Social Studies 8 Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Middle Ages Unit) Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pd \_\_\_\_\_\_

**Middle Ages Guided Notes**

1. The Middle Ages
	1. It is the time period in Europe following the Fall of the Roman Empire in 476 CE until the Renaissance around the 1400s.
	2. It is also called the Dark Ages
		1. A time of slow growth, no learning, and many communities in pure survival mode.
		2. The term “medieval” also refers to this era. Medieval is Latin for “middle age.”
	3. When Rome fell, so did the political stability in the area.
		1. As a result, anarchy and violence reign.
	4. Most people live on farms and not in cities early in Middle Ages, but cities grow near the end (1300s).

Introduction

* The late Middle Ages were a time of great change and upheaval, and a series of events shook the foundations of Western society.
* People – 10 percent of people belonged to the noble (or knightly) class, and far more were serfs.
	+ Serfs: an agricultural laborer bound under the feudal system to work on his lord's estate.
* Religion – the Catholic Church was rocked by the appearance of new heresies.
	+ Heresy: a teaching contrary to that of the church
* Society – the Black Death killed perhaps a third of all the people in Europe, and peasant revolts spread rapidly.
* Politics – the Hundred Years War ruined northern France and wasted England’s energies.
* However, there was also a lot of positive change.
* Trade developed across the continent and the nations of modern Europe began to emerge in a recognizable form.
* Agriculture improved and so did the wages of the farmers who worked the land.
* People could earn money at a trade instead of scraping by as a serf.
* Cities grew in importance and size. Beautiful cathedrals were built.
* New ideas grew in the universities and spread to influence rulers and their advisors.
1. The Germanic Kingdoms
	1. Tiny kingdoms exist all throughout Western Europe and rule over their territory since Rome fell.
	2. The Franks were the largest of the Germanic tribes. They inhabit the land we now call France and will become the most powerful force in Western Europe in Medieval Europe.
2. The Franks
	1. Clovis was the first great Frankish king in 418 CE. He converted them to Christianity and united all the Franks under his rule.
	2. Charles Martel, nicknamed “The Hammer,” becomes the next great leader of the Franks.
		1. He consolidated control over the Franks after his victory at Tours against the Muslims in 732.
	3. Charles’s son, Pepin the Short, runs the Carolingian Dynasty He extends Frankish control to the northern parts of Western Europe.
		1. His son becomes one of the greatest rules in European history: Charlemagne.
3. Charlemagne
	1. Son of Pepin the Short and grandson of Charles “The Hammer” Martel.
		1. Named “Charles.” Called “Charles the Great” – in Latin, Charlemagne
	2. His rule cements Catholicism in Western Europe
	3. Extends rule when he conquers Lombards in Italy in 774
		1. Goes further when he conquers Saxons in 780s
		2. In 790s, he conquers Goths in Eastern Europe
			1. And later pushes back Muslims in Spain
		3. Capital in Aachen, Germany
	4. In 800, Pope Leo III rewards Charlemagne for his work in extending Christianity
		1. Charlemagne is made Holy Roman Emperor and a power struggle quickly begins.
			1. If Charlemagne is made the emperor by the Pope, does that meant the Pope has more power?
	5. Charlemagne dies in 814, and the Treaty of Verdun splits his kingdom into three regions
		1. Instead of uniting Europe, treaty further divides it
4. Feudalism

William the Conqueror

* William the Conqueror was the first Norman King of England.
* He reigned from 1066 until his death in 1087.
* He took control of Normandy in 1035, and his hold on the area was secure by 1060, following a long struggle.
* After established, he launched the Norman conquest of England, and was successful.
* The rest of his life was marked with struggles to consolidate his hold over England and his continental lands.
* Soon after he took possession of England, he introduced the feudal system which he was familiar with from Normandy.
* Armoured knights need a large land base to support them, so William took away land from the defeated English earls and gave it to the Norman knights who fought with him.
* Norman feudalism was very different from the old English system, where people lived in free villages.
* English landholders and serfs resisted at first, but William brutally suppressed all opposition.
* Within five years, William had established feudalism throughout England.
	1. Feudalism is a class structure society that took hold of Europe during the Middle Ages.
		1. Entire society is based around the exchange of land for military service
	2. All the land the king owns is called the manor
		1. The king cannot protect all the land himself, so divided into small parcels called fiefs.
		2. King gives fiefs to Lords (nobles) to manage and protect.
			1. Lords then divide the land down further and gives to Knights to manage and protect
			2. Knights then provide land to peasants to live on, farm.
				1. Paid rent with the crops they produced
				2. Beneath peasants were serfs
			3. Serfs were bound to the soil, could not leave, and paid rent with manual labor
		3. Entire system is based on loyalty
			1. In the event of an invasion, peasants agree to fight for the knight, who fights for the lord, who swears allegiance to the king.
	3. Feudalism most popular in France, England, and Germany

The Feudal Contract

* A feudal system like this was based on the “three Fs”
	+ Fief – land
	+ Fealty – loyalty
	+ Faith - religion
* Under feudalism, land was the basis of all wealth. Land was given to nobles, who were all knights, in exchange for loyalty.
* The oath formed the cement in this bond, and religious faith bound every knight to the oath he swore.
* The monarch parceled out all the lands in the kingdom to faithful nobles as fiefs or estates. In return, the nobles promised their king their loyalty and that meant they had to live up to a number of obligations.
* All nobles had to serve in the king’s army for a certain number of days each year, usually around forty.
* They had to supply the king with additional knights in time of war.
* Nobles were expected to serve in the king’s court and give him advice on political matters.
* They had to give the king money on certain occasions, such as when his older son was knighted or when a daughter got married.
* In return, the nobles had the right to the monarch’s protection and justice. The king defended his nobles from attack and settled disputes that arose between two or more nobles.
* The relationship was sealed in a ceremony in which nobles swore an oath of allegiance.
* Allegiance - loyalty
* Therefore, they became the king’s vassals.
* Similarly, stronger nobles took lesser nobles as vassals, who in turn took their own vassals.
* This is the basis of the feudal system: the contract between the lord and the vassal. Both parties, even when one was the monarch, was expected to live up to the bargain, known as the “feudal contract”.
* As long as all parties maintained the bargain, peace was maintained.
* The vassals of the king, the barons, became tenants in chief of estates. The vassals of the nobles became tenants, and the vassals of the tenants became sub-tenants.
* The nobles always kept some land for themselves, so that, in the end, all nobles had some land in their control.
* Each noble would live on his land, called a manor, and, as the lord of the manor, had the right to profit from it.
* The lord of the manor had serfs and freeholders to work the land.
* Serfs and freeholders (90% of the population) were kept outside the circle of power, and had few rights.
* Freeholders owned their land, but paid a yearly fee to the lord of the manor.
* Serfs had no power, and were considered part of the property. However, lords could not take away their right to farm and live on the manor.
1. Knights and Chivalry
* Prior to the invention of the longbow and firearms, which made heavy plate armor useless, times were ideal for the mounted knight.
* Knights swore to uphold the a code of honour, known as chivalry.
* The code of chivalry was based on personal honour.
* Ideally, they were all brave, generous, and truthful. They were also supposed to protect women and children and to love and strengthen the church.
* In practice, few were actually chivalrous. For example, the code of chivalry was rarely extended to serfs.
* Mistreatment of serfs by knights was so common that laws had to be passed forbidding assaults on peasants.
	1. Knights lived by a code of conduct known as chivalry
		1. Sworn to protect women, children, the helpless.
		2. Sworn to treat the elderly, the unfortunate with care and respect
		3. Sworn to loyalty, and courteous and brave behavior
		4. Sworn to never attack unarmed enemy
* Almost all knights admired and practiced fighting and war, seeing it as their trade.
* Their fun, things like jousting and hunting, were ways of practicing for war.
* By perfecting their physical abilities, they increased their valued social status, lands, and chances of staying alive on the battle field.

The Education of a Knight

* At 7 or 8, a noble’s son would be sent to live in the household of a knight to get his education.
* He would serve as a page: waiting tables, learning to ride and fight, and learning to play music and sing.
* The ladies of the household would teach him about literature, music, and knightly good manners.
* The warriors taught the page how to hunt and use weapons.
* At 14 or 15, the page was usually accepted by a knight as a squire.
* The young man would serve as the knight’s assistant and bodyguard, attending tournaments and fighting by his side in battle.
* The knight shared his knowledge: instructing him in the use/care of weapons, in heraldry, and in siege warfare.
	+ Heraldry: the system by which coats of arms and other armorial bearings are devised, described, and regulated.
	+ Siege warfare: a Medieval military operation involving the surrounding and blockading of a town, castle or fortress by an army in the attempt to capture it.
* They spent much of their time with tournaments, combat training, and hunting with dogs and hawks.
* Most squires expected to be knighted, but some could not afford the necessary armour and other equipment. If they couldn’t, they would be squires for life.
* A suit of armour cost something similar to the price of a modern luxury car.
* Squires became knights at the age of twenty-one.
* Before the formal ceremony, the squire fasted and kept vigil over his armour overnight.
* In the morning, freshly bathed and purified, the new knight was dubbed, robed, and armed by his lord.
	+ To dub: to make a person a knight by touching the shoulder with a sword.
1. Agriculture
	1. The three-field system grew very popular during the Middle Ages
		1. Land is divided into three parts
			1. 1 part is left to fallow (unplanted)
			2. The other 2 fields have different crops
			3. Each year the field’s use rotates

Manor

* Large fiefs were divided into parcels of land called manors.
* Each manor had farming lands, woodlands, common pasture, and at least one village.
* Almost completely self-sufficient, the manor usually provided enough food for everyone who lived on it.
* The manor village had a church, a mill, a tannery, and a blacksmith’s shop. They also had the skilled people needed to do most jobs from thatching a roof to fletching an arrow.
* The manor would typically be located near a river or stream where the villagers got water, and it powered the mill to grind grain for bread, and helped grow hay to feed livestock in the winter.
* Firewood was gathered in the common woodlands, while other forests were set aside for the lord to hunt in.
* The lord of the manor kept some land for himself called a demesne. It would consist of the gardens and orchards around the manor house and some strips of land in the manor fields.
* The rest of the land would belong to freeholders or were used by serfs.
* Some lords too personal interest in the work of their estates, but most had managers, called bailiffs, to take care of the day to day matters and keep the peace.

Ordinary People

* Serfs and freeholders provided all the labour, but had the lowest standard of living.
* Serfs were considered part of the property and were not free to come and go as they pleased. All serfs had to donate 2-3 days a week of tending to the lords demesne.
* They couldn’t own land, but had the right to farm a particular strip of land within the the manor fields. Strips would be passed on within families from generation to generation.
* Serfs had to turn over a percentage of their crops grown to the lord. After that and feeding themselves, they could sell their extra crops.
* Serfs often had small vegetable and herb gardens. Some owned livestock (such as cows, sheep, a horse or two, pigs, chickens or ducks).
* The average male serf consumed 5000 calories a day, mostly in the form of bread and beer. They also ate herring, onions, leeks, cheese, fruit, peas, and eggs. Besides beer, they drank milk of cows, sheep, and goats.
* Freeholders owned their lands. They paid money to the lord, but didn’t have to work on his demesne. They could leave the village or farm whenever they pleased.

Village Homes

* Serfs, freeholders, and the few tradespeople lived in the manor village.
* The villagers built their houses from wood or wattle and daub (woven sticks covered with clay or mud). The homes were roofed with thatch, and the floors were packed dirt.
* There would be a place for the fire, a hole in the roof to let out the smoke, but no chimney.
* The houses were quite small, just 9-10 metres long by 3-4 metres wide. The whole family (5-6 people) would share one dirty room, and often shared it with farm animals.
* Most people had few pieces of furniture: a stool or two, some wooden boxes, a rough bench, and a homemade table. They slept on low beds heaped with straw.

Work and Cooperation

* Everyone worked hard during the Middle Ages, even young children. Babies went to the fields with their mothers, and children learned how to do farm work. The whole family helped with planting and farming.
* Children of serfs and freeholders did not go to school.
* Women spent a good deal of time keeping their families clothed and fed.
	+ She wove cloth, baked bread, cooked meals, preserved food for winter, and cared for the children. Women also gathered firewood, hay and cornstalks for the farm animals. They collected nuts, berries, and herbs (used for flavor and for medicine). Kitchen gardens were kept nearby.
	+ Grandparents were seldom available to help, because many people died young.
* Men spent most of their time doing farm work:
	+ Ploughing, planting, weeding, harvesting, all without any modern machinery.
* They worked from sunrise to sunset. Larger jobs were worked with neighbours, partly because of laws of the manor.

The Manor House

* The lord and lady lived well compared to the serfs, but it was not great compared to a modern standard. (No plumbing or electricity, drafty rooms, very little privacy).
* They occupied the largest and best house, and were attended to by servants.
* Manor houses had several large rooms including a large hall where the lord would entertain guests and deal with affairs of the manor.
* Walls were draped with tapestries to keep out the cold, every room had furniture (table, chests, chairs, a book or two). Servants laid fresh rushes on the floor several times a year.

Privileges

* They lived as well as they could with the help of their servants.
* People loved to possess costly, rare things to keep as status symbols.
* Lords owned fine hunting falcons, beautiful horses, expensive furniture, and big houses.
* Men and women hunted for recreation.
* Singers (called troubadours) and other entertainers occasionally visited the manor and performed for the lord and lady.

The Obligations

* In return for their manor, the tenant in chief expected pay back. If the lord failed to meet those obligations, he could lose the manor.
* One of the duties of all nobles was to marry and have children. If a lord died childless, the tenant in chief could take back the manor.
* Parents arranged the marriages of their children, finding a partner with the most land possible. Young men and women were rarely asked who they would like to marry.
* Noble marriages were about land and power rather than romance, and the good of the family was considered more important than an individuals wants or needs.

A Woman’s Rights

* As they got older, boys gained more rights but girls did not.
* Before marriage, a girl’s father controlled her life and after marriage, her husband did.
* Women who were expected to inherit property would be treated like prizes to be won at this time. Due to the fact that the tenant in chief expected military service in return for the land, he might take back the land of an unmarried heiress, so she would try to marry before that.
* Orphans from noble families became wards of the rulers, who selected a husband for them.
* Once married, a woman’s property came completely under her husband’s control.
* Unmarried medieval women had few legal rights. Widows, however, kept their rights, their property, and their freedom. Many rich widows absolutely refused to remarry, even when pressured by the king to do so.
1. The Power of the Church

Pilgrimages

* The Catholic Church had a great influence over people in the Middle Ages due to its position in society and its spiritual guidance.
* Pilgrimages are a journey to a place associated with someone or something well known or respected, especially religious sites.
* Pilgrimages were very popular at this time, showing that Christians took their religion very seriously. Pilgrims would travel to holy sites, especially places where saints had been martyred. It was considered a way to make up for sins.
* Pilgrimages were long and dangerous journeys. People traveled by foot, horse, or sailing ship.
* Pilgrims tried to bring back souvenirs: pieces of Christ’s cross, the last name Palmer as the symbol of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem was a palm leaf, Crucifixion nails, and other holy items. However, often they were fake relics sold by sly traders on the route.

Church Architecture

* During the 12th century, engineers learned how to build tall churches with spires and how to replace wall space with brilliantly coloured stained glass.
* To achieve greater height, architects pointed the arches that supported the cathedral roofs. They used supports called flying buttresses to support walls. Cathedrals grew taller and allowed for larger windows.
* This was the age of the Gothic cathedral.
* They were created with simple tools over long periods, sometimes 100 years or more.
	1. The Church Hierarchy
		1. At the bottom of the church hierarchy, the person who operates an individual parish (church) is a parish priest.
		2. The parish priest reports to a bishop. The bishop might rule over 10 different parishes.
			1. This territory is called a diocese
		3. The bishop reports to an archbishop. The archbishop might rule over 10 dioceses (over 100-200 individual parishes)
			1. This territory is called an archdiocese
		4. The people who choose and advise the pope are called the Cardinals.
		5. The Pope is the most powerful person in the church
	2. In ordinary life, people could not advance in society
		1. A peasant could not become a lord
		2. But in the church, people could advance. Priests could become bishops, archbishops, and even the Pope one day
		3. This made the church very attractive to people.
		4. Since the church also offered salvation – and life was pretty miserable for the lower class – it had a hold on people
			1. People also believe the Pope could take away one’s afterlife, which forced people to follow the church rules
				1. Heresy: denying the teachings of the Catholic church

**Quick talk and write**:

How did the Catholic church develop to be a powerful force in people’s lives?

Rumblings in the Flock

* During the 14th century, the Catholic Church began to lose authority.
* England – the teachings of John Wycliffe became very popular with commoner and noble alike.
* He believed that the priests, bishops, and the pope had no right to tell people what to believe. People could only find their salvation by following his or her own conscience.
* The Bible was only in Latin at this time, and Wycliffe wanted to translate it into English so that people could read it and decide for themselves.
* Church leaders were angered by his teachings, but he had powerful friends so they were unable to do anything about him.
* He also criticized the Church for its wealth, and nobles and common people were sick of paying taxes to the church.
1. The Crusades
	1. The First Crusade
		1. In 1096, Pope Urban II calls for a holy war against the Seljuk Turks who have attacked Christians in the Holy Land
			1. Byzantine Emperor Alexios Comnenos asked the Pope as the Seljuks advanced into Byzantine lands
		2. 60,000 knights and soldiers met at Constantinople to lead the First Crusade
		3. Christians scale the walls of Jerusalem, enter the city, and launch a bloodbath against Muslims and Jews
			1. “Ankle deep in blood.”
		4. Christians win the First Crusade – establish four kingdoms around Jerusalem to protect the city
	2. The Second Crusade
		1. Launched in 1144 after Muslims conquer Edessa, one of the four kingdoms
		2. Crusaders arrive in Holy Land weak and unable to do much
			1. Christians return in failure
	3. The Third Crusade
		1. Called the “King’s Crusade”
			1. Four European kings assembly an army of 100,000 in 1189
				1. Frederick Barbarossa, Holy Roman Emperor, drowns in a river
				2. French and Austrian kings turn back
				3. English King Richard I, “the Lionheart,” reclaims land, but fails to capture Jerusalem
			2. Muslim leader Saladin agrees to peace deal with Richard – Christians can visit Jerusalem peacefully, however the land remains in Muslim hands.
	4. The Children’s Crusade
		1. An attempt in 1212 to retake Jerusalem by children
			1. Thousands of kids set out from Vienna, Austria
				1. Promised protection by Stephen of Cloyes
				2. Many died crossing the helps, dying in the wilderness, or drowning in the Mediterranean Sea
	5. Nine total Crusades are launched, however Christians only win the first
2. The Growth of Cities and Guilds
	1. The Crusades broke the feudal system
		1. Many peasants who left to fight did not return
			1. They either died or found a more attractive situation

Trade Begins

* During the crusades, western Europeans’ eyes were opened to the possibilities of trade with distant lands.
* They were tempted by goods such as silk, spices, tapestries, and sugar. Brave people with the money to pay for the expenses went into the trading business, and sent ships on trading expeditions.
* Traders started by selling their goods in regular local markets or fairs that were held in towns.
* At the fairs, people socialized and browsed, not just bought.
* This exposure to faraway things, people realized that they could make things and sell them in exchange for money, which could be an escape for serfdom.

Trade Leads to Towns

* Fairs could not satisfy the needs of traders and consumers:
	+ They were seasonal, so no one could buy or sell in winter.
	+ People would travel great distances to reach the fairs, and travel was dangerous so many just didn’t go.
* Due to these reasons, a need for stability that could be provided by a town where permanent shops could be set up and protected by a wall surrounding the town emerged.
	+ 1. Cities began to grow as returning Crusaders congregated in areas
			1. Trade began to grow again pretty strongly, and people in these cities began to specialize in their trade
			2. Merchants and artisans set up shops instead of roaming from manor to manor
			3. People could own property, land, farms
			4. Cities a place of filth and disease
				1. No sanitary systems, high population density

Life in Town

* Medieval towns were crowded and smelly and rather small compared to modern cities.
* Most were the centre for for farming communities. They were surrounded by farms of large manors, or they grew around some sort of a defensive structure, ie. castles, palace, large monasteries.
* Usually a large wall was built around to prevent attacks. Gates were built, and were shit at night. As the villages grew, ever larger rings of walls were built.
* Due to the limited space, houses for the poor and middle class were crowded together. Town houses would be several stories high, and upper floors would overhang the streets.
* Streets were narrow and winding with open sewers. People dumped their chamber pots into the street and dumped their garbage there as well.
* There were attractions and more entertainment such as pageants, plays, and bear baiting.

Social Changes that Came with Trade

* There was a new emphasis on money. Previously wealth and power had to do with how much land people had, but with trade people could be come independent and powerful because they could make money.
* The town was the home of the medieval middle class, merchants and skilled tradespeople. They were called burgesses in England, burgers in Germany, and bourgeois in France.
* Some merchants grew wealthier than feudal landowners. Feudal lords had a hard time adjusting to the new system. They thought trade was beneath them, but still wanted the finer things.
* Eventually this marked the end of feudalism.

New Freedoms

* Towns drew people with a longing for freedom.
* People in towns had the freedom to do as they wished, marry whom they pleased, and make money as they could.
* According to law, runaway serfs could earn their freedom by staying in town for a year and a day without being discovered. Towns were small, so this was difficult, but some managed to do it.
* Feudal lords and manor courts couldn’t control who was living in town. Most medieval towns were chartered, which means they were given or paid for the right to exist by the monarch or local lord.
* Charters gave towns special privileges, one of which was that the town could govern itself.
* Wealthy citizens and guilds usually controlled the town government.

New Powers

* The most powerful citizens belonged the merchant guild.
* They bought and sold goods on a large scale, and financed ships and caravans to trade in distant lands.
* In some places, the guilds became so powerful and organized they were able to support their own armies or navies. One such guild, the Hanseatic League did that, and could make countries do what they want by threatening to cut off trade with them.
	1. Tradesmen living in cities eventually created guilds for their protection
		1. Guilds are comparable to modern-day unions
		2. A group of people in the same craft/trade set the standards for work and training
			1. For example, all the blacksmiths in town set prices for services (to prevent undercutting)
			2. All blacksmiths set rules for how to train an understudy

The Guild Crafts

* The towns were populated by all sorts of trades workers: bakers, tailors, sword and armour makers, tanners, tavernkeepers, etc.
* Individual trades/crafts were controlled by the experts of that trade/craft. This was called a guild.
	+ Guild: a union of persons practicing the same craft
* Guilds set standards for the quality of their products, controlled prices for them, and kept out unskilled craftspeople, and eliminated competition. They controlled almost all the merchant and trade activity that took place within and between towns. They looked after guild members in case of death or accident.
* Tradespeople could only operate if they belonged to a guild, and they could only belong to the guild for which they had been trained.

Becoming a Master of Craft

* Acceptance into a guild came at the end of a long and difficult apprenticeship.
* Apprentice – learned the craft in stages, beginning with the most simple tasks. They would receive training , room and board, and a small allowance.
* Young people were sent to work under a master at a very young age, sometimes 8 or 9.
* Sometimes masters beat their apprentices for making mistakes.
* When apprentices completed their training, they would take a test and become a journeyman and were admitted to the guild. Journeymen were called this because they could now be paid by the day.
* After more years of study and practice, the journeyman created a “master piece” to be judged by a panel of masters for quality. If the piece was acceptable, then the journeyman became a master, an expert in their craft.
	1. Cities saw education finally begin to resume
		1. Books were written local languages (vernacular)
			1. Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer
		2. Sir Thomas Aquinas
			1. Promoted scholasticism
				1. The world can be explored through reason and not just through faith
				2. Used ancient texts from Aristotle to prove much can be learned from non-Christians.
		3. Universities started to pop up throughout Europe
			1. University of Bologna (1158) in Italy
			2. University of Paris (1200) in France
			3. University of Oxford (1248) in England
			4. University of Cambridge (1231) in England

Women in the late Middle Ages

* European women of the Middle Ages had fewer advantages in life than men.
* They used passages in the Bible, taught by the Church, to justify women’s lower status.
* It was a male dominated society, and they deemed it acceptable to treat all women as inferior to men and kept them under men’s control.
* Women tried to make the best of things.

Women and Social Level

* Peasants at this time lived hard lives, often in terrible poverty.
* Women usually had many children, shared the hard work with the men in the fields, and often died young.
* Town women were slightly better off than women in the fields because many town women earned money.
* They maintained their homes, went to market, cooked meals, spun the wool, wove the cloth, made the clothes, and cared for their children. Many worked as servants.
* Those married to guild members were better off than most. As towns grew in importance, more opportunities were afforded to them, such as an education.
1. The Black Death
	1. Massive epidemic hits Europe in 1347 through the Bubonic Plague
		1. It was called “Black Death” due to the symptoms
			1. Infected developed black, swollen buboes (swollen lymph node)
			2. Started off with flu-like symptoms, high fever
			3. Once infected, had about 4-5 days to live
				1. Death rate around 60%
		2. Came from China via the Silk Road and trade ships
		3. Carried by infected fleas that traveled on rats

The Black Death – In Detail

* In the middle of the fourteenth century, Italian trading ships returned from port on the Black Sea and brought back a horrific disease: The Black Death.
* The Black Death was a variant of the bubonic plague.
* Bubonic plague: a highly contagious, usually fatal disease; swollen lymph glands (rounded masses of tissue located under the arms and in the groin) were a typical symptom
* The disease was spread from victim to victim through the fleas on rats, which lived on medieval ships and throughout towns and cities. It was also probably passed on from person to person.
* The diseased person quickly developed buboes (swollen lymph glands) and was covered with dark blotches on the skin. Then the patient would be stricken with a high fever and begin vomiting blood and hallucinating.
* In some towns, the sick and dying outnumbered the healthy.
	1. Without medical science, people developed their own causes
		1. Punishment from God from failing to recapture Jerusalem
		2. Jews poisoned the drinking water

Continued

* At the time, there was no cure for the disease.
* Doctors recommended burning Sulphur and smelling garlic to prevent the plague.
* Around 25 million people (1/3 of all of Europe) died from the plague. Thousands of villages became ghost towns, not reappearing until centuries later when their outlines where revealed through aerial photographs during the Second World War.
* The Black Death brought out the best and worst in people.
* Many priests, nuns, and doctors died because they spent so much time tending the sick.
* On the other hand, parents abandoned their sick children, thieves broke into houses where everyone was dead or robbed houses.
* Groups of religious fanatics (Flagellants) travelled from town to town to spread the idea that the plague was a punishment from God.

Economics

* The Black Death changed Europe because it killed so many people, but it also damaged the feudal system.
* Feudalism was based on farming and the growth of towns and trade had already weakened this system. After the plague, labour was in such short supply that workers could travel from estate to estate and ask for higher wages.
* Due to the labour shortage, there was a rise in wages and therefore this caused many feudal estates to go bankrupt.

Peasant Revolts

-Feudalism was further weakened when the lowest order of society rose up and demanded better living conditions.

France

* The revolt was called “Jacquerie” after Jacques Bonhomme, the nickname for the French peasant.
* Began after the French defeat at the battle of Poitiers in 1356, when the English captured the French king, John II, and held him in London.
* While he was gone, a mob attacked the palace of the king’s son in Paris and drove him from the capital.
* In the northern countryside, the serfs broke into open revolt against their lords.
* Farms had been laid waste to by years of fighting, but the manor lords were demanding high rents from serfs.
* The peasants banded together and burned manor houses throughout northern France and killed their lords.
* Reaction was swift and brutal as ringleaders were rounded up and hanged and whole villages were burned to the ground.

England

* 14th Century – the Black Death caused a labour shortage in the countryside.
* Food supplies went down and prices and wages rose dramatically.
* Lords tried to put an end to the trend in 1381 and passed laws returning wages to the pre-plague levels.
* Then, they passed a poll tax in order to fund the Hundred Years’ War, which took a fixed amount of money from every person in England (from serf to noble).
* The serfs had had enough and two leaders emerged to organize the serfs into a fighting force: Wat Tyler (a former soldier) and John Ball (a preacher who believed all people were equal in the site of God, no class distinctions).
* Soon the peasant army was marching on London and sympathetic guards let them into the city.
* The peasants killed any nobles they could find, including the archbishop of Canterbury. They also burned down a great many buildings.
* During negotiations with King Richard II (age 14), Wat Tyler was killed by the mayor of London. John Ball was taken prisoner and later beheaded.
* The revolt collapsed and the serfs returned to their farms, where many were hanged by vengeful lords.

The Balance of Power

* Under law, the feudal monarch had the power to make and change laws, to collect taxes, choose advisors, and to give titles and estates.
* The monarch’s powers weren’t unlimited, because under the feudal system they had to obey the feudal code.
* The king was kept in check by the wealthiest and most powerful nobles, called barons.
* If the king broke the contract, the nobles could feel justified in making war.
* The barons were a considerable threat.
* They had large armies and strong castles and could call on their vassals at a moments notice.
* Meanwhile, the royal army needed time to collect knights from across England. Royal messengers would take time to travel even in good weather.
* So an unexpected rebellion could be hard to put down.
* Therefore the monarchs made great effort to fulfill his obligations and treat them with the utmost respect.
1. The Magna Carta
	1. King John of England was a horrible, corrupt king who did little to satisfy his people
		1. Constantly raised taxes to pay for wars
		2. Took his Lords’ sons hostage since they refused to fight a war across the English Channel
		3. Destroyed peasant property to satisfy his desire to hunt

Other Bad Things King John I Did

* Colloquially, he is known to most as the villain of the Robin Hood legend.
* He quarreled with Pope Innocent III over who should appoint the Archbishop of Canterbury. Therefore the pop excommunicated him, and placed an interdict on on England, which banned the kingdom from participating in church services.
	+ No one could be properly married, baptized, or buried.
* Then after the pope tried to get France to invade England, he swung back around and gave England to the pope as a fief and raised taxes for the pope.
	1. Eventually, his Lords fought back, raised armies to defeat King John
		1. Forced him to sign the Magna Carta in 1215
			1. First document to limit the power of the king
			2. Creates what becomes British Parliament
			3. King John must have consent of a council before taking certain actions
1. The Hundred Years’ War
* The Hundred Years’ War was a struggle between the monarchs and nobles of France and Europe.
* It lasted from 1338-1453.
* Warfare was very different from modern warfare, and there were periods of long truces, nobody fought during the winter (because roads were impassable).
* During active military campaigns, the armies spent much of their time maneuvering for position, burning homes, trampling crops, and raiding farmers’ food stores.
* The war started over a disagreement of who should be king of France.
	+ France supported the French cousin of the dead ruler.
	+ England’s king, Edward III, was the nephew of the dead king, and thought he had a stronger claim, so he invaded France.
* Over the course of the war, England, at various times, controlled vast areas of France. However, by the end of the war they only held the port city of Calais.

Technology and Tactics

* English had one weapon that the French did not have: archers.
* The archers were ordinary villagers skilled in the use of the longbow. They shot clothyard (metre-long) arrows from bows almost 2 metres in height.
* Reports said that an arrow from a longbow could penetrate a knight’s plate armour and kill him. The shot from such a bow was so powerful it could send an arrow through the armoured leg of a mounted knight, the body of his horse, and his leg on the otherside.
* The French knights could fight as well the English knights, but they were defeated many times.
	+ The French refused to fight with anyone of “low birth” so they would not attack the archers.
	+ In three important battles, the French knights tried to ride past the archers to get at the English knights, their social equals.
	+ The lowly English archer made the knight and his armour obsolete.

Joan of Arc

* In 1429, a 17 year old peasant named Joan of Arc appeared at the French court. She claimed that angelic voices had commanded her to drive the English out of France.
* The dauphin was skeptical, but eventually gave Joan a suit of armour, a white banner, and troops to battle the English.
	+ Dauphin – eldest son of the French king
* She was an inspirational leader, and drove the English from Orleans. Later she escorted the dauphin to Reims and stood at his side as he was crowned, King Charles VII.
* Joan of Arc enjoyed other victories.
* Unfortunately, two years after her victory at Orleans, she was captured and the king refused to pay her ransom. She was put on trial for heresy and witchcraft.
* On May 30, 1431, Joan was burned at the stake. She was only 19 years old.
* Her death inspired the French to unite more as a nation rather than as a collection of fiefs.