GUIDED READING  The Age of Chivalry

A. Identifying Supporting Details  As you read about knighthood and chivalry, take notes to fill in the web diagram below.

1. Education  2. Weapons and equipment  3. War games


Knight in Feudal Society

B. Using Context Clues  Define the terms chivalry, tournament, and troubadour.
Japan Between 1000 and 1200, Japan developed a feudal system in which landowners assumed the roles of independent local rulers. Lesser lords pledged to fight for greater lords in exchange for protection. Each lord surrounded himself with a bodyguard of elite warriors called samurai who lived according to a harsh code called Bushido. A samurai’s honor was constantly on the line. He had to prove his absolute courage and loyalty in defense of his lord, who rewarded him with an allowance.

A samurai’s uniform was one of the most elaborate costumes ever worn. It consisted of leather shinguards and thigh guards, baggy pantaloons, a kimono, metal-cased shoulder guards, a chest protector, an iron collar and facemask, and a visored helmet. The samurai trained himself to get into this outfit within a minute. A samurai’s most essential weapon was his sword.

Europe Every local lord had a force of knights ready to defend the land against foreign invaders and neighboring lords. From each of the knights, a lord could demand about 40 days of combat on horseback every year. The skillful use of weapons took training and practice and knights became specialists in war. In the early days of the Middle Ages, little was asked of a knight other than courage in battle and loyalty to his lord in return for land. Later, knights were expected to live up to a code of chivalry, a complex set of ideals.

The education of a knight began at age seven when his parents sent him off to the castle of another lord. There the young nobleman learned manners and how to fence and hunt. At age 14, he became a squire, helping the knight with his armor and weapons and practicing his skills with sword and lance on horseback. At age 21, he became a full-fledged knight.
In the early 12th century, nobles celebrated courtly love, an ideal form of spiritual love in which a knight or courtier completely devoted himself to a noblewoman. Andreas Capellanus, a member of the clergy who served Marie of Champagne, wrote *The Art of Courtly Love* in about 1174. His manual included the following rules. Which rules do you think might apply to love in today’s world?

Section 3

These are the rules.

I. Marriage is no real excuse for not loving.

II. He who is not jealous cannot love.

III. No one can be bound by a double love.

IV. It is well known that love is always increasing or decreasing.

V. That which a lover takes against his will of his beloved has no relish.

VI. Boys do not love until they arrive at the age of maturity.

VII. When one lover dies, a widowhood of two years is required of the survivor.

VIII. No one should be deprived of love without the very best of reasons.

IX. No one can love unless he is impelled by the persuasion of love.

X. Love is always a stranger in the home of avarice.

XI. It is not proper to love any woman whom one should be ashamed to seek to marry.

XII. A true lover does not desire to embrace in love anyone except his beloved.

XIII. When made public love rarely endures.

XIV. The easy attainment of love makes it of little value; difficulty of attainment makes it prized.

XV. Every lover regularly turns pale in the presence of his beloved.

XVI. When a lover suddenly catches sight of his beloved his heart palpitates.

XVII. A new love puts to flight an old one.

XVIII. Good character alone makes any man worthy of love.

XIX. If love diminishes, it quickly fails and rarely revives.

XX. A man in love is always apprehensive.

XXI. Real jealousy always increases the feeling of love.

XXII. Jealousy, and therefore love, are increased when one suspects his beloved.

XXIII. He whom the thought of love vexes, eats and sleeps very little.

XXIV. Every act of a lover ends in the thought of his beloved.

XXV. A true lover considers nothing good except what he thinks will please his beloved.

XXVI. Love can deny nothing to love.

XXVII. A lover can never have enough of the solaces of his beloved.

XXVIII. A slight presumption causes a lover to suspect his beloved.

XXIX. A man who is vexed by too much passion usually does not love.

XXX. A true lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved.

XXXI. Nothing forbids one woman being loved by two men or one man by two women.

*Research Option*

Creating Oral Presentations Troubadours and trouvères were aristocratic poet-musicians of the medieval courts of France who wrote about courtly love. Work with a group of classmates to find a love poem by a troubadour or trouvère such as Bertran de Born, Arnaut Daniel, Bernard de Ventadour, Rainbaut de Vaqueiras, Blondel de Nesle, Guillaume d’Aquitaine, Thibaud de Blazon, or Chrétien de Troyes. Recite the poem for your class. Then discuss which rules of courtly love the poem reflects.


European Middle Ages 75
CHAPTER 13 Section 3

LITERATURE SELECTION from The Song of Roland

The Song of Roland, one of the earliest medieval epic poems, was written in France in about 1100. The poem is based on an incident during Charlemagne’s wars against Muslims in Spain. Charlemagne puts his nephew, Count Roland, in charge of the rearguard as French knights retreat. The rearguard is attacked by a much larger Arab army, and Roland waits too long to summon Charlemagne’s help. In what ways does this poem excerpt reflect the age of chivalry?

It is the end of day, and full of light, 
arms and armor are ablaze in the sun, 
and fire flashes from hauberks and helmets, 
and from those shields, painted fair with flowers, 
and from those lances, those gold-dressed gonfalons.
The Emperor rides on in rage and sorrow, 
the men of France indignant and full of grief. 
There is no man of them who does not weep, they are in fear for the life of Roland . . .

High are the hills, and tenebrous, and vast, 
the valleys deep, the raging waters swift; 
to the rear, to the front, the trumpets sound: 
they answer the lone voice of the olifant.
The Emperor rides on, rides on in fury, 
the men of France in grief and indignation. 
There is no man who does not weep and wail, and they pray God: protect the life of Roland 
till they come, one great host, into the field 
and fight at Roland’s side like true men all.

What does it matter what they pray? It does no good.
They are too late, they cannot come in time. 
King Charles the Great rides on, a man in wrath, 
his great white beard spread out [defiantly] upon his hauberk.
All the barons of France ride spurring hard, 
there is no man who does not weep, furious not to be with Roland, the captain count, 
who stands and fights the Saracens of Spain, 
so set upon, I cannot think his soul abides.
God! those sixty men who stand with him, what men!
No king, no captain ever stood with better. 
Roland looks up on the mountains and slopes, 
sees the French dead, so many good men fallen, 
and weeps for them, as a great warrior weeps: 
“Barons, my lords, may God give you his grace, 
may he grant Paradise to all your souls, 
make them lie down among the holy flowers. 
I never saw better vassals than you. 
All the years you’ve served me, and all the times, 
the mighty lands you conquered for Charles our King!”
The Emperor raised you for this terrible hour! 
Land of France, how sweet you are, native land, 
laid waste this day, ravaged, made a desert.
Barons of France, I see you die for me, 
and I, your lord—I cannot protect you.
May God come to your aid, that God who never failed.

Oliver, brother, now I will not fail you. 
I will die here—of grief, if no man kills me. 
Lord, Companion, let us return and fight.”


Research Options

1. Using Research in Writing The Song of Roland is a type of medieval epic poem known as a chanson de geste, or song of exploits. Research chansons de geste and then write a brief summary. Share your findings with classmates.

2. Determining Word Meaning Use a dictionary to define hauberks, lances, and gonfalons. Then use these definitions and details in the poem to visualize how medieval French knights dressed. Draw a labeled diagram and display it in the classroom.

CONNECTIONS ACROSS TIME AND CULTURES

Roles of Women

In Unit 3, you have read about the status of women in Muslim, Chinese, and feudal European societies. Throughout history and into modern times, the roles and responsibilities of women in society have varied. To help you identify some reasons for the continuous shift in the status of women, answer the questions that follow.

1. In Chapter 10, Section 1, you read that Muslim women had more rights than European women living in the same time period.
   a. What rights did Muslim women have?
   b. What were their responsibilities as women?
   c. How did the religion of Islam affect the role of women in Muslim society?

2. In Chapter 12, Section 1, you read that prosperity in China during the Tang and Song periods transformed Chinese society. The status of Chinese women, who had always been subservient, declined even further.
   a. What were the reasons for this decline?
   b. How did the custom of foot-binding reflect the inferior status of women?

3. In feudal European society, there were well-defined social classes, and status determined a person’s prestige and power.
   a. How did the Church view women?
   b. How were women viewed in the literature of chivalry?
   c. Under the feudal system, how did the role of a noblewoman differ from that of the vast majority of women?
   d. How did peasant women contribute to the well-being of their families?

4. In general, how would you characterize the status of women in the ancient and medieval societies you have studied? How would you characterize the role of women in modern-day societies?

5. What factors appear to have had the greatest influence on the rights and responsibilities of women in society?
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY  Medieval Technology in Hand Weapons

Though much of military technology during the Middle Ages was designed for laying siege to castles, there were significant developments in weapons for individual soldiers.

Section 3

The hand crossbow originally was invented in China in the 13th century B.C. The Greeks significantly enlarged the weapon and renamed it the siege ballista. After the breakup of the Roman Empire, the story of the hand crossbow becomes vague. However, historians know that it was independently introduced in Europe around the tenth century A.D.

The crossbow was composed of a bow that was made of horn or wood. It was mounted on a stock, the long supporting rod that held the bow. A catch and trigger were also built on the stock. Pulling a string connected to the trigger allowed the crossbow to be fired.

Initially, the crossbow was a light weapon with a trigger that could be locked by hand. As its power increased, the soldier had to rest it on the ground to gain the leverage needed to reset the catch. The end of the stock was then equipped with a metal stirrup for a soldier’s foot. When the bow was made of steel, the trigger became impossible for a single person to lock.

Crossbows fired many types of missiles. Most of these weapons shot bolts that were about 15 inches long and made of wood or iron. Some had a vane, or feathers, for stability. At times, the crossbow was modified to shoot round stones or lead pellets. One variation had a barrel on it through which iron bolts were shot.

The size of the crossbow was different in each country. The English version was small and had a bow only two feet wide and a stock about 18 inches long. On the other hand, the French model was almost three feet wide and weighed 15 pounds. Soldiers could aim this weapon accurately at 150 yards and still seriously injure an enemy soldier or horse at up to 300 yards.

Crossbows could inflict terrible wounds. In fact, in 1139 Pope Innocent II decided that the crossbow was too deadly and outlawed its use for a time. Though warriors could strike fear in the hearts of their enemies by using this weapon, its slow rate of fire (one crossbow shot to three longbow shots) also made it deadly to the shooters.

This weapon was able to be used by essentially untrained troops. In contrast, archers using the longbow required many years of practice to build up strength and accuracy. The cavalry also adopted the crossbow, and sailors used it effectively from the crow’s nest to prevent the enemy from boarding their ships.

With the steel bow, this armament became the most powerful weapon in Europe. However, its effectiveness lasted only until the middle of the 15th century when guns started coming into wide use.

Questions

1. Clarifying  Name two types of missiles that crossbows fired.
2. Comparing and Contrasting  Compare the weaknesses of the crossbow to those of the longbow.
3. Drawing Conclusions  Why did Pope Innocent II ban the use of the crossbow?
RETEACHING ACTIVITY  The Age of Chivalry

Determining Main Ideas  The following questions deal with the age of chivalry. Answer them in the space provided.

1. How did feudal lords in Western Europe in the 11th century defend their territories?

____________________________________________________________________________

2. How were the lives of a noblewoman and a peasant woman in the Middle Ages different?

____________________________________________________________________________

3. How did invading armies go about attacking a castle?

____________________________________________________________________________

4. How did some of the troubadours’ songs promote a false image of knights and noblewomen?

____________________________________________________________________________

Reading Comprehension  Find the name or term in the second column that best matches the description in the first column. Then write the letter of your answer in the blank.

___  5. mock battles in which knights participated to gain experience
   a. tournaments

___  6. a code of ideals that required that knights were loyal, and fight bravely in defense of three masters: his feudal lord, his heavenly Lord, and his chosen lady
   b. Tortoise

___  7. a structure that rolled on wheels and shielded soldiers from arrows above
   c. troubadours

___  8. traveling poet-musicians who performed short verses and songs about romantic love in the castles and courts of Europe
   d. chivalry

European Middle Ages  87