

Classroom Study Guide



Alabama Medieval Fantasy Festival

www.Almff.com

Most material provided here is adaptable to multiple grade levels. The materials put forth are generally inexpensive and easily obtainable. We have provided this information to facilitate educators and students in educational and fun hands on learning activities.

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We have started you with a few interesting Medieval facts, can you find some others?

- In Medieval times it was thought that everything was made up of four “elements” or “humors”, earth, air, fire and water.
- The dinner of a royal or noble could include 15 to 20 separate dishes!
- Average people only owned the one set of clothes that they were wearing.
- People were much smaller then, the average man was only 5 foot 3 inches tall weighed only about 135 lbs. and died before his 30th birthday, and women were smaller and had an average life span of only 24 years because of the dangers of childbirth.
- Anyone over 6 feet tall was considered a giant.
- People longed for and scholars fought to restore the human values of Greek and Roman antiquity that had been lost or prohibited during the Dark and Early Middle Ages. This was called the Humanism movement and covered studying art, literature, culture and politics.
- Villages had walls for protection, streets were only as wide as a single man’s shoulders so as to be more easily defendable.
- Trade routes were growing as routes became safer, profits were high and a new class of wealthy merchant emerged.
- People had terrible manners and if dining in the landowners hall had to be reminded not to blow their nose on the table linens or with the hand they ate with but with the knife hand instead.

Discussion Ideas

- Divide your class into small groups of commedia del arte players (these wandering players were the first known acting troupes), have each group write and perform a short play that may have played for a nobles dinner party.
- Discuss the lack of hygiene and other environmental factors that helped the rapid spread of the plague, and why it was called “the black death.”
- Discuss some occupations that existed during the medieval and renaissance periods that no longer exist today, also some that still exist. Why do you think these changes in the job market took place?
- Discuss some of the up and coming new invention ideas of this period.

Did it Exist?

The Renaissance was a time of brilliant invention. Many insightful people created, designed, dreamed and built a variety of new things. On the list below put a check beside the things that did exist during the renaissance period.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ fork | _____ cotton gin |
| _____ the “Mona Lisa” | _____ screwdriver |
| _____ printing press | _____ eyeglasses |
| _____ steam engine | _____ electric lamp |
| _____ gun/musket | _____ car |
| _____ microscope | _____ submarine |
| _____ parachute | _____ life jacket |
| _____ world map | _____ telescope |
| _____ stapler | _____ saxophone |
| _____ metal screws | _____ helicopter |
| _____ toothbrush | |

Answer Sheet

D = Did Exist **N** = Did Not Exist **I** = Idea/Design

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u> D </u> fork | <u> N </u> cotton gin |
| <u> D </u> the “Mona Lisa” | <u> N </u> screwdriver |
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| <u> N </u> toothbrush | |

Here is a list of some things you might see on your visit to our Festival.

Can you find the items in the word search below?

horse	goblet	harp
knight	crown	turkey leg
lance	armor	wench
king	peasant	sword
queen	princess	prince
maypole	herald	fountain
artisans	jester	falcon

k i n g a l m o t s p o r c t
n b i a e c n i r p n m e r e
i f a l c o n v u o w j n o m
g a f t a r d l a r e h b w t
h o r s e n u n o s n k l n i
t l t j h l c b t i c j a r s
a s w o r d f e n g h s l o p
b t u k g a r t l s a n s l a
s o h a p r i n c e s s w o r
o z a h q e f i p d o c m f m
t u r k e y l e g r v o q s o
u n p p y s h k a o w u i p r
s r q o u d m x g m b t l u t
v c m a y p o l e z t l e z u
e x o b i l b n j a n e e u q
n i a t n u o f d u e v n t a

Word Search Answer

k i n g a l m o t s p o r c t
n b i a e c n i r p n m e r e
i f a l c o n v u o w j n o m
g a f t a r d l a r e h b w t
h o r s e n u n o s n k l n i
t l t j h l c b t i c j a r s
a s w o r d f e n g h s l o p
b t u k g a r t i s a n s l a
s o h a p r i n c e s s w o r
o z a h q e f i p d o c m f m
t u r k e y l e g r v o q s o
u n p p y s h k a o w u i p r
s r q o u d m x g m b t l u t
v c m a y p o l e z t l e z u
e x o b i l b n j a n e e u q
n i a t n u o f d u e v n t a

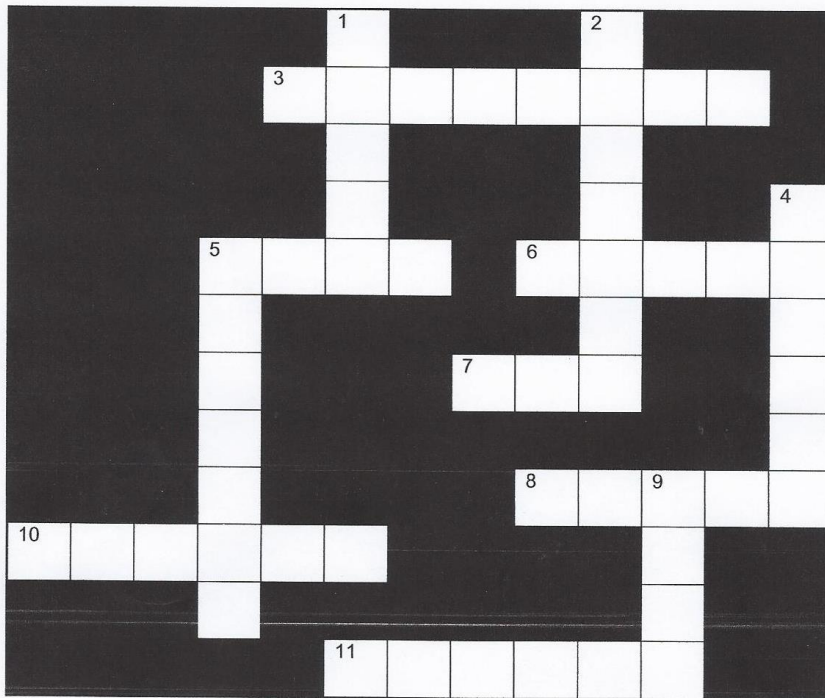
Renaissance Crossword Puzzle

Across

- 3. the daughter of a king or queen
- 5. male ruler
- 6. weapon used in jousting
- 7. carried the plague (Black Death)
- 8. suit worn by knights
- 10. the queen's home
- 11. renaissance drinking glass

Down

- 1. the queen's headdress
- 2. a member of the working class
- 4. the court clown
- 5. King Arthur's guests at the round table
- 9. water around a castle



Word Bank

- | | | | |
|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| king | castle | lance | peasant |
| princess | goblet | rat | jester |
| knights | crown | moat | armor |

Renaissance Crossword Puzzle

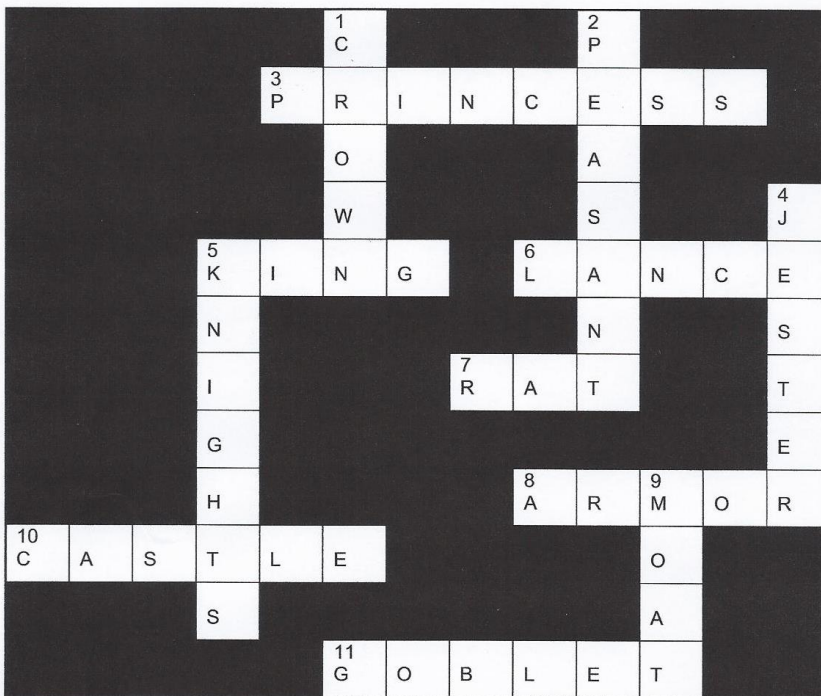
Answers

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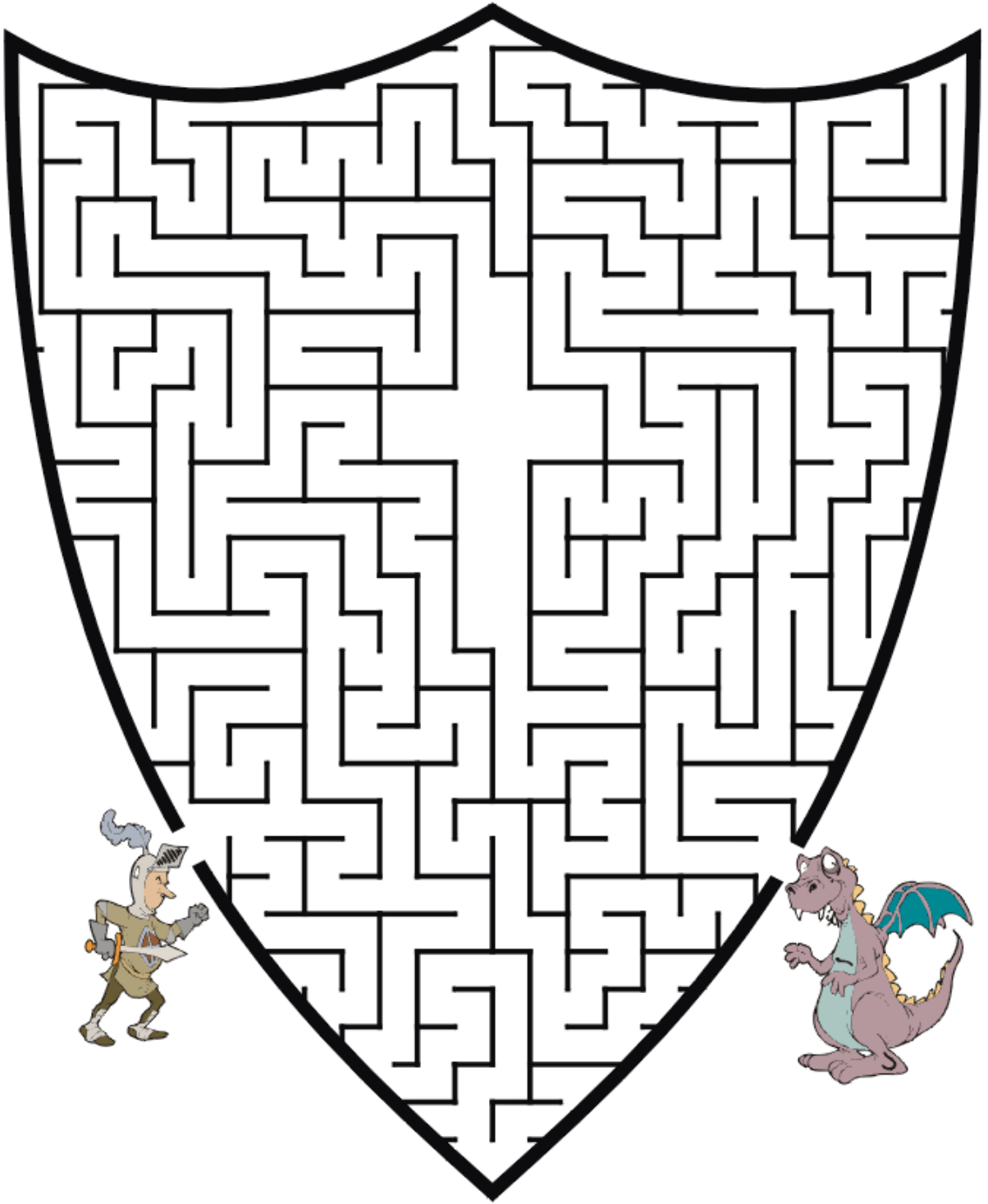
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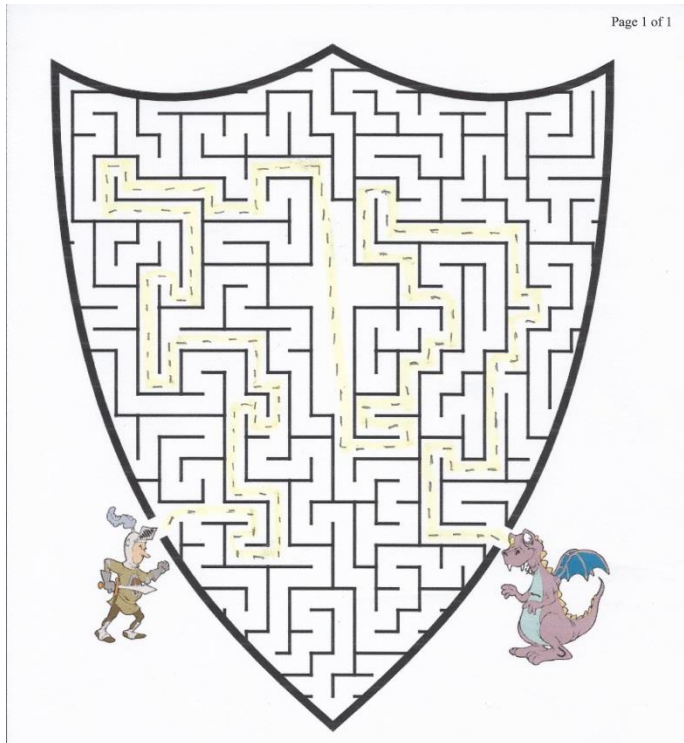
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Medieval Trivia

❖ In Medieval times, sticks were used as counters, a sort of primitive version of the beads on an abacus. Schools adapted this crude tool for taking attendance. As long as you made it by the time the person taking attendance reached your name, you received a notch on the stick used to record your presence. That was the nick of time.

□ The crusaders had contempt for the Moslem dietary laws forbidding the eating of pork. They said that since Moslems used pigskins to make water bags and made use of other parts of the animal as well, why not use the whole hog and also eat the creatures? Eventually the expression going whole hog came to mean setting no limits when referring to anything.

□ Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and were still smelling pretty good by June.

□ Baths equaled a big tub filled with hot water. In medieval times, the man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it, hence the phrase *"Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."*

□ Houses had thatched roofs. Thick straw, piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the pets... dogs, cats and other small animals, mice, rats, bugs lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof.

□ There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and dirt would fall on your nice clean bed, so they found if they made beds with big posts and hang a sheet over the top, it addressed that problem. Hence those beautiful big 4 poster beds with canopies.

□ The floor was made of dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt, ergo the saying "dirt poor." The wealthy had slate floors, which in the winter, they would get slippery when wet. So they spread thresh on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on they kept adding more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed at the entry way, later named a "thresh hold."

□ They cooked in the kitchen in a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They mostly ate vegetables and didn't get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes the stew had food in it that had been in there for a month. Hence: "Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old."

□ Sometimes the working class could obtain pork and would feel really special when that happened. When company came over, they would bring out some bacon and hang it to show it off. It was a sign of wealth and that a man "could really bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."

□ Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests or nobility got the top, or the "upper crust."

□ England is old and small. At some point in time, they started running out of places to bury people. They started digging up coffins and would take the bones to a house and reuse the grave. In reopening these coffins, one out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. People started tying a string on the wrist of the alleged deceased and lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night to listen for the bell. Hence on the "graveyard shift," they would know that someone was "saved by the bell" or if he was a "dead ringer."

□ Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey. The combination would sometimes knock people out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. The origin of the custom of holding a "wake" was to give a person a chance to wake up before they were buried.

□ Many surnames (last names) were created as descriptions of the person's job, location, or parents. For example: Carpenter, Farmer, Smith, & Chamberlain are all jobs that people held; Kent, Blackwood, Honeywell, & Overbrook are all places people lived or near; and Williamson, Fitzgerald, Upjohn & MacDonald are all references to their parents.

~ Chamberlain was the servant in charge of lighting the fires.

~ Smith can refer to any craftsperson, blacksmith, leathersmith, goldsmith, etc.

~ Kent is a county in England.

~ Blackwood meant you lived near the Black Woods.

~ Overbrook meant you had to cross a brook to get to that person.

~ Prefixes and suffixes such as -son, -ian, -sen, Fitz-, Up-, & Mac- all meant "Son of" so Matthew Fitzwilliam actually means Matthew son of William.

Renaissance Quest

In this activity, students have an opportunity to earn points by completing activities. The activity can be used to teach Feudal concepts and the Medieval and Renaissance caste system, too. The hierarchy is as follows:

King: the male student with the highest number of points will earn this position

Queen: the female student with the highest number of points

Prince: male student with the next highest number of points earned

Princess: female student with the next highest number of points earned

Noble: male and female student with the next highest points earned

Knight: male student with the next highest points, female student at this level is a **Lady**

Vassal:

Serf (peasant laborer):

To set up your own Quest, begin by listing all the concepts you wish to cover in this unit. Then use the sample activities given in this section, or think of your own activities.

Suggestions from teachers:

- Include kinesthetic, visual, auditory and other different learning styles.
- Include art and research activities.
- Leave enough room in the activity to let students explore and expand their knowledge.
- Give each activity a point value and a start date (point values let the student know the worth of each activity so that they can compete with other children for placement in the hierarchy).
 - Some of the best Quest ideas have come directly from students.

Sample Quest Activities

A. Make a game with a Renaissance theme. The game should have written out instructions of how to begin play, how to play, how to “win” (although there does not need to be a winner), how to end play. Students will present the game to class. Suggested point value – 20 points

B. Research Black Death. Create a storyboard or scroll depicting information on Black Death. Present to the class. Suggested point value – 20 points

C. Create a Medieval Cartoon Strip. Strip should have a minimum of five boxes. Remember to include thought bubbles and dialogue between characters that relates to the Renaissance/Medieval period. All artwork must be your own. Suggested point value – 5 points

D. Write a song telling of an event. Minstrels traveled all over the country during the Renaissance/Medieval period. You can use a tune you already know and write new lyrics. Perform the song live or put it onto a cassette or videotape. This can be done with a partner. Suggested point value – 10 points

E. Pretend you are a person living in the Medieval/Renaissance era. Identify your status in the society and write about your life for one week. Add details about your clothes, food, chores, family, entertainment, disease and home. Suggested point value – 3 points for each topic discussed

F. Make a poster of weapons or tools used during the era. Label and describe each item.
Suggested point value – 5 points

G. Make a paper maché or clay model of a mythical creature (dragon, for example). Write a narrative story to accompany your model. Suggested point value – 20 points

H. Make a model of a Castle. Use Styrofoam, crackers, cardboard, toothpicks, etc. Each part of the castle must be labeled. Working parts receive more credit (a drawbridge, for example).
Suggested point value – 20 points

I. Learn to juggle, or perform some other kind of entertainment a Jester would perform. Make a Jester puppet. Suggested point value – 15 points

J. Create a Renaissance dish of food and give samples to classmates (BEWARE of food allergies of others!). Explain how the dish was prepared and present the recipe. Was this a special occasion dish or eaten every day? What class of people ate this dish? Suggested point value – 10 points

Renaissance Books

Background information that is helpful:

- Making books in the Renaissance era
- Concept of Illumination

Create your own Illumination book using the ABC format. Students should write the

1) word 2) definition 3) illuminate the first letter of the word.

Create an antique looking cover for the book by using brown construction paper and ball it up firmly. Do this several times, but be careful not to tear the paper. When you unroll it, smooth it flat. The paper should now be soft and worn looking. Fold the book in half and punch holes in the folded end. Use twine or leather laces to make your book look truly authentic.

Printing

Printing is fun and simple to do. Remember that prior to printing blocks being invented, monks had to copy every book by hand! Printing blocks really changed things. Now the blocks could be rearranged to form new words and used again and again.

You will need: Cardboard, string, glue, paint, paper, and a shallow tray.

First, cut a section of string and dip it into the glue. Arrange the yarn on the cardboard into the shape you want. You can do a letter at a time, or an entire name. Make a lot of “blocks.” You can also make designs to decorate the paper. When your printing blocks have dried you are ready to dip them yarn side down into the paint (make sure not to use too much paint) and practice making different designs by pressing the yarn side down onto the paper.



Castle Building

There are many resources that describe and teach parts of a castle. Research is helpful.

Styrofoam: The packing to almost any electronic equipment has the right “framework” for a Renaissance castle. The Styrofoam may be spray painted (by an adult) and the paint will actually melt the Styrofoam a bit. This creates an authentic mottled look. Don’t forget to add towers.

Edible: Graham crackers, saltines, sugar cubes, ice cream cones (inverted) and icing all make excellent building materials for a castle. (Think of the procedure of making a gingerbread house).

For small hands, begin with a box for a frame and cover it up.

Cardboard: Provides easy to find material and is inexpensive. An adult should help cut the cardboard.

Refrigerator boxes can be used to make “walk-in” size castles.

Heraldry (n.) 1. The Science of dealing with coats of arms, genealogies, etc.

2. Ceremony or pomp.

In 16th century England, a knight’s purpose was to defend his Lord’s Castle. Also, the knight spent much of his time in tournaments, displaying his skills and courage. Tournaments were occasions of great pageantry and show. Each knight was entitled to an “achievement of arms”, which refers to their entire display: shield, mantle, crest, helmet, surcoat, etc. The most noted and important part of the “achievement” is the coat of arms, a design made up of symbols, shapes and colors. Each knight had his own “coat” distinct from any other. A knight chose symbols that represented his personality, name, or a great adventure for which he was famous. Some examples included a lion, dragon, castles, trees, flowers, animals, etc. Coats of arms are still passed down to succeeding generations. Do some research, your family may already have one.

Your Family Motto

Mottos became a popular part of an achievement of arms sometime during the 14th century. A motto can be a significant indication of the attitude of the family to which it belongs, or a pun designed to reveal the family name in some way. Some examples:

family name – Hope motto: “At spes infracta” translation: “Yet hope is unbroken”

family name – Smith motto: “Faber mea fortuna” translation: “Smith of my own fortune”

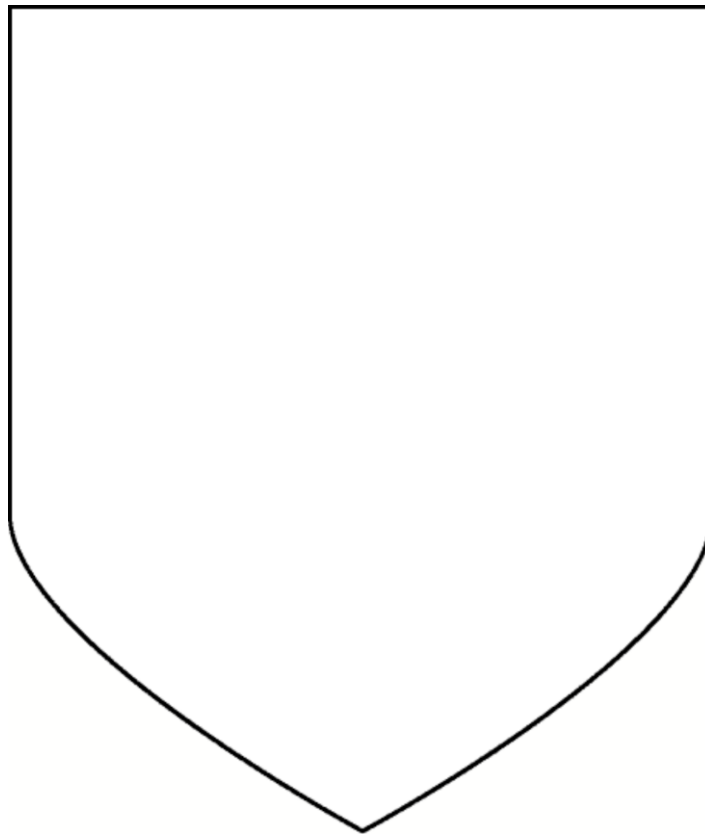
family name – Lockhart motto: “Corda serata fero” translation: “I bear a locked heart”

Write your own family motto to go with your new coat of arms.

If you are studying a language besides English, try using it to write your motto!



Make Your Own Coat of Arms



SOMEWHERE IN TIME

Finding your place in History

The Late Medieval and Renaissance periods were periods of tremendous creation and growth in the humanities of Art, Literature, and Music throughout the known world. For the first time, news, information, and general knowledge was becoming widely available to the common man everywhere. The entire 16th century to the mid-17th century, can be fairly termed Renaissance and for this festival the term Medieval starts a bit early (9th century). To help you find your way from Rome to the Viking invasion and from Robin Hood to the Golden Age of Elizabeth, here is a short Timeline of notable names from fact and fiction.

ROMAN BRITAIN		c 55 BC ~ c AD 440
	Roman Conquest	47
	Hadrian's Wall	c122
	St. Patrick	373 - 463
ANGLO SAXON PERIOD		c 440 ~ 1066
	Saxon Invasions Begin	477
	King Arthur	c 500
	Viking Invasions Begin	789
	Lady Godiva	1040 - 1080
EARLY MIDDLE AGES (MEDIEVAL)		1066 ~ 1290
	First Crusade	1096
	Brother Cadfael setting	c 1130
	Robin Hood	c 1160
	King Richard I (The Lionheart)	1189 ~ 1199
LATER MIDDLE AGES (MEDIEVAL)		1290 ~ 1485
	Magna Carta	1215
	William Wallace (Scotland)	1270 ~ 1305
	Black Death	1300
	Canterbury Tales Chaucer	1340 ~ 1400
	Gutenberg's Printing Press	1398 ~ 1468
	Joan of Arc (France)	1412 ~ 1431

	Christopher Columbus (Italy)	1451 ~ 1506
	Leonardo da Vinci (Italy)	1452 ~ 1519
	Michelangelo (Italy)	1475 ~ 1564
TUDOR AGE		1485 ~ 1603
	Lucrecia Borgia (Italy)	1480 ~ 1519
	King Henry VIII (Famous for his six wives)	1491 ~ 1547
	Nostradamus (France)	1503 ~ 1566

King Edward VI (Son of Henry VIII & Jane Seymour)	1547 ~ 1553
Lady Jane Grey (The Nine Day Queen)	1553
Mary, Queen of Scots (Scotland)	1542 ~ 1587
Queen Mary I (Bloody Mary) (Daughter of Henry VIII & Catherine of Aragon)	1553 ~ 1558

ELIZABETHAN RENAISSANCE ~	
Queen Elizabeth I Daughter of King Henry VIII & Ann Boleyn Ascended the Throne of England in 1558 God Save the Queen! Huzzah!	1533 – 1603
Sir Frances Drake	1545 ~ 1596
Sir Walter Raleigh	1552 ~ 1618
William Shakespeare	1564 ~ 1616
Galileo (Italy)	1564 ~ 1642
Globe Theatre London	1598
THE STUARTS	
King James I (Accession of James VI of Scotland as James I of England)	1603 ~ 1625
Guy Faulks Gunpowder Plot	1605
Cervantes Don Quixote	1605
Jamestown, Virginia First permanent English settlement	1607
Pilgrims sail from England & arrive in Plymouth	1620
Samuel Pepys Diaries	1633 ~ 1703
Isaac Newton	1642 ~ 1727
King Charles I beheaded	1649
Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector (Commonwealth ~ Roundheads)	1653 ~ 1658
King Charles II (Restoration of the Monarchy)	1660
Great Plague	1665
Great Fire Of London	1666
THE 18TH CENTURY	
Rob Roy	1715
Charles Edward Stuart (Scotland) (The Young Pretender - Bonnie Prince Charlie)	1720 ~ 1788

Artisans:

There are many inexpensive and simple crafts that can be completed to illustrate the craft guilds of the Medieval/Renaissance time period.

Masonry:

This was an essential and valued skill. Look into carving a bar of soap from a three dimensional point of view. Look at the soap from all sides/angles; the top, bottom, length and width. Students will then have to design a sculpture while keeping each of those sides in mind.

Hints: Ivory soap is the easiest to carve. Use a butter knife and make very soft, slow cuts and scoop out small amounts at a time or else the bar of soap will crack. Work over a newspaper in a well-ventilated room.

Candle Dipping:

You will need paraffin wax, candlewick, two large juice cans, saucepan, scissors, newspapers, and a source of heat. Procedure begins by filling 1/3 can full of water and placing it into a saucepan to create a double boiler. Fill the saucepan half full with hot water and place on the stove or hot plate. Second, fill 2/3 of the other can with cool water and set it aside. Cover the entire work area with newspaper. Break the wax into chunks and put into the can of hot water. As the wax melts it will float on top of the water. When the wax has melted, turn off the heat source. Cut a piece of wick about 10 inches long and hold the wick in the center and dip the ends into the melted wax. The hot wax will stick to the wick as you pull it back up. Both ends of the wick will make a candle. Pull the wick out of the hot wax and dip it into the can of cold water to cool it. Repeat this and straighten the wick when needed. Keep dipping and cooling until the candle has reached the desired thickness.

Hints: Old pieces of crayon can be used to color the paraffin wax. Scent can be added by obtaining scent oils. One pound of paraffin wax will make about eight pairs of four-inch candles.

Costuming:

Students can create detailed costumes to set the mood of the Medieval/Renaissance period. There are many outstanding books available with illustrations and photographs to aide in designing authentic costumes.

Wire Jewelry:

You will need metal wire and pretend it is gold or silver. Simply twist, shape, cut and bend the wire into interesting necklaces, rings, arm cuffs, and bracelets. Watch out for sharp ends!

Headwear:

Girls may enjoy wearing a flower garland in their hair. These are easily made with silk flowers and ribbon. Girls with long hair may want to research the elaborate “up-do” hairstyles of the day and tuck little flowers within these braids.

A henin is a type of hat that royal ladies wore. It is actually a cone cut (from a 12” by 23” triangle). Tape into a cone and add streamers.

Boys can make and wear jester caps. They can be constructed from stuffed tube socks pinned or sewn to a beanie type hat. Remember that during this time period in history only royalty were permitted to wear clothing with points or bells. It was against the law for anyone else!

Men sometimes also wore twisted scarves tied around their heads and girls can lay a sheer cloth on their head and then place a twisted scarf over that. Hoods were popular, too. To dress properly you must recall the type of fabric that was available at the time. While it might be difficult to recreate the rough homespun woolens of the time, color choice is significant. An interesting discussion on dyeing cloth with natural items is a good history/science lesson. Renaissance children simply did not have the array of bright colors that we now own. Royalty wore colors of blue, purple and shades of red. Most everyone else wore brown, gray and black – dull, muted colors. Everyone wore layers of clothing. Girls, find a long sleeve “fancy” blouse and layer it over the skirt. Then tie ribbons around the sleeves at the wrist, slightly above the elbow and slightly below the elbows to create ‘leg o’ mutton sleeves. Long skirts were a must! Again, a layered look applies here. Wear a long skirt and then a jumper or shorter skirt over that. Layer a blouse over that, and then tie as described above. If you wish to be very creative, glue or sew ribbons to the borders. Ladies’ shoes were slipper types. Leggings were very popular for boys, layered with tunics (a long t-shirt) and tied at the waist in a low fashion with a scarf or thick leather belt. Pouches can easily be made from fabric or preferably, a piece of suede or leather.

Customs

Customs and manners in medieval times were dictated by fashion, flirtation, survival, and superstition. Listed below are some examples of the customs and manners of the time.

Men Greeting Men:

When men would meet one another, they would not shake hands as they would today. Rather, they would grasp each other’s right wrist and give a firm shake. Then they would pat each other on the back with their left hands. There was a very practical reason for this: they were checking sleeves and backs for hidden weapons. Men shook right wrists for two reasons: one was to prove that the men held no weapon in that hand. The other was the belief that left-handedness was a sign of the devil. A left-handed man would hide this fact. The modern day practice of shaking hands probably evolved from this custom.

Women Greeting Women:

Women greeted other women with the latest craze: the “French kiss.” Women would face each other and lightly grasp each other by the shoulders. Then they would kiss the air on either side of the other woman’s cheeks, three times. One would never actually touch the cheeks, for reasons of courtesy as well as fear of contracting the plague. This type of greeting is still commonly practiced in France.

Men Greeting Women and Women Greeting Men:

When a gentleman met a lady, it was very important to make a good impression. Therefore, he would bow to her, in Renaissance style. He would present his left leg forward and put his right leg behind. Then he would bend his back leg, and bend at the hips, keeping head raised, and maintaining eye contact with the lady. The proper response to this bow would be for the lady to curtsy. First she would place her right leg slightly behind her. Then she would lightly grab her skirts and bend at the knees, keeping her body straight. She would raise her skirts only high enough to keep them off the ground. It was not considered proper for a lady to show her ankles or legs. She too would maintain eye contact with the gentleman. An especially dashing or

romantically inclined man might then proceed to kiss the lady's hand. He would offer his hand, palm facing down; if the lady so desired, she would place her fingers lightly on top of his hand. Then the gentleman would ever so lightly kiss the lady's middle finger, between the first and second knuckle, making sure to maintain eye contact.

Making a Leg

The calf of a man's leg was a very important focal point in Renaissance fashion. Men took every opportunity to show off this physical attribute. Men wore stockings and short pants. They would often stand and "present" their leg forward, turning the foot outward so as to show off their calf. This practice was called "making a leg." If a man was especially proud of his calves, he might stand with a foot on a chair, table, or rock, so his calf would be more prominent.

Escorting

Gentlemen escorted Ladies whenever they were out walking in public. As with everything, there was a proper way for this to be done. Men and women would never hold hands in public, palm to palm as they do today; this was considered quite scandalous. First of all, they believed the germs spread by rubbing palms with someone could prove fatal. Secondly, such a bold and public display of affection was not respectful of another's reputation. The proper way for a woman to be escorted would be either to place just a finger on the man's hand, or to rest her entire hand on his. It was very important for the lady to be on the right side because men carried their swords on their left and needed to be able to draw their sword easily when necessary.

Education

Common people of this time were usually illiterate, so there was a need for someone who could read and assist in matters of business. The church was about the only non-noble group who routinely educated their people so most villages were provided with a clerk (or Clark) to fulfill the function.

Renaissance Men & Women

Both men and women provided functions in the society of the day. While the culture was essentially male-dominated, a woman carried the clout of a "dowry," or the goods, lands, and money she brought to the marriage. These she controlled herself, to benefit the household. The dowry was also an insurance policy against ill treatment, for if she were mistreated, she could leave and take the property with her and leave her husband poor! Besides managing the household, one of the woman's duties was to provide as many free farm laborers, in the form of children, as possible. Between a high infant mortality rate and unreliable birth control, she usually managed to oblige. Boys were always easier because girls had to be provided with dowries and that could get expensive!

Music & Instruments

The court of King Henry VIII was alive with music. King Henry VIII was a trained musician, with a large collection of musical instruments. The King played the lute and composed music. Music was used at the King's Court for both ceremonial occasions and court entertainment. Recorders and flutes were both pleasing to Renaissance ears. They were made in sets, with various sizes from the large great bass to tiny soprano and played together "in consort." There were also "consorts" of viols, which look like modern cellos, but differ from them in many

respects. Ancestors of modern violins were present too, having been brought over from the continent. One instrument that did not evolve into another instrument was the krummhorn. This “L” shaped reed instrument, with a cap covering the reed, produced a strange muted sound, and had a very limited range. The krummhorn dies out at the end of the Renaissance period, but its cousin the bagpipe lives on.

Language

Below are some common words and phrases to help you understand the language and speak to the various people at the Festival.

Title

Social standing and proper etiquette were very important during the Renaissance era. You could tell a lot about people’s social standing by how they addressed one another. The following are appropriate titles for addressing our villagers.

- Your Majesty or Your Highness, My Leige (King or Queen)
- Your Grace (Members of the Royal Court)
- M’lord or M’lady (respectful)
- Sir or Mada, Gentleman or Gentlewoman, Cousin (Equal birth or social standing)
- Master or Mistress Artisian (Craftsperson)

Hellos’ and Good-bye’s

Renaissance language was very specific. People did not use the all-purpose greeting of “hello” or “hi.” There were different greetings depending on the time of day. Also, etiquette might call for one to ask permission before leaving. One could also express one’s feelings or regards for another by leaving them with a blessing or good wishes.

- Good Marrow (Good morning)
- Good day (Afternoon greeting or parting)
- Good eve or eventide (Good evening)
- God ye good den (God grant you a good day)
- I bid you adieu (Good-bye)
- By your leave (With your permission)
- Fare thee well (Good-bye – wishing them well)
- God save thee (A blessing)

Compliments

- Thou are most beauteous this day (You look pretty today)
- Thy voice is sweeter than that of an angel (Your voice is beautiful)
- By my troth, mine eyes are blessed by our very visage (In, truth, the sight of your face is a blessing)
- Thy beauty eclipses the sun (You’re dazzlingly beautiful)

Insults

- Thou are lily-livered (Calling someone a coward)
- Thou slop-jar of ineptitude (A slop jar is similar to a chamber pot. People also spit or threw garbage in it)

Common Sayings

- Dost thou knowest the time? (Do you know the time?)
- Let us go thither. (Let's go there)
- Come hither. (Come here)
- 'Tis most splendid! (Alright! Cool!)
- Yea, me thinks so (Yes, I think so)
- How fare thee? (How are you?)

Other Helpful Words

- Privies (Bathrooms)
- Zounds (Exclamation of astonishment)
- Fantastical (Amazing)
- Knotty-pated (Thick headed, stupid)
- Buffoon (Fool)
- By my troth (Exclamation of truth)
- HUZZAH! (Hurrah)
- Prithee (Please)
- Grammarcy (Thank you)

The Joust

Words like “pomp, pageantry and chivalry” serve to evoke the romantic aspects of jousting. When you get close enough to see the dull glow of chain mail next to bright armor, you begin to grasp how tightly woven the joust is with its history. An understanding of today's combats is impossible without the tracing of their ancient roots.

The origins of jousting are believed to be in classical Rome, but the “sport” rose to its greatest popularity in Europe by the 1400's. It all evolved from mock battles in which knights on horseback, assisted by foot soldiers, formed into teams and charged at each other in some wide meadow. The result was a “melee” (the word hasn't changed in a millennium) of shattered lances, clanging swords, flailing arms and legs – astride and afoot – that went on all day and into the night. The earliest recorded melee was in 1066 A.D., though mock combat had probably been around for at least a century by then.

At first, the battles served more to hone fighting skills than to provide popular diversion. But in peaceful times, a knight needed a way to retain their skills. The Jousts were great moneymakers for the victors; instead of claiming mere points, the winning team held the losers for ransom, often accepting their horses and armor as payment.

By the mid 1200's, the Joust emerged as the favored way to prove which of two (or more) knights were better. Most contests were a “Joust a Plaisir” (for pleasure) in which a winner was declared on the basis of points scored, though some were still conducted, an “Outrance” (to death). In the sporting version, the knights' swords were dulled and their lances tipped with “coronals” (little crowns) to prevent their penetrating a joint in the armor. Some authorities believe that the lances were deliberately weakened, a precaution still in effect today. The training of a knight included spearing small rings, some on stanchions and some tossed in the air, and Quintain jousting. In Quintain jousting, the knight tilled with a mock opponent which sat on a revolving pedestal.

Food and Drink

People of this day knew nothing about sanitation (they'd never heard of germs, nobody ever had one!) The water was dangerously polluted, so most people drank a very low alcohol brew called "small beer." Much milk was consumed, especially skim and buttermilk – cream was needed for other things. Ale was consumed on special occasions, and only royalty and the very wealthy drank wine. In this time, people thought that the proper foods for humans were meat, bread, dairy, eggs and a few varieties of fruit. Meats were preserved with salt, sugar or spices, but meat which we would consider spoiled, would be gratefully eaten. Usually, meat came from elderly animals and was tough, so no one expected the best cuts. In spite of these drawbacks, Medieval cooks are still famous for their skillful use of herbs, spices and their slow stewing methods. But only the very rich could afford meat regularly in their diets and they considered vegetables, which were grown from earth, to be beneath them.

Many were even suspected of producing ill humors. Peasants couldn't afford to be picky. Their diets consisted MAINLY of vegetables, plus lots of eggs and cheese, which they referred to as "white meat." In spite of economic differences, peasants were the better nourished of the two classes.

The Fork

Another new trend from France was the use of the fork as an eating utensil. The fork was fairly common among the nobility but was not very widespread among the peasant class. Peasants continued to eat with their fingers, as they feared the fork's tines were some sign from the devil (perhaps they were afraid to put the devil's pitchfork in their mouths).

The way people eat can often describe an entire culture. Here are a few sample activities, but before you begin, remember these few things:

- The climate of Medieval/Renaissance Europe was much different than we experience today.
- The diet in different seasons was very different than in other times of the year.
- Food was stored much differently so people ate the foods that were in season.

Trencher

Plates as we know them were not yet in existence. The people ate their meals off of a slab of bread called a trencher. Meat or stew was served on the trencher and when that was finished the trencher was often eaten, too. The wealthy did not eat their trenchers, but rather gave them to the poor to eat. There are a number of ways to make a trencher, including using pita, prepackaged pizza crusts, or frozen bread rolled out and cut. What other ways can you think of?

Butter

The idea behind this activity is to churn butter. It may sound too simple but it really works. Start with small jars and a tight fitting lid and whipping cream. A pint of whipping cream will provide enough for six baby food jars or two larger (mayonnaise) size jars. Screw the lid on tightly and begin shaking the jar. The jar must be shaken back and forth (not round and round) for about 10 minutes. The cream will thicken and then turn solid into a light yellow ball. The liquid that separates from it is called "thin milk," or buttermilk. The butter you just made is ready to eat on a cracker or piece of bread. Store in the refrigerator.

Curds and Whey

You will need: two cups of milk, 1 Tablespoon white vinegar, salt, and 1 Tablespoon cream (optional), a small pot and a hot plate, cooking spoon, and a strainer/colander. Heat the milk until it begins to bubble. Remove the pot from the heat source and stir in the vinegar. Let it sit until the milk begins to curdle like cottage cheese. Pour the milk into the strainer and drain off the liquid (the whey). The remaining curds can be chilled, seasoned to taste with salt and pepper and eaten.

Mead

You will need: 2 quarts water, approximately 1 cup honey, one lemon or orange, nutmeg, and ice. (You can also substitute hot or cold apple cider for the water in this recipe). Simply mix all the ingredients and serve. In the Medieval era this was left to rest (ferment) before serving. Serve chilled in a tankard and enjoy. Makes about 2 quarts.

Hold A Renaissance Feast:

Here are some samples of store bought food that will work for a Renaissance feast includes: pot pies, oatmeal (porridge), gingerbread, dark bread (rye or pumpernickel), meats on the bone or strips/chunks of meat on skewers, fruit, chunked cheese, loaves of French bread, boiled eggs.