



# In Days Of Old

**Recommended year group:** Year 7

**Subject focus:** History, RE

## Driving question

How did events in the medieval period shape our society today?

## Introduction

This lesson is all about diving into the exciting world of the Middle Ages! We'll explore what life was like in medieval times by looking at big events like the Norman Conquest in 1066 and how the Normans kept control of England. Along the way, we'll use real historical sources and different opinions to help us understand what happened and why it mattered.

We'll also look at how religion shaped people's lives and how events from hundreds of years ago still affect the way we live today. By the end of the topic, you'll be able to explain why these events were important and how they helped shape the world we know now.



## Learning Checks

**Lesson 2** – Why did William win the Battle of Hastings?

**Lesson 7** – Big Write – persuasive text

**Lesson 11** – Big Read, Joan of Arc

## Key vocabulary

Anno, Domini, (AD), Apostle, Archaeology, Armed, Forces, Baron, Black, Death, Causes, Chronicle, Civil, Service, Claimant, Concentric, castle, Conquest, Consequence, Crusades, Defiance, Epidemic, Evidence, Feudal, System, Heir, Hierarchy, Infer, Integrity, Interpretation, Islam, Journalism, Kaabah, Knight, Magna, Carta, Mecca, Media, Medina, Middle, Ages, Motte, and, Bailey, Museum, Curator, Pandemic, Parable, Patriot, Peasant, Perspective, Persuade, Poll, Tax, Prejudice, Prophet, Muhammad, (PBUH), Provenance, Revolt, Rival, Saint, Samaritan, Settlement, Source, Stone, Keep, Treatment, Utility, Vagrancy, Villein, Villein, Witch.

## Linked reading

1. **The Magna Carta Chronicle** by Christopher Lloyd and Patrick Skipworth

*Non-fiction:* A timeline-style book that explores the development of rights and freedoms from 1215 to the present day, with engaging illustrations and fold-out timelines that make complex history accessible.

2. **Castle Diary: The Journal of Tobias Burgess** by Richard Platt  
*Fiction:* A fun and informative diary of a young boy living in a medieval castle, packed with illustrations, historical facts, and humorous insights into daily life in the Middle Ages.

3. **You Wouldn't Want to Be a Medieval Knight!** by Fiona Macdonald

*Non-fiction:* A humorous and engaging look at the tough life of a knight, perfect for younger readers who enjoy quirky facts and cartoon-style illustrations.

4. **The Inquisitor's Tale** by Adam Gidwitz

*Fiction:* A gripping adventure set in 13th-century France, blending history, fantasy, and humour. Told through multiple perspectives, it explores themes of bravery, faith, and friendship.

5. **Horrible Histories: The Measly Middle Ages** by Terry Deary

*Non-fiction:* A classic, funny and fact-filled book that brings the Middle Ages to life with all its gruesome details.

6. **The Book of Boy** by Catherine Gilbert Murdock

*Fiction:* A beautifully written medieval adventure following a young pilgrim with a mysterious past. Rich in historical detail and spiritual themes.



## Family learning opportunities

### 1. Medieval Meal Night

Your Challenge - Create a simple medieval-inspired meal. Research what people ate during the Middle Ages and try making some of the foods they enjoyed, such as bread, cheese, vegetable stew (pottage), or stewed fruit.

While you eat, discuss:

- How was medieval food different from food today?
- Did peasants and nobles eat the same foods?
- Where did people get their food from?
- How has food production changed over time?

### 2. Build a Castle Challenge

Use LEGO, cardboard, recycled materials, or anything you can find at home to build your own medieval castle.

Can you include:

- A drawbridge
- A portcullis
- Towers or turrets
- A keep
- Strong defensive walls

While building, discuss:

- Why did people build castles?
- How did castles help Norman kings control England?
- Which castle feature would be most important during an attack?
- How did castle designs improve over time?

### Bonus Challenge

Visit Dudley Castle and see how many castle features you can spot in real life! Take a photo or draw a sketch of your favourite feature.

## Extended learning opportunities

Have you ever wondered where studying history could take you?

Careers with History / Historical Association Discover careers such as: Archaeologist, Museum Curator, Historian, Heritage Manager, Teacher, Archivist

Find out what these jobs involve and how historians help us understand the world today.

**Challenge:** Which history-related career would suit you best and why?

### Places to Visit

Visit Canterbury Cathedral - Take a virtual or real visit to one of England's most famous religious buildings. Look for clues about Christian beliefs, worship and history.

Visit a local Christian church or Islamic mosque - What similarities and differences can you find between a mosque and a church?

Visit a castle or medieval site, such as [Warwick Castle](#), and discover what life was like hundreds of years ago. **Challenge:** Imagine you are a medieval visitor. What sights, sounds and experiences would you encounter?

 **Read:** *“What Was Life Like in Medieval England?”* – Read about life in the Middle Ages, including the Norman Conquest, the Black Death and the Peasants' Revolt. Discover what everyday life was like for medieval people.. [Read it here](#)

 **Look:** [The Bayeux Tapestry](#) – Explore this famous artwork and see how it tells the story of the Norman Conquest and the Battle of Hastings.

 **Listen:** [The Battle of Hastings](#) – Listen to a short and engaging podcast that explains what happened at the Battle of Hastings and why it changed England forever.

## Lessons

| Lesson title                                                    | Subject | Essential knowledge/concepts                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Competencies                                                                                            | National curriculum coverage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>When were the Middle Ages and what happened during them?</b> | History | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify events that were important in the Middle Ages.</li> <li>2. Explain aspects of events in the Middle Ages.</li> <li>3. Make links between events in the Middle Ages.</li> </ol>                                                                                                                         | <b>SE.HS.01</b> Structuring, organising and deploying historical knowledge, using historical vocabulary | A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past.                                                                                          |
| <b>The Norman Conquest</b>                                      | History | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the rival claims to the throne in 1066.</li> <li>2. Explain the events, causes and consequences of the Battles of Fulford, Stamford Bridge and Hastings in 1066.</li> <li>3. Evaluate the reasons for William's victory at Hastings and explain why he is a significant figure in history.</li> </ol> | <b>SE.HS.02</b> Making historical connections (cause and significance)                                  | Extend and deepen chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, so that it provides a well-informed context for wider learning. Identify significant events, make connections, draw contrasts, and analyse trends within periods and over long arcs of time. |
| <b>Castles and sieges</b>                                       | History | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of medieval castle designs.</li> <li>2. Describe medieval methods of attacking castles.</li> <li>3. Explain how and why castle design changed over time.</li> </ol>                                                                                     | <b>SE.HS.02</b> Making historical connections (change and continuity)                                   | Extend and deepen chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, so that it provides a well-informed context for wider learning. Identify significant events, make connections, draw contrasts, and analyse trends within periods and over long arcs of time. |
| <b>The feudal system</b>                                        | History | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the feudal system in England, including reference to the Domesday Book</li> <li>2. Explain how the feudal system worked in England.</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                        | <b>SE.HS.01</b> Structuring, organising and deploying historical knowledge                              | Extend and deepen chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, so that it provides a well-informed context for wider learning. Identify significant events, make connections, draw contrasts, and analyse trends within periods and over long arcs of time. |

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| <b>The importance of Jesus</b>                          | RE      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify key features of Christianity.</li> <li>2. Explain some of the teachings and miracles of Jesus.</li> <li>3. Evaluate the importance of Jesus.</li> </ol>                                                               | <b>SE.RE.01</b> Make sense of religious beliefs                                                                                        | <p><b>NATRE guidelines</b></p> <p>Students should extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and world views, recognising their local, national and global context. Building on their prior learning, they learn to appreciate religions and world views in systematic ways. They should draw on a wide range of subject specific language confidently and flexibly, learning to use the concepts of religious study to describe the nature of religion. They should understand how beliefs influence the values and lives of individuals and groups, and how religions and world views have an impact on wider current affairs. They should be able to appraise the practices and beliefs they study with increasing discernment based on analysis, interpretation and evaluation, developing their capacity to articulate well-reasoned positions. Please refer to and include your local SACRE guidelines.</p> |
| <b>The importance of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH)</b>        | RE      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe what life was like before Islam and how Islam started.</li> <li>2. Discuss which qualities make a good leader.</li> <li>3. Explain the importance of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a good leader for Muslims.</li> </ol> | <b>SE.RE.01</b> Make sense of religious beliefs                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Big Write</b><br><b>The murder of Thomas Beckett</b> | History | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe who Becket was and the significance of his death.</li> <li>2. Summarise sources to discuss the importance of Becket.</li> <li>3. Use resources to create an interesting piece of report writing.</li> </ol>           | <b>CL.WP.03:</b> Organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring ideas, information and events (organisation) | Extend and deepen chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, so that it provides a well-informed context for wider learning. Identify significant events, make connections, draw contrasts, and analyse trends within periods and over long arcs of time.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>King John and Magna Carta</b>                        | History | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe key events and actions during King John's reign</li> <li>2. Explain how and why historical interpretations of King John have changed over time.</li> <li>3. Evaluate the significance of Magna Carta.</li> </ol>      | SE.HS.04 Using historical interpretations                                                                                              | Know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world. Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>The Black Death:</b>                                 | History | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the symptoms of the Black Death.</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>SE.HS.02</b> Making historical connections (continuity and change)                                                                  | Know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

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| <b>Catastrophe or opportunity</b>      |         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Explain the impact of the Black Death on the people and places of England.</li> <li>3. Analyse reasons why the Black Death was a catastrophe and an opportunity.</li> </ol>                                                              |                                                                                                         | nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world. Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change.                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>The Peasants' Revolt 1381</b>       | History | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain the reasons why the peasants were unhappy in 1381.</li> <li>2. Link these reasons to the consequences of other medieval events.</li> <li>3. Investigate what happened to Wat Tyler using sources.</li> </ol>                     | <b>SE.HS.02</b> Making historical connections (cause and consequence)                                   | Know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world. Understand historical concepts such as cause and consequence. |
| <b>Big Read The Hundred Years' War</b> | History | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the events of the Hundred Years' War including the role of the Black Prince.</li> <li>2. Explain why the Battle of Agincourt is important in British culture.</li> <li>3. Evaluate the role that Joan of Arc played.</li> </ol> | <b>SE.HS.01</b> Structuring, organising and deploying historical knowledge, using historical vocabulary | Extend and deepen chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, so that it provides a well-informed context for wider learning. Identify significant events, make connections, draw contrasts, and analyse trends within periods and over long arcs of time.               |
| <b>Careers in History</b>              | Careers | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investigate the various careers to do with history.</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                           | PD.CA.02 Experiencing the world of work                                                                 | Gatsby benchmark 4 Linking curriculum learning to careers. All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. History teachers should highlight the relevance of history for a wide range of future career paths.                                                                                            |

