

Date:

Student Name:

Week 6 -Year 2 Medieval Life: Feudalism

General Information for All Grades

This week is devoted to studying the customs and lifestyle of Europeans during the feudal period. This is the quintessential era that everyone thinks about when the Middle Ages are mentioned: The times of knights and castles! Younger students will focus their attention on the many rules and customs that governed feudalism. The word feudal comes from a Latin term for fief, the land granted by a lord to a vassal in return for the vassal's loyalty and service. Feudalism primarily began as a set of political or military relationships. These were extended and formalized over time, so that eventually all Europeans lived their lives in one of three main classes: noblemen, peasants, and clergy. Noblemen were lords, vassals, knights, and fief holders. They were professional warriors who were paid for their service with manors: lands and large houses. Peasants worked the manor's land and paid the lord for their homes with food, labor, and military service. And the clergy (or churchmen) were either fief holders and lords themselves, or humble workers in monasteries, depending on where they lived and in which aspect of church life they were involved. Churchmen represented a cross-section of European classes: sons of noblemen and peasants both became members of clergy.

As a side note, manorialism was a system that organized agricultural (or farm) labor in the feudal system. It refers to the economic relationship between the lord of a manor and his peasant tenants. Though noblemen lived in manors and castles, it would be wrong to call their governing system 'manorialism' as some people mistakenly do. "Feudalism" is the correct term. Conversely, "feudalism" refers to the system among the nobility of land grants and military alliances; no peasants took part in feudal customs.

One thing to keep in mind as you study is that the people of this era were doing their best with what they had. For example, knights in armor on horses represented the best of their technology. The stirrup had just begun to be used in Europe as feudalism started, and heavier war horses had recently been imported by Byzantium. Without these horses, and without a stirrup, there would have been no knights in armor, jousting, or tournaments. Armor itself was new: it was developed because times were dangerous, there were no anesthetics or modern surgical methods, and people died quickly from infections in wounds of all kinds. Armor protected warrior from many such wounds. In feudal times, most people only lived to be about thirty or forty years old, and peasants seldom traveled more than ten miles from their homes during their whole lives. Guns and gunpowder had not yet been invented. Life was quieter and moved at a slower pace. There were many other customs of work, play, warfare, and family during feudal days. Have fun discovering them this week!

Older students will also follow the thread of the creation of modern nation-states in Europe. This week, they'll note the rise of several important rulers who became kings of large, centralized governments. These kings and emperors were not just lords who had nominal authority over large territories on the map and no actual power over most of it, but actual rulers through increasingly stable central governments. Remember that, during the feudal age, the map of Europe would not yet have shown the borders of the European countries of today. The whole idea of a modern nation-state had yet to be invented! However, a number of the kings that we will read about this week made significant steps toward building modern nation-states, especially in England and France. Some, especially the founder of the Holy Roman Empire, actually took steps in the German and Italian territories that significantly delayed these populations in unifying as nations. Older students will learn why this was so as we go through this unit, along with many interesting details about the feudal systems by which kings, emperors, and even the Roman Church governed their people and their lands.

READING

ALL - ENRICHMENT or READ ALOUD

- ☐ **Story of the World Vol II Chapters 16 & 17**
- ☐ **Famous Men of the Middle Ages by John H. Haaren & A.B. Poland Pope Gregory VII and Emperor Henry IV**
- ☐ **Streams of Civilization Vol 1: 261-265 stop at Monasticism, and 270-273**

LG Reading Assignments:

- ☐ The Making of a Knight, by Patrick O'Brien

UG Reading Assignments

- ☐ Trial and Triumph by Richard Hannula, Chapter 12
- ☐ The Story of Rolf and the Viking Bow, by Allen French
- ☐ The Middle Ages, by Mary Quigley p 6-7, 12-13, 24-25, 28-29, 34-37, 40-45

DIALECTIC & RHET. Reading

The first half of Dante's Inferno

(Norton Anthology of Western Literature, p 1465-1519)

- ☐ The Church in History Chapter 11 (sections 5-6), 13 (section 4), 14-16
- ☐ The Story of the Middle Ages, by Christine Miller, chapters XL-XLI, LVIX - LX, LXX, LXXII-LXXVII, LXXIX-LXXXI
- ☐ Church History in Plain Language, by Bruce Sheley, Chapter 18p 178-182
- ☐ Beowulf: A Translation & Commentary by J.R.R. Tolkien (FINISH)

• Lower Grammar Words

peasant

noble

loyalty

knight

squire

page

troubadour

lance

joust

tournament

Upper Grammar Words (All Lower Grammar Words +)

falconry

baron or baroness

vassal

palisade

portcullis

garrison

accolade

excommunicate

Lower Grammar People (No Names for this week)

Upper Grammar People (all LG +)

Emperor Otto I (The Great)

Pope Gregory VII

Emperor Henry IV

Anselm

Accountability Questions:

1. What is feudalism?
2. How is feudalism different from manorialism?
3. Outline five important feudal customs and outline the conditions that gave rise to them.
4. Who was Otto I and where did he rule? What did he accomplish?
5. Over what specific issue did Emperor Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII come into conflict?

Thinking Questions:

1. The feudal system developed as a response to stressful conditions as we outlined last week. The central governments of England, France, Germany, and Italy were in their infancy, since the feudal system fostered a system of alliances between equals more than centralized governments. Nonetheless, God used events to forward the development of nation-states. Looking back with the clear vision of hindsight, we can notice some. Jot down information on kings of England, France and the German and Italian territories and prepare to discuss the development of modern nation-states during the feudal period.
2. What relationships did church leaders and noble lords have during the feudal era?
3. What ongoing tension did the conflict between Emperor Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII highlight?