

The Rise of Feudalism

The fall of Rome changed Western Europe. Germanic tribes slowly took over Roman lands. People did not obey Roman laws any longer. Roman soldiers could not keep order. Hundreds of little kingdoms took the place of the Roman Empire. These kingdoms had no system for collecting taxes. Rulers had no money for government. To make matters worse, these little kingdoms were always at war with one another. Trade was nearly impossible since robbers frequently waited to attack travelers. Roads and bridges were not repaired. As these problems continued, people lost interest in learning. Schools closed and the people just tried to survive. Civilization lost knowledge of the past. The world seemed to be falling down around them. Because of all of this, historians call this period of history the “Dark Ages.”

Questions:

1- How did the fall of Rome affect the people of Western Europe?

2- Why was trade difficult after the fall of Rome?

3- Why did schools close after the fall of Rome?

4- Why is the period following the fall of Rome known as the “Dark Ages”?

The Franks established the largest of the new Germanic kingdoms. Charlemagne became king of the Franks in 768. He managed to unite all of Western Europe. In 800, Charlemagne was crowned Holy Roman Emperor by the Pope. However, less than 30 years after his death, his empire broke apart. Once again, invaders threatened his empire. Yet Charlemagne greatly influenced Western Europe by expanding the Frankish practice of giving land to his nobles in exchange for their promises of loyalty and service. At the same time, the nobles gave the land to those below them in exchange for similar promises. Peasants put themselves in the service of their local lords for security. This system

protected people from violence and provided for basic economic needs. This system became known as feudalism. Feudalism is a political and military system characterized by the exchange of land for military service.

Questions:

5- Who was Charlemagne and what did he do?

6- What was the Frankish practice regarding land?

7- Why did peasants put themselves in the service of lords?

8- What is feudalism?

9- How did feudalism differ from the political and military system of the Roman Empire?

A major characteristic of feudal society was the development of a strict class structure based on the control of land and military power. Feudalism is based on a fixed social class system similar to the Hindu caste system. The son of a lord was a lord and the son of a serf (a person bound to the lord's land) was a serf. A serf could not leave his lord's land nor could his children. Lords or local nobles were given land by their rulers in exchange for military service. The lords had small armies of their own made up of knights or warriors on horseback. Once again, people were born as serfs or lords and could not change their social position.

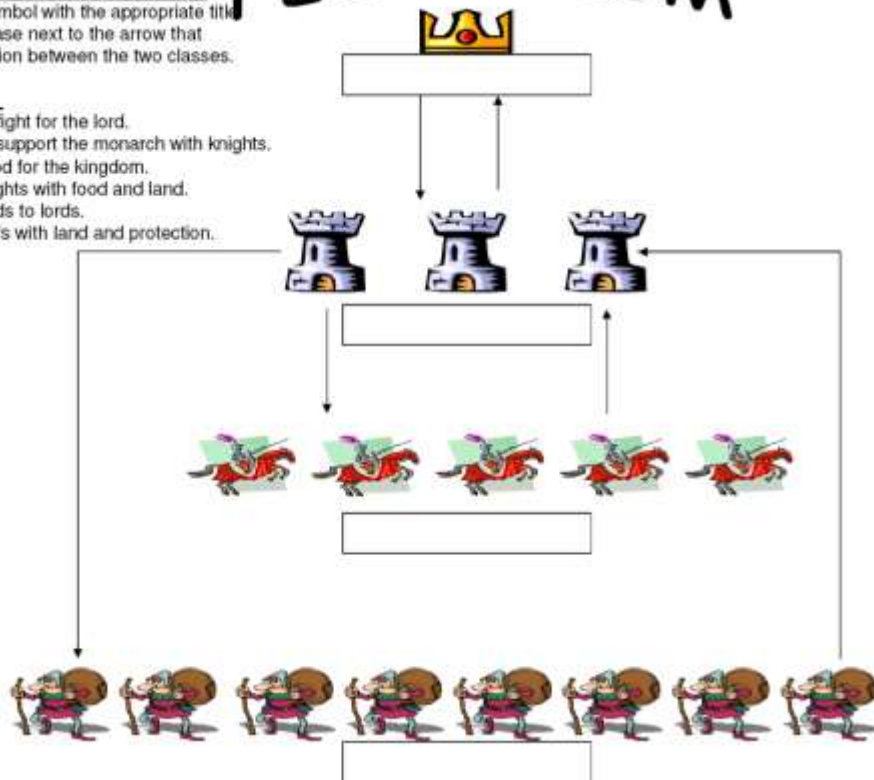
10- Who was a serf and who was a lord?

FEUDALISM

Complete the following organizer for Feudalism.

1. Label each picture/symbol with the appropriate title.
2. Place the correct phrase next to the arrow that describes the interaction between the two classes.

Classes	Phrases
Knight	Promised to fight for the lord.
Monarch	Promised to support the monarch with knights.
Serf	Produced food for the kingdom.
Lord	Provided knights with food and land. Provided lands to lords. Provided serfs with land and protection.



Try to find the following words: feudalism, knight, lord, manor, peasant, Crusade, dagger, fief, helmet, lance, loyalty, noble, soldier, squire, vassal, page, battleax, armor

W N N C N T G D Q X M U W V W
 D R K P T I G J S X K U A G V
 E B K Q O K E M E K P T C G S
 R L V G Q D M D Q I G M M N O
 I N B U A E R I U Q S A P X N
 R J Y O T E J O I I O N P R T
 Q O H O N D V B L W L O L W P
 Z F M Z A A N A O F D R W U B
 A U Z R S S D T Y A I N T U O
 A Z T S A U A T A C E D H B G
 S I A P E R G L L J R E G T K
 H L W F P C G E T A L L I M E
 P J U A I U E A Y M N I N U A
 Z C G Z V E R X E C C C K P B
 G E G F D R F T O V Z I E U F

The King

The King was in complete control under the Feudal System. He owned all the land in the country and decided who he would lease land to. He therefore only allowed those men he could trust to lease land from him. However, before they were given any land they had to swear an oath to remain faithful to the King at all times. The men who leased land from the King were known as Barons; they were wealthy, powerful and had complete control of the land they leased from the King.

Barons

Barons leased land from the King which was known as a manor. They were known as the Lord of the Manor and were in complete control of this land. They established their own system of justice, minted their own money and set their own taxes. In return for the land they had been given by the King, the Barons had to serve on the royal council, pay rent and provide the King with Knights for military service when he demanded it. They also had to provide lodging and food for the King and his court when they traveled around the country. The Barons kept as much of their land as they wished for their own use, then divided the rest among their Knights. Barons were very rich.

Knights

Knights were given land by a Baron in return for military service when demanded by the King. They also had to protect the Baron and his family, as well as the Manor, from attack. The Knights kept as much of the land as they wished for their own personal use and distributed the rest to villeins (serfs). Although not as rich as the Barons, Knights were quite wealthy.

Villeins

Villeins, sometimes known as serfs, were given land by Knights. They had to provide the Knight with free labor, food and service whenever it was demanded. Villeins had no rights. They were not allowed to leave the Manor and had to ask their Lord's permission before they could marry. Villeins were poor.

Summarize Findings:
