

NAME:

DATE:

CLASS:

DBQ FOCUS: The Middle Ages



Document-Based Question Format

Directions: The following question is based on the accompanying Documents (The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise.) This question is designed to test your ability to work with and understand historical documents.

Write a response that:

- Has a relevant **thesis** and **supports that thesis with evidence** from the documents.
- Cites evidence from included source perspectives.
- Analyzes the documents by grouping them in as many appropriate ways as possible. Does not simply summarize the documents individually.
- Takes into account both the sources of the documents and the author's points of view.

Historical Context: In European history, the Middle Ages, or Medieval period, lasted from the 5th to the 15th century. It began with the collapse of the Western Roman Empire and merged into the early modern period. The Middle Ages is the middle period of the traditional division of Western history into Antiquity, Medieval, and Modern periods. The period is subdivided into the Early, the High, and the Late Middle Ages. Depopulation, de-urbanization, and barbarian invasions, which had begun in Late Antiquity, continued in the Early Middle Ages. The barbarian invaders formed new kingdoms in what remained of the Western Roman Empire. During the High Middle Ages, which began after AD 1000, the population of Europe increased greatly as technological and agricultural innovations allowed trade to flourish and crop yields to increase. Kings became the heads of centralized nation states. Intellectual life was marked by scholasticism, a philosophy that emphasized joining faith to reason, and by the founding of universities. The Late Middle Ages was marked by difficulties and calamities including famine, plague, and war, which much diminished the population of Western Europe; between 1347 and 1350

Question

What is the legacy of the Middle Ages; Dark Ages, Age of Faith, Age of Feudalism, or a Golden Age?

Document 1

Source: In the Middle Ages, historian Frantz Funck-Brentano made use of previously published texts to describe Europe in the ninth and tenth centuries (Heinemann, 1922, pp.1-3).

The barbarians have broken through the ramparts. The Saracen [Moors] invasions have spread in successive waves over the South. The Hungarians swarm over the Eastern provinces... they sacked town and village, and laid waste the fields. They burned down the churches and then departed with a crowd of captives... There is no longer any trade, only unceasing terror... The peasant has abandoned his ravaged fields to avoid the violence of anarchy. The people have gone to cower in the depths of the forests or in inaccessible regions, or have taken refuge in the high mountains... Society has no longer any government.

Student Analysis

What were conditions like in Europe in the 800s?

Document 2

Source: The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells of invasions of England

842. In this year there was a great slaughter in London and Quentavic and in Rochester

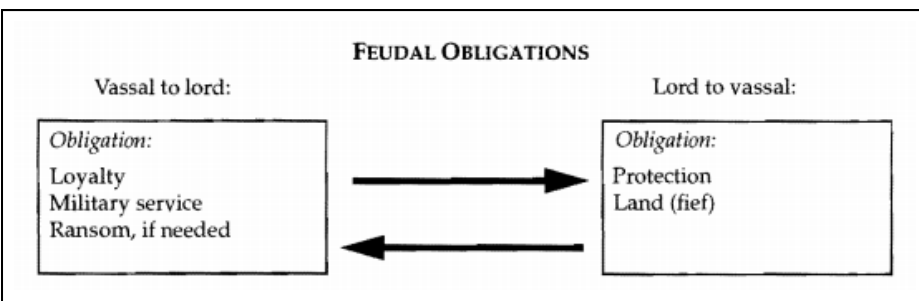
846. According to their custom the Northmen plundered... and burned the town of Dordrecht... the Northmen, with their boats filled with immense booty [treasure], including both men and goods, returned to their own country...

Student Analysis

According to this Chronicle, what is happening at this time?

Document 3

Source: Illustration of the feudal obligations between a lord and a vassal.



Student Analysis

Explain the mutual obligations illustrated in the diagram.

Document 4

Source: A Church council calls for the observation of the Truce of God, 1083.

... That from the first day of the Advent of our Lord through Epiphany... and throughout the year on every Sunday, Friday, and Saturday, and on the fast days of the four seasons... this decree of peace shall be observed... so that no one may commit murder, arson, robbery, or assault, no one may injure another with a sword, club, or any kind of weapon... On... every day set aside, or to be set aside, for fasts or feasts, arms may be carried, but on this condition, that no injury shall be done in any way to anyone... If it shall happen that any castle is besieged during these days which are included within peace, the besiegers shall cease from attack unless they are set upon by the besieged and compelled to beat the latter back...

Student Analysis

What is the Church trying to accomplish?

Document 5

Source: Gray C. Boyce, "The Medieval Period" in *The 34th Yearbook of the National Council for the Social Studies*, 1964, pp. 69-70.

Student Analysis

... we learn that an age once traditionally described as "dark" had remarkable vitality and exuberance. Even at its worst it performed the function of guarding, frequently by accident and chance, the knowledge and treasures of what had come before, but even more it was creative and inventive, and transmitted to later ages great riches of its own.

What function were provided during the Middle Ages?

Document 6

Source: *Medieval Europe* by H.C. Davis, Oxford University Press, 1946, p. 79.

Student Analysis

... Medieval culture was imperfect, was restricted to a narrow circle of superior minds... Measure it, however, by the memories and the achievements that it has bequeathed to the modern world, and it will be found not unworthy to rank with those of earlier and later Golden Ages. It flourished in the midst of rude surroundings, fierce passions, and material ambitions... we must judge them by their philosophy and law, by their poetry and architecture...

How does a decline in education correlate with the decline of society?

Document 7

Source: Frances & Joseph Gies, *Cathedral, Forge, and Water Wheel: Technology and Invention in the Middle Ages*, Harper Perennial (adapted)

Student Analysis

... In a word, Europe was turning from a developing into a developed region. The growth of industry meant the growth of cities, which in the eleventh and twelfth centuries began to abandon their old roles of military headquarters and administrative centers as they filled with the life of commerce and industry. Some, like Genoa, once Roman villages, mushroomed, while others, like Venice, appeared out of nowhere. Still others, calling themselves simply "New City" (Villanova, Villeneuve, Neustadt), were founded by progressive rulers. Instead of growing haphazardly, they were built on a plan, typically a grid pattern with a central square, church, and market buildings. Beginning in tenth-century Italy, businessmen and craftsmen in many cities established what they called "communes," declaring themselves free men who owed allegiance only to a sovereign who collected taxes but otherwise left them alone. Astute lords granted charters exempting city dwellers from feudal obligations—"so that my friends and subjects, the inhabitants of my town of Binerville, stay more willing there," sensibly explained one lord. Under the rubric "Free air makes free men," even serfs were declared emancipated if they maintained themselves in a city for a year and a day. ...

What was one impact of the growth of European cities on medieval European societies?

Document 8

Source: This excerpt is from the monastic vows of Brother Gerald

Student Analysis

I hereby renounce my parents, my brother 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 purity, chastity, and poverty, in the hope of heaven; and I promise to remain a monk in this monastery all the days of my life.

What sacrifices must be made to commit oneself to a monastery?

Document 9

Source: Minnesota State University E-Museum

The role of the Church was very large in Medieval Europe. More than any other institution, it unified Europeans and gave every person a sense of how the world worked. Since political leaders only had local power, the Church was the most powerful institution. This secondary source describes the multiple roles the Church played in the Middle Ages.

In a time of great political chaos, the Roman Catholic Church was the single, largest unifying structure in medieval Europe. It touched everyone's life, no matter what their rank or class or where they lived. With the exception of a small number of Jews, everyone in Europe was a Christian during the Middle Ages from the richest king down to the lowest serf.

From the moment of its baptism a few days after birth, a child entered into a life of service to God and God's Church. As a child grew, it would be taught basic prayers, would go to church every week barring illness, and would learn of its responsibilities to the Church. Every person was required to live by the Church's laws and to pay heavy taxes to support the Church. In return for this, they were shown the way to everlasting life and happiness after lives that were often short and hard.

In addition to collecting taxes, the Church also accepted gifts of all kinds from individuals who wanted special favors or wanted to be certain of a place in heaven. These gifts included land, flocks, crops, and even serfs. This allowed the Church to become very powerful, and it often used this power to influence kings to do as it wanted.

Student Analysis

What is the role of the Church during the Middle Ages?

Document 10

Source: Medieval French manuscript illustration of the three classes of medieval society: The Cleric, Knight, and Peasant. *Li Livres dou Sante*, 13th century.



Student Analysis

What does this painting tell us about the three predominant social classes of the Medieval Ages?

**Generic Core-Scoring Guide for AP World History
Document-Based Question**

Basic Core: Competence	Points	Historical Thinking Skills Assessed
1. Has acceptable thesis.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
2. Addresses all of the documents and demonstrates understanding of all or all but one.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
3. Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all or all but one document. [Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all but two documents.]	2 (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
4. Analyzes point of view in at least two documents.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
5. Analyzes documents by grouping them in two or three ways, depending on the question.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Use of Historical Evidence ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
6. Identifies and explains the need for one type of appropriate additional document or source.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
Subtotal	7	Essay as a whole: Synthesis
Expanded Core: Excellence	Points	Historical Thinking Skills Assessed
Expands beyond basic core of 1–7 points. A student must earn 7 points in the basic core area before earning points in the expanded core area. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Has a clear, analytical, and comprehensive thesis. ➤ Shows careful and insightful analysis of the documents. ➤ Uses documents persuasively as evidence. ➤ Analyzes point of view in most or all documents. ➤ Analyzes the documents in additional ways — groupings, comparisons, syntheses. ➤ Brings in relevant “outside” historical content. ➤ Explains why additional types of document(s) or sources are needed. 	0–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Same skills as noted in basic core ➤ Other historical thinking skills may be demonstrated depending on the question and the documents
Subtotal	2	
TOTAL	9	

TOTAL POINTS BASIC CORE	
TOTAL POINTS EXPANDED CORE	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED	
FINAL GRADE	

RUBRIC	PERCENT	POINTS
9	100	50
8	95	48
7	90	45
6	85	43
5	80	40
4	75	38
3	70	35
2	65	33
1	60	30
0	0	0

Comments: