

YE YUCKY MIDDLE AGES

Introduction

This teacher's guide helps young adults learn more about life in the Middle Ages. Most students will know that the Middle Ages is the period of time between ancient and modern European history. It began in the fifth century with the Fall of Rome and ended with the Renaissance.

These times were not completely different from our modern lives. People then enjoyed a good meal with friends and family, they liked being entertained, and they worked hard. Like us, they sometimes got sick, found themselves at war, and endured some hardships that were largely out of their control. The series' theme highlights how parts of medieval life are viewed today as being downright surprising and yucky. Students will enjoy and appreciate the interesting lives led by the people of the Middle Ages and come to realize that even though life was much different then, it was still filled with a rich culture and sophisticated minds.

National Standards

This series supports Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science curriculum. Go to www.enslowclassroom.com and click on the "View State Correlations" tab. Click on your state, grade level, and curriculum standard to display how any book in this series backs up your state's specific curriculum standard.

Classroom Activities

Activities for teaching the five curriculum areas: Reading/Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and the Arts can be found in this teacher's guide. Students will further appreciate how medical care has evolved, the importance of basic hygiene, the emphasis on proper food preparation, and the modern conveniences found in all of our homes – big and small, as they learn how Social Studies, Arts, Science and Math concepts can be tied in with the content of the books in this series.

Guided Reading Level: R

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Sweaty Suits of Armor

Teacher’s Guide for **Sweaty Suits of Armor**

Medieval life had unique challenges, and customs of the Middle Ages can be seen as both fascinating and peculiar. As the students read and discuss the book, remind them that even though there were great thinkers and wonderful inventions during this time, there was still so much now-basic information left to be discovered and realized. Greatly improved medical practices, realizations and changes in food handling and safety, and an emphasis on personal hygiene are only some of the many differences between our modern culture and that of the Middle Ages.

Using upbeat illustrations, interesting text, and often surprising facts, *Sweaty Suits of Armor* discusses the types of protection knights wore in battle, the intense fighting that often took place, and the weapons used by attackers and defenders during this time.

Start with the Cover

Have the students look at the book’s cover and read the title aloud. Talk about what it may mean. Ask the students to spend some time looking at the cover art and have them think about ways the book’s title may tie in with this picture. Now have the students read the title’s question aloud: *Could you survive being a knight?* and based on their prior knowledge of the life of a knight, write their response in a journal or other page. (When the students have finished reading the book, have them revisit the question in the title and revise and add to their original response based on what they have read.)

Preview the Rest of the Book

Encourage the students to continue to preview by reviewing the table of contents, the illustrations throughout the book, and the headings on some pages. Have them think about what they may learn from these pages. Remind the students that previewing text – especially nonfiction articles and books – helps good readers understand what they will be reading. It activates their prior knowledge of the topic, helps them set a purpose for their reading, and helps them know what lies ahead.

Make Predictions

Have the students think about or write down predictions as they read. Model prediction strategies for the students as an aid to their comprehension: *I think this chapter will tell me how a person gets to be a knight and if it was a hard job.*

Visualize

Discuss with the students how since there are no photographs of life during this time, the author needed to research thoroughly to help readers imagine what it was like to be a captured knight, how a suit of armor protected (and didn’t protect) a knight, training as a knight, and other facets of life during this time. Encourage the students to read these descriptions carefully. These words together with the illustrations will help readers more clearly see what medieval life was like.

Tie in With the Theme

Remind the students that the series’ theme is *Ye Yucky Middle Ages*. Ask what “yucky” means to them and discuss what parts of the book could be considered “yucky,” and why.

Glossary

This book contains many terms often used specifically to describe life in the Middle Ages. Encourage the students to use context clues within sentences and paragraphs to learn the meaning of the words as they read, and to turn to the glossary at the back of the book for many of these words and their clear, concise definitions.

The Five Curriculum Activities

Before any activity, make sure your students do not have any allergies to items you may use. Never use anything sharp that may cut a student. Do not use anything too hot or too cold which may injure a student. Always have an adult supervise all activities to ensure the safety of your students and provide an appropriate setting, such as a gym or an outdoor space, for physical activities. Make sure the students are supervised when using the Internet.

Reading/Language Arts Activity

Ask the students to refer to the description in the book and then imagine they are going to be in a melee the next day. Have students first discuss what a melee is then write a diary or journal entry detailing their thoughts as they prepare for the activity tomorrow. Encourage the students to tell whether they are excited, happy, scared, or something else, and why they believe they feel that way.

Math Activity

Page 12 says that at least 30 percent of Europe's population was wiped out by the Black Death epidemic. Tell the students that approximately 25,000,000 people were killed by this sickness. Have them figure out which of the four figures below most accurately estimates the original population before the epidemic:

100,000,000

80,000,000

60,000,000

40,000,000

Then have the students discuss modern-day sicknesses that have taken the lives of large numbers of people and how these compare with the Black Death of medieval times.

Science Activity

Since they wore heavy armor and fought in often stifling hot temperatures, knights suffered from heat exhaustion. Discuss whether people today can suffer from this condition. Have the students research to find the signs, causes, and prevention of heat exhaustion and discuss what they find out.

Social Studies Activity

A suit of armor offered a knight more advantages than hardships. Ask the students to use information from the book and their own ideas to create a Venn diagram comparing some of the main advantages and disadvantages of wearing a suit of armor during medieval times.

Arts Activity

Page 34 describes heraldry, a colorful system of symbols and patterns used by knights to identify each other. Have the students design a meaningful system of patterns and/or symbols that could identify them and tell why they have added particular parts of it.

Math Answer: 80,000,000,

Social Studies: Advantages: it identified someone as a knight; it offered protection from being hurt in battles. Disadvantages: movement was restricted; it was hot, it was very heavy. Center: a body covering

Handout

Imagine you are a reporter and have been asked to travel back in time to the Middle Ages. Your assignment is to interview a knight. Develop three questions your television audience would most like to know the answers to and write those questions below. Then imagine what you think the knight's response may be to each of those questions and add that below.

Question 1:

Knight's Response:

Question 2:

Knight's Response:

Question 3:

Knight's Response:

After interviewing the knight, you go back to your newsroom. Your boss asks you what the most interesting part of your interview was. What do you say to her? Write your response below, telling why you singled out that part of the interview.

Assessment

Directions: Circle the correct answer.

1. (T/F) All squires eventually became knights.
2. What was the most likely reason a king would try to stop tournaments?
 - A. Having so many knights in one place was seen as a threat.
 - B. The kings were afraid of their own knights dying or being injured.
 - C. They wanted their knights to be doing other things around the castle.
 - D. The tournaments were illegal and kings could get into trouble.
3. (T/F) Knights were paid to fight battles.
4. What is the name of the ceremony where a squire becomes a knight?
 - A. Dubbing ceremony
 - B. Aketon
 - C. Tournament
 - D. Melee
5. Where was a *surcoat* usually worn?
 - A. On the head
 - B. Under the metal armor
 - C. Over the metal armor
 - D. On each arm
6. How was a *tilt* mainly used as a safety device?
 - A. To dull the sharp lance's point
 - B. To keep horses separated
 - C. To protect the knight's neck
 - D. To help pages and squires train for battle

7. What is another name for a *quintain*?
 - A. Dummy
 - B. Armor
 - C. Weapon
 - D. Ceremony

8. What would most likely happen to a captured knight for whom the ransom was not paid?
 - A. He would eventually be let go
 - B. He would die in the dungeon
 - C. The king would order him released
 - D. The knight's family would be captured

9. Which was not a problem of medieval armies?
 - A. Contracting disease
 - B. Hunger
 - C. Being killed
 - D. Drug use

10. Which person would be most likely to become a knight?
 - A. A girl who showed she could fight
 - B. A boy from a wealthy family
 - C. A poor peasant with no other options
 - D. A foot soldier for the king

Answers: (1-3=supporting facts; 4-7=vocabulary; 8-10=inference)

1	F
2	A
3	T
4	A
5	C
6	B
7	A
8	B
9	D
10	B