

Lesson: Social Studies Grades 4-6 Medieval Feudalism



Feudalism in the Medieval Era

*The story of Rapunzel is set in medieval times.
People who lived during this period were part of a system called feudalism.*

Introduction

Objective:

Students will conduct research on the feudal and the democratic systems.

Students will compare and contrast living within a feudal system with that of living within a democracy.

Academic Content Standards:

- ❖ National Standards for the Social Studies Curriculum Standards: V. Individuals, Groups and Institutions
 - *Institutions such as schools, churches, families, government agencies and the courts play an integral role in people's lives. It is important that students learn how institutions are formed, what controls and influences them, how they influence individuals and culture, and how they are maintained or changed.*
- ❖ National Standards for the Social Studies Curriculum Standards: X. Civic Ideals and Practices.
 - *An understanding of civic ideals and practices of citizenship is critical to full participation in society and is a central purpose of the social studies. Students confront such questions as: What is civic participation and how can I be involved? How has the meaning of citizenship evolved? What is the balance between rights and responsibilities? What is the role of the citizen in the community and nation?*
- ❖ National Standards for the Social Studies Curriculum Standards: VI. Power, Authority and Governance
 - *Understanding the historical development of structures of power, authority and governance and their evolving functions in contemporary U.S. society and other parts of the world is essential for developing civic competence.*
 - *In exploring this theme, students confront questions such as: What is power? What form does it take? Who holds it? How is it gained, used and justified?*
- ❖ Ohio Academic Content Standards for Social Studies: Government
 - *Students use knowledge of purposes, structures, and processes of political systems at the local, state, national, and international levels in order to understand that people create systems of government as structures of power and authority to provide order, maintain stability, and promote the general welfare.*
 - *Benchmarks: A and B (4th & 5th Grades)*
 - *Benchmarks: A and C (6th Grade)*
- ❖ Ohio Academic Content Standards for Social Studies: Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities
 - *Students use knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in order to examine and evaluate civic ideals and to participate in community life and the American democratic system.*
 - *Benchmarks: A and B (4th & 5th Grades)*
 - *Benchmarks: A, and B (6th Grade)*
- ❖ Ohio Academic Content Standards for Social Studies: Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities
 - *Students use knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in order to examine and evaluate civic ideals and to participate in community life and the American democratic system.*
 - *Benchmarks: A and B (4th & 5th Grades)*
 - *Benchmarks: A, and B (6th Grade)*

- ❖ Ohio Academic Content Standards for Social Studies: Skills and Methods
 - *Students collect, organize, evaluate, and synthesize information from multiple sources in order to draw logical conclusions. Students communicate this information using appropriate social studies terminology in oral, written, or multimedia form and apply what they have learned to societal issues in simulated or real-world settings.*
 - *Benchmarks: A and B (4th & 5th Grades)*
 - *Benchmarks: A, B, and C (6th Grades)*

Getting Started

Materials:

- A collection of books about Medieval life and the democratic form of government
- Handouts A

Vocabulary:

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| • Feudalism | • Peasant |
| • King | • Serf |
| • Noble | • Slave |
| • Baron | • President |
| • Bishop | • Governor |
| • Lord | • Senate |
| • Lady | • House of Representatives |
| • Knight | • Congress |
| • Vassal | |

Technology:

- Internet access for research.

Lesson

Orientation Activity:

The teacher will use a K-W-L chart, <http://www.teachervision.com/lesson-plans/lesson-4301.html> to learn the extent of the students' prior knowledge about the medieval era and feudalism. The teacher and students will then decide what additional information will be learned about these topics based on student questions about the play, *Rapunzel*, and its connection to medieval life. Next, the class will create a graphic organizer to illustrate the power structure within the feudal system. Discussion of feudal hierarchy follows.

Learning Activity:

The teacher will assign a feudal role to each student. The students conduct research on their subject using the Internet, textbooks, and other informative books or encyclopedias. During the research, students will attempt to pinpoint the democratic political role that best compares to the feudal role that they are researching. Next, students will complete the graphic organizer on *Handout A* in order to organize their information for comparison between the two forms of government. Students may use the following web sites as starting points.

Feudalism

<http://www.mce.k12tn.net/middleages/feudalsystem.htm>

http://themiddleages.tripod.com/feudal_system.htm

<http://www.learner.org/exhibits/middleages/feudal.html>

Democracy

<http://whitehouse.gov/>

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/government/branches.html>

Upon completion of findings the required information, students will present their information to the class. Presentations will begin with the student assigned the most powerful position in the feudal system, that of the King.

Evaluation and Follow-Up

Assessment Tools and Methods:

Journal requirements: Students will write a one-page journal entry as a citizen in feudal society. Students will include their thoughts, comments, and ideas on the following subtopics.

- Medieval life and impact on their particular assigned role.
- Interaction of the political roles with one another.
- The advantages and disadvantages of feudalism as compared to a democracy.
- Impact of feudalism on citizens' entertainment.
- Impact of feudalism on housing and clothing.
- Impact of feudalism on religion.
- Impact of feudalism on wartime life.
- Students' opinions on their rights as a citizen

Use the Ohio Proficiency Test Rubric to evaluate student's writing. (View rubrics at the web site address, <http://www.lkwdpl.org/gr4test/wrirubr.htm>).

Interdisciplinary Connections:

Language Arts: Read books about King Arthur and his court to further explore life in the medieval period.

Math: Create a pie chart illustrating the percentages for the distributions of the various roles of people in a feudal system.



Handout A

Directions: Conduct research on two comparable political roles within the feudal and the democratic system. List how the political roles are chosen, their duties, their powers, the advantages and disadvantages of each role, and how they interact with other roles.

Feudal Role		Comparable Democratic Role	
	Duties		Duties
	Powers		Powers
	How Chosen		How Chosen
	Advantages		Advantages
	Disadvantages		Disadvantages
	Interaction with other government roles		Interaction with other government roles