The Middle Ages

So what comes to mind when we say “Middle Ages?”
Knights!
Castles!
Feudal Warfare!!!!
Chivalry - code of honor
Vikings!
Jousting Tournaments
The Middle Ages were a dangerous time in Europe

- The strong empires of Rome and Greece that protected trade routes and encouraged science and freedom were gone.

- Education died out

- Only the Christian Church kept education alive in monasteries
  - Hand copied books
Invaders and Raiders make life dangerous

Vikings

Huns

Neighboring Tribes
Invaders and Raiders

• Genghis Kahn
  Mongolian warrior
  • A particular problem for the Russians.

• Mongols conquered Russia and ruled it for 400 years

• Russia has been behind the rest of Europe ever since
Note: The Eastern Roman Empire is still going strong.
No Strong Central Govt.
So how will we be protected?

• Lack of central government for protection leads to rise of Feudalism
What is Feudalism?

**Feudalism**: “loosely organized system of government in which local lords governed their own lands but owed military service and other support to a greater lord.”
Feudalism (political system)
So who is in charge?

- The kings had plenty of land; but he could not control it all
  - So he gave land to lords in exchange for protection, loyalty and $.
- Lords then gave their land to knights in exchange for protection, loyalty and $.
- Knights let serfs (peasants) work the land and he would protect them.
- Serfs got food and shelter.
- Thus, each person had rights and responsibilities.
Manor Life
So where do the people live?

• In Medieval Europe, people lived on manors
  – self-sufficient communities consisting of a castle, church, village and surrounding farmlands.
  – Serfs work land and give part of their crops to the local (land) lord, for letting them farm the land.
Problems with Feudalism

• Possible to have allegiances to more than one person
• No strong central government
  – King must ask his lords for knights in time of war
  – King must ask his lords for money to pay for things
  – Lords hold most of the power
    • Lords constantly fighting among themselves.
How to Gain / Stay in Power

• GET More LAND!!
  • More land = more crops = more $
  • How to Get More Land?
    • Conquer it
      • Medieval times saw constant fighting
    • Marry into it

• Make Alliances
  • It helps to have friends
    • Marry off your daughter to secure an alliance
OK, but let's get to the stuff you all want to know

- Knights in shining armor, Castles, Horses, Warfare, and general mayhem.
The Norman Conquest

- In 1066, England was invaded by Normans (Vikings from modern-day France)

- The Battle of Hastings
  - Harold, King of England killed
  - William of Normandy (William the Conqueror) takes over.
  - Can YOU win the battle of Hastings?
William of Normandy helped make England what it is today and codified feudalism (gave it the force of law).
• French was spoken in the English court for the next 200 years.

• 1066 - William I creates Domesday Book for purposes of fair tax collection.
  – Great resource for modern historians to learn about Medieval life)
The Magna Carta

• English King John was a bad king so his nobles forced him to sign it
• Limited powers of king.
• Signed in 1215
• Example of Rule of Law
Magna Carta - 1215

- No royal official shall take goods from any man without immediate payment.
- No free man shall be imprisoned except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by the law of the land.
- In future no official shall place a man on trial without producing credible witnesses.
- Courts shall be held in a fixed place at a fixed time.
- The barons shall elect a House of Lords for the creation of laws.
- The English church shall be free.
- For a trivial offence, a free man shall be fined only in proportion to the degree of his offence.

Due Process of Law