

Present a 5- 10 minute skit to class about the

Life on a Fiefdom.

Choose no more than 4 other people to be in the skit.

The purpose of the skit is to bring to life the details of the everyday life in Feudal Europe.

Use your packet, text pages 294 -299, and Orange Life in Medieval Times books on the table. Make sure you explain the role of the nobles (lords and Vassals), knights, members of the clergy, women (lords and peasants) and peasants in actions or script of the players.

Costumes are optional but you need at least 2 props per person to enhance the performance. Example - peasant could have a rake. Examples for plot - peasant comes to pay lord his share of the crops. - Lord has a Christmas celebration and invites all the members of the manor. - Lord takes a tour of his holdings.

Write down your script and turn it in. This does not have to be typed. You may use copies of your script in the performance. Individually turn in answers on the packet.

NO puppet shows. This must be presented on the last day of that task time.

The Manor

Key Terms

manors Farming communities (page 375)

seneschal Medieval official who looked after the noble's fiefs (page 375)

bailiff Medieval official who saw that peasants did their work (page 376)

freemen Peasants who paid the noble for the right to farm land (page 377)

Drawing From Experience

How do you think you would feel if you knew that you could never move from where you are living now? How would you feel if you had to stay at one place to work for the rest of your life?

In the last section, you read about the lives of knights. This section focuses on life on a manor.

Organizing Your Thoughts

Use the chart below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about the role of each of the following in a manor.

	Role in the Manor
Seneschal	
Bailiff	
Freemen	
Serfs	

Read to Learn

Daily Life (page 375)

Nobles and peasants depended on the land for everything they needed. The land was divided into **manors**, or farming communities. Manors were found on fiefs. They were owned by nobles.

Several officials were chosen by nobles to run the manors. They made sure the nobles' orders were carried out. One official was the **seneschal**. He looked over the fief by visiting it regularly. Another official was the **bailiff**. He made sure the peasants worked hard in the fields. Each manor had its own court of law. It settled differences, gave out punishments, and discussed manor business.

Section 4 *(continued)*

The people in each manor produced food, clothing, and shelter for themselves and the noble. The noble lived in a wooden house or castle. Nearby was the village where the peasants lived. Most villages included a church, a mill, and a bread oven. Around the village were forests, pastures, and fields. The cottages of the peasants were crowded around an open area called the village green. Most cottages had only one room. Three-legged stools and a table were the only furniture. Diseases from animals that also slept in the cottage often made people sick.

1. What two officials helped run a manor?

Freemen and Serfs

Two groups of peasants worked on the manor. **Freemen**, or peasants who paid the noble for the right to farm the land, worked only on their own strips of land and had rights under the law. They moved wherever and whenever they wished. However, the noble had the right to throw them off the manor without warning.

The other group of peasants was the serfs. They were the property of the noble. They could not move to another area, own their own property, or marry without a noble's permission. But serfs could not be driven off the land. They also did not have to serve in the army.

It was difficult for serfs to gain their freedom. One way was to escape to the towns. If a serf remained in the town without getting caught for one year, he or she was considered free. Eventually, serfs were allowed to buy their freedom.

The serfs worked in the fields and performed services for the nobles. They spent three days of the week working the lord's land and the other days working their own strips of land. Yet they had to give part of their own crops to the noble. They also had to pay the noble for using the village's mill and oven.

On Sundays, the serfs rested from work. At Christmas, the lord gave a great feast and entertainment. When they could, serfs took part in sports such as wrestling and soccer.

By the 1200s, peasants began to learn better farming methods. They used the three-field system of farming. They also used heavy iron plows and horses to plow the fields. This helped serfs grow more crops.

2. What two groups of peasants worked the manor?

The Nobility

Key Terms

castles Stone houses where nobles lived (page 370)

keep Tall tower with thick walls (page 371)

ladies Noblewomen (page 372)

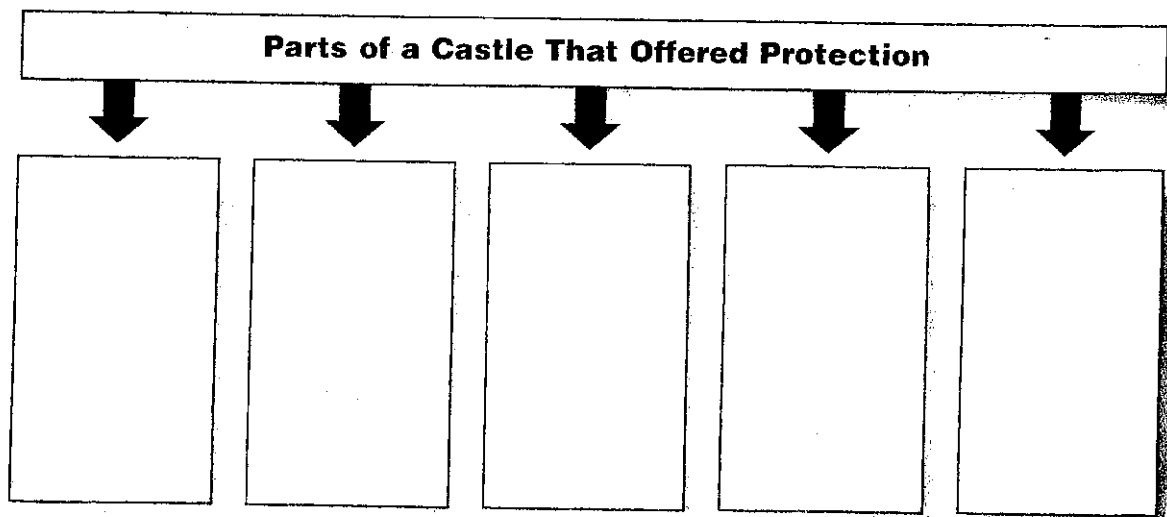
Drawing From Experience

Would you like to live in a castle? Why? What do you think life in a castle would be like?

In the last section, you read about the beginning of feudalism. This section focuses on the life of the nobility.

Organizing Your Thoughts

Use the diagram below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about the parts of a castle that contributed to its security and offered protection.



Read to Learn

The Castle

Nobles and their families lived in wooden houses surrounded by *palisades*, or high wooden fences built for protection. In case of attacks, the people from the villages sought shelter inside the palisade. The house consisted of one room with a high ceiling and a straw-covered floor. All activities took place in that room. Nobles met with vassals there. The nobles and

Section 2 (continued)

their families also ate and slept in the room. Wooden tables were set up with food. People ate and threw scraps of food on the floor for the dogs. The fires that cooked the meals also heated the house, but the fires did not keep the house very warm.

By the 1100s, nobles were living in stone houses called **castles**. They made nobles feel more secure. Castles had thick stone walls, one within another. There was a lookout tower in each corner of the castle. Some castles had further protection by a moat with a soft and muddy bottom. This stopped attackers from using ladders to climb over the outer walls. To cross the moat, a person had to use the castle's drawbridge, which was raised to stop people from entering. The drawbridge led to an iron gate that was the entrance to the castle.

Within the castle walls was an open area. In the middle of this area was a **keep**, or tall tower with thick walls. It had a great hall, rooms, and a dungeon. The household lived in the keep. Shops, kitchens, and stables were also located inside the castle walls.

Many people lived in the castle. They included the nobles' servants and officials. They were responsible for the castle's care because the noble was away fighting much of the time. Most castles had plenty of storage for large supplies of food and drink. Thus, people inside a castle could hold out against attackers for many months.

1. In what part of the castle did the noble's household live?

Castle Life

At home, nobles looked after their estates, hunted, fished, and held court. They played chess with their family and listened to minstrels, who sang songs and played instruments.

Noblewomen were called **ladies**. Husbands had complete authority over their wives. Most marriages were planned to unite important families. A woman had little say about who was chosen to be her husband. Most nobles looked for wives with large dowries.

Wives helped their husbands run their estates. The women defended the castle when the men were away. The main duties of wives were to have and raise children and to take care of the household. Wives also trained young girls from other castles in household duties. In addition, wives used plants and herbs to care for the poor and the sick people on her husband's fief.

2. What were the main duties of nobles' wives?
