

PICTURE BOOKS

Chanticleer and the Fox | Cooney, Barbara | Age Level: 2 and up.

This is one of the best adaptations of medieval literature for children. Barbara Cooney simplifies Chaucer's tale without losing its essence, and her wording follows Chaucer closely. The story of the proud and elegant rooster is preserved in artwork that reflects the medieval era.

The Story of a Castle | John S. Goodall | Age Level: 2 and up.

A brief initial description of the wordless book traces the life of a Norman castle from the twelfth century to modern times. The illustrations cleverly unravel the castle's transformation as changing history puts new demands on the fortress.

PRINCE BOGHOLE | Erik C. Haugaard | Age Level: 2 and up.

This fairytale-like story about a kind who promises his daughter to the prince with the most beautiful bird in all of the world is full of detailed watercolor illustrations. A wonderful companion piece, Haugaard's Princess Horrid also appeals to a young audience.

Illuminations | Johnathon Hunt | Age Level: 6 and up.

This alphabet book uses an illuminative style to illustrate the vocabulary associated with the medieval era. This book can be used in combination with the Bellerophon Coloring Book of the Middle Ages (1987), which presents authentic medieval designs, as a model to enable students to create their own alphabet book.

Two Travelers | Christopher Manson | Age Level: 6 and up.

Based on an actual event in the court of Charlemagne, this delightful tale of a servant and an elephant who journey from Baghdad to the court of Charlemagne narrates an act of kindness worth sharing with a younger audience.

Saint George & the Dragon | Geraldine McCaughrean | Age Level: 6 and up.

McCraughrean weaves some of the tales surrounding a proclaimed folk hero of England. Saint George's adventure overcoming the ruthless dragon is accentuated with incredibly detailed and expressive illustrations. For a renaissance version of the tale, see Margaret Hodges book with illustrations by Trina Schart Hyman (Little, Brown, 1984).

FICTION

In the Keep of Time | Margaret J. Anderson | Age Level: Grade 5-8.

*Four children find themselves stepping through time into a host of captivating adventures as they walk through the door of Smailholm Tower, an old Scottish Border Keep, built during the days of medieval Scotland. See also her book: *The Druid's Gift*.*

Harald and the Great Stag | Donald Carrick | Age Level: 5-9.

A young serf's son learns of a stag hunt that is to take place in the baron's private forest. Carrick's story and watercolor illustrations beautifully portray Harald's inner conflict about the actions he takes.

Canterbury Tales | Barbara Cohen, Trina Schart Hyman | Age Level: 10 and up.

*Cohen has translated some of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* in a narrative that makes them understandable to children. Trina Schart Hyman's illuminative style of artwork bring personalities to the whimsical characters in each tale.*

The Door in the Wall (Books for Young Readers) | Marguerite de Angeli | Age Level: 10 and up.

Accurately set in fourteenth-century England, this book portrays a physically disabled boy destined for knighthood. En route to his training as a page, unexpected circumstances change his course of life, and young Robin eventually finds another way to serve his king with dignity.

Sir Cedric | Roy Gerrard | Grade Level: K-4.

*Sir Cedric, bored with life, sets out for adventure and frees a neighboring kingdom from the threats of Black Ned. Gerrard's carefully detailed illustrations and bouncy verse reflect some medieval architecture and dress of the time. The sequel, *Sir Cedric Rides Again*, involves the adventure of Sir Cedric's mischievous daughter Edwina the Fair.*

Adam of the Road (Puffin Modern Classics) | Elizabeth J. Lawson | Age Level: 8 and up.

Though this book is set in the thirteenth century, many of the themes reflect more modern thinking. For example, medieval minstrels were not in fact as itinerant as they are portrayed here.

Redwall (Redwall, Book 1) | Brian Jacques, Gary Chalk | Age Level: 8 and up.

*The mouse hero Matthias battles the rat Cluny the Scourge in Redwall Abbey. This gripping adventure presents a medieval lifestyle with animal adventures. After reading this book, it is difficult to imagine not reading the other books in the series: *Mossflower*, *Mattimeo*, *Mariel of Redwall*.*

Proud Knight, Fair Lady: The Twelve Lais of Marie de France | Naomi Lewis, Angela Barrett |
Grade Level: 5-8.

Here children are placed in direct contact with the vivid and psychologically powerful tales of this twelfth-century writer. Through her memorable imagery, Marie probes complex issues in ways comprehensible to children: the importance of clothing in defining an individual's position in society, the potential for finding psychological freedom in a restrictive home environment, and many other emotional issues relevant to children today.

The Canterbury Tales (Puffin Classics) | Geraldine McGaughrean, Victor Ambrus | Age Level: 12 and up.

The watercolor illustrations in this retelling of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales make this a must for any school library. McGaughrean's clever work with words has preserved Chaucer's humor.

El Cid | Victor G. Ambrus | Grade Level: 4-8.

Told in vivid detail, the story of the Spanish hero comes alive in this magnificently illustrated adaptation of the entire medieval epic.

Alanna: The First Adventure (The Song of the Lioness, Book 1) | Tamora Pierce | Grade Level: 5-8.

*A female protagonist changes places with her twin brother and learns the ways of knighthood. This is the first in a quartet of captivating adventures. Others include: *In the Hand of the Goddess, The Woman Who Rides Like a Man, and Lioness Rampant.**

Walter Dragun's Town: Crafts and Trade in the Middle Ages | Shiela Sancha | Grade Level: 5-8.

*This story, set in the thirteenth century, takes place in the English town of Stanford (now Stamford). A descriptive view of the activities medieval craftsman and merchants encounter through a week's time is enhanced through black and white drawings. Another of her books about country life in medieval England, *The Luttrell Village*, provides a nice companion to this one.*

Walk in Wolf Wood (Modern Classics) | Mary Stewart | Grade Level: 5-8.

A captivating, adventurous tale involving two modern children who find themselves walking through time into the fourteenth century. Their discovered mission is to solve a mystery involving a werewolf. The story provides some descriptive detail of fourteenth-century lifestyle and a unique werewolf tale.

Beowulf Dragonslayer (New Windmill) | Rosemary Sutcliff | Grade Level: 5-8.

*Beowulf, a deserving ALA Notable Book by Sutcliff, reflects her talent for writing stories that have held young readers' interests over the years. Other books by Sutcliff with medieval themes are: *The Light Beyond the Forest, The Sword and the Circle, The Road to Camlann, and Tristan & Iseult.**

FOLKLORE

Dick Whittington and His Cat | Marcia Brown | Grade Level: K-3.

A Caldecott honor book, this book retells the tale of the English folk hero, Dick Whittington, who went from being a pauper to being the mayor of London as a result of his generous spirit.

April fool (Ready-to-read) | Mary Blount Christian | Grade 1-3.

During the thirteenth century, the unpopular King John of Nottingham wished to build a hunting lodge near the people of Gotham. This folktale retells the story of how the people successfully foiled his plans on the first day of April.

Tristan and Iseult (Sunburst Book) | Rosemay Sutcliff | Grade Level: 5-8.

This folktale of two lovers, one trapped in marriage to royalty, has warmed the hearts of many over the years. Sutcliff's rendition is charming.

Medieval tales | Jennifer Westwood | Grade Level: 5-8.

This comprehensive collection of stories from the Middle Ages, rewritten in a folklore style, covers a variety of themes to suit diverse interests.

NONFICTION

A Medieval Feast | Aliko | Grade Level: 2 and up.

Aliko describes the events that might have taken place in a lord's dwelling as they prepared for a visit from the king and his court. The illustrations are magnificent, often incorporating actual details from specific late medieval manuscripts. The information about medieval feasts is very accurate.

The Luttrell Psalter | The Luttrell Psalter | Grade Level: 5-8.

*Life in a medieval village is portrayed in vivid detail in these photographs from a fourteenth-century book. This book works well in tandem with Sheila Sancha's *The Luttrell Village*.*

A Cathedral Builder (The Everyday Life of Series) | Giovanni Caselli | Grade Level: 3-8.

This colorful, beautifully illustrated book takes the reader through the building of a cathedral from the perspective of a young architectural apprentice, Etienne. The setting is France, where Rheims and Chartres Cathedrals are woven into the story.

The Middle Ages (History of Everyday Things) | Giovanni Caselli | Grade Level: 3-8.

With special attention to details and labels Giovanni presents a colorful description of a multitude of facets from the Middle Ages including technology, knighthood, Crusades, trade fairs, markets, entertainment, country life and several other topics too numerous to mention.

The Warrior Knights | George Constable | Grade Level: 3-6.

This informative book traces the male offspring of a knight from his early expectations as a page, then a squire, and finally a fully fledged knight. A multitude of colorful, detailed illustrations along with pen and ink drawings accompany the easy-to-read text.

The Middle Ages (Cultural Atlas for Young People) | Mike Corbishley | Grade Level: 4-8.

This remarkably comprehensive book includes many photographs of medieval buildings and art works, including two pages on the Bayeux Tapestry. Information is accurate and geographically balanced. The depth and complexity of medieval thought and culture is suggested in the book without cluttering or confusing the information.

Medieval Warfare | Geoffrey Hindley | Grade Level: 5-8.

Warfare, a theme within the Middle Ages that captures the interests of many, is presented in over 250 authentic photographic representations. Numbers corresponding with each photo are placed in context with the narrative.

Medieval People (Medieval Series) | Sarah Howarth | Grade Level: 5-8.

*This book is divided into chapters by class of person, such as “The Chronicler,” “The King,” etc. Howarth uses photographs of authentic paintings, sculpture, illuminations, stained glass, and other artifacts to support her descriptions, and, in general, she preserves a realistically complex, though accessible, view of the Middle Ages. *Medieval Places*, by the same author, effectively complements this book.*

Merry Ever After 1ST Edition | Joe Lasker | Grade Level: 2-5.

This tale depicts two weddings during the medieval era: one a marriage of royalty and wealth and the second a marriage between serfs. While the book provides some gay displays of events often associated with the time period, careful attention must be paid to clarify misconceptions that are represented. Medieval marriages were not always predetermined, and, although they were considered festive events, a mass drunken party was not the norm.

A Tournament of Knights | Joe Lasker | Grade Level: 2-5.

The story depicts the life of knights and the challenge of maintaining honor in simulated battle and jousting. Lasker’s text is supported with many detailed and colorful illustrations that take the reader through a tournament from start to finish.

Cathedral: The Story of Its Construction | David Macaulay | Grade Level: 3-8.

From the original hiring of the Flemish architect William of Planz through the eighty six years of craftsmen's labor that it took to build the largest French cathedral, David Macaulay treats the reader to the construction of a medieval cathedral.

The Middle Ages (Illustrated History of the World) | Fiona Macdonald | Grade Level: 5-8.

If you are looking for a source that covers the three dominant civilizations during the Middle Ages and events surrounding this time period, you might consider this book. Maps, time lines, photo displays of authentic works of art, and more give the reader an overwhelming glimpse of the medieval era.

The Days of Knights and Castles | Pierre Miquel | Grade Level 4-8.

This book presents a detailed composite of illustrations covering medieval life in and outside the castle. A host of subjects are covered including: work and celebration, education and sciences, fashion and clothes, craftsman and traders, and tales of medieval animals.

Life in a Medieval Village | Gwyneth Morgan | Grade Level: 3-8.

Morgan presents four sections: the peasant and his home, church and people, law and order, and the village and outside world. Black and white photographs of authentic artifacts along with illustrations tell the story of life as it might have occurred in a medieval village.

Age Of Chivalry | The National Geographic Society | Grade Level: 4-8.

The scholars who worked on the book are well-known and respected medievalists, and their depth of knowledge comes through in the work. Rather than trying to generalize about the Middle Ages as a whole, this book is divided topically and thus remains accurate.

The Cathedral Builders (Peoples of the Past) | Marie-Pierre Perdrizet | Grade Level: 3-8.

This is a wonderfully detailed description of all aspects of a cathedral's construction from beginning to completion. Sidebar notes provide interesting factual information.

Made in the Middle Ages | Christine Price | Grade Level: 3-6.

This book is quite accurate, both in its illustrations and in its text. The author makes distinctions between the dramatically different time periods and locations, and her sources appear in sidebars.

Medieval Times (Costume in Context Series) | Jennifer Ruby | Grade Level: 5-8.

If you are looking for a fairly comprehensive book on attire covering the 11th through the 15th century, this one provides simple sketches and narrative description to support the styles of the times.

Looking into the Middle Ages (A Pop-up book) | Huck Scarry | Grade Level: Grade 1-4.

A delightful popup book with castles, cathedrals, and knights, this informative, well-labeled text provides insights into the medieval tournaments, castle components, battle scenes, villages, and cathedrals.

Men in Armor: The Story of Knights and Knighthood | Richard Suskind, Enrico Arno | Grade Level: 4-6.

This tells the story of Roger, the eldest son of the Count of Bornel, and his quest to become a knight. The history of knighthood is cleverly woven into the tale starting with the influence of Clovis, King of Franks, in 496 A.D. and ending with the arrival of the long bow in the Battle of Crecy in the 15th century.

The Medieval Knight: The Soldier Through the Ages | Martin Windrow | Grade Level: 3-6.

Detailed with a multitude of colored pencil drawings this book gives the reader a fairly comprehensive look at knighthood.

CASTLES

Medieval Castles | Brian Adams | Grade Level: 3-5.

This book gives the reader a glimpse of castle types and features within. It could be used to generate more extensive looks at the components of castles and lifestyles within.

Medieval Castles (Cambridge Introduction to World History) | Conrad Cairns | Grade Level: 5-8.

This is not a lavish book, but it has a considerable amount of information and accurate drawings or photographs of particular castles with discussions of specific features.

Castle | David Macaulay | Grade Level: 3-8.

An artist with a passion for detail, David Macaulay successfully takes the reader inside the construction and completion of a medieval castle. Additionally, he provides a glossary of terms associated with castle components.

Castles (Let's Look at Series) | Rupert Matthews | Grade Level: 1-3.

This colorfully illustrated book takes the reader from the construction through the decline and present status of castles.

Castles (The Great Book of Series) | John Monks | Grade Level: 3-7.

Through a combination of photos and illustrations, this book provides an inside view of the characteristics of castles. Unique castle features in this book include prisons, medieval fun and games, tales of haunted castles, and the influence behind the construction of Walt Disney World's Cinderella Castle in Florida.

See Inside a Castle | R.J. Unstead | Grade Level: 2-5.

This book combines photographs of authentic art and existing castles along with illustrations to describe the story behind castles and their former inhabitants.

Castles | Jenny Vaughan | Grade Level: 2-4.

With a combination of illustrations and photos, this book briefly describes castles by type, lifestyles within, means of defense, and present day use.

Castles (Read About Series) | Tim Wood | Grade Level: 2-5.

This book provides an easy-to-read format in text and supportive illustrations. Easy-to-follow directions for making a motte and bailey castle, knight's helmet, and catapult are included.

BIOGRAPHIES

Queen Eleanor: Independent Spirit of the Medieval World | Polly Schoyer Brooks | Grade Level: 6-8.

This award-winning book will speak for itself in the incredible life story of Eleanor of Aquitaine.

Beyond the Myth: The Story of Joan of Arc | Polly Schoyer Brooks | Grade Level: 6-8.

Set during the time of Joan of Arc, this biography provides a fascinating close look at her life. The text is full supportive photographs of artifacts, artwork, historic sites, and monuments in her honor.

Leif the Lucky | Ingri d'Aulaire & Edgar Parin d'Aulaire | Grade Level: 3-6.

In their well known artistic style, the d'Aulaires weave myth and fact around the life of Lief Eriksson.

Kublai Khan (World Leaders Past & Present) | Kim Dramer | Grade Level: 4-8.

In this biography, Kublai Khan, the first Mongol chieftain to conquer and rule all of China, is supported with black-and-white photos of artifacts, artwork, and Mongol people of today. This series of biographies also includes: Attila, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Charlemagne, Joan of Arc, and Genghis Khan.

The Man Who Loved Books | Trina S. Hyman | Grade Level 3-6.

This story is about Columba, now an Irish saint, who was noted for his passion for books and missionary work in Scotland.

The Travels of Marco Polo (Exploration Through the Ages) | Richard Humble, Richard Hook |
Grade Level: 3-8.

*The journeys of Marco Polo are the major focus of this biography. Detailed illustrations abound throughout the text. Another book available in this series of biographies is *The Age of Lief Eriksson*.*

Richard the Lionhearted (Great Lives) | Joanne Jessop | Grade Level: 3-8.

*Illustrations interspersed with some reproductive photos of artwork give a glimpse of King Richard's life. Also included in this series of biographies is *Joan of Arc*.*

The Girl in White Armor | Albert Bigelow Paine | Grade Level: 5-8.

Considered by many to be a classic biography on the life of Joan of Arc for young people, this work is still popular among readers. Paine utilizes some actual written accounts along with early photos of historical sites and monuments erected in her honor.

The boy who drew sheep | Anne Rockwell | Grade Level: 3-8.

*This is a biography of Giotto di Bondone, the famous Italian painter. A wonderful companion to this book is Madeleine L'Engle's *The Glorious Impossible* (Little Simon, 1990). Although L'Engle's book is not a biography, the story told through photos of Giotto's work offers more examples of his paintings in color.*

Leif Eriksson and the Vikings (Worlds Great Explorers) | Charnan Simon | Grade Level: 3-8.

Filled with breathtaking photos of historic sites, artifacts, paintings, wildlife, and landscapes, this biography provides a wonderfully detailed look into Leif Eriksson's life.

Stories of Charlemagne | Jennifer Westwood | Grade Level: 6-8.

Westwood used her background in medieval English language and literature to create these stories about Charlemagne's life.