

The Early Middle Ages

THE BIG PICTURE

At the outset of the early Middle Ages, western Europe was a land without empire.

With the Roman Empire gone, new forms of community took hold. Christianity spread throughout western Europe, forging unity at a spiritual level. Strong, new political systems also arose, uniting much of Europe.



North Carolina Standards

Social Studies Objectives

3.02 Describe events in Western Europe from the fall of Rome to the emergence of nation-states and analyze the impact of these events on economic, political, and social life in medieval Europe.

Language Arts Objective

2.01.3 Demonstrate the ability to read, listen to and view a variety of increasingly complex print and non-print information texts appropriate to grade level and course by providing textual evidence to support understanding of and reader's response to text.



Knights in combat, from Bible of Charles de Moulins and Pierre Comestor, c. late 1200s.

TIME LINE

CHAPTER EVENTS

800

The pope crowns Charlemagne Emperor of the Romans.

**Viking raids in Europe
800s**

962

Otto the Great becomes emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

1066

William the Conqueror wins the Battle of Hastings.

800

1000

WORLD EVENTS

900

The Classic Age of Maya civilization ends.

960

China is reunified under the Song dynasty.

1060s

The Empire of Ghana reaches its height.



History's Impact video program

Watch the video to understand the impact of the feudal system in Europe.

Reading like a Historian

This illustration shows knights in conflict during the Middle Ages. Knights fought in service to kings and nobles, helping them to gain and maintain political power.

Analyzing Visuals What does this scene suggest about warfare in the Early Middle Ages? How accurate do you think this illustration is in showing a medieval battle? Explain your answer.

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H26

1215
King John signs
Magna Carta.

1200

1192
The first shogun takes
power in Japan.

GEOGRAPHY Starting Points



Interactive

EUROPE, 815

England was divided into eight small kingdoms.

ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOMS

SLAVIC STATES

FRANKISH EMPIRE

Charlemagne built the Frankish Empire.

UMAYYAD CALIPHATE

Constantinople

BYZANTINE EMPIRE

EUROPE, 1215

England was united as one kingdom.

ENGLAND

What had been the Frankish Empire was divided into France and the Holy Roman Empire.

HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

POLAND

HUNGARY

BYZANTINE EMPIRE

LEÓN

NAVARRRE

CASTILE

ARAGON

PORTUGAL

ALMOHAD CALIPHATE

KINGDOM OF SICILY

Starting Points

In the 800s one major Christian kingdom, the Frankish Empire, ruled a huge portion of western Europe. This kingdom reached great heights under the rule of Charlemagne (SHAR-luh-mayn). By 1215 many kingdoms in Europe had divided, others had become unified, and even more had become Christian.

- 1. Compare** What do you think caused the political boundaries in western Europe to change between 815 and 1215?
- 2. Predict** What do you think happened during the Middle Ages to allow Christianity to spread so far in such a short period of time?



Listen to History

Go online to listen to an explanation of the starting points for this chapter.

go.hrw.com

Keyword: SHL EMA

Charlemagne's Empire

BEFORE YOU READ

MAIN IDEA

Through conquest and social change, Charlemagne brought much of western Europe together into a single empire.

READING FOCUS

1. How did Charlemagne and the Carolingians build the Frankish Empire?
2. How did Charlemagne's actions contribute to shaping a new society?

KEY TERMS AND PEOPLE

Charlemagne
Papal States
counts

THE INSIDE STORY

Could one man restore the lost glory of the Roman Empire?

Cheers and excitement shattered the silence of Christmas morning in Rome in the year 800. From Saint Peter's Basilica—the city's most powerful church—word spread quickly through the city. For the first time in more than three centuries, Rome had a new emperor.

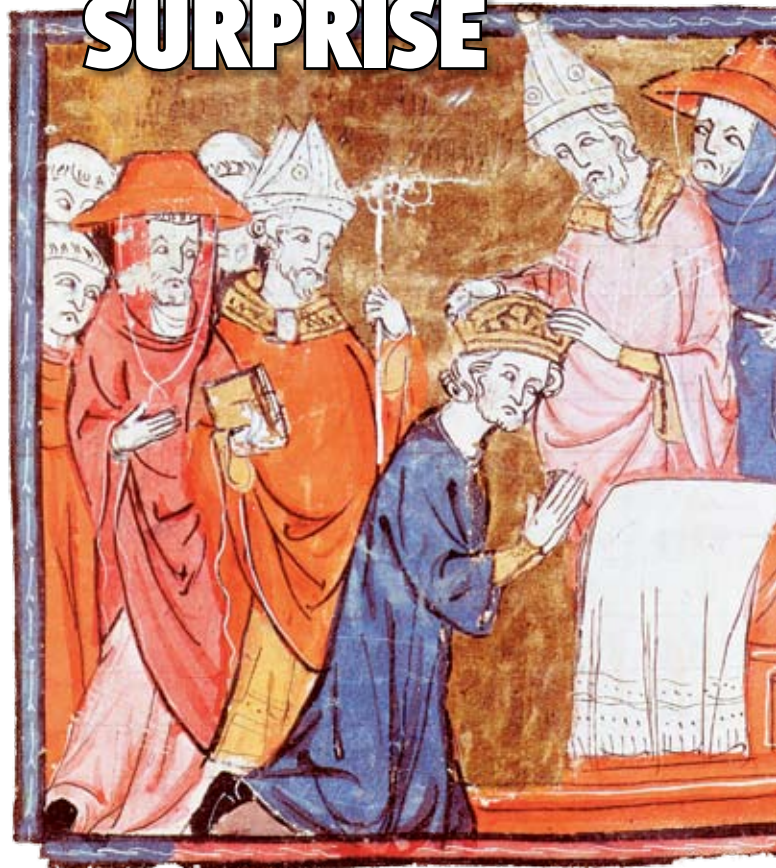
The new emperor was Charlemagne, the king of the Franks. His coronation was designed to surprise everyone, perhaps even Charlemagne himself! During a Christmas mass, Pope Leo III walked to where Charlemagne was kneeling and lowered a golden crown onto the king's head. Addressing him as Emperor of the Romans, Leo hailed Charlemagne as the heir of Rome's ancient rulers.

Throughout Rome, people rejoiced. After more than 300 years, they had an emperor again! Even more exciting, however, was the fact that the emperor had been crowned by the pope, whom they saw as God's representative. To many people, the coronation was a sign that God had chosen their new emperor to restore the glory of their ancient empire. They thought Rome had been reborn. ■

Building an Empire

Though it was a surprise to some people, the crowning of **Charlemagne** as emperor was not a random decision. With the fall of Rome, Europe had entered into a period of political, social, and economic decline. Small kingdoms competed to control lands once under Rome's central authority. Among these were Charlemagne's predecessors, the kings of the Franks. By 800 the Franks ruled much of western and central Europe. The leaders most influential in the expansion of the Franks all belonged to one family. That family—the family to which Charlemagne belonged—was the Carolingians.

A CHRISTMAS SURPRISE



▲ This medieval manuscript shows Pope Leo III crowning Charlemagne Emperor of the Romans.

TAKING NOTES

INCORPORATED
combined or made into one body or unit

The Early Carolingians One of the first members of the Carolingian family to gain power was Charlemagne's grandfather, Charles Martel. Charles was not a king. Instead, he served as a political adviser and a war leader for the Frankish king. As war leader, he led the Frankish army in many crushing defeats of their opponents, most notably Muslims from Spain. From his skills in battle Charles earned the nickname Martel, which means "hammer."

Charles's son Pippin III was also a skilled leader. Like his father, Pippin won many battles and captured new lands for the Franks. Unlike Charles, Pippin would become king—the first king of the Carolingian dynasty. In 751 he forced the old king of the Franks to step down and Pippin took the throne for himself. When Pippin died in 768, he passed the kingdom on to his son, who was also named Charles. That son was the ruler we know today as Charlemagne.

Charlemagne's Rise to Power The name *Charlemagne* is from Old French for Charles the Great. In his case, the name was accurate, for Charlemagne was truly a great leader. In fact, many historians consider him one of the most important leaders in European history.

The foundation of Charlemagne's success was his military power. Each year, he assembled an army and led it into battle against one

of his foes. When Charlemagne defeated a people, he incorporated their land into his sphere of influence and formed alliances with local rulers. In this way, he increased both the size and the power of the Carolingian kingdom.

Pope Leo III recognized Charlemagne's skill as a warrior and called on him for help when the Lombards attacked the **Papal States** in 774. The Papal States made up a region in central Italy that was under the control of the pope. Charlemagne answered the pope's call for help. The Franks swept into Italy and defeated the Lombards. Charlemagne became king of the Lombards, as well as the Franks.

The pope was grateful for Charlemagne's help against the Lombards, and his gratitude became even greater in the year 799. In that year, angry supporters of the previous pope attacked Leo and ran him out of Rome. Once again, Leo called on the Franks for help. Responding to his call, Charlemagne had Leo escorted back to Rome and restored to power.

The pope thanked Charlemagne by naming him Emperor of the Roman People. The pope's granting of this title put forward two ideas about Charlemagne. First, the title implied that Charlemagne had restored the glory of the Roman Empire in Europe. Second, the pope's action suggested that Charlemagne's rule had the full backing of the church and of God.

Charlemagne in War and Peace



Charlemagne Besiges Agolant, from *Chroniques de France ou de Saint Denis*. Roy 16 G.VI, c. 1325–1350.

Charlemagne was a skilled warrior and commander who won countless victories. Charlemagne was not just a fighter, though. As emperor, he supported religion and education to strengthen his rule. **What political reasons might have motivated Charlemagne to support education and religion?**

Charlemagne's Rule Charlemagne had tremendous power as emperor. However, the empire was so large that it was not easy to rule. Soon after taking power, Charlemagne made several changes to make his government both efficient and effective.

One step that Charlemagne took to improve his government was to select a center for his government. He established a permanent capital, which earlier Frankish kings had not done, at Aachen (ah-kuhn) in what is now Germany. There, Charlemagne built a huge palace and a cathedral to reflect his own greatness.

Because Charlemagne stayed in Aachen, he could not personally oversee his entire empire. He chose officials called **counts** to rule parts of the empire in his name. Counts were bound by oath to obey Charlemagne. In return, counts were granted large tracts of land and given considerable authority. Still, they had to answer to Charlemagne for their decisions.

To keep tabs on his counts, Charlemagne sent inspectors throughout the empire. The inspectors visited counts, rewarding those who did their jobs well and punishing those who did not. They helped ensure that counts remained loyal and that the empire was well run.

READING CHECK Summarize How did Charlemagne turn his kingdom into an empire?

A New Society

Although Charlemagne is known mostly as a warrior and a political leader, he also made sweeping changes to Frankish society. Some of the changes he introduced helped shape life for hundreds of years.

Education One aspect of society in which Charlemagne was particularly interested was education. He was personally interested in learning and spent much of his time studying. In an era in which education was not widely appreciated, he wanted leaders in his empire to be able to read and write. To achieve this goal, Charlemagne ordered churches and monasteries to start schools staffed by educated priests and monks. Students in these schools studied religion, music, grammar, and other subjects.

To further encourage learning in his empire, Charlemagne invited noted scholars from all over Europe to Aachen. These scholars spent much of their time teaching. When they were not teaching, the scholars studied and copied ancient texts. They sent copies of the texts to monasteries all over Europe, where monks made more copies. Had the scholars and monks not done this, many valuable works from the ancient world might have been completely lost during the Middle Ages.

READING SKILLS

Using Word

Origins If you know that cathedral comes from a Latin term meaning "of a bishop's seat," who would you expect to preside over a cathedral?

A devout Christian, Charlemagne built a huge cathedral in Aachen. ▼



Monk Eadwine at work on a manuscript, c. 1150.

◀ At Charlemagne's request, scholars and monks in Aachen spent hours studying and copying ancient writings.

Religion In addition to improving education, Charlemagne wanted to preserve and spread Christian teachings. The strength of the emperor's faith is described by his friend and biographer, Einhard:

HISTORY'S VOICES

“Charlemagne practised the Christian religion with great devotion and piety . . . As long as his health lasted he went to church morning and evening with great regularity, and also for early-morning Mass, and the late-night hours.”

—Einhard, *The Life of Charlemagne*

As emperor, Charlemagne worked closely with the church to create a unified Christian empire. He accomplished this, in part, by force. During some military campaigns, Charlemagne ordered those he conquered to convert to Christianity, under penalty of death. He then sent monks to live among the conquered people to help Christianity take root.

Law Charlemagne honored the traditional laws of the tribes that he brought under his rule. Most of these laws had only existed in oral tradition. After Charlemagne became emperor, he had many of the tribal laws recorded, and he allowed tribal legal codes to maintain their separate existence. At the urging of the pope, Charlemagne also issued many new laws that enforced Christian teachings.

Unfortunately, with Charlemagne's death in 814, the empire lost its center. Charlemagne had not built a bureaucracy strong enough to

CHARLEMAGNE'S ACHIEVEMENTS



As emperor, Charlemagne made sweeping changes to many aspects of Frankish society.

Politics

- Unified Europe for the first time since the fall of Rome

Education

- Built schools and preserved ancient writings

Religion

- Spread Christianity among conquered people

Law

- Developed a written legal code

maintain his vast holdings. Regional kings grew strong and, once again, disunity spread across western Europe. There was trouble in the Carolingian house, too. Charlemagne's grandsons fought amongst themselves for the throne. In 843 the grandsons agreed to divide the empire into three parts—a western, a middle, and an eastern kingdom. The empire was crumbling. To make matters worse, invaders challenged the empire from all sides.

READING CHECK Find the Main Idea How did Charlemagne change society in his empire?

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

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Online Quiz

Keyword: SHL EMA HP

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- a. Identify** What new title was Charlemagne given by Pope Leo III? What significance did that title have?

b. Explain How did counts and inspectors help Charlemagne effectively rule his empire?

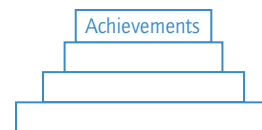
c. Evaluate Do you think Charlemagne deserves the title Great? Why or why not?
- a. Describe** What changes did Charlemagne make to education in the Frankish Empire?

b. Analyze How did Charlemagne's personal religious beliefs affect life in the empire?

c. Make Judgments Which of Charlemagne's reforms do you think was the most significant? Why?

Critical Thinking

- Rank** Using your notes and a graphic organizer like the one below, rank Charlemagne's achievements in what you think was their order of importance in strengthening the empire.



FOCUS ON WRITING



- Narration** Write a letter describing Charlemagne's coronation as though you were a Roman who witnessed the event. In your letter, explain what happened and why.

World Literature

About the Reading A popular form of entertainment in medieval Europe was storytelling. Through their craft, storytellers had the power to transform minor historical figures into heroes and insignificant events into legends. Such is the case with *The Song of Roland*, a story that dates back to the time of Charlemagne. The story is based on a real event, a minor skirmish between Charlemagne's forces and Christian Basques, a people who live in the Pyrenees Mountains that divide Spain from France. Over time, the story changed. The Basques were transformed into Muslims and Charlemagne's nephew Roland, who played only a minor role in the real battle, becomes a hero of epic proportions.

AS YOU READ Ask yourself which details are likely based on fact and which are literary creations.

Excerpt from

The Song of Roland

The battle is fearful and full of grief.
Oliver and Roland strike like good men,
the Archbishop, more than a thousand blows,
and the Twelve Peers do not hang back, they strike!
the French fight side by side, all as one man.
The pagans die by hundreds, by thousands:
whoever does not flee finds no refuge from death,
like it or not, there he ends all his days.
And there the men of France lose their greatest arms;
they will not see their fathers, their kin again,
or Charlemagne, who looks for them in the passes.
Tremendous torment now comes forth in France,
a mighty whirlwind, tempests of wind and thunder,
rains and hailstones, great and immeasurable,
bolts of lightning hurtling and hurtling down:
it is, in truth, a trembling of the earth.
From Saint Michael-in-Peril to the Saints,
from Besançon to the port of Wissant,



This stained-glass window from Chartres cathedral shows Roland in combat against an enemy warrior.

there is no house whose veil of walls does not crumble.
A great darkness at noon falls on the land,
there is no light but when the heavens crack.
No man sees this who is not terrified,
and many say: "The Last Day! Judgment Day!
The end! The end of the world is upon us!"
They do not know, they do not speak the truth:
it is the worldwide grief for the death of Roland.

Skills
FOCUS

READING LIKE A HISTORIAN

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World Literature

Keyword: SHL WRLIT

- 1. Identify Supporting Details** How does the storyteller use details about the day of Roland's death to communicate Roland's importance?
- 2. Interpret Literature as a Source** What effect might changing the enemy army in the story from Basque to Muslim have had on listeners?

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H28

New Invaders

BEFORE YOU READ

MAIN IDEA

Invasions and migrations changed the political and cultural landscapes of western Europe during the early Middle Ages.

READING FOCUS

1. Why did many Europeans fear the Vikings?
2. What made Magyar raids in eastern Europe so devastating to people there?
3. Why did Muslims raid towns in southern Europe?

KEY TERMS AND PEOPLE

navigation
sagas
Leif Eriksson



THE FIRST ATTACK

▼ The ruins of Lindisfarne Monastery lie on an island off Britain's coast.

THE INSIDE STORY

“Where did they come from?” That question was on the minds of the monks of Lindisfarne Monastery on the morning of June 8, 793. Just a few hours before, the monks had been going about their daily business, tending crops, praying and copying manuscripts. Now many of them were dead, killed by the swords and spears of raiders. Those left alive watched as their monastery's precious treasures were loaded into ships that slipped quietly out to sea. Dazed, the monks wondered exactly what had led to this terrible destruction.

What the monks did not know was that the raiders were Vikings from what is now Denmark. Nor did they realize that the raid on their monastery was only the beginning of Europe's newest threat. The attack on Lindisfarne was the beginning of a 200-year period of raids on northern Europe, a period sometimes called the Age of Vikings. ■

The Vikings

The relative peace Charlemagne brought to western Europe did not last long. Even before Charlemagne died, invaders had begun nibbling at the edges of his empire. The invaders came from many directions, pouring across plains and seas into Europe. Of all these invaders, the fiercest were the warriors called the Vikings.

Origins of the Vikings The people we know as the Vikings came from northern Europe. They lived in Scandinavia, an area that today includes the countries of Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. Because of their northern homelands, the Vikings were also called the Norsemen or the Northmen.

Reading like a Historian

Viking Raids

Analyzing Point of View Few historians would argue that the Viking raids were anything but savage. Still, historians may look at the raids in completely different ways. Interpretations of past events often come with differing points of view. These different interpretations may reflect differences in the historians' backgrounds, interests, and the sources that they use.

The earliest written accounts of the Viking raids were written by those who fell prey to Viking exploits. In this passage, present-day historian C.H. Lawrence discusses the Viking raids faced by monks in the Middle Ages. To analyze the author's point of view, think about

- the author's interests and sources
- the main points in the argument
- the use of emotional and factual language

The author's use of *fearsome foes* suggests that he is telling the story from the monks' point of view.

The monks had to face more fearsome foes in the heathen Vikings and Saracens [Muslims]. In the ninth century Christian Europe was under siege. Ireland, England, and the north of Gaul were ravaged by the Northmen. Abbeys near the coasts or on inland waterways of those areas were sitting targets. Lindisfarne, Clonfert, and Clonmacnoise were among the first to be sacked. The more accessible abbeys near the coast of northern Gaul and along the valleys of the Seine, the Meuse, and the Loire fell victims to the onslaught of the predators.

—C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, 1996

The excerpt is taken from a book about medieval monasteries, many of which were destroyed by Viking raids.

In the Viking homelands, society was rural and agricultural. Most people worked as fishers or farmers. Although the sea provided plenty of fish, Scandinavia's soil was not very fertile. Viking farmers often had trouble growing enough grain to keep people fed. As Scandinavia's population grew, food shortages became a common problem. Looking for new sources of food and wealth, some Viking leaders decided to take what they needed from other people. Thus began the Viking raids.

Viking Raids The Vikings were superb ship-builders and sailors. Their ships were capable of withstanding heavy ocean waves and carried crews of as many as 100 warriors. In addition, the Vikings' skills at **navigation**, or planning the course across the sea, allowed them to cross expanses of ocean in search of wealth, prestige, and new lands.

The first targets of Viking raids were England and northern France, neither of which is far from Scandinavia by sea. As time passed, the Vikings began raiding places farther and farther from their homeland, even Kiev and Constantinople were not safe. Nor were inland locations safe. The Vikings sailed their ships upriver, attacking cities such as Paris and Aachen. All over Europe, people lived in fear of the Vikings, and with good reason. Writings of the period are filled with haunting descriptions of fierce Viking raids:

HISTORY'S VOICES

“The number of ships grows: the endless stream of Vikings never ceases to increase. Everywhere the Christians are victims of massacres, burnings, plunderings: the Vikings conquer all in their path, and no one resists them.”

—A monk of Noirmoutier, quoted in *The Viking World* by James Graham-Campbell

People were constantly afraid because they had no warning that the Vikings were coming. Their fast-moving ships allowed the Vikings to approach a target quickly, so people had little time to prepare. Armed with swords, axes, spears, and shields, warriors leapt from the ships to attack. They killed or captured any defenders who stood against them, grabbed any precious items they could find, and returned to their ships to sail off. The people they captured were taken to distant lands and sold into slavery.

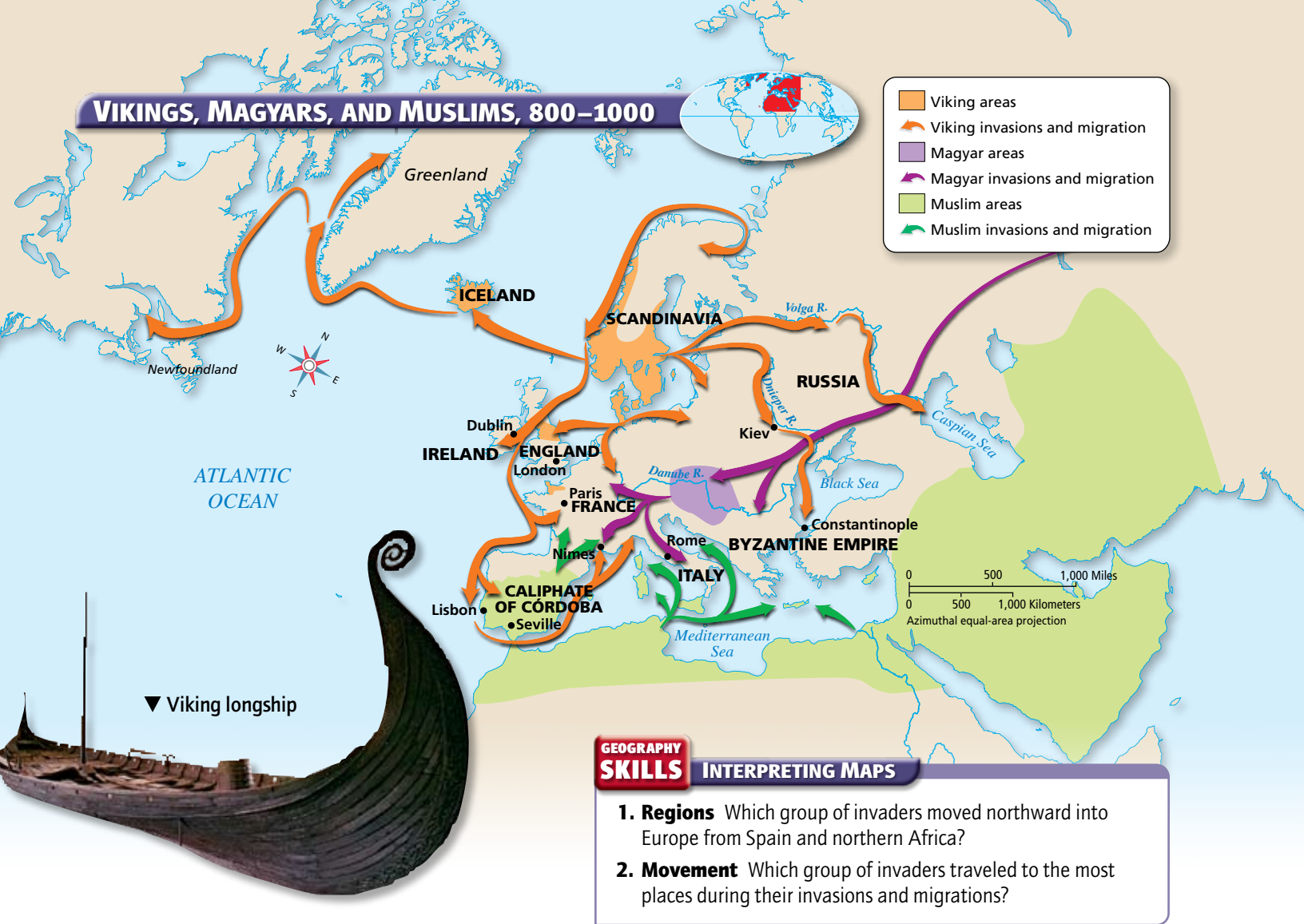
Skills FOCUS

READING LIKE A HISTORIAN

- 1. Author** What point of view might a historian writing about monasteries have of the Vikings?
- 2. Details** Which details from the selection reveal the author's point of view?
- 3. The Sources** Do you think the earliest written accounts of Viking raids would be a good source for understanding the Vikings' point of view? Explain.

See **Skills Handbook**, H32

VIKINGS, MAGYARS, AND MUSLIMS, 800–1000



Among the Vikings' favorite targets were monasteries. Because monks were not warriors, monasteries were generally easy to plunder. In addition, monasteries had fine treasures, such as jeweled crosses and gold or silver candlesticks. The Vikings, who were not Christian, saw nothing wrong with stealing these religious items to make themselves richer.

Viking Settlements Not all of the Vikings who left Scandinavia were raiders. Some were explorers in search of new lands. In time, some of these explorers settled down and established permanent settlements in far-off places.

Among the places settled by the Vikings was Iceland. According to old Icelandic sources, the first Vikings arrived there in the late 700s. Led by a council called the Althing, Viking society thrived in Iceland for centuries, much longer than the Vikings lasted in mainland Europe.

From Iceland, groups of Vikings set out to settle lands even farther from their homeland. According to the **sagas**—long Icelandic stories about great heroes and events—Viking explorers reached Greenland in 982. About 100 years later, Vikings under **Leif Eriksson** reached North America. They settled on the eastern shore of what is now Canada.

Viking warriors also settled in northern France. Led by a chief named Rollo, the warriors had raided France many times. The king of France, tired of the raids, made a deal with Rollo. If Rollo stopped his raids and defended Frankish lands against other Vikings, the king would give him land. Rollo accepted the deal. In time, the area he controlled became known as Normandy, or the land of the Northmen.

READING CHECK Draw Conclusions What made Viking raids so terrifying to Christian Europe?

The Magyars

As the Vikings were terrorizing northern and western Europe, the Magyars were invading from the east. Originally from central Asia, the Magyars were nomads who settled in what is now Hungary. Like the Vikings, the Magyars were fierce warriors. Unlike the Vikings, they were not sailors. On horseback, the Magyars, who were skilled riders, could easily outmaneuver the armies of their opponents.

The Magyars planned their raids carefully. They never attacked heavily defended towns, choosing instead to attack smaller settlements. After looting these settlements, the Magyars fled, easily outrunning any armies sent to stop them. Using these tactics, they raided eastern France and Germany, northern Italy, and the western Byzantine Empire.

Eventually, the Magyars gave up their nomadic ways. In doing so, they lost their major advantage in battle. Once the Magyars had a permanent home, they could not easily run from opposing armies. In the mid-900s King Otto the Great of Germany crushed a huge Magyar army, ending the Magyar raids.

READING CHECK

Infer Why were Magyar raids so difficult to stop?

The Muslims

Muslims first came to Europe in large numbers as conquerors. In 711 a Muslim army from northern Africa crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and made rapid conquest of Spain. The Muslims would rule the Iberian Peninsula for more than 700 years. Their capital city, Cordoba, became one of the wealthiest and most culturally advanced cities of the medieval world. Muslim Spain was also, for the most part, a land of tolerance, where Muslims, Christians, and Jews lived together in relative peace.

By 732 the Muslims had swept across the Pyrenees into France. There a Muslim raiding party was stopped short at the Battle of Tours by Charles Martel, Charlemagne's grandfather. Although later European accounts marked this as a major Muslim defeat, Muslims regarded this as only a minor skirmish.

In the 800s and 900s Muslim leaders changed their strategy. Instead of full-scale

invasions, they ordered small, fast raids against cities and towns in southern France and Italy. Among the places the Muslims raided was Rome, the home of the pope and the spiritual center of Christianity in western Europe. The raiders destroyed many of the city's ancient churches, including Saint Peter's Basilica. The loss of these churches was a painful blow to European Christians.

In addition to raiding cities, Muslim fleets blocked Byzantine trade in the Mediterranean. Muslim pirates looted the ships and sold their crews into slavery. More importantly, they cut off trade routes between Italy and its eastern allies. The popes had little choice but to turn to the Franks for protection. As a result, the balance of power in western Europe shifted.

READING CHECK

Make Generalizations

Why did Muslims launch small, fast raids against Christian lands?

SECTION

2

ASSESSMENT

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Online Quiz

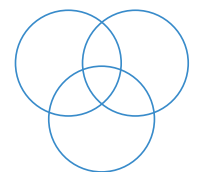
Keyword: SHL EMA HP

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- Identify** What skills allowed the Vikings to conduct raids in locations far from their homeland?
 - Draw Conclusions** Why do you think the period between 800 and 1000 in western Europe is sometimes called the Age of Vikings?
 - Evaluate** Do stories like the Viking *sagas* make good sources for historical information? Why or why not?
- Identify** Who were the Magyars? What parts of Europe did they invade and settle?
 - Explain** How did the Magyars' decision to settle down in a permanent location help bring an end to their raids?
- Describe** Where did the Muslim raiders who attacked Europe in the 800s and 900s come from?
 - Contrast** How did Muslim attacks on Europe in the 800s differ from those in the 700s?
 - Elaborate** Which Muslim tactic do you think would have caused more problems for the people of southern Europe, small raids or a full-scale invasion? Explain your answer.

Critical Thinking

- Compare and Contrast** Use your notes and a graphic organizer like the one at right to compare and contrast the Viking, Magyar, and Muslim raiders.



FOCUS ON WRITING

- Description** Write a description of a Viking, Magyar, or Muslim raid as though you are an inhabitant of the town being raided. Bring your description to life by choosing vivid adjectives to describe the sights, sounds, and emotions that surround you.

The Feudal and Manorial Systems

BEFORE YOU READ

MAIN IDEA

In Europe, during the Middle Ages, the feudal and manorial systems governed life and required people to perform certain duties and obligations.

READING FOCUS

1. What duties and obligations were central to the feudal system?
2. How did the manorial system govern the medieval economy?
3. What was daily life like for people on a manor?

KEY TERMS AND PEOPLE

knights
fief
vassal
feudal system
fealty
manorial system
serfs

THE INSIDE STORY

What did it mean to be a knight?

For William Marshal, knighthood did not convey the same image of dashing heroes in shining armor that we imagine today. For William, knighthood meant a lifetime of military and political service. As a young knight, he gained fame and wealth by besting other knights in tournaments all over France and England. From there, William went on to serve the first of four English kings. He fought in dozens of battles, risking his life to protect the English crown.

William was handsomely rewarded for his service. Kings and queens respected William, and he was even granted the honor of knighting one of England's crown princes. He was named Earl of Pembroke and his marriage to one of England's wealthiest women made him lord over vast lands and a castle. However, William's career was not always easy. Despite his skill as a warrior, William was badly wounded many times. He also spent considerable time as a prisoner. For his sacrifices and his successes, many people consider William Marshal the greatest knight who ever lived. ■

The Feudal System

Knights like William Marshal did not exist at the beginning of the Middle Ages. Soldiers fought mostly on foot, not on horseback, and were part of large armies headed by kings. As the Middle Ages progressed, however, knights began to emerge as key figures in Europe. What was responsible for this change in society?

THE GREATEST KNIGHT



▲ This medieval manuscript shows a knight pledging himself in service to a lord.



◀ Knights in battle at the Battle of Hastings in 1066

FEUDAL OBLIGATIONS



Feudalism was built upon relationships of obligation and service.

A Knight's Duties to His Lord

- Provide military service
- Remain loyal and faithful
- Give money on special occasions

A Lord's Duties to His Knights

- Give land
- Protect from attack
- Resolve disputes between knights

The Origins of Feudalism Feudalism in Europe originated, in part, as a result of the Viking, Magyar, and Muslim invasions. In the face of these invaders, kings all over Europe found themselves unable to defend their lands and the lands of their nobles from attack.

The nobles, who could no longer count on their kings' armies for protection, had to find a way to defend their own lands. To achieve this defense, nobles built castles. Often, castles were built on hills because hilltop locations were easier to defend. Most early castles were not the elaborate structures we see in movies and books. They were usually built of wood, not stone, and were simply a place for the noble and his family to take shelter in case of attack.

Knights and Lords To defend their castles, nobles needed trained soldiers. The most important of these soldiers were **knights**, highly skilled soldiers who fought on horseback. Mounted knights in heavy armor were the best defenders nobles could have.

Being a knight was expensive. Knights needed weapons, armor, and horses, all of which were expensive to acquire and maintain. For this reason, knights demanded payment for their services. This payment did not usually take the form of money. Instead, most knights were paid for their services with land.

The land given to a knight for his service was called a **fief** (FEEF). Anyone who accepted a fief was called a **vassal**, and the person from whom he accepted it was his lord. Historians sometimes call this system of exchanging land for service the **feudal system**, or feudalism.

Feudal Obligations Lords and vassals in the feudal system had duties to fulfill to one another. These duties were the ties that bound people together.

For example, a knight's chief duty as a vassal was to provide military service to his lord. He had to promise to remain loyal to his lord and not turn against him. This promise was called an oath of **fealty**, or loyalty:

HISTORY'S VOICES

“Hear you my Lord [name] that I, [name] shall be to you both faithful and true, and shall owe my Fidelity unto you, for the Land that I hold of you, and lawfully shall do such Customs and Services, as my Duty is to you, at the times assigned. So help me God and all his Saints.”

—from *The Manner of Doing Homage and Fealty*

A knight also had certain financial obligations to his lord. If the lord was captured in battle, for example, the knight was obliged to help pay ransom for his release. A knight also gave money to his lord on special occasions.

One such occasion was the knighting of the manor lord's eldest son.

In return for this loyalty and service, a lord had to meet certain duties to his knights. He had to treat them fairly, not demanding too much of their time or money. The lord also had to protect a knight that was attacked by enemies. In addition, the lord had to act as a judge in disputes between knights.

A Complicated System The feudal system in Europe was incredibly complex. Only in rare cases was it clear who owed service to whom. This complexity of the feudal system stemmed from many factors.

First, a person could be both a lord and a vassal at the same time. Some knights who were given large fiefs subdivided their fiefs into smaller parts. They gave small pieces of their land to other knights in exchange for their loyalty. These other knights could even subdivide their land further if they chose, creating many levels of obligations.

Second, one knight could serve many lords. There was no prohibition against a knight accepting fiefs from more than one noble. Indeed, such occurrences were common. If the two lords that a knight served went to war with each other, he had to choose which to follow into battle.

In theory, almost everyone who was part of the feudal system served more than one lord. Everyone in a country was supposed to be loyal to the king. In fact, most fealty oaths were careful to note that the knight would be loyal to both his lord and to the king. In practice, however, not everyone was so loyal. Across Europe, powerful nobles sometimes found themselves to be as strong as the kings they were supposed to serve. Some of these nobles, who might bear the title duke, count, earl, or baron, ignored their duties as vassals. In their lands, the central authority of the king gradually faded.

Third, the rules guiding feudal obligations were specific to time and place. For example, the rules that bound a knight and a lord in England might not apply to the same relationship in France. These rules could also change over time. Just keeping track of one's duties required a great deal of effort.

READING CHECK Summarize How did the feudal system work?

The Manorial System

The feudal system was essentially a political and social system. A related system was at the heart of medieval economics. This system was called the **manorial system** because it was built around large estates called manors.

Lords, Peasants, and Serfs Manors were generally owned by wealthy lords or knights. Bound by feudal duties, lords were too busy to farm their own lands. Instead, peasants farmed the manor fields. Manor lords gave peasants protection and plots of land to cultivate for themselves. In exchange, peasants had to provide the lord with labor and other services.

Most of the peasants on a manor were **serfs**, workers who were legally tied to the manor on which they worked. Serfs were not slaves, meaning that they could not be sold away from the manor. Still, serfs were not free to leave a manor or marry without their lord's permission. In addition, serfdom was hereditary: if a child's parents were serfs, so was the child.

Manors also had some free people who rented land from the lord. Free people might also have included land-owning peasants and skilled workers, such as millers and blacksmiths. Most manors also had a priest to provide for spiritual needs.

A Typical Manor Most of a manor's land was occupied by fields for crops and pastures for animals. Farmers in the Middle Ages learned that leaving a field empty for a year helped improve the soil, thus improving the size and quality of harvest. In time, this practice developed into the three-field crop rotation system. In this system, one field was planted in spring for a fall harvesting. Another field was planted in winter for spring harvesting, and the last field remained unplanted for a year.

Besides fields, each manor included a fortified manor house for the noble family and a village where the peasants and serfs lived. It was the goal of each manor lord to make his manor self-sufficient, or able to produce everything people there needed to live. As a result, a typical manor would also include a church, a mill to grind grain, and a blacksmith.

READING CHECK Analyze How did lords and peasants benefit from the manorial system?

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

prohibition an order or law that forbids

HISTORY CLOSE-UP

A Typical Manor

Manors were large estates owned by wealthy lords. Peasants and serfs lived and worked on manors. Most manors produced most of the food and other goods that people living there needed.

The manor house or castle provided protection from attack for all people of the manor.

Peasants worked on the lord's lands and also farmed their own. They had to give the lord part of their crop.

In return for the privilege of living on the lord's land, peasants often had to pay a tax on grain ground at the mill.

Even people's spiritual needs were provided for on a manor, which typically had its own church.

New farming tools, such as the heavy plow, and techniques, such as crop rotation, helped farmers grow more food in the Middle Ages.

**Skills
Focus**

INTERPRETING VISUALS

Peasants and lords had different duties and obligations on a manor.

Compare and Contrast How was life on a manor similar and different for peasants and lords?

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H26

Daily Life in the Middle Ages

Life in the Middle Ages was not easy. People did not enjoy many of the comforts we have today, and most died relatively young. Of course, the lives of nobles and peasants differed greatly.

Life in a Castle Medieval castles sometimes doubled as manor houses. Early castles were built for defense, not for comfort. Most castles had few windows and tended to be stuffy in the summer, cold in the winter, and dark inside almost all of the year. Because the nobles of the castle had to share space with many other people, including soldiers and servants, private rooms were very rare.

The main room of a castle was the hall. The nobles of the castle used this large room for dining and entertaining. Carpets often hung on the walls, but they were not used on the floors. In the earliest castles, the noble family slept at one end of the hall, with their bedrooms separated from the main living area by sheets. Later castles often had separate bedrooms.

Near the bedrooms were the latrines. Waste traveled either down a long pipe that emptied onto the ground or down a chute directly into a moat or river. Instead of toilet paper, people used hay. People bathed in an area of the castle that was separate from the latrines. Usually a wooden bathtub was placed in the garden in warm weather and indoors near a fireplace in cold weather.

Life in a Village In villages, peasant families lived in small, one to two room cottages that they built themselves. The floor was made of packed dirt. The windows were kept small to prevent heat loss. The straw thatch roof was the most critical part of the construction. It had to be layered thick enough to be waterproof, but not so heavy as to collapse on those living inside.

The inside of a peasant's cottage was quite simple. Other than wooden stools and benches, peasants had few pieces of furniture. For bedding, they used straw, sometimes stuffing it into a sack to make a rough mattress. Bedding straw had to be replaced regularly as unwelcome guests, bedbugs and lice, favored it.

Peasant families cooked their meals over an open fire set in the middle of the floor. A typical meal might include brown bread, cheese, vegetables and, on occasion, pork or bacon. Because there were no chimneys, the house was often full of smoke. In addition, sparks from the fire could easily ignite the straw roof and start a massive blaze.

The whole family had to rise before dawn to start their day. Men and boys—and sometimes women—went to work in the fields. Women and girls cooked, sewed, cared for animals, and grew vegetables. During harvest times, the entire family worked in the field all day.

READING CHECK Contrast How was life in a castle different from life in a village?

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

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Online Quiz

Keyword: SHL EMA HP

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- a. Define** What was the **feudal system**? What roles did lords and **vassals** play in it?

b. Analyze How did oaths of **fealty** and feudal obligations tie knights to their lords?

c. Elaborate Why was the feudal system so complicated?
- a. Define** What was the **manorial system**? Who participated in this system?

b. Compare and Contrast How were the lives of nobles and peasants similar? How were they different?

c. Elaborate Why do you think most lords wanted their manors to be self-sufficient?
- a. Describe** What was village life like in the Middle Ages?

b. Explain What made the **manorial system** an effective economic system?

Critical Thinking

- Summarize** Draw a graphic organizer like the one below. In each box, list the responsibilities that each group had toward the other.



FOCUS ON WRITING

- Narration** Write a journal entry from the point of view of a man or woman in the early Middle Ages. In your entry, describe what your daily life is like and what duties and obligations you fulfill.

The Growth of Monarchies

BEFORE YOU READ

MAIN IDEA

The power of kings grew and the nature of monarchy changed across Europe in the early Middle Ages.

READING FOCUS

1. How did the power of the English monarchy grow and change?
2. How did kings increase their powers in the other monarchies of Europe?

KEY TERMS AND PEOPLE

Alfred the Great
William the Conqueror
Domesday Book
Eleanor of Aquitaine
Magna Carta
Parliament
Hugh Capet
Otto the Great
Reconquista

THE INSIDE STORY

Did a comet foretell the Norman Conquest of England?

In 1066 King Harold of England was traveling with several of his knights. A comet, the one we know today as Halley's comet, appeared in the sky above. Thinking it was a new star, the men stared at the comet in wonder. They had never seen such a sight before. What could it mean?

Harold and his men soon decided that the new star was a sign that change was coming to England. They were right. However, the coming change was not one that Harold and his knights would appreciate. Within the year the Normans, under the command of Duke William of Normandy, invaded England and took the English throne. ■

A SIGN FROM THE HEAVENS

The appearance of Halley's comet was recorded in the Bayeux Tapestry. It was created before 1476 but when and by whom is unknown. ▼



ELEANOR of Aquitaine

c. 1122–1204



Eleanor of Aquitaine was one of the most powerful people of the Middle Ages. Having inherited a fief about one-third the size of

present-day France, she was wealthy in her own right. She gained more power by marriage. At age 15 she married the king of France. The couple, however, grew apart and ended their marriage in 1152.

Soon after, she married Henry II of England, adding her lands to his kingdom. In the early years of their marriage, Eleanor ruled the couple's French territories. Over time, Eleanor and Henry's relationship soured, and Henry imprisoned Eleanor for 15 years. Upon Henry's death in 1189, Eleanor helped her son Richard I rule England.

Infer In what ways was Eleanor an unusual woman?

The English Monarchy

England was one of the first countries in Europe to develop a strong central monarchy. Under the Anglo-Saxons, who first unified the country, and then under the Normans, who conquered the Anglo-Saxons, the English kings exercised considerable power.

Anglo-Saxon England The Anglo-Saxon rulers of England were descendants of the Angles and Saxons who invaded the island in the 400s. For most of the Anglo-Saxon period, England was divided into seven small kingdoms, each with its own laws and customs.

In the 800s Danish Vikings invaded England and conquered several of these kingdoms. The Vikings never conquered all of England. Their campaign was cut short in 878 by **Alfred the Great**, then king of Wessex in southern England. Alfred drove the Viking forces north of London to what became the Danelaw, a territory under Viking control.

The Norman Conquest Alfred's descendants ruled England for most of the next two centuries. In 1066, however, the king died without an heir, and two men claimed the crown. One was Harold, an Anglo-Saxon nobleman from England. The other was William, the duke of Normandy in France and a distant relative of the dead king. Supported by the English nobility, Harold was named the new king.

Angry at being passed over, William decided to take the crown by force. He gathered an army and sailed to England. Harold marched out to meet him, and the two armies fought in the Battle of Hastings. William won. He became King William I of England, but he is better known as **William the Conqueror**.

William was a stronger king than Anglo-Saxon rulers had been. One of his first acts was to claim all the land in England as his personal property. He then divided the land into fiefs to give to his Norman soldiers and thus created a new nobility. The new nobles owed their positions and their loyalty directly to the king.

To learn more about his kingdom, William ordered a survey taken. He wanted to know who lived in each part of England, what they owned, and how much they could afford to pay in taxes. The survey results were collected in the **Domesday Book**, a book that William used to create a central tax system for England.

William and the Normans introduced many elements of French culture into England. Because most of England's new nobles had been born in France, they spoke French and practiced French customs. Most of the lower classes, on the other hand, kept their old Anglo-Saxon language and habits. Still, the link to French culture would last for centuries.

The English in France As king, William had considerable power. The kings who followed him, though, gained even more power as time passed. This new power came largely from the acquisition of new lands, many of them in France.

William's descendants inherited his position as the duke of Normandy, so they ruled that region in France. In addition, William's great-grandson Henry II was the son of a French duke. When his father died, Henry also inherited his father's lands in France, which became part of England.

Even more territories in France were added to the English crown when Henry married **Eleanor of Aquitaine**, a powerful French duchess. Together, the two ruled all of England and about half of France. In theory, their French holdings made the English kings vassals of the king of France. In practice, however, the kings of England were much stronger than their French counterparts and ignored any feudal obligations they were supposed to have.

READING SKILLS

Using Word

Origins If you know that Danelaw comes from combining the Old English words for "the Danes" and "law," whose laws do you think applied in the lands north of London?

Magna Carta By about 1200 the power of the English king had started to worry some nobles. They feared that kings would abuse their powers and take away the nobles' rights.

The nobles' concerns reached a crisis point in 1215 under King John. Caught up in a war with France in which he lost almost all of England's French holdings, John found himself short of money. He tried to raise money with a new tax on the nobility, but the nobles refused and, instead, took up arms against the king.

Eventually, the rebellious nobles forced John to accept a document outlining their rights. This document was called **Magna Carta**. It contained many provisions that restricted the king's power. For example, Magna Carta stated that the king had to obtain the consent of the nobles before raising taxes. The document also ended the king's ability to arrest and punish people without cause or to take their property without following legal procedures.

The importance of Magna Carta grew in the years after its signing. It set forth ideas about limiting government and executive power. For example, by restricting the king's power, Magna Carta suggested that even kings were not above the law. Because of this, many people today consider Magna Carta one of the most important historical documents in the formation of modern democracies.

Parliament Although Magna Carta addressed many of the nobles' concerns, some nobles were still not satisfied. The king was constantly asking for their approval to raise taxes to finance wars or debts of which they disapproved. To obtain a say in how the kingdom was run, the nobles started another rebellion in the 1260s.

As part of the agreement that ended the rebellion, the king agreed to meet with members of the nobility, the clergy, and the middle class to discuss key issues facing the country. The resulting council eventually developed into **Parliament**, the governing body that still makes England's laws today.

For several years the powers of Parliament remained undefined. One of the first kings to clarify the role of Parliament and to work effectively with this new governing body was Edward I. The Parliament he summoned in 1295 included not only nobles and clergy members but representatives from every county

and town in England. It had the power to create new taxes and to advise the king on law-making. Members of Parliament also advised the king on other matters of royal policy.

With the help of Parliament, Edward strengthened England's central government and reformed its system of laws. However, Edward saw Parliament as a tool for strengthening the monarchy rather than limiting it. He maintained the power of the king over Parliament, keeping Parliament in a secondary role.

READING CHECK Summarize How did Magna Carta and Parliament change the English monarchy?

THE IMPACT TODAY

Today the British Parliament is the highest legislative body in the United Kingdom.

PRIMARY SOURCES

A Summons to Parliament

Parliament took on a greater role in English government during the rule of King Edward I. This letter, sent by the king in 1295 to call a noble to a meeting of Parliament, shows the nature of this new form of government.

“The king to his beloved and faithful relative, Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, greeting. Because we wish to have a consultation and meeting with you and with the rest of the principal men of our kingdom, as to provision for remedies against the dangers which in these days are threatening our whole kingdom; we command you, strictly enjoining you in the fidelity and love in which you are bound to us, that on the Lord's day next after the feast of St. Martin, in the approaching winter, you be present in person at Westminster, for considering, ordaining and doing along with us and with the prelates [high-ranking clergy], and the rest of the principal men and other inhabitants of our kingdom, as may be necessary for meeting dangers of this kind.”

Earl is a title of nobility.

Similar letters were sent to important people throughout England.

Skills FOCUS

READING LIKE A HISTORIAN

- 1. Explain** Why is the king calling a meeting of Parliament?
- 2. Analyze Primary Sources** What does the king's choice of words suggest about his relationship with nobles?

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H25

THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE, 1100



◀ Created in the 900s, the crown of the Holy Roman emperors was made of gold and gems.

In the mid-900s one noble family rose to power in France when one of its members was elected king. This family was called the Capetians, named after the first family member to hold power, **Hugh Capet** (kuh-PAY). Hugh and his successors gradually managed to extend the power of their monarchy throughout France. Sometimes they fought local nobles for power, while at other times they created allegiances with other powerful nobles through treaties or arranged marriages. By about 1300 the Capetians ruled almost all of modern France.

Holy Roman Empire Recall that the emperor Charlemagne managed to unify most of western Europe into one empire. After he died, however, his empire split into two parts. The western part of the empire became France. The eastern part became known as Germany. Unlike France, which remained somewhat unified under one king, Germany separated into several small states. Each state had its own ruler, most of whom used the title of duke.

In 936, **Otto the Great**, the duke of Saxony, gained enough support from other German nobles to succeed his father, Henry I, as king of the Germans. Otto worked to unite German lands, and he conquered parts of northern Italy. When nobles challenged Pope John XII, he turned to Otto for help. The pope rewarded Otto's support by crowning him Emperor of the Romans in 962. In time, the territories united under Otto became known as the Holy Roman Empire. It was called holy because the empire had the pope's support. It was called Roman because Charlemagne, when he had ruled over the area, had held the title Emperor of the Roman People.

For the most part, Holy Roman Emperors made decisions and passed laws with the

GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

INTERPRETING MAPS

- 1. Place** About how many states made up the Holy Roman Empire in 1100?
- 2. Regions** What difficulties might have been part of governing the Holy Roman Empire because of its political divisions?

Other European Monarchies

The changes in the English monarchy were unique. During the Middle Ages, kings in other European countries also worked to gain more power, but their experiences were very different from those of the English rulers.

France After Charlemagne's reign, the kings of France did not rule much territory at all. Their rule was largely limited to an area around the cities of Paris and Orléans. The rest of what we think of as France was in the hands of powerful nobles, including the king of England. Many of these nobles, who owned more land and had more power than the king, ignored the king's wishes and ruled as they pleased.

help of dukes, who maintained full authority in their own lands. Support from the dukes was needed not only to make laws but also to become emperor. Beginning in the 1100s, Holy Roman emperors did not inherit their position. Instead, they were elected. A select group of electors—the dukes of certain powerful states and a few archbishops—met when an emperor died to choose his successor. The person chosen to be the new emperor then had to travel to Rome to be crowned by the pope before his power was fully recognized.

Spain and Portugal In Spain and Portugal, the growth of the monarchy was coupled with religious struggles. Today these two countries share the Iberian Peninsula, which had been conquered by Muslims in the early 700s. Called Moors by Christians, these Muslims had built a powerful state centered in the city of Córdoba. Christians ruled only a few small kingdoms in the far northern part of the peninsula.

As early as 722 Christian rulers expanding westward had begun to fight the Moors, trying to drive them out of Europe. Over time, Christian rulers continued their westward push, but they met with little success until the early 1000s. By this time, a civil war had broken out in Muslim Spain, weakening the Moorish leaders. Watching from afar, Christian leaders took advantage of this weakness.

Christian states embarked on a series of campaigns to retake the Iberian Peninsula,

an effort called the **Reconquista** (reh-kahn-KEES-tuh), or reconquest. The largest of the Christian kingdoms in the Iberian Peninsula and the leader of the Reconquista was Castile (ka-STEEL). In 1085 the king of Castile won a great victory over the Moors by capturing the city of Toledo. His victory inspired the rulers of two other Christian kingdoms, Aragon and Portugal, to join in the Reconquista.

Together, the three Iberian kingdoms won victory after victory over the Moors. In the early 1100s the Portuguese drove the Moors completely out of their lands and established the Kingdom of Portugal. Meanwhile, the rulers of Aragon and Castile continued to push south. In 1236 they captured Córdoba itself. Within a few years, the Christians had pushed the Moors almost all the way out of Spain. Of the once powerful Moorish state, only a small kingdom called Granada, protected by mountains in the far south, remained.

The Moors were not driven completely off the Iberian Peninsula until 1492, when they were finally forced to surrender Granada. Modern Spain also has its origins in the late 1400s. A royal marriage between the rulers of Aragon and Castile had united the two kingdoms. By combining their countries and their power, the two found that they ruled one of the strongest countries in all of Europe.

READING CHECK Analyze How did rulers in France, the Holy Roman Empire, and Spain gain power?

SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

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Online Quiz

Keyword: SHL EMA HP

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

1. **a. Describe** How did William the Conqueror come to rule England? How did the English government change after he took the throne?
 - b. Explain** How did Magna Carta and the development of Parliament limit the power of England's kings?
 - c. Predict** How might England's history have been different if the Normans had not arrived and England had remained an Anglo-Saxon kingdom?
2. **a. Identify** What family gained power in France in the 900s? How did that family gain power?
 - b. Draw Conclusions** How did the Reconquista lead to the growth of the Spanish and Portuguese monarchies?
 - c. Elaborate** How do you think having elected emperors affected the balance of power between emperors and nobles in the Holy Roman Empire?

Critical Thinking

3. **Identify Cause and Effect** Use your notes to create a chart like the one below. For each monarchy, describe the growth of the king's power and its effects.

King's Power	Effects

FOCUS ON WRITING

4. **Persuasion** Write a letter to King John of England as though you were one of his advisors. In your letter, you must advise him either to accept or reject Magna Carta. Remember to use logical reasons to support your position.

Power of the Church

BEFORE YOU READ

MAIN IDEA

Reform and changes swept through the Christian Church, one of the most influential institutions in medieval Europe.

READING FOCUS

1. What was the nature and influence of religion in the Middle Ages?
2. What led to the growth of papal power in Europe?
3. What changes in monasticism were introduced in the Middle Ages?

KEY TERMS AND PEOPLE

piety
pontificate
Pope Gregory VII
Henry IV

BAREFOOT in the SNOW



▲ Emperor Henry IV waited three days to meet with Pope Gregory VII and the Countess Matilda.

Henry IV asking Countess Matilda to intervene in the conflict with the pope, from a poem by Donizone, Italian school, 1100s.

THE INSIDE STORY

Who would have the power to make an emperor wait in the snow, begging for an audience?

Late in January 1077, Henry IV, the Holy Roman emperor, left Germany. He was headed to Canossa, a castle in northern Italy. Once he arrived at Canossa, Henry stripped off all his royal finery and donned a simple shirt woven from rough cloth. Shoeless, Henry waded into the deep snow before the castle and waited for an invitation to enter. For three days he stood there, shivering and eating nothing, before the castle's huge gates were finally opened to him.

Canossa was the home of Matilda, the countess of Tuscany, but Henry had not come to see her. He was there to see the only man powerful enough to make the mighty Holy Roman emperor wait—the pope, Gregory VII. ■

Religion in the Middle Ages

The pope is the head of the Roman Catholic Church. Early popes were seen as spiritual leaders, but during the Middle Ages they became powerful political figures as well. How did this change come about?

While manorialism and feudalism encouraged local loyalties, Christian beliefs brought people across Europe together in the spiritual community of Christendom. The majority of people in Europe were, at least in name, Christian, and religion touched almost every aspect of their lives. Major life events—baptism, marriage, death—were marked by religious ceremonies. Monks acted as peacemakers in disputes and prayed for the safety of rulers and armies. Church officials also served as teachers and record keepers. As the people's main connection to the church, members of the clergy had great influence.

Sometime around 1000 the influence of the church increased dramatically. At that time, there was a great upwelling of piety in Europe. **Piety** is a person's level of devotion to his or her religion. For centuries Europeans had been members of the Christian church, but at this time many believers became more devout. Across Europe, people's participation in religious services increased, and thousands flocked to monasteries to join religious orders.

READING CHECK Identify Cause and

Effect Why was the medieval clergy so influential?

Growth of Papal Power

The common people of Europe were not the only ones inspired by a new sense of piety in the Middle Ages. Within the Christian Church itself, many clergy members sought ways to improve conditions and end corrupt practices.

Church Reforms In the 900s and 1000s, popes had little authority. Although the pope was considered the head of the entire church, local bishops actually made most important religious decisions. As a result, the papacy was not held in high regard. Adding to this lack of esteem was the fact that few popes during this time were noted for their religious devotion. Most of them were nobles who were more concerned with increasing their own power than overseeing spiritual matters.

In 1049 the first of a series of clever and capable popes dedicated to reforming the papacy came to power. His name was Leo IX. A man of high ideals, Leo believed that Europe's clergy had become corrupt and set out on a mission to reform it. Among Leo's top concerns was simony, the buying and selling of church offices. He traveled throughout Europe, seeking out and replacing bishops suspected of such offenses.

Bishops guilty of particularly bad offenses were excommunicated, or cast out of the church. For Christians in the Middle Ages, there was no greater punishment. A person who had been excommunicated could not take part in the Eucharist, and the belief was that one who died while excommunicated would not be saved. Through his reforms, Leo became more active in governing the church than any other pope had been for centuries.

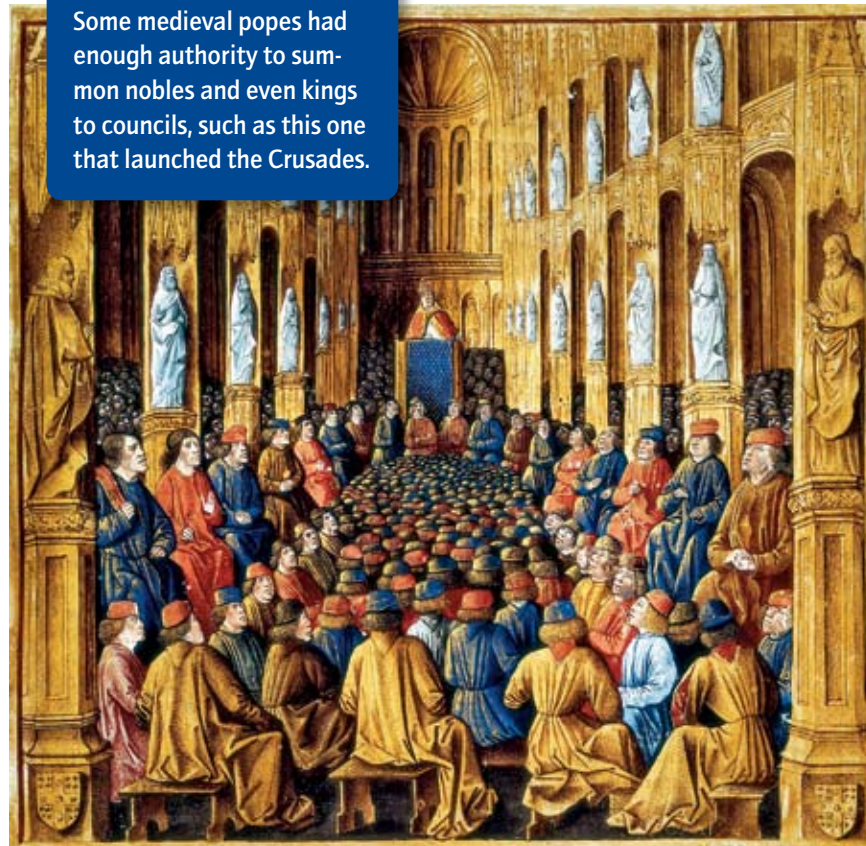
Leo's reforms brought him into conflict with both political and religious leaders. Kings resented what they saw as interference with the bishops in their kingdoms. Many bishops, too, believed the pope had no authority to tell them how to act. Among those who rejected Leo's authority was the patriarch, or bishop, of Constantinople. Leo excommunicated the patriarch in 1054, an action that split the Christian Church in two. Those who agreed with Leo were Roman Catholics, and those who sided with the patriarch were called Orthodox.

Popes and Politics Popes gained influence not only over people's religious lives but also over politics in Europe. The pope became the head of a huge network of ecclesiastical, or church, courts, that heard cases on religious or moral matters. Popes also ruled territories, such as the Papal States in Italy. To defend their territories, popes had the ability to raise armies. For example, several popes hired the Normans to fight wars on their behalf. The Crusades, a series of wars launched against the Muslims of Southwest Asia, were launched by popes.

Papal Authority

Some medieval popes had enough authority to summon nobles and even kings to councils, such as this one that launched the Crusades.

Pope Urban II presiding over the Council of Clermont, France, c. 1490. Courtesy of Bibliotheque Nationale



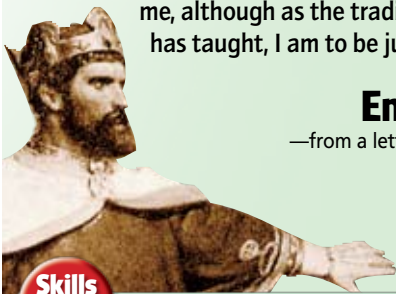
Two Sources on the Power of the Papacy

Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV believed that he and other rulers had been chosen by God. He denounced the political power of popes, whom he did not believe had the authority to pass judgment on kings.

“Our Lord, Jesus Christ, has called us to kingship, but has not called you to the priesthood. For you have risen by these steps: namely, by cunning, which the monastic profession abhors, to money; by money to favor; by favor to the sword . . . You have also touched me, one who, though unworthy, has been anointed to kingship among the anointed. This wrong you have done to me, although as the tradition of the holy Fathers has taught, I am to be judged by God alone.”

Emperor Henry IV

—from a letter to Pope Gregory VII, 1076



Skills
FOCUS

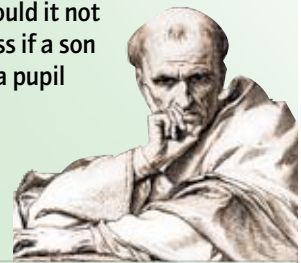
INVESTIGATING HISTORY

Pope Gregory VII argued that the pope's spiritual authority was greater than the secular power wielded by kings. He believed that the pope's power came from God, but a king's came from more worldly sources.

“Who does not know that kings and princes derive their origin from men ignorant of God who raised themselves above their fellows by pride, plunder, treachery, murder—in short, by every type of crime—at the instigation of the Devil, the prince of this world, men blind with greed and intolerable in their audacity? . . . Does anyone doubt that the priests of Christ are to be considered as fathers and masters of kings and princes and of all believers? Would it not be regarded as pitiable madness if a son should try to rule his father or a pupil his master?”

Pope Gregory VII

—from a letter to the bishop of Metz, Germany, 1081



Analyze How did Gregory's and Henry's views of the papacy differ? How did each man's view relate to his own position?

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

resolved
determined

READING SKILLS

Understanding Word Origins If you know that scathing comes from an Old Norse word meaning “to injure,” what do you think was the tone of Gregory's letter?

Conflict over Bishops Although popes had increased their power, they still came into conflict with political leaders. Popes of the late 1000s were firmly **resolved** to change the way members of the clergy were chosen. For years, kings and other leaders had played an active role in choosing clergy. Kings chose most of the bishops who served in their lands, and the Holy Roman emperor had named several popes. The reform popes did not think that anyone except the clergy should choose religious officials.

The issue of clergy selection became critical during the **pontificate**, or papal term in office, of **Pope Gregory VII** in the late 1000s. At that time, the Holy Roman emperor was **Henry IV**. In 1075 Henry chose a new bishop for the city of Milan in northern Italy. Gregory did not approve of his choice and removed the bishop. In response, Henry wrote a **scathing** letter to the pope, stating that Gregory had no authority over him or any other ruler.

Gregory's response was to excommunicate Henry. He also called on the clergy and nobility of Germany to replace the emperor with a more suitable candidate. This response frightened Henry. Fearing that he would lose his throne, he traveled to Canossa, Italy, where Gregory was staying to beg forgiveness. Though reluctant, Gregory lifted the excommunication.

Gregory and Henry continued to fight over bishops for years. In fact, the conflict over this issue outlived both men. Later popes and emperors finally reached a compromise: local clergy would choose bishops, but their choices could be vetoed by secular rulers. More important than the details of the conflict, though, was the fact that Gregory had been able to stand up to the emperor. The pope had become one of the strongest figures in Europe.

READING CHECK Analyze In what ways did popes become stronger in the Middle Ages?

Changes in Monasticism

In the early Middle Ages, monasteries had been founded all across Europe by men seeking lives of contemplation and prayer. These monasteries were often paid for by local rulers, who then helped to choose the abbots who led the monasteries. By about 900, however, rulers had stopped choosing qualified abbots. Far from being religious, many abbots held their positions just for the prestige it brought to them or their families. In monasteries led by these abbots, the strict Benedictine Rule was largely abandoned.

In the early 900s a small group of monks sought to return monasticism to its strict roots. They established a new monastery at Cluny, France, where they would live strictly according to the Benedictine Rule. To prevent the onset of corruption, the monks of Cluny reserved the right to choose their own abbot, rather than having one appointed to them.

Over time, Cluny became the most influential monastery in Europe. Monks from Cluny established daughter houses, whose leaders had to answer to the abbot of Cluny. In addition, other monasteries in France, Spain, and Italy adopted Cluny's customs and agreed to follow the direction of its abbots. Over time, Cluny became the core of a network of monasteries that stretched across western Europe.

For some monks, however, even the Benedictine life was not strict enough. These monks wanted lives free from any worldly distractions. Not finding what they wanted in Benedictine houses, they created new orders.

The most popular of these new monastic orders was the Cistercian (sis-TUHR-shuhn) order. Cistercian monasteries were usually broad estates built outside of towns to ensure isolation. These monasteries were undecorated and unheated, even in winter. The monks who lived there divided their time between prayer and labor, such as farm work or copying texts.

Some other new orders were even stricter than the Cistercians. Members of these orders lived like hermits in tiny cells, having no contact with other people. Those who joined such orders were widely admired for their piety and dedication to their faith.

READING CHECK Find the Main Idea What changes were introduced to monasticism?

Cistercian Life

As shown in this medieval manuscript, the Cistercian order was dedicated to leading simple lives. Monks spent part of each day in prayer and part at work.



SECTION 5 ASSESSMENT

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Online Quiz

Keyword: SHL EMA HP

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- a. Define** What is **piety**? How did increased piety affect religion in the Middle Ages?

b. Draw Conclusions Why did a shared religion make people feel like part of a larger community?
- a. Identify** What goals did Leo IX have as pope? How did he achieve those goals?

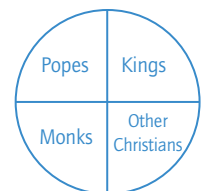
b. Make Generalizations What was the relationship between Pope Gregory VII and Emperor Henry IV like? Why?

c. Elaborate Explain why both kings and popes wanted the right to choose bishops.
- a. Describe** How was Cluny different from earlier monasteries?

b. Summarize Why were monks frustrated in the early Middle Ages, and what steps did they take to change things?

Critical Thinking

- 4. Summarize** Draw a chart like the one at right. Use your notes on changes in Christianity to identify how those changes affected different types of people in the Middle Ages.



FOCUS ON WRITING

- 5. Description** Write a paragraph describing what life was like in a Cistercian monastery. Use vivid language and specific details to make your writing more interesting.

Perspectives on Magna Carta

Historical Context The four documents below reveal different aspects of and attitudes toward Magna Carta.

Task Study the selections and answer the questions that follow. Then, using evidence from these selections and from the chapter, write an essay explaining whether Magna Carta is truly a foundation of democratic government or just another document that upheld feudal relationships.

DOCUMENT 1

Selections from Magna Carta

Magna Carta outlined the rights of nobles and limited the king's power, which a group of nobles thought he was abusing. The excerpts below describe just some of the new agreements between king and nobles.

To all free men of our kingdom we [the monarchy] have also granted, for us and our heirs for ever, all the liberties written out below, to have and to keep for them and their heirs, of us and our heirs:

20. For a trivial offence, a free man shall be fined only in proportion to the degree of his offence, and for a serious offence correspondingly, but not so heavily as to deprive him of his livelihood.
21. Earls and barons shall be fined only by their equals, and in proportion to the gravity of their offence.
29. No constable may compel a knight to pay money for castle-guard if the knight is willing to undertake the guard in person, or with reasonable excuse to supply some other fit man to do it. A knight taken or sent on military service shall be excused from castle-guard for the period of this service.
39. No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgement of his equals or by the law of the land.

DOCUMENT 2

An Artist's View

The painting below was created by an unknown artist who copied an engraving by artist Alonzo Chappel. Created several hundred years after the signing of Magna Carta, it shows the artist's view of the mood at the historic event.



King John signing Magna Carta, undated illustration after painting by Chappel.

DOCUMENT 3

A Contemporary's Account

Roger of Wendover was a monk and a historian, who lived at the time of the signing of Magna Carta. The excerpt below is from his account of the signing.

King John, when he saw that he was deserted by almost all, so that out of his regal superabundance of followers he scarcely retained seven knights, was much alarmed lest the barons would attack his castles and reduce them without difficulty, as they would find no obstacle to their so doing; and he deceitfully pretended to make peace for a time with the aforesaid barons . . . and told them that, for the sake of peace, and for the exaltation and honour of the kingdom, he would willingly grant them the laws and liberties they required . . . Accordingly, at the time and place pre-agreed on, the king and nobles came to the appointed conference, and when each party had stationed themselves apart from the other, they began a long discussion about terms of peace and the aforesaid liberties. . . . At length, after various points on both sides had been discussed, king John, seeing that he was inferior in strength to the barons, without raising any difficulty, granted the underwritten laws and liberties, and confirmed them by his charter.

DOCUMENT 4

A Historian's View

C. Warren Hollister is one of many historians today to explore the different meanings of Magna Carta in its historical context.

Its authors were looking neither forward nor backward but were contending with problems of the moment. Magna Carta's most important clauses were designed to keep the king within the bounds of popular and feudal custom. Royal taxes not sanctioned by custom, for example, were to be levied only with the consent of the great men of the kingdom. But implicit in the traditional doctrine that the lord had to respect the rights of his vassals and rule according to good custom was the constitutional principle of government under the law. In striving to make John a good feudal lord, the barons in 1215 were moving uncertainly toward constitutional monarchy. Thus Magna Carta expresses the notion that the king is bound by traditional legal constraints in his dealings with all classes of free English people.

Skills FOCUS

READING LIKE A HISTORIAN

DOCUMENT 1

- a. **Identify** To what people do the agreements described in Magna Carta apply?
- b. **Infer** What kinds of problems do you think were going on in England that led to the writing of Magna Carta?

DOCUMENT 2

- a. **Describe** What groups of people does the artist represent as present at the signing of Magna Carta?
- b. **Analyze** How does the artist portray King John's emotions at the signing of Magna Carta? Why would the king have felt that way?

DOCUMENT 3

- a. **Identify Main Ideas** According to Roger of Wendover, why did King John agree to sign Magna Carta?
- b. **Analyze** What circumstances might affect the accuracy of Roger of Wendover's account?

DOCUMENT 4

- a. **Identify** According to Hollister, what was the main goal of the framers of Magna Carta?
- b. **Explain** Why does Hollister describe Magna Carta as a feudal document?

DOCUMENT-BASED ESSAY QUESTION

Magna Carta has been referred to as a document that simply defined the relationship of lord and vassal. It has also been referred to as a great step toward democratic government. Which interpretation is correct? Or are both valid? Using the documents and information from the chapter, form a thesis to support your interpretation of Magna Carta. Then write a short essay to support your position.

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H25

VISUAL STUDY GUIDE

Political Changes in the Early Middle Ages

Charlemagne and the Frankish Empire

- Charles Martel leads the Franks to victory at the Battle of Tours
- Pope Leo III crowns Charlemagne Emperor of the Romans
- Charlemagne unites much of Western Europe into a Christian empire
- Viking, Magyar, and Muslim invasions and migrations bring change to the Frankish Empire
- After Charlemagne, the Frankish Empire declined

Monarchies Grow and Change

- William the Conqueror takes England by force and increases the power of the king
- Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine rule all of England and about half of France
- Magna Carta limits the English monarchy
- Hugh Capet extends the French monarchy
- Otto the Great starts the Holy Roman Empire
- Christian monarchies in Spain and Portugal unite to drive out the Moors

The Church in the
Early Middle Ages**Everyday Life**

- Church officials serve as teachers and record keepers
- Religious ceremonies important to everyday life
- Christianity unifies most parts of western Europe

Popes Gain Power

- Replace corrupt bishops
- Threaten to excommunicate
- Raise armies
- Call kings and nobles to council
- Rule the Papal States

Monasteries Change

- Wealthy monasteries spark reform
- Benedictine Rule regains followers
- New, stricter, orders form
- Monks retreat from politics

Feudalism

Lords

- Provide fief, or land
- Offer protection
- Resolve disputes between knights

**Vassals**

- Provide military service
- Remain loyal and faithful
- Give money on special occasions

Manorialism

Lords

- Own manors
- Provide protection from attacks
- Provide land for farming

**Peasants**

- Live on the lord's land
- Give a portion of their crops to the manor lord
- Farm the lord's land

Review Key Terms and People

Identify the term or person from the chapter that best fits each of the following descriptions.

1. planning a course across the sea
2. the system of exchanging land for service
3. duke of Normandy who fought in the Battle of Hastings and became king of England
4. to unite or work into something that already exists
5. emperor of the Frankish Empire
6. workers who were legally tied to the manor on which they worked
7. the land given to a knight for his service
8. an economic system built around large estates
9. governing body that still makes England's laws
10. a person's level of devotion to his or her religion
11. Icelandic stories about great heroes and events



Comprehension and Critical Thinking

SECTION 1 (pp. 373–376)

12. a. Describe How did Charlemagne rise to power?

b. Explain How did the changes Charlemagne made to education strengthen his empire?

SECTION 2 (pp. 378–381)

13. a. Recall Where did the Magyars come from?

b. Explain Why did the Vikings go on raids throughout Europe?

c. Draw Conclusions What effects do you think Viking raids might have had on Europe?

SECTION 3 (pp. 382–386)

14. a. Identify Main Ideas What were the main obligations of lords and vassals in the feudal system?

b. Compare and Contrast What was one similarity and one difference between the feudal system and the manorial system?

c. Make Judgments Do you think peasants were fortunate or unfortunate to be part of the manorial system? Explain your answer.

SECTION 4 (pp. 387–391)

15. a. Recall What was the Reconquista?

b. Analyze Why did French culture flourish in England after 1066?

c. Elaborate How did Parliament strengthen the reforms made in Magna Carta?

SECTION 5 (pp. 392–395)

16. a. Identify Main Ideas Why did popes have so much power in medieval Europe?

b. Summarize What issues were at the root of the conflict over selection of clergy?

c. Make Judgments Who do you think should have appointed bishops in the Middle Ages, the pope or the emperor?

Reading Skills

Understanding Word Origins Using a dictionary, find the origins of the following words and explain how the origin of each relates to the use of the word in the chapter.

17. monastery

18. fealty

19. navigation

Analyzing Points of View

Reading Like a Historian The selection below was written by English historians in 1963.

“For half a century or so from 1066 the English way of life was not sensibly altered [changed]. The Normans had very little to teach, even in the art of war, and they had very much to learn. They were barbarians who were becoming conscious of their insufficiency.”

—H. G. Richardson and G. O. Sayles, *The Governance of Medieval England*

20. Identify What main point of view do the historians express about the Norman conquest of England in the selection?

21. Analyze How might the information provided about the authors help explain the authors' point of view?

22. Elaborate What details do the authors use to support their point of view? What details from the chapter provide an alternative point of view of the influence of the Normans in England?

Using the Internet

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Practice Online

Keyword: SHL EMA

23. During the Middle Ages, daily life differed greatly for nobles and peasants. Using the keyword above, do research to learn more about the daily life of either peasants or nobles. Then create a poster illustrating the different aspects of the daily life experienced by the group you choose.

WRITING FOR THE SAT



Think about the following issue:

Charlemagne greatly expanded his empire through conquest. He also made sweeping changes to Frankish society. Through his roles as both a warrior and a political leader, he created one of the largest and strongest kingdoms of the Early Middle Ages.

24. Assignment Which were more important to the creation of a strong empire—Charlemagne's conquests or his social reforms? Write a short essay in which you develop your position on this issue. Support your point of view with reasoning and examples from your reading and studies.