

History vocabulary for ESL students – the Middle Ages

Find one thing in each section below which is not relevant to the topic of the Middle Ages in Europe, e.g. a thing that didn't exist at that time.

Iron bridge	Castle
Dungeon	Gothic cathedral
Hut	Walled town
Drawbridge (a bridge that goes up and down)	Moat (like a canal around a castle)
Tapestry	Thatched roof (= made of straw)
Jousting/ Tilting (fighting on horses with long sticks)	Falconry (hunting with birds)
Tennis	Football
Darts	Skating
Marbles	Bear baiting
Dog fighting	Skittles (similar to ten pin bowling)
Wrestling	
The Crusades	Knight/ Chivalry
Chain mail (armour made of metal hoops)	Mine
Bow and arrow	Cavalry
Cannon	Siege engine
Rifle	Mercenary
Apothecary (similar to a modern pharmacist)	Blacksmith
Tinker	Troubadour
Guild	Minstrel
Apprentice	Serfs
Accountant	Eunuch
Merchant	Baron
Landed gentry	Tenant farmer
Carpenter	Mason
Bricklayer	Glassblower
Rat catcher	Potter
Chastity belt	Dowry
Veil	Bra burning
Monastery	Excommunicate
Pilgrimage	Evangelical Christians
The Inquisition	Nun
Astrology	
The Black Death (= bubonic plague)	Leech
Humours	Antibiotics
Herbal cure	



Mead (a kind of wine made from honey)
(Wild) boar
Rabbit

Poll tax
Cheques
Government monopolies

Palanquin
Horse and cart
Toll gate

Torture
The ducking chair
Witch trials
Branding

Mutilation

Lute
Dancing bears
Piano

Potatoes
Black pudding (= blood sausage)
Fasting

Salt tax
Banks
Tax farmer

Steam engine
Inn
Sailing ship

The rack
Ordeals
Poaching
Corporal punishment

The electric chair

Passion plays (religious drama)
Trumpet
Flute

Match the sections above with these categories:

- Buildings and architecture
- Food and drink
- Health and disease
- Law and order and crimes
- Music and entertainment
- Professions, trades and social classes
- Religion
- Sports and games
- The economy
- Transport
- War
- Women and marriage

Choose one of the categories and discuss which things in that section were also relevant to a country you know about outside Western Europe.

Suggested answers

The words in **bold** are the odd words out that aren't connected to the Middle Ages and the **underlined parts in bold** are the names of the categories

Buildings and architecture

Iron bridge

Dungeon

Hut

Drawbridge

Tapestry

Castle

Gothic cathedral

Walled town

Moat

Thatched roof

Sports and games

Jousting/ tilting

Tennis

Darts

Marbles

Dog fighting

Wrestling

Falconry

Football

Skating

Bear baiting

Skittles

War

The Crusades

Chain mail

Bow and arrow

Cannon

Rifle

Knight/ Chivalry

Mine

Cavalry

Siege engine

Mercenary

Professions, trades and social classes

Apothecary

Tinker

Guild

Apprentice

Accountant

Merchant

Landed gentry

Carpenter

Bricklayer

Rat catcher

Blacksmith

Troubadour

Minstrel

Serfs

Eunuch

Lord

Tenant farmer

Mason

Glassblower

Potter

Women and marriage

Chastity belt

Veil

Dowry

Bra burning

Religion

Monastery

Pilgrimage

The Inquisition

Astrology

Excommunicate

Evangelical Christians

Nun



Health and disease

The Black Death (= bubonic plague)
Humours
Herbal cure

Leech
Antibiotics

Food and drink

Mead
(Wild) boar
Rabbit

Potatoes
Black pudding
Fasting

The economy

Poll tax

Cheques

Government monopolies

Salt tax
Banks
Tax farmer

Transport

Palanquin
Horse and cart
Toll gate

Steam engine
Inn
Sailing ship

Law and order and crimes

Torture
The ducking chair
Witch trials
Branding
Mutilation

The rack
Ordeals
Poaching
Corporal punishment
The electric chair

Music and entertainment

Lute
Dancing bears
Piano

Passion plays
Trumpet
Flute