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# Middle Ages Europe

*Mr. Donn and Maxie's Always Something You Can Use Series*

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# Preface

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I am a teacher. With “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) being the law of the land, and with every teacher required to help raise test scores on standardized tests, we are all looking for ways to improve our teaching. Today there are national Common Core State Standards for teaching as well as various state standards that students are expected to meet. Maybe your state or school district has exit exams students are required to pass. Your circumstances will be different from mine but we all have the same goal in mind. Help our students reach their goals.

The Mr. Donn and Maxie’s Always Something You Can Use series was written in part because when I went looking for help as a new teacher there was nothing there. The lessons you are about to use are ones that I have used in the classroom myself, with input from my colleagues, friends, students, and especially my wife.

I currently teach in an urban school with all its challenges and difficulties. I teach both language arts and social studies. I have been in various levels of secondary school grades 6–12.

Focus: This book, and the rest of the books in the series are for teaching Ancient History. Each book is a separate unit that deals with each of the different ancient civilizations. Each book has within it a complete unit on ancient history. Within each unit there are various types of lessons. Each unit will contain vocabulary lessons, writing lessons, and activity lessons. The variety will hopefully keep all your students involved, entertained, and learning.

In *Classroom Instruction that Works*, Marzano et al list ten research based strategies. The ancient history series uses these ten strategies, as well as other concepts, ideas, and strategies, to build lesson plans and instruction around. For those who are unfamiliar with Marzano et al, here is a quick recap of those strategies.

- Identifying Similarities and Differences
- Summarizing and Note Taking
- Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition
- Homework and Practice
- Nonlinguistic Representations
- Cooperative Learning
- Setting Objectives and Providing feedback
- Generating and Testing Hypotheses
- Cues, Questions and Advanced Organizers

These strategies and concepts are imbedded into the lessons. You won't find a place where it says "We will now use the strategy of Cooperative Learning." Instead you will find cooperative learning within the lesson. An example of this is in the Ancient China unit; students are divided into groups, and each group chooses or is assigned one of the dynasties. That group is given an opportunity to research, create a presentation, and then present their product to the class. This project is monitored by the teacher as to progress and deadlines. Their product is then placed in the classroom for all to see, share, and use. This same project includes Marzano's strategies of "Reinforcing effort and providing recognition," "Nonlinguistic Representation," and "Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback."

The Mr. Donn and Maxie Always Something You Can Use series also uses ideas and concepts to help make teaching and learning enjoyable—ideas such as "Word Walls" to help build vocabulary, various writing ideas to stimulate interest in writing, and games, pictures and graphic organizers to increase efficiency and retention.

We worked very hard to bring you the best ideas we could to make history a subject that students would want to learn.



# Medieval Europe Introduction

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**Subject:** Medieval Europe (450 CE–1500 CE)

**Time Frame:** 5 to 6 weeks

**Level/Length:** This unit on Medieval Europe was written with seventh graders in mind, but can easily be adapted for grades 5–9. The unit is composed of 22 lessons. Some lessons are mini-units and will take longer than one class period to complete. Lessons are based on a 55-minute class period but can be adjusted to fit any time frame. Activities are varied and include classifying, abstracting, map work, dramatizing, writing, reading, speaking, researching, interpreting, cooperative learning, and other higher level thinking activities.

**Unit Description:** This unit explores the geography of Medieval Europe, the fall of the Roman Empire, Barbarian Invasions, the Byzantine Empire, Justinian, the Frankish Empire, Clovis, Charles Martel, Charlemagne, Pope Adrian, Pope Leo, the Holy Roman Empire, manorialism, feudalism, fiefs, vassals, serfs, peasants, pleasant peasant poems, lords, ladies, castles, medieval life, the Church, monks, nuns, medieval manners, knights, chivalry, heraldry, jousts, tournaments, troubadours, the Sacraments, who's who in the church, Pope Gregory VII, Henry IV, church reform, church councils, friars, the Inquisition, rise of monarchs, William the Conqueror, the Bayeux Tapestry, inventions, the Magna Carta, the Crusades, *Song of Roland*, rise of towns, guilds, cathedrals, the Black Death, and more!

**Rationale:** In view of the latest government guidelines on education with No Child Left Behind, all units were developed to meet standards applicable in most states. Lessons are designed to address various learning styles and can be adapted for *all* students' abilities. Units are designed to fit into an integrated curriculum.

**Ongoing Project/Graphic Organizers:** Using bulletin boards or wall space as graphic organizers supports critical thinking activities and fits the theme of the unit. At the end of the unit, each “board” (graphic organizer) should be completed and will support the final activity. To complete each board, students will need to be directed to add information as it is discovered in your unit study.

# Medieval Europe

## Setting up the Room

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### Graphic Organizers:

#### Word Wall

*Design:* This is a constant for all units, but each has its own look. A castle might work well, as would a church or cathedral.

*Key Words:* Words you will probably wish to include on your word wall as you discover them in your unit of study are: continent, Europe, Mediterranean Sea, Constantinople, Rome, Palestine, Crusades, feudalism, manorialism, serf.

*Use:* Once a week, have your students pick any word, define it, then use it in a sentence. Use the word wall to fill in short periods of time throughout the unit.

#### The Manor

*Design:* Put a sign above an open wall area marked THE MANOR.

*Use of this area:* Use the table and wall area to post papers with no names, and stack copies of reproducibles and homework assignments for pick up by students who were absent.

Closing Class Each Day: We like to close class each day with a sentence or two that reminds students what we are studying. With this unit, you might choose to close your class each day with: “See you next time, right here, smack in the middle of the Middle Ages.”

Lesson One:  
**Geography of Europe**

---

Time frame: 1 class period (55 minutes)  
Includes: Geography of Western Europe

**Preparation:**

- Daily Question. Use overhead projector or write question on the board. (This is a student writing activity. Students are to write answers to daily questions in their notebooks upon arrival.)
- World atlas (one per group), maps of the world
- Overhead transparencies: Both maps listed below. You will need to copy these reproducibles onto your own transparency paper to create overheads.
- Reproducibles:  
*Map of the Continents of the World*  
*Map of Western Europe*

**Daily Question: Is Europe a country or a continent?**

**Open Class:** Meet your class at the door

**Ask:** What pops into your mind when you think of Europe? (Get some answers.)

**Activity: Is Europe a Country or a Continent?**

- Ask the daily question: “Is Europe a country or a continent?” (Get some answers.)
- **Say:** “Those of you who said Europe is a continent are right.”
- **Ask:** “What is a continent?” (Get some answers. Have one student look up the definition of a continent in the dictionary and read it aloud. Adjust the student definition if necessary.)
- **Ask:** “Does anyone remember how many continents there are in the world?”
- **Say:** “The answer is seven. Africa, Asia, Antarctica, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America.”
- **Say:** “Europe is a small continent. It is the second smallest continent. Which is the smallest?” (Australia)
- Handout: *Map of the Continents of the World*
- Hand out atlases or maps of the world, or have students turn to the appropriate page in their textbook. They can work alone or in pairs.
- **Say:** “Your job is to label the seven continents and the four oceans of the world.” (Give them some time.)
- Use the overhead projector. As a class, label the seven continents and the four oceans of the world.
- Have students compare their answers to the labels added to the overhead projector. Have students make changes on their handout as needed.

- **Ask:** “Ranking the continents by size, which is the largest?”  
Which is the second largest?  
Which continent is the smallest continent?  
Which continent is the second smallest?
- **Say:** “Rank the remaining continents according to geographic size.”

### Activity: The Geography of Europe

- Use the overhead projector. Place the *Map of Western Europe* on the overhead projector.
- Point to various places on the map. **Ask:** “What is the name of this sea? Does anyone remember?” (Mediterranean.) Have students identify the Black Sea, the North Sea, the Caspian Sea, Rome, Palestine, and Constantinople (called Istanbul today).
- **Ask:** “On what continent is the Caspian Sea located? How about the Black Sea? Is the North Sea part of the continent of Europe?” (No, it’s a sea. Landlocked seas may be part of landforms, but seas are usually sections of oceans.)
- **Ask:** “How about the Mediterranean Sea? Is that part of Europe, Asia, or Africa?” (None. It’s a sea! Continents are landforms.)
- **Ask:** “On what continent is the city of Rome located? How about Constantinople? How about Palestine?”
- Handout: *Map of Western Europe*
- Allow students time to label their own maps as you have on the overhead projector. Have students create a map key. Students may color in their maps if they wish.

### Activity: Time Period

- **Ask:** “Who knows what medieval means?” (Get some answers. Direct one student to look up the definition of medieval in the dictionary. Adjust students’ answers as needed.)
- **Say:** “That’s right. Medieval means middle—but, the middle of what?” (Get some answers.) “Historians mean in the middle of history. In medieval times, the cavemen were long gone.”

The Middle Ages (or medieval times) refers to a block of time in history from 500 CE to about 1500 CE—a period of 1000 years. Wherever you are on the globe—be it Asia, Africa, South America, or Europe—if you are talking about a piece of history that happened between 500 and 1500 years ago, you are talking about something that happened in the Middle Ages.

For the next few weeks, we’re going to take a look at what was going on during the Middle Ages in just one piece of the globe—Medieval Europe. Medieval Europe was the time of knights and vassals and castles and war.”

### Activity: Timeline

- **Say:** “Today, I want each of you to organize a timeline for yourself. We don’t have much to add to our timeline right now, so we’ll just get it ready to go.”
- Direct students to get out a piece of paper or use the handout provided entitled: *Timeline*. Fold paper in half and then in half again to create four sections. Label sections 500 CE, 750 CE, 1000 CE, and 1250 CE.
- **Say:** “You do not need to memorize a lot of dates. This timeline is to give an idea of sequencing.”
- **Ask:** “Who knows what sequencing means?” (If you have to, have a student look it up in the dictionary and read the definition aloud.)
- **Say:** “Timelines are a helpful way to quickly see the sequence of events.”

**Close Class:** “That’s all the time we have today. Next time we meet we’re going to take a look at why Rome fell.”

Teacher Note: Throughout the unit, direct students to take out their timelines and update them based on the information studied to date. Allow 3–5 minutes for this activity with each update.

# Teacher's Outline Map of the Continents of the World



Name:  
Date:  
Class:  
Period:

---

## Blank Outline Map of the Continents of the World

