
Unit 4: Beginnings of the Modern World (13 Days)

Overview

The emergence of Europe out of the Middle Ages signals the beginning of western domination throughout the globe. This unit reviews the basics of the medieval world and then delves into Renaissance era changes in art, literature, Christianity, exploration, and science. This unit covers a lot of information very quickly.

Objectives

- Examine the unique culture that defined the Middle Ages.
- Trace the role of Christianity in the Middle Ages to the transformation of the religion through the Reformation. Often students question why we are studying Christianity in the classroom (especially if you are in a public school). It is impossible to study history without looking at religion, and learning about the background and impact of a specific religion in no way endorses or condemns it. Additionally, Christ was a historical figure who obviously changed the course of history.
- Identify the changes and advancements in art and literature during the Renaissance.
- Examine the impact of the Age of Exploration on the world.

Daily Lesson Plans

Day 1

Materials List: *CN 4:1 Introduction to the Middle Ages*, video clip of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*

Procedure: Start the day by asking students what they know about the Middle Ages. Create a list on the board or overhead of their responses. Ask what movies they have seen that depict the Middle Ages (list will probably include *First Knight*, *A Knight's Tale*, *Lady Hawk*, and *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*). Discuss how the time period is represented in each of those movies. If it is appropriate, show a short video clip of one of those movies (suggested movie is *Monty Python*). The first twenty-five minutes of *Monty Python* shows many of the stereotypical aspects of the Middle Ages. If you show a video clip be sure to mention that history is rarely 100% accurate on the movie screen.

After the discussion or video clip, lecture using *CN 4:1 Introduction to the Middle Ages*.

Content background: Most of what is commonly shown in the media as the Middle Ages really occurs in stages three and four of the Middle Ages. One of the most famous Medieval characters, King Arthur, is probably based upon a smaller king in England around 500 CE. However, in the media he is often depicted in armor and ruling castles of the 10th century.

Homework: SQ3R on chapter/section on the early Middle Ages or Europe immediately after the fall of the Roman Empire. Chronologically, this reading should cover about 500 CE to 1000 CE.