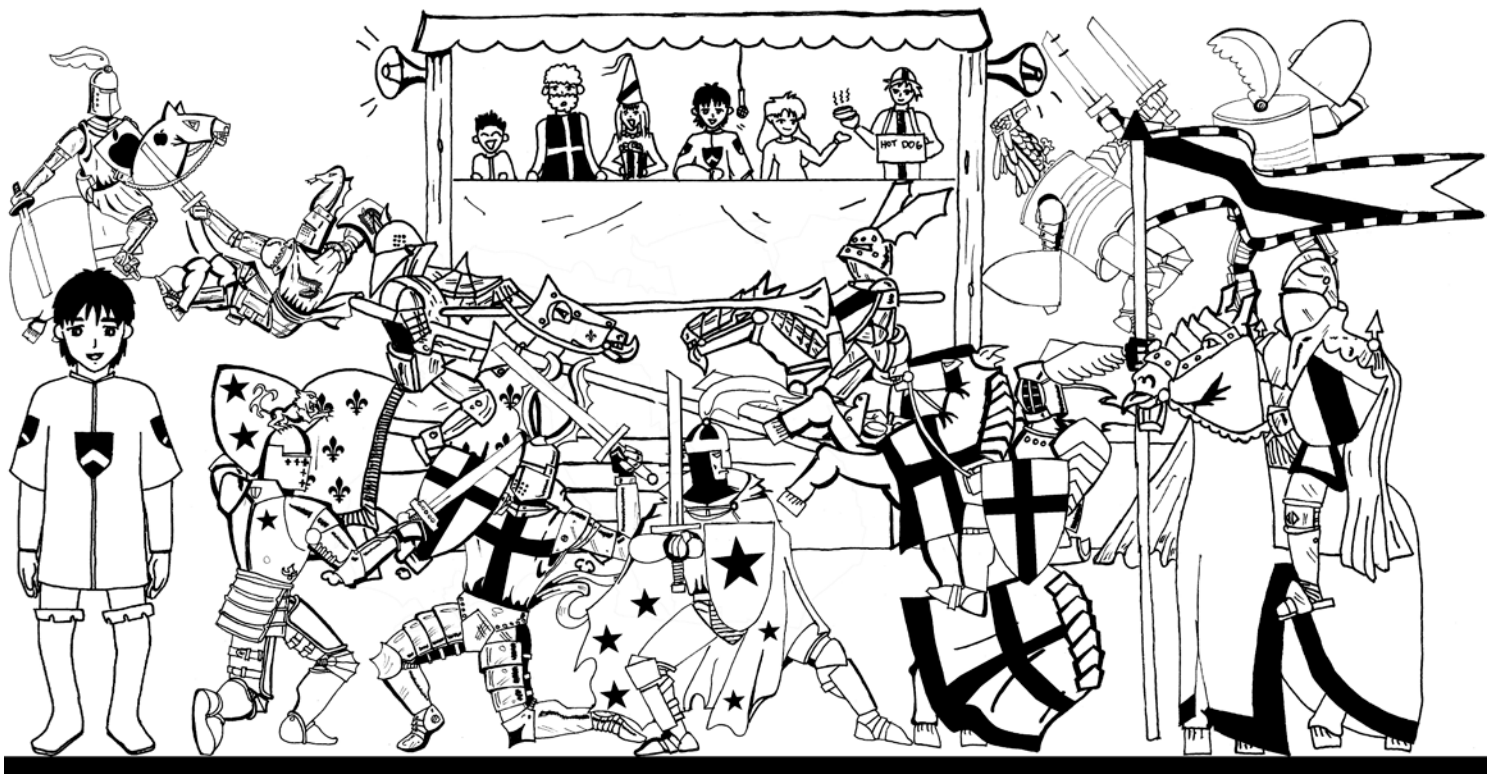


# HERALDRY



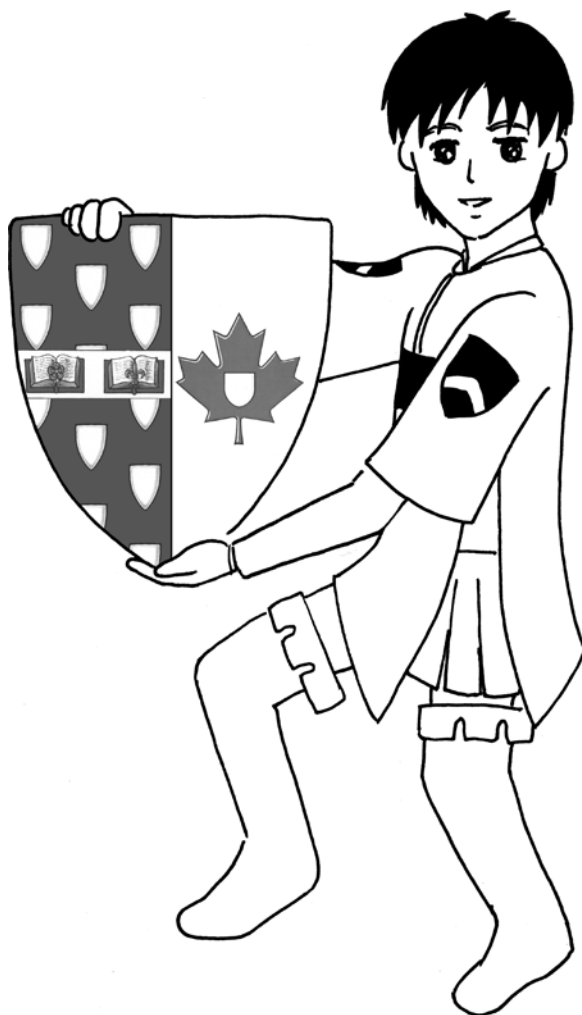
An educational package  
for ages 9 to 13

[www.gg.ca/eduzone](http://www.gg.ca/eduzone)



# HERALDRY IN CANADA

## An Educational package and activities for teachers and students



University of  
Ottawa

Produced by the Department of History of the  
University of Ottawa  
in collaboration with the  
Canadian Heraldic Authority



Canadian Heraldic  
Authority

# HERALDRY IN CANADA

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**This package was produced by the Department of History of the  
University of Ottawa  
in collaboration with the Canadian Heraldic Authority  
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## **TEACHER'S GUIDE**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE EDUCATIONAL PACKAGE HERALDRY IN CANADA**

This educational package originated with the wish of the Department of History of the University of Ottawa and the Canadian Heraldic Authority to establish links with schools, to familiarize young people with heraldry as well as with the Middle Ages, and to allow teachers to benefit from the specialized historical knowledge of the Department and the Authority.

To realize these goals, the package is designed to:

1. Be linked with a program of study for students ages 9 to 13, and which can draw on knowledge from many disciplines, including history, art, geography, and English.
2. Encourage students, through the activities to develop a number of complementary skills, including research, artistic design, public speaking, group work, creativity, the ability to listen and observe, etc.
3. Show teachers and students the importance of a knowledge of history related to daily life, aspects of society, individual people and historical events.
4. Describe the features, the use and the role of coats of arms in the Middle Ages and in modern-day Canada; describe how and why individuals wish to remember the past and preserve their heritage; and identify what has changed and what has remained the same between the past and the present.
5. Stimulate self-awareness and allow the student to express his or her identity (origins, history, etc.) and that of his or her classroom group.

We have attempted to produce a package that is as lively and creative as possible in order to encourage student participation and the acquisition of general knowledge that will be useful to them in their academic development and in their lives.



Xavier, the herald, will follow them throughout the different sections. Each section may be used by itself, so that it may be incorporated into other teaching units, such as fine arts, personal development, geography, history, and English.

We have also included in this package several documents that can be used as additional resources for teachers and students. We hope that these will be useful to you.

The package includes the following items:

- ❖ a teacher's guide
- ❖ a student's guide
- ❖ activities to photocopy for the students
- ❖ a glossary
- ❖ a bibliography
- ❖ an evaluation form
- ❖ a procedure guide describing how to obtain a grant of arms from the Canadian Heraldic Authority, which you can obtain at [http://www.gg.ca/heraldry/pg/index\\_e.asp](http://www.gg.ca/heraldry/pg/index_e.asp)
- ❖ an info sheet of the arms of the Governor General
- ❖ a pamphlet for the history program at the University of Ottawa
- ❖ a pamphlet for the medieval studies program at the University of Ottawa

We hope that you and your students will have as much fun and interest in exploring heraldry as we have had in preparing this package.

**N.B.** Please feel free to photocopy the various parts of this package to use in class.

## What is heraldry?

Heraldry is the study of coats of arms, in the same way that mathematics is the study of numbers. A coat of arms is an emblem in colour belonging to an individual or a corporate body, its arrangement and form being subject to specific rules<sup>1</sup> (see page 16). Each symbol, colour and other element included in a coat of arms has a particular meaning or purpose. Together, they form an emblem that can be used by the owner during his or her lifetime.

This is the main difference between a coat of arms and a logo. The latter is a simple emblem with limited symbolism, and it is often changed according to current tastes and trends. Take, for example, a logo associated with a clothing line or with a restaurant chain: although one can easily recognize the symbol, its meaning is often ambiguous. As for the colours or forms, they do not really follow a rule related to how they are arranged or how many may be shown.

In the pages that follow, we shall see how a coat of arms, originally an emblem used in combat, has become a mark of identity. A coat of arms is unique because it uses an arrangement of symbols specific to each bearer, allowing us to identify that person. It can indicate someone's origins, interests, profession, place within his or her family, etc. rather like an illustrated business card.

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<sup>1</sup> From Rémi Mathieu, *Le système héraldique français* (Paris, J.B. Janin, 1946), p.13.

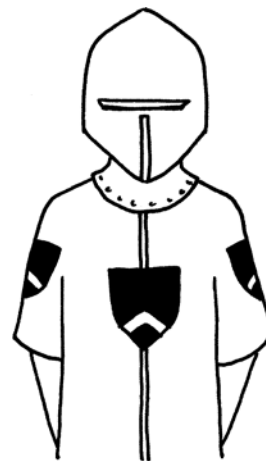
## Where does heraldry come from?

From ancient times to the 11th century, the use of symbols as indications of identity was widespread. These symbols were often the same because ancient conflicts were usually between groups whose differences in clothing and equipment made it easy to distinguish between them. There was little chance that combatants on the same side of a battle would not be able to recognize each other. Unlike heraldry, these ancient emblems were not governed by particular rules. The ownership of an emblem was not exclusive, nor permanent, nor hereditary.

Heraldry did not develop until the 12th century, and it was the evolution of military equipment that led to the development of coats of arms. Prior to this time, a soldier's helmet included a nasal guard, a small piece of metal covering the nose. For more complete protection, the soldier also wore a hood of chain mail (made of interlocking rings of iron) that covered the lower part of the face and neck. It was the development of the full helmet (or pot helm) that led to the adoption of coats of arms. This happened gradually: first, the back of the helmet was lengthened to cover the nape of the neck, and the nasal guard was expanded to cover the cheeks as well. Then, the helmet became cylindrical by the attachment of metal plates that covered the ears and the forehead. Eventually, the helmet did not have any openings except for the eyes and several ventilations holes.



Nasal helm



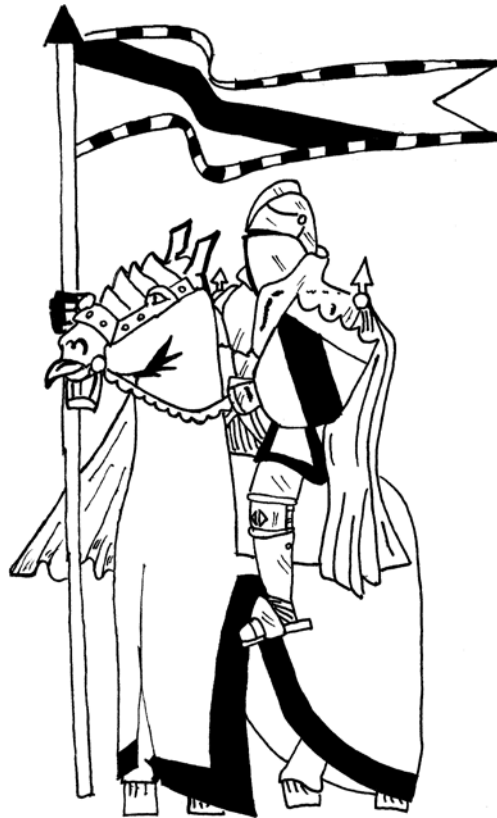
Pot helm

This new type of military outfit protected the knight during battle and made him totally unrecognizable. The face of the soldier was hidden in much the same way as the face of a hockey goalie is hidden today. Then, as now, the helmet was designed to protect against blows. Only the material used in the manufacturing of the mask has changed.

Consequently, the soldier, now resembling a tin can, began to decorate his shield with simple figures, colours, shapes, animals or floral symbols, so that soldiers on his side could recognize him in the confusion of battle.

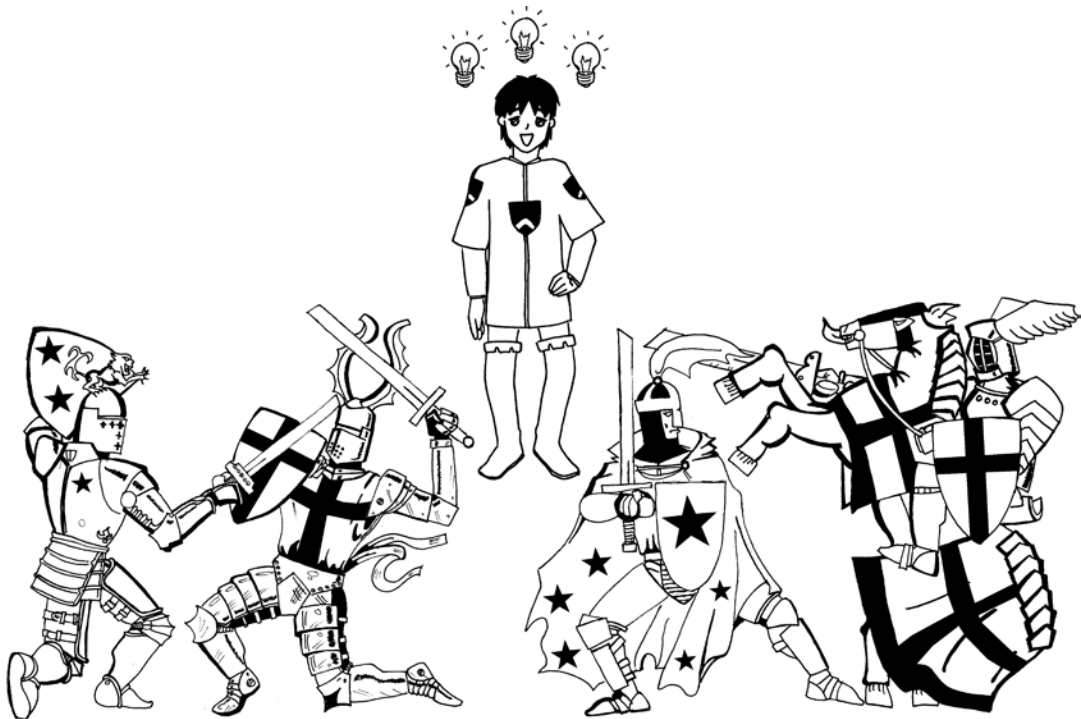


In this way, the use of coats of arms spread with the transformation of warfare in medieval Europe. Feudal society had been founded upon the unfailing loyalty that bound a vassal to his lord. A lord could thus mobilize soldiers and undertake a military campaign against another lord. Unlike ancient conflicts, feudal wars took place between the same peoples wearing the same type of armour. Soldiers thus adopted distinctive visual signs to quickly identify who was on their side. Also, the lord, to be conspicuous, bore his own coat of arms not only on his shield, but also on the surcoat covering his armour, on his banner, and on the trappings of his horse.



It is in this context that the Crusades also facilitated the use of arms. At the time of these campaigns, many thousands of soldiers were summoned by the kings and princes of Europe to liberate the Holy Land and Jerusalem. They used the system of heraldry because it permitted quick and clear recognition of the Crusader knights. This system helped in cohesively managing a war of such a large scale because the combatants could very quickly identify friends and enemies on the field of battle. In much the same way, our modern-day sports teams wear jerseys bearing distinctive colours and numbers in order to eliminate confusion. Each of these players wears a number that represents him or her alone. It is thus possible during a sports match for the spectators and the players to be able to recognize not only the teams but also particular individuals.

The other factor that contributed to the extension of heraldry was the development and use of the seal. In the medieval period, a signature, which we use today to identify a document, did not exist. In effect, except for clerics, practically no one knew how to read or write. The recommended method to authenticate a document was to seal it with an identifiable and personal mark. Not surprisingly, the image that is found on the seal was often the coat of arms of its owner. It is probable that the increasingly frequent use of the seal during the medieval period was largely responsible for the growth of the use of heraldry by other, non-military social categories, such as women and the clergy.

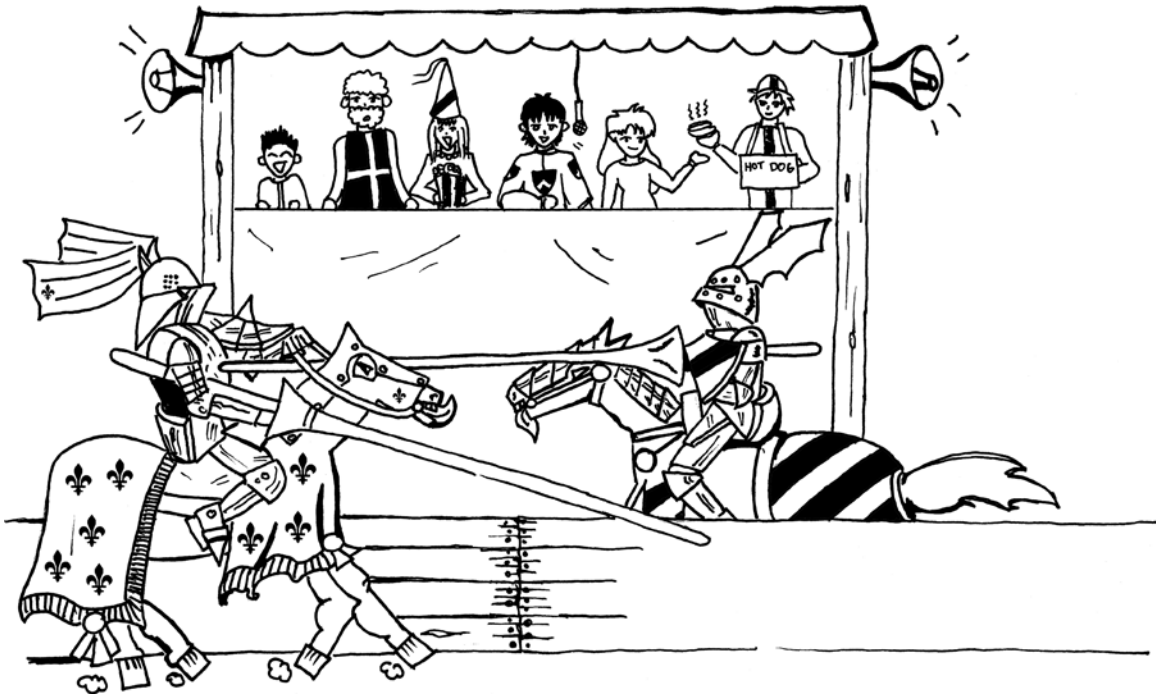


## What is a herald?

On the battlefield, the need soon arose to identify coats of arms quickly and accurately. The ability to recognize soldiers by their arms became the specialty of a new profession, that of the *herald* of arms.

The herald was an expert in coats of arms, and he knew the rules of heraldry. These rules were vital to prevent confusion and disorder from occurring in battle. The herald was easily detectable because he was dressed in an armorial tunic (of the coat of arms of his master), called a *tabard*, which was a short, full coat. The herald was unarmed so that he could be assured of total immunity. He had a multitude of tasks, such as the introduction of vassals before combat by ordering the armorial banners according to the degree of seniority. During the fighting, he distinguished friend from foe, and, when the battle was over, he counted the dead and the prisoners. A herald's job demanded a perfect memory and complete honesty. The smallest error of identification could cause catastrophic consequences on the battlefield and in the relaying of messages. In the same way, making a mistake in announcing those who had died in battle or failing to identify a captured lord for whom a ransom would have to be paid could prove to be disastrous.

In the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, the fashion for tournaments further encouraged the development of heraldry. The tournament, a sporting as well as a military demonstration, was the principal pastime of a knight in times of peace. Today, this type of confrontation could be compared to a hockey or football game. The original form of a tournament involved a frantic battle in which groups of knights would charge at each other and fight with weapons, as they would on a battlefield. The goal of a tournament was to capture your opponent, ransom him, and take his armour, his harness and his horse. Many negotiations took place during and after the fighting. Later, another type of tournament, the *joust*, took place between two knights in a form of combat with lances. The knight who showed the greater prowess was designated the victor. As in war, the participants' faces were hidden by their helmets, and coats of arms were used for identification during the competition. The knight would consult a herald to ensure that his arms were painted and described correctly and that they were distinct from those of other knights. The herald was also responsible for announcing the names of the knights to the spectators to the spectators and for presenting the victors. He was a kind of sports commentator who identified the players from their coats of arms and described their outstanding deeds in the competition. Historians today frequently consult the writings of heralds to learn about a battle or a tournament.

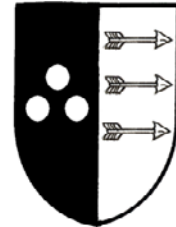


Gradually, as heraldry spread to many other categories of society in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the herald's profession began to be organized hierarchically. Before serving a prince or a great landowner, the aspiring herald became a *pursuivant* of arms, and, after a certain number of years, he became a herald of arms. A small number of heralds were given the title King of Arms. A King of Arms had a territory in which he was responsible for registering and overseeing all matters related to coats of arms. The functions and role of the herald were bound to military activities, for wars and tournaments created this system of identifying symbols as a method of reliable recognition.

## Who could have a coat of arms?

Coats of arms, which were originally created so that soldiers could be recognized, soon became popular among non-combatants. It is incorrect to believe that only nobles possessed coats of arms. In fact, people at all levels of medieval society, including peasants, could adopt coats of arms. Of course, in certain social categories, the need to use arms was less, and they were thus rarer. In effect, arms were an honour, a way of showing one's prestige, power, and family alliances, and they were naturally less prevalent among peasants than among the nobles who played a major role in wars, tournaments or in various princely or royal ceremonies.

A woman could not go to war and generally could not own property, but this did not prevent her from using a coat of arms. She would use the arms of her father or her husband. In many cases, a woman used these two coats of arms on one shield to represent her family background (her father's arms) and, at the same time, her marriage (her husband's arms).



Father/Husband

Over the centuries, the medieval town gradually became detached from its links of vassalage to the local lord. This new independence gave it the necessary autonomy to organize its own community administration. The authentication of official town acts could be done by means of a sealed document. It was therefore logical and necessary that the town possessed a seal engraved with its coat of arms, the symbol of its identity and autonomy. Often, the symbol shown on the coat of arms represented one of its predominant economic activities. For example, a town supported by whaling could use a whale on its coat of arms.



Town

Soon, people in specialized trades felt the same need for identification. Artisans placed on their shields the instruments of their trade, the product of their work, or symbols representative of their profession.



Tailor

Many other urban institutions, such as educational establishments, were also affected by the need to be represented by a coat of arms. For example, schools could show their educational role by decorating their shield with symbols of instruction, knowledge and learning, such as a book.



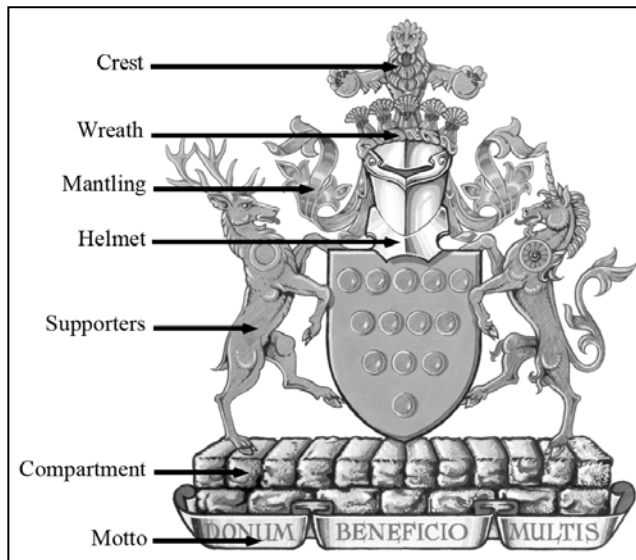
University

## What are the parts of a coat of arms?

The shield *is* the coat of arms! The elements that surround it are optional: these are the helmet, the mantling, the crest, the supporters and the motto.

The **shield** is a shape (resembling the surface of an electric iron) on which are placed the colours and symbols that make up the coat of arms. Without a shield, a coat of arms does not exist.

The Arms of The Winnipeg Foundation



The **helmet** (helm) was a crucial piece of equipment in medieval warfare, but it prevented the identification of the man hidden behind this metal mask. Showing the helmet on top of the shield thus recalls the chivalric and military origins of heraldry.

The **mantling** recalls the neck covering, a piece of cloth that was designed to protect the metal armour from the rays of the sun. During combat, the cloth would become torn and cut, and this is why mantling is shown in such a fashion when displayed with a coat of arms.

The **crest** is found on top of the helmet on a **wreath** (a cushion of twisted cloth). In the Middle Ages, this element was designed as a way to impress others: it made the knight wearing it look bigger and more intimidating to the enemy. The crest thus had a military function. However, by the end of the medieval period, it was mainly used as an ornament in funeral processions.

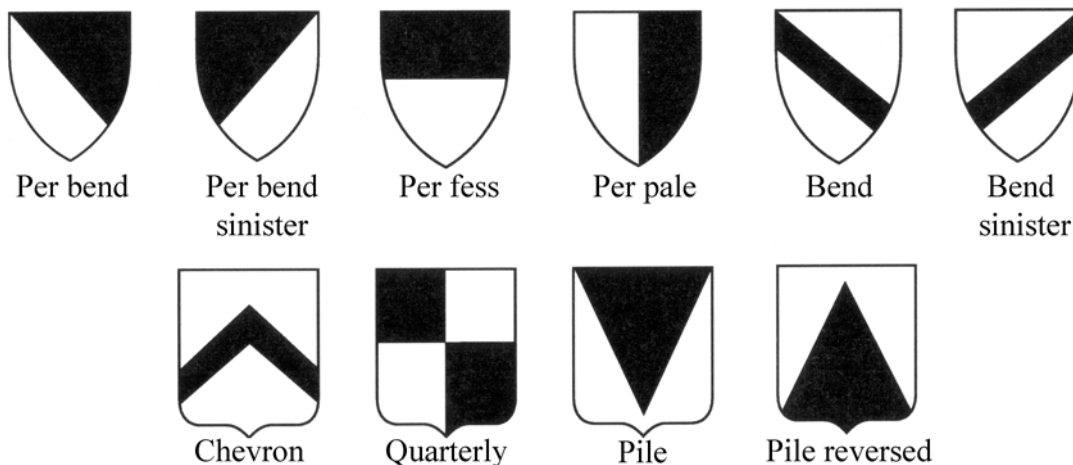
The **supporters** are animals placed on either side of the shield, appearing to hold it up. They are generally shown in an upright, dignified stance. Supporters can also be human figures. In Canada, supporters are limited to corporate bodies (such as municipalities and associations) and to certain categories of individuals.

The **motto** is a short phrase or several words, like a proverb, that expresses the accomplishments and the philosophy of the owner of a coat of arms. Usually, the motto is shown below the shield on a **scroll**.

## A Heraldic Inventory: Shapes, Fauna, Flora, and the Human Body

A coat of arms is meant to identify the person who uses it by indicating something of his or her personality, family history and profession. To convey this message, the shield does not use words but displays images with symbolism of greater or lesser complexity. A coat of arms can “speak” thanks to the use of different types of symbols. Rather than examine these exhaustively, we shall limit ourselves here to noting the most frequently encountered figures and elements, or the ones that are particularly Canadian.

The first group of figures are those that divide the shield by a certain number of horizontal, vertical, diagonal or curved lines. The colours and elements in the shield are placed within these geometrical partitions. Here are some examples:



Source: *Les armoiries des Associations de familles*, p. 16

The second group of figures is composed of animals. Animals may be associated with certain qualities. Their symbolic value was thus often a factor in determining why an individual would place them in his arms. For example, the lion is the most popular animal shown in coats of arms. It represents strength and courage. To represent Canada or a particular province, a coat of arms could include a beaver, a grizzly bear, a polar bear, a moose, a caribou, a killer whale, a squirrel, a snowy owl, etc. Do your students know the animal and bird symbols of the provinces of Canada?

The third group of figures consists of floral symbols. The fleur-de-lis was made popular by the kings of France, who used it as a royal emblem. The rose is a traditional symbol of England, and the shamrock of Ireland. Entire trees can also be used, such as the oak tree, which is an outstanding symbol of strength and endurance as well as of knowledge and education.

The fourth group is that of parts of the human body often used to represent values or attributes: the heart for passion, the arm for strength, etc.

The fifth group is that of items of everyday life. Here one finds implements such as axes or millstones; architectural features such as towers; weapons such as arrows or swords; musical instruments such as flutes; and sports equipment such as skates and baseball bats. The choice is limitless.

Heraldry also uses monsters and fabulous creatures, which form the last group of figures. Books and legends describing these mythical beasts were very popular in the Middle Ages. One need only think of the great number of gargoyles in church architecture.

As the owner of a coat of arms was represented by these symbols, their choice was very important, and the symbols had to be easily identifiable.



## How does heraldry work?

Heraldry is different from other symbol systems because all of its elements can be expressed through a unique language. We have seen that with their skills and knowledge, heralds are specialists who deal with coats of arms. Heraldry invented a language of heraldry, called *blazon*, to describe coats of arms. A blazon is the technical description of a coat of arms expressed in words, so that the design does not necessarily need to be seen. This system has always been universal: this means that with a simple written description, a herald at the other end of the country, or in another part of the world, could redraw a coat of arms without ever having seen the original design. For example, a herald in South Africa who received this blazon from Canada – “Argent a cross Sable” – would draw this coat of arms:



The colours in heraldry have special names. These colours are divided into two groups: metals and (heraldic) colours. The two metals are Or (yellow or gold) and Argent (white or silver). The “colours” are Gules (red), Azure (blue), Sable (black), Vert (green) and Purpure (purple).

In order for this language to be precise, concise and effective, good heraldic design respects these general principles:

- A coat of arms must be **recognizable from a distance**;
- Symbols must be drawn in a **simplified** way;
- The elements illustrated on the shield should **represent, in a unique and symbolic way**, the owner of the coat of arms.

These principles are made effective by adhering to the following three rules:

### 1. Do not put a metal on a metal or a colour on a colour.

The fundamental rule of blazon is that one should not put two colours belonging to the same group (heraldic colours and metals) together.

Before a symbol can be placed on a shield background, one of them must be a metal and one a colour. The “colour rule” makes a lot of sense, because putting a red figure on a black background would not be discernable in the way that a red figure on a white or yellow background would be. You can explain this rule to the students by drawing a connection to traffic signs, which, to be readily identifiable from a distance, follow the same principle, showing outside of a heraldic context the effectiveness and the universality of this system. We have seen that heraldry was born in battle, and this is why the constant care which governs this science is able to result in a design that is visible and recognizable from a distance.

**METALS**



**Argent**



**Or**

**COLOURS**



**Gules**



**Azure**



**Vert**

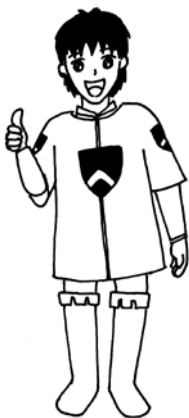


**Sable**



**Purpure**

**EXAMPLE OF THE COLOUR RULE**



**Correct design**



**Incorrect design**



## 2. Keep it simple

Don't forget that the key idea behind the use of a coat of arms was quick identification in battle, and this required the creation of a design that was simple and clear. Do not start by dividing the shield into four sections and filling each with many figures. Encourage the students to design figures that are simple, clear and instantly catch the eye.

## 3. Think of some symbols

Remember that heraldry is symbolic. If a student wants to show his love of sport, use a black disc rather than a hockey player; if he wishes to be an airline pilot, he could use a bird; if there are four members of his family, he could use four stars to represent them; if the student is brave, he could use a lion, a symbol of chivalry. Another original way of referring to a person is to create arms that are called "canting" arms, as the name of the symbol recalls the name of the family or the first name of the child. For example:



Xavier  
Goodsun



Xavier  
Leafster

## How is a coat of arms used?

In order to be recognized from a distance, knights used heraldic emblems on their shields, their helmets, and the trappings of their horses. The arms could be used with their lances in the form of a banner. In addition, coats of arms were soon adopted by non-military categories. They were used to express family relationships and alliances, political loyalties, professions, or territories.

A coat of arms was a kind of social code. Whoever could decipher coats of arms could, for example, often read the place of an individual within a family (by seeing if the design was that of the full arms or a differenced form of the arms). A coat of arms is hereditary, which means it can be transmitted to one's descendants.

The "chief of arms" (head of the family) uses the undifferenced arms, meaning arms without modification or an additional symbol. On the other hand, all of his children could add to their arms a "brisure," which is a specific mark on the design of a shield.

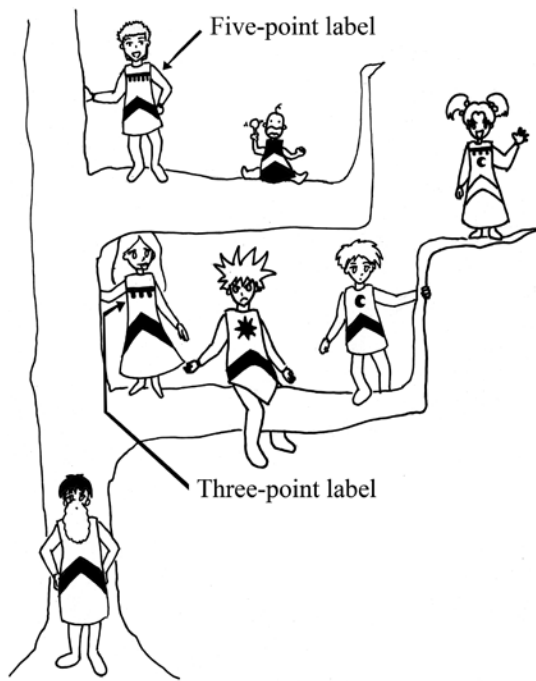
A brisure could, for example, be the addition of a symbol or a change in colour. In order to inherit the arms of the chief of arms, the child who was the heir would use the arms with a brisure during the parent's lifetime.



Deceased "Chief of arms"



Heir discarding his arms in order to adopt those of his father.



In the Middle Ages, it was the eldest son who inherited the basic coat of arms. The label, a horizontal stripe with three tabs, was generally used by the eldest son until the death of his father.

The other children used their own marks of difference all their lives and transmitted these to their children. The system of differencing allowed the creation of a family tree in a visual and colourful way.

This illustration shows heraldic practices particular to Canada, such as:

- the transmission of arms to women.
- the labels (with 3 or 5 points according to each generation) as marks of differencing for the eldest children.
- the other marks of differencing among younger children.
- the inheritance of these marks.

A coat of arms is also used as an indication of ownership. For example, to show ownership of a possession, one can use a coat of arms to decorate one's house, valuables, or goods such as china, silverwear, furniture, chests, carpets, or firebacks. Another quite widespread practice is to indicate ownership of a book by sticking a bookplate decorated with one's coat of arms to the inside cover.



This overview of the use of a coat of arms from the late centuries of the Middle Ages on constitutes a valuable aid for historians and archaeologists. As a result of the presence of arms, they are able to identify the owner of, or the person who commissioned, a piece of furniture. In this way, coats of arms allow researchers to determine the date and the place of manufacture of various objects.

## What are some special features of Canadian heraldry<sup>2</sup>?

Heraldry in the European tradition arrived in Canada with the voyages of discovery of the French and English explorers at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Originally, the visual emblems identifying nations, corporations or individuals were created by officers of arms of the mother countries. Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, arms were granted to Canadians with growing frequency, a practice that continued to accelerate after Confederation and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For two centuries, many Canadian corporate bodies, societies and associations — as well as individuals — received arms symbolizing their status, their history and their identity.

Today, Canadian coats of arms honour individuals and groups who have contributed to the well-being of our country. They evoke our history and geography as well as the aspirations of Canadians. Thus, each of Canada's ten provinces and three territories has a coat of arms that expresses its own identity.



Canada is fortunate in having received the heritage of different symbolic traditions: those of Aboriginal peoples and those of immigrants from all corners of the earth. The use of First Nations symbols, such as stylized representations of animals, honours the traditions and the contributions of these peoples.

The arms of Peter Irniq, former commissioner of Nunavut, illustrate how heraldry can be adapted to the Canadian experience and to its native symbols.

In Canada, arms are granted through the Canadian Heraldic Authority. The Governor General is head of this organization. As in the medieval period, the Canadian heralds work to create and to record arms. Since one of the principle objectives of heraldry is to allow for the recognition of a coat of arms and its owner, each Canadian herald also has a badge of office and an official title, the latter based on the name of a river. The badge of the Saint-Laurent Herald includes a gridiron, the instrument of the martyrdom of St. Lawrence, enflamed and surmounted by a blue cross with fleur-de-lis terminations, symbolic of royal France, New France and Quebec. The name, of course, refers to the biggest and most important river in eastern Canada.



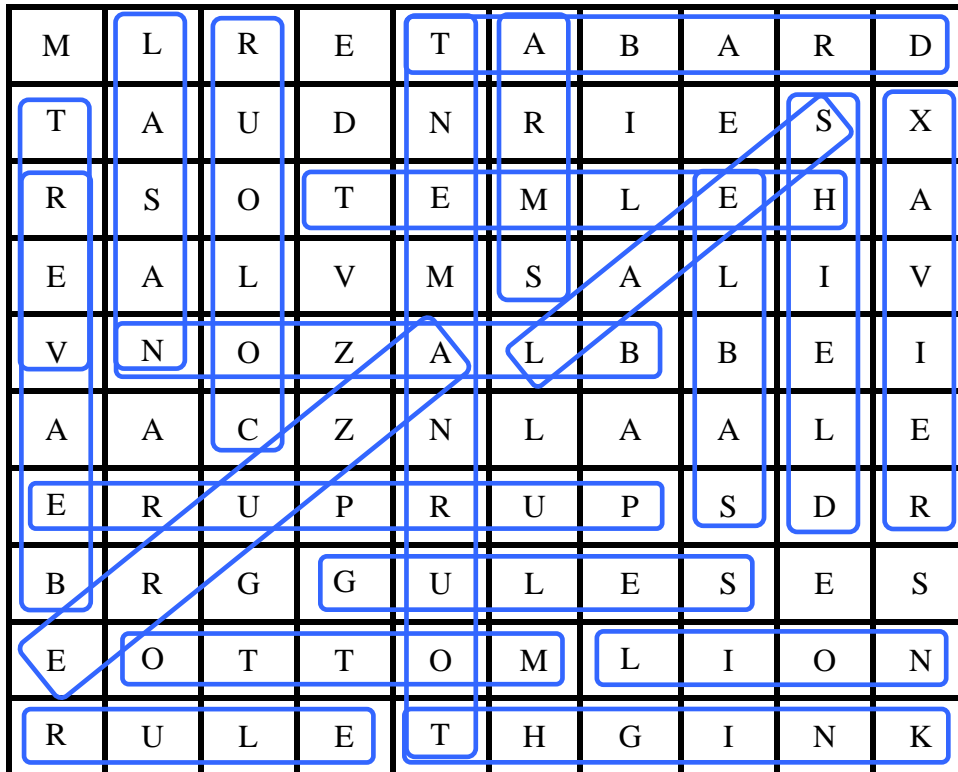
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<sup>2</sup> Refer to the website [www.gg.ca](http://www.gg.ca)

## ANSWER KEY

**Activity 1:** After you explain the three main rules for creating a coat of arms (see pages 15, 16, 17), the student should create a coat of arms following these instructions in order to illustrate his or her personality, interests, tastes and family.

**Activity 2 :**



**The hidden word is : MEDIEVAL AGES.**

**Activity 3:**

A noble who fights on horseback in the Middle Ages:

A piece of military equipment decorated with a coat of arms:

An animal symbolic of Canada:

A term meaning Or (yellow) or Argent (white):

A term meaning Gules (red), Azure (blue), Sable (black),

Vert (green) and Purpure (purple):

A period in history which saw the birth of coats of arms:

A coat of arms allows us to \_\_\_\_\_ a fighter on the battlefield:

**KNIGHT**

**SHIELD**

**BEAVER**

**METAL**

**COLOUR**

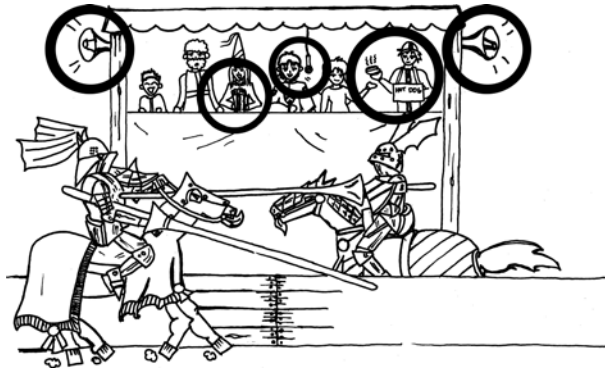
**MEDIEVAL**

**IDENTIFY**

**Activity 4:** After the teacher presents the different coats of arms of the Canadian provinces and territories, the students can link the arms with the correct region. To do this, they can be helped by noting the special characteristics of the provinces, like the sheaf of wheat for the province of Saskatchewan or the fleur-de-lis for Quebec. The teacher can check the web site <http://www.pch.gc.ca> for supplementary information to complete this assignment.

1. BRITISH COLUMBIA
2. ALBERTA
3. SASKATCHEWAN
4. MANITOBA
5. ONTARIO
6. QUEBEC
7. NEW BRUNSWICK
8. NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
9. PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
10. NOVA SCOTIA
11. YUKON
12. NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
13. NUNAVUT

**Activity 5 :**



**Activity 6:** No answers



## GLOSSARY



**Arms:** an emblem depicted in colour on a shield, belonging to an individual or a community and that is required to follow specific rules of blazon (see page 16). Strictly speaking, “arms” or “coat of arms” refers to the shield alone, although these terms are often used to describe the combination of shield, crest, motto, helmet, mantling, etc.

**Beaver:** an animal used as a heraldic charge that is symbolic of Canada.

**Blazon:** the description, in a specialized language, of the design of a coat of arms.

**Bookplate:** an illustrated label attached to the inside of a book indicating ownership. Many bookplates show the coat of arms of the owner.

**Chain mail:** an article of clothing worn composed of interlocking rings of metal.

**Chivalry:** the system of conduct in war and peace followed by knights in the Middle Ages.

**Coat of arms:** another term for “arms.”

**Colour:** when used specific to heraldry, “colour” refers to Gules (red), Azure (blue), Sable (black), Vert (green) and Purpure (purple).

**Crest:** an emblem placed on the top of a helmet, which is above the shield in an illustration of a coat of arms. Note that a crest is *not* the shield.

**Exterior ornaments:** the heraldic elements surrounding the shield: crest, helmet, wreath, mantling, motto, supporters and compartment.

**Feudalism:** how society was structured in Europe in the Middle Ages. Its basis was an understanding of hierarchical loyalties and obligations.

**Helmet:** armour designed to protect the head.

**Herald:** a specialist in heraldry who creates and regulates coats of arms.

**Heraldry:** the science of coats of arms, their colours, charges, composition, transmission, description, etc.

**Hereditary:** able to be passed down from parents to children.

**Joust:** the part of a tournament in which two knights on horseback charge at each other with lances.

**Knight:** a noble who fought on horseback during the Middle Ages.

**Lion:** a strong and courageous animal that frequently appears in heraldry.

**Lord:** a noble who possessed land in the Middle Ages.

**Medieval:** related to the historic period of the Middle Ages.

**Metal:** in heraldry, this term indicates Or (yellow or gold) and Argent (white or silver).

**Middle Ages:** the historic period between the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 and the discovery of the New World in 1492.

**Motto:** a phrase or proverb expressing a particular thought, shown with a coat of arms.

**Noble:** a person in a high level of medieval society.

**Peasant:** a farmer who worked on a noble's land.

**Scroll:** a strip on which a motto is written, usually below the shield.

**Seal:** an engraved disc used to authenticate documents. In the medieval period, seals often used a coat of arms.

**Shield:** a defensive item held in the arm of a fighter on which was often painted a coat of arms.

**Supporter:** an animal or human figure that appears on either side of a coat of arms.

**Symbol:** a visual item that represents an idea or concept.

**Symbolism:** the science of symbols.

**Tabard:** a short but full article of clothing worn by a herald, showing an arms design.

**Tincture:** a heraldic colour or metal.

**Tournament:** an organized competition between knights.

**Vassal:** a person in the Middle Ages bound to a lord by an oath of loyalty.

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