

MEDIEVAL WORLD

L.No	Title of Lesson	SKILLS	Activity
2	Medieval World	Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking Problem Solving	Visiting Museum, Learning and Understanding History by seeing visuals e.g., Paintings, Sculpture, and Architectural remains etc.

Meaning

There was transformation of European Society after the downfall of the Roman Empire, and the birth of a new religion called Islam which led to the founding of a vast empire that originated in West Asia and spread out over a large part of the world. The Medieval Period is also called the Middle Age. The period which succeeded the ancient period and come before the Modern Period.

Feudalism: Political, Military and Socio-Economic Aspects

- Feudalism was a hierarchical or graded organization of political sovereignty; its structure stood like a ladder.
- At the top stood the king; below him stood the big lords known as Dukes and Earls.
- Below these lords were a number of lesser lords known as the Barons. Below these were the knights, who were perhaps the lowest lords
- Vassal: a person owing homage or fidelity to a superior lower lord is vassal to the upper lord. Also a person granted use of lands.
- The vassal would take a vow to serve the lord all his life mainly including military services
- The entire landed estate over which a feudal lord had control was known as the manor.
- The manor was a self-sufficient economic unit. This means that almost all articles of everyday use were produced and consumed on it.

Decline of Roman Empire

- The western province's capital was Rome and Eastern's Constantinople.
- The Roman Empire in the west came to an end following attacks by various Germanic tribes like the Goths, Vandals, Visigoths and Franks.

Change in Feudal Economy: Prosperity and Crisis in Medieval Europe

- The few centuries after the collapse of Roman Empire were marked by a low level of economic life.
- There was a decline in town life, trade and monetary exchange.
- Technology used in agriculture was backward and agriculture yields were low.

- During this period, learning remained a privilege of the few. The masses received no formal education. The language of learning was Latin which was known only to the priestly class.

Arab Civilization During the Medieval Period

- Arabia is a peninsula of deserts. Before the founding of Islam, most Arabs were Bedouins, that is, wandering camel herdsman.
- Arabia became a safer transit route for Caravans going between Africa and Asia. The most prominent of these was Mecca which lay on the junction of some major trade routes.
- Prophet Muhammad who spread Islam was born in Mecca in to the Quraish tribe in 570 A.D. He grew up to be a prosperous trader, entering the service of a rich widow Khadija, whom he later married.
- The word 'Islam' means absolute submission to God and adherence to faith. The followers of this faith are known as Muslim.

Society and Culture

- Arab philosophy was based on the study of earlier Greek thought. Greek Philosophy was cultivated by philosophers who believed in rationality. They practiced Astrology and Medicine.

Medieval Indian Civilization (8th & 10th century)

- Between the 8th and 10th century: In the North, Palas Pratiharas and Rastrakutas; in the south Cholas.

Political Events

- Turks had established their rule over most of Northern India by the 13th Century.
- The Turkish rulers were known as Sultans and ruled from their capital at Delhi.

- Their Empire was called Delhi Sultanate. Dynasties, such as the Khaljis and the Tughlaqs.
- In South the Vijayanagar and Bahmani were the two supremacy.
- Mughals marked a new era in Indian History in the early 16th century.

Political Institutions

- Mughals appointed mansabdars who performed military and civil duties.

Economy

- The Delhi Sultanate as well as the Mughal Empire was based on surplus of agricultural produce of the peasants that was extracted in the form of revenue.
- Trade and commerce, which had declined greatly following the period of the Guptas, saw a revival during this time.

Culture and Religious Life

- The Medieval period witnessed a great synthesis of traditions in culture and religion.
- The Bhakti movement and Sufism in religious sphere.
- Language, literature, art, architecture music and dance also bore out this trend of synthesis between different traditions.
- Under the Mughals, painting was organised in the royal karkhanas and painters were on government payroll.
- Another fascinating aspect of cultural life in medieval India is reflected in its Indo-Islamic architecture, new features like the arch and the dome were combined with the use of Hindu motifs like bell, lotus swastika, and kalash/water pot.
- The Bhakti and Sufi tradition also gave an inputs to new devotional styles of music.

Evaluate Yourself

- Q. Describe the bond between the feudal Lords and their vassals in about 30 words.
- Q. Who was the founder of Islam Arabia?
- Q. Name two famous painters of Mughal Period?