

# Medieval Document Based Question

**Question:** Which labels for the Middle Ages best describe the era between 500 and 1400 in Europe: The Dark Ages, the Age of Feudalism, the Age of Faith, or the Golden Age of Europe? You must discuss three labels.

## Document 1

In the Middle Ages, Eastern Franks made the first widespread use of siegeable castles to control their Europe. In the ninth and tenth centuries, (J&M, 111, 112), pp. 153.

The Franks, as in the past, through the mountains. The divisions (German invasions) have spread in successive waves over the South. The Hungarians swarm over the Eastern provinces. . . . They sacked towns and killed and laid waste the fields. They burned down the churches and then departed with a crowd of captives. . . . There is no longer any trace of increasing luxury. . . . The secular and ecclesiastical lands covered fields to avoid the violence of attacks. The people have gone to cover in the depths of the forests to the inaccessible regions, or have taken refuge in the high mountains. . . . Society and its leaders are governmentless.

## Document 3

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle on the invasion of England.

842 E. ðra gæst-hira was a great abigayter in London and Queneore and in ðe heofor.  
846 According to their custom the Northmen burned . . . and burned the town of Drocecht. . . . the Mercians, with their king, killed the Danes, but, in ending both men and goods, returned in their own country. . . .

## Document 5

A Church council calls for the observance of the Peace of God, 1027

. . . That from the first day of the Advent of our Lord through Epiphany . . . and throughout the entire years, Sunday, Friday, and Saturday, and on the first days of the four seasons . . . the degree of peace shall be observed. . . . so far as no one may commit murder, arson, robbery, or assault on one may injure another with a sword, club, or any kind of weapon. . . . If . . . every day is to be so-called, the law of the lord is to be observed, but on this condition that no injury shall be done in any way to any one. . . . If it shall happen that any castle is besieged, during the days when we mentioned within the peace, the besiegers shall refrain from attack unless they are set upon by the besieged and compelled to leave the latter town. . . .

## Document 7

The development of the positive aspects of the Middle Ages was taken from *Man and Machine* by H. G. Wells, Oxford University Press, 1945, p. 75.

. . . Medieval culture was imperfect, was restricted to a narrow circle of superior minds. . . . Thus, as it is, it was, by the memories and the reinforcements that it has bequeathed to the modern world, and it will be found not unwisely to rank with those of Greece and Rome. . . . I am biased in the matter of rank, as you will see. Some positive and manifold utilitarianism we must judge of them by their philosophy, and not by their poetry and religiousness. . . .

## Document 2

This excerpt from the *History of the Kings of France* by John of Gual.

. . . John of Gaul, monk of Sens, that I am the legitimate lord of the county and countship of Champagne. . . . I will add the count of Champagne in my own person, and will send to the count who counts of Champagne the knights who were given to me to have for the diet which I hold of them. . . .

## Document 6

This excerpt describes the Middle Ages. (From *Great City*, by The Medieval Period, in *The 48 Hours of the National Geographic Society*, 1964, pp. 69-70.)

. . . The life of a town was more difficult to describe as "dark" had remarkable variety and excitement. Even at its worst it performed the function of guarding, frequently by accident and chance. The knowledge and resources of what had transpired but were sure it was true, and instead of a dark, unrelieved, later ages great richness of its own.

## Document 4

Revised 1170-1180

Y. central of Continental Europe	East of coast Chloveson Europe
W. 1170-1180 W. 1170-1180	W. 1170-1180



## Document 8

This excerpt is from the monastic vows of Brother Gerard.

I hereby renounce my parents, my brothers and relatives, my friends, my possessions. . . . and the vain and empty glory and pleasure of this world. I also renounce my own will, for the will of God. I accept all the hardships of the monastic life, and take the vows of poverty, chastity, and piety, in the hope of heaven; and I promise to sustain a monk in this monastery all the days of my life.

## Document 9

In 1095, Pope Urban II issued a call for a holy crusade – a war to recapture the Holy Land.

. . . Ye are brethren who live in the (Middle East) in urgent need of your help. . . . For, as most of you have heard, the Turks and the Arabs have attacked them and have conquered the territory of Jerusalem (the Byzantine Empire). . . . They have captured more and more of the lands of these Christians. . . . They have killed and captured many, and have destroyed the churches and devastated the Empire. . . . and who die by the way, whether by land or sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins.

## Document 10

