

FEUDAL EUROPE

Learn how to understand what you're studying....

1. READ THE INFORMATION AND HIGHLIGHT THE KEY WORDS AND PHRASES:

After the Roman Empire fell in 476, Goths, Vandals, Vikings and other tribes divided Europe into many kingdoms. The old Roman laws were no longer in effect and people were loyal only to their own families or to their tribal chiefs. Everything was disorganized and life was unsafe. So, to defend themselves, people formed small communities around lords or masters.

2. TAKE NOTES:

- Roman Empire fell: 476
- life became unsafe
- people gathered in villages

3. FORM A QUESTION: Why was life unsafe?

4. PROVIDE EVIDENCE:

- no central government for Europe
- much chaos and violence
- so each family had to survive and defend itself from attackers
- so people formed little groups around a strong person who could protect them

5. ADD AN ILLUSTRATION:

6. WRITE A CONNECTION:

Life in Europe after the Fall of Rome reminds me of some large schools. Hallways can be so chaotic that students prefer to stay near their own classrooms during breaks. They don't want to go to the washrooms by themselves. They don't want to go outside at lunch time because students from other areas of the school bother them. They just stay near their friends because they feel safer surrounded by people they know. Life in large schools can cause a great deal of stress.

RUBRIC FOR NOTETAKING

Name _____

	Extending	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
Highlighting	Key words and phrases of significant ideas are highlighted.	Words and phrases of significant ideas are highlighted.	Words and phrases of important ideas are highlighted. (I.e. Too much information.)	Entire sentences are highlighted or important ideas are not highlighted.
Notes	Key ideas are paraphrased and sequenced either chronologically or logically.	Key ideas are paraphrased.	Important ideas are copied.	Unimportant details are copied.
Main Question	A key question is formed from the information in the key ideas.	An important question is formed.	A question is formed that can be answered by the information.	A question is formed that cannot be answered by the information.
Evidence for Answer	Evidence that answers the question is listed in chronological or logical order.	Evidence is listed that answers the question.	Evidence is listed that answers the question.	The evidence does not answer the question.
Illustrations	Simple coloured illustrations support the key ideas and evidence.	Coloured illustrations support the evidence and ideas.	Black and white illustrations support the evidence.	Illustrations do not clearly support the evidence.
Connection	A paragraph of 5-7 sentences clearly explains a significant connection to history or present-day life.	A paragraph of 5-7 sentences clearly explains a connection to the student's personal life.	A paragraph of 4-5 sentences explains a connection to the student's personal life or a movie.	A set of sentences explains a connection to the student's personal life or a movie.

<p>Conventions</p>	<p>There are very few spelling, grammar, punctuation mistakes, and word spacing is accurate. Includes a cover page with name, number and date.</p>	<p>There are some errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation and word spacing, but it is still easy to understand. Includes a cover page with name, number and date.</p>	<p>There are numerous errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation and word spacing but it still is possible to understand. Name and date is on the front of the assignment.</p>	<p>There are numerous errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation and word spacing, and it is often difficult to understand. Name is on the assignment.</p>
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Date: _____

Name of note-taker: _____

Examined by (student) _____

Overall, these notes are _____

Examined by (teacher) _____

Overall, these notes are _____

PRACTISE YOUR SKILLS WITH THESE PARAGRAPHS:

1. Read and highlight key words and phrases.
2. Take brief notes.
3. Form a key question.
4. Provide evidence that answers the question.
5. Add a coloured illustration.
6. Write a connection.

A. This system of staying safe, called feudalism, often appears after empires collapse. And it appeared in Europe during medieval times. Kings got the support of soldiers by giving them land. That land was then inherited by the children of the soldiers, and so a whole new ruling class was established, a ruling class of nobles. This ruling class was in charge of the government. It controlled the courts and judges, the businesses and the social systems. Landless peasants, or serfs, worked on a noble's land in exchange for protection.

B. William the Conqueror was born in 1027. His father was Robert, Duke of Normandy and his mother was Herleve of Falaise. They never married and William was known as "William the Bastard" to his enemies – though this was never said to his face when he had grown up. In 1035, Robert died. William, only eight years old, became the Duke of Normandy. He was so young, and he had been born out of marriage. So many lords in Normandy did not approve of him ruling them. In 1040, they even tried to kill him. The plan failed but William's guardian – Gilbert of Brionne – was killed.

C. In 1047, the lords in western Normandy rebelled against William. They, again, failed but these two incidents taught William to trust no-one. He also became a victim of the violent time he lived in. He believed that if someone betrayed him, he should show no mercy. If a village or town betrayed him, he should show no mercy. In 1051, citizens in the town of Alençon, which William was besieging, taunted him about being illegitimate. Once the town had fallen to him, he ordered that those who had abused him should have their hands and feet cut off.

In 1051, William met Edward the Confessor. William claimed that at this meeting, Edward promised him the throne of England on Edward's death. However, the only witnesses to this meeting were people who wanted to keep on the good side of William.

D. In 1053, William married Matilda of Flanders with whom he had nine children. During the next decade, William had to constantly fight off invaders to his territory. He was always successful and built up a powerful army with the latest technology: soldiers on horseback. These horses were bred to be able to run quickly while carrying great weight which was necessary because the soldiers wore chain mail for protection and fought battles using lances, swords or maces.

E. In 1066, William invaded England. He brought soldiers on horseback across the English Channel and defeated King Harold at the Battle of Hastings. But before he could be truly called king of England, he had to gain control of all the people in England. After all, he was a foreigner who had forced his way to London. He was not popular with the people of England and he had to use force to control them. He was also still the Duke of Normandy. He had to return to Normandy to maintain control of his land in France. Therefore, he had to leave the

country for weeks at a time. He needed a way of controlling England so that the people remained loyal.

F. When he was in England, William spent much of his time in London. He built his own castle – the Tower of London – so that it dominated the city. It was also his home while in London. He did not trust the builders of London – or English stone – so he used Norman craftsmen to do the skilled work while the English acted as labourers. From France, he also brought the stone needed for his castles, which were useful because they represented a visible threat to the people of England. Soldiers could be safe in them and could be used to fight against any troublemakers. However, William needed a way of actually governing the country. This was the Feudal System.

G. William took land away from the defeated Anglo-Saxons and gave it to the Norman knights who helped him win the battle. He took the land that had belonged to English people and gave it to his knights and nobles in a special commendation ceremony. William's feudal system was based on loyalty (fealty), land (fief) and religion (faith). The land was given to the knights, who were nobles, in exchange for loyalty. And the religious faith of the knights helped them keep their solemn oaths to the king.

H. William awarded land to the men who had fought with him at the Battle of Hastings. William believed that knights who were willing to die in battle for him would also be loyal to him. So William took all the land of England away from the people who already lived there and gave it to his noblemen. And he started a new custom: a special ceremony in which a vassal swore an oath of allegiance to his lord. In the eleventh century, a sworn oath on the Bible was a very important thing since to break it could condemn a person to Hell.

I. William controlled all of England. And in 1085, he ordered a survey of the whole country. This Domesday Book listed all the landholdings, all the people, the animals and the possessions in England.

Before 1066, people in England only had one name. William introduced a new concept: a surname. It was another one of his ways of maintaining control over people. There were six main kinds of surnames: paternal (son of John = Johnson); place (York); topographical (Ford); occupation (Baker); village duty (secretary = Clarke); and nickname (Bold).

J. In exchange for land, a noble had certain obligations. He had to serve in the king's army for about forty days a year. He had to provide advice about running the kingdom. He had to supply additional soldiers in times of war. And he had to provide funds when the king needed extra money. The king promised to protect the land of each noble and to settle any arguments that arose between nobles. There was a special vocabulary for their relationships. The king was called a monarch. The most powerful nobles were called barons. Below them were lesser nobles and minor nobles. And anyone who owed loyalty to someone else was called a vassal.

K. All the knights were soldiers who had enough money to own a horse. Some were nobles and some were commoners. All knights were expected to honour the code of chivalry: defend the Christian church, protect women and children, give to the poor, fight against injustice and stand up against enemies. The word 'knight' comes from an Old English word meaning 'household retainer'. The word 'chivalry' comes from a French word meaning 'horse soldiery'.

L. At the very bottom of the power structure of society were the commoners. The freeholders were people who owned a small piece of land, for which they paid a yearly fee. The serfs were people who were given a place to live in exchange for working on the land. Almost all the people, about 90% of the people, were commoners.

All the land owned by a noble was called a manor, and the noble himself was called the lord of the manor. His land included wooded areas, farming areas, pastures and at least one village, which was usually built near a stream or river. The land the noble kept for his own home and garden was called the demesne (di-mane). And he usually had a manager, or bailiff, to take care of the rest of his land.

M. In 1215, the English barons formed an alliance that forced King John to sign the Magna Carta. While it gave no rights to ordinary people, the Magna Carta did limit the king's powers of taxation and require trials before punishment. It was the first time that an English monarch came under the control of the law.

N. This European system of feudalism started in France and spread to England, Spain and other parts of the Christian world. It became most powerful between the 800s and 1200s. It started disappearing by the 1400s.

A similar feudal system developed in Japan in the 12th century. Instead of a king, there was a shogun. He ruled the country through the daimyo, or nobles, who were in charge of the samurai, or knights. Peasants farmed the land in exchange for protection by the samurai. Everyone had to follow a strict code of conduct known as bushido, much like Europeans followed the code of chivalry. Japan's feudal system lasted until the end of the 19th century.

LEARN THESE VOCABULARY WORDS:

1. Copy the word.
2. Copy the definitions.
3. Add simple coloured illustrations.

king:

the owner of all the land who awarded fiefs to his most important nobles, barons and bishops in exchange for soldiers for the army

lord:

a noble who held land given by the king in exchange for...

- working some days to get chores done
- providing trained soldiers to fight for the King
- providing clothes and weapons for the soldiers
- providing money for the king noble:

a person with high social or political status who inherited his position

vassal:

also called a liege lord; a person who was allowed to use a lord's land in exchange for loyalty and service to the lord (military service)

serf:

also called peasants or villeins; allowed to work on a manor and given protection in exchange for working on the vassal's land for about 3 days each week

reciprocal obligations:

groups of people with specific responsibilities towards each other

demense (di- main):

all the land owned by the king; nowadays, all the land owned by the government is called 'crown land

fief:

a piece of land granted by the king to a lord or baron; they became known as manors; about 500-700 hectares

manor:

the castle, the church, the village, and the surrounding farm land; manors were isolated, with occasional visits from peddlers, pilgrims on their way to the Crusades, or soldiers from other fiefdoms; there was little or no need to leave a manor for anything so ideas and information did not easily spread

political: relating to how a group of people is governed

homage: a show of respect and dedication

fealty: faithfulness or allegiance

