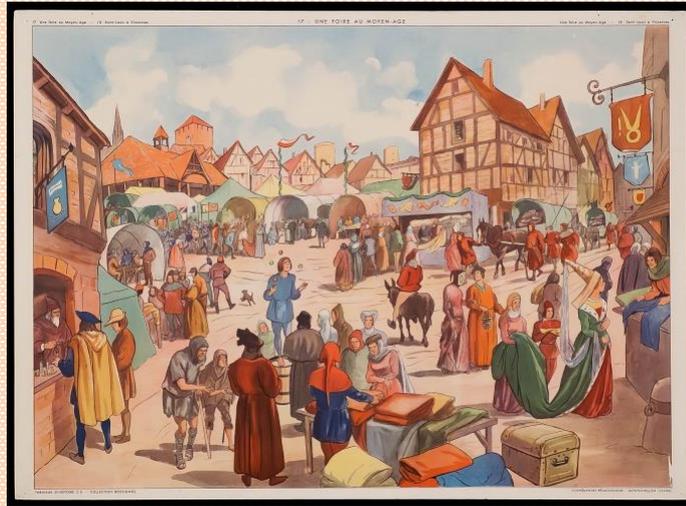


Life In Medieval Towns



West Branch Middle School
7th Grade Ancient History

Introduction

- Originally people lived on a manor or in a religious community
- By the 12th Century many towns began to spring up around castles, monasteries, and trade routes
- Eventually these towns became the center of industry



Can you guess what types of business's these are?



Growth of the Towns

- High Middle Ages towns are growing again
 - Farming
 - Revival of trade
- Some people stayed after they came to trade
- The towns got bigger



Guilds

- An organization of people in the same trade or craft
- Two main kinds
 - Merchant Guilds
 - Craft Guilds
- Guilds provide
 - Protection
 - High standards
 - Control hours of work
 - Set fair prices
 - Deal with customer complaints



Becoming a Member

- At age 12 a boy becomes an *apprentice*
- Master agrees to:
 - House, feed, and train the apprentice
- After seven years the apprentice has to prove to the guild that he has mastered his trade



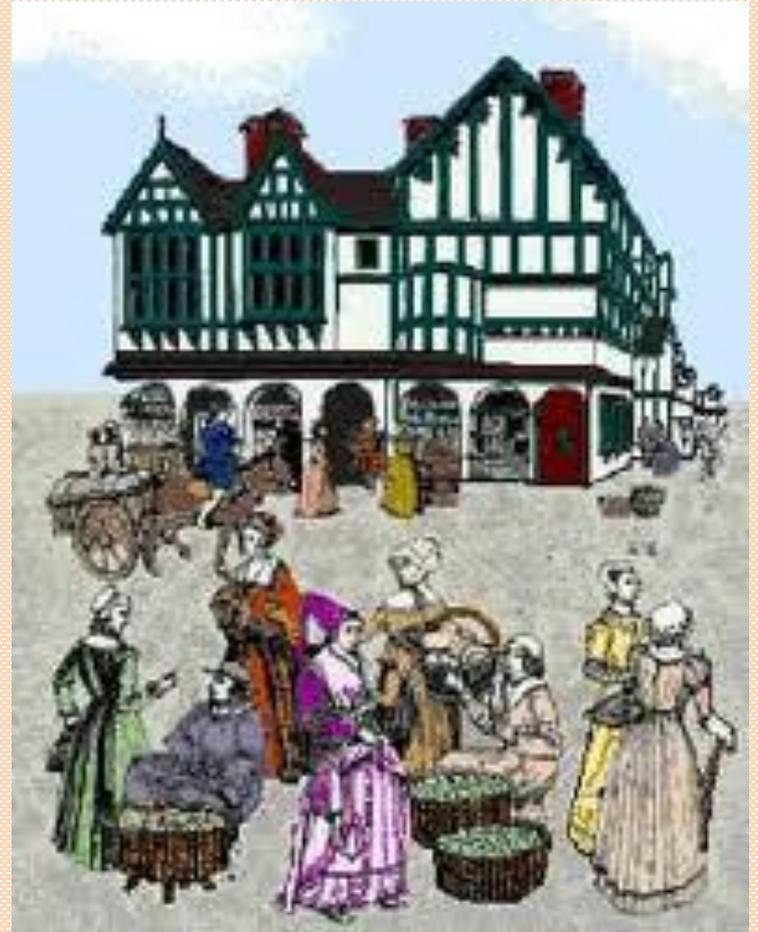
Journeyman

- A person who has learned a particular trade or craft but has not become an employer or master



Trade and Commerce

- Most people came to town for business
- Most towns have a market
 - Food, clothing, household items
- Many people prospered
- But not everyone



Prejudice against Jews

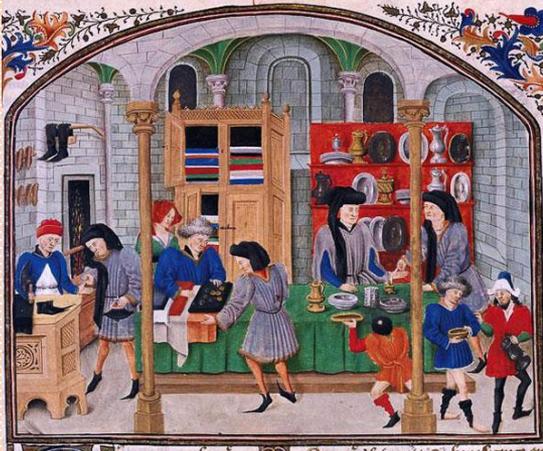
- Laws were passed to make it difficult for Jewish people to make a living
- Not allowed to own land
- Lords sometimes took their property at will
- Targets of violence
- Could make money as bankers and money lenders
- Looked down on for practicing the “wicked trade”.



Homes and Households

Rich

- More than one level
- First level
 - Offices and storerooms
- Second level
 - Living quarters with a *solar*
- Upper level
 - Servants and apprentices



Poor

- Several families share a house
- Might only have one room to cook, eat, sleep
- Worked where they lived



Growing up in a Medieval Town

- Half of all children died before they became adults
- The rest started preparing for adult roles at age seven
- Boys learned the work of their father
- Girls trained for a craft
 - Cooking, cloth making, how to run a home
- Most girls married young
 - As early as age 12



Disease and Medical Treatment

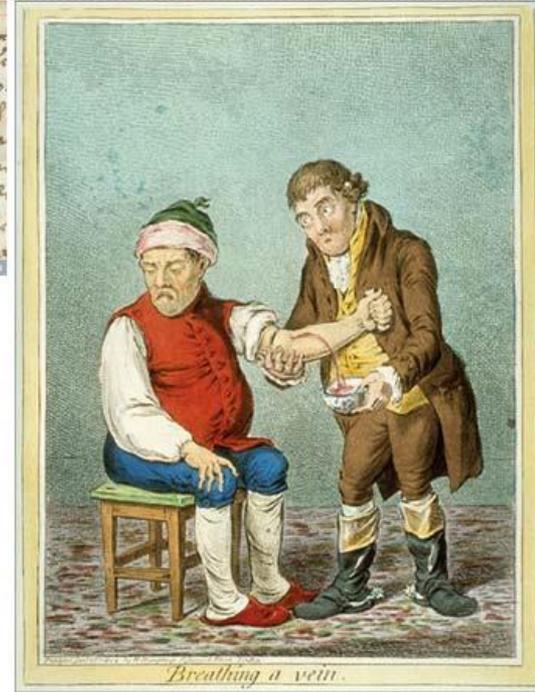


- Lepers had to live by themselves in isolated houses
- Laws were passed to keep them out.
- No one knows how disease is spread at this time

Treatment of Sickness and Disease

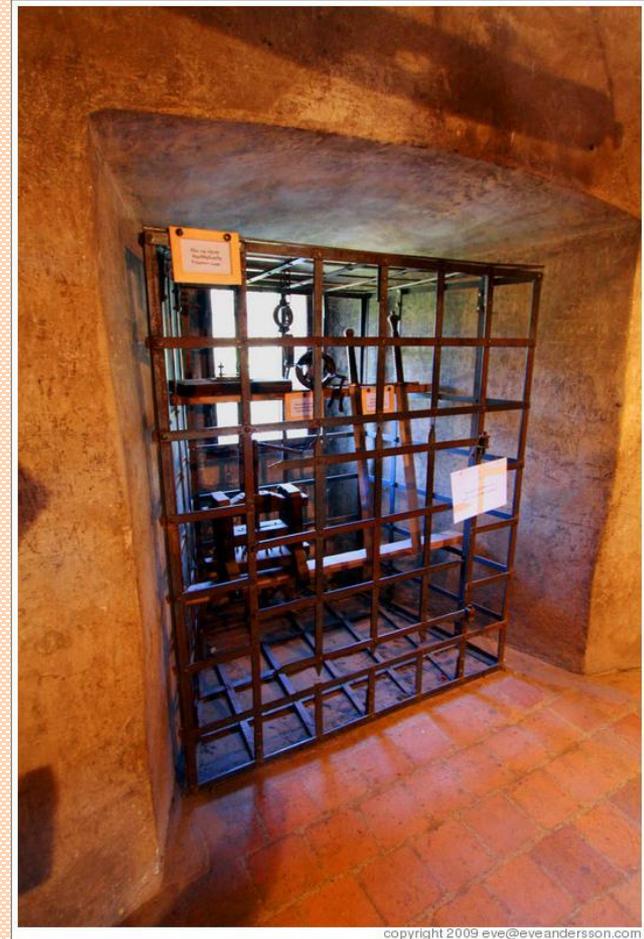
- Treated in the home
 - Family members, or doctor
- Medieval doctors use prayer and medical treatment
 - Herbs
 - Planet alignment
 - Magic charms
- Bloodletting
 - Open a vein or apply leeches to the skin to suck out blood
 - Doctors believe this helped to restore the balance to the body and spirit
 - Often weakened the patient instead.

Examples



Crime and Punishment

- Pickpockets and thieves were always around
- Prisoners were fed by friends and family
- Many people who were accused of crimes were tried by “ordeal”
- Or by combat



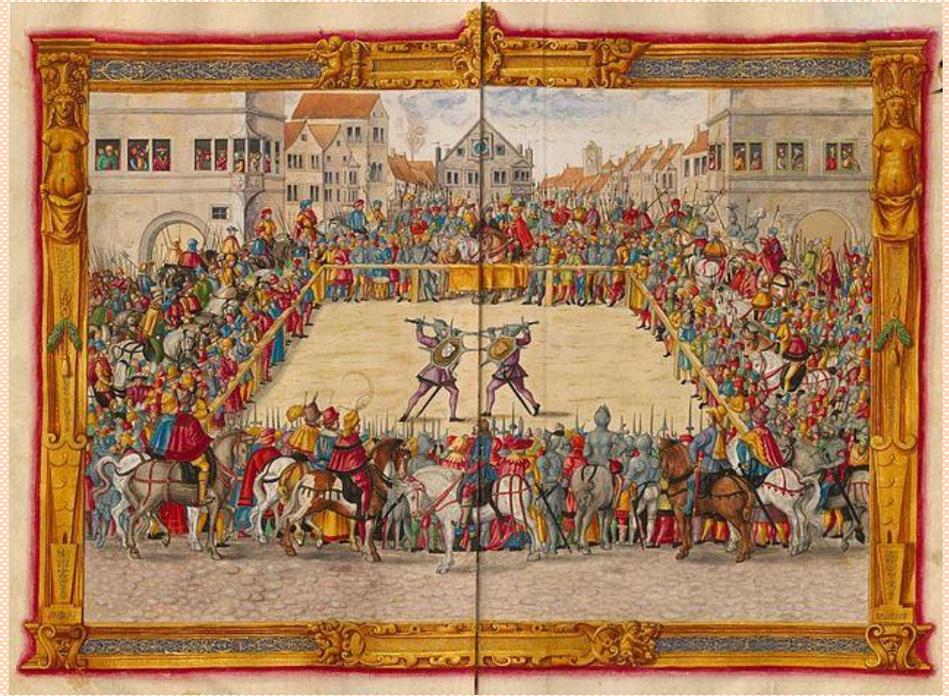
Trial by Ordeal

- Accused had to pass a test to prove innocence
 - Thrown into a deep well
 - If you floated you were guilty
 - If you drowned you were innocent
- Unfortunately if you were innocent you were dead anyway



Trial by Combat

- Accused had to fight to prove his or her innocence
- People believed that God would make sure the right person won
- If you won then you were innocent



Other Punishments

- Very harsh
- Stocks for lesser crimes
 - Very painful
 - Very humiliating
- Serious Crimes
- Highway robbery
- Stealing livestock
- Treason or murder
 - Could be hanged
 - Burned at the stake



Leisure and Entertainment

- Children played with dolls, toys, and wooden swords
- Played badminton, lawn bowling, and blind mans bluff
- Adults liked chess, checkers, backgammon, play cards, roll dice, dancing



Next Time

The Decline of Feudalism