

Middle Age Spread: Art of the Medieval World

With Rome in deterioration and the **Byzantine Empire** slowly growing in the East, western Europe struggled for almost a millennium. The period from approximately 500 to 1400 is known as the **Middle Ages, Dark Ages** or the **Medieval era**.

For the average citizen daily life in the **Middle Ages** was filled with physical and intellectual poverty, as well as a fear of war, famine and disease.

The Decline of the Arts

With their world in turmoil, the citizenry of the **Middle Ages** had little time or ambition for producing quality works of art. Also, gone was a strong centralized government or Empire for which to fund artistic endeavors.



Hercules Strangles the Serpents from the House of Vitte, Fresco 63-79AD.



St. John from the Franco-Saxon Gospels 850 AD.

Manuscript Illumination

An important contribution to the on-going development of visual arts and illustration was created in the Medieval era: **Illuminated Manuscripts**.

This new artistic form - **Manuscript Illumination** created by monks in monasteries allowed them to record and preserve precise knowledge and education in the form of the written word for future generations of learners and scholars.

Name: _____ /24

Grade 10 - Middle Ages Questions

1. What is the period from approximately 500 to 1400AD commonly referred to as? (1)

2. Common people during the Medieval era faced what three daily hardships? (3)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3. Who wrote the first illuminated manuscript and what was recorded in them? (2)

3. List two stylistic similarities and two differences between the illuminated manuscript cover St. John from the Franco-Saxon Gospels and the Roman fresco Hercules Strangles a Serpents from the House of Vitte. (4)

Stylistic Similarities:

- 1.
- 2.

Stylistic Differences:

- 1.
- 2.

Charlemagne

The **Middle Ages'** first great ruler was **Charles the Great**, better known as **Charlemagne**, a Norman leader who was crowned Emperor by the Pope on Christmas day, **AD 800**.

With this action he became the first of the **Holy Roman Emperors**, and encouraged learning and the preservation of knowledge throughout Europe in the wake of the many barbarian invasions.

Charlemagne's Empire ended shortly after his death, and by the close of the 9th century western Europe was in shambles once more. Weak central government and the need for protection led to the formation of **Feudalism**.

The Feudal system involved having common people and some noblemen giving up their owned land and freedom to strong and powerful lords. The **lords** then had the responsibility to protect the common people and **noblemen** and also protect their land.

The lords also allowed the common people and **noblemen** to live and often farm the land with the **lord** working as an **administrator** and **protector**. The common people and **nobelmen** under his protection were called **servants** or **vassals** and they would pledge their loyalty and support to him in return for his protection.



Palace Chapel of Charlemagne, Aachen Germany, c. AD 800.

4. Pick 2 elements and principles and describe the Front and Back cover of the Lindau Gospels from 870. (2)

1.

2.

5. When the Pope crowned Charlemagne on Christmas day 800 AD, he received what title? (1)

6. What system was created in Europe as a result of having no strong form of centralized government during the Middle Ages? (1)

7. In the Feudal System what was the responsibility of the lords/noblemen to the common people and vice versa? (2)



Lindau Gospels c.AD 850(front)



Lindau Gospels c.AD 850(back)



Architecture

Compare these two structures - from the Middle Ages with this earlier Greek structure. What similarities and differences can you notice? Consider overall craftsmanship, complexity and decorative elements.

Monasticism and Mysticism

During the Middle Ages religion was often in a state of unrest and change as well. As a result of the ongoing waves of invasions from different groups trying to gain power, the Christian religion was preserved primarily in monasteries where monks continued to practice the teachings of Jesus Christ.

They consisted of a series of buildings such as a church and living residence where the monks could live and pray and they were often well-protected structures throughout Europe.

Christianity was preserved by the monks as they faithfully reproduced the **Bible as Illuminated Manuscripts**.

Not all individuals during the Middle Ages practiced Christianity however. In this age of turmoil, much of Europe's citizenry practiced various pagan religions, or peculiar blends of Christianity and local superstition.

When the millennium came about in the year 1000, many believed that the end of the world was near, and committed suicide in mass rituals.

Mass religious hysteria also arose when, beginning in 1347, over 20 million people (1/3rd of Europe's total population) died due to the black or bubonic plague.

The massive 100 Years War between England and France, in which Joan of Arc was born, was to be a fitting end to this low period in the history of humanity, one in which civilization struggled simply to survive.



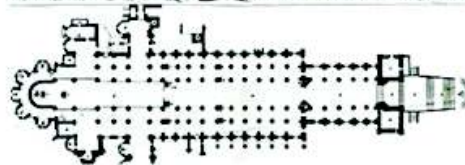
Monastery of San Juan de la Pena, Jaco Spain 922 c. Parthenon, 448-432 B.C.



Coca Castle in Spain, c. AD 1300.



Cluny Monastery, Paris 910 AD.



Castle of King Richard I in England, c. AD 1300.

8. Compare the Greek Parthenon with the Monastery of San Juan de la Pena in Spain. List 1 stylistic similarities and 1 differences between the architectural structures:(2)

Similarity:

Difference:

9. Look at the Castle of Coca and the Castle of King Richard I, list 2 architectural similarities they both share. (2)

1.

2.

10. What are monasteries and what did they help preserve during the Middle Ages? (2)

11. Not everyone during the Middle Ages practiced Christianity, what did other Europeans practice? (1)

8. During the Middle Ages approximately how many people died as a result of the Black/ bubonic plague? (1) /8