

## **Sentence completion Interview with T. A. Barron for John Schumacher**

***Merlin's Guide to a Meaningful Life*** is... a way of imagining what Merlin would say to give us hope, courage, and meaning in our lives. I've had a lot of fun with this—especially since I've written so many books about the great wizard, he now really seems like an old friend whose voice is quite familiar! To spread the fun (and maybe a bit of wisdom), I've produced 3 short videos you can see at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEmGIp5VWA0&list=PLmYq34773G6Mrezb7EpiB2EOgq86khoIU>. The first one, *Merlin's Seven Most Magical Words*, reveals his seven favorite words...plus one more word that powers them all. I'm glad to tell you these videos were seen by well over 100,000 people in just the first month. So I'm now making *Merlin's Guide* into a book which will be published soon!

***Ellegandia*** is the... setting for my latest book, *Atlantis Rising*. It's a great vacation place for anyone who loves to travel in the imagination! This magical place is home to two very different young people—a vagabond named Promi and a mysterious woman named Atlanta. But their world is about to be destroyed—and their only hope is to work together. And their adventure results in the birth of the most wondrous island anywhere: Atlantis.

**I hope the Atlantis Trilogy...** will give people a new, authentic vision of Atlantis—in the same way my Merlin Saga introduced a new Merlin, a young man who was very human as well as deeply magical. Ever since childhood, I've loved the tragic tale of that lost paradise. But I've wondered...how was Atlantis created, as well as destroyed? Who

were the key players in that drama? What was the ultimate source of that island's magic? The Atlantis Trilogy will, I hope, answer those questions.

**The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes...** is all about one thing—turning the spotlight on some remarkable young people who are making the world a better place. Each year we honor 25 kids ages 8 to 18, from all sorts of diverse backgrounds. They have shown amazing courage, energy, and leadership to help people or the environment. Sometimes it's hard to feel hopeful about the future—but these amazing young people will renew your hope! Visit [www.barronprize.org](http://www.barronprize.org).

**The best thing about...** a walk in nature is how it makes me feel so alive! All my senses wake up: I smell the sweet tang of a spruce forest or the briny breeze of an ocean shore; I hear a distant owl hooting, touch moss softer than velvet, taste a sprig of wild mint, and see the iridescent flash of a butterfly's wings. Whatever the place, whatever the season...nature is my favorite place for healing and inspiration. And since I'm lucky enough to live in Colorado, nature is always beckoning!

**Libraries are...** a great big treasure chest full of wondrous places, people, and ideas. The first book I ever checked out from a library was a biography of Abraham Lincoln—and I remember that amazing feeling that in this library, I could go anywhere and be anyone. Merlin had his crystal cave for discoveries, solitude, and magical inspiration—and for the same reasons, we have libraries!

**Reading is...** the best way to travel! With a good book, you can instantly voyage to another continent, another world, or another universe. And you can travel just as easily through time. The only limit is our imagination...which means there's no limit at all.

**Mr. Schu, you should have asked me...** about the magic of words. After all the books I've written, I still can't explain how words, these simple marks on a page or sounds in our ears, can convey every possible feeling and experience. Being a writer is a humbling experience—partly because there are so many ways to grow and improve, and partly because I'm dealing with these mysteriously powerful elements called words. Honestly, no magic that Merlin ever wielded is more amazing than what all of us can do through creating and sharing stories and ideas! All thanks to the magic of words.