

KING ARTHUR
and the
RECTANGULA
R
TABLE

A Short Musical Play
in One Scene

by
Janet Williams Stensaas

for
Grades 2 - 6

The Mail-Order Bride

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by Daris Howard

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

KING ARTHUR

SIR GAWAIN

DRAGON 1

SIR PERCIVAL

DRAGON 2

SIR TRISTAM

DRAGON 3

SIR GEORGE

DRAGON 4

SIR GALAHAD

DRAGON 5

SIR SEGRAMOUR

DRAGON 6

SIR BELWIN

DRAGON 7

SIR EUSTACE

DRAGON 8

SIR LANCELOT

DRAGON 9

QUEEN GUINEVERE

MORGAN LEFAY

LADIES OF THE COURT

MUSICAL NUMBERS

WE ARE THE BRAVEST KNIGHTS (All Knights)

A TABLE ROUND (Guenivere, Morgan, and Ladies)

THE REAL TALE OF THE ROUND TABLE (Company)

KING ARTHUR and the RECTANGULAR TABLE

SETTING: King Arthur's room. There is a rectangular table, with 2 chairs, one at the head, one at the foot.

AT RISE:

King Arthur sits at the head of the table. Surrounding him stand 9 Knights, each armed with a sword.

ARTHUR: Only knights may sit at my table. As King, I, of course, sit at the head, and the bravest knight of all may sit at the foot of the table.

GAWAIN: Well, then King Arthur, that's my seat, because I, Gawain, am the bravest. I remember the time I fought the terrible dragon.

(As he talks, the dragon enters and the two act out what Gawain is describing)

It came toward me, breathing fire.

DRAGON 1: Prepare for battle, Sir Gawain. Haaaaa!

GAWAIN: I rolled it and bowled it over. Then I pointed my sword at it and said: "Begone!" And it left. I am certainly the bravest knight of all.

*(Dragon exits and Gawain sits down in the seat.
Percival walks up behind Gawain, hands on hips)*

**Note: A different dragon enters to battle each knight, acting out what the knight describes*

PERCIVAL: I beg your pardon! I, Sir Percival, am the bravest. Why, when I fought the dragon, it came toward me, breathing fire.

DRAGON 2: Prepare for battle, Sir Percival. Haaaaa!

PERCIVAL: I bopped it and hopped over it. Then I pointed my sword at it and said: "Begone!" And it left. I am certainly the bravest knight of all.

TRISTAM: I beg your pardon! I, Sir Tristam, am the bravest. Why, when I fought the dragon, it came toward me, breathing fire.

DRAGON 3: Prepare for battle, Sir Tristam. Haaaaa!

TRISTAM: I flopped it and I bopped it. Then I pointed my sword at it and said: "Begone!" And it left. I am certainly the bravest knight of all.

GEORGE: I beg your pardon! I, Sir George, am the bravest. Why, when I fought the dragon, it came toward me, breathing fire.

DRAGON 4: Prepare for battle, Sir George. Haaaaa!

GEORGE: I picked up a bucket and poured water over the dragon and put its fire out. Then I pointed my sword at it and said: "Begone!" And it left. I am certainly the bravest knight of all.

GALAHAD: I beg your pardon! I, Sir Galahad, am the bravest. Why, when I fought the dragon, it came toward me, breathing fire.

DRAGON 5: Prepare for battle, Sir Galahad. Haaaaa!

GALAHAD: I roped it and tied it up like a puny little calf. Then I pointed my sword at it and said: "Begone!" And it left. I am certainly the bravest knight of all.

SEGRAMOUR: I beg your pardon! I, Sir Segramour, am the bravest. Why, when I fought the dragon, it came toward me, breathing fire.

DRAGON 6: Prepare for battle, Sir Segramour. Haaaaa!

SEGRAMOUR: I growled at it and showed my teeth. Then I pointed my sword at it and said: "Begone!" And it left. I am certainly the bravest knight of all.

BELWIN: I beg your pardon! I, Sir Belwin, am the bravest. Why, when I fought the dragon, it came toward me, breathing fire.

DRAGON 7: Prepare for battle, Sir Belwin. Haaaaa!

BELWIN: I jousted it and roused it. Then I pointed my sword at it and said: "Begone!" And it left. I am certainly the bravest knight of all.

EUSTACE: I beg your pardon! I, Sir Eustace, am the bravest. Why, when I fought the dragon, it came toward me, breathing fire.

DRAGON 8: Prepare for battle, Sir Eustace. Haaaaa!

EUSTACE: I bounced it and pounced on it. Then I pointed my sword at it and said: "Begone!" And it left. I am certainly the bravest knight of all.

LANCELOT: I beg your pardon! I, Sir Lancelot, am the bravest. Why, I didn't have to fight at all. When it came toward me, breathing fire...

DRAGON 9: Prepare for battle, Sir Lancelot. Haaaaa!

LANCELOT: I just looked it straight in the eye and said, very politely, "Please Begone!" And it left. I am certainly the bravest knight of all.

KING ARTHUR: Indeed, you are **all** the bravest knights of all.

WE ARE THE BRAVEST KNIGHTS (All Knights)

WE ARE THE BRAVEST KNIGHTS OF ALL,
OF ALL THE KNIGHTS BOTH SHORT AND TALL.
WE JUST LOOK AT A DRAGON AND DOWN IT FALLS.
WE ARE THE BRAVEST KNIGHTS OF ALL.

WE JOUSTED AND ROUSTED
AND POUNCED AND BOUNCED
AND SHOWED OUR TEETH AND GROWLED .
WE BOPPED IT AND FLOPPED IT
AND POURED WATER ON IT
SOTHAT DRAGON NEEDED A TOWEL.

WE ARE THE BRAVEST KNIGHTS OF ALL,
OF ALL THE KNIGHTS BOTH SHORT AND TALL.
WE JUST LOOK AT A DRAGON AND DOWN IT FALLS.
WE ARE THE BRAVEST KNIGHTS OF ALL.

ARTHUR: Sir Knights, Sir Knights, your attention please.
(Waits until they are quiet) I agree that you are all very
brave, but I must choose the one who will sit at the foot of my
table. After careful consideration, I choose.....Sir Lancelot.

LANCELOT: Thank you, thank you. Of course I accept. *(He
goes to sit down in the seat)*

ALL KNIGHTS: *(They talk at the same time, arguing)* But
that's not fair...I'm braver than he is...Why should he get the
seat...I'm a better fighter than he is.

*(Actors may make up lines to argue with. They then try
to sit in Lancelot's seat. He hangs onto the table so hard
that the table is tipped over. Everyone is suddenly quiet.)*

ARTHUR: Sir Knights! Now, look what you've done; you've
over- turned my table. Pick it up, pick it up!

*(The Knights pick up the table. At that moment, Queen
Gulnevere, Morgan LeFay, and the Ladies of the Court enter)*

GUINEVERE: Hello, Arthur. Oh, Arthur, I see you have made a mess of things again. Thank goodness we arrived in time to help you straighten it out.

ARTHUR: *(Dejectedly)* Oh, hello, Guinevere. Yes, it appears I have made a bit of a mess of things. But what can YOU do? You are not Knights, you're ladies.

GUINEVERE: We don't have to be Knights to know how to solve your problem. We just have to use some common sense.

MORGAN: We have a solution that will suit you perfectly. Ladies, will you help me bring it in?

(The ladies exit to get a round table top, carrying it in and placing it on top of the rectangular table, making a round table out of it)

MORGAN: Sir Knights, would you please stand around the table?

(The Knights surround the table and stand quietly)

GUINEVERE: As you can see, there is no head, there is no foot. All of you are equally brave and each deserve an equal place. Ladies! *(MUSIC STARTS)*

A TABLE ROUND (Guenivere, Morgan, and Ladies)

WHAT YOU NEED IS A TABLE ROUND
WITH CHAIRS FOR ALL YOUR KNIGHTS.
WITH NO HEAD AND WITH NO FOOT,
YOU WON'T HAVE ANY FIGHTS.

ROUND TABLE, TABLE ROUND,
SO SIMPLE TO ARRANGE.
EVERYBODY SITS AROUND,
IT'S QUITE A PLEASANT CHANGE.

WHAT YOU NEED IS A TABLE ROUND,
WITH EQUAL SEATS FOR ALL.
WITH NO ONE BRAVER THAN THE REST
YOUR TABLE WON'T HAVE TO FALL.

ROUND TABLE, TABLE ROUND,
IS THE ANSWER TO THE QUIZ.
WITH A SEAT FOR EVERYONE,
EACH ONE KNOWS WHICH SEAT IS HIS.

ARTHUR: By jove, I think you've hit upon a great idea. I think I'll call it: King Arthur and his Round Table. I'll go down in history.

GUINEVERE: Very well, Arthur, but everyone who is here today will know it was really OUR idea.

LANCELOT: King Arthur, I agree and I salute Queen Guinevere, Morgan LeFay, and all the fair ladies. Thank you, gracious Queen.

ARTHUR: All Hail Queen Guinevere and the ladies. (*All Knights join him*) HAIL, HAIL, HAIL!

THE REAL TALE OF THE ROUND TABLE (Company)
QUEEN GUINEVERE AND HER LADIES FAIR
FOUND ARTHUR AWFULLY MAD.
HIS KNIGHTS WERE FIGHTING ONCE AGAIN
AND MADE HIM AWFULLY SAD.

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO," SAID HE,
"ABOUT WHO'S SITTING WHERE.
I CAN'T HAVE ALL THESE KNIGHTS SO BRAVE
JUST SITTING HERE AND THERE."

SO GUINEVERE AND HER LADIES FAIR
ARRIVED AT A DECISION.
THEY CARRIED IN A TABLE ROUND
AND PLACED IT WITH PRECISION.

THEY TURNED A TABLE RECTANGLE
INTO A TABLE ROUND,
AND ONCE AGAIN THE VOICES HEARD
WERE RAISED IN HAPPY SOUND.

COSTUME HINTS

Helmets for the Knights (illustration a) are easily effected by the use of gallon-sized plastic milk jugs. Cut along the black line. Spray jug with silver paint. Invert jug to fit over actor's head.

Headdresses for the Ladies of the Court (illustration b) can be made of construction paper. Simply form a cone, with the large end fitted to the actor's head. Attach a filmy scarf to the top, to trail down the back.

***Note:** To make **hats** for the **Dragons** and **shields** for the **Knights**, follow the patterns on the following page.

SET HINTS

A **round table** can be constructed of cardboard, taped together with duct tape for added strength and painted brown. Sheets can be hung to form simple **backdrops**. If you have more time, tapestry-type designs can be painted on the sheets to imitate a castle room.