

Life in the Castle: The Knight and the Lady

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OVERVIEW

I would like to give a brief overview of the Middle Ages before I begin my introduction. My unit does not include all of the facts listed below, but I thought it would be a good idea to get somewhat of a “feel” for what the Medieval era was like before diving right into the unit.

The term “Medieval” comes from a Latin word and means “the Middle Ages” between Classical Rome and the Italian Renaissance. The Middle Ages covers a period roughly from the fifth century to the end of the 15th century. One can read about kings, monks, lords, ladies, knights, and castle life to name a few examples.

The society of the Middle Ages was dominated by feudalism. Under this system, land was allocated from the king to noblemen and in return the nobleman vowed to supply the king with soldiers for protection. The noblemen further divided the land among lords and knights. The peasants, who were at the lowest ranking order, were required to work the land to have a place to live and to produce crops. Everything the peasants owned belonged to the manor, and they were tied to the soil.

There were few cities at that time. “Most country people lived on a manor which consisted of a village, the lord’s house or castle, a church, and the surrounding farmland” (Langley14).

The lord of the manor acted as judge and had the authority to fine anyone who was caught breaking the law. He ruled the community in which the manor was located and made sure that the people in the villages carried out their duties, which included farming the land and paying taxes from the produce.

Medieval homes were different from ours. The lord’s house or castle was considered a home and was decorated somewhat elaborately, and in contrast, the peasants lived in a one or two room house, but their homes were kept very clean from the constant sweeping of the floors.

The church considered Medieval women to be subservient to men, but many women worked along side their husbands, and many held jobs and owned land. Girlhood did not last long. Usually girls were married by the time they were fourteen. They were taught how to sew, read, sing, and write Latin.

Since there were no stores, the manor was forced to buy products from peddlers who passed through. Later on as more goods were produced, the peddlers became merchants and employers who sent out carriers for people in towns and villages to purchase products from.

There were several kinds of trades. Some of the more prominent were cobblers who made shoes, stonemasons who built cathedrals and castles, and spinners and weavers who made cloth, to name a few.

The Catholic Church was the only church in Europe during the Middle Ages, and all Christians were members. The Church was very powerful because it had its own laws and owned its own land. The Church wielded great power over people’s hearts because it advocated that if they followed the teachings of Christ, they would be rewarded in heaven.

Entertainment and entertainers played an important role in the Middle Ages. Some entertainers were jugglers, court jesters, clowns, troubadours, and minstrels. Often they performed at the castle in the Great Hall and in the towns.

This overview is by no means complete nor was it meant to be. I merely attempted to give some background information about the Middle Ages that may or may not be useful to some people who choose to read this unit.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this unit is to focus on the day-to-day lives of knights and ladies of the Medieval era. It is also my intent to discuss some aspects of castle life. The Middle Ages have come and gone leaving a lasting impression with its many aspects on the world, and I would like to afford my students an opportunity to be “transported” if you will, into the past to explore castle life, the prerequisites for becoming a knight, and the relationship between the knight and his lady. Almost everyone has some prior knowledge of the Medieval period and can identify with this fascinating and unique period in history (500-1500 A.D.). Putting a focus on those aspects of the Medieval Era will allow my students to dissect those pieces, and put them under a microscope to view in order to obtain as much knowledge as possible from the study of this unit.

Life in the Middle Ages consisted of a hierarchy or rank order of the inhabitants. At the very top was the king, and then came lords and noblemen. Peasants were considered the underclass and were listed last in the hierarchy. The hierarchy in the castle included the lord and lady, the steward, and lastly, again the underclass in the castle, the servant.

As a young adult, I watched movies containing legendary themes about the Middle Ages. I was not aware at the time that these were fictional movies that were based on factual knowledge. I thought that they were all true for a long period of time. To add to my knowledge of the Middle Ages, during my college career I studied authors who left a lasting impression on the Medieval period and on the world that followed. One of those authors was Geoffrey Chaucer, who wrote *The Canterbury Tales*.

When the opportunity presented itself to study the Medieval period in depth including authors and some of their work and other aspects of the Middle ages, it afforded me an opportunity to gather information based more on fact than legend. My topic is a subject that I would like to explore and learn more about in order to share this information with my students.

I am a middle school teacher of Special Education Resource students, and I strongly believe that my students will appreciate and be interested in knights and ladies who lived in castles and other pertinent information about the topic.

Because of their limited academic ability, varied, and unique learning needs, the students whom I teach will probably not be able to read and understand some of the books that I have included in the bibliography; therefore, I have included reference books that they will be able to understand as well as reference books for teachers who may want to teach this unit to similar students or to regular students without learning disabilities.

Since I will have to teach this unit to my students in the fall of this school year, I have already questioned them about what they know about the Middle Ages. The majority of them are familiar with the tales of Robin Hood and King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, but that is about the extent of their knowledge. They possess no real knowledge of the Medieval period and its impact on the world. In fact, neither did I until the study of this unit. I can add that at this point, they seem interested in learning more.

The information from the research that I used based on the role of knights and ladies is very informative and interesting. According to my research, the relationship between the knight and

the lady is both factual and legendary. Whether factual or legendary, knights held ladies in the highest regard and esteem.

This topic will be of interest to male and female students because of the content. Although I teach both boys and girls, the majority of my students are male. Originally, I had planned to focus only on the study of knights. Then I decided to include some information on the lady/ladies to help pique the interest of my female students and also to allow them an opportunity to become more involved in the study of the Middle Ages as well.

ACADEMIC SETTING

Sharpstown Middle School has an enrollment that varies from approximately 1100-1250 students depending on the school year. The above numbers are an estimate that may go up or down. Our school has been known as a “Rainbow of Colors” because at one time we had students enrolled from 71-75 countries. We still have a large number of students from other countries. Flags to represent those countries are displayed in the front on the inside of the atrium area to greet parents, students, and visitors. Since we have a large variety of students from other countries, our ESL enrollment is quite high. SMS has a large Hispanic enrollment as well. I am not certain of the percent of the other ethnic groups, but we have Anglo, Black, and Asian students who also comprise our student population.

We are a “First-Things-First” school that is divided into small learning communities. The ESL community has enough students to have its own small learning community. Our Special Education enrollment has enough students to be divided into three of the small learning communities. Some ESL and Special Education students are mainstreamed into regular classes with the general population and are being monitored. All Special Education students who are in Resource Language Arts and Math are mainstreamed in Science and History classes.

I teach Language Arts (Writing /Reading) to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students. Some classes may have 18-20 or more students while some classes may have 7-10 students more or less. The number of students in any given class depends on the grade level. My 6th grade classes are typically larger as the students enter middle school because the students are scheduled for more resource classes. As they begin to enter 7th and 8th grade, the classes become smaller because students do well academically and behaviorally and are considered for mainstreaming.

As I prepare to teach this unit in the fall, I have to take into consideration the students that I teach, their learning styles, and strengths and challenges. As a matter of fact I have considered those aspects all along as I prepared this unit. I realize that they will need hands on activities and repeated review opportunities to be successful. They may have limited academic abilities, but given the chance and with prompts, encouragement, and positive feedback, they will succeed. I plan to make this unit informative, interesting, fun, and hopefully exciting.

UNIT BACKGROUND

This unit background is divided into three sections for discussion that are listed as follows: Castle Life, Becoming a Knight, and Courtly Love.

When I think of castles, I think of tall elaborate buildings with towers and turrets, an enormous amount of rooms, moats, and drawbridges. “The word castle comes from the Latin word *castellum* which means a Roman fort” (*World Book Looks at the Age of Knights and Castles* 5).

The word ‘knight’ also has an interesting origin. “The word knight comes from an Old English word *cnicht*, which means a household retainer.” (*World Book Looks at the Age of Knights and Castles* 5). Following the Norman Conquest in 1066, the English described knights

as French mounted soldiers who were suited out and trained to fight on horseback. Kings were dependent on knights to help them protect themselves and their territory.

Also included in this unit is some discussion of courtly love that may or not have been displayed between a knight and his love interest of the moment. At times, this love interest may have been married and not at liberty to return the knight's affections. If the lady were married, there may have been secret affairs carried on, or the knight may have been in love in vain with no chance of interest being reciprocated.

Castle Life

We will investigate why castles were considered homes but were not very comfortable places in which to live. They were drafty and cold and very hard to heat. They were not centrally heated as our homes are today. There was a hearth or fireplace that was centrally located and was mostly used for the lord and his family. The lord and his family had the use of blankets and furs to help them keep warm. Servants were forced to sleep on the floor using blankets and whatever they could find to keep warm. During the spring and summer, when it was warm, the castle was still a cool damp place.

Everyday life in the castle consisted of many hardships. Since there was no central heating, there were only fireplaces, and they had to be tended regularly. The majority of the heat was saved for the lord and lady. There was a lot of shivering during cold nights among the lower classes. Also there was no bathroom. A latrine called a *guarderobe* was used.

Some castles may have been smelly and noisy because animals were allowed to roam inside the stables. Soldiers practiced their skills, craftsmen crafted, cobblers made shoes, and blacksmiths clanged out ironwork.

A day at the castle began at sunrise when a trumpet was blown by one of the guards.

Fires had to be lit in the kitchen to begin the preparation of meals. A fire was also lit in the Great Hall. Chores were started such as sweeping floors, picking up trash and debris, and washing out basins. The lord and lady were brought water in which to tidy up. Before going to mass in the chapel, the lord and lady and everyone ate breakfast. Dinner was served at mid-morning which was the main meal of the day and often featured several courses. Entertainment was often a part of this meal. After dinner, the activities for the day would resume. The evening meal, which was supper, was eaten late in the day. Many days it was served just before bedtime so that no one would get hungry during the night.

Originally, castles were built as forts to keep enemies out and to make it very difficult for the inhabitants inside to be captured. If the castle came under attack, it would be defended from within, and if the town came under attack, the people who were threatened would make haste to the castle for protection.

Mostly castles were built on the top of a hill so the enemy could be seen approaching. They were surrounded by a moat filled with water and a drawbridge for entrance. My students will be very interested in learning about the different kinds of castles and how style and architecture of castles differed throughout Europe during the Medieval period, but the characteristics listed above were commonplace. The castles for the most part contained a Great Hall that served many purposes. Meals were eaten there, business was also conducted there, and guests were entertained there. Since religion was a very important part of daily life during the Medieval period, a chapel was also built in the castle and the inhabitants would have easy access to the place of worship. "The chapel was decorated with statues, carved stone, and stained glass windows" (Gresko 7).

The lord was ruler over the castle and its lands that were given to him by the king or another nobleman. The castle included of a schoolroom in which children were tutored. The castle also

contained a garden, a stable, a courtyard, a dungeon for prisoners, a kitchen, and servants' quarters.

Peasants were at the lower end of society in the Medieval period. If they were born on the land, they had to remain there for their lifetime. They farmed the land and were required to give large portions of their harvest to the king or owner of the land. They were also required to pay taxes out of what they produced. During times of peace, the land surrounding the castle was also used for livestock to roam and graze.

All castles were not alike in design and that depended on the area and the country in which the castle was built. The main entrance to the castle was at the front which was adjacent to the drawbridge that was let down for visitors to enter. There were also smaller entrances around the castle that were not used as often so as not to draw attention to them in the event of an attack. Some castles contained several windows that were built very small so that no one could climb through them.

Castles were not only designed for defense or as protection against enemies, but they were used for everyday living as well. As mentioned previously, the Great Hall was a very important room in the castle because it served many purposes.

Becoming a Knight

A knight has been described as a warrior on horseback. Many knights were sons of landowners or sons of commoners. They were known for fighting on horseback using spears and swords. Knights did not just automatically become knights. There was a process that had to be followed. They had to be groomed and trained for this loyal order. A boy who had aspirations of becoming a knight started training at the age of seven. This training lasted over a period of several years. He was sent to the home of a relative or to a castle and was known at that time as a page until he reached the age of fourteen.

A page had to learn many things including learning how to fight and use weapons such as a spear or a sword. A page learned how to be brave, learned good manners, how to be polite, and serve the family in which he was training. He ran errands and helped with household chores. He learned to be obedient by presenting himself promptly whenever he was summoned. He learned to be patient when there were no errands to run or chores to perform. A page also learned to read and to serve the lord of the household; however, he may or may not be taught how to write. Using the blunt end of a wooden sword, he began to learn the basics of becoming a swordsman.

A page was also taught how to hunt. It was also an important part of becoming a knight as well as becoming adept at horsemanship and swordsmanship. He would often be confronted with wild animals that would force him to develop the necessary skills to survive in the midst of facing a wild animal and on the battlefield.

Around the age of fourteen, a page moved to the next process in training which was becoming a squire. If a page made good progress, he could look forward to becoming a squire. He was presented as a squire in a religious ceremony that took place before the chaplain in the castle. At the ceremony, he was presented with a sword and a belt by the priest. Although the squire was considered someone who was adept at fighting, he had much to learn.

A squire was trained to fight for many hours a day. He learned how to use weapons and ride a horse. He improved his skills as a swordsman and took part in endurance training for running, jumping, and wrestling. He spent a lot of time using the heavy weapons that knights use. He became more proficient when using a sword and a lance.

As a squire, part of his training was working for a knight and that required many duties. The squire was required to awake the knight in the morning and help him get dressed, serve meals,

take care of the horses, and clean the stable. He also helped the knight put on his armor during jousts or tournaments. The squire accompanied the knight to war games, and into battle. The squire also helped the knight off the battlefield if he became injured. On the entertainment side, the squire learned how to play music, dance, and sing to aid in the courtship of ladies.

About the age of twenty, a squire was given the opportunity to become a knight. There were several prerequisites for this new station in life. The squire would have to find a lord to serve if he did not already have one, obtain a horse, clothes, armor, and weapons. A religious ceremony was held which was a large part of the dubbing ritual. Before the ceremony could be held, several things were required of the squire. He had to take a bath, cut his hair (shave or trim his beard), and spend all night praying in a church. "Cutting his hair was a sign that he would honor God. Bathing was a sign that he was pure" (Corbin 16).

During the dubbing ceremony, which was very solemn and serious, the squire was required to wear special colors. Each color meant a different sign or symbol. "White meant pure in spirit, black stockings and shoes meant that he was not afraid to die, and a red cloak was a sign that he was willing to shed his blood in battle" (Corbin 17).

During the ceremony, flags were flown and music was played. The squire knelt before the lord and was tapped on the shoulder and dubbed "knight." The title "Sir" was also conferred upon the knight. After becoming a knight, he was expected to honor the code of chivalry that included defending the church, being truthful, remaining faithful to his word, respecting women, and fighting against evil and injustice.

A knight now needed weapons, armor, and a horse. Necessary weapons could include a sword, a lance, and a dagger or a knife. Knights also used axes and maces. A mace was a wooden club with spikes on the end. A knight must own a horse, and they were quite expensive. Horses were bred and trained for strength, stamina, and courage. A knight was required to take care of his horse if he wanted his horse to return the favor. The horse had to be fed and watered, and knights most often placed armor on their horses to prevent injury during war games and battle.

Knighthood was not only about fighting. It was also about chivalry and defending one's honor. Knights were expected to show respect and exhibit the code of chivalry which included some of the following: show courage in word and deed, defend the weak and innocent, die with honor, respect women, be loyal to king and country, never abandon a friend or ally, and exhibit good manners.

The armor that a knight needed included a helmet, a shield, a breastplate, metal gloves called gauntlets, metal shoes, a collar made of chain mail, chain mail to cover the body, and covering for the knees, legs and arms. This armor could weigh approximately 50-60 pounds and was difficult to fight in. The armor had openings at the joints that made it easy for a knight to move quickly if he fell from his horse. A knight may also wear a coat of arms that was made up of geometric shapes or figures. This coat of arms would have a bar using two sets of colors and carried a motto depicting the castle or king that he swore to defend. It could be worn over the knight's outer garment.

During a tournament, in which a knight might take part to show off to the ladies, the object was to knock the opponent off his horse, and oftentimes during these tournaments knights were injured or killed. After so many knights were often killed or injured during a joust, the weapons that were used were made safer and the knight could enjoy the sport with peace of mind.

The knight's home was the lord's castle unless he owned land and a home or a castle. The knight's job was to protect and serve his lord. Knights were often paid for their services by being given land. When the castle was under attack, the knight's job was to help defend the castle by

fighting the foot soldiers in hand to hand fighting. If the attackers somehow made it into the castle, the knight had to defend the castle and its territory. If knights were captured, they were often held for ransom.

Life for a knight on a daily basis could be exciting or somewhat humdrum depending on the life of the knight. They rose early and ate breakfast that was oftentimes served by a squire. Knights took part in many activities including fencing games, playing chess, and riding their horses. The lord of the estate set aside land for hunting because knights liked to hunt such wild game as foxes and wolves. They also hunted birds and taught falcons to hunt birds. In the afternoon or late evening after the evening meal, they told jokes, made up songs, sang songs for the ladies, and danced with them. This aspect of their routine leads me to courtly love between knights and ladies.

Courtly Love

According to the code of chivalry, knights were expected to take care of ladies and honor and respect them. Knights were bound by honor to respect and protect women. This honor and respect were shown more to ladies of the upper class and ladies of gentle birth. It was uncommon for them to treat the lower class or commoners with respect and honor. As a matter of fact, it was probably unheard of. In legendary tales, knights risked their lives to save the lady.

On the same note, knights' wives were not always treated well because married women during the Middle Ages had few rights. Although women may have had few rights, chivalry demanded that noble ladies be honored and protected. Knights often swore loyalty to their ladies.

According to the premise of courtly love, the knight was expected to fall hopelessly in love with the "apple of his eye" whether the lady was married or single. If she were married, she could not be courted openly and sometimes an affair would ensue or she more likely would be worshipped from afar. If the lady were resistant to the knight's advances, he would woo her and swear his undying love and loyalty to her. He would attempt to prove or express his feelings by participating in tournaments in which he would show off his jousting skills and his riding ability. In other words, he would risk his life to prove his love for his lady.

After his love interest was convinced that his love was sincere, they would pledge themselves to each other (in secrecy if she were married) swearing to remain faithful to one another no matter the cost. Their love would then be consummated as they began to enter a new phase in their relationship. I choose not to share that last part about consummating their relationship with my students because it is not appropriate and I want to keep working as a teacher.

Some of the time, knights did not always marry for love. Many of the marriages were arranged by their parents to ally one castle to another, to help stop wars, or because of being offered land as a wedding present. Mostly, a knight wanted a wife who had a large dowry, was an heiress, or one who had enough money to buy land. When the knight was away from home, his wife was in charge of running his castle or estate. She might also be required to protect the castle against an attack.

A knight often fought to prove that he was good enough for his lady. He also gave up things that he loved to prove his love, while the lady played hard to get. Troubadours who were entertainers at that time wrote songs about knights. In their songs, they wrote that knights were sometimes in love with married ladies who could not accept their love. The troubadours also wrote about how knights wrote poems for their love interests and provided tokens of love for them.

In the preceding paragraphs, I have endeavored to explain some background information for my topic. I attempted to make it as thorough as possible, yet at the same time trying not to make it too wordy.

BRINGING EVERYTHING TOGETHER

The majority of the students whom I teach would not ordinarily be exposed to a unit on the Middle Ages unless they received some exposure in a regular history class. In the past at the school in which I teach, some teachers have taught units on Medieval history, but those classes only had a few resource students who were mainstreamed. Also at that time, it was not mandated by the Houston I.S.D. for resource students to be mainstreamed in all science and history classes. It is now a requirement that all resource students be mainstreamed in those classes, and most teachers are trying to teach to the TAKS that they seldom get a chance to cover different information other than what is required. It is my desire that my students are taught about an age in history that they would not necessarily learn about. The knowledge that they will acquire will add to what information they may already have and at the same time give them the opportunity to broaden their horizons as they explore information about castles, living in a castle, and the lives of knights and ladies and their relationship with each other. They will have learned about a different age and how life is different from their own.

The knowledge base of my students will be expanded because they will learn new vocabulary words, learn about how other people lived, discuss knights' armor and weapons, study rights or lack of rights for women, discuss dress, costumes, poetry and poems, and write songs.

Based on the TEKS/Project Clear curriculum for Language Arts/ Reading, my students can use what they already know to enhance the knowledge that they will learn about this unit. Since they will be studying something new and different, hopefully some of the skills that I have taught them will be used more practically, and they can see why we drill and practice to make sure the skills are learned, that there is a purpose in mind instead of the teacher having to say, "Because I say so." I will allow them opportunities to make comparisons and contrasts, predictions, inferences, use cause/effect relationships, note details, draw conclusions, and distinguish between fact, fiction, and fantasy. I would also like to see the use of figures of speech such as similes and metaphors.

As an aid to the writing activities, I will review with my students what we have discussed for brainstorming ideas, prewriting strategies, different kinds of sentences, capitalization and punctuation rules, grammar usage, noun and pronoun usage as well as connectives and relationship words. I will also review with them the proper use of adverbs and adjectives.

When I write my lesson plans, I will make every attempt to see that all of the skills that I teach every year are developed by my students. I listed those skills in the previous paragraph. My students need to develop all of these skills to aid in completing class work, homework, and also to assist them in passing state tests. More and more is expected of our students because they are being required to score at least the minimum on tests. Just because our students carry a Special Education label is not an excuse anymore for low performance. Some growth is now being required even on Special Education state tests.

All of the skills that I would like to see developed will be used in some form or other on a daily basis because my students need a great deal of drill and practice for them to retain information. The information presented in the Unit Background will be used to develop ideas to aid my students in becoming stronger as those skills are reviewed and used on a daily basis. In the Implementation portion of this draft more information is forthcoming on different strategies and activities that will be used.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

At Sharpstown Middle School, teachers are being trained in the use of Kagan strategies. These strategies were developed to help students become more responsible for their learning and also to get them more actively engaged in the learning process. Teachers still lecture, explain, and instruct, but it is expected that the teacher allow all students to participate simultaneously instead of calling on one student at a time and leaving out all of the other students. In that way there is more interaction with all students instead of just between one student and the teacher. After the teacher has finished lecturing, explaining, or instructing for a short period of time, then the students become involved with each other in group work so that the teacher can assess what they have learned individually and collectively. Here is where the Kagan strategies can begin. Students are allowed to work in groups of two to four on hands on activities, discussions, etc., holding each person in the group responsible. Each person has a task to complete and should be actively engaged and not depending on the other members of the group.

There are several Kagan strategies that can be used. As I plan my lessons, I will name the strategy and give an example of how it can be used in the lesson.

A GLIMPSE OF PLANNED ACTIVITIES

Several ideas come to mind of activities that my student can take part in for this unit. First, I plan for my male students to complete comparison/contrast charts where the subject will be knights of the Medieval period and the law enforcement officers of today. I would like for the girls to make comparison/contrast charts where they will have to discuss women's right or the lack there of during the Middle Ages to women's rights of today.

Next, the girls and boys can become involved in a joint venture of writings skits where the emphasis will be on the conversation between a knight and a lady. They can use skills that have been learned for brainstorming, writing sentences, and paragraphs.

Then, all students can make use of figures of speech such as similes and metaphors as they attempt to write poems and songs that can be examples of what knights wrote for their ladies.

Finally, students can make use of their imaginations and good sentence structure to write creative paragraphs on what life was like in the Middle Ages from the stand point of a knight and his lady.

EXPLANATION OF LESSON PLANS

Before introducing the unit, I will have already talked to my students about the study of a unit and kinds of activities that may be involved in the study of units. I will then introduce the unit that will include the title and a brief overview/definition of the Middle Ages. I will give the students an outline of the material that will be covered and activities that will be completed.

Lesson 1 - Use of Prior Knowledge and Vocabulary Development

After the introduction has been discussed and any questions answered, I will then be ready to begin the unit. Using a **Think-Pair-Share** strategy (students will already have paired), the students will be asked to think about any prior knowledge that they may have about castles, knights, lords, and ladies of the Medieval period. I will give them a 60 second time limit in which to think. After the time is up, they will share with their partners the information (if any) that they have thought about. (I will already have determined in advance which partner will go first). The partner listens and paraphrases what the other person has shared. Then it is the other person's turn to share. And the partner listens and again paraphrasing is done to restate what the other person has said. In this way, if something different is shared, new information has been learned about the topic. After each person in each pair has had a turn to share, I will ask some or all of the groups to share (depending on the time). Much information can be learned if students

have prior knowledge that is recalled, and that information can be added to what they already know. Of course, to the best of my ability, I will correct any erroneous information in order for students not to be misinformed or misled on the subject.

When that strategy has been completed, I will introduce another strategy that may be new to some students and a form of review for other students. This is a type of graphic organizer, and it is called a **K-W-L Chart** (What I **K**now, What I **W**ant to Know, What I **L**earned). I will hand out a sheet of paper that will be divided into three columns with those headings. I will direct the students to fill in the first two columns with at least two statements in each column. The last column is not filled in until the end of the unit. Hopefully by then, the student will have answers to what he/she wanted to know, and several statements filled in for what was learned.

The last planned activity for that day will be the presentation of the vocabulary words/terms used during the Middle Ages. I am a strong believer in students learning new words which will expand their word bank and help them comprehend more advanced reading passages. I will attempt to have a visual for each vocabulary word that is introduced to help students remember how the word is used. The words will be defined and used in sentences. These new terms can be divided into syllables along with the study of the vowel sounds to aid in the pronunciation of the words.

Hopefully after the first day's activities, the students will have gotten a "feel" for the unit and are looking forward to the second day's activities with excitement.

Lesson 2 - Vocabulary Development, Use of Correct Sentence Structure, Correct Grammar Usage/Mechanics, and Noting Details (Facts)

On the second day, I plan to have them participate in a review of the definitions of the words by using a strategy called "Fan 'n' Pick" which uses cards. I will have already prepared the cards with the vocabulary words on one side and the meanings on the other side. The students are divided into groups of two to three. To begin the strategy they number off and I will call a random number and the person with that number is the one to begin first. The cards are fanned face down to look like a fan by the student to the left of the person with the number that was called. The student pulls a card, turns it over, pronounces the word, and gives the meaning of the word and uses it in a sentence. If the student needs assistance with the meaning of the word, all the student has to do is turn the card over and look at the meaning. The next student takes a turn, and the next until all of the cards have been pulled.

After this strategy has been completed, I will prepare the students to watch a video that will give them more background to add to the information that was given on the first day. The title of the video will be discussed, and a list of questions will be given to be answered by the students as the video is watched. When the video has finished, the discussion of the answers to the questions will take place as a whole group discussion. The students will then break up into the previous groups and participate in a strategy called "**Find the Fiction**" using the information learned in the video and from the answers to the previously discussed questions. This strategy requires each person in the group to write three statements, one of which must be false and other two must be true or factual. After everyone has finished writing the statements, then the statements are read, and the rest of the group have to determine which statement is false in each student's statements.

Before the class period is over for the second day, I will assign topics and websites for students to complete research on and questions to be answered from the research. I want only two students in each group because that number is more manageable, and I will assign each student in the group a task to complete so that each person is equally responsible for the work. I will allow them to take turns looking up some of the information on the computers in the classroom then we will move to the library if time permits because the students will have access

to more computers. If we do not have enough time to complete the research in the library, I will plan the visit to the library for the next class period.

Lesson 3 - Noting Facts/Details, Completing Internet Research, Writing/Drawing to Inform/Entertain

The next class period will begin with a warm up of a discussion of previous information that has been presented. This will be done in a whole group discussion hopefully with everyone taking part in the discussion and responding to questions being asked and comments or remarks being made. Students will be given a chance to participate in **Think-Pair-Share** to review what was learned from the previous day's discussion. After the discussion, I will review the appropriate behavior and rules for completing research in the library if that has not already been done. The questions will be reviewed and appropriate library behavior will also be reviewed. After the research has been completed in the library, we will return to the room and share the information gathered by each group. Students will have already been told that they may create artwork to depict their research.

As we study the facts of the Middle Ages that have already been learned, we can now begin a more in-depth study of castles, knights and their armor, lords, and ladies. I plan to display those kinds of pictures. Students will be told that they will be expected to choose a topic and produce artwork to accompany any information on the topic that they have chosen to share with the class. This activity can be done individually or with a partner.

The previous activities are just some ideas/examples of some of the things that I would like to do with my students as I teach this unit. Of course, there are many more ideas that I have that I would like to use. I plan for my unit to be at least four weeks in length because I plan to teach the factual aspect in a reading class and the writing of the factual aspect in the writing class with the same students who are in the reading class in order to promote continuity. I would not like for my students to become bored with the length of the unit, but I have to keep in my mind that my resource students need repetition, drill, and practice. However, I do not plan for them to become bored because we will be producing art work, watching age appropriate movies, and role playing as well as studying content.

As I planned, researched, and wrote lesson plans for this unit, and answered the “why” and “how,” I really became more excited about all the aspects of teaching it. I am eager for my students to learn about castles, castle life, knights, lords, and ladies and other pertinent background information about the Middle Ages.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Work Cited

Corbin, Carolyn. *Knights*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1989.

How knights are trained and gives much information to help students develop ideas on what kind of research they can do.

Gresko, Marcia S. *A Medieval Castle*. San Diego, California: Kidhaven Press, 2003.

A good explanation of life in a castle is outlined here and will give students insights into castle life.

Langley, Andrew. *Eyewitness Books-Medieval Life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996.

A factual picture book that would be useful for both teachers and students.

World Book Looks at the Age of Knights and Castles. Chicago: World Book, Inc., 1996.

An encyclopedia type format; very informative; a must read for students.

Internet Resources

Castle Learning Center: Life in a Medieval Castle. 2005. Castles Unlimited.

<<http://www.castles-of-britain.com/castle6.htm>>.

Gilberts, Rachel. *Knighthood: Becoming a Knight*. 2001. Emuseum at Minnesota State University, Mankato. <<http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/history/middleages/knighthood.html>>.

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Marshall, James. *Rules of Courtly Love*. April 9, 2002. <<http://www.astro.umd.edu/~marshall/chivalry.html>>.

Ross, David. "Medieval Knights and Warfare." 2001. *Britain Express*. <http://www.britainexpress.com/History/Knights_and_Fights.htm>.

Video Resources

Camelot (Parts 1 & 2). Dir. Joshua Logan. Warner Bros., Original Version (1967), (Renewed 1995).

Digitally remastered musical version of an old classic about the legend of King Arthur and the knights of the round table, Queen Guenevere, and Lancelot; a good choice for children.

First Knight. Dir. Jerry Zucker. Columbia Pictures, 1995.

A new version of King Arthur's Camelot; showcases battles for ownership of land: abounds with scenes of courage and a depiction of Lancelot's love for Guenevere.

Medieval Times: Life in the Middle Ages (1000-1450 A.D.). United Learning, Inc. SVE & CHURCHILL MEDIA, 1992.

Factual and informative 31 minute video complete with lesson plans/suggestions to be used with video or after video, words/terms used during the Middle Ages, a sketch of a Norman Castle, a map of Europe made during A.D. 1000, and a Medieval Word Find puzzle. Included also is a 'Study Guide' puzzle

Student Resources

Baines, Francisca. *Castles*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1995.

An understanding account of castle life and why knights are important to have at the castle.

Clements, Gillian. *The Truth about Castles*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 1990.

This book will really capture my students' attention because of the cartoon format which also includes factual information. A great book!

Corrick, James A. *The Early Middle Ages*. San Diego California: Lucent Books, Inc., 1995.

This book gives a time line of events that happened in the early Middle Ages and will help students get a feel for time and events.

Dargie, Richard. *Knights and Castles*. Austin, Texas: Raintree Steck-Vaughn, 1999.

This book lists first and last knights, their training, battles and crusades. Students will be able to make comparisons versus contrasts.

Gravett, Christopher. *Knights*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.

A pictorial book of knights, castles, armor, and descriptions of each. It describes who knights were and why they went to war.

Kerr, Daisy. *Knights and Armor*. London: Grolier Publishing, 1997.

This book explains how a young man becomes a knight and how armor is made. It would be good to use for sequencing.

Reid, Straun. *Castle Life*. Austin, Texas:-Steck Vaughn Co., 1999.

A pictorial book that will assist students who are visual learners.

Teacher Resources

Baker, Alan. *The Knight*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003.

Focuses on the dangers that knights face as they risk their lives for fame and glory; good background information

Comte, Suzanne. *Everyday Life in the Middle Ages*. Italy: Editions Minerva S.A., Geneve 1978.

A factual and pictorial book; a great teacher resource.

Corrick, James. *Life of a Medieval Knight*. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent Books, 2001.

This book deals with all aspects of becoming a knight and knightly duties.

Langley, Andrew. *Eyewitness Books-Medieval Life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996.

A factual picture book for both teachers and students; easy to read and understand.

McDonald, Fiona. *How Would You Survive In The MIDDLE AGES?* New York: Franklin Watts, 1995.

Lots and lots of pictures and factual information that will be helpful in doing research and completing projects.

Newman, Paul. *Daily Life in the Middle Ages*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1961.

A good book on different aspects of the Middle Ages. A good teacher resource.

Powell, Eileen. *Medieval Women*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

I did a book report on this book for a class assignment. It is divided into five chapters and is very factual, descriptive, and informative.