

Introduction to Time Capsule: Medieval England – You are There!

You and your children are about to go on the adventure of a lifetime! The best way to learn something and retain the material is to actually experience the lesson firsthand. While I am unable to truly send you back to medieval times, my hope is that these activities will provide as close to a firsthand experience for your family as possible.

The goal of this curriculum is not to learn every fact possible about this time period. Instead, the Time Capsule lessons are bursting with hands-on projects to enable you and your children to not only hear about the medieval times, but also to see, hear, taste, and touch what it would have been like to have lived during this unique time period.

I hope you enjoy your journey. Creating this curriculum has been a blast! It has been incredibly fun to work on these lessons and to experience them with my own children. I hope that you enjoy using this material as much as I have enjoyed creating it. I'd love to hear about your experience!

Michelle Caskey
Michelle@inquisitivemindspress.com

A Few Tips Before You Get Started...

Daily Lessons – The Time Capsule curriculum is set up with 12 full weeks of lessons. The manual contains lists of all of the supplies necessary for each lesson as well as the necessary preparation you will need to do in advance. Each day's lessons also include a variety of options from which you can choose.

Don't feel that you have to complete everything before you move on to the next day's lessons. Each child learns differently and will enjoy different types of projects. Some of the activities are geared more for younger children and some for older ones. Choose a few things you think your child will enjoy as well as a few things that will stretch him or her. If you and your children are having a great time and learning a bunch, however, feel free to dig in and do everything. The choice is completely up to you.

If you have done unit studies in the past that's great; however, this curriculum will be unlike any unit study you have ever done before. Our goal is to expose children to as many different experiences as possible while studying this material. We have included lessons which will teach a variety of subjects including:

- Logic
- History
- Reading
- Literature
- Writing
- Photography

- Social studies
- Drama
- Science
- Math
- Geography
- Arts and crafts
- Drawing
- Art appreciation
- Music appreciation and more

You may decide to use this curriculum exclusively for the 12 week period and let your child completely immerse themselves in this subject material. Or, you may decide to do your regular subjects in the morning and to do your Time Capsule lessons in the afternoon – or on Fridays only – or over summer vacation. There is no right or wrong way to use these lessons. Decide what you think will work best for your family.

Details About Specific Subjects

Writing - Throughout the course of this material, your child should keep a journal of some kind. Depending on the age, interests, and abilities of your child, this journal can take on many different forms. You may decide to have your child write out what they are learning and experiencing as they go. You may decide to have your child draw pictures, take photographs, or print pictures off of the internet. Your child may also want to put some of the flatter objects they create inside of their journal. I recommend you get a 3-ring binder and plastic page protectors for each child who participates in this curriculum to contain their journal entries.

For children who don't enjoy the physical act of writing things down, try to limit what you require from them in this area. This course is about helping your child to experience and enjoy learning about the Middle Ages. If you find that they are resisting you during a certain lesson, feel free to modify the material to make your child more comfortable. A great way to do this is to let your child narrate back to you what they have learned and you can write it down for them.

Photography - Your child will be learning different tips through this course to help them take better photographs. Have your child take pictures while doing the optional activities as well as during other times if they desire. If you have more than one child, have them take pictures of each other as well as their projects. If you have one child, let your child take pictures of YOU performing the above activities and you can take pictures of them. Be sure your child also gets to take pictures of their completed projects if applicable. The best of their photos should be printed and placed inside their journals.

Drama – This portion of the lesson is a great time for you and your children to really ham it up. The more time you take making costumes or props, the more your children will enjoy this piece. Even shy children will come out of their shell if they see you acting with gusto. You may even want to get the whole family involved in these portions of the lesson. That will really thrill the kids!

Depending on how many people will be participating, you may either need to assign multiple parts to each person or take turns reading different parts. You can even change the parts around depending on how many boys and/or girls will be participating. For example, in the first scene of the drama, we changed Thea, the peasant girl into Theo, another peasant boy. We did this to accommodate the fact that we had two boys who needed roles.

We suggest that you run through the script a couple of times and then do a final run through while videotaping (if you have a video camera.) You may decide to set up the camera on a tripod or to have a family member run the camera.

Children will be thrilled to see themselves on screen – and these videos become a wonderful keepsake for helping your child remember their experiences during their Time Capsule lessons. Enjoy this silly time with your kids!

How Do I Get Started? –

Overall:

1. Look through the entire curriculum.
2. Make a list of needed materials which you don't normally have around the house.
3. You may want to give a copy of this list to all of the grandparents – they are usually eager to help out, either with digging up supplies at home or with helping to purchase some of the school supplies for your child.
4. Begin collecting the necessary materials so that you'll have them when you need them. Try to stay at least a week or two ahead on gathering supplies if possible.

Weekly:

1. Familiarize yourself with one week's lessons at a time.
2. Confirm that all of the necessary materials are available.
3. Complete all of the preparations which are necessary for each lesson.
4. You are ready to start the lessons with your children. Have fun!

Table of Contents - Overview

You are a Peasant in Medieval England – Weeks One and Two	1
You are a Tradesman/Tradeswoman in Medieval England – Weeks Three and Four	56
You are a Knight/Lady-in-Waiting in Medieval England – Weeks Five and Six	108
You are a Monk/Nun in Medieval England – Weeks Seven and Eight	161
You are a Baron/Baroness in Medieval England – Weeks Nine and Ten	215
You are a Knight/Queen in Medieval England – Weeks Eleven and Twelve	273
Materials List	330
Suggested Reading List	340

You are a Peasant



in Medieval England

Table of Contents for Peasant Weeks

Week One – You are a Peasant	4
Day One.....	4
Daily Life of a Peasant	4
Create Peasant Clothes	7
Holding the Camera Level and Still	8
Write in Your Journal	9
Reading	10
Day Two	11
Clear a Field of Rocks	11
Listen to Old English.....	11
Making a Model House with Wattle and Daub Construction.....	12
Literature	13
Medieval Instruments.....	14
Day Three.....	15
The Feudal System	15
Literature	16
Ancient England (886 A.D.)	17
Does Differently Colored Light Affect the Growth of Seeds?	18
Peasant Problems	20
Day Four.....	21
The Bayeux Tapestry.....	21
Weaving a Floor Mat.....	22
Reading	23
Learn to Draw a Chicken	23
The Game of Skittles	26
Day Five.....	27
If Peasants Were So Poor, What Did They Eat?.....	27
Write in Your Journal	28
Make an Olive Oil Lamp	29
Literature	30
Peasant Problems 2.....	30

Week Two – You are a Peasant.....	31
Day One.....	31
Clock the Wind.....	31
Hammer Throwing.....	33
Write a Classified Ad.....	33
Frumenty.....	34
Reading.....	35
Day Two.....	36
An Increased Food Supply.....	36
How to Focus the Camera.....	38
Literature.....	39
The Phases of the Moon.....	40
Foot Race.....	41
Day Three.....	42
What Color is My Hair and My Dress?.....	42
Watching a Seed Grow.....	42
Learn to Draw an Ox.....	43
Reading.....	45
Make a Photo Collage of a Peasant’s Life.....	46
Day Four.....	47
The Black Death.....	47
Write in Your Journal.....	48
Literature.....	49
Field Trip to a Local Farm.....	49
Cures for the Black Death.....	49
Day Five.....	50
Bucket Race.....	50
Make a Flyer Warning People about Black Death.....	50
Quiz Bowl.....	51
Reading.....	52
Medieval Adventure, Scene One.....	53
Activity Suggestions for Further Learning and Fun.....	54

Week One – You are a Peasant *Day One*

Daily Life of a Peasant

Materials: None

Preparation: None

Lesson: Peasants did not have an easy life. They lived on land that was owned by someone else and they spent a lot of time working in the fields. Farming has always been a strenuous activity. Can you imagine how hard it would have been before there were tractors and other heavy farming equipment to help take care of the crops? Many peasants woke up at 3am to start their day!



Peasants were at the very bottom of the social ladder. They were not free to do whatever they wanted to do. They had to obey their local lord. A man named Jean Froissart wrote this description of peasant life back in 1395:

“It is the custom in England, as with other countries, for the nobility to have great power over the common people, who are serfs. This means that they are bound by law and custom to plough the field of their masters, harvest the corn, gather it into barns, and thresh

and winnow the grain; they must also mow and carry home the hay, cut and collect the wood, and perform all manner of tasks of this kind.”

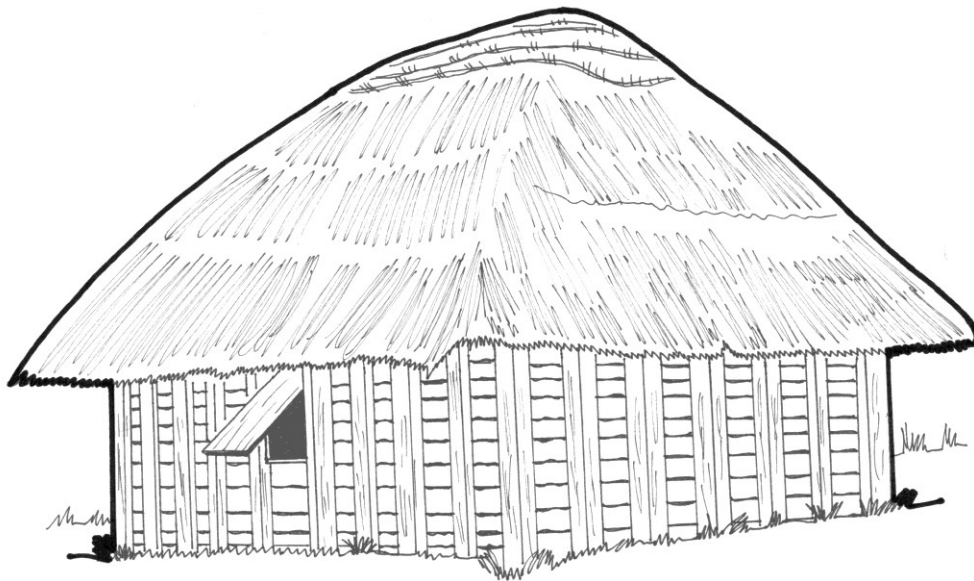
Mr. Froissart called these people “serfs.” A serf is a type of peasant. In fact, there were three different types of peasants during the Middle Ages:

1. **Slaves** – These people could be bought and sold.
2. **Serfs** – These people lived and worked on land that was owned by someone else.
3. **Freemen** – These people actually owned all or part of the land they worked. Some freemen were able to make a good living for themselves.

Even though most peasants had a hard life and didn’t have much political power they were extremely important to medieval society. They are the ones who grew the food. Imagine how hungry the rest of the people would have been if the peasants decided to stop growing food!

Peasant villages were small and between ten and sixty families lived there. Peasants lived in small, simple houses without much furniture or other possessions inside other than a table, a few stools, and a chest. Their houses were made from wood or straw. The floor was covered with straw or reeds. These were woven together to make mats which covered the floor. They also scattered herbs under the mats so that when they were stepped on, fresh scents were released into the air.

The windows of the poorest peasant houses were just holes in the wall as they wouldn’t have been able to afford to buy glass.



Houses wouldn’t have had any running water. This means no bathtubs, no sinks, and no toilets. There also wasn’t any soap or shampoo. You may think it was wonderful not to have to take

baths; however, people were covered in dirt and fleas and lice. Their beds were mattresses stuffed with dried leaves or straw which attracted even more bugs. They went to the bathroom in a bucket which they emptied into the nearest river each morning. How would you like for that to be your job?

Peasants were said to be given only two full baths in their lifetime: once when they were born and once when they died. They did wash up their hands and faces, however, using water they had gathered from the river. Unfortunately, this was often the same river where they had just dumped their bathroom buckets. No one understood about germs or bacteria during this time.

Families cooked and slept in the same room. There was a hole in the middle of the ceiling so that smoke could escape through the roof. Children slept in a loft if their house was big enough. Each family also had its own vegetable garden.

At night, the poorest peasants brought their animals inside with them! This was to keep them safe from wolves and bears and to keep them from wandering off. It also prevented others from stealing their valuable livestock! Can you imagine the smell?!? These animals weren't house trained. They also brought in more fleas and flies.

Peasant children lived hard lives. Many of them died from disease before they even reached their first year. Peasant children didn't go to school in these days. They weren't educated much beyond being taught to farm and/or to develop whatever other life skills the parents thought might be necessary for survival. You might think this sounds like fun as well, but these children worked in the fields with their parents as soon as they were able. Often children were used to pick up all of the stones in a field and to chase birds away while their parents were planting seeds. It was back breaking work and the children didn't have much hope that their lives would ever improve. For peasants, life was nasty, rough and short.

For the next two weeks you will pretend to be a peasant living in medieval England. You will get to experience some of the hardships and work that a peasant would have experienced. As you complete these activities and go about your day, try to imagine what it was like to do these things all day every day of your life. Do your best to imagine how a peasant child might have felt knowing that this was their reality. They wouldn't have had much hope that their life was ever going to get better.

Make an Olive Oil Lamp

Materials:

- A glass jar with a wide mouth (a ½ pint canning jar or an empty baby food jar works well)
- Extra virgin olive oil
- A piece of scrap paper approximately 3” x 3”
- A fire source – it will be much easier if you use a propane fire starter versus a match
- Hot pad
- A glass or plate which is larger than the opening of your jar for snuffing out the fire
- Graph Paper (optional)



Preparation: None

Lesson: Before the fall of the Roman Empire, people often made candles using olive oil. In the beginning of the Middle Ages, however, olive oil became scarce. People began making candles by melting animal fat and pouring it into a mold. They used rushes (a thin type of grass) to make wicks. In this activity, you will make your own lamp using olive oil.

Activity:

1. Add some olive oil to the jar. You don't need much – just an inch or so is plenty. The more you use, however, the longer you will be able to burn your lamp.
2. Wad up the piece of scrap paper and place it in the middle of your jar. This will serve as your wick.
3. Light the wick. You may need to hold the flame on the paper for several seconds to really get it going. Also, try to get the paper lit before it absorbs too much olive oil. Be persistent. This does work!
4. Your lamp will burn for several hours, especially if you used a larger amount of olive oil. Be very careful because the longer your lamp burns, the hotter the glass will become.

Parent Note: You may want to place it on a hot pad or on some other surface which is safe to hold hot substances.

5. Optionally, you may want to have your child graph how much oil is burned each hour.
6. To extinguish the flame, **DO NOT pour water onto your lamp.** You will need to cut off the supply of oxygen to your lamp by placing a glass or ceramic object, such as a larger bowl or plate, overtop of your lamp. This will quickly snuff out the fire.

Week Twelve – You are a King/Queen

Day One

Write in Your Journal

Materials:

- Your child's journal
- Paper
- Pencil, colored pencils, markers, etc.

Preparation: None

Parent Note: Have your child write down a few key points about what they learned about a medieval feast. Depending on their age and ability, you can require your child to write one sentence or several paragraphs. You can also have them draw a picture or print pictures from the internet as well.

Possible Writing Prompt: Imagine you are either a court jester or a regular dinner guest at a medieval feast. Describe the sights and sounds and tastes. How did it feel to be in attendance? Were you in awe of the royal family?

You Can Lift Your Parent!

Materials:

- A large, wooden block or a brick
- A plank which is at least 1 in. thick and at least 4 ft. long

Preparation: None

Lesson: People during medieval times knew all about simple machines. In fact, they used simple machines quite often in their daily lives. There are six simple machines: pulley, lever, wedge, screw, wheel and axle, and inclined plane. For today's lesson, we are going to use a simple machine called a lever for you to easily lift your parent into the air!



1. First, make a lever by placing the plank on top of the wooden block, which is the fulcrum. **Parent Note:** You'll want to set this up near something that you can hang onto because you're going for a ride!)
2. Be sure the fulcrum is closer to the end of the plank where the parent will stand.
3. Have the adult stand on their end of the plank.
4. Have the child step onto their end of the plank.
5. What happens? The adult should be lifted off of the ground. If it doesn't work, move the fulcrum even closer to where the adult is standing and try again – or try using a longer plank.

Week Twelve – You are a King/Queen Day Two

Different Types of Castles

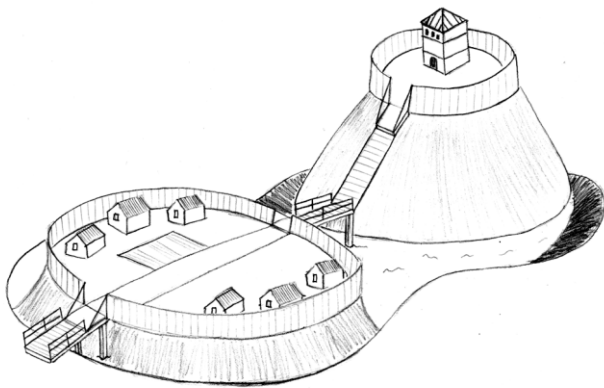
Materials:

- 9 craft sticks (the wider, tongue depressor style)
- 4-6 rubber bands
- 1 plastic spoon
- Several mini marshmallows

Preparation: None

You or your child should read this lesson aloud.

Lesson: When you think of a castle, a picture probably comes to mind of a large, stone structure with crenellated walls. Did you know that castles were actually built in five distinct styles and that the very first castles were made of dirt and wood?

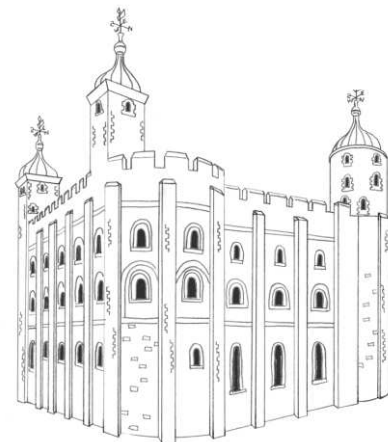


The Motte and Bailey Castle was the very first type of European castle. At least 500 of them were built in England beginning in the 10th century. They began being built in Normandy and were introduced into England by William the Conqueror following his invasion.

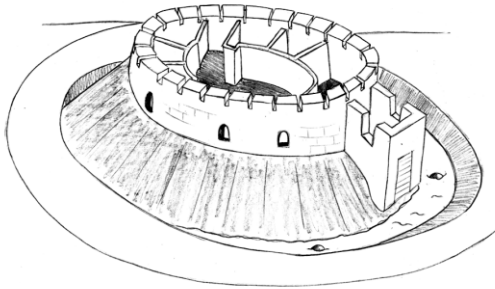
This type of castle consisted of a mound of dirt which was surrounded by a Bailey or a courtyard which is surrounded by a wall or fence. These castles were relatively easy and

cheap to build. First, two circular ditches were dug. The soil that was removed from the ditches was used to build the motte and to form a berm around the ditches. Then, a stockade fence was built around the outside. The keep was built on top of the motte.

In the 11th century, people began to build castles with a stone keep. The first of these was built with the rectangular shape with which we are familiar today. The Tower of London is an example of this type of castle. These stone castles were definitely an improvement over the motte and bailey structures; however, they were so heavy that they couldn't be constructed on top of a motte.



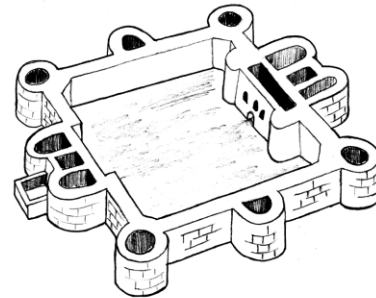
The rectangular stone keep castles were surrounded by curtain walls which were also made of stone. Also, the only entrance to these castles was often on the second story, making it difficult for enemies to gain entrance.



In the 13th century, people began to build castles with a shell keep, which was a circular or semi-circular stone wall with various buildings built inside of it.

The Concentric Castle began being built shortly after this. It was a

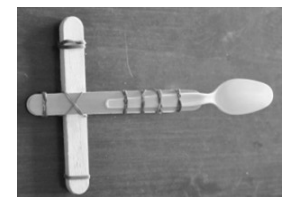
combination of a shell keep and a rectangular keep. This type of castle had multiple defensive walls built in concentric circles. Often, they were also surrounded by moats for an additional line of defense.



One of the important improvements in castle design at this point was the change from rectangular buildings to circular ones. Round towers were much stronger and more able to withstand attack. Square towers had corners which were more vulnerable to attackers digging beneath them causing them to collapse. Square towers also had angles which formed blind spots allowing attackers to hide.

Activity: For this activity, we will be making a catapult.

1. Take 7 of the craft sticks and tie a rubber band tightly around one end.
2. Tie a rubber band around the opposite end of the sticks as well.
3. Take the remaining 2 craft sticks and tie a rubber band tightly around one end of them as well. Try to do this near the edge of the sticks.
4. Insert the 7 sticks banded together through the 2 stick bundle.
5. Tie a rubber band in a cross fashion joining the two pieces. The closer the 7 stick bundle gets to the edge, the more leverage the catapult will have.
6. Use a few rubber bands to attach the plastic spoon to the end of the 2-stick bundle.
7. Stick a marshmallow on the spoon, pull the spoon down, and let the marshmallow fly! That's it. You have a working catapult.



Now that you have finished, use your catapult to storm the cardboard castle you made previously. Use the marshmallows and have a great time! ☺

Literature

Materials:

- Arthur High King of Britain by Michael Morpurgo

Preparation: None

Parent Note: Read this book aloud and discuss it with your child.

King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table

Materials:

- Paper and pencil

Preparation: None

Lesson: If you've been reading the book *Arthur High King of Britain*, as we suggested, you've been learning a lot about the legend of King Arthur. You may also have heard many other snippets about King Arthur in the past. He is definitely a legendary figure! There is also a chance that he was a real king – or that the stories about him were based on the life of one or more real kings.



For this lesson, try rewriting the story of the Sword and the Stone from someone else's viewpoint. You might decide to write as an unseen observer in the woods. For a very interesting story, try writing from the point of view of the sword or the stone! You may want to put your completed story in your journal.