

**Date:**

**Student Name:**

## ***Week 4 -Year 2 The Making of Medieval Europe: Charlemagne***

### **General Information for All Grades**

This week is devoted to understanding how the people of western Europe slowly began to build a new life after the chaotic years following the dissolution of the Roman Empire. The central figure for this week's study is the extraordinary king of the Franks, Charles the Great, who is best known by his Latin title, Charlemagne.

Charlemagne is probably the best-known ruler of the Middle Ages. During his long reign, he ruled the lands that now make up Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and part of western Germany. Charlemagne was a Christian emperor, and had a close relationship with the pope, whom he defended from the Lombards. Charlemagne was a "larger-than-life" character with a deep love for learning and Christianity. His example and administration encouraged a brief renaissance in art and literacy that strengthened the clergy and, after his death, caused many monasteries to be established. As with Constantine, Charlemagne's close relationship with the Christian church set up connections between emerging kingdoms and the Roman Church, leading to tensions that we will follow for the rest of our study of the Middle Ages.

A network of nobles who owed their loyalty and lands to Charlemagne administrated his empire. Because the lands were so extensive, Charlemagne constantly changed the location of his court and routinely checked in on his vassals. As a result, there emerged a curious mixture of practical and personal relationships between the emperor and his nobles. This personal network of relationships became one of the bases for the feudal system of the Middle Ages after Charlemagne died.

Though Charlemagne was a great individual, many of his achievements did not outlast him, the most obvious being the unified kingdom he had built. His son, Louis the Pious, whose attempts to govern were hampered by frequent Viking invasions, died about twenty-five years after Charlemagne did. Three years after Louis' death, Charlemagne's grandsons split his empire into three parts, and then fell to fighting for it and grabbing parts of it from each other. The Treaty of Verdun, agreed on in 843, finally settled the boundaries of their three kingdoms. Unfortunately, their sons and grandsons were weak and quarrelsome and were no better at unification. Looking at the boundary lines of the territories divided among Charlemagne's grandsons, we can begin to see the outline of modern European states.

Even though the government and schools Charlemagne built did not long outlive him, the effects of his life were profound. His love for the church, his orderly government, his love of justice and law, and the brief glow of culture and learning that attended his reign gave western Europeans vision, hope, and a renewed longing to reestablish the Roman empire in a Christian context.

### **READING**

#### **ALL - ENRICHMENT or READ ALOUD**

- Story of the World Vol II Chapters 13**
- Streams of Civilization Vol 1: 233-236 (stop at Islam) 244 (start at Feudalism) - 247**
- D'Aulaires'Book of Norse Myths, by Ingri and Edgar Parin D'Áulaire**

#### **ACTIVITIES - Design your own coat of arms for the Rivera family.**

**The coloring book of the Middle Ages by Bellerophon Books**

**Build a Catapult -**

**Use The Art of the Catapult by William Gurstelle**

#### **LG Reading Assignments:**

- Read aloud with Mommy - *Stories of Beowulf Told to the Children* by H.E. Marshal
- A Coloring Book of the Middle Ages by Bellerophon
- Sir Cumference and the First Round Table by Cindy Neuschwander (T.O.)

#### **UG Reading Assignments**

- *Stories of Beowulf Told to the Children* by H.E. Marshal Chps I - VI
- The Story of the Middle Ages, by Samuel B. Harding p 73-93, 146-154
- D'Áulaire's Book of Norse Myths (Week 1 of 2)

#### **DIALECTIC & RHET. Reading**

- The Two Lives of Charlemagne by Einhard and Notker (p 49-90)
- Chanson de Roland (Norton Anthology p 1251-1316)
- The Story of the Middle Ages, by Samuel B. Harding
- p 73-93, 146-154
- The Church in History Chapt 9 (sections 2-7), 10 (sections 3,4)
- The Discarded Image by C.S. Lewis p 174-185
- The Art of Catapult by William Gurstelle (Week 1 of 3)
- Beowulf: A Translation & Commentary by J.R.R. Tolkein (Week 1 of 2)

• Lower Grammar Words

thane

churl

Anglo-Saxon

lathe

emperor

inherit

**Upper Grammar Words (All Lower Grammar Words +)**

booty

lance

conquest

homage

bishoprics

hilt

plunder

**Lower Grammar People** (Preschool and Pre-K - would be great to know who Charlemange is.)

*Charlemange*

*Charles Martel (the Hammer)*

*Pepin the short*

*Louis the Pious*

**Upper Grammar People (all LG +)**

*Lothair I*

Handwriting practice lines for the name "Lothair I".

*Charles the Bald*

Handwriting practice lines for the name "Charles the Bald".

Louis the German

Handwriting practice lines for the name "Louis the German".

Egbert the Saxon

Handwriting practice lines for the name "Egbert the Saxon".

# High School History Discussion Questions

## Accountability Questions

Who was Charles Martel, and what were his contributions to history?

Who was Pepin the Short, and what were his notable achievements?

What were the Donation of Constantine and Pepin's Donation? In what ways were the Donations similar, and how did they differ? Why were these both important, practically and symbolically?

Summarize Charlemagne's accomplishments in these areas:

Wars of conquest

Administration of his empire

Promotion of learning within his empire

What were the Strasbourg (or Strasburg) Oaths, and why were they significant?

What was the Treaty of Verdun? When, and between whom, was it agreed upon? Why was it significant?

## Thinking Questions

How did Charlemagne manage to rule his vast territories so well, despite the fact that, at that time, people only traveled on foot, on the backs of animals, in carts, or by boat? Be as specific as you can about the details of his system!

Prepare to discuss the connections between Pepin and Charlemagne and the Roman Church.

In *The Story of Europe*, H.E. Marshall asserts that the Teutonic races had what kind of influence?

Lots of dates for your timelines!