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| Course Syllabus  Medieval History  8th Grade |

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| ****Instructor:** Ms. Loftis** |
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# Course Overview

What is history? What is the role of history within liberal education? At its simplest, history is the study of change over time. People, places, and ideas change, and part of the historian’s task is to find out why and how these changes occur. Rather than simply asking, “what happened?” the historian should always ask the more involved question, “why did this happen *at this time*?” Through the posing of this latter question, historical inquiry becomes an attempt to come to a deeper understanding of what it means to be human throughout various times, places, and cultures. History allows us to perceive the connection between our predecessors and ourselves: the desires and concerns that we share with them as well as their unique thoughts and achievements. Further, in learning how past peoples were both like and unlike us, we come to a greater understanding of ourselves and we deepen our sense of both our individuality and shared humanity. Ultimately, history allows us to experience the immensity and grandeur of the world as well as locate ourselves in it, while helping us to understand and critique our own culture by contemplating the experiences of those who preceded us.

# Course Objectives

This course seeks to initiate students in the ideas and events of the Middle Ages, approximately AD 100 to 1500. Students will read both primary and secondary texts in order to understand the medieval moment within the Western tradition. A breakdown of the year follows:

**Fall Semester**

Ancient Heritage • Christianity • The Making of Western Europe • The Empires of the Early Middle Ages • Restoration of an Ordered Society

**Spring Semester**

The Flowering of Medieval Civilization • The Urban Economy and the Consolidation of States • Breakdown and Renewal in an Age of Plague • Tradition and Change in European Culture • The Song of Roland

Through the rational investigation of course concepts, students will be asked to discuss various issues involved in cultural transformation as they develop and deepen their skills of critical thinking and analysis. To this end, we study the facts of history, or, in other words, we study the quantifiable data of change over time. History, of course, is not merely a summary of information—names, dates, and events—but, also, it cannot be understood without these building blocks. While the student of history must study, memorize, and digest information, he or she must also work toward understanding the narrative of history. Learning history should increase the student’s ability to understand and memorize concrete information and use this information to recognize and discuss more abstract concepts. The analysis of these discrete facts will lead to the broader synthesis of time periods, historical movements, and intellectual trends.

Throughout the year we will be reading our textbook, *The Western Experience*, as well as primary sources, including laws, poetry, philosophy, and accounts of battles. We will study as much art and architecture as we can, and we will even try our own hand at calligraphy. Ultimately, we will strive to understand the people of the Middle Ages and to develop a sense of history in order to understand and analyze both the past and the present.

# Course Materials

The following is a list of books and sources that each student is expected to have for this course. If you are missing any of these texts, please tell Ms. Loftis.

*The Western Experience, Ninth or Tenth Edition*

*The Song of Roland*

*The Travels of Marco Polo*

And other texts to be distributed throughout the year

Students should report to class each day with the following materials:

1. Two pens (black or dark blue ink) and a pencil for taking notes.
2. A **three-ring binder or section of a binder** with blank paper for notes. I will be giving you handouts to read and complete during the year, and these will be punched to add into your binder.
3. Colored pencils to be kept in locker.
4. The text we are currently using.

Failure to come to class prepared with the appropriate materials for the day results in 1) detention, 2) parental notification, 3) administrative action.

# Tutoring Hours

Tutoring is available weekly and will be announced at the end of the first week of school. Students can also make an appointment to meet. Students should come to tutoring prepared with questions or to discuss a specific topic relating to the Middle Ages. I am happy to help students who would like extra help or clarification.

# Assignments and Assessments

1. **Tests:** Major tests may be given as we complete each unit of study; we will typically have three to four per quarter in addition to the semester final exams.
2. **Quizzes**: Quizzes may be announced or unannounced, and will often be short answer, fill-ins, or True/False. Doing well on these, as well as being able to study from them, can help you be successful on larger assessments.
3. **Class Participation:** Sense of wonder, depth of inquiry, passion for learning, and openness to the ideas of others are a large part of grade in this class. Regular participation is expected of all students.

# Late Assignment Policy

***Homework turned in one day late without an excuse (such as illness) will be worth a maximum of 50%. Homework turned in after that will not be accepted.*** Unless instructed, all students must write in complete sentences on all assignments and must arrive with homework in hand in paper form. No digital versions of homework will be accepted (email, flash-drives, etc.)

# Absence and Makeup Policy

If absent, it is always **the student's responsibility** to obtain the assignment within a timely period after being away. Each student is responsible for getting notes and reading assignments from fellow classmates. If a student is absent the day an assignment is due, it must be turned in the day of his return, unless extenuating circumstances, described in a signed note, clarify enough cause for a day’s grace. For a missed test or quiz, **the student must come prepared to take the test the day he returns** to school. If absence was for a long period, or there were extenuating circumstances, ***it is up to the student***to come to the teacher to schedule a make-up exam. The student must visit the teacher the day of return after a long absence in order to come up with a make-up plan.

# Course Grading

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| **Course Work** | **Percentage** |
| Participation | 20% |
| Tests | 30% |
| Quizzes | 20% |
| Homework | 20% |
| Project | 10% |
| **TOTAL** | **100%** |

# Academic Policies and Institutional Resources

All student work (tests, quizzes, homework, projects) will be returned within one week of submission, with minor exceptions. Essays will be returned within two weeks of submission. Please refer to Scottsdale Prep’s Family Handbook for more information on the academy’s policies.

# Signature

I have read and understand the course overview and syllabus.

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Print Name

X\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Signature

X\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Signature

Parent’s best phone number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s best email address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_