

Author: Unknown

Timeline Date: According to the British Library, 1375 AD

There are two projects for this meeting. The parents and children in our group made the choice at home according to which project felt right for their age and brain stage of reasoning.

Background:

Envisioning the underlying meaning of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* brings us more enjoyment as we read the story, because we can relate to what we are reading.

The author of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* stresses Christian morality throughout the poem, but he also shows evidence of a connected between humans and nature, and that animal instincts are present within us and can overtake us.

According to the writer of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, King Solomon initially planned the five-pointed star as his own seal. An image of truth, the star has five connection points that lock with one another, shaping the unending knot. The pentangle represents the ideals which Gawain strives for: to be impeccable in his five senses, never to fail in his five fingers, to be strengthened by the five joys that the Virgin Mary had in Jesus, to be reinforced by the five delights that the Virgin Mary had in Jesus (the Annunciation, Nativity, Resurrection, Ascension, and Assumption), and to have brotherly love, courtesy, piety, and chastity. The side of the shield facing Gawain has a picture of the Virgin Mary to ensure he never loses heart.

Another different theory asserts that Gawain descended from the Irish hero, Lugh. Stylized triangles recur in Irish myth and Celtic design. They represent various gods and goddesses, such as the Triple Goddess maid, mother, and crone. In Christianity, the triangle represents the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. George Lyman Kittredge and Alice Buchanan long ago argued that Gawain is a Christianized derivation of Irish myth.

Another point of view regarding the section on the seasons, and connections to animals and plants, is a way of describing the passing of time and how time dictates the behavior of all of them. The focus on time intimately links to the respect for customs and traditions, in the culture such as in there is a proper time for things like feasting, celebrating, eating, and sleeping.

What do you think about overlaying a pagan myth with Christian truth?

## PROJECT ONE

## Goal:

Preconceived ideas start wars in relationships and among countries. When we are young and see an object, we determine its meaning because we are told what it means or we quickly arrive at an opinion based on limited information. Maturity requires us to slow down so we can move past an initial conclusion to explore other possibilities. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* melds Pagan and Christian theology together. Let your pentangle represent this to imagine what it would have been like in his time period.

## Directions:

Make a pentangle that represents the ideas presented in the book. You can make it from paper, metal, string or any material you like.

*Do this before making your pentangle:*

How does the Pentangle represent Sir Gawain?

Examine the points of the knightly code of the time. Make a list of the points that were not seen in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* emphasized in the pentangle?

What is the code of chivalry?

How does Gawain embody that code?

What is the significance of the star?

How does the Pentangle represent infinity or eternity?

What is the symbolism—both pagan and Christian—of the triangle?

What is the significance of the interconnectedness of the triangles?

Make a list of the symbols from above that you can see in our culture. Example: the circle of life and other circles that symbolize eternity?

Make a list of meanings for the circle, triangle, intersections between the lines and so forth.

*Then do this:*

Make your pentangle and prepare to explain it to the group.

Need a little help to get your creative juices flowing? Make a pentangle and write one aspect of the Code of Chivalry (and, thus, Gawain's character) on each point of the star. Then let your imagination run wild as you add other meanings to it.

## PROJECT TWO

### Goal:

To walk in the shoes of the characters in the story and have a great time.

Task: Act out a scene from *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Time Limit: 2 minutes

\*Our club was large. Therefore, we had to limit speeches to fit the time we set aside for the meal, socializing, and the conversation.

### Directions:

1. Choose a scene from the book.
2. If the scene included dialog, you may use it. If not, make it up.
3. Memorize your lines.
4. You may act alone or work in groups of 2 or 3.
5. Search online for videos of people who have done this project before.