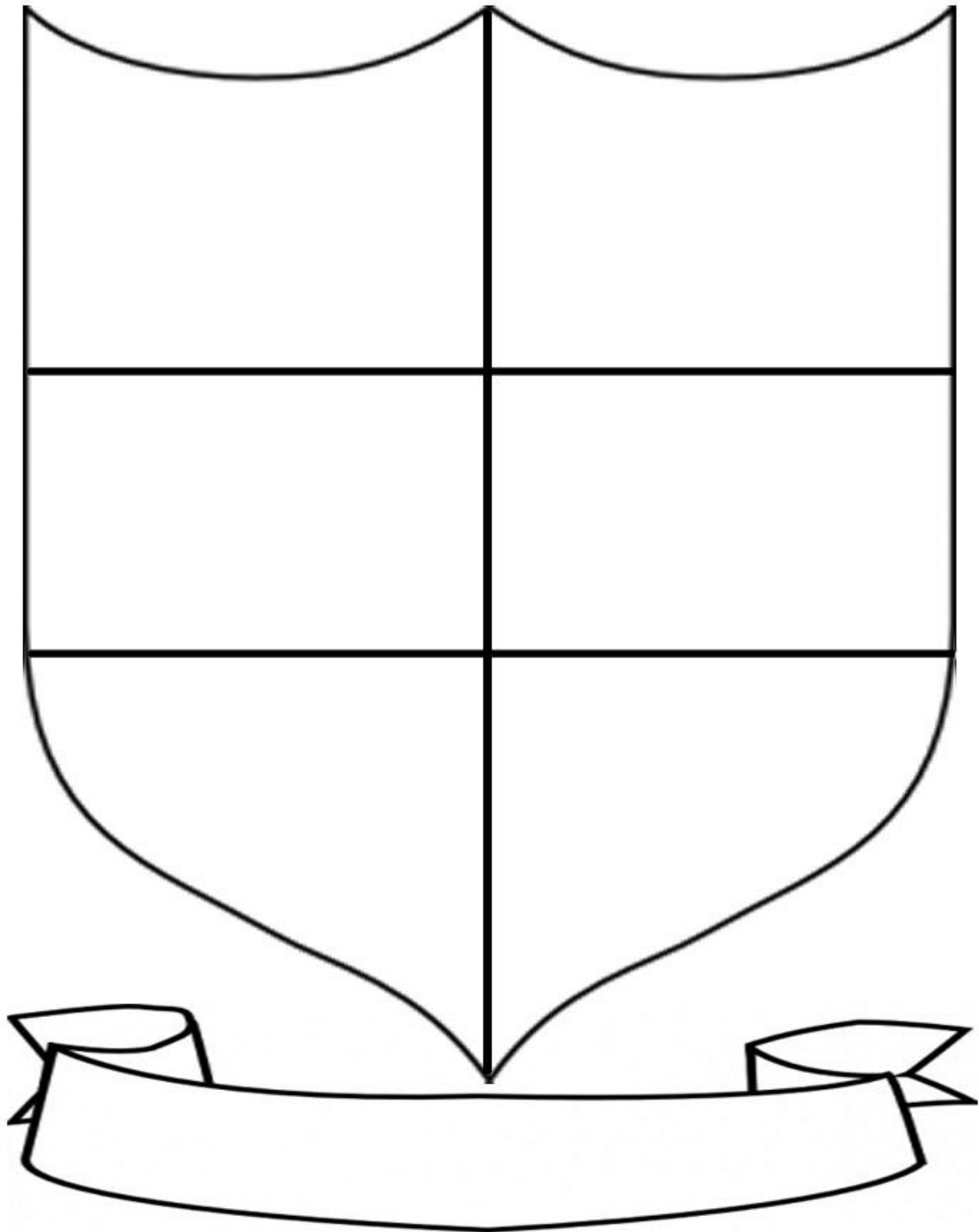
Be prepared for a Royal Celebration of Magic Tree House:

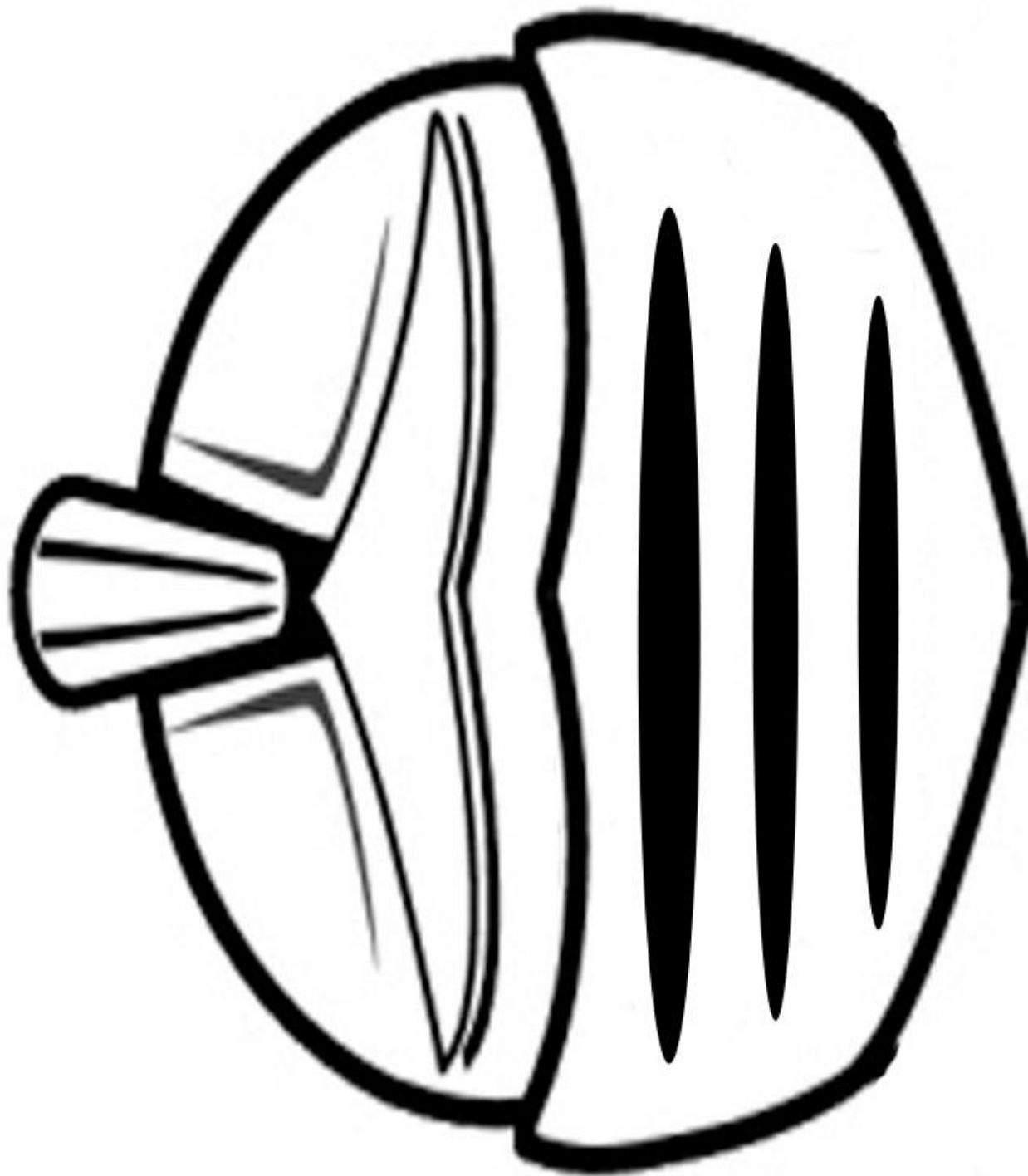
The first 20 Years!



- Deliver invitations to students in another class. This is a wonderful activity to use with Reading Buddies or Book Buddies if your class participates in this program.
- Children are now ready to draw the cover of their favorite Magic Tree House book on the front of the shield pattern (provided) and write six events in sequential order in the six sections on the back of the shield. Cut out the banner shape at the bottom of the shield and use it to display the title of the book on the front of the shield. Explain to students that in reality, knights used their family's coat of arms to embellish their shields. A coat of arms was a design used to identify men in battle. In Medieval Times, a distinctive coat of arms was used to identify each noble family. Each item in the design had meaning. Once a coat of arms was adopted by a family, the design was placed on shields held by knights of the manor. It was placed on swords and on banners, sewn into tapestries, and even burnt into the top of breads on special occasions. A family's coat of arms was important. It made a statement to the world: "This is who we are, and we are special." Explain that today the cover of our favorite Magic Tree House book is our coat of arms! Visit the following website to explore the meaning of the symbols and colors of heraldry if your students desire more information:
 - <http://www.angelfire.com/realm/durant/crestsymbols.htm>







Color, cut out and attach to a sentence strip/headband

- When guests arrive for the special celebration have students seated around the large round table cloth on the floor with their “helmets” or headbands on and their shield displaying their favorite Magic Tree House adventure placed around the perimeter of the “Round Table” in front of them. Guests may sit on the sidelines or in students’ chairs and listen to each child give an overview of the Magic Tree House books (written on the back of the shields) they have chosen to represent.
- If you have parent volunteers who enjoy baking or would be willing to buy a decorated cake, you might add a festive touch to the celebration by serving each child a piece of a Happy Birthday Magic Tree House cake! If your celebration takes place in December after the reading of Christmas in Camelot, use paper products and decorations with a holiday theme.