Sir Bedivere and Excalibur

Read the story

Long, long ago there lived a famous king. His name was Arthur and he was the king of the Britons. King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table fought many battles. Arthur's last battle was against his own son, Mordred, at Camlan. The armies started fighting early in the morning and the battle lasted all day. When they finished fighting, Mordred was dead and the king was badly wounded. Only one of Arthur's knights survived – Sir Bedivere.

After the battle of Camlan, Sir Bedivere took the wounded king to the island of Avalon. The island was in the middle of a lake. Arthur knew the lake well. He remembered the day when he received his magic sword, Excalibur, from the Lady of the Lake. 'That was a long time ago,' he thought. Then he said to Sir Bedivere: 'I need to return Excalibur to the lake before I die.' But he was too weak to move, so the knight offered to take the sword. 'Throw the sword out into the middle of the lake,' said the king. Sir Bedivere promised to do it.

The knight stood on the shore of the lake and looked at Excalibur. It was such a beautiful sword. He couldn't imagine throwing it away. He decided to keep it. On the way back to the king, he stopped to hide the sword in the bushes.

'Have you done it?' asked King Arthur, when the knight returned.

'Yes, Your Majesty,' said Sir Bedivere.

The king smiled. 'Tell me,' he said. 'What did you see?'

'Nothing,' said the knight.

The king stopped smiling. 'You didn't throw the sword into the lake,' he said. 'Go back and do it.'

Sir Bedivere didn't want to throw the sword into the water, but he agreed to do it and went back to the lake. He picked up the sword and started to throw it, but he couldn't do it. He hid the sword again and went back to the king. Again the king asked him: 'What did you see?'

'Nothing happened,' he said. 'The sword just fell into the water.'

King Arthur was very angry. He refused to believe the knight's story. 'I see that I must do it myself,' he said, and he tried to stand up.

Exercise 1 – Comprehension questions

Answer the questions in full sentences.

1. **Who was King Arthur's last battle against?**

2. **Which knight survived the battle of Camlan?**

3. **Where did Sir Bedivere take King Arthur after the battle?**

4. **What did King Arthur want Sir Bedivere to do with Excalibur?**

5. **Why didn't Sir Bedivere throw the sword into the lake the first time?**

6. **Where did Sir Bedivere hide the sword?**

7. **What did Sir Bedivere tell the king he saw when he came back?**

8. **How did King Arthur know Sir Bedivere was lying?**

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Exercise 2 – Match the word to its meaning

Draw a line to match each word on the left with the correct meaning on the right.

1. battle	→	having special powers that are not normal or natural
2. wounded	→	said you will definitely do something
3. shore	→	not having much strength or energy
4. survived	→	to put something where others cannot find it
5. promised	→	hurt or injured, usually in a fight
6. weak	→	the land at the edge of a lake or sea
7. hide	→	continued to live after a dangerous event
8. magic	→	a fight between armies or groups of people

Exercise 3 – Fill in the gaps

Use the words from the vocabulary box to complete the sentences.

1. Only one _____ survived the battle of Camlan.
2. King Arthur's _____ sword was called Excalibur.
3. Sir Bedivere stood on the _____ of the lake.
4. The king was too _____ to move after the battle.
5. Sir Bedivere decided to _____ the sword in the bushes.
6. Sir Bedivere _____ the king he would throw Excalibur into the lake.

Exercise 4 – Verb patterns

Some verbs are followed by to + infinitive. Some are followed by verb + -ing.

Look at the examples from the story:

verb + to + infinitive	**verb + -ing**
decide to keep, want to throw, agree to do, try to stand	imagine throwing, stop hiding

Now complete these sentences. Use the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. He couldn't imagine _____ it away. (throw)
2. He decided _____ it. (keep)
3. He stopped _____ the sword in the bushes. (hide)
4. Sir Bedivere didn't want _____ the sword into the water. (throw)
5. He agreed _____ it and went back to the lake. (do)
6. He picked up the sword and started _____ it. (throw)
7. He tried _____ up. (stand)
8. He refused _____ the knight's story. (believe)

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Exercise 5 – Find the mistake

In each group, **two sentences are correct** and **one sentence has a mistake** with the verb form. Tick (✓) the two correct sentences.

Group 1	
□	a. She decided to keep the sword.
□	b. He couldn't imagine to throw it away.
□	c. They agreed to help the king.

Group 2	
□	a. He promised doing it before he left.
□	b. She refused to believe his story.
□	c. He tried to stand up.

Group 3	
□	a. He wanted to return the sword.
□	b. He stopped to hide the sword in the bushes.
□	c. He enjoyed to fight in battles.

Group 4	
□	a. They started fighting early in the morning.
□	b. He offered to take the sword.
□	c. He avoided to go back to the king.

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