

Medieval Knowledge Organiser

Key People	Medieval Village/Town	Henry II & Thomas Becket	King John and the barons
<p><u>Monarchy</u> Henry II – King of England from 1154-1189 Richard I – King of England 1189-1199 John – King of England 1199-1216 Edward III – King of England 1327-1377 Richard II – King of England from 1377-1399</p> <p><u>Others</u> Villeins – peasants who were legally tied to land owned by a local lord. Freemen – peasants who were able to move from one village to another. Thomas Becket – Archbishop of Canterbury for Henry II Wat Tyler – the leader of the Peasants' Revolt.</p>	<p>Most people lived in villages and most of the population were peasants. Peasants were either villeins or freemen and they worked on the land. Life could be hard; if crops failed to produce enough food, people faced starvation. Peasant homes were small, often just made up of one room. They also had to pay a tithe to the Church. A tithe was 10% of what they produced on their land. The Church was central to medieval life.</p> <p>There were not many towns in medieval England, and those that existed were small by modern standards. There were many skilled craftsmen working in towns, such as carpenters, blacksmiths and tailors. Trade was a key part of town life, with goods such as iron, wool, salt and agricultural products being commonly bought and sold. Towns were often unhygienic because of the larger populations and the lack of proper sanitation.</p>	<p>Henry II reformed the law. He set up the jury system and ordered that only royal judges, called Justices, could try criminal cases. Henry II is sometimes called 'the Father of the Common Law'. He tried to increase his influence over bishops and church courts.</p> <p>Thomas Becket was a successful and trusted friend and advisor to the King. He was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in the hope that he would help Henry increase his influence over the church. Becket refused to help and was later murdered by 4 knights. His death was a catastrophe for Henry. In 1174, to show he was sorry, Henry walked barefoot to Canterbury Cathedral and allowed the monks to whip him.</p>	<p>King John argued with the Pope over who would be the next Archbishop of Canterbury, as a result he was excommunicated by the Pope. The Pope also banned priests in England from carrying out weddings and christenings whilst they argued, this meant that lots of English people were very anxious as they thought they'd go to hell.</p> <p>He needed money after Richard I spent all of England's money on the crusades. To raise money he overtaxed the barons and they rebelled against him.</p> <p>Magna Carta (Great Charter/agreement) was a document that the barons forced John to sign. This was the first document to officially limit the power of the English monarchy and paved the way for Parliament.</p>
Black Death	Peasants' Revolt	Knights	Crusades
<p>The Black Death or the plague was thought to have killed between 33 and 50% of the population of the British Isles. The symptoms included sweating, fever, vomiting, breathing problems and painful lumps called buboes would appear in the armpits and groin. People didn't realise how the plague was caught or spread; they had no idea about germs. Instead, they thought it was either an act of God, the result of a curse or that they were being poisoned. For those that survived, life improved. They were able to ask for extra wages and better treatment because the Lords needed the peasants they had left. It speeded up the breakdown and the end of the feudal system and meant that ordinary peasants had more freedom.</p>	<p>The Peasants' Revolt started in Essex on 30 May 1381, when a tax collector tried, for the third time in four years, to collect a tax. Radical priest John Ball led the preaching for equality and they began demanding that all men should be free and equal; for less harsh laws; and a fairer distribution of wealth. They marched on London, where they destroyed the houses of government ministers.</p> <p>On 15 June, the 14-year-old king, Richard II, met the rebels' leader Wat Tyler. William Walworth, the Lord Mayor of London, attacked and killed Tyler. Before the rebel army could retaliate, Richard stepped forward and promised to abolish serfdom. The peasants went home, but later government troops toured the villages hanging men who had taken part in the Revolt. Richard did not keep his promise, however the life of peasants showed some signs of improving.</p>	<p>Knights owned land given to them by the nobles and were responsible for that land and could be asked to fight for the nobles. Knights were important fighters because they wore strong armour and often rode on horseback. Knights were always men, women were not allowed to become a knight. These knights had the job of protecting the wealth of the pilgrims as they travelled. Knights followed a code of conduct called chivalry which influenced how they behaved.</p>	<p>In the Middle Ages, the Muslim world included the Holy Land (places that are important for Christians and associated with the life of Jesus Christ.) The most important holy city was Jerusalem. Rumours of Christian mistreatment in the area led to appeals to the Pope for help. Pope Urban II responded by promising the knights of Europe forgiveness for their sins if they went on a Crusade to win back the Holy Land. Many responded and in 1096 the First Crusade began. They successfully took control of key cities including Jerusalem in 1099.</p> <p>In the long term the Crusaders failed to keep any of the territory they conquered. However, they borrowed many ideas from the Muslims, such as: better castle design, science, medicine, numbers that were easier to use than Roman numerals. Crusaders were invading a foreign country, and many Crusaders committed what we would regard today as criminal activity.</p>