



## Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Illinois Education Committee September Education

The members of the Grand Royal Arch Masons Chapter Education Committee were asked the following question:

**“What does it mean to you to be a Royal Arch Mason?”**

We ask each chapter to contemplate the same question and discuss your reasons amongst yourselves at your next stated convocation.

Here are some of the responses from the Education Committee:

***Being a Royal Arch Mason means continuing the journey set forth by our Symbolic Lodge. It represents a dedicated search for what was lost--nay, missing. Not a Word, but a refined understanding of ourselves. The degrees of the Royal Arch unlock cognizant pathways that allow us to see further, think deeper, and act according to the dictates of reason. The Royal Arch system offers four additional degrees that unpack the subtle lessons of our symbolic lodge. The next step in the Masonic journey requires passing through the Royal Arch.***

**-Robert Johnson**

***Throughout your Masonic Journey you have been taught many of the great lessons of Freemasonry, these lessons were taught by way of allegories aimed at making you a better man. In addition to individually making you a better person, these lessons were aimed at making you a better team player and a more effective communicator. At this point on your Masonic Journey, more than likely you have been in some type of leadership role. This could be anything from heading up an investigation or a work committee to sitting in the Oriental Chair.***

***However, regardless if you've taken on a leadership role in the past or not, as a Royal Arch Mason you are expected to work as a leader amongst other leaders. Therefore, as a Royal Arch Mason, it was a necessary requirement that before being exulted to this degree, you traverse the Oriental Chair, becoming a Past Master. You were caused to traverse the Oriental Chair as a Worshipful Master or as a Past Master, to ensure that you receive the instruction on the importance of consulting deity when making difficult decisions. Although being a Past Master is an essential requirement to becoming a Royal Arch Mason, it is not necessary for everyone to have become a Worshipful Master of a Craft Lodge, for this requirement is satisfied in some jurisdictions virtually by way of the Past Master Degree.***



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*Nevertheless, before you can become a leader amongst leaders or what I'd like to call a Team Leader, you need to first be effective at leading others. A team leader would be someone in charge of a portion of the team's members, for example in the US Marines a Team Leader is in charge of four Marines including him/herself, whereas the squad leader is in charge of the squad of all twelve Marines. As a Royal Arch Mason you are finally in possession of the long lost, now found, The Grand Omnific Word. In some jurisdictions the Royal Arch Degree is the culmination of the Craft Lodge, as it is the fourth step in Masonry. As described in the Regis Manuscript "Ancient Masonry consists of four Degrees, the first three of which are those of the Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and the sublime Degree of Master Mason: and a brother, being well versed in these Degrees is eligible to be admitted to the fourth Degree, The Holy Royal Arch." Even today, in some parts of the world, particularly in Eastern Europe you are not considered a Master Mason until you have been exalted to the Holy Royal Arch Degree.*

*-Kevin Wheeler*

*My basic answer would be what I get to share with my fellow Companions in the ways of friendship, comradery, and fellowship.  
But the real answer is much deeper than that.  
These Companions have made me a better person, husband, father, community member, and Freemason.  
I'm thankful to be a Royal Arch Mason and grateful for the amazing opportunities it has provided to me.*

*-Greg Knott*

*Many of my reasons for becoming a Royal Arch Mason are alluded to in the above answers, however, to expand upon the previous points, I would say I became a Royal Arch Mason because I am curious. I feel like the Ancient Craft Degrees are a steppingstone on a path to spiritual enlightenment, and that the Royal Arch Degree was a logical next step in this journey. Whenever asked to give the elevator pitch as to why one should become a Royal Arch Mason, I answer that it allows you to be Indiana Jones. However, while Jones searches for artifacts, we search for Wisdom. I feel allegorically that the degree teaches you that deep within the recesses of yourself, you have the knowledge of the divine spark that resides in every person.*

*-Darin Lahners*