




SCHOOL HISTORY




SCHOOL HISTORY

Medieval Women

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- The societal roles of women in the Middle Ages
- Important female figures in the Middle Ages
- The dynamics of marriage in the Middle Ages
- The life of a peasant woman in the Middle Ages

FACT FILE



Let's learn more about Medieval Women! 


Women in the Middle Ages were mostly subordinate to men. However, some women were able to become important figures and held a certain prestige within the fields of medicine and religion.

OVERVIEW OF WOMEN'S CONDITIONS

With the establishment of Christian monasticism, roles within the Church community also became available to women.

From the 5th century onwards, Christian convents allowed women to escape the social obligations represented by marriage and the raising of children, allowing them to educate themselves and become literate whilst performing a religious role.





SCHOOL HISTORY





Medieval Women

THINK ABOUT THIS ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 11-14

1 BUILDING VOCABULARY Define the given terms based on your understanding and use them in appropriate sentences. (X marks)


A. CONVENT -
B. ABBESS -
C. MARRIAGE -
D. SPINNING -
E. PATRIARCHY -

2 MATCHING TYPE Match the name of the important female figure to her correct description. (X marks)

 She was a writer who is considered one of the greatest exponents of proto-feminism.
 She led the French army on several occasions during the Hundred Years' War.
 She was one of the richest and most powerful women in Western Europe during the Middle Ages.
 She was one of the richest and most powerful women in Western Europe during the Middle Ages.

3 THEN AND NOW Compare the roles and expectations of women then (the Middle Ages) and now (21st century). Substantiate your answer with historical facts and related literature. (X marks)

THEN	NOW



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Medieval Women

THINK ABOUT THIS ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 11-14

1 BUILDING VOCABULARY Define the given terms based on your understanding and use them in appropriate sentences. (X marks)

A. CONVENT - An assembly of priests, monks, and nuns
B. ABBESS - The head of an abbey of nuns
C. MARRIAGE - Legally and culturally recognized union of a man and a woman
D. SPINNING - Process of turning fiber into thread
E. PATRIARCHY - A system of society in which men hold the dominant power over women

2 MATCHING TYPE Match the name of the important female figure to her correct description. (X marks)

 She was a writer who is considered one of the greatest exponents of proto-feminism.
 She led the French army on several occasions during the Hundred Years' War.
 She was one of the richest and most powerful women in Western Europe during the Middle Ages.
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Note: Words for each activity are to be determined by the teacher.

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The School History Team





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- The life of a peasant woman in the Middle Ages



FACT FILE

Let's learn more about
Medieval Women!



Image of maidens playing musical instruments for a queen

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OVERVIEW OF WOMEN'S CONDITIONS

With the establishment of Christian monasticism, roles within the Church community also became available to women.

From the 5th century onwards, Christian convents allowed women to escape the social obligations represented by marriage and the raising of children, allowing them to educate themselves and become literate whilst performing a religious role.



Image of women in a Christian convent in the Middle Ages





Abbesses could become important personalities, often governing both male and female monasteries and maintaining private ownership of land.



An **abbess** is the head of an abbey of nuns.

In such a way, they had the possibility of acquiring significant power. Figures like Hilda of Whitby were able to acquire influence on a national and even international scale.



Spinning was also one of the many female craft traditions.



Image of a woman spinning

Until the introduction of beer made with hops, this drink was produced mostly by women. This was a form of work that could easily be carried out at home.

In addition, **married women** were also generally required to assist their husbands in various farming and craft activities. A large number of marriages were facilitated by the fact that many jobs took place in or in the immediate vicinity of the home. However, there are also registered examples of women engaged in a business other than that of their husband.

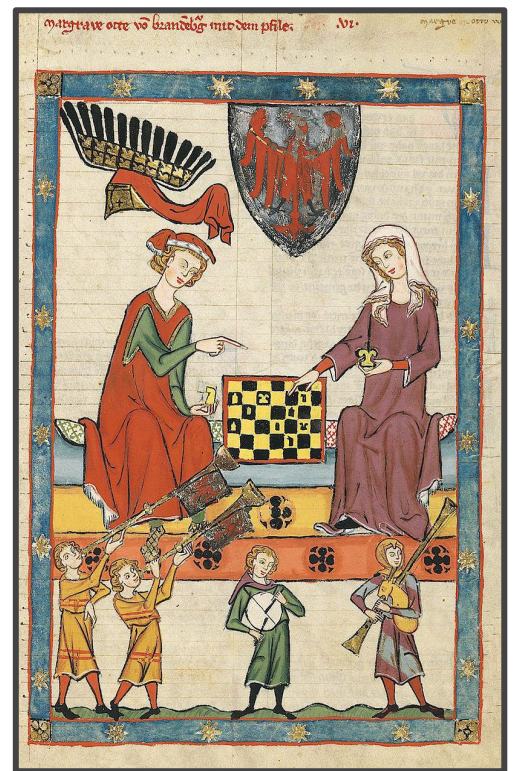


Image of a woman playing chess with a man



Obstetrics was practised in an informal way, gradually becoming a specialised occupation in the late Middle Ages. Although women often lost their lives during childbirth, some of them survived and were able to live as long as their husbands.

Life expectancy improved gradually during this period, too, mainly due to the improvement of nutrition. Life in the fields was very difficult for men and for women.

IMPORTANT FEMALE FIGURES IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

Eleanor of Aquitaine (1122-1204) was one of the richest and most powerful women in Western Europe during the Middle Ages. She was the patron of important literary figures, such as Norman poet Robert Wace, French writer Benoît de Sainte-Maure, and author of the Breton cycle, Chrétien de Troyes.

Eleanor of Aquitaine

1





THINK ABOUT THIS!

ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 11-14



1

BUILDING VOCABULARY. Define the given terms based on your understanding and use them in appropriate sentences. (X marks)

- A. CONVENT - _____
- B. ABBESS - _____
- C. MARRIAGE - _____
- D. SPINNING - _____
- E. PATRIARCHY - _____





THINK ABOUT THIS!

ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 14-16



- 1 **WORDS OF WISDOM.** Critically read the source and write about your own interpretation of the quote in relation to women in the Middle Ages. (X marks)

"It is foolish to think that we will enter heaven without entering into ourselves."

- Teresa of Avila

SOURCE A





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Thank you!





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Thank you

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