William the Conqueror and the Feudal System

In 1066 England was invaded for the last time by William the Conqueror from Normandy.

He fought and won the Battle of Hastings which gave him the title King of England.

It was William's planned invasion and mounted cavalry that helped him win the battle.

William’s success also brought the Feudal System that existed in Europe to Britain. It allowed a King to govern large kingdoms through local Lords or vassals.

The Feudal System was a social system based on land loyalty and religious faith.

The King defended his Lords from attack and settled disputes that arose. The local Lords in turn, governed the local people or serfs.

All of these allegiances were the basis of the feudal system, which was basically a contract or formal agreement between the King, his vassals (the nobles or lords) and the nobles’ vassals, the commoners or serfs.
William the Conqueror and the Feudal System

Directions: Read pages 44-47 in your text Pathways - Civilizations Through Time and answer the following questions;

1. Provide Definitions for the following vocabulary words:
   - allegiance
   - lord of the manor
   - homage
   - freeholder
   - contract
   - to exploit

2. Answer the following questions using COMPLETE SENTENCES:
   a. Explain how a feudal system worked. (2 mks for quality of answer)
   b. What did the King give to the nobles (lords) in exchange for their loyalty and what did the nobles get in return? (2 mks)
   c. How was a Freeholder different from a serf? (1m)
   d. Who made up the largest percentage of the population? Monarchs (Kings), Nobles (Lords) or Commoners (Freeholder and Serfs)? How were they exploited? (2 mks for quality of answer)

Total: ____/ 13
The Manor

The King's land was divided amongst his nobles into Manors.

Each Manor usually had farming lands, woodlands, common pastures and at least one village.

Each Manor was therefore almost completely self-sufficient

The noble in charge or the Lord of the Manor set aside land for himself that was used to farm for profit. These were called Demesne.

The Lord of the Manor usually had a manager called a Bailiff who was responsible for the day to day activities of the Manor.

The Freeholders and Serf were used to work the land and were responsible to the Lord of the Manor.

The Church was also given parcels of the Kings land similar to a Manor.
The Organization of the Manor

Kingdoms were often very large areas that were similar to a modern day country. In fact the feudal system was an effective way of governing large numbers of people, without the benefits of modern day conveniences such as common currency, telephones, computers etc.. that modern governments use today.

The simple Feudal System allowed the King to run, defend and profit from a large organized community of people.

The Manor is a good example as to how the Feudal System was used in day to day life. A Manor consisted of a large area of the King's land that was given to a trusted noble to run. The noble became the Lord of the Manor and was responsible for the people on the Manor lands.

Each Manor had to be self-sufficient, or had to insure that they produced all the food and goods they would every need by themselves. To insure that all the work was done in an orderly fashion, the freeholders and serfs had to pay rent.

Each Freeholder or Serf had to:

1. Work on the Lord's land so many days a week.

2. Give a portion of the food they produced each year (corn, meat, eggs, wool, wood, etc...) to the Lord.

3. They had to pay to use the Lord's mill and bread oven, usually in the form of a portion of the flour or bread.

4. Pay taxes when they had a child or were married. They also had to pay taxes whenever the Lord needed more money for himself or the King.

5. Remain in his or her village.
The Lord of the Manor had to take all of this from the Commoners (freeholders and Serfs) because each Lord of the Manor had to report and pay rent to the King.

**Each Lord of the Manor had to:**

1. Pay homage to the King at the royal court every year and promise to obey him.

2. Provide the King with a set number of armed and trained Knights (usually 20-30) to fight for the King when he called for them.

3. Provide the King with a certain amount of food and money yearly as well as on special occasions (weddings, etc.).

The Church played an important role in the Feudal System. The Church played a role similar to the Nobles in that they too were given parts of the King's land to govern or look after. But instead of taxing or providing money for the King, the Church paid rent to the King in other ways.

**The Church would:**

1. Support the King by threatening God's anger on anyone who disobeys him (everyone was deeply religious and usually did what the Bishops and the Priests told them)

2. Pray to God to help the King in running the country or Pray for him to be successful in battle.

3. Help the King run the country. The Bishops were counselors, and the Priests and Monks did most of the writing work (few people outside the Church could read or write).

4. Occasionally find Knights for the King.
The Manor Map Assignment

Map # 1

The Feudal System flourished in Western Europe. It did so for a variety of reasons, many of them due to the simple geography of the region.

Read the instructions found on page 49 of your text, Pathways - Civilizations Through Time and complete a map using the outline below.

You will be marked out of 5 for completion of map and following of instructions (found on page 49) and 5 marks for spelling, neatness, and quality of work, for a TOTAL MARK of 10.

over...
Map # 2

During medieval times, self-sufficiency was absolutely necessary. Manors had to grow enough food on the manor lands to feed the community all year.

Each manor looked similar to the Manor map found on page 48 of your text, *Pathways - Civilizations Through Time*.

Your assignment is to create your own map of a Manor in the space provided below.

You will be marked out of 5 for inclusion of all headings outlined on page 48 (Lord’s Demesne, Bake House, Common Pasture, etc.) and 5 for spelling, neatness and quality of work, for a TOTAL MARK of 10.
Commoners and People of the Middle Ages

There were two types of Commoners who made up all of the Middle Ages work force. The Serfs and the Freeholders.

The Serf were considered to be property of the Manor and although they were granted rights to farm part of the Manor’s pastures, they did not actually own it.

Because the Serfs were considered property, they could never leave the Manor lands and were expected to work on the Lords Demesne.

The Freeholders were different in that they own their own small portions of land.

The Freeholders could leave at any time, but while they were on the Manor they had to pay rent.

The Commoners often lived in small, one bedroom houses, and they slept in low beds made of straw.

While the men worked in the fields, the women worked around the house, making clothes, baking bread and caring for the young. There were very few Grandparents around to help because most people died quite young.
Commoners and People of the Middle Ages

Directions: 1. Match and color the descriptions with the pictures found on the attached page.
2. Answer the questions provided.

1. **Knights/Crusaders.** Noblemen who sought to help recapture the Holy Lands from the Turks were Knights/Crusaders. Crusader comes from the Latin word “crux”, meaning cross. Crusaders often use the cross as a symbol.

2. **Serfs.** The serfs owned nothing. They lived on the lord’s land, grew their own food and worked for the lord of the manor in his fields. They had no freedom. When necessary they fought in the lord’s battles. For all this they received protection.

3. **Nuns.** Religious women who left their homes to live together in order to save their souls were called nuns. The church welcomed all and no doubt many women entered nunneries to escape poverty.

4. **Shepherds.** Tending to the sheep of the manor was the job of the shepherds. It was lonely and often unrewarding work.

5. **Noblewomen.** The ladies of the castle supervised the upbringing of their children, gave instructions to their servants on the day-to-day running of the castle. They spent some time making medicines from herbs and tending to the poor. If they were able to read, they taught reading to the pages. In their spare time they sewed or worked on tapestries.

6. **Monks.** Men who left the company of ordinary men to live together away from worldly temptations and affairs were called monks. They took vows of obedience, poverty and chastity. Their first concern was to save their own souls. Many became well educated, and as time went on monasteries became centers of learning.

7. **Pilgrims.** Medieval Christians made pilgrimages to the Holy Land to visit the places where Jesus lived and died. The travelers who made their way to these lands were called pilgrims. They traveled great distances to receive special blessings and to ask forgiveness for their sins.

8. **Troubadours.** No one is certain when troubadours began to appear. We know that most of their songs dealt with love between knights and ladies, of gallant deeds the knights performed and the inspiration of their ladies for those deeds.

9. **Bishops.** The bishops were noblemen of the church. They sometimes ruled over large land holdings and had knights under them. The Church stood for mercy, piety and dignity of all before God. For many of the poor, rising in the ranks of the church was their only chance to become equal of a noble.
Questions

Directions: Use the above information to answer the following questions, using complete sentences when asked.

1. Put the following people into the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knights/Crusaders</th>
<th>Shepherds</th>
<th>Pilgrims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serfs</td>
<td>Noblewomen</td>
<td>Troubadours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuns</td>
<td>Monks</td>
<td>Bishops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commoners</th>
<th>Nobles</th>
<th>Church Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. If you were a poor male or female serf who was unhappy with the life that you were born into, how would you go about changing your life? What were your options, if any, and what could you hope to achieve? Answer using complete sentence(s). 3 marks for a good answer, 1 mark for O.K., with few mistakes, 0 for an ugly answer that is either wrong or has too many mistakes to make any sense.

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
**Belief and Devotion**

The people of the middle ages were deeply religious

They saw evidence of God’s hand in their everyday lives, bringing them success or failure, sickness or health, rain or drought.

The Church reinforced the idea that people should accept and be happy with their position in life (either as a noble or a commoner) as it was all part of God’s plan.

Between 800 and 1300 the Catholic Church was the only religious institution in Western Europe and was therefore very influential and very powerful.

The Church was also very wealthy because of its land holdings and the church tithe or tax on the commoners.

Commoners who were both inspired and who wanted to improve their lifestyle, either entered the church as a monk or a nun.
Belief and Devotion Assignment Sheet

Directions: Read pages 54-56 in your text Pathways - Civilization Through Time and answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper.

1. Provide definitions for the following vocabulary words:

   - sceptical of
   - relic
   - ecclesiastical
   - to excommunicate
   - tithe

2. Answer the following questions using COMPLETE SENTENCES:
   a) Describe how the Catholic Church became such a powerful institution in the Middle Ages. (2 marks for quality of answer)
   b) Explain what it meant to be excommunicated from the Church. (2 marks for quality of answer)
   c) In what ways was the Church’s influence over people a positive thing? A negative thing? (2 marks for quality of answer)
Middle Ages Law & Contact w/ Asia

Many of our own legal customs and traditions originated in some form from the Middle Ages.

Trial by Battle and Trial by Ordeal was often used to determine guilt, because it was believed that God would always help an innocent man.

For minor or petty crimes defendants were sent to the Manor Court, for a major crime like murder, it was off to the Royal Court.

If you were part of the Clergy and you committed a crime, you would go to a Church Court.

Church Courts often gave lighter or more lenient sentences and would not sentence anyone to death, regardless of the crime committed.

The head of the Catholic Church, the Pope, claimed authority over everyone, including Kings and Queens and this sometimes caused trouble.

The people of the High Middle Ages knew little about their own world, their maps were often incorrect and most always put Jerusalem as the centre of the known world.

By the 13th C. some Europeans had begun to explore and trade as far as Asia, which opened their eyes to different peoples, customs, ideas and trade items.
Middle Ages Law & Contact With Asia

Directions: Read pages 56-58 in your text Pathways - Civilizations Through Time and answer the following questions:

1. Provide Definitions for the following vocabulary words:
   - prosecute
   - sue
   - lenient
   - to try
   - ordeal
   - assault
   - treason
   - meddlesome
   - canonize
   - shrine

2. Answer the following questions using COMPLETE SENTENCES:
   a. What is common law and why is it called common law? (2 marks)
   b. Explain the difference between trial by ordeal and trial by battle. (2 marks)
   c. How were Church courts different from Manor or Royal Courts? Explain your answer (2 marks)

3. Read How to Make a Comparison Organizer on page 59 of your text. On a separate piece of paper create your own chart to help you understand the differences between the three types of Medieval courts. Use the five comparison points outlined in your text. (1. What crimes could the court try?  2. Whom could the court try?  3. Who was in charge?  4. How did the court operate?  5. What penalties could the court hand down?)

You will be marked out of 10 for a complete chart that addresses the 5 points outlined and for neatness and quality of work.
Canada is a constitutional democracy which means that its citizens have the right to elect their leaders. Medieval people did not have this luxury.

The Medieval or Feudal Monarch had almost unlimited power as long as he or she stayed within the feudal contract.

It was the powerful Barons that kept the King or Queen honest and “in check”.

Eleanor of Aquitaine was a powerful Queen who not only ruled France and England, but also participated in a crusade, gave birth to two future Kings of England and promoted the idea of equality of the sexes.

King John I of England was Eleanor’s son who took over after her other son King Richard the Lion Hearted died.

King John was not a popular king. He squabbled with the Church, raised taxes, ignored the feudal code at times, imprisoned barons without trial and even hired foreign soldiers to fight his own people.

Because of King John’s behavior, the people of England revolted and created and forced the king to sign the Magna Carta.

The Magna Carta was a charter that forced the King to respect the rights of the English people and made it illegal for the King to raise taxes without the approval of a parliament.

The rights and ideas represented in the Magna Carta are still a part of the traditions and law of the Canadian government today.
Royal Power and Democracy

Directions: Read pages 65-67 in your text Pathways - Civilizations Through Time and answer the following questions:

1. Provide Definitions for the following vocabulary words:

   - interdict
   - Baron
   - Peter’s Pence

2. Answer the following questions using COMPLETE SENTENCES:

   a. By custom, what was the monarch allowed to do, and who kept the monarch "in check" or accountable to the people (made sure that the monarch couldn't do whatever he or she wanted). (2 mks for quality of answer)

   b. Who was Eleanor of Aquitaine and provide an example as to why she is seen as a great person/ruler. (2 mks for quality of answer and inclusion of details).

   c. What was so bad about King John and what did the powerful people of England force him to do? (2 mks for quality of answer and inclusion of details)

   d. What is the Magna Carta and why do we even bother learning about it? (2 mks for quality of thought and inclusion of details)

3. For a total of 10 marks, in the space provide on the back, create your own Magna Carta that would be used to outline the rights of a student in a classroom. Your charter must:

   1. Outline at least 5 different rights or rules that both the teacher and the students must respect and obey.
   2. Be decorated with coats of arms and wax seals (should be drawn, do not use real wax please), to give your charter the appearance of formality and importance.

You will be marked out of 5 for the quality and thought put into your rights or rules and out of 5 for quality and evidence of effort put into the design and decoration of your charter.

Total: ____/ 21