

Core D Ancient Lit | Obituary Assignment

For this assignment, you will write an obituary for any one of the characters from *Le Morte d'Arthur*. Your obituary must include the pertinent details of the character's life, as well as a potential celebration of accomplishments. If you feel that your character is not worthy of such praise, you may deal honestly with the facts of their life using a more neutral tone, however, you must still employ useful descriptions to communicate their life and personality to your audience.

You can fabricate information that is not known, but please research information on your character to try to determine known details (dates of birth/death, spouse, children, locations of birth/death, etc). Remember, these characters are potentially based in historical fact so some of this information is available outside of our text. One helpful resource is "The Camelot Project" from The University of Rochester: <https://d.lib.rochester.edu/theme/Camelot%20Project?type=Character>

Your obituary can be more than a recitation of the facts. It can be heartwarming and/or amusing (see attached examples). However, it must be appropriate to the character of your choosing and your time period. If you're going to make a joke, it should be one that would be understood by a European citizen in 15th century AD and be respectful of the position held by each man.

The obituary must be at least 700 words in length and should include citations for quoted/paraphrased material, a Works Cited page, and the following:

- Full name of the character/person
- Date of birth
- Date of death
- Age at the time of death
- Cause of death
- Education
- Occupation
- Major accomplishments/achievements
- Names of the character's parents
- Names of the character's closest deceased and surviving relatives
- Place of residence
- Place of funeral/burial

I have provided a *Student Planning Sheet* to help you organize your information and sample obituaries of real people for inspiration.

The assignment is due May 4, 2022 and should be submitted to Turnitin before class on that day. Please also bring a paper copy to class as some of you will be reciting this obituary in front of the class as a part of our Round Table Memorial Service.

Student Planning Sheet

Before writing the obituary, you will need to gather information about the deceased person or character. You must make up information that is not known, but it should make sense within the context of the story.

Name of Deceased	
Date of Birth	
Date of Death	
Age at the Time of Death	
Cause of the Death	
Education	
Occupation	
Major Accomplishments/Achievement	
Names of the Character's Parents	
Names of the Character's Closest Surviving Relatives	
Place of Residence	
Place, date and time of Funeral/Burial	

Obituary for Joy Lofthouse (Military)

In 1943 Joy Lofthouse, a 20-year-old bank cashier, replied to an advertisement she had seen in the *Aeroplane* magazine. It was for women to train for the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA), and although the competition was intense her application was successful. As a result she went on to become one of 164 female pilots during the Second World War who were given the important job of ferrying military planes around the UK from one air base to another.

Lofthouse, who has died aged 94, showed great aptitude for flying. Her first solo flight was in a Miles Magister, an open, low-winged monoplane. After qualifying, her initial work focused on delivering Magisters and Tiger Moth biplanes to flying schools. Later she moved on to fighter planes, including Spitfires.

She was born Joyce Gough, always known as Joy, in Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Her father was a professional footballer who later became a hairdresser, and her mother was a dressmaker. Educated at Cirencester grammar school, both Joy and her older sister, Yvonne, were dedicated to sport in general and to tennis in particular. Joy began working in the local Lloyds bank just as war broke out.

But she had greater ambitions than to be a cashier, and sought inspiration in the pages of the *Aeroplane* magazine, the journal whose then editor had proclaimed that “the menace is the woman who thinks she ought to be flying a high-speed bomber when she really has not the intelligence to scrub the floor of a hospital properly”.

When Joy applied to the ATA she had no idea that Yvonne had also put in an application, just before her. Both were successful and served together until the end of the war.

As a flying member of the female section of the ATA – which also had 1,153 men in its employ – Lofthouse was one of what the press liked to call the *Attagirls*, working on pay rates equal to those of the men. That there was a women’s section and that it attracted pilots from around the world was substantially due to the efforts, before and during the war, of their senior commander, Pauline Gower. The pilots’ work expanded rapidly from the transport of medical supplies and personnel to ferrying fighters and bombers to bases around the country. For Lofthouse this meant a posting to Hamble, near Southampton, in 1944.

Alongside workaday aircraft she also flew more spectacular machines. There were Hawker Tempest Vs, North American Mustangs and Supermarine Spitfires, all 400mph fighters. She flew a total of 18 types of aircraft – relying on a map and the view out of the cockpit for navigation – but the Spitfire was her enduring favorite.

By 1945 she completed training for twin-engine planes, only to quit the ATA after the end of the war; it was wound up that November.

In 1946 EC Cheeseman’s book, *Brief Glory: The Story of ATA*, was published, listing, on page 230, “Third Officer Gough, Joyce, Miss”. But jobs for women pilots were then practically nonexistent, and she had to turn to other things.

After the war she married Jiri Hartman, a Czech Spitfire pilot whom she had first encountered while working at Lloyds. The marriage ended in divorce in 1966. Two years later, while training to become a teacher in Portsmouth, she met Charles Lofthouse, a former bomber pilot who had been held at Stalag Luft III prison camp in what is now Poland, where he had worked on preparations for the 1944 Great Escape. They married in 1971, by which time he was a head teacher and she was teaching children with special needs.

It was only towards the end of the 20th century that the scale of the achievement of women such as Lofthouse began to be appreciated. Throughout her life she retained her links with her former female comrades in the ATA and attended many reunions. In 1990 she met young women aspiring to be RAF pilots at Biggin Hill, and in 2008 she was a recipient of a commemorative badge for the *Attagirls* issued by the government. She was also a patron of the *Fly2Help* charity, which encourages young people to take up flying. In 2015, at Goodwood in Sussex, she took to the air in a (dual-control) Spitfire for the first time in 70 years.

She and Charles retired to Cirencester. He died in 2002. She is survived by a son, Peter, and a daughter, Lyn, from her first marriage, and a grandson. Another son from that marriage, Michael, died in 2008.

Obituary for Antonia Larroux (Civilian/humorous)

Waffle House lost a loyal customer on April 30, 2013. Antonia W. "Toni" Larroux died after a battle with multiple illnesses: lupus, rickets, scurvy, kidney disease and feline leukemia. She had previously conquered polio as a child contributing to her unusually petite ankles and the nickname "polio legs" given to her by her ex-husband, Jean F. Larroux, Jr. It should not be difficult to imagine the multiple reasons for their divorce 35+ years ago. Two children resulted from that marriage: Hayden Hoffman and Jean F. Larroux, III. Due to multiple, anonymous Mother's Day cards which arrived each May, the children suspect there were other siblings but that has never been verified.

She is survived by the two confirmed, aforementioned children. Her favorite child, Jean III, eloped in college and married Kim Fulford who dearly loved Toni. They gave Toni three grandchildren: Jean IV, Ann Elizabeth and Hannah Grace. Toni often remarked that her son, Jean III, was "just like his father," her ex-husband, Jean Jr., a statement that haunts her son to this day.

Hayden Hoffman married Stephen Hoffman of Charleston, WV. They reside in Bay St. Louis and carry the Larroux family torch forward through each and every Happy Hour, Mardi Gras and cocktail party. Steve's quiet demeanor has provided ballast to an otherwise unstable family. They have two children: Charlie and Helen (the 'well-behaved' child Toni's daughter, Hayden deserved to raise.)

Toni had four sisters: Patty the elder, Kitty the cook, Lisa the lawyer and Piji...the...piji. The sisters dearly loved Toni; spoke often and as one family photo proved, all preferred Clairol blonde in a box #47. They inherited their unique sense of humor from their father, Paul "P. Marvelous" White. He gave nicknames to all the girls such as "tittle mouse", "kittycat", "boulder bounce", "spooker mcdougale" and "poodle pump."

Toni previously served on the board of the Hancock County Library Foundation. Ironically, the only correspondence she has received from the library since her resignation has been overdue notices for several overdue books (a true statement.) Between ICU, dialysis and physical therapy she selfishly refused to make the time to return them. Her last words were, "tell them that the check is in the mail..." Toni retired from GE Plastics after Hurricane Katrina in 2007. She would undoubtedly cherish the thought of having the former smoking room named in her honor.

Any sendoff for Toni would not be complete without mentioning her lifelong buddy Myrtle Jane Wingo Haas and her adopted daughters Liz & Laura. She considered Aaron Burrell to be a distant grandson (not distant enough) and had the ability with family pets to usher them toward heaven at an unrivaled pace. Her favorite activity was sipping hot tea on her back porch with friends seated around her porch ensemble from Dollar General (again, not kidding.) This will be sold to the highest bidder at her garage 'estate' sale. Any gifts in her honor should be made to the Hancock County Library Foundation (to the overdue book fund.)

Visitation will be held at Edmond Fahey Funeral Home in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi on Saturday, May 4th at 9:30 a.m. Her memorial service will begin at 11:00 a.m. (another true statement.) It will be led by Rev. Curt Moore of Orlando, Florida, a questionable choice for any spiritual event, but one the family felt would be appropriate due to the fact that every time Toni heard Curt preach she prayed for Jesus to return at that very moment.

On a last but serious note, the woman who loved life and taught her children to 'laugh at the days to come' is now safely in the arms of Jesus and dancing at the wedding feast of the Lamb. She will be missed as a mother, friend and grandmother. Anyone wearing black will not be admitted to the memorial. She is not dead. She is alive.

Edmond Fahey Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

Obituary for Ronald Reagan (Statesman)

Ronald Reagan, the cheerful crusader who devoted his presidency to winning the Cold War, trying to scale back government and making people believe it was "morning again in America," died Saturday after a long twilight struggle with Alzheimer's disease, a family friend said. He was 93. He died at his home in California, according to the friend, who spoke on condition of anonymity. The White House was told his health had taken a turn for the worse in the last several days.

Five years after leaving office, the nation's 40th president told the world in November 1994 that he had been diagnosed with the early stages of Alzheimer's, an incurable illness that destroys brain cells. He said he had begun "the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life."

Reagan body was expected to be taken to his presidential library and museum in Simi Valley, Calif., and then flown to Washington to lie in state in the Capitol Rotunda. His funeral was expected to be at the National Cathedral, an event likely to draw world leaders. The body was to be returned to California for a sunset burial at his library.

Reagan lived longer than any U.S. president, spending his last decade in the shrouded seclusion wrought by his disease, tended by his wife, Nancy, whom he called Mommy, and the select few closest to him. Now, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton are the surviving ex-presidents.

Although fiercely protective of Reagan's privacy, the former first lady let people know his mental condition had deteriorated terribly. Last month, she said: "Ronnie's long journey has finally taken him to a distant place where I can no longer reach him."

Reagan's oldest daughter, Maureen, from his first marriage, died in August 2001 at age 60 from cancer. Three other children survive: Michael, from his first marriage, and Patti Davis and Ron from his second.

Over two terms, from 1981 to 1989, Reagan reshaped the Republican Party in his conservative image, fixed his eye on the demise of the Soviet Union and Eastern European communism and tripled the national debt to \$3 trillion in his single-minded competition with the other superpower.

Taking office at age 69, Reagan had already lived a career outside Washington, one that spanned work as a radio sports announcer, an [actor](#), a television performer, a spokesman for the General Electric Co., and a two-term governor of California.

At the time of his retirement, his very name suggested a populist brand of conservative politics that still inspires the Republican Party. He declared at the outset, "Government is not the solution, it's the problem," although reducing that government proved harder to do in reality than in his rhetoric. Even so, he challenged the status quo on welfare and other programs that had put government on a growth spurt ever since Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal strengthened the federal presence in the lives of average Americans. In foreign affairs, he built the arsenals of war while seeking and achieving arms control agreements with the Soviet Union.

In his second term, Reagan was dogged by revelations that he authorized secret arms sales to Iran while seeking Iranian aid to gain release of American hostages held in Lebanon. Some of the money was used to aid rebels fighting the leftist government of Nicaragua. Despite the ensuing investigations, he left office in 1989 with the highest popularity rating of any retiring president in the history of modern-day public opinion polls.

That reflected, in part, his uncommon ability as a communicator and his way of connecting with ordinary Americans, even as his policies infuriated the left and as his simple verities made him the butt of jokes. "Morning again in America" became his re-election campaign mantra in 1984, but typified his appeal to patriotism through both terms.

At 69, Reagan was the oldest man ever elected president when he was chosen on Nov. 4, 1980, by an unexpectedly large margin over incumbent Democrat Jimmy Carter.

Near-tragedy struck on his 70th day as president. On March 30, 1981, Reagan was leaving a Washington hotel after addressing labor leaders when a young drifter, John Hinckley, fired six shots at him. A bullet lodged an inch from Reagan's heart, but he recovered. Four years later he was re-elected by an even greater margin, carrying 49 of the 50 states in defeating Democrat Walter F. Mondale, Carter's vice president.