

Coat of Arms Project

Date Assigned: _____

Date Due: _____

A **coat of arms** is a design belonging to a particular person (or group of people) and used by him or her in a wide variety of ways. Coats of arms originated during the middle ages when knights used colors to make their armor and shield easily recognizable by friends, foes, and spectators in battle and tournament, almost like a uniform. The designs were worn over the armor, hence the term *coat of arms*. In addition to being painted on the shield, elements of the knight's coat of arms were used to decorate the helmet crest, the pavilion, and the banners of knights and lords. In the beginning, each knight chose his own symbols and designs. He might choose an animal to represent strength if he was strong, refer to an accomplishment, or to make a connection with his name. As time went on, the son would keep his father's design and add his own elements to it.

In this activity, you will design a coat of arms for yourself. Like the knights, you'll want to make it tell something about who you are or what you like. It could also tell about your first or last name.

Step 1: To make a coat of arms, start by working out a design on paper, then make a larger shield from construction paper or posterboard. Your coat of arms can also be put on banners or clothing. There are no rules for how large it should be, but it should be NO SMALLER THAN a regular piece of paper, or 8 ½ by 11 inches.

*** NOTE- Extra credit will be given to the more realistic and/or creative projects***

Step 2: The most common shape for a shield was called a *heater*. Women, however, usually carried *lozenges*, which are shaped like a diamond, because they did not go into battle. You can choose either shape.



Heater



Lozenge

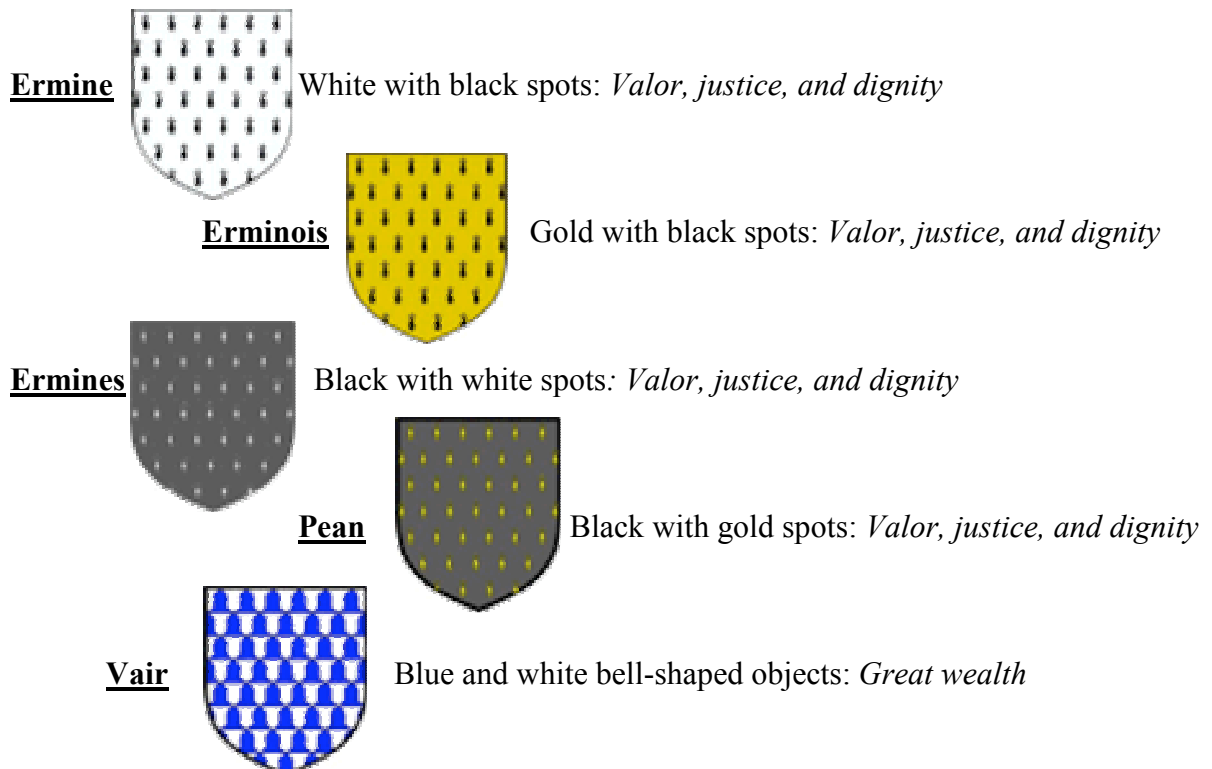
Step 3: The surface of the shield is called the field. It can contain different symbols (called charges), colors (called tinctures), patterns (called furs), or designs. Each is symbolic of something, so be sure to pick things that represent you! You may choose symbols from the middle ages, or you may choose more modern images. Either way, be sure to attach a piece of paper that explains what they mean!

Step 4: These shields were meant to be seen from a distance and clearly read. Make sure that you use contrasting colors and that you don't overload the shield with shapes and patterns. Some basic rules are:

1. Limit the number of tinctures (metals, colors, or furs) to FOUR.
2. Limit the number of charges (elements like birds, animals, etc) to between 1 and 4, with one being larger than the others
3. Use good contrasting colors (example: orange on yellow will not stand out!)
4. Try to balance things out (example: keep the same colors paired or repeat an image)

Step 5: Use the information on the attached sheets, as well as the list of symbols provided in class (way too long to attach), to complete this assignment. Be sure to look at the student samples on display to get some ideas! Also, check the back page for some links to websites about heraldry.









FURS or DESIGNS ON A SHIELD



TINCTURES or COLORS ON A SHIELD

Gold or Yellow (*Or*)- Generosity and elevation of the mind
Silver or White (*Argent*)- Peace and sincerity
Red (*Gules*)- Warrior or martyr; Military strength and magnanimity
Blue (*Azure*)- Truth and loyalty
Green (*Vert*)- Hope, joy, and loyalty in love
Black (*Sable*)- Constancy or grief
Purple (*Purpure*)- Royal majesty, sovereignty, and justice
Orange (*Tawny or Tenne*)- Worthy ambition
Maroon (*Sanguine or Murray*)- Patient in battle, and yet victorious

ORDINARIES or SYMBOLIC LINES ON A SHIELD

- Nebuly Line**  Clouds or air
- Wavy Line**  Sea or water
- Engrailed Line**  Earth or land
- Invected Line**  Earth or land
- Indented Line**  Fire
- Dancette Line**  Water
- Raguly Line**  Difficulties that have been encountered
- Embattled Line**  Walls of a fortress or town (also, fire)

CADENCY IMAGES or SYMBOLS OF BIRTH ORDER

SONS

DAUGHTERS

File / Label



FIRST



Heart

Crescent



SECOND



Ermine Spot

Mullet



THIRD



Snowflake

Martlet



FOURTH



Fir Twig

Annulet (Ring)



FIFTH



Chess Rook

Fleur-de-lis



SIXTH



Scallop Shell

Rose



SEVENTH



Harp

Cross Moline



EIGHTH



Buckle

Double Quatrefoil

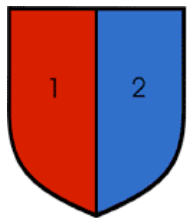


NINTH

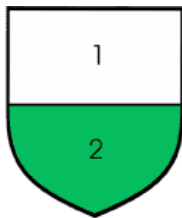


Clarichord

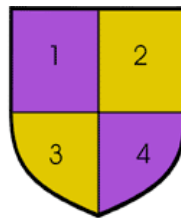
CHARGE PATTERNS or POPULAR WAYS TO DIVIDE A SHEILD



per pale



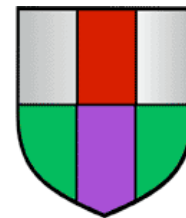
per fess



quartered



canton



quarterly of six



per saltire



tierced in pale



tierced in pale reversed



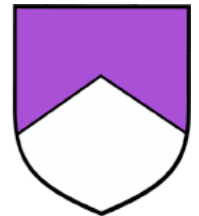
gyronny of eight



per bend



per bend sinister



per chevron



bend



pale



bend



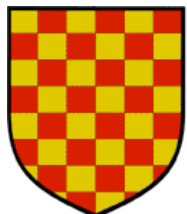
paly of six



barry of six



bendy of eight



chequy



chevron



chape-ploye



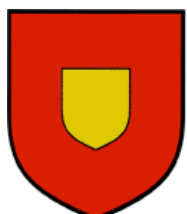
chief



fess



pall



inescutcheon



bordure



cross



fretty



*fleuretty
semme-de-lis*



fusily

Sites with info about Heraldry

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~jkmacmul/heraldry/index.html>

<http://www.digiserve.com/heraldry/symbols.htm>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charge_%28heraldry%29

<http://www.heraldsnet.org/saitou/parker/index.htm>

<http://www.fleurdelis.com/meanings.htm>

<http://museum.worldwidesam.net/reenactment/en/heraldry/blazon.htm>

<http://www.modernheraldry.com/register.html>