Bluebonnet Learning
K–5 Reading Language Arts

ENGLISH

THE MIDDLE AGES



GRADE 4 UNIT 4 | READER

EDITION 1

Grade 4 | Unit 4

The Middle Ages

Reader

Acknowledgement:

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Chapter 1

Welcome to the Middle Ages

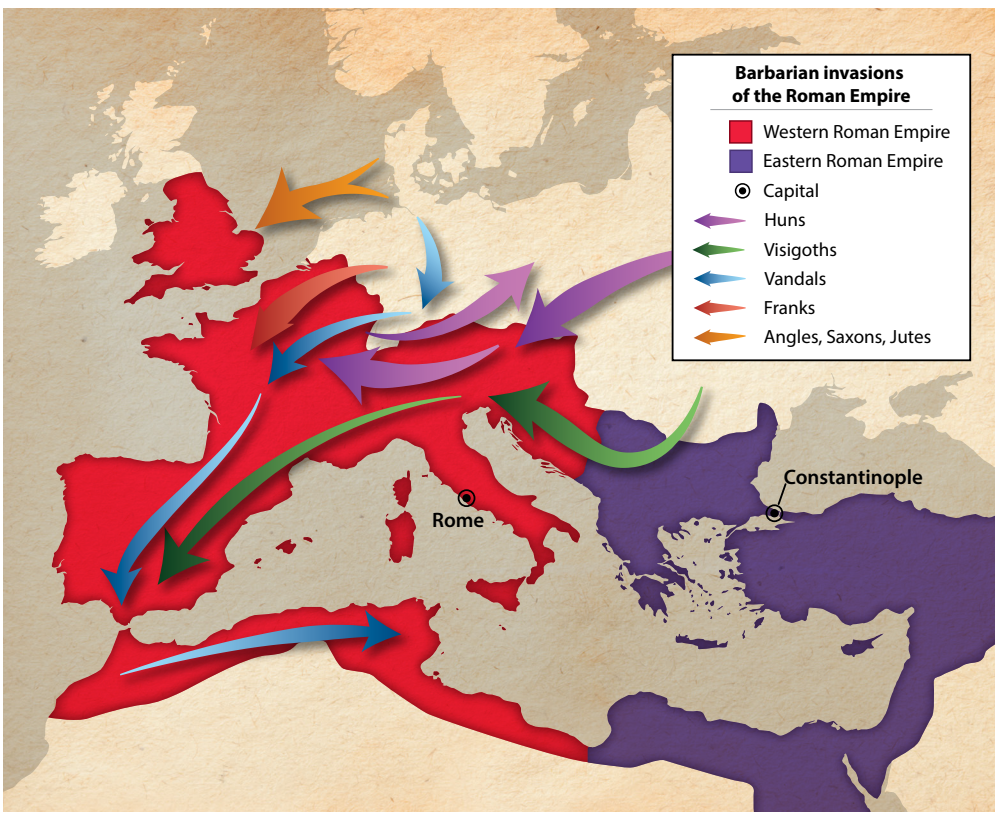
THE BIG QUESTION
What are some of the events that led to the Middle Ages?

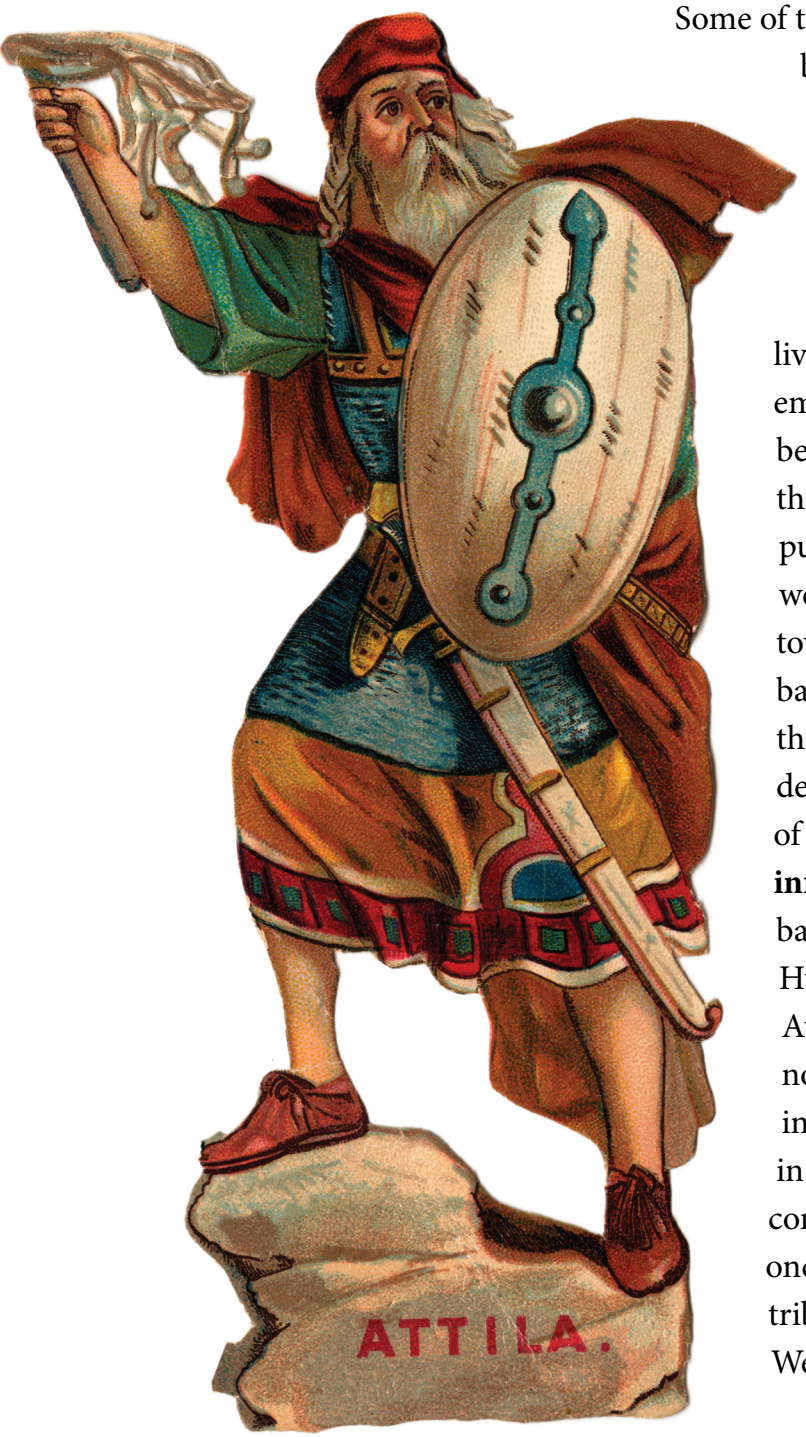


Medieval knights riding into battle

If you know anything about knights, castles, or Robin Hood, then you already know something about the Middle Ages in Europe. "The Middle Ages" may seem to be an unusual name for a historical period—especially one that lasted for more than 1,000 years. People in the Middle Ages did not know they were in the middle of anything. They thought they were modern—just as you and I do today. In fact, the Middle Ages was not a phrase used by the people who lived during that time period. It is a term modern historians use today to refer to that time period between ancient and modern times.

We begin our journey into **medieval** Europe—another name for the Middle Ages—by examining some key events that happened long before this age began. The first major event that helped to **transform** western Europe occurred when the mighty Roman **Empire**, having grown too big for one emperor to rule, broke apart into the eastern and western parts of the empire. This division had a major impact on western Europe. With the Roman Empire split into two parts, different tribes took the opportunity to **seize** some of its lands. Interestingly, some of these people were given the name *barbarian* from the Latin word *barbarus*, meaning foreigner, or not Roman. The Romans may have considered these people to be uncivilized because they did not speak Latin, the language of the Roman Empire.





Attila the Hun

Some of the most successful barbarian invaders were Germanic tribes, such as the Franks, the Visigoths, and the Vandals. These tribes lived on the edges of the empire. As the Romans became unable to defend their borders, these tribes pushed farther to the west. The Vandals **looted** towns and villages so badly that today we use the word *vandalism* to describe the destruction of property. The most **infamous** so-called barbarians were the Huns from central Asia. Attila the Hun led this nomadic tribe as they invaded parts of Europe in the 400s. As the Huns conquered, they drove the once dominant Germanic tribes even farther into the Western Roman Empire.

As warlike tribes swept across western Europe, and powerful kings emerged, another transforming force appeared—the Christian Church. Throughout these years of change, many people turned to the Church because it offered them a sense of stability and hope. The heart, or center, of the Church was in Rome, the seat of the **papacy**. Slowly, more and more groups of people became Christians, including the Germanic tribes. Over time, the Church became even richer and more powerful than many kings and queens.

It is this time—when the Roman Empire was no longer the only powerful force in Europe—that many historians consider to be the start of the Middle Ages. Roman, Germanic, and Christian ideas, as well as powerful kings, began to shape western Europe.

In one of the Germanic regions, a great ruler emerged. His name was Charles, and he took control of much of the land that later became France. Charles ruled for more than 45 years. He increased the size of his empire by gaining land in areas that are now part of Germany, Austria, Italy, and Spain. As king, Charles defended the authority of the Church. He promoted the spread of Christianity. On Christmas Day, in 800 AD, he was crowned Roman Emperor by the Pope in Rome. His reputation was so great that, later, writers called him Charlemagne, which means "Charles the Great."



Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne Roman Emperor in 800 AD.

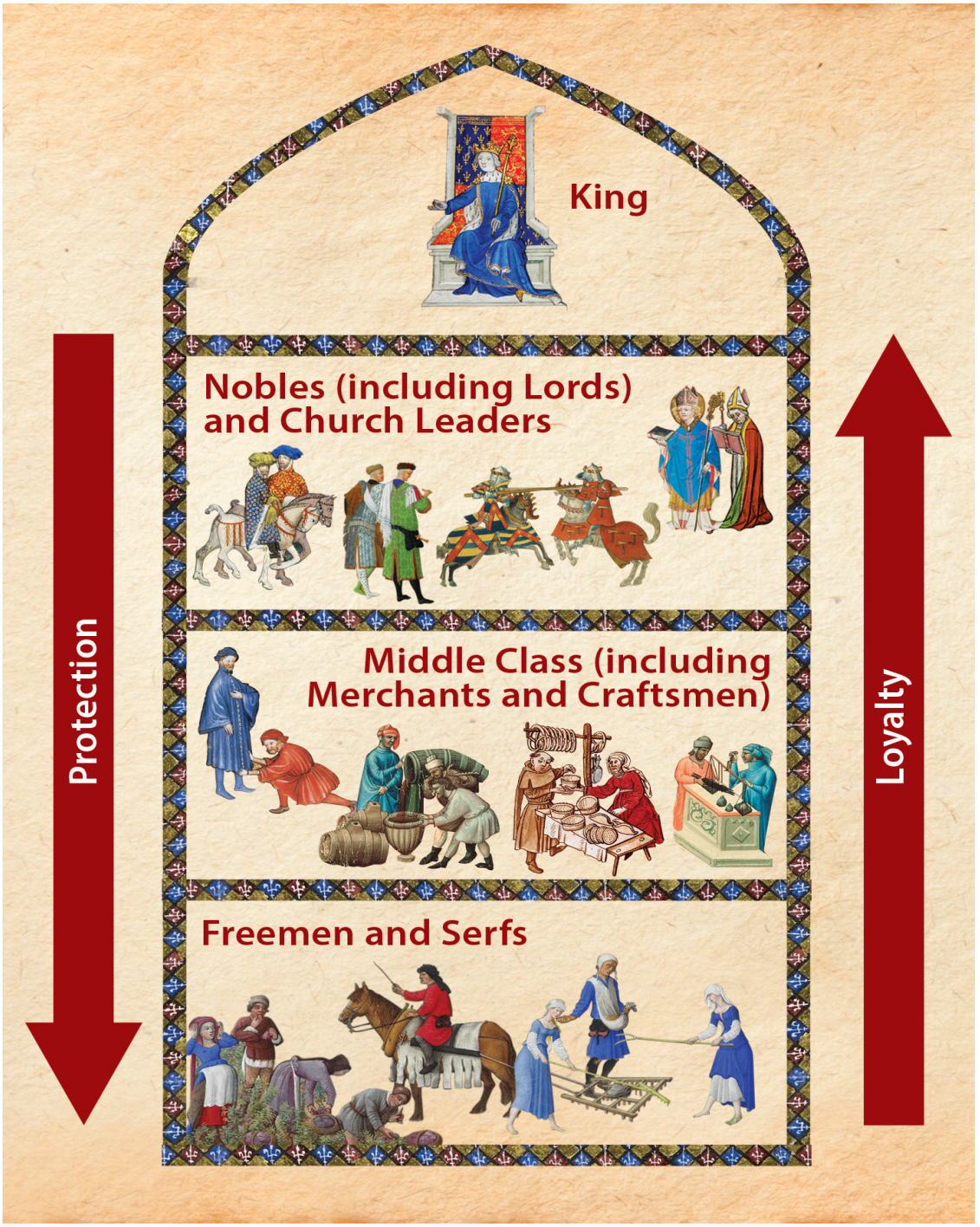
Charles encouraged new ideas and promoted an interest in education and art. To help him rule his empire, Charlemagne also encouraged a system of government that we now call feudalism. He gave land, instead of money, to those who worked for him in the military or government. The practice of paying men with land spread throughout other countries in western Europe.

Life in the Middle Ages was not the same as it is now. For one thing, people who lived back then probably thought about time differently. Many people measured time by the rising and setting of the sun and the passing of the seasons. For this reason, life likely had a slower, steadier pace. In addition, there was a strong desire to honor God that appeared to transcend time. As a result, people undertook impressive, long-term projects such as building magnificent cathedrals that took centuries to complete.



Cologne Cathedral took 632 years to complete.

Language and location helped shape people's lives, too. Because travel was so difficult, many people didn't do it. Generally, only rich, educated people in Europe traveled. Almost everyone else stayed close to home. Although Latin was the language of both the Church and government, only select members of society could understand that language. Most people lived an isolated existence. They did not travel far from home. As a result, most people communicated using the language, or dialect, spoken in the place of their birth. As strange as it may seem to us, in certain parts of Europe villagers from places just 30 miles apart could not easily understand each other. For this reason, most people during the Middle Ages were concerned with the affairs of their village, what they owed the local lord in the way of payment, and how to ensure their place in heaven.



Although this diagram does not include every aspect of medieval feudal society, it does show the people with the most power at the top, and the people with the least power at the bottom.

There was another force that had a huge impact on western European society during the Middle Ages. This force came in the form of a deadly disease. The disease, called the Black Death, or plague, certainly made its mark upon medieval Europe. This dreadful plague first appeared in the 500s. In the second half of the 1300s it swept through Europe once again. Spread by infected fleas that lived on rodents, the Black Death probably killed one-third of the population of western Europe.





Despite conflicts and hardships, this period in history was also a time when people created impressive and inspiring architecture. Great castles and churches began to adorn the landscape. Kings, queens, and **noblemen** held jousts, and court jesters entertained noble families.



In the Reader for this Unit, you will discover what it was like to work on the land for the local lord. You will learn about what life was like in the incredibly crowded towns of the Middle Ages. You will wander through a castle and find out how young men trained to be knights. Are you ready to explore this fascinating time in history?

Medieval Musings

1. In the Middle Ages, people used a pleasant-smelling plant, sometimes used in cooking, to clean their teeth. What is the name of the plant? (Clue: The first letter is R.)

2. An instrument that helps us to see faraway objects, such as stars, was invented in the Middle Ages. What is the name of this instrument?



Picture of night sky from medieval manuscript

3. During the early part of the Middle Ages, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes invaded an island nation and remained as settlers. The Angles gave their name to this land, or kingdom. What is this kingdom called?

Chapter 2

To the Manor Born

THE BIG QUESTION
How were the lives of serfs and lords different from one another?

If you lived during the Middle Ages, your life followed one of a few set paths. If you were the child of a king and a queen or a **lord** and a **lady**, you lived a **privileged** life. You had enough food to eat and clothes to wear. You lived in a relatively nice house. You had servants, too. You may have been one of the few who learned to read and write. You even learned to ride a horse. If you were a boy, you learned to become a skilled swordsman. Privileged girls may have learned to embroider, to dance, and to play a musical instrument. Occasionally girls, too, learned to read. As a privileged child, you likely grew up to become a king or a queen, or a lord or a lady, yourself.



Privileged family in the Middle Ages

But most people in the Middle Ages were not privileged. In the early Middle Ages, nearly everyone in Europe worked on the land. Most farmworkers were called serfs. Serfs grew the food and tended to the livestock, or animals, that fed the people. Some had more freedom than others and were called freemen. Serfs were at the bottom of the social order and had the least amount of power.

Serfs usually spent their entire lives working on a landowner's or lord's estate. In return for the work they did, the lord allowed serfs to use some of the land to grow their own food. The lord lived in his castle or manor house. He owned all the land around his home and often the nearby towns and villages, too. The lord also controlled the lives of most of the people who worked for him.



Serfs worked on the land throughout the year.

Serfs were not educated. They did not learn to read or write. If serfs wanted to travel to a nearby town, they needed permission from the lord. When serfs wanted to marry, the lord had the right to approve or disapprove of the match. When serfs had children, those children usually grew up to work as serfs for the same lord.

In the Middle Ages, serfs worked on farmland that was divided into strips. The serfs spent about half of their time working for the lord. The rest of the time, they worked on the strips of land where their own crops were grown.

Most serfs lived in small, simple houses in or near a village. Their houses were made from wood and mud. The roofs were thatched, meaning they were made from rushes, or straw. They usually had just one room. Serfs slept on straw beds. Inside each house was a small fireplace for cooking. Smoke from the fire escaped through a hole in the roof.

The lord increased his wealth in many different ways. In addition to working the farmland for the lord, serfs paid taxes to the lord in the form of money, crops, and livestock. Sometimes the lord ran a mill and even charged his serfs a fee to grind their grain into flour.

If crops failed or illness struck, people during the Middle Ages struggled to survive. In times of hardship, the lord did not always come



to the aid of his serfs. Even when food supplies were low, serfs were not allowed to hunt in the lord's forests. However, to avoid starving, people sometimes hunted illegally. This was called poaching, and serfs who were caught poaching were severely punished.

Some farmworkers were freemen. Freemen were not under the same strict control of the lord. If a serf ran away from his home, and managed to live for a year and a day in a town without being found, he could become a freeman, too.

The Middle Ages was a violent time compared to how we live today. There were frequent wars and uprisings, including rebellions against the king by **rival** nobles. The need for armed protection shaped medieval society. Usually, high-ranking nobles swore their loyalty to the king and lords swore their loyalty to higher-ranking nobles. Freemen and serfs had to be **loyal** to their lord. In exchange for their loyalty, the lord offered his protection. If the lord needed to raise an army, he would require freemen on his estates to serve as foot soldiers.

If You Were a Boy Serf

From an early age, you work a full day. You wake up just before sunrise and go to sleep when it is dark. For breakfast, you have rye bread and water. Even before the sun is fully risen, and regardless of the weather, you begin your work on the land.



Boy serf plowing fields

In springtime, you are busy plowing and planting seeds. You assist in the delivery of baby lambs and calves. At midday, you walk home for a simple meal of rye bread and maybe a small piece of cheese. After lunch, you return to work, cutting logs for the lord's fire.



Boy serf chasing birds away from crops

In the summer months, you tend to the crops you planted in the spring. You keep the hungry birds and insects away from the growing crops.

Autumn, the time to harvest crops, is perhaps the busiest time of all. You help your mother and sisters pick fruits and berries, which they preserve and store for the winter. Using a simple tool called a **scythe**, you harvest grain crops such as wheat, oats, rye, and



Boy serf harvesting grain

barley. You help store the grain. A good harvest makes everyone, especially the lord, very happy. It means there is food to eat during the winter months. A good harvest is a time of celebration for all.

Nevertheless, you have to get used to having less food to eat in the wintertime, and to feeling hungry and cold more often than not. At times, your parents find it difficult to make ends meet. Even if ice and snow lay upon the frozen earth, you still have jobs to do. You have to feed and care for the livestock. You repair fences and barns. All the while, you continue to work on your family's strips of land. Each evening as the sun is setting, you return home quite exhausted. You end your day with a meal called pottage that your mother or sisters have prepared. Pottage is a vegetable stew with grain and a tiny piece of meat or fish in it. After a good night's sleep, you will wake up and do it all again!



Serf family eating a meal together

Medieval Musings

1. In the Middle Ages, a kind of food made from grain was used as a plate. What was it?

2. In the Middle Ages, people kept coins in clay pots. The pots were made from a type of clay called *pygg*. Today, many children place coins in a special container, the name of which originates in the Middle Ages. What is the container called?

3. A popular board game that is still played today arrived in Europe from Persia in the 800s. What is the name of that game? (Clue: Make sure you check your answer.)



Wealthy lords and ladies played games like this.

Letter Quest

Stained-glass windows adorned medieval churches. Most people in the Middle Ages could not read and write. Stained-glass windows depicted stories from the Bible and helped to communicate Christian beliefs.

Look closely at this stained-glass window; a letter of the alphabet has been hidden for you to find. When you find it, record this letter on Activity Page 2.3. After you find all the letters in the Letter Quest activities, you will rearrange them to spell a word related to the Middle Ages.



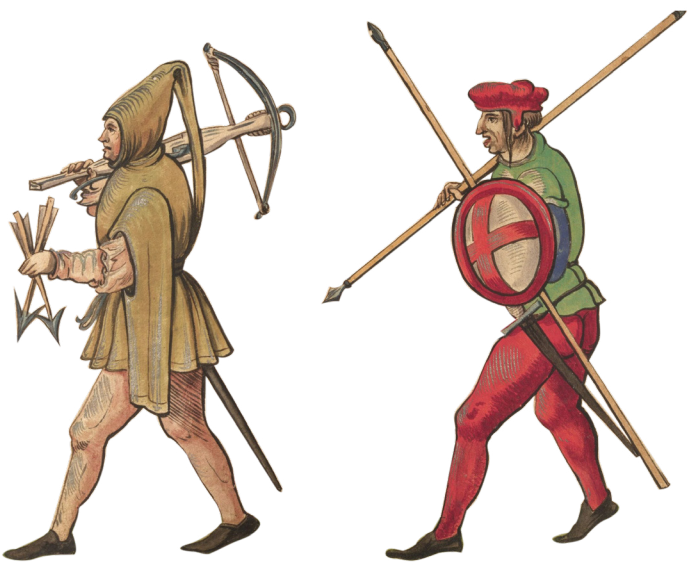
Chapter 3

Gloomy Castles and Jousting Knights

THE BIG QUESTION
Why was there a need for knights and castles during the Middle Ages?

Whether rich or poor, young men in the Middle Ages learned how to use a weapon of some kind. Rivalries between nobles, wars with other nations, even violence between neighbors required that they be able to fight. When a lord needed to raise an army, he turned to those he governed.

In the Middle Ages, ordinary foot soldiers were trained to fight with an axe and a long spear called a pike. Others were trained to be skillful archers and crossbowmen. Some foot soldiers might have worn chainmail, an early form of metal **armor**, but most had padded coats and carried daggers. However, the most **esteemed** soldiers were knights.



Crossbowman and pikeman



Knight in suit of armor riding armored horse

Knights were soldiers who fought on horseback, and sometimes on foot, for their lord. If you wanted to be a knight, you had to be able to afford horses and armor. You also had to find someone willing to train you. Because it was very expensive to become a knight, these mounted warriors were usually sons of wealthy, **influential** members of society.

Being a knight was one way of making a fortune. If you were involved in successful battles and wars, you might receive money or land as payment for your services. Sometimes a king might also reward you with a **title**. Having a title usually meant that you were an influential member of society. Knights also made money by looting and by holding certain people for **ransom**.

If You Were a Knight



Young boy training to be a knight

Your training to become a knight begins at a young age. You leave home to live with a family friend or relative who has agreed to train you. In the first several years of your training, you help to dress and to serve the lord. You are known as a page. During these early years as an **aspiring** knight, you probably learn to use a sword, to ride a horse, and to wield a lance, or long wooden pole with a metal tip. Later, when you are ready to learn more challenging skills, you become a squire.

Although you are still a servant, as a squire you are now responsible for grooming and saddling the lord's horses. You are also responsible for cleaning and polishing his armor. You learn how to fight while riding a horse. You learn to use other weapons, including a heavier lance. This part of your training lasts for several years.



Squires learned to fight with swords.

If you are a successful squire, you might be knighted by the lord. In what is called the dubbing ceremony, the lord taps you on the shoulder with the flat part of his sword. Then, a priest might bless you with a prayer.



King knighting a squire

The Way of the Knight



Knights were supposed to be brave in battle.

In France in the 1100s and 1200s, certain expectations about how knights should behave in society were developed. The term **chivalry**, which refers to a warrior horseman or knight, became the term used to describe these expectations. These ideas of chivalry spread to other European countries. Knights were expected to serve their lord. They were required to honor and protect the Church and weaker members of society. They were also expected to treat other knights captured in battle as honored guests until a ransom was received. Sometimes it took months before a captured knight's family paid up. Once payment was received, the captured knight was free to go home.



A knight was expected to guard and protect weaker members of society.

Charge!

Knights could prove their strength and abilities by taking part in jousting matches. Jousting matches were mock, or pretend, battles between two or more knights. Knights rode horses, wore full armor, and carried lances. Those who took part in jousts did so to gain respect and possibly a generous prize. For the privileged, attending the jousting matches was considered to be a day of excitement and entertainment. It was very much like watching a football or baseball game today. When the joust began, the knights charged at each other. With the aid of a lance, each knight attempted to knock his opponent off his horse.



Jousting was a popular sport.



Knights competing in a joust

Cold, Dark, and Gloomy

Many kings and nobles lived in castles. Castles provided the inhabitants, or people who lived there, with a certain amount of protection from the enemy. They were also fairly safe places to store weapons and food supplies. The first castles were wooden forts. Later, people built stronger castles made of stone.



Modern reconstruction of wooden castle



Stone castle in France

Castle walls sometimes **enclosed** a series of small buildings, like a little town. The castle had a water supply within the walls. Residents also needed a good supply of food inside so they could withstand a **siege**. For added protection, some castles were surrounded by moats. The moat was a deep trench, often filled with water. Sometimes there was a drawbridge that could be raised or lowered. Over time, castles became more elaborate with interior courtyards, living quarters for soldiers, and stables.

By today's standards, life in a castle was not very pleasant. Castles were cold and gloomy. They were designed for protection, not comfort. Most castles had only a few rooms. There was typically a Great Hall, a kitchen, and two or three private chambers, or rooms, for the lord and his family. There was no bathroom, just a tiny alcove that jutted out of the castle wall. The contents of the toilet emptied into the moat or a pit directly below. Can you imagine the smell?



Castle in England with moat

A Medieval Castle



Soldiers guarded the walls.

Tower

Gatehouse

Outer Wall

Drawbridge


Kitchen
Lord's Chamber
Keep
Great Hall
Moat



A castle's Great Hall had many uses.

The Great Hall was where family members and their guests gathered. Meals were served in the Great Hall. Entertainers performed there, and guests and even servants slept there. Buckets of hot coals or fireplaces provided the fire needed for heat and cooking. Small windows and candles offered little light.

Traveling storytellers, minstrels, and troupes of actors often visited a castle. Quite often, jesters lived in the castle, ready to perform whenever requested. Noble children and adults in the Middle Ages enjoyed music and dancing. They played outdoor sports as well. Tennis, croquet, and bowling all began as lawn games during this period in history.



Medieval musicians

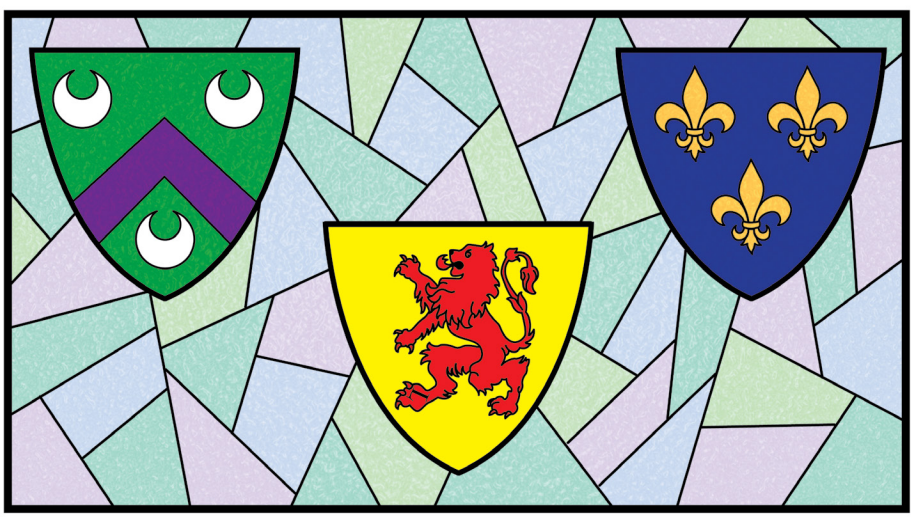
Medieval Musings

1. The invention of new weapons brought an end to the era of knights and jousting. What were these noisy weapons called?

2. If a knight dishonored himself in some way by being disloyal or dishonest, he stood trial before a very important member of society. Who would have been his judge?

Letter Quest

Find the letter in this stained-glass window and record it on Activity Page 2.3.



Chapter 4

Merchants, Markets, and Mud:
Towns in the Middle Ages

THE BIG QUESTION
How did the growth of trade during the Middle Ages affect the way people lived?

It is raining again! You stand in a puddle on the edge of a narrow street. You have just entered town through one of two gates. The gates are the only ways in and out of this walled town. Inside the walls, tiny townhouses stand side-by-side. As you move through the crowd, you spot rats scurrying about, feeding on discarded trash. Nearby, you hear the varied cries of people selling fruits, vegetables, eggs, and pies. It is market day and people have set up their stalls in the town square.

As you make your way through the muddy streets, you hear the sound of church bells. They ring out to sound the hour and to call people to church.



Metalworker's stall in medieval market

You have just caught a glimpse of a town in Europe during the late Middle Ages.



Streets in medieval towns were often crowded and muddy.

In the early part of the Middle Ages, most people lived in the countryside. Between the years 1000 and 1350 AD, **fueled** by trade, towns began to grow. New jobs **emerged**, and, as a result, more and more people left the countryside to live and work in towns.



Peasants farming in the countryside

With this growth in trade, an increased number of people became involved in commerce, or business. As a result, a class of people, called the middle class, grew in importance. **Merchants** and craftsmen were part of the middle class. Towns grew as the middle class created successful businesses, and therefore jobs. Some merchants became rich and influential members of town communities.

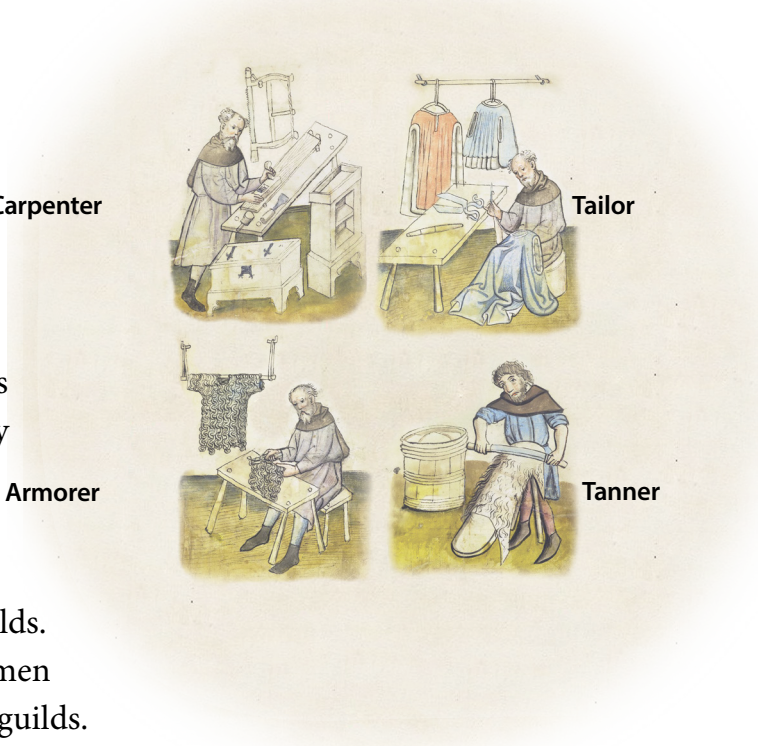


Merchants and artisans sold goods in town markets.

To protect their businesses, merchants established guilds in towns throughout Europe. Guilds were organizations made up of merchants. Guilds controlled wages as well as the price and quality of the goods the merchants sold.

Medieval Craftsmen

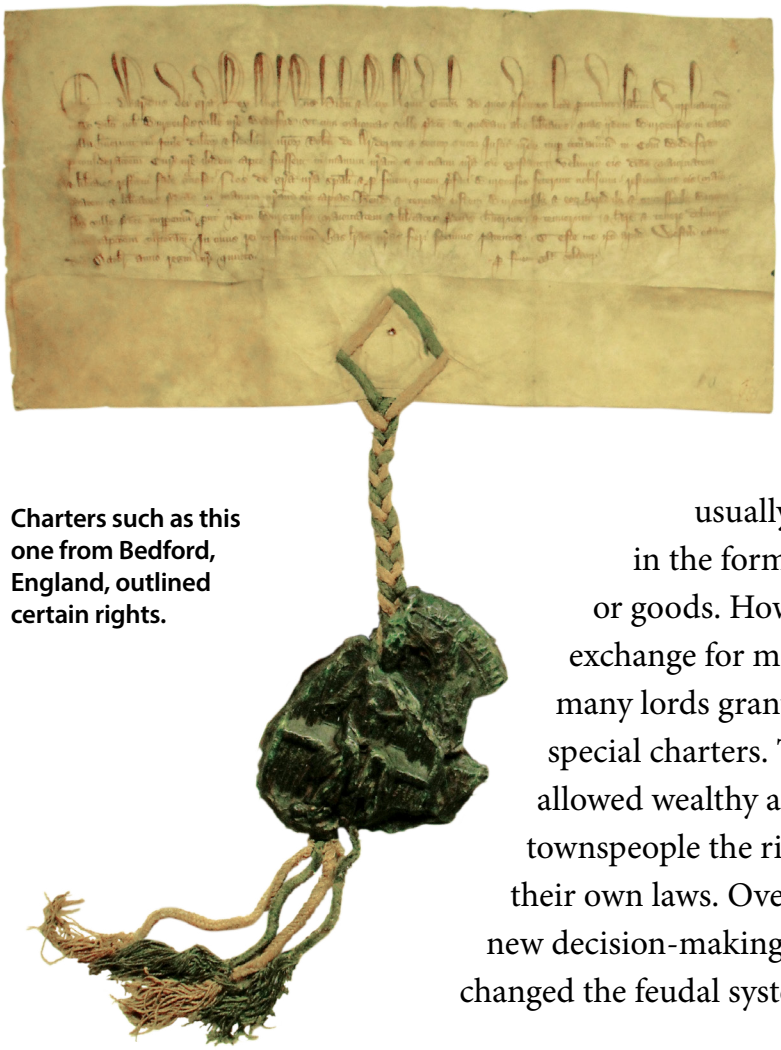
Not only did merchants **thrive**, so too did skilled craftsmen, such as carpenters, papermakers, glassmakers, and blacksmiths. Skilled craftsmen were also important members of town communities. They made and sold their goods in the towns in which they lived and worked. Just like merchants, skilled craftsmen protected their businesses by forming guilds. Only highly skilled craftsmen were invited to join these guilds. Many years of training went into becoming a skilled craftsman.



There was a certain pattern to daily life in towns in the Middle Ages. From Monday to Saturday, towns were busy with the **hustle and bustle** of street vendors, shopkeepers, craftsmen, and market sellers. Shops opened as early as 6:00 a.m. Most towns held markets two or three times a week. Local farmers sold produce and animals.



Town scene in medieval manuscript



Charters such as this one from Bedford, England, outlined certain rights.

Towns were not outside the control of the local lord. Merchants and craftsmen usually paid lords in the form of money or goods. However, in exchange for money or goods, many lords granted towns special charters. The charters allowed wealthy and influential townspeople the right to make their own laws. Over time, this new decision-making process changed the feudal system.

With a growing economy, a banking system began to develop. The increasingly wealthy churches in towns created schools called universities. Places such as Oxford and Cambridge in England, and Paris in France, became important centers of learning.



Construction on the chapel at Oxford University's Merton College began in the 1200s.

It was not long before many European towns and cities became terribly overcrowded. People lived in small houses crowded together. The towns and cities were also disease-ridden. Rats scurrying about helped spread disease. Unless you lived in a castle, you did not have a toilet inside your home. Instead, people used chamber pots and threw the contents into the streets!



Rats spread disease in towns.

Local water supplies, polluted with the waste that was discarded daily, carried disease. Sickness and disease were common. The Black Death spread easily in such conditions.

As they did in the countryside, people in towns cooked on small fires inside their homes. Fires frequently broke out and were difficult to control. Townspeople were required to keep buckets of water outside their homes—just in case.



Fires spread quickly in medieval towns.

Many Middle Age towns were walled. People entering or leaving did so through gates. Often a toll, or fee, was charged to enter a town. A toll collector stood at the gate to collect the fee. The tolls were either paid in money or in goods. Gates were designed to keep criminals out, or if necessary, to lock criminals in so that they could be caught. There was no organized police force, but instead there were watchmen. Any member of the public could be asked to help catch an escaping criminal. The town gates were locked at night when the **curfew** bell sounded.

This gate leads into the town of Besalú, Spain, built in the 1100s.

Originally, curfew bells rang to inform those in the **taverns** that it was time to leave. However, they soon became a signal to everyone that it was time to go home.

If You Were an Apprentice Craftsman

Just like the boys who go off to train to be knights, you, too, are sent away at an early age. Your family arranges your training. You must live in the home of a master, or highly skilled, craftsman. It is unlikely that you will return home again during your **apprenticeship** years.



Apprentice blacksmith assisting his master



A journeyman blacksmith continued to work for his master.

you are paid by your master each day for your work. Usually, you continue to work for your master as an employee. After several years as an employee, you might take the next step in your career. You might be ready to submit a piece of your best work, called your masterpiece, to the guild for approval. If the guild accepts your work, you finally become a master craftsman. You might even be able to open your own shop with your name above the door!

Your training will take many years to complete. You will not receive payment for any of the work you do. During this time, you are part of your master's household. You live in his home or shop. You usually eat with his family. Your new family provides the clothes you wear. Even if you are homesick, or sad, you have to obey your master.

After a specified period of time, you advance from being an apprentice to becoming a journeyman. As a journeyman,



A master blacksmith might open his own shop.

Women in the Middle Ages

Women in the Middle Ages had few legal rights. However, a small number of women in positions of power had significant influence. For example, women who became queens were often in a position to **advise** their husbands and sons, the kings and princes. A lord's widow who did not have sons could manage her deceased husband's land and make important decisions. Women could become skilled in a particular craft, and some trained to be merchants. Other women joined the Church and became nuns. Many women worked alongside their husbands in the fields. Regardless of whether they were part of the privileged class or were serfs, as important members of their households, women managed their families' daily needs.



Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I of England

Two interesting women from this time period were Empress Matilda and Abbess Hildegard of Bingen. Empress Matilda lived during the 1100s and was the daughter of King Henry I of England. She was involved in leading an army against an English king. She escaped capture and went to France. She was also the mother of King Henry II of England.



Abbess Hildegard of Bingen

Abbess Hildegard was a writer and composer who lived during the 1100s. She wrote about many different subjects, including philosophy, science, and medicine. She also developed an alternative English alphabet.

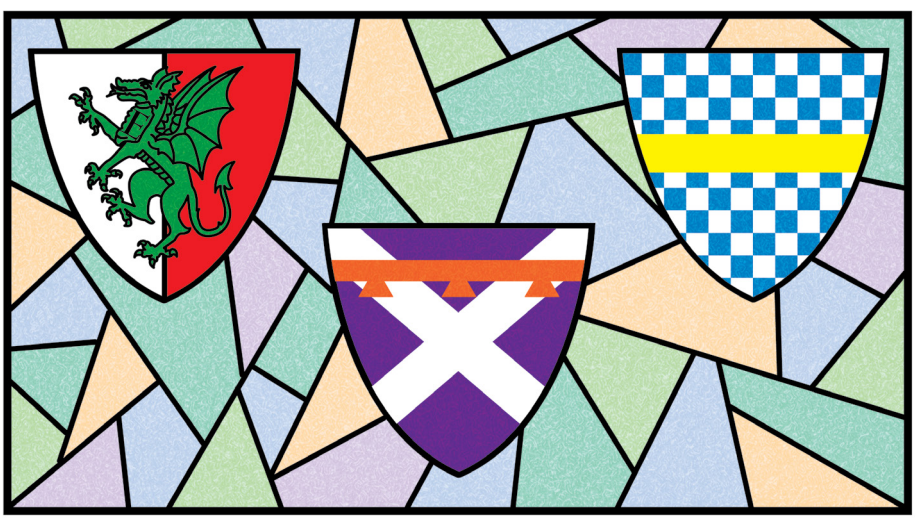
Medieval Musings

1. In the Middle Ages, salt was very expensive and thought to be precious. People thought that spilling could bring evil, and developed a custom to ward off any evil that might come. What did they do? (Clue: some people still do it today.)

2. In the Middle Ages, people created last names to describe the job they did. What did men with the last name *Shoemaker* or *Cooper* do?

Letter Quest

Find the letter in this stained-glass window and record it on Activity Page 2.3.



Chapter 5

The Power of the Church

THE BIG QUESTION
What practices in the Middle Ages show the influence and power of the Church?

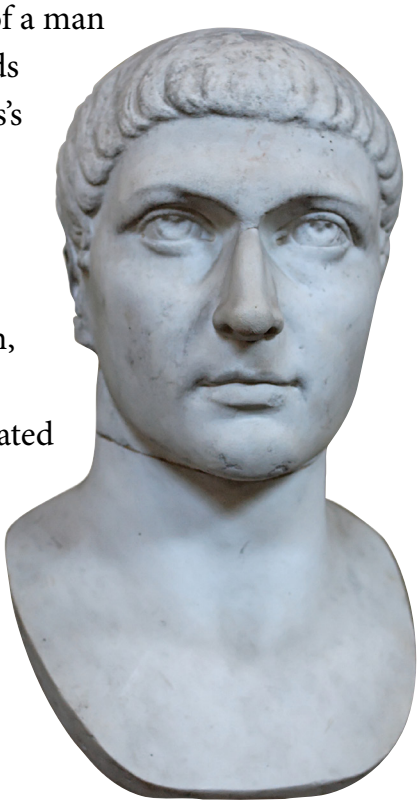
It is 6:00 a.m. The church bells are ringing to welcome the day and to ***summon*** *you to church. The early morning sunlight illuminates the stained-glass windows. Sometimes, at daybreak, you attend a church service before starting work. You pray often and your life is* ***anchored*** *to the Church.*



Stained-glass windows in La Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, France, built in the 1200s

It may be impossible for us to understand just how important the Christian Church was to most Europeans in the Middle Ages. Not only did the local lords have great influence over people's lives, but the Church did, too. The power of the Church had grown gradually over a long period of time.

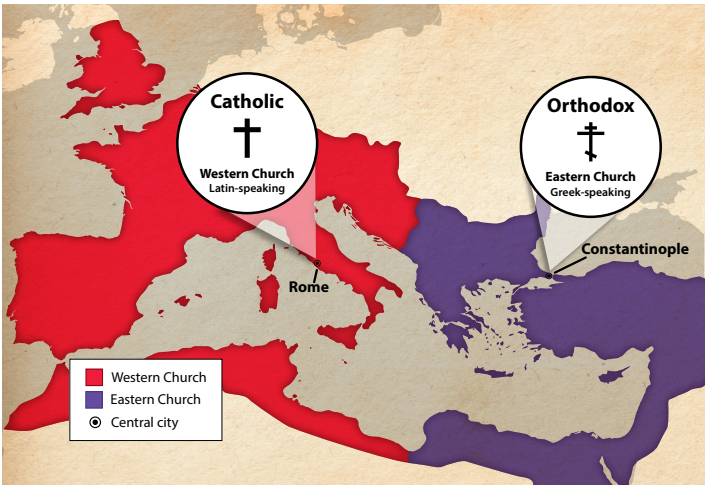
Christianity is based on the teachings of a man named Jesus of Nazareth who lived hundreds of years before the Middle Ages began. Jesus's followers were known as Christians.



Under the Roman emperor Constantine the Great, Christianity was accepted as one of several religions in the Roman Empire.

In the first 300 years after Jesus's life, Christianity grew slowly. In fact, in the early years of the ancient Roman civilization, Romans were not permitted to practice the Christian faith. Later, Christianity was tolerated as one religion among several. Eventually, it became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Christianity spread throughout the Empire. As it spread, the power and influence of the Church in Rome grew. The pope was the leader of the western Church.

As time went on, during the Middle Ages, conflicts developed between the eastern followers of the Church, who spoke Greek, and the western followers, who spoke Latin. Finally, in 1054 AD, the two sides split over differing beliefs. The eastern Church was called Orthodox. Members of the Orthodox Church thought their beliefs were orthodox, or correct. The western Church, based in Rome, was called Catholic. Members of the Catholic Church thought their beliefs were catholic, or universal. The two Christian Churches that emerged



The Christian Church split apart

during the Middle Ages still exist today.

In western Europe, almost every village and town had a church. Most people attended church on Sunday. In addition, certain days were considered holy days to mark important events in the life of Jesus and his followers. People did not work on these days, but instead went to church. Some holy days were feast days and other holy days were days of **fasting**. Christmas, an important Christian holiday, was a time of feasting, or celebration. The 40 days before Easter, another Christian holiday, were a time of fasting called Lent.

Architects and craftsmen in the Middle Ages built beautiful churches to express their love for God. New engineering skills enabled stonemasons to create a style of architecture that later became known as Gothic. They built tall towers, arches, **rose windows**, and **spires**. Sometimes it took hundreds of years to complete a great medieval cathedral.



Chartres Cathedral

Holy shrines dedicated to people who played an important role in the history of Christianity were scattered across western Europe. These shrines were usually places where religious figures had been killed or buried, or where miracles were believed to have happened. Most Christians hoped to go on at least one journey, or **pilgrimage**, to visit one of these shrines in their lifetime. For many, going on a pilgrimage meant walking or riding long distances, and eating and sleeping in roadside taverns or religious houses. Many men and women made the journey to fulfill a vow to God, to seek a cure for a disease, or just to travel abroad.



Medieval pilgrims

Monks were men who chose to live apart from society and to **devote** their lives to the Church. They spent their lives in monasteries, working on the land, studying, and praying. Monks were often the most educated people in Europe, especially in the early part of the Middle Ages. A monastery was a building, or collection of buildings, that housed monks. Monasteries were usually contained within high walls that provided a certain amount of protection.



Sénanque Abbey in Provence, France, was founded in 1148 AD.

Women also joined the Church. Women who devoted their lives to the Church were called nuns. Nuns lived in convents, or nunneries. Nuns received many of the same benefits as monks. They were educated and were taught crafts and other skills.



A painting from the 1400s shows nuns kneeling in prayer.

As the Church grew in power and influence, it became very wealthy. The Church raised taxes and it owned land. People who held powerful positions within the Church often came from wealthy noble families. They gave large amounts of money to the Church. The Church also influenced political decisions and supported or opposed kings.

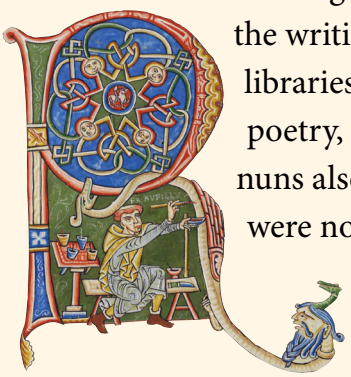


Interior of the Duomo, or Cathedral, of Pisa, Italy, begun in the 1000s

Not only powerful people gave money to the Church. All Christians were required to pay one-tenth of their earnings to the Church. This payment was known as a tithe.

However, there was a troubling side to this deeply religious period in history. Some people expressed ideas with which the pope and other Church leaders disagreed. Church leaders called these contradictory opinions heresy, and the people who held them were called heretics. Heretics were treated cruelly.

Precious Books



Illuminated manuscripts were works of art.

During the Middle Ages, monks and nuns studied the writings of ancient Greeks and Romans. Their libraries contained books about religion, science, poetry, mathematics, and history. Monks and nuns also copied ancient writings by hand. There were no machines or printers that made books. By copying these texts, monks and nuns helped to preserve, or save, ancient knowledge that would otherwise have been lost.

In the late Middle Ages, the higher social classes who could read, and even write, owned their own prayer books, such as the *Book of Hours*. These prayer books were read at different times of the day. In addition to prayers, the books included biblical texts, calendars, hymns, and painted pictures.

Many of the books produced by monks and nuns contained **exquisite** art and design features. After the Middle Ages, as a result of Johannes Gutenberg's invention of the printing press around 1450 AD, more affordable books were produced. These printed books began to replace the beautiful handmade books and made these original manuscripts even more rare.



Page from *Book of Hours* created in the early 1400s for John, Duke of Berry (France)

If You Were a Monk

Young boys like you are often given to a monastery. Even a serf can become a monk. Therefore, if you are not **destined** to become a craftsman or a merchant, then becoming a monk is a good option.



Novice

Life within a monastery certainly is hard. However, you are assured of a place to sleep, clothing, food, medical care, and an education. Your training will take many years. When you start your training, you are called a novice, another word for *beginner*. You begin by learning to read and write. You study texts from the Christian Bible, pray, and learn to farm or to acquire a certain skill. If, at the end of your training, you are certain you want to join the Church, you take part in a special ceremony. In this ceremony, you vow, or promise, to dedicate your life to God. You also vow not to marry, and to live a **humble** and obedient life. Then, the top of your head is shaved, identifying you as a monk.



Novice working in the monastery garden



Novice taking his vows



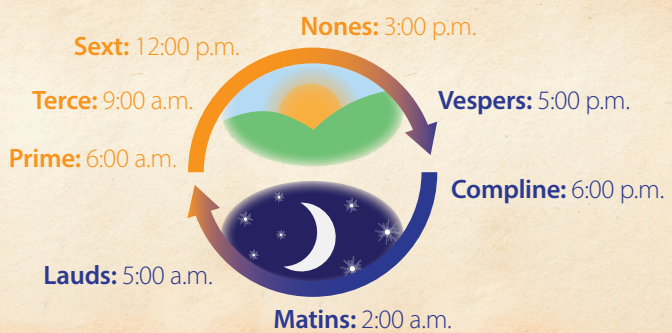
Monks chanting hymns

As a monk, you spend a large part of your day in worship and prayer. However, you also spend time working on the land or in the monastery itself. You might wash clothes, cook, or tend to the vegetable garden. You might learn to make honey. Or, you might learn how to make shoes or furniture. If you have a beautiful singing voice, you might participate in the performance of Gregorian chants. Gregorian chants are a form of **sacred** vocal music, or musical speech, based on hymns or passages from both the Hebrew and Christian Bibles. Monks perform these chants on certain holy days. As a gifted artist, you might work in the scriptorium copying the work of classical writers or producing new books. For many like you, the life of a monk provides a degree of security and protection from some of the challenges of medieval life.



Monk working in the scriptorium

A Monk's Daily Prayer Schedule



Medieval Musings

1. What did monks and nuns write with?
(Clue: This writing tool was once attached to a creature that can fly.)

2. Certain religious people provided serfs with medical care. Who do you think those people were?



John Duns Scotus, a member of the Church

Letter Quest

Find the letter in this stained-glass window and record it on Activity Page 2.3.



Chapter 6

1066: The Battle that Changed History

THE BIG QUESTION
How did the Battle of Hastings change history?

It is October 14, in the year 1066 AD, near the small coastal town of Hastings, England. At the top of a rolling hill known as Senlac Hill, thousands of foot soldiers stood in a line. At around 9:00 a.m. on this autumn day hundreds of years ago, English soldiers prepared to battle an invading army. What happened next changed the course of English history.

The English soldiers formed a shield wall at the top of Senlac Hill.

The English soldiers, led by their king, Harold, stood at least 7,000 strong. However, these brave and loyal soldiers had recently marched about 200 miles. They came from the north of England where they had already fought an invading force. Though victorious, these soldiers were tired.

As they stood on the hill, the English soldiers could see that they faced a large, well-equipped Norman army. The Normans, who came from a region of France, had approximately 10,000 men. They had thousands of skilled archers. They also had thousands of foot soldiers and knights who fought on horseback. The English, however, had mostly foot soldiers armed with simple weapons, such as bows and arrows, axes, spears, swords, and daggers.

Nevertheless, the English line was strong. What they lacked in energy, they made up for in **determination**. They stood with their

shields raised, creating a strong shield wall. From their position on top of Senlac Hill, they made it almost impossible for the Norman archers to **penetrate** this wall.



The English soldiers marched about 200 miles to reach the battle site.

The Normans needed to change their **tactics**. William, Duke of Normandy and leader of the invading army, sent his knights charging up the hill. The English responded with arrows, spears, and even stones. They forced the Norman knights to **retreat**.

The English soldiers once again defended their position. Still unable to break the wall, the Norman knights retreated. Seeing this, some English soldiers broke the wall and **pursued** the fleeing knights. This proved to be a fatal mistake. The English shield wall now had gaps in it.

Throughout the day, Norman attacks and retreats **drew** the English soldiers out of their positions. As more and more



English soldiers left their positions on Senlac Hill, they encountered Norman knights on horseback. The knights surrounded them. Then King Harold was killed. Although the English soldiers fought bravely, the Norman knights charged up the hill. Without a strong defensive line, the Norman knights were able to overwhelm the English soldiers. What was ultimately an eight-hour bloody battle ended with a Norman victory. The Duke of Normandy and his army had defeated the English.



Bayeux Tapestry section showing English foot soldiers and mounted Normans



Death of King Harold

Although victorious, William could not yet pronounce himself king. He and his soldiers began to march to the capital city of London. They chose to follow the old Roman road to London. Along the way, William met little **resistance** until he reached the capital.



William meeting with his nobles

The first real armed resistance came when the Norman army arrived at London Bridge. This bridge was the only way across the river into the city. Instead of fighting, William decided to send his soldiers into the surrounding countryside to burn the local villages. Fearing **mass** destruction, a number of important English lords surrendered and vowed to be loyal to William.

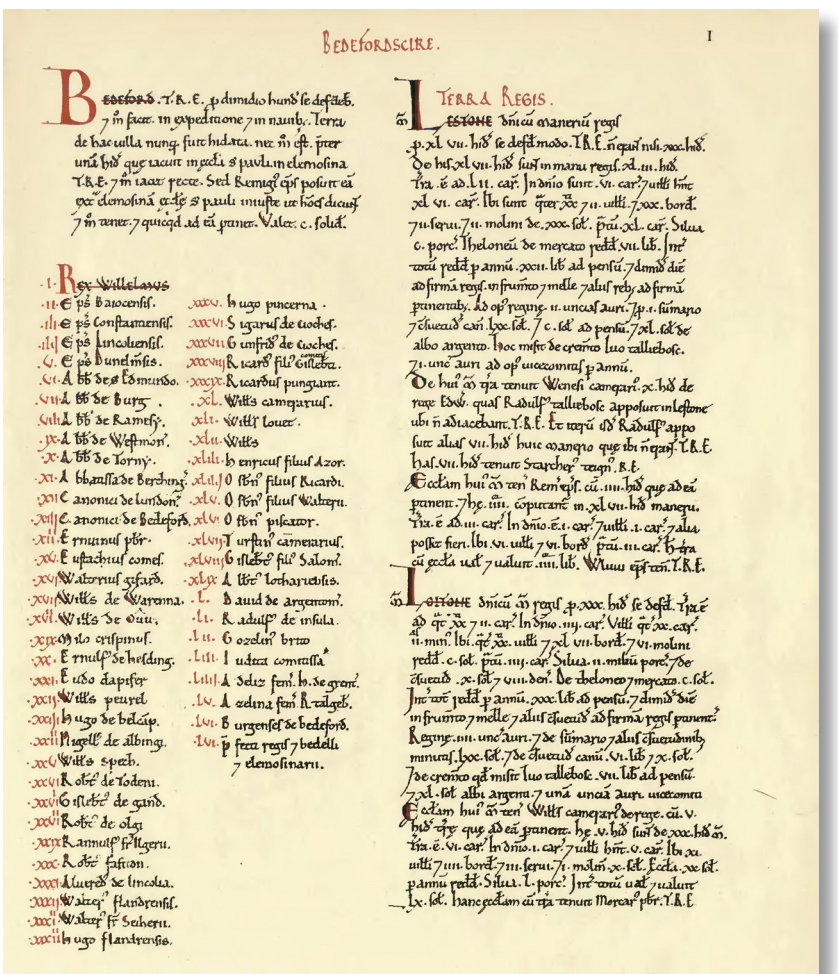
On Christmas Day in Westminster Abbey, in the year 1066 AD, the Norman duke was crowned King William I of England. From that moment on, he became known as William the Conqueror.



William as king

Why did the Battle of Hastings take place? It took place because Harold and William each believed he was the true king of England. There could be only one victor, and, in the end, it was William.

About 20 years after the Battle of Hastings, William decided that he wanted to know how rich England was. He wanted to know how much money people had in order to determine what taxes he could collect. William ordered officials from different counties to ride out across the land to find out. Although these men did not visit every location, or record every piece of property, they did collect a lot of information. They sent the information to the king's clerks who recorded it in two books. These books later became known as *Great Domesday* and *Little Domesday*. Today we simply refer to these books as the *Domesday Book*.



BEDEFORDSCIRE. I

TERRA REGIS.

Page from the *Domesday Book*

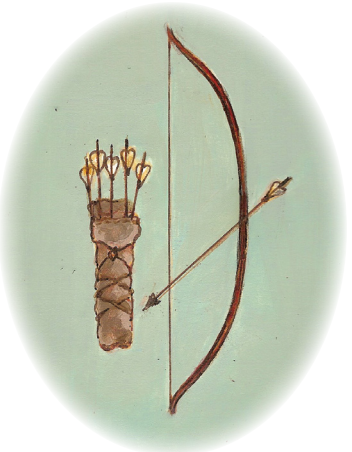
Bayeux Tapestry

The Bayeux Tapestry is a medieval embroidered cloth that tells the story of the Norman Conquest. The story is told in Latin text and beautiful images that were embroidered onto 231 feet of linen cloth. The Bayeux Tapestry is believed to have been **commissioned** around the year 1075 AD by a member of William's family. Much of what we know about the Battle of Hastings is because of this extraordinary tapestry.



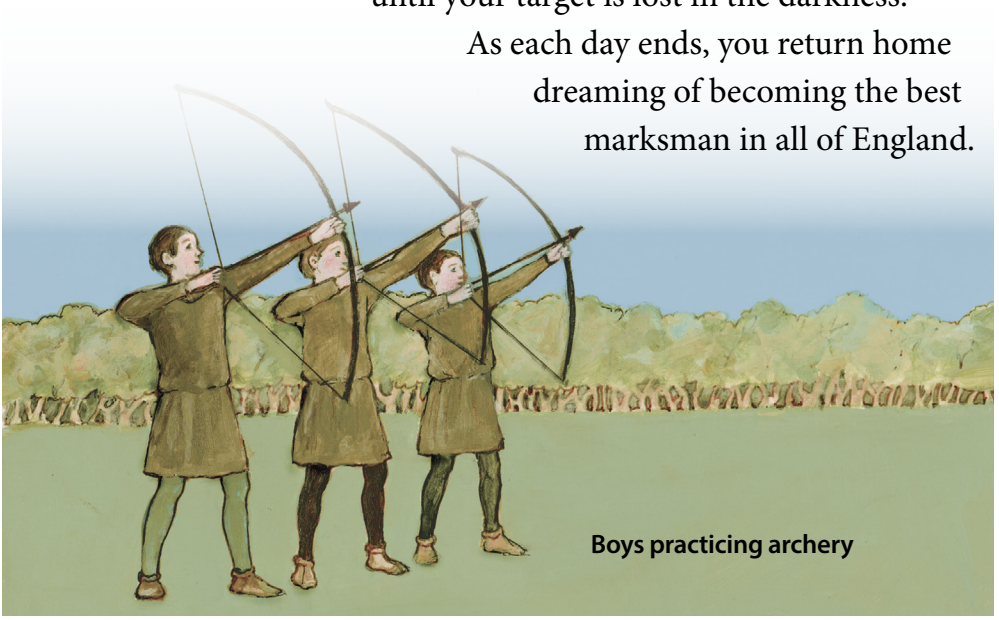
In the top image you can see William the Conqueror on horseback. In the bottom image, you can see English soldiers defending themselves against Norman cavalry using a shield wall.

If You Were an Archer



Bow, quiver, and arrows

Your family farms land for the lord. You work from sunrise to sunset tending to the crops and animals. However, you are not only a freeman, you are also a young warrior, or at least you hope to be. You are the son, grandson, and nephew of skillful archers. You, too, are training to be an archer, or longbowman. It is the law in England that you practice this skill. You have been learning the skills needed to be an archer since you learned how to walk. Your first longbow and set of arrows were carved from the wood of a yew tree. Your older brother gave them to you. Your mother made your quiver. At the very first glimmer of light, you run to the training field. You and the other boys your age love to practice hitting the set targets. You love to hear the cries, "Ready your bows! Nock! Mark! Draw! Loose!" Before the sun sets, you return to practice until your target is lost in the darkness. As each day ends, you return home dreaming of becoming the best marksman in all of England.



Boys practicing archery

The Changing of a Language



Geoffrey Chaucer

You might not realize it, but you, too, have been affected by William's victory over the Anglo-Saxon people of England. Before the Normans conquered this kingdom, Germanic tribes who invaded England after the Romans left spoke Anglo-Saxon, or Old English. William and his lords spoke Norman French and Latin. After his victory, William invited many people from his native land to settle in England. Over time, these languages were blended together and became what is called Middle English. In the 1300s, Chaucer wrote *The Canterbury Tales* in Middle English. If William had not defeated King Harold, we might be speaking a different language!

Anglo-Saxon Words

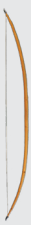
Anglo-Saxon words usually have one or two syllables, and many Anglo-Saxon words are still recognizable. Can you match each Anglo-Saxon word to the correct picture?

aefan, āctrēow, æppel, mete, hund, modor, swurd, faeder



Medieval Musings

War was a constant part of life in the Middle Ages. Men had to be able to fight, often to the death. Below are a number of medieval weapons of war. Match the weapons to the descriptions that follow.

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

A. This kind of weapon was used in hand-to-hand combat by knights.

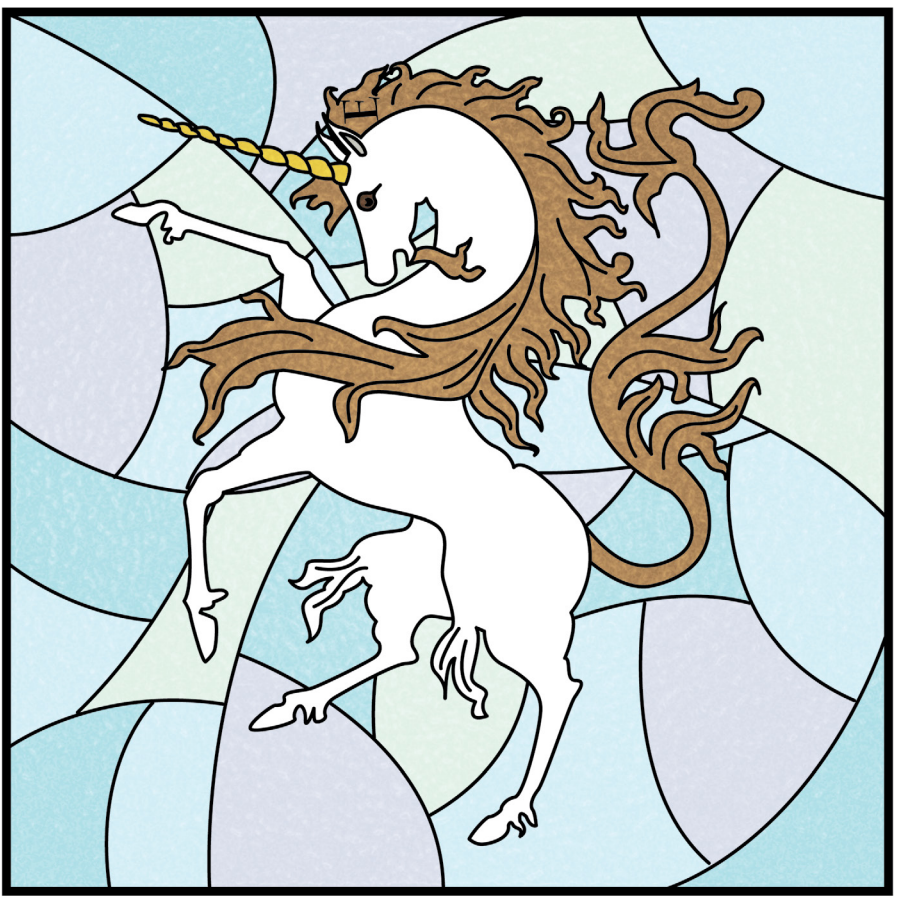
B. This was an interesting weapon because it was used to launch all kinds of objects over long distances, as well as over castle walls. For example, stones, burning oil, animal dung, and plague-ridden dead bodies were launched into the air.

C. This was perhaps the weapon of choice in England in the Middle Ages. Archers were expected to be expert marksmen. Archers spent a great deal of time training. In England, in the 1200s, a law was passed stating that all men between the ages of 15 and 60 years old must have these weapons and know how to use them.

D. These partner weapons were used by knights and some foot soldiers.

Letter Quest

Find the letter in this stained-glass window and record it on Activity Page 2.3.



Chapter 7

Henry II and Law and Order

THE BIG QUESTION
Why was King Henry II such an important English king?

The great conqueror is dead. He died 21 years after his incredible victory at the Battle of Hastings. William I had ruled England with an iron fist. He punished anyone who refused to be loyal to him. To defend his newly ***acquired*** *kingdom, he built great castles. He kept a close eye on finances. After his death, England experienced a period of turmoil and unrest. As a result, power-hungry nobles fought each other, and some even challenged the ruling kings.*



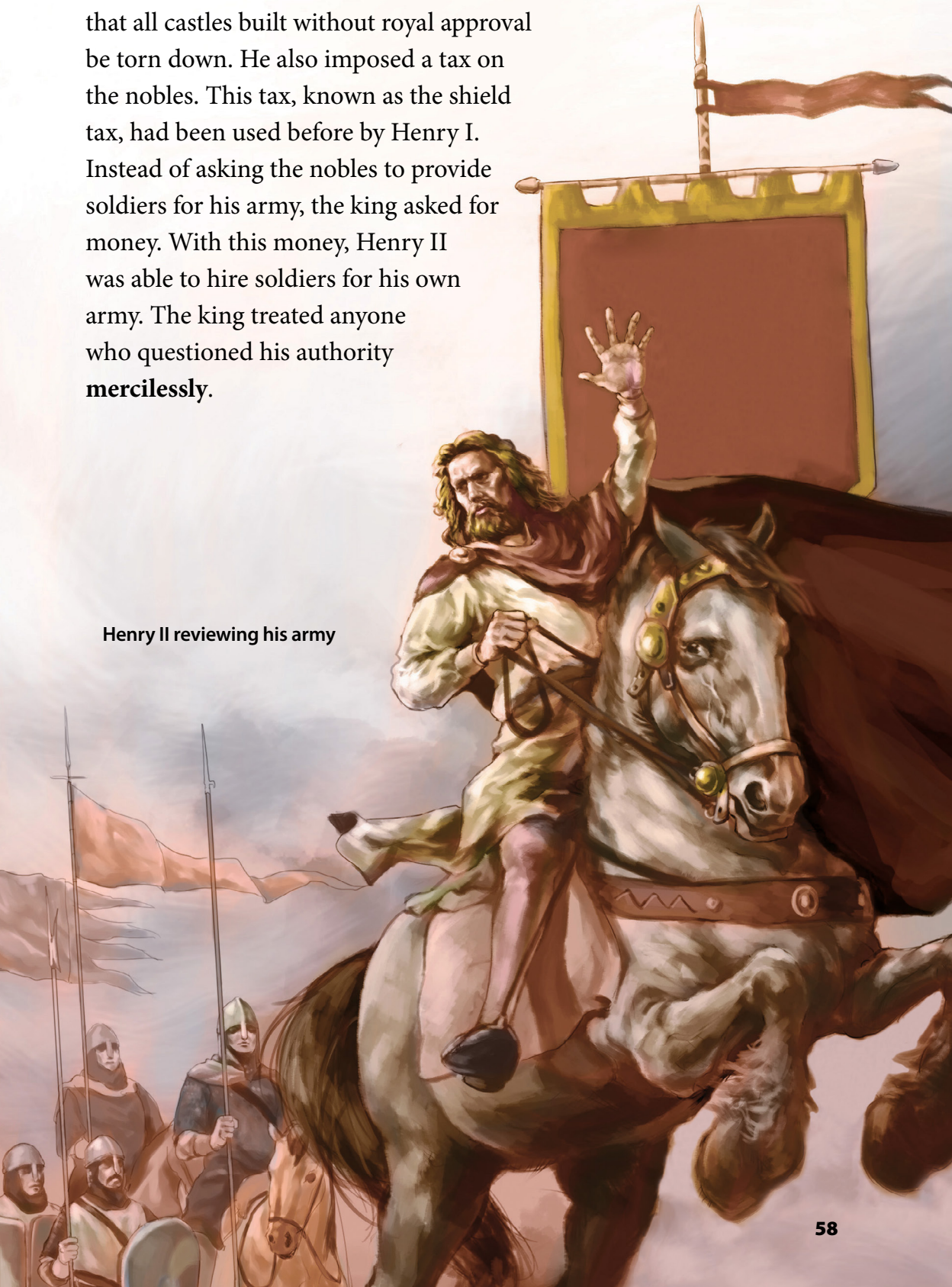
White Tower within the Tower of London, built by William the Conqueror



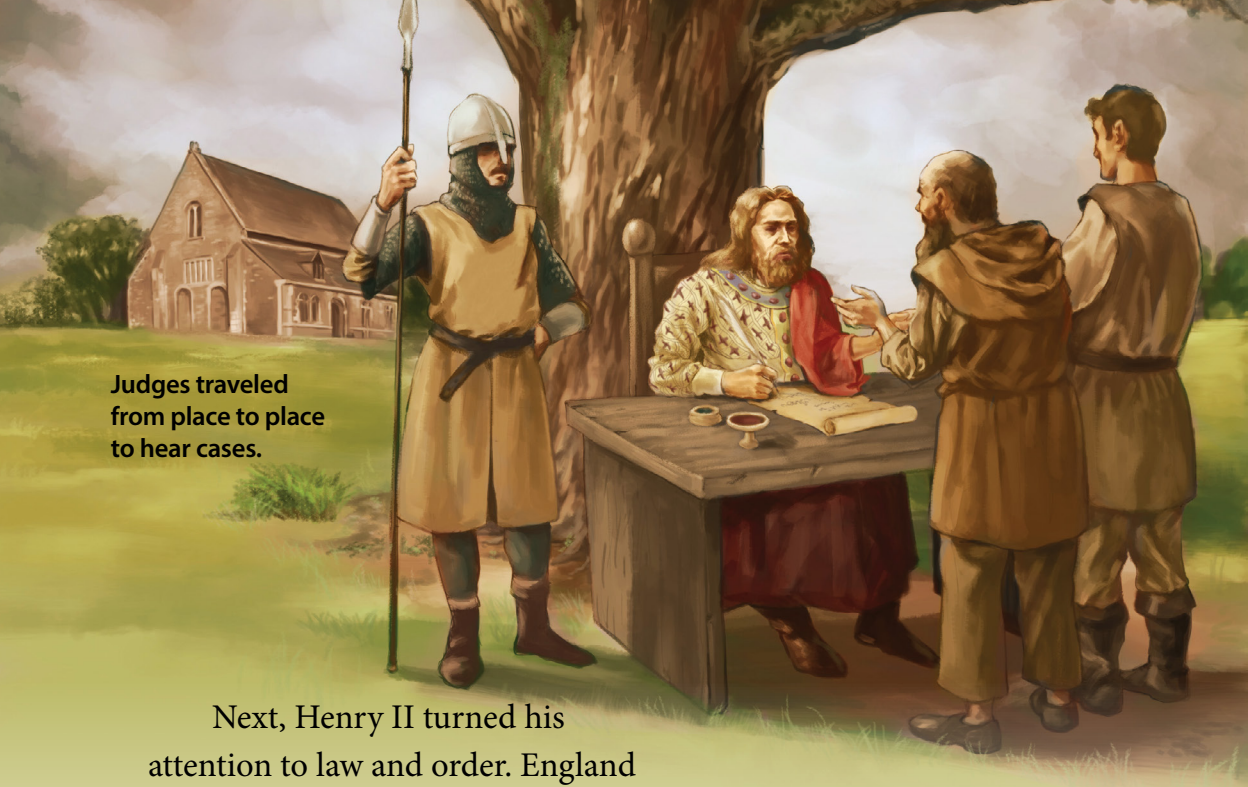
Henry II holding model of the abbey church he founded

Finally, in 1154 AD, 67 years after William's death, his great-grandson, Henry II, became king. Just like his great-grandfather, Henry II became the Duke of Normandy. Bright and determined, he made major reforms in justice, finance, and the armed forces. The first thing he did was to challenge the nobles who had been fighting among themselves for years. By this time, many nobles had acquired great wealth. They built castles for themselves. They formed their own armies, led by knights. Henry II ordered

that all castles built without royal approval be torn down. He also imposed a tax on the nobles. This tax, known as the shield tax, had been used before by Henry I. Instead of asking the nobles to provide soldiers for his army, the king asked for money. With this money, Henry II was able to hire soldiers for his own army. The king treated anyone who questioned his authority **mercilessly**.



Henry II reviewing his army



Judges traveled from place to place to hear cases.

Next, Henry II turned his attention to law and order. England had different courts assigned to deal with various crimes. For example, local lords held manor courts to deal with local affairs. There were also Church courts. The king's court took care of serious crimes such as murder and **treason**.

In the Middle Ages, there was a method of proof called trial by ordeal. This meant that the accused might be asked to prove his innocence by going through a certain ordeal. For example, the accused might have to pick up a piece of red-hot metal, be tossed into a pond, or fight an opponent. People believed that if the accused survived the ordeal, it was a sign that he was **innocent**.

Henry II set up a fairer legal system. He created a circuit court system. This meant that royal justices or judges went out into the countryside to hear cases. Their decisions helped decide future cases and ultimately became the basis of common law, or the law of the land. By the time he died in 1189 AD, Henry II had done a lot to **restore** the power and authority of the English monarchy.

Murder in the Cathedral



Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury

In the beginning of his **reign**, Henry II **appointed** a man he trusted named Thomas Becket to be his chief advisor. As well as controlling the nobles, Henry also wanted to limit the power of the Church in England. To help him do this, he appointed Thomas to the position of archbishop of Canterbury. This meant that Thomas had become the most powerful Church leader in all of England. Henry was confident that his friend would support his decisions regarding the Church.

But things did not work out that way. Thomas took his new job very seriously. When Henry wanted to reduce the power of the Church courts, Thomas disagreed with him. Furious, Henry thought about having his friend arrested. However, before this could happen, Thomas escaped to France. The pope supported Thomas and threatened to excommunicate, or remove, Henry from the Church. In the Middle Ages, excommunication was a terrifying prospect. Many Christians believed that if they were excommunicated from the Church, they would not go to heaven.



Henry II and Becket arguing

Eventually, Henry and Thomas reached an agreement and Thomas was allowed to return to England. Henry and Thomas's relationship did not improve, though. They continued to argue over Church matters. Henry became so frustrated that during a royal dinner, with many nobles in attendance, he is said to have uttered the words, "Will no one rid me of this troublesome priest?"



Knights murdering Becket in Canterbury Cathedral

Was Henry just **sulking**, or was he encouraging the **assassination** of Thomas? We will never know for sure. Four knights who heard these words murdered the archbishop while he was kneeling in prayer in Canterbury Cathedral. These knights may not have set out to kill the archbishop. The reasons behind the murder of Thomas Becket are still a mystery.



Canterbury Cathedral

Three years after Thomas's death, the pope declared him to be a saint. Thomas Becket's tomb in Canterbury Cathedral became a holy shrine that many **pilgrims** visited during the Middle Ages. It is said that Henry never forgave himself for the death of his friend.

A Most Extraordinary Queen

In 1153 AD, Henry II married a woman named Eleanor of Aquitaine. Eleanor came from a noble family who controlled Aquitaine, one of the richest regions of France. She had been married previously to the king of France. Henry and Eleanor had eight children. In 1173 AD, two of their sons plotted against Henry.



Eleanor with her sons, Richard and John



Eleanor of Aquitaine's seal

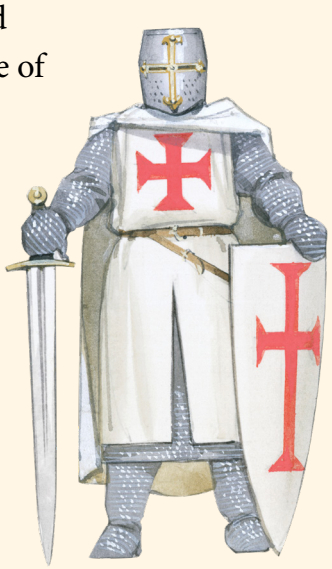
Henry believed Eleanor had been involved in the plot to overthrow him, so he had her placed under house arrest. When Henry died in 1189 AD, Eleanor was released by her oldest son, Richard I. Richard was crowned king after the death of his father, Henry II. Eleanor helped to govern England during the years King Richard was away fighting in the wars known as the Crusades. Because he was so brave, Richard earned the name *Lion–Hearted*. Eleanor of Aquitaine is thought to have been one of the more influential women of her time.

The Crusades



Pope Urban II encouraged the First Crusade at the Council of Clermont in 1095 AD.

A series of wars that became known as the Crusades helped to define and shape the Middle Ages. The origin of these wars began in 638 AD when Arab armies captured the holy city of Jerusalem. Despite this conquest, Jerusalem remained open to travelers, traders, and pilgrims. The city was, after all, sacred to Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Over time, Arab armies were conquered by Turkish armies, and access to Jerusalem became harder for Jewish and Christian pilgrims. In 1095 AD, the pope commanded that the Christian kings of Europe raise an army to reclaim Jerusalem. Crusaders across Europe answered his call, often motivated by the Pope's promise of religious salvation and also motivated by the prospect of fortune and glory. Between 1095 and 1291 AD, there were nine crusades, or attempts to recapture Jerusalem. On their way to the holy city, crusaders sometimes killed Muslims and Jews. Despite the violence, trading relationships developed between Europe and the Middle East. In addition to trading goods, people exchanged knowledge of science and mathematics, as well as views on art and architecture.



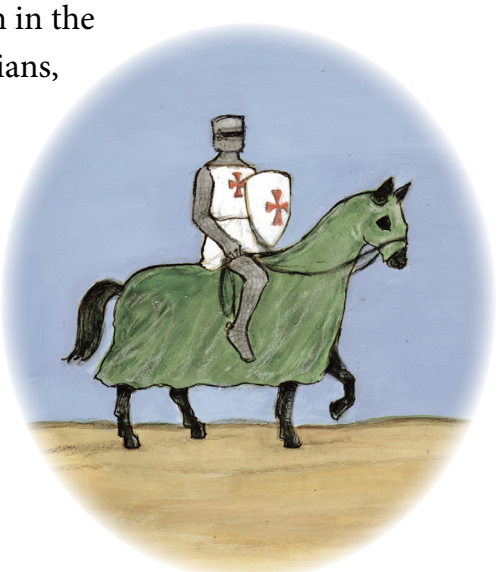
Crusader

The Journey of a Crusader

Many crusaders left their homes in Europe and traveled to faraway lands. Their journey took them around two years and led across land and sea. Many of the places crusaders passed through had climates very different from their native Europe. Diseases were also common along the route. Crusaders often wore a symbol of some kind on their shirt of armor and would sometimes carry a flag that displayed the same emblem. These were used to identify where they came from. The destination for all crusaders was the city of Jerusalem in the Holy Land. Many medieval Christians, following the Pope, believed that Jerusalem should only be controlled by Christians. When the Pope began the Crusades to take Jersualem from the Muslims who ruled there at the time, many crusaders came to believe that they were given permission to persecute and kill non-Christians. Unfortunately, this happened to many Jewish

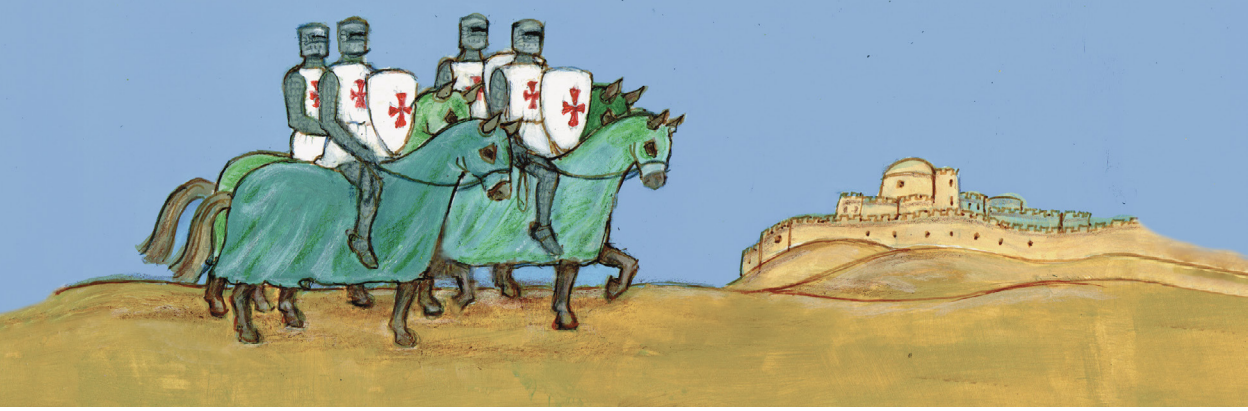


Crusaders traveled to the Middle East and North Africa.



Crusader crossing the desert

and Muslim communities on the journey to Jerusalem and once the crusaders arrived. A large number of them, however, would never make it all the way. It took a lot of resources to fund a journey to Jerusalem, and not all were able to keep up the journey.



A group of crusaders sees the city of Jerusalem in the distance.

Medieval Musings

1. In the Middle Ages, the poor had a very simple diet. They ate mostly from three food groups. What were these food groups? Clue: Even today they are important foods!

2. In the Middle Ages, to whom did people go if they needed to have a tooth removed? Clue: These people also cut hair.



Medieval man having tooth pulled

Letter Quest

Find the letter in this stained-glass window and record it on Activity Page 2.3.



Chapter 8

The Wayward King:
King John and the Magna Carta

THE BIG QUESTION
Why is Magna Carta such an important document?



Richard I

King Richard I died in 1199 AD. Although he had spent very little time in England, people there still mourned the death of Richard the Lion-Hearted. Many people had taken up arms and followed this royal crusader to the hot deserts of the Middle East. Many fought alongside him in battle. Without children to **succeed** him, Richard's youngest brother John became the next king.

King John was not as popular as his brother. For one thing, he failed to hold on to some of England's lands in France. Less than five years after John became king, the king of France attacked the regions of Normandy and Anjou. These were King John's **ancestral** lands. John attempted to defend these lands, but without his nobles' support, he was unsuccessful.



King John lost the lands in orange.



King John holding model of the abbey church he founded

Wars cost money and someone had to pay for them. To do this, King John raised taxes. He taxed nobles and wealthy merchants, and he placed taxes on cities. He also made it more difficult for people to hunt in the royal forests. Dissatisfaction with King John grew among the ruling class.

Then, King John claimed Church property and disagreed with the pope's choice of who should become the archbishop of Canterbury. Now he had yet another enemy. In fact, the pope was so angry with King John that he instructed the priests in England to limit church services. Most people were prevented from participating in the daily and weekly rituals of the Church. These were **unsettling** times, indeed. Two years later, in 1209 AD, the pope excommunicated King John.

Many of the English lords were now completely dissatisfied with their king. The king was just as unhappy with his nobles.

The pope ordered English priests to limit church services.

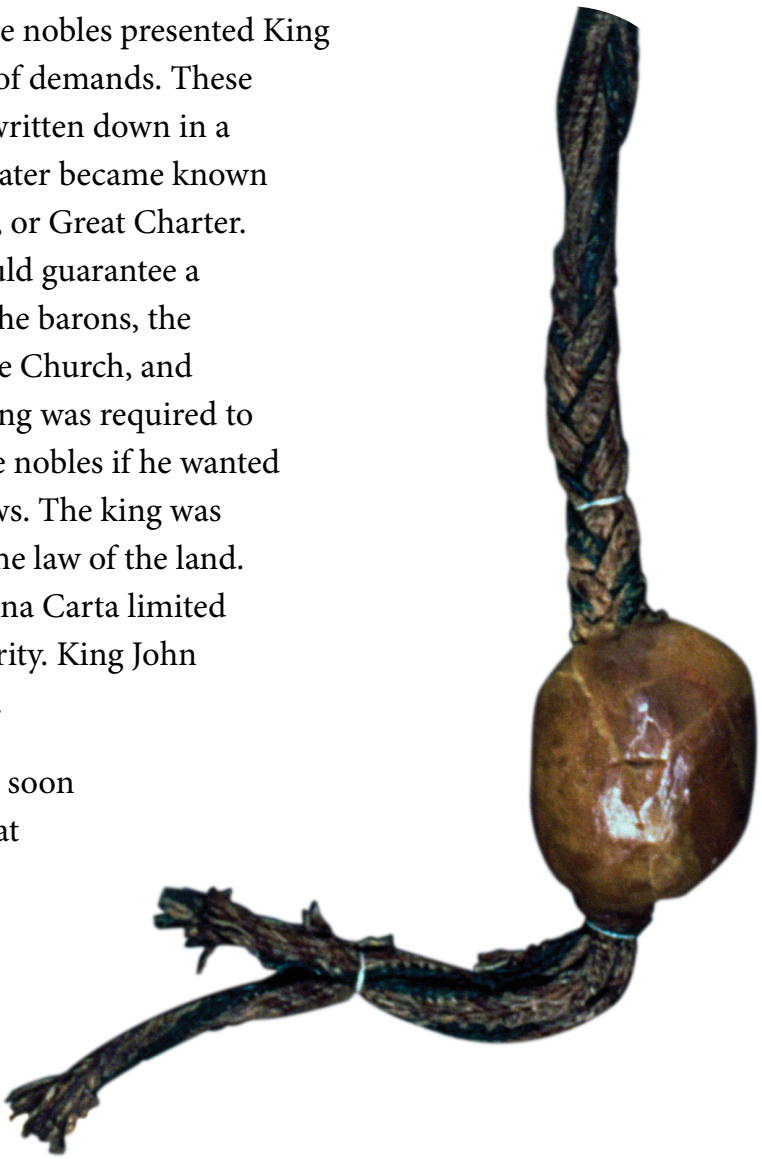
As a result of the feudal system, nobles had a huge amount of power. King John wanted to lessen their power and claim some of their land. The nobles wanted to limit the king's authority. A major conflict was **inevitable**.

Eventually, King John agreed to the pope's candidate for archbishop of Canterbury. But by this time, some of the more powerful nobles had already decided to act against him. In 1215 AD, following another English military defeat in France and additional taxes, these nobles rebelled and turned against King John. They captured London. For a short time, there was a military stand-off between the rebellious nobles and King John.



An important group of English nobles rebelled against John in 1215 AD.

In the summer of 1215 AD, both sides agreed to talk about their differences. After much debate, the nobles presented King John with a list of demands. These demands were written down in a document that later became known as Magna Carta, or Great Charter. The charter would guarantee a list of rights to the barons, the townspeople, the Church, and freemen. The king was required to **consult** with the nobles if he wanted to make new laws. The king was also subject to the law of the land. Essentially, Magna Carta limited the king's authority. King John was not pleased.



An official seal was placed on Magna Carta.

However, it soon became clear that if he did not agree to the charter, his nobles would continue to rebel. In June 1215 AD, an official seal was placed on Magna Carta. Copies of Magna Carta were sent out to different parts of the kingdom. Magna Carta was an important written statement that limited the power of English kings.

Magna Carta

Magna Carta really only benefited some members of society: feudal lords, the Church, the merchant class, and, in a general way, all freemen. Still, the document stated that the king must consult with others if he wanted to make new laws or raise taxes, and that courts must recognize the rule of law. In this respect, it is considered to be one of the most important documents in English history. Many of the ideas in this document have been included in the constitutions—or governing documents—of modern democracies.

King John did not have to endure this **humiliation** for too long. Four months later, he died of a fever as conflict continued to rage throughout England. King John's son Henry was crowned king of this troubled land. Henry III was just nine years old!

Within 50 years of King John's death, England would have a new governing body, or parliament. This parliament included the king, the lords, the knights, and the townspeople in England, providing more people a say in the government and laws.



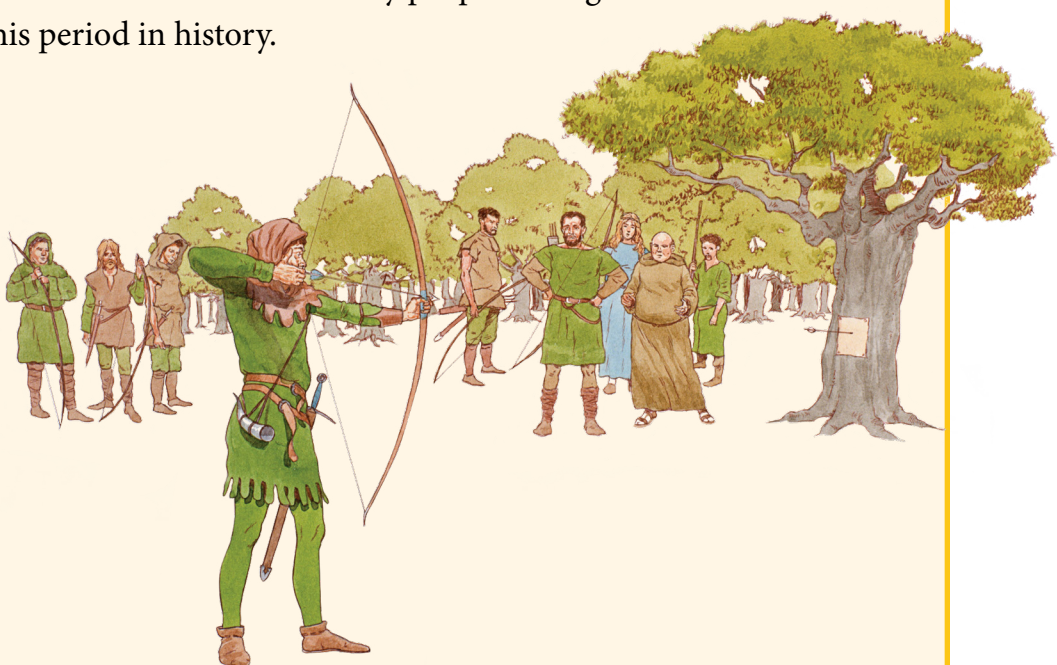
Marble coffin lid of King John



Copy of Magna Carta from 1225 AD

Robin Hood

Did the English hero Robin Hood really exist? It is difficult to say. The earliest reference to the legend of Robin Hood appears to date from about 1377 AD, and the oldest manuscript is from the late 1400s. The stories of Robin Hood's adventures first appeared in the form of **ballads**. As the legend goes, Robin and his band of men lived in the forests of northern England. Robin was thought to be a hero because he challenged the local lords, and even the king. English kings had raised taxes and introduced strict hunting laws, which prevented many people from entering royal forests. It is possible that there really was an outlaw like Robin Hood who challenged these laws. However, it is also possible that a fictional character named Robin Hood was created by storytellers to explain how difficult life was for many people during this period in history.



Robin Hood and his band of outlaws

If You Were a Lady–in–Waiting

Queens during the Middle Ages would have had ladies–in–waiting to attend to them. If you are destined to become a lady–in–waiting, you too will leave home at an early age to begin your training. Only girls from noble households can wait upon other noble ladies, including members of the royal family.



Young girl from a noble family



A lady-in-waiting learned to sew.

Therefore, your training takes place in a noble household. You are expected to acquire excellent manners. You learn to dance, sew, and ride a horse. You learn to read and, often, to speak a foreign language. You might even learn to be a skillful archer.



Your many duties include helping to dress your mistress, brushing her hair, and helping her wash up. You also tend to her clothes, repairing them and cleaning them. As with all ladies–in–waiting, the purpose of your training is to ensure you eventually marry a nobleman.

A lady-in-waiting would brush her mistress's hair.

Medieval Musings

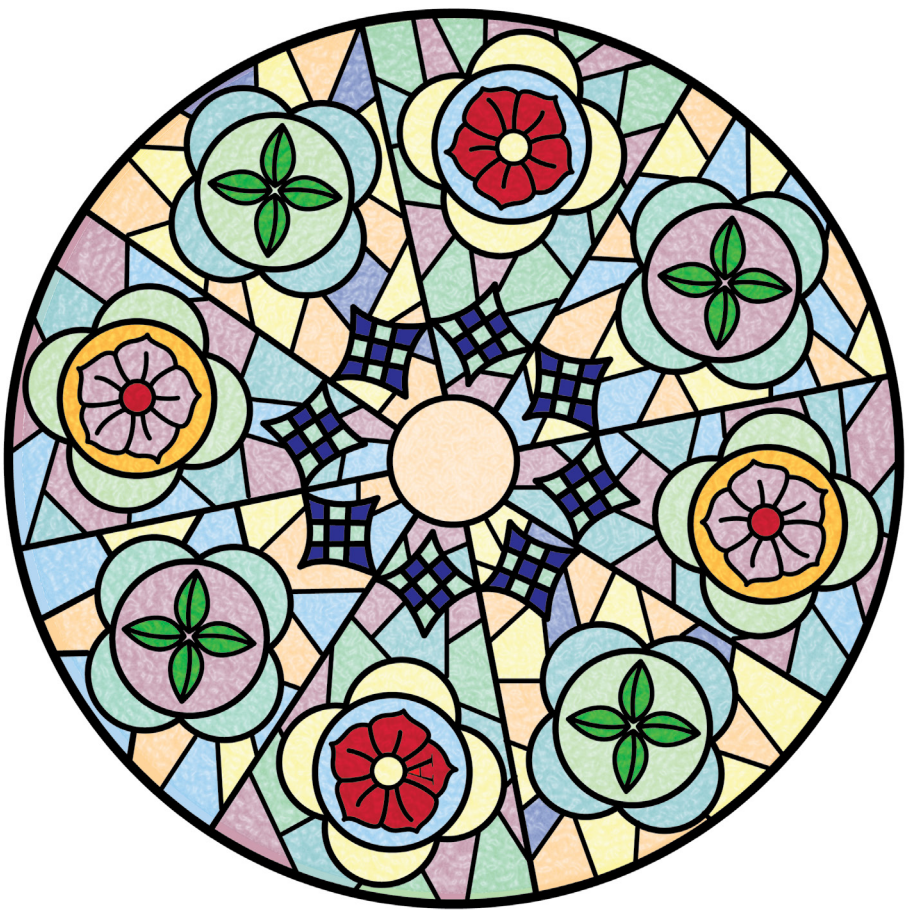
1. King John inherited a nickname that pokes fun at the fact that he did not have as much land or wealth as other kings. What was his nickname?

2. Skilled craftsmen made armor. What kind of craftsmen did this?



Letter Quest

Find the letter in this stained-glass window and record it on Activity Page 2.3.



Chapter 9

A Changing World

THE BIG QUESTION
How are our lives today affected by things people created or invented during the Middle Ages?

The Middle Ages lasted for more than a thousand years. Wars occurred, kings and queens ruled, and a deadly disease killed one-third of the population of Europe. People lived their lives, seasons came and went, and history was made. Those days are long gone, but the people who lived long ago have touched our lives. Many ideas, laws, inventions, and important decisions made in the Middle Ages still affect our lives today.

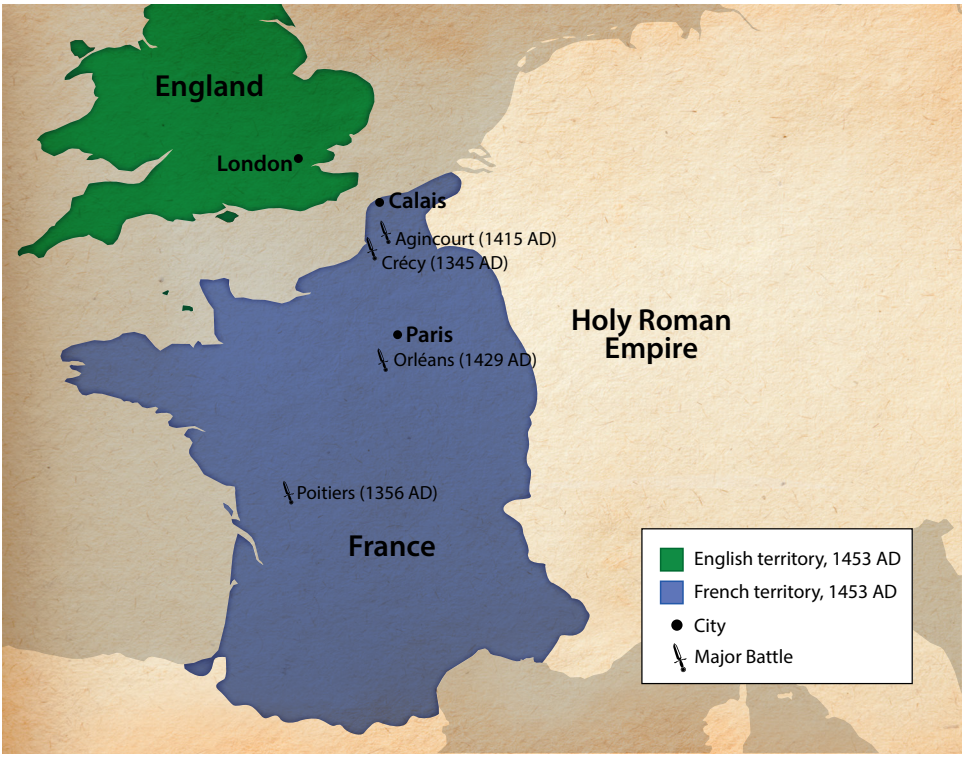


Certain key events helped define the Middle Ages. You have already heard about many of them. The Hundred Years' War is another. This war began when one man claimed to be the true king of another land. This time it was the English king, Edward III, the great-great-grandson of King John. He claimed to be the rightful king of France.



Scene from Hundred Years' War

The Hundred Years' War was not one war, but rather a series of military **encounters** that began in 1337 and ended in 1453 AD. Between the battles and sieges were **truces** and **negotiations**, and periods of peace.



The outcome of the Hundred Years' War was that France held onto a great deal of land.

When this war began, France was probably the most powerful kingdom in Europe. People did not expect this war to last long. The English, however, made good use of their skillful archers. Many of these archers used longbows. This powerful weapon helped the English archers defeat the French knights on the battlefields of France. One good example was the famous battle of Agincourt. On October 25, 1415 AD, a **mighty** French army faced a much smaller English army. The English archers with their longbows could not be overpowered by the French soldiers.

Although this was **indeed** a great victory for the English, France won the war in the end. They held onto almost all of the lands that the English had hoped to control. Out of wars such as this one, a stronger sense of nationalism developed. People fought and died for their king and for the land they belonged to.

Joan of Arc



Portrait of Joan of Arc from the 1400s

France won the Hundred Years' War. This might not have happened if it had not been for the bravery of a young girl. Her name was Joan of Arc and this is her story.

Joan was born into a peasant family in eastern France in 1412 AD. She lived a simple life. She did not go to school and never learned to read or write. During her childhood, the Hundred Years' War was raging. The mighty French army had not been able to defeat the English. This war caused hardship and poverty in France.

When Joan was 13 years old, she began to have visions and to hear voices. Joan believed that God was speaking to her. These experiences continued for several years. When Joan was 17 years old, the English burned her village of Domrémy. Joan heard the voices again. This time she believed that God was telling her to lead the soldiers of France to victory against the English.



Joan riding into battle



Joan of Arc entering town of Orléans

Joan traveled to a nearby town. There she told the governor of the town that she had a message for the dauphin. The dauphin was next in line to the French throne. Incredibly, the governor agreed to allow Joan to speak to the dauphin. Joan convinced the dauphin to give her a sword, a horse, and some soldiers. She was able to free the town of Orléans from English control and helped to ensure that the dauphin was crowned King Charles VII.

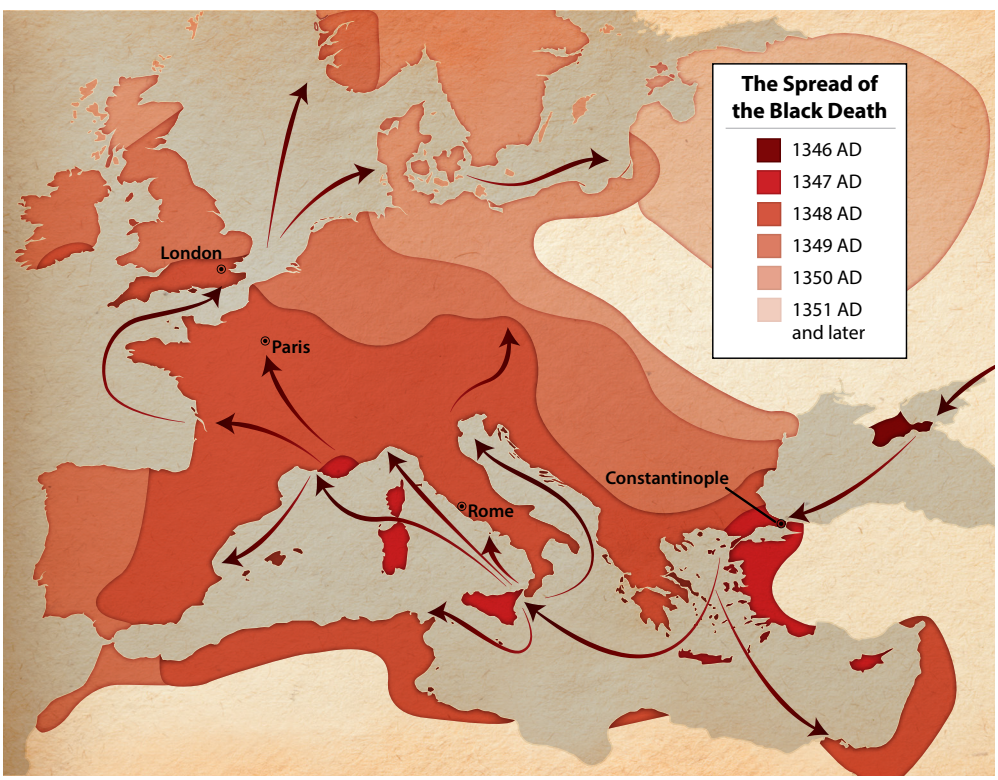


Joan was captured by the English army.

But in another battle, Joan was captured by the English. She was accused of being a heretic and was found guilty in a trial. As a punishment, she was put to death.

The Black Death

Some historians have concluded that traders who had been trading in the Middle East brought the plague to Europe. This first outbreak in the 600s was the most terrible of all. It is estimated that at least one-third of the population of Europe died during this outbreak. The plague existed throughout much of Europe, but it arrived in England in 1348 AD. This terrible disease created a sense of terror. It spread throughout England and eventually made its way into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. Carried by infected fleas that lived on rodents, it spread quickly through the dirty towns and cities. It affected every level of society. Nobles as well as serfs were struck down by this terrible disease. The plague returned at least eight times in the 1300s, and another 14 times in the 1400s.



Spread of the Black Death

The following account of the plague was written down by a man named Henry Knighton. Henry Knighton was a canon, or member of the church, in Leicester, England. This is what he said in 1348 AD:

*The dreadful **pestilence** penetrated the sea coast by Southampton and came to Bristol, and there almost the whole population of the town **perished**, as if it had been seized by sudden death; for few kept their beds more than two or three days, or even half a day. Then this cruel death spread everywhere around, following the course of the sun. And there died at Leicester in the small parish of St. Leonard more than 380 persons, in the parish of Holy Cross, 400; in the parish of St. Margaret's, Leicester, 700; and so in every parish, a great **multitude**.*

All Kinds of Changes

People fought wars differently by the end of the Middle Ages than they had earlier. Cannons and firearms changed what happened on the battlefields of Europe. Skilled archers and mounted knights were no match for such devastating weapons. The machinery of war was changing and becoming even more deadly.



Cannons used during the siege of Orléans

Another significant occurrence in the Middle Ages was the growth of towns and cities. This development transformed European society. As more and more people moved from the countryside to seek employment elsewhere, the lord's role changed. Over time, townspeople were no longer subject to his authority. The ties of feudalism began to **unravel**.

In addition, exploration and trade opened people's eyes to other places, ideas, and cultures. The invention of the compass and a navigational tool called the astrolabe enabled sailors to embark on even more daring voyages.



An astrolabe from the 1400s



Printing press from 1498 AD

The invention of the printing press in 1450 AD, without a doubt, transformed European society. The ability to produce books, pamphlets, and newspapers helped to spread knowledge and new ideas. Books, once a luxury, gradually became more affordable. The desire and need to know how to read and write grew among different social groups.

Medieval Musings

1. Many people in the Middle Ages believed that something that one of your senses could detect caused the plague and other diseases. What was it?



Medieval illustration of priest blessing victims of disease

Letter Quest

Look for the last letter in this stained-glass window and record it on Activity Page 2.3. Now you have all the letters which, if put in the correct order, spell out something that relates to the Middle Ages. Do you know what it is?



Glossary

A

acquire, ***v.*** to get (**acquired**)

advise, ***v.*** to give a suggestion about how something should be done

ancestral, ***adj.*** related to a person's relatives from long ago

anchored, ***adj.*** strongly connected

appoint, ***v.*** to choose someone to do a specific job (**appointed**)

apprentice, ***n.*** a person who learns a skill or trade by working with a skilled craftsman for a period of time, usually for no pay (**apprenticeship**)

armor, ***n.*** a protective metal covering used to keep a person safe from injury during battle (**armored**)

aspiring, ***adj.*** hoping to be or become something

assassination, ***n.*** the act of killing a well-known or important person

B

ballad, ***n.*** a simple song, usually telling a story (**ballads**)

bear, ***v.*** to carry or include (**bears**)

C

chance, ***n.*** luck

chivalry, *n.* a code of honor often connected to European knights of the Middle Ages

coarse, ***adj.*** rough (***n.*** **coarseness**, ***adj.*** **coarsest**)

coat of mail, ***n.*** armor, chainmail

commission, ***v.*** to request or order something be made or done **(commissioned**)

consult, ***v.*** to ask someone for advice or information

curfew, ***n.*** an order or a law requiring people to be in their homes at a certain time, usually at night

D

destined, ***adj.*** certain to become something or do something

determination, ***n.*** a quality that makes you keep trying to do something difficult

devote, ***v.*** to give time or attention to something (**devoted**)

devout, ***adj.*** extremely religious

dialect, ***n.*** a form of a language spoken in a particular area, including unique words and pronunciations (**dialects**)

dirk, ***n.*** a long knife

draw, ***v.*** to take something out of a container, pocket, or safe place (**drew**)

E

emblem, ***n.*** an image representing something

emerge, ***v.*** to become known or come into existence (**emerged**)

empire, ***n.*** a group of countries or regions controlled by one ruler or one government (**emperor**)

enclose, ***v.*** to surround; close in (**enclosed**)

encounter, ***n.*** an unexpected and difficult meeting (**encounters**)

esteemed, ***adj.*** highly regarded; admired

exquisite, ***adj.*** extremely beautiful

F

fast, ***v.*** to eat little or no food (**fasting**)

foe, ***n.*** enemy

fuel, ***v.*** to give strength to or cause something to happen (**fueled**)

H

hostelry, ***n.*** inn or hotel

humiliation, ***n.*** a feeling of embarrassment and shame

hustle and bustle, ***n.*** a great deal of activity and noise

I

indeed, ***adv.*** without any question

inevitable, ***adj.*** will happen and can't be stopped

infamous, ***adj.*** well-known for being bad

influential, ***adj.*** having power to change or affect important things or people

innocent, ***adj.*** not guilty of a crime or other bad act (**innocence**)

L

lady, ***n.*** a female member of the nobility

loot, ***v.*** to steal things by force, often after a war or destruction (**looted**)

lord, ***n.*** a man in the upper class who ruled over a large area of land

loyal, ***adj.*** showing complete faithfulness and support (**loyalty**)

M

mass, ***adj.*** widespread, or affecting many people

medieval, ***adj.*** of or relating to the Middle Ages

melody, ***n.*** song

merchant, ***n.*** someone who buys and sells things; the owner of a store **(merchants)**

mercilessly, ***adv.*** done with cruelty or harshness

mighty, ***adj.*** having great size or strength

multitude, ***n.*** a large number of things or people

N

negotiation, ***n.*** a conversation between people trying to reach an agreement (**negotiations**)

nevertheless, ***adv.*** in spite of what was just said, however

nobleman, ***n.*** a member of the highest social class (**noblemen**)

P

papacy, ***n.*** the office or the position of the pope

penetrate, ***v.*** to go through or into something

perish, ***v.*** to die or be destroyed (**perished**)

pestilence, ***n.*** a deadly disease

pilgrim, ***n.*** someone who travels for religious reasons (**pilgrims**)

pilgrimage, *n.* a journey to a place or shrine that is important to a religion

privileged, ***adj.*** having more advantages, opportunities, or rights than most people

pursue, ***v.*** to follow to capture; try to accomplish (**pursued**)

R

ransom, ***n.*** money that is paid to free someone who was captured

reign, ***n.*** the time during which a king, queen, or other monarch rules a country

repute, ***n.*** the opinion generally held of someone or something

resistance, ***n.*** an effort made to stop or fight against someone or something

restore, ***v.*** to give back or put back into existence

retreat, ***v.*** to back away from danger (**retreated**; **retreats**, ***n.***)

rival, ***adj.*** competing

rose window, n. a circular stained-glass window in a church that contains a pattern near the center (**rose windows**)

S

sacred, ***adj.*** holy; deserving of special respect

scythe, ***n.*** a farming tool with a curved blade and long handle that is used to cut crops such as wheat, oats, rye, and barley

seize, ***v.*** to take

sheaf, ***n.*** a bundle with many of the same thing

shire, ***n.*** county

siege, ***n.*** a situation in which soldiers or police officers surround a city or building to try to take control of it

simplicity, ***n.*** the state of being uncomplicated and easy

spire, ***n.*** a tall, cone-shaped structure at the top of a building (**spires**)

succeed, ***v.*** to follow or replace someone in a position of power

sulk, ***v.*** to be angry or upset about something (**sulking**)

summon, ***v.*** to call or send for someone

T

tactic, ***n.*** planned action or method used to achieve a particular goal (**tactics)**

tavern, ***n.*** a place where people can get drinks and a meal or sleep while traveling (**taverns**)

thrive, ***v.*** to grow and succeed

title, ***n.*** a name that describes a person's job or status

transform, ***v.*** to change something completely, usually in a positive way (**transforming**)

treason, ***n.*** the crime of being disloyal to one's country

truce, ***n.*** an agreement to stop fighting (**truces**)

U

unravel, ***v.*** to come undone or fall apart

unsettling, ***adj.*** making people nervous, worried, or upset

V

valiant, *adj.* brave

W

worthy, *adj.* deserving (**worthiness**)

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