



MEDIEVAL BRITAIN

1066AD – 1485AD



KWL

What do you already KNOW?

What do you WANT to know

Norman Kings of England

1066-1087: King William
the Conqueror

1087-1100: King William
Rufus (son of William)

1100-1135: King Henry I
(William Rufus brother)

1135-1154: King Stephen
(nephew of Henry I)

Timeline of the The Plantagenet Kings of England

1154-1189: King Henry II
(grandson of Henry I)

1189-1199: King Richard I
(third son of Henry II)

1199-1216: King John
(fifth son of Henry II)

1216-1272: King Henry III
(son of John)

1272-1307: King Edward I
(son of Henry III)

1307-1327: King Edward II
(son of Edward I)

1327-1377: King Edward III
(son of Edward II)

Timeline of the Royal Houses of Lancaster and York - Kings of England

1377-1399: King Richard II
(grandson of Edward III, son
of the Black Prince)

1399-1413: King Henry IV
(grandson of Edward III, son
of John of Gaunt)

1413-1422: King Henry V
(son of Henry IV)

1422-1461: King Henry VI
(son of Henry V)

1461-1483: King Edward IV
(youngest son of Edward III)

1483-1485: King Richard III
(uncle of Edward V)

Lesson Six –

To identify the different ways crimes were punished during Medieval times.



What types of crimes would be committed and why?

Arson- This is the act of deliberately setting fire to property. Arson was treated as a serious crime in the medieval period. Buildings were mostly made of wood and fire could spread easily. It was a crime that had the potential to impact the whole community if it got out of control.

Poaching- This is the act of hunting game or fish on land that is not owned by the individual. Peasants could only hunt on common land, to hunt elsewhere required a royal licence. The punishment for poaching included hanging, castration, blinding, or being sewn into a deer skin and then hunted down by ferocious dogs.

Petty Theft- Perhaps the most common of crimes in the Middle Ages. This is the theft of low value goods from an individual. This was often punished by a form of public humiliation or mutilation.

<https://revoltingmiddleages.weebly.com/crime--punishment.html#>

What types of crimes would be committed and why?

Treason- This is the act of disloyalty to the crown, including attempts to murder the monarch or act against the monarch. In 1351, to be hung, drawn and quartered became a statutory penalty for treason.

Attacking Royal Officials- This offence was clearly demonstrated during the Peasants' Revolt in 1381 where many royal officials were attacked and killed, including the Lord Chancellor. The rebel leaders were tracked down and executed. At least 1500 rebels were killed in the suppression of the revolt.

Murder- This is the act of unlawfully killing another person. Often it led to further crimes in vengeance of the initial murder. The punishment was death, however women accused of murder were strangled and then burnt.

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What types of crimes would be committed and why?

Protest- Protests often occurred as a result of injustices suffered by the poor. The rebels would never direct their anger at the king but rather at his advisors. Revolts rarely led to positive change for peasants, the rebel leaders would be executed and laws may be tightened to stop further protests happening.

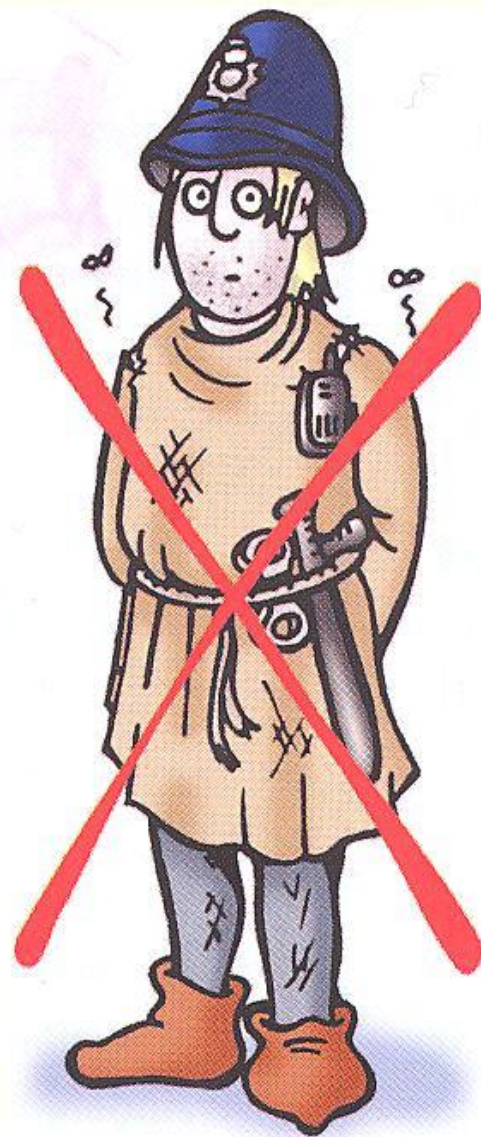
Stealing Crops- Stealing another person's crops was taken very seriously in Medieval Britain considering the effort it took to produce food. Crops were often stolen from lords who owned large amounts of land. However, like petty theft, the thief could face having a hand cut off as punishment. Food was so valuable that in some cases mice were publicly tried for stealing part of the harvest!

Rebellion- Rebellion was the most extreme form of protest in the Middle Ages. It was the ultimate show of anger against injustice and an attack on authority. Rebellions could start over taxation or changes to laws over common land. Often they would spread to many parts of the country and be difficult to put down.

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CATCHING CRIMINALS

- There were no paid policemen in the Middle Ages.
- There were village constables. They were ordinary people who also had other jobs. They were not paid. They just kept watch when they could.
- If someone saw a crime, they raised the 'hue and cry'. This meant everyone else had to chase the criminal and try to catch them.
- If they caught the criminal and, if the crime was serious enough, the criminal was taken by the constable to the sheriff of the county, and kept in prison until a trial.



From what you have read so far answer these question in your books.

1. Who was responsible for law and order in the Middle Ages?
2. How would someone witnessing a crime report it?
3. What were the problems with how village constables worked?

List A

List B

Tithing

A loud noise to make people chase a criminal

Hue and Cry

A group of 10 people responsible for each other

Jury

An official who looked after law and order

Stocks

A group who watched over a town

Constable

A wooden frame used to hold prisoners

Watch

A group of men who decided if a prisoner was telling the truth

Ordeals

Serious crimes were heard by the King's court. The accused had to face trial by ordeal to decide whether they were guilty or not guilty.

Ordeal by Fire

The accused had to pick up a red hot iron bar and hold it while they walked three or four paces. Their hand was then bandaged. After three days they had to return to the court where the bandages were removed. If the wound was beginning to heal they were innocent but if the wound showed no sign of healing then they were pronounced guilty.

Ordeal by Water

The accused had their hands and feet tied together. They were then thrown into water. If they floated they were guilty but if they sank they were innocent.

Ordeal by Combat

Noblemen would fight (usually to the death) in combat with their accuser. The winner of the battle would be considered to be in the right.

After 1215 Trial by Ordeal was replaced by Trial by Jury... WHY???

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TRIALS

If there were witnesses to a crime, a judge would find out from them what had happened. But what happened if there were no witnesses or if the witnesses disagreed?

Until 1215, people let God decide. The accused was taken into a church to face trial by ordeal. There were different kinds of ordeal.

- One was ordeal by hot iron. The accused had to carry a piece of burning hot iron for three metres. Then the hand was bandaged for three days before being unwrapped. If the hand was healing cleanly, it was believed that God was telling everyone that the person was innocent. If it was infected, he or she was guilty.
- Other ordeals involved plunging an arm into boiling water or lowering the accused into a river to see if they would sink or float.

Trial by ordeal was abolished in 1215. **After 1215**, all trials were decided by judges and juries. Juries were made up of ordinary people who probably knew the accused.

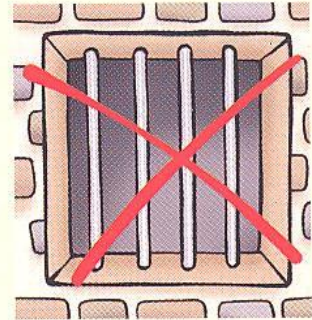




PUNISHMENTS

Prison was not used as a punishment. There were a few small jails in castles where some accused people were held until trial. But prisons were too expensive (they need guards and strong buildings). Instead, there were three main punishments used throughout the Middle Ages:

- **The stocks.** People threw rotten food (or worse) at you. This made you look foolish.
- **A fine.** For example, you could be fined a week's wages for letting your animals eat other villagers' crops.
- **Hanging.** Many people were hanged for stealing clothes or food. Executions took place in public as a warning to others to obey the law.



Can you match the crime to the punishment???

Drag the coloured tiles up and down to match the crimes to the punishments!

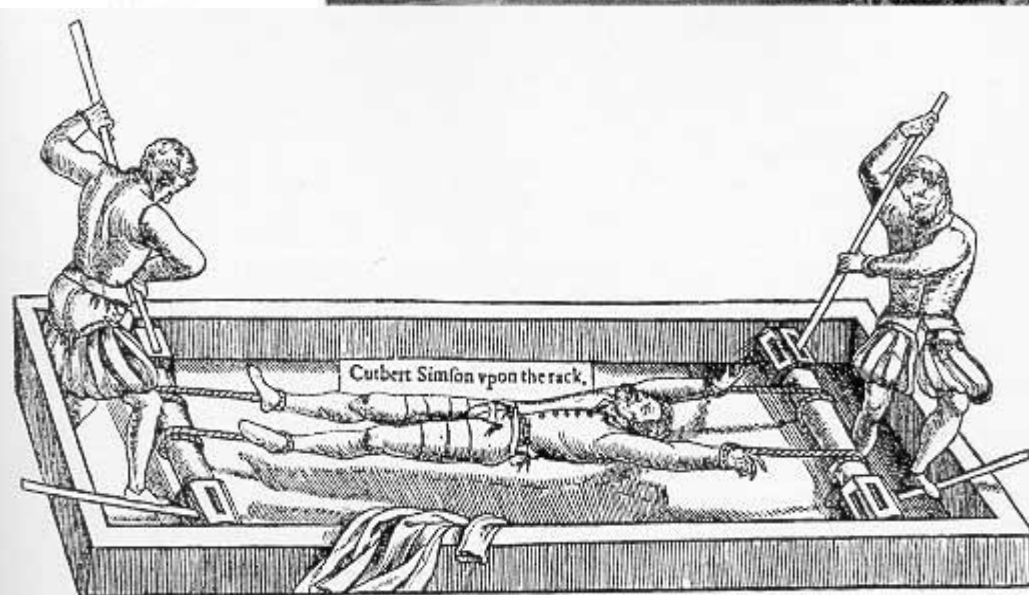
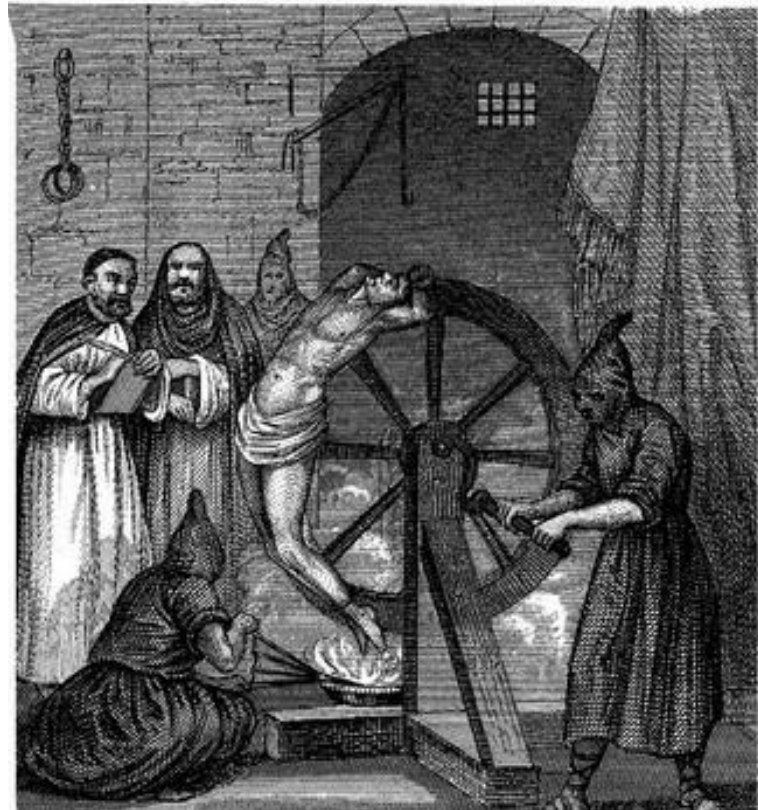
theft	dragged on sledge with loaf on head
woman commits murder	hanged
man commits murder	hands cut off
hunting in royal parks	whipped
nobleman commits murder	ears cut off
baker produces bad bread	beheaded
not working hard	dunked in the pond
drunkenness	burnt alive
gossiping	placed in stocks

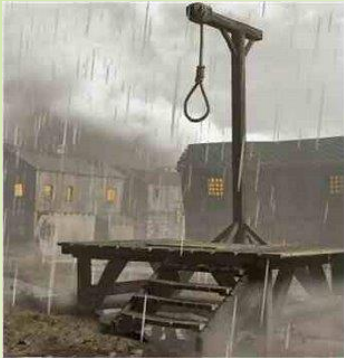
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What was the most effective punishment in medieval times?





Punishment	Description	Crime
Fine 	A sum of money had to be paid to the Lord of the Manor or the King. Most people could not afford the fines so faced the punishments listed below.	Most minor crimes
Shame 	A period of time had to be spent in the stocks. The stocks were usually positioned in a public place and villagers would often throw rotten vegetables at the criminal.	Drunkenness, Swearing, Telling lies
Mutilation 	Cutting off part of the body. Amputation of ears, hands and tongue were all common punishments.	Stealing Hunting on royal ground without permission
Death 	The usual method of execution for men was by hanging. Most towns had a gibbet and bodies were left to rot as a warning to others. For treason the punishment was to be hanged drawn and quartered. Women were usually strangled and burnt. Execution by beheading was used as a punishment for nobles found guilty of treason.	Treason Murder, Arson, Mugging, Adultery Forgery, Guilty by Trial by Ordeal

Type of Crime	Punishment	Why punishment used	Fair or unfair	explain

Assessment questions

1. Name at least 2 punishments used in the Middle Ages?
2. Why were these punishments used?
3. How have punishments changed since?