

Mark Twain

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

Hank Morgan is the boss of a factory in late 19th century Connecticut. One day, while he's working, a man hits him on the head. When Hank wakes up, he's in sixth century England. He's at the Court of King Arthur where he meets the Knights of the Round Table, Queen Guenever and also makes friends with Sandy and Clarence. Hank knows more than the others, so he soon becomes very important for the King. He wants to make the country more modern, but things don't always go the way he wants...

In this reader you will find:

- Information about Mark Twain
- A section with background and contextual information
- A glossary of difficult words
- Comprehension and grammar activities including A1 Movers style exercises and 21st century skills activities
- Final test

Tags

Fantasy | Legend | Adventure | Love

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STAGE 3	1000 headwords	Intermediate	B1	Preliminary

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A Connecticut Yankee
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ELT
A1
Mark Twain

Stage 1 A1

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

Teen Readers



Teen
 Readers

Classic

~ Mark Twain ~

A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT



ILLUSTRATED BY

*Margherita
Micheli*

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Book brief

- 1** *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* is an 1889 novel by American writer, Mark Twain.
- 2** A comedy set in the 6th century, when Hank Morgan, a Yankee engineer from Connecticut in the 19th century, finds himself back in the time of King Arthur, after being hit on the head.
- 3** Twain wrote the book after dreaming about being a knight, and it's often considered an example of how to write a 'time travel' story.
- 4** In the story, Hank tries to teach the people of medieval England what he knows to make their lives better.
- 5** The book questions many social ideals and is a humorous satire of feudalism and the monarchy.

Mark Twain

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

Retold and with activities by

Jane Bowie

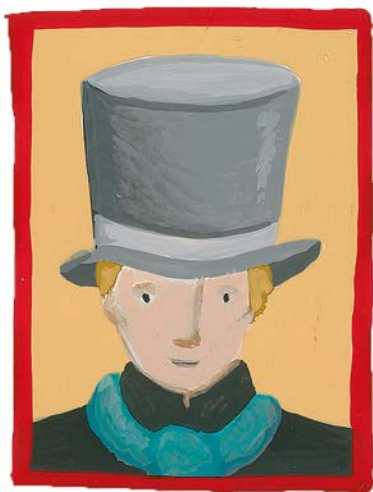
Illustrated by

Margherita Micheli

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Main Characters



Hank Morgan

A Yankee engineer from 19th century Connecticut. He tries to make life better for King Arthur's people.



Clarence

Hank's best friend. He helps him with his new ideas.



Sandy

A pretty girl who believes in magic.



Merlin

The magician at King Arthur's Court. He doesn't like Hank at all.

King Arthur

*The King of Camelot. He
listens to Hank's ideas
because he wants
to help his people.*



Guenever

King Arthur's wife.



Before you read

Reading and Writing **MOVERS**

- 1 These words are all in Chapter 1. Look at the pictures and choose the correct word for each definition.



armour



magician



castle



dragon



lightning



king



prison



tower

This animal is in many old stories:

dragon

- 1 You see this when the weather is bad: _____
- 2 This is where they put people who are bad: _____
- 3 This building is very high: _____
- 4 In some places, this person is head of the country: _____
- 5 Important people lived in this kind of building in the past: _____

Speaking

- 2 This book is called *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Look online and answer these questions.

- 1 Who was King Arthur?
- 2 What does 'Yankee' mean?
- 3 Can you see Connecticut on this map? Which country is it in?
- 4 What kind of story do you think this is?
- 5 What kind of books do you like reading?
- 6 How important do you think it is to read? Why?

21st
Century
Skills



Grammar

3 Circle the correct form of the verb for each sentence.

- The writer meets / meet a man at Warwick Castle.
- 1 Warwick Castle *is* / *has* in England.
 - 2 The man *says* / *tells* the writer many stories.
 - 3 The man's name *is* / *are* Hank Morgan.
 - 4 Hank *go* / *goes* to the hotel to speak to the writer.
 - 5 Hank *gives* / *give* the writer his story to read.
 - 6 Hank *comes* / *goes* from the USA.

Listening

▶ 3 4 Decide if you think the sentences are true (T) or false (F). Then listen and check your answers.

- | | T | F |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Hank Morgan starts his story at work. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1 Someone hits him on his legs. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 When he wakes up he sees a man in armour on a horse. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 He meets a young man who tells him he's at King Arthur's Court. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 He meets King Arthur. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 There are no women at King Arthur's Court. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Merlin the magician is boring. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 Sir Kay says Hank is very dangerous. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



King Arthur's Court

The writer meets a man called Hank Morgan at Warwick Castle. The man gives him his story to read.

2 I was at Warwick Castle in England when I met a man. He told me many stories about the past. I liked them very much. Then we saw some old armour¹. There was a bullet² hole³ in the armour.

"That's strange⁴," I said. "They didn't have guns⁵ at that time."

"I did it," said the man, and smiled.

I was surprised. The man came to my hotel room that evening. He gave me some papers. His name was Hank Morgan. This is his story. ■

3 I was in my factory in Connecticut. A worker hit me and I fell down. I woke up under a tree and saw a strange man in armour on a horse. He said I was his prisoner⁶. His name was Sir Kay. I went with him to a village. He said it was Camelot. I thought it was all a bad dream.

I thought all the people were mad⁷. They all looked at my clothes. They thought I was strange.

I started to talk to a boy. His name was Clarence.

¹ **armour** 

² **bullet** 

³ **hole** 

⁴ **strange** something you don't usually see


⁵ **gun** 

⁶ **prisoner** if you're someone's prisoner, you must do what they say


⁷ **mad** if someone is mad, they do strange or silly things

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

"Where am I?" I asked.

"King Arthur's Court, in the year 513," he answered. "You're going to prison¹ and then they want to kill² you." Then some people took me to the King at his Round Table. There were lots of knights³ round the table. The room was very big and there was music. The knights ate and the women watched them. They all had beautiful clothes. An old man stood up and told a story. Everyone was bored and fell asleep. The old man was Merlin. Then Sir Kay told them about me. He told a lot of lies⁴ and said I was very dangerous. He took me to Queen Guenever. He said my clothes were magic⁵. They took away my clothes and then put me in prison. I fell asleep. 

Someone hits Hank Morgan on the head and when he wakes up he's in the year 513 at King Arthur's Court.

 4 When I woke up, I thought it was all a dream but I was wrong. I was a prisoner at King Arthur's Court. Clarence came to visit me.

"Help me to get out of here," I said to him.

"I can't," he answered. "There are lots of guards⁶ and there's a spell⁷ on this prison. Merlin

¹ **prison** where they put people who do something wrong

² **kill** make someone die

³ **knight** 

⁴ **lies** if you tell a lie you say something that isn't true

⁵ **magic** a special power to do something impossible

⁶ **guard** a person who watches prisoners so that they don't get away

⁷ **spell** a kind of magic

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did it. No one can get out of here. Tomorrow at 12 o'clock, they want to burn¹ you."

I was very sad and angry, but I had an idea.

"I'm not afraid," I said. "I'm a great magician². Is today the 20th of June?"

"Yes, it is," said Clarence.

"Then go and tell the King that, if I want, I can take the sun away from the world and make it dark forever if they try to hurt me."

I knew from my studies that on 21st June 513 there was a total solar eclipse³. That was my magic: to make the sun disappear⁴!

The next day they came to get me and tied⁵ me to a big tree. People sat around to watch. Everyone wanted to see. I was afraid. What if I were wrong about the eclipse?

Then everyone looked up. *The eclipse is starting*, I thought. "Burn him," shouted Merlin.

"Stop!" shouted King Arthur. "Please, don't take the sun away! What do you want? I can give you anything!"

I said I wanted to be his minister⁶ and help

¹ **burn** you burn yourself if you go near something hot

² **magician** 

³ **solar eclipse** when the moon passes in front of the sun

⁴ **disappear** if something disappears, you can't see it anymore

⁵ **tie** if you tie someone to something, they can't move.

⁶ **minister** someone who helps the king with his work



They want to burn Hank so they tie him to a tree, but then the solar eclipse starts and they think he's a magician.



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The solar eclipse passes and the sun comes out again. King Arthur and his people think that Hank did it so he saves himself and becomes King Arthur's most important minister.

Merlin doesn't like him so Hank uses gunpowder and lightning to make his tower go BOOM! Everyone now thinks he's a very clever magician.

him, and he agreed¹. The moon was in front of the sun now and everything was dark. So I pointed at the sun and shouted, "Sun! Come back to us!" The sun started to come out again and everyone was happy.

So, the King made me his minister and everyone in Camelot had to do what I said. Clarence helped me. I had beautiful clothes which were difficult to wear all day, and the best rooms after the King. People came from all over the country to see me. I was famous, but they wanted some more magic from me.

Merlin was in prison. He was my enemy², so I said I wanted to burn his tower with fire³ from the sky. His tower was an old Roman one and very strong. One stormy⁴ night I put lots of gunpowder⁵ inside the tower and tied a long piece of metal⁶ to it. Then I called everyone and we watched as the lightning⁷ hit the tower and it went BOOM! Everyone was afraid. They thought I was a very clever magician.

Day after day, I could see that the people

¹ **agree** if you agree with someone, you think the same as them

² **enemy** someone who isn't a friend

³ **fire** 🔥

⁴ **stormy** when the weather is very bad

⁵ **gunpowder** 💣

⁶ **metal** a car is made of metal

⁷ **lightning** ⚡

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

in Camelot were like children. They didn't understand many things. They couldn't read or write and they weren't good with numbers. They believed¹ everything they heard. I started to open secret² schools. I put down wires³ for telephones. I wanted to write for a newspaper.

Hank wants to make things better and more modern for the people so he starts secret schools and puts in telephone wires.

I taught Clarence to be a journalist. The King and the nobles⁴ believed they were better than me but they thought I was clever. I thought I was better than them because I knew more than them, but I liked them. So, we were all friends.

After four years, King Arthur was very happy with my work. He was richer⁵ because I helped him to make more money. More money went to the people of Camelot so they were happier too. They started to call me 'The Boss'. I liked it.

Hank also helps the King to make more money and to help his people, so everyone is happier and they call him 'The Boss'.

People at Camelot loved watching jousting⁶. Hundreds of knights did this sport and many hurt themselves. Sometimes the knights went to

¹ **believed** when you think what someone said is true

² **secret** if something is a secret, you don't want other people to know about it

³ **wires** 

⁴ **noble** a person who comes from an important family

⁵ **richer** to have more money than before

⁶ **jousting** a medieval sport where two knights try to make each other fall their horses

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save¹ princesses² from dragons. They believed in dragons and giants³.

Hank agrees to go with Alisande to save her mistress and forty-four girls who are the prisoners of huge guards with four arms and one eye, in a castle.

One day a girl came to Camelot. Her name was Alisande la Carteloise. She said her mistress⁴ and forty-four girls, many of whom were princesses, were prisoners in a castle. The guards were three huge men with four arms and one eye. At Camelot they said I had to save them. I thought it was time for a holiday so I agreed.

I asked Alisande questions which she couldn't answer.

"Where's the castle?"

"Many miles⁵ away," she answered.

"How many?" I asked.

"I don't know," she said. "They all look the same."

I got up early and had breakfast. Then I put on my armour. It took a very long time. There were many parts and I couldn't move or do anything. They had to carry me out and help me onto the horse. Then Alisande climbed onto the horse behind me. She had to show me how to get to the castle. We left and everyone waved goodbye to us. ■

Think

How do you think Hank can save the prisoners?

¹ **save** help someone to stop something bad happening to them

² **princess** the King's daughter

³ **giant** 

⁴ **mistress** a woman boss

⁵ **miles** 1 mile = about 1.60 km



Hank and Alisande are going to the castle to save the girls.



Reading and Writing

1 Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?

	T	F
An American tells the story.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 Someone hits the man on the head.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 He wakes up in the sixteenth century.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 There are a lot of people at King Arthur's Court.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 King Arthur puts the man in prison.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 His friend Clarence saves him from burning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Merlin likes Hank.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 People think the solar eclipse is magic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Hank helps King Arthur to make more money.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reading and Writing

MOVERS

2 Choose the correct word(s) for each sentence.

The people at King Arthur's Court wanted to kill Hank.

kill ~~to kill~~ killing

1 They _____ Hank's clothes because they thought they were magic.

had got took

2 Hank _____ the people that he could take the sun away.

spoke said told

3 Hank knew there was a solar eclipse _____ 21st June 513.

on in at

4 Hank had the _____ rooms after the King.

good better best

5 Alisande climbed onto the horse _____ Hank.

before behind near

Speaking

21st
Century
Skills

3 Answer the questions with a partner.

- 1 In the story, Hank travels back in time to the year 513. What other stories or films do you know where the people are time travellers?
- 2 What kind of films do you like?
- 3 Do you watch films on TV or online? Why?
- 4 Would you like to travel back to the past or into the future? Why?
- 5 What can you learn if you travel to other countries?
- 6 Which countries would you like to visit? Why?



Before-reading Activity

Listening

- 6 4 Listen to track 6 and decide if the statements are true (T) or false (F).

- 1 Hank meets a group of rich people.
- 2 The Freeman give Hank a present.
- 3 The Freeman are knights.
- 4 They have to pay tax.
- 5 The Freeman are repairing the bishop's house.
- 6 Clarence is teaching people to read and write.
- 7 Hank gives the men five pennies.

T	F
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>