King Arthur and the Sword
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Uther is the king of England. He is a good king. He and his queen have a beautiful baby boy.
But England is not a safe place. There are many bad men, and they want to be king. The boy cannot live in the castle, because it is not safe.
One day the king says to the queen, ‘Sir Ector is a good man. He is a good knight. Our boy can live with Sir Ector and his son.’ So the king says to his servant, ‘Take my boy to Sir Ector. But do not say, “This is the king’s son.” Tell nobody.’
The king’s servant takes the boy to Sir Ector’s house. Sir Ector is a good father to him, and his son Kay is a good brother.
The boy, Arthur, is soon big and strong. He is the king’s son, but he does not know it. He loves Sir Ector, and he loves Sir Ector’s son Kay.

Sometimes Sir Ector takes the boys to a tournament. They like to see the beautiful horses, and the strong knights.

‘I want to fight in tournaments,’ says Kay, ‘when I’m older.’
One day a servant comes to Sir Ector’s house.

‘King Uther is dead,’ the servant says.

Sir Ector falls to his knees, and he cries for the king of England.

‘Come tomorrow to the big stone on the road to London,’ says the servant. ‘All the king’s knights must go there.’
So, the next day, Sir Ector goes to the big stone on the road to London. Merlin and all the knights of England are there. Merlin is a good man. He is a friend of the kings of England, and he knows many things.
There is a sword in the stone. It is a beautiful sword, with jewels on it.

‘Only the king of England can take this sword out of the stone!’ Merlin says.

‘Who wants to try?’

One knight comes to the stone. He pulls and he pulls, but the sword doesn’t move.

Then another knight tries, and another. But nobody can take the sword out of the stone.
Every day, men come to the big stone on the road to London.

'I am a good, strong man,' each one says. 'I can take the sword out, and be king of England.'

Everyone tries, but nobody can take the sword out. And so England has no king.
Kay and Arthur are older now. Kay is a knight, and he fights in many tournaments.

One day there is a tournament in London. It is a big tournament, and Merlin, the queen, and all the knights of England are there. But Kay suddenly says, ‘Where is my sword?’

Oh no! Kay’s sword is at home, in his room.
'I can ride home, Kay,' says Arthur. 'I can ride home fast, and get your sword!' He starts to ride home very fast. But on the road, he sees a big stone. There is a sword in the stone. A beautiful sword, with jewels on it.
'Kay can fight with this sword,' Arthur thinks. 'Then I can put it back after the tournament.'

Arthur pulls the sword, and it comes out of the stone. Then he rides to the tournament.
Arthur takes the sword to Kay and says, ‘Here’s a sword, Kay! You can fight with this sword. Then I can put it back.’

But the people at the tournament all stop and look.

‘It’s the sword!’ one person says. ‘The sword from the stone! This boy is the king! He is the new king of England!’
Some of the people are angry.
‘He is not the king!’ they say.
‘He’s Sir Ector’s boy!’
‘Bring Merlin!’ somebody says. ‘Bring Merlin!’
Merlin sees the sword, and he says, 'Come with us to the stone, boy.'

So Merlin, Arthur, and all the people go to the big stone. Merlin puts the sword back in the stone.

'I want to try,' says one of the men.

He comes to the stone. He pulls the sword, but it doesn't move.
Another man tries, and another. But the sword doesn’t move.

Then Merlin says to Arthur, ‘Take the sword out of the stone, boy.’

Arthur goes to the stone. He pulls the sword ... and it comes out.
'He is the king!' the people say.  
'I am not a king,' Arthur says.  
'My father is Sir Ector.'  

Now King Uther's servant comes to Arthur and falls to his knees. 'Sir Ector is not your father,' he says.  
'You are the son of King Uther.'  

'And now you are king of England,' says Merlin.  
'We have a king!' the people say. 'England has a king!'
So from that day, Arthur is king of England. He lives in Uther’s castle, with Merlin and his mother, and with Sir Ector and Kay. Soon King Arthur has a beautiful queen, Guinevere. He is a good king and the people love him. And he always carries the beautiful sword – the sword from the stone.
1 Write the names.

Arthur  Kay  King Uther  Sir Ector  Merlin  Guinevere

1 The servant takes King Uther’s baby boy to __Sir Ector__.
2 ____________ wants to fight in tournaments when he’s older.
3 ____________ is a friend of the kings of England.
4 A servant tells Sir Ector, ‘___________ is dead.’
5 ____________ pulls the sword out of the stone.
6 England soon has a new queen, ____________.

2 Answer the questions.

1 Who’s this? __It’s Arthur__.
2 Can he pull the sword out of the stone? _____________
3 Does he take the sword to Kay? _____________
4 Is he Sir Ector’s son? _____________
5 Is he King Uther’s son? _____________
6 Is he the new king of England? _____________
3 Match and write the words.

safe beautiful strong bad baby big

1 beautiful horse 2 knight 3 boy

4 Make sentences about the story. Then number them 1–5.

1 Arthur arrives at the tournament ...

with Merlin and all the people.

2 Arthur goes to the stone ...

and he lives in Uther’s castle.

3 All the people at the tournament ...

and it comes out of the stone.

4 Arthur pulls the sword, ...

with the sword from the stone.

5 Arthur is the new king of England, ...

stop and look.
castle
come out
cry
dead  He is dead.
fight
horses
jewels
king
knees
knight
pull

put back

queen

ride

road

safe  She's safe.

servant

stone

strong  He is strong.

sword

take out

tournament