

Merlin as a Supernatural Aid

In the first column, record the actions and characteristics of Merlin in *Le'Morte de Arthur* and then Merlyn in *The Once and Future King*. In the second column, record evidence from the text that supports the description of Merlin. In the final column, write a response that compares or contrasts Campbell's description of a supernatural aid with Merlin in *Le'Morte de Arthur* and then Merlyn in *The Once and Future King*.

Characteristics of Merlin in Le'Morte	Evidence (quotation or paraphrase)	Compare/Contrast with Campbell
disguised as a beggar	"So Ulfius departed, and by adventure he met Merlin in a beggar's array, and there Merlin asked Ulfius whom he sought" (1).	Campbell claims that the supernatural aid will often be disguised as old or decrepit, much like Merlin appearing as a beggar.
promises to help King Uther, under certain conditions, including that he give Merlin his son	"if King Uther will well reward me, and be sworn unto me to fulfil my desire, that shall be his honour and profit more than mine; for I shall cause him to have all his desire" (1).	In Campbell's examples, the supernatural aid offers grace, mercy, and protection, but his comparison myths do not include the supernatural aid offering these gifts under any conditions. However, in Le'Morte, Merlin remains a selfless benefactor. This Merlin is similar to those aids in Campbell's myths, because his conditions are not to benefit himself but rather to help Arthur fulfill his destiny.

Merlin has supernatural powers.	Merlin magically transforms King Uther. So he looks like Igraine's husband (2).	<p>Campbell offers the example of the Spider Woman who has feathers that magically subdue the Twin God's enemies.</p> <p>The old woman Kyazimba meets can fly him to the zenith.</p> <p>Maymunah and Ariadne have mythological powers.</p>
Merlin is a powerful advisor.	The men in power, the King and the Archbishop, listen to Merlin's advice. The King follows Merlin's advice into battle, and then the Archbishop, at Merlin's request, summons the knights to the stone (6).	The aids in Campbell's myths also guide those in power as well as the heroes. The old woman brings Kyazimba to the chieftain, who then blesses him with prosperity. Similarly, Maymuna guides the Persian prince to his destiny.

Characteristics of Merlyn in <i>The Once and Future King</i>	Evidence (quotation or paraphrase)	Compare/Contrast with Campbell
Merlyn is portrayed as a philosopher, teacher and magician.	<p>Philosopher (44)</p> <p>Wart's teacher "that was what Merlyn was for"</p> <p>Merlyn warns Wart about the proper behavior in the mews, especially to steer clear of Cully (77) Merlyn tests his wit and quickness of getting away from Cully (83-84). Merlyn turns</p>	<p>The Spider Woman teaches the Twin Gods how to subdue their enemies with magical feathers.</p> <p>Campbell describes the aid as "the great figure of the guide, the teacher, the ferryman, the conductor of souls into the afterworld" (60).</p>

	<p>Wart into an ant, so he can learn when the group is put before self. For example, Wart is turned into a kind of feeding machine and must let other ants feed from him whenever they are hungry (127).</p> <p>Merlyn turns Wart into an owl and he has a conversation with a swan, learning that birds view war and land boundaries as barbaric and a sign of immaturity. "I like fighting," Merlin tells the swan. "It's knightly." "Because you're a baby," the swan retorts (170).</p>	
<p>Merlyn is in communication with the mythological gods, and has the power to transform.</p>	<p>Summons Psoiden who turns Wart into a fish (45-46)</p> <p>Merlyn turns Wart into a fish, a bird, and a ant.</p>	<p>Campbell retells the story of Maymunah, a Jinniyah, who protects a Persian prince. Jinniyah "have the power of putting on any form they please" (61).</p>
<p>Merlyn is like a parent</p>	<p>Merlyn appears knitting and lecturing Wart to</p>	<p>Campbell describes the protector Virgil as "motherly and fatherly</p>

figure to Wart.	be patient (74). Merlyn is Wart's protector, and Merlyn obeys him much like a father or mother. When he is sick, Merlyn visits him. (121)	at the same time" (60).
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