

Teacher Notes

Jolt your children into content-area reading success!



Synopsis

The Middle Ages: Harsh or Heroic? describes medieval life. It presents a realistic picture of the prevailing conditions for different classes of people at this time, and highlights the gradual growth of towns and cities. It considers historical fact alongside the romanticised image of the age of chivalry.

Vocabulary Development

Read and discuss the high-powered words on page 4 prior to reading the book.

The high-powered words for this book are:

castle, chivalry, Crusades, knight, medieval, Middle Ages, moat, noble.

Reading Assessment Focus

Deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts:

- evaluate whether life was harsh or heroic in medieval times.

Identify and comment on the writer's purpose and viewpoints, and the overall effect on the reader:

- evaluate the quality of the text.
How effectively does it convey the information? Is it appealing to readers?

Before Reading – Get on the Wavelength

- As a class look at the illustration on the front cover.
Ask: *What do you think this book will be about? What do you think the subtitle "harsh or heroic" means?*
Tell them to imagine what life was like for an ordinary person in the Middle Ages. Provide a timeline to show how this period of history relates to other historical events known to the children.
- Invite the children to read the entries on the Contents page.
Ask: *What section are you most looking forward to reading? Why?*
Allow the children to read their chosen section and share their findings with the rest of the group.

SHOCKER

The executioner had such a low status that no woman wanted to be his wife. A female criminal could receive a pardon if she agreed to marry the executioner!