

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

World History – Middle Ages

Mr. Purificato

### Medieval Knighthood and Chivalry

#### Becoming a Medieval Knight:

When a highboy (noble) reached the age of seven, he was sent to live in the castle of another lord, usually the close friend of his father's, or a relative. There he began his education as a page, running errands in the castle and performing humble services for noblemen and ladies. He learned good manners, reading, writing, numbers, singing, dancing, strumming the lute, reverence for God, how to use a sword, and how to ride a horse. In the morning he helped his lord dress, and served at meals, bringing in food and drink.



.. Around the age of 13, the boy was apprenticed to a knight and became a squire. He was taught skill with the sword, lance, shield, and he learned the duties and responsibilities of a knight. Squires engaged in mock battles against each other and against dummies. If the squire hit the dummy exactly in the middle it fell over, but if he hit it anywhere else, it would swing around and smack the erring squire in the back. Squires also served their mentor. He looked after his masters horses, polished his weapons and armor, and served him at meals. As the squire grew older he was expected to follow his master into battle, and protect his master if the knight fell in battle.

When the squire was judged ready to be a knight, usually between the ages of 18 and 21, a time for the knighting ceremony was set. On the night before the ceremony the squire would take a cleansing bath, fast, and make confession. He would spend the whole night in the chapel praying to God for guidance in his journey as a knight. The next morning, he dressed in white and entered the crowded hall with his sword strung around his neck. The priest would bless the sword and then the squire knelt before his lord (often the knight who had trained him). The lord asked the squire reasons for wanting to become a knight and if the lord was satisfied with his answers, the knight agreed to perform the ceremony. The ladies and knights would then dress the squire in new armor and the squire again knelt before the lord. The lord would then take a sword and tap him lightly on the shoulder three times and make a short declaration such as "in the name of God and Saint George, I make thee a knight."



Primary Sources:

Source 1

The Ten Commandments of the Code of Chivalry: From Chivalry by Leon Gautier

- I. Thou shalt believe all that the Church teaches, and shalt observe all its directions
- II. Thou shalt defend the Church
- III. Thou shalt reject all weaknesses, and shall constitute thyself the defender of them
- IV. Thou shalt love the country in which thou wast born
- V. Thou shalt not recall before thine enemy
- VI. Thou shalt make war against the infidel without cessation, and without mercy.
- VII. Thou shalt perform scrupulously thy feudal duties, if they be not contrary to the laws of God
- VIII. Thou shalt never lie, and shall remain faithful to thy pledged word.
- IX. Thou shalt be generous, and give largess to everyone
- X. Thou shalt be everywhere and always the champion of the right and the Good against injustice and Evil.

Source 2:

The Code of Chivalry-England Supplement

- Live to Serve King and Country
- Live one's life so that it is worthy of respect and honor
- Live for freedom, justice and all that is good
- Never attack an unarmed foe
- Never use a weapon on a foe not equal to the attack
- Never attack from behind
- Avoid lying to your fellow man
- Avoid cheating, obey the law of the king, country and chivalry
- Protect the innocent
- Exhibit self-control
- Show respect to authority
- Respect Women

Source 3:

The Twelve Chief Rules in Love: From the Art of Courtly Love by Andreas Cappellanus

- Thou shalt keep thyself caste for the sake of her whom thou lovest
- Thou shalt not knowingly strive to break up a correct love affair that someone else is engaged in.
- Thou shalt not choose for they love anyone whom a natural sense of shame forbids thee to marry.
- Thou shalt be in all things polite and courteous.

Chivalry Question Sheet:

1. Below, fill in the chart describing the process of being a knight.

Step to become a knight	Details of that step
# 1:	
#2:	
#3:	

2. Who was eligible to become a knight?

3. Which fact about knights interests you? Which fact surprises you?

4. What do these facts reveal about the lives of knights?

DID YOU KNOW?????

- ❖ At the end of the knighthood ceremony a knight could claim the title "Sir"
- ❖ A disgraced knight had his spurs hacked off and shield was hung upside down as a sign of dishonor
- ❖ Full plate armor was introduced during the 15<sup>th</sup> century and weighed about 50 LBS
- ❖ Fighting on piggyback introduced the young knights to the balance and skills required in mounted combat.
- ❖ Knights met each other at combined speeds of 60 mph when jousting.

Primary Source Guided Questions:

1. According to source 1, describe the Ten Commandments of the code of Chivalry?
2. How was a knight expected to act?
3. According to Source 2, what were some of the rules that guided English Medieval knights?
4. Do you think that these rules were fair? Why or why not?
5. How would you describe the rules outlined in, "The Art of Courtly Love" (source 3)
6. How did this guide the lives of knights and noblemen of this time?

