

# Class Set

## American Reaction Reading

**ARTHUR'S CAMELOT** -The legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table in Camelot are among the world's most famous legends. The legends state that Arthur was raised not knowing he was a king's son. He came to power as a young man when he pulled the sword from the stone. Camelot was the city where King Arthur held his court. It was a magical place, attracting only the most honorable and chivalrous people. The inhabitants were noble people, no matter to what level of society they belonged. Even the common people felt included and looked to the future with high ideals and hope. King Arthur gathered the most valiant knights to join his Round Table. They were honor-bound to protect the weak, help the needy, and fight evil wherever it appeared. King Arthur was married to a beautiful princess named Guinevere. She was regal and elegant and felt the same duty to her subjects as King Arthur and his knights. King Arthur and his knights pursued many quests and adventures, slaying the wicked, fighting dragons, and searching for the Holy Grail. King Arthur was finally slain by Modred, one of his knights who turned traitor.

**KENNEDY'S CAMELOT** -John Fitzgerald Kennedy's thousand days of presidency were a magical time. Young and enthusiastic, he gathered intellectual, idealistic, talented people to staff his White House and fill positions in his administration. In his inaugural speech, Kennedy made his famous challenge: Ask not what your country can do for you -- ask what you can do for your country. He envisioned a United States that cared for the sick and elderly, protected the weak and downtrodden, and championed a better future for all. The White House had been newly renovated, and Jacqueline Kennedy (the First Lady) gave a televised tour that drew 48 million viewers. She was charming and elegant and won the hearts of Americans and foreigners. On a successful trip to Paris, John Kennedy joked, I am the man who accompanied Jacqueline Kennedy to Paris. She hosted White House musicales and dinners. One guest list included 49 Nobel Prize winners. The Kennedy administration took stands against the spread of Communism in such situations as the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam Conflict. When peaceful means were not effective, military might was brought to bear. The Peace Corps was started by John Kennedy to promote mutual understanding and world peace. He felt America had the knowledge that, if shared, could help undeveloped countries help themselves.

**SPUTNIK SUMMARY AND REACTION** -On Friday, October 4, 1957, in Kazakhstan, U.S.S.R., a rocket engine took off. Two radios clicked on , emitting a stead beep....beep....beep. The sphere dubbed (named) Sputnik (Russian for traveling companion), began to circle the earth. Sputnik's beeps were coded messages of the observations it was making as it sailed through the skies. The shiny Soviet moon had become our planet's first artificial satellite. That evening, in the United States, the event became real for millions of Americans as the chirping (beeping) of Sputnik interrupted their favorite radio and television programs. Sputnik's electronic beep could be heard coming from their radios and television sets. The first reaction was shock, and then anger, and fear set in. Sputnik was more proof of the growing Communist superiority in the all-important missile field. If the Soviets could send a satellite whirling around the world, could they not use the same technology to deliver a nuclear bomb to a U.S. city? Concern increased when, a month later, the Russians launched a much larger satellite, Sputnik II, carrying a 11-pound dog, Laika. Putting a living creature into space indicated that the Russians might soon send a man into space.

On the morning of December 6, 1957, Americans attempted to put a Vanguard satellite into orbit at Cape Canaveral (later name was changed to **Cape Kennedy**), Florida. The rocket fell over slowly and broke apart -- it was a failure. This did not stop the Americans and on January 31, 1958, the little Explorer satellite was in orbit. By July, Congress had set up the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to plan and execute (begin) space exploration, and within a year (1959), NASA named seven men America's first astronauts, Alan Shepard, Virgil Grissom, Gordon Cooper, Scott Carpenter, John Glenn, Donald Slayton, and Walter Schirra. The beep, beep of Sputnik I turned out to be wake-up call.

<http://coreknowledge.org/CK/resrcs/lessons/898AdaptKennedy.htm> <June 2008>