

Medieval Manuscripts

At the State Library of Victoria



State
Library of Victoria

Education resource



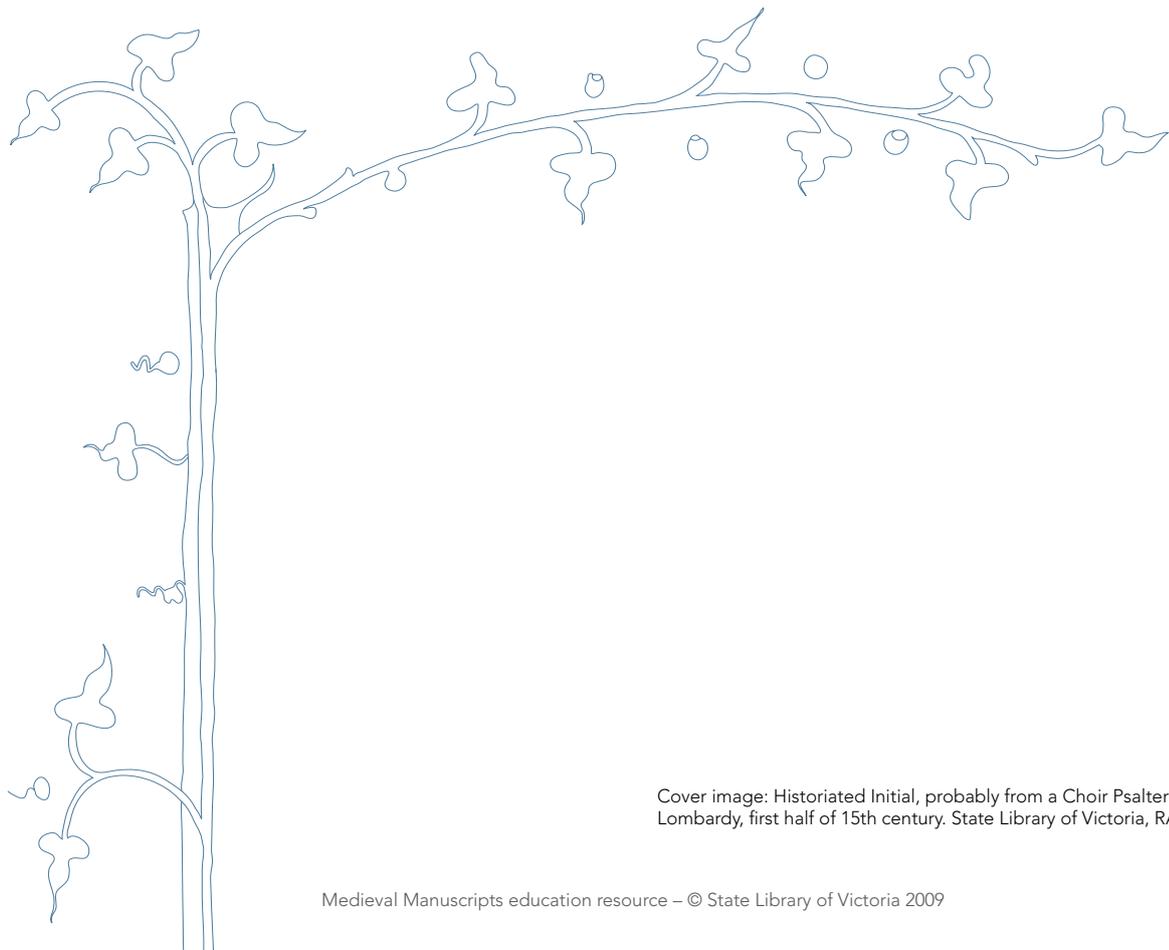
Introduction

This education resource is designed to help you, the teacher, to enhance your teaching of medieval society and culture, particularly in relation to medieval manuscript books. It contains background information, learning programs for the classroom and other resource material.

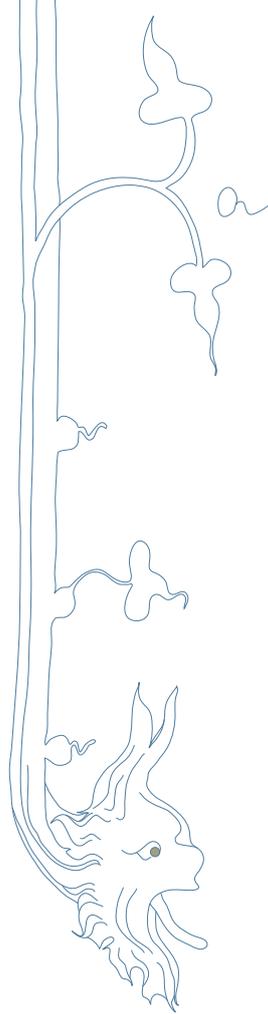
The material is primarily designed for students in Years 7 and 8, but if you are teaching at another level you can adapt the learning programs to suit your own requirements, or follow the suggestions outlined under 'Other Curriculum Suggestions'.

You can use as much or as little of this resource as you wish, but it is recommended that you start by reading the introductory sections (pages 3 & 4), which give an overview of the topic of medieval manuscripts and how the State Library's collections, exhibitions and resources can be used enhance teaching and learning.

We hope you enjoy using this resource.



Cover image: Historiated Initial, probably from a Choir Psalter (detail). Italy, Lombardy, first half of 15th century. State Library of Victoria, RARESF 096 IL 1, fol. 1



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Medieval manuscripts at the State Library

The State Library's collection includes a number of superb medieval illuminated manuscripts, as well as some of the earliest printed books from the 15th century. Through its exhibitions, learning programs and online resources, the Library gives students a rare opportunity to use primary sources in their study of medieval history.

The *Mirror of the World* exhibition

A number of illuminated manuscripts are on display in the Library's permanent exhibition, *Mirror of the World: books and ideas*, which covers the history and role of the book in society. This magnificent exhibition traces the evolution of books and the written word. It celebrates books as keepers of ideas, knowledge and the imagination, and provides an overview of the history of book production, design and illustration, with examples dating from the Middle Ages to now.

Exhibition tour and calligraphy workshop

In this engaging activity (suitable for Years 7 & 8), students will be guided through the *Mirror of the World* exhibition to see rare and beautiful illuminated manuscripts from the Middle Ages. They will then be introduced to the art of calligraphy and make their own 'illuminated manuscript' page. (90 minutes; \$7 per student; bookings 03 8664 7555 or email learning@slv.vic.gov.au)

Online resources

If you are unable to visit the Library, or would like further information, you can also explore the Library's resources online:

The ***Mirror of the World* website** (www.mirroroftheworld.com.au) reflects the content of the *Mirror of the World* exhibition, showcasing the world of books from the Middle Ages to today. It includes high-resolution interactive images of works including medieval manuscripts and early printed books. The *Teach & Learn* section of the site (www.mirroroftheworld.com.au/teach_and_learn) contains related educational resources for teachers and students.

The ***Medieval Imagination* image gallery** on the Library's website at www.slv.vic.gov.au/goto/medieval showcases many of the rare medieval manuscripts featured in the 2008 exhibition *The Medieval Imagination* (see box).

The *Medieval Imagination* exhibition

The images included in this document are of works that featured in the exhibition *The Medieval Imagination: Illuminated manuscripts from Cambridge, Australia and New Zealand*.

This spectacular exhibition was held at the State Library in 2008 (28 March to 15 June). It featured over 90 medieval and Renaissance illuminated manuscripts, including treasures from the collections of the University of Cambridge, from the State Library of Victoria's collection and from other Australian and New Zealand libraries and museums.

The exhibition offered visitors a rare opportunity to view such magnificent works first-hand. The manuscripts on display, dating from the 8th to the 16th centuries, included early Bibles, 'books of hours' and other prayer books, as well as works of science, law, literature and history.

The exhibition was curated by Professor Emeritus Margaret Manion AO, Professorial Fellow at the University of Melbourne.

For more information about the exhibition, visit www.slv.vic.gov.au/goto/medieval

Using this resource

This education resource is divided into four main sections:

Educational themes: An overview of key themes relating to medieval literature and life, for discussion and investigation.

Learning programs: A range of nine learning programs designed by the State Library's education team. Use the tables on page 11 to choose the best activities for your class.

Program resource sheets: Material for students and teachers to use while following the learning programs.

Other resources and references: A list of useful books and websites containing information about medieval manuscripts.

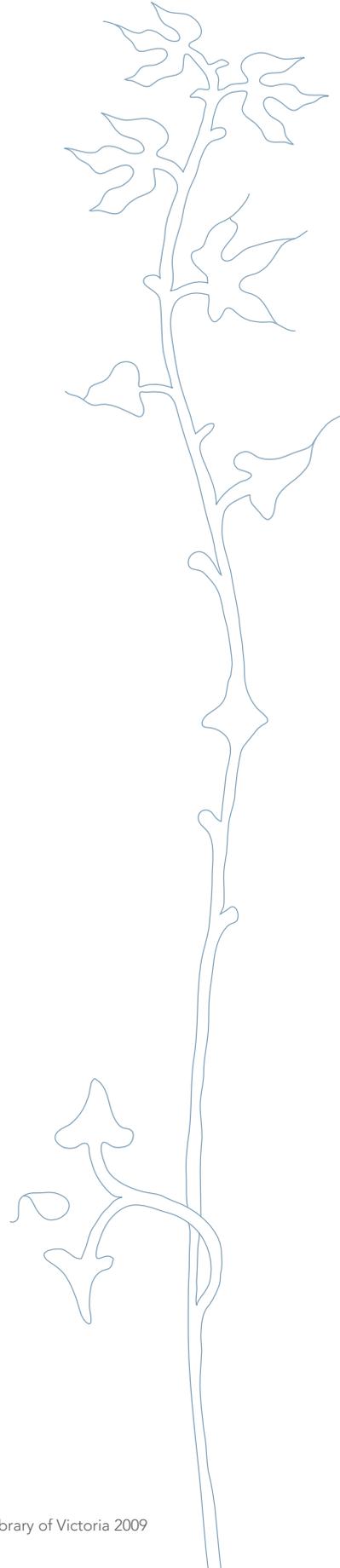
You can use this material to prepare for and complement a visit to the State Library, or simply use it to enhance your students' learning in the classroom.

In preparation

If you do plan to visit the Library with your class, remember that the more preparation the students receive the deeper their understanding will be. We recommend that you introduce some key ideas and terminology to the students prior to their visit. This can be done either by a general discussion of the themes on pages 6–10, or by using one of the introductory learning programs on pages 12–16. You may also encourage your students to bring along some questions to ask or investigate when they come to the Library.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback on this education resource. Were the tasks appropriate for the year levels specified? Were the instructions clear? Did your students enjoy the tasks? Do you have any suggestions for improvement? Please email your comments to education@slv.vic.gov.au, with 'Medieval education resource' as the subject line.



Educational themes

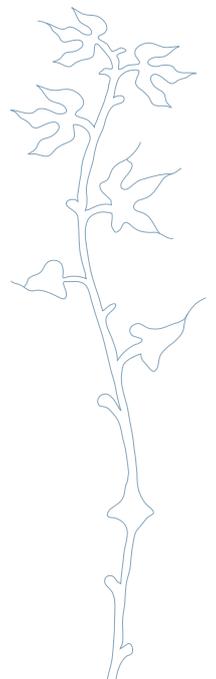
The following key themes relating to medieval culture and life are briefly outlined over the next few pages:

- The Books of Medieval Society
- The Story of Books, Communication and Literacy
- Comparing Past and Present
- Manuscripts as Art
- Decoding Primary Sources

The themes are relevant to a variety of disciplines, and the theme outlines can be used as teaching tools.

Some questions to guide learning

- What were the most common manuscripts in the Middle Ages? Why?
- Who produced and owned manuscripts?
- What were the different purposes of manuscripts?
- Who could read and write?
- What does it mean to be literate? Was it important?
- What is the history of 'the book'?
- How did the development of the book correspond with the emergence of ideas?
- Who controlled the production of books and how did this affect society?
- What events changed the book?
- Why were books sometimes dangerous?
- Why were manuscripts illuminated?
- What do the different types of decoration mean?
- What information about the Middle Ages can we gather from manuscripts?
- How do we find information in manuscripts?



The Book in Medieval Society

Compared to today, books were extremely rare in the Middle Ages. Many people would never see a book in their life, and certainly would not own one. The books that were produced were called manuscripts; they were hand-written on parchment made from animal skin. Many manuscripts were created for priests and other clerics, while others were made for wealthy members of society. The following were some of the more common types of medieval manuscripts:

Antiphonal: A book containing sentences from scripture that are sung alternately during Mass.

Bestiary: A book containing depictions of real and imaginary animals, used for entertainment and to teach morals.

Bible: The full-text Latin version of the Bible (Vulgate), or its separate books.

Book of hours: A book for private worship, usually containing a calendar, psalms and prayers, sometimes taken to church services.

Breviary: A book containing the services for the daily Divine Office.

Gradual: The principal choir book used in the celebration of Mass.

Missal: A book containing a collection of readings for Mass.

Pontifical: A book used only by the bishop, containing rites, blessings and services.

Psalter: A book containing the 150 Psalms, usually for private use.

The book that was produced the most was the book of hours – a bestseller for over 250 years! These books were often status symbols, as their equivalent in today's value would probably be similar to that of a luxury car.

The term 'illumination' originally referred to the decoration of books with gold or silver, but today the term is used to refer to any illustration or decoration in a manuscript.

Illuminated manuscripts would often take years to make, and many people would work on the production of the manuscript. In the early Middle Ages these workers would usually be found in the scriptorium of a monastery, but in the later Middle Ages commercial scriptoriums were more common. The main workers involved were:

- the parchment maker
- the scribe
- the illuminator and illustrator
- the binder and finisher



Preparing manuscript materials. Image courtesy of Bernard J Muir, University of Melbourne.

The Story of Books, Communication and Literacy

Today we live in a society where finding information is as simple as typing a few key words into a search engine. In Europe in the Middle Ages, however, written information was scarce. Most ordinary people could not read or write – we would say they were illiterate. But illiteracy did not create the same difficulties as it does today, since oral communication was generally used in learning, trade and storytelling. The ability to read and write was only valued in the official study of law, economics and religion.

A society that relied heavily on oral history, or one in which the written language (Latin) was different from the spoken language (Italian, French, English etc), would face particular issues – for example, with the accurate reproduction of ideas.

In the time before Christ, information was usually recorded on stone or clay tablets, then on papyrus or scrolls. The early Christians embraced the newly developed codex – the book in the form we know today, made up of bound pages. Book production in the Middle Ages was almost solely under the control of the Church. Books were used to inform or teach, and even medical texts contained Christian ideas and teachings. The production of the codex can be linked closely with the spread of Christianity throughout Europe. Although everyday citizens couldn't read, their local priests would use the Bible and other texts to inform their teaching and preaching. The codex travelled easily and therefore so did Christian ideas.

The next major event in the history of book production was the development in Europe of the printed book. Johannes Gutenberg is credited with developing moveable type in Europe, and he printed the first Bible between 1452 and 1455. This allowed for much cheaper mass-production of books. Books were no longer the domain of the very rich and noble.

Another event that significantly changed the use of the book was the decree of Henry VIII to print the Bible in English. Up until this time, the Bible (as well as other texts) was usually printed in Latin. In fact, just a few decades before Henry VIII's decree, William Tyndale was burned at the stake for doing just that.



Gospels of St Luke and St John (detail). England, Northumbria, early 8th century. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 197B, fol. 2. Reproduced by permission of the Master and Fellows, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

Comparing Past and Present

A central theme of studies in history is the concept of continuity and change. Using manuscripts from the past, we can compare their form and function with the texts we use today.

Today, illuminated manuscripts are rare and precious objects, and their meaning and purpose may seem quite foreign to first-time viewers. However, they offer us many insights into the origin of books and of practices that we follow today.

Some physical characteristics of these manuscripts (other than the materials used) are similar to the books we use today: they are bound on the left, and the text is written left to right. The way the Bible is organised, into 'books' with numbered chapters and verses, is the same today as when this structure was invented, around 1200 AD.

Some of the ideas in these manuscripts endure today. Some books, particularly the book of hours, included a calendar of church feast days. The most important days were usually written in red. Here we find the origin of two terms still used today: 'red letter day' and 'holiday' ('holy day').

These early books can teach us about the preferences and priorities of the time in which they were produced – the most significant being the predominance of biblical ideas. The Catholic Church controlled most aspects of medieval life, and religious devotion was paramount. As religious and political preferences changed, so did the books. For example, when Henry VIII introduced Protestantism with the Church of England, the language of the Bible changed. The story of the manuscript reveals an interesting picture of medieval Europe.



The Apocalypse and Life of St Edward the Confessor (detail). England, London, c. 1380–90 & c. 1400–20. Trinity College, Cambridge, MS B.10.2, fol. 22. Image courtesy of the Master and Fellows, Trinity College, Cambridge

Manuscripts as Art

Illuminated manuscripts were treasured not only for their literary value, but also for their value as works of art. Like other forms of visual art, they can be explored and analysed for the artistic processes used and for their meaning. Manuscripts were illuminated for a variety of reasons: to highlight and illustrate particular ideas in the text; to provide a focus for meditative thought; and to highlight the owner's status.

Illuminators were skilled artists who used a variety of methods and tools to create the desired effect. Each illumination was created by hand. Some were original, while others were copied from or inspired by other illuminations, paintings or stained glass work. Some manuscripts were personalised with an image of the person who commissioned the manuscript, or their family coat of arms.

The materials used to create illuminated manuscripts included: high-quality and well-prepared vellum; quill and ink; gold leaf or powdered gold or silver; gesso (to give a three-dimensional effect); burnishing tools; colours made from organic minerals; brushes; animal glue; and egg whites.

Analysing an illuminated manuscript offers many avenues for discussion. The artistic methods used differ from those of today, but we can trace the emergence of techniques such as perspective drawing. By exploring the purpose of the miniatures and decorations in manuscripts, we can also learn about the culture and lifestyle of the times. In fact, some researchers have even examined manuscripts to discover the fashion trends of the medieval era.



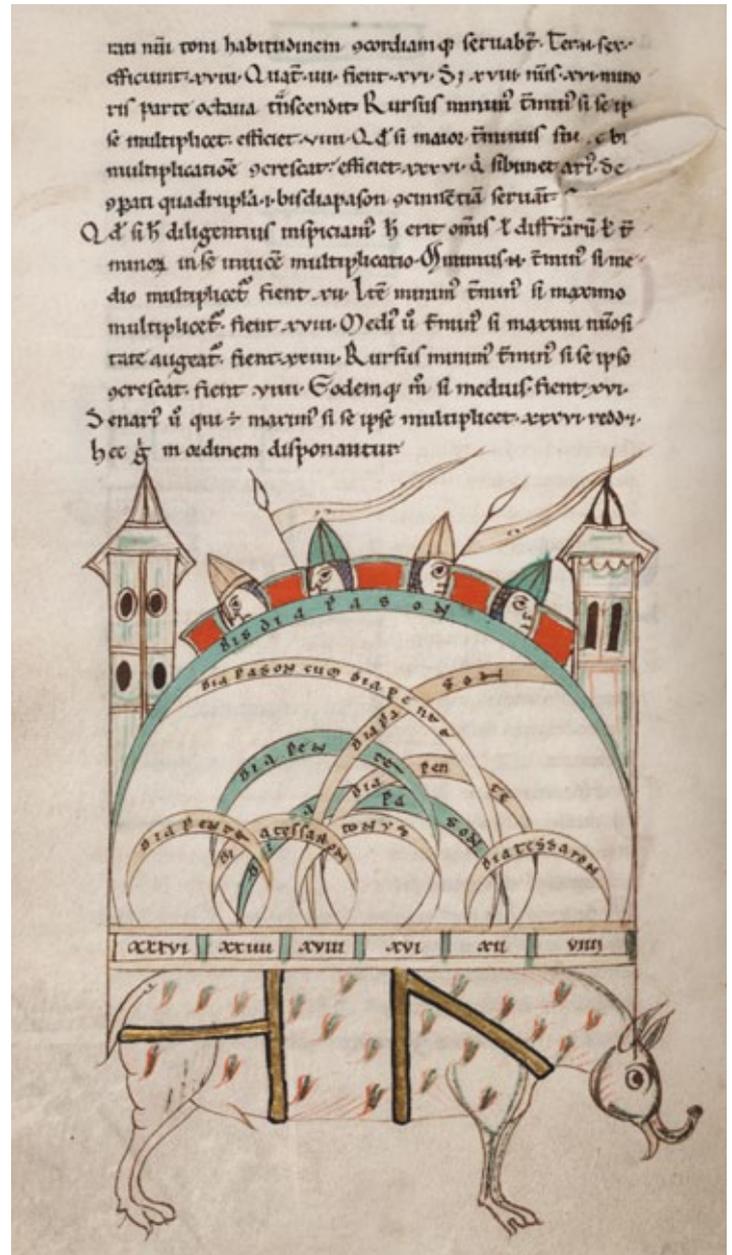
Historiated Initial from a Gradual (detail). Italy, Venice, c. 1420. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Marlay Cutting It. 18. Reproduced by permission of the Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Decoding Primary Sources

While many medieval books contain text that was copied from an original (and are thus secondary sources), each manuscript as a whole can be considered a primary source. The content choices, illustrations, bindings, signatures and glosses can all give us an insight into medieval life.

Many historians have used manuscripts to learn about daily life, important events and people in history. We can discover how historians investigate the origins and ownership of manuscripts, by focusing on things such as a coat of arms, images of the owner in miniatures, and signatures of the scribe. Historians also commonly use the calendar to find the place and time for which the manuscript was intended, as different feast days were used in different areas and were made official at various times.

The illustrations in an illuminated manuscript can show many details of daily life. For example, some calendars in books of hours would illustrate each month with a common activity associated with that month, such as harvesting or grape-crushing. The miniatures can also show us details about clothing, architecture and religious practices common in the period in which they were created.



Boethius, *De Musica* (detail). England, Christ Church, Canterbury, c. 1130–60. Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand, MSR-05, fol. 27v

Learning programs

The nine learning programs are designed to engage students in learning about various aspects of medieval history and manuscript production. The programs include activities and topics that relate to a variety of curriculum areas, at both introductory and 'further learning' levels.

The tables below list each learning program alongside the progression points it is linked to (the letters are abbreviations of VELS Dimension names). Programs marked with an asterisk (*) have extension options to allow for further development of ideas.

Introductory learning programs

Shorter activities to encourage students to explore ideas about medieval manuscripts.

| Program | VELS Domain | | | | Page |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------|---------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| | Humanities – History | English | The Arts – Art (2D) | The Arts – Visual Communication | |
| 1. Thinking Trivia | HKU 4.25 and 4.5 HRI 4.25 | | | | 12 |
| 2. Terminology Tangle | HKU 4.25 and 4.5 | | ER 4.25 | | 13 |
| 3. Past and Present | HKU 4.25 and 4.5 | | ER 4.25 | | 14 |
| 4. Perusing Pictures | HKU 4.5 | | ER 4.25 | ER 4.25 | 15 |
| 5. Searching Sources | HKU 4.5 HRI 4.25 and 4.5 | R 4.25 | | | 16 |

Further learning programs

More in-depth activities, drawing on students' knowledge and extending their ideas.

| Program | VELS Domain | | | | Page |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|---------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| | Humanities – History | English | The Arts – Art (2D) | The Arts – Visual Communication | |
| 6. A Manuscript Story* | HKU 4.25 | | | ER 4.5 | 17 |
| 7. A Touch of the Times* | HKU 4.25 and 4.5 | R 4.5 | | | 18 |
| 8. Proving Provenance* | HKU 4.25 HRI 4.25 and 4.5 | R 4.5 | | | 19 |
| 9. Hunting Historiated Initials* | HKU 4.25 HRI 4.25 | | ER 4.25 and 4.5 | ER 4.25 and 4.5 | 20 |

Thinking Trivia

Aim

To engage students in the themes of medieval life and illuminated manuscripts, and help them to generate questions and ideas.

Duration

One hour.

Resources

- Thinking Trivia resource sheet – teacher’s copy only (see page 21)

Curriculum outcomes

This activity is focused on the early stages of historical study. The students will be working towards the achievement of the following progression points in Humanities – History:

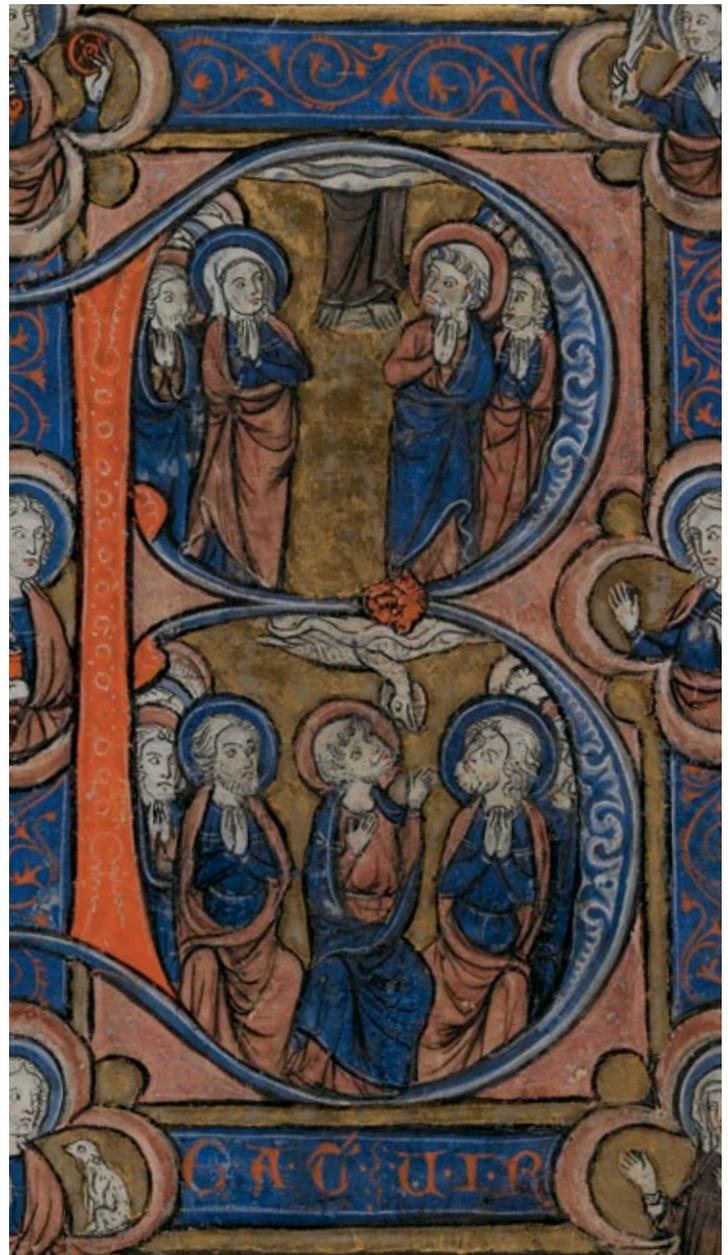
History: HKU 4.25 – Knowledge of aspects of past societies, such as daily life, work, family, education, community life and governance.

History: HKU 4.5 – Identification of legacies of past societies evident in contemporary societies.

History: HRI 4.25 – Development of key research questions for an investigation.

Learning process

1. Introduce students to the topic. For example, read some or all of the text on page 6 to the class, and display pictures of manuscripts.
2. Divide the class into groups of two to six. Ask each group to nominate a scribe and have a pen and paper ready.
3. Read through each trivia question, allow time for discussion and ask scribes to record the group’s answers.
4. Read the answers (on the resource sheet) to the students. Take the opportunity to discuss any surprising answers and record on the board any questions or thoughts the class has. (Alternatively, students could present their answers on large sheets of paper before the correct answer is given.)
5. Discuss questions and ideas the students may have.
6. Formulate some sample questions linked to an area of medieval history they wish to investigate, such as ‘What can manuscripts tell us about how people lived in the Middle Ages?’
7. Share some questions and close discussion.



Psalter-Hours (use of Liège). Southern Netherlands, Liège, 1270s. State Library of Victoria, RARES 096 R66, fols. 19v-20 (detail)

Terminology Tangle

Aim

To develop students' understanding of the language used to discuss medieval manuscripts.

Duration

One hour.

Resources

- Copies of the Medieval Glossary resource sheet (page 22)
- Copies of the Manuscript Labelling resource sheet (page 23)
- Scissors and glue
- Internet

Curriculum outcomes

This activity can be adapted to suit either History or Art, with students working towards the following progression points:

History: HKU 4.25 – Understanding of key concepts and terms for use in historical study.

History: HKU 4.5 – Identification of legacies of past societies evident in contemporary societies.

Art: ER 4.25 – Use of appropriate art language to describe the use of art elements and principles.

Learning process

1. Introduce the activity with some contextual information about medieval manuscripts.
2. Read through the explanation of terms as a class and explain the following four activities:

Manuscript labelling – students use the glossary to correctly label the parts of the manuscript in the picture.

Mix and match – students cut up the words and definitions in the glossary and then try to correctly match them to make their own glossary, using a master list to check their results.

Definition drama – a small group picks three words from the glossary, then prepares a skit that uses the words in the correct context and shows an understanding of their meaning.

Etymology – students take some words from the 'Words with medieval origins' section of the glossary and explore where they come from, using the etymology dictionary at www.etymonline.com. They can also include other words that they think might have a medieval origin.

3. Students can either rotate through activities in groups, or complete them at their own pace.
4. At the end, each group can perform its skit to the class.
5. Discuss any interesting words or facts that came out of the activity.

Assessment suggestion

Students could use this activity to begin to create their own medieval glossary. This could be used as an ongoing assessment task throughout the term.



Leaf from Frère Laurent, *La Somme le Roi* (detail). France, Paris, c. 1290–1300. Artist Master Honoré (act. 1289–1312). Virtues and Vices: Chastity and Luxury. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, MS 368. Reproduced by permission of the Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Past and Present

Aim

To develop students' understanding of the similarities and differences between today's society and medieval society, with a particular focus on books and literacy. Note: this activity is best suited to students who have some background knowledge of medieval history.

Duration

One hour.

Resources

- Copies of Past and Present resource sheet (page 24)
- Copies of Educational Themes, including images (pages 5–10)
- Relevant books from your own library

Curriculum outcomes

Students will develop an understanding of the impact of past societies on our society today as well as differences that have developed over time. They will work towards the following progression points in History and/or Art:

History: HKU 4.25 – Identification of change and continuity over time in a past society.

History: HKU 4.5 – Identification of legacies of past societies evident in contemporary societies.

Art: ER 4.25 – Awareness of cultural and historical influences on a range of contemporary and traditional artworks.

Learning process

1. Before the lesson, set up five tables or areas with a few copies of an Educational Theme outline, the corresponding picture and a book.
2. Sort students into five groups and give each student a Past and Present activity sheet.
3. Outline the activity and work through an example of a Venn diagram (if it is a new learning tool for the students).
4. Each group begins at a different table. Using the resources on the table, they should discuss the theme and then add as much information to their Venn diagram as possible about the characteristics of medieval and modern books.
5. After five to ten minutes, each group rotates to another table and continues to add to their Venn diagram.
6. Students form new groups of five (one person from each original group), discuss what they have written in their Venn diagram and respond to the questions at the bottom of the page.
7. Groups report back to the class.

Assessment suggestion

The Venn diagram sheet could be used as a minor assessment piece, and students could complete a similar activity at the end of the unit to reveal what they have learnt.



Book of Hours (fragmentary). France, Besançon, c. 1430–40. State Library of Victoria, RARES 096 R66HM, fol.13 (detail)

Perusing Pictures

Aim

To develop students' awareness of methods of analysing pictures, focusing on the impact of the context in which they are created.

Duration

One to two hours.

Resources

- Copies of Educational Theme 'Manuscripts as Art' (page 9)
- Images of manuscripts, from this resource or from websites (see list on page 29)
- Computer and projector if possible

Curriculum outcomes

This activity can be used as part of an integrated Humanities/Arts unit on medieval history, or as a stand-alone Art or Visual Communication activity. The students can work towards the following progression points:

History: HKU 4.5 – Identification of legacies of past societies evident in contemporary societies.

Art: ER 4.25 – Contribution to classroom discussion about the structure of artworks and ways they communicate meaning; Awareness of cultural and historical influences on a range of contemporary and traditional artworks.

Visual Communication: ER 4.25 – Awareness of characteristics of visual messages; Awareness of influences on a range of visual communications.

Learning process

1. Introduce manuscript illumination as a form of art or visual communication.
2. Read through the Educational Theme 'Manuscripts as Art' as a class, and reiterate prior knowledge about the analysis of pictures.
3. Discuss and list techniques, styles and purposes of illuminators in the Middle Ages.
4. Use a sample manuscript and show students evidence of illumination techniques used and messages being delivered. Link this to the context in which they are working.
5. Students take a copy of the manuscript and work in pairs to make notes of techniques used, the purpose of the piece and evidence of the historical context in which the illuminator was working. Some students may benefit from a pre-prepared checklist to guide them through the activity.
6. Students present their findings to the class.
7. Reiterate key techniques and suggestions for inferring meaning and contextual information from manuscripts.

Assessment suggestions

Students can be assessed on their contribution to class discussion and the development of their understanding of techniques used by illuminators and of how the context in which they were working influenced their work. They could keep an ongoing journal of techniques they learn about.



Missal (use of Sarum). England, London, c. 1425–30. Trinity College, Cambridge, MS B.11.11, fol. 151 (detail). Image courtesy of the Master and Fellows, Trinity College, Cambridge

Searching Sources

Aim

To develop students' awareness of the difference between primary and secondary sources and of methods for gathering information from primary sources.

Duration

One to two hours.

Resources

- Copies of Searching Sources resource sheet (page 25)
- Images of manuscripts, from this resource or from websites (see list on page 29)
- Examples of secondary sources (textbooks etc)

Curriculum outcomes

This activity can be used in the areas of History or English, or a combination of both. The progression points students are working towards are:

History: HKU 4.5 – Identification of legacies of past societies evident in contemporary societies.

History: HRI 4.25 & 4.5 – Identification of a variety of primary and secondary sources for particular research or questions.

English: R 4.25 – Identification of strategies used by authors to persuade others to share a point of view.

Learning process

1. Discuss the definitions of primary and secondary sources.
2. Create an Examples/Non-Examples list on the board and fill in some answers in reference to primary sources.
3. Display an example of a manuscript and discuss elements that allow for the discovery of primary source information – such as the pictures and calendar.
4. Discuss the role of the pictures in persuading the reader.
5. Hand out the Searching Sources worksheet, and ask students to complete it individually or in groups.
6. Share responses and discuss.
7. (Optional.) Students could develop a list of information they want to gather during their visit to the Library.

Assessment suggestion

The students can be assessed on their understanding of how to identify and use source material. Alternatively, this activity may simply be used as skill development for a larger research project.



Crucifixion, Missal (use of Besançon). France, Besançon, c. 1470–80. Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland City Libraries, Med. MS G139 fo124 (detail)

A Manuscript Story

Aim

To develop students' understanding of the role of manuscripts in medieval societies and, through extension opportunities, to use this as a tool for comprehending the structure of a medieval society.

Duration

Two to three hours.

Resources

- Computer room or computer and digital projector
- Photo Story software (available at www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/photostory/default.aspx)
- Website: www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/pharos/sections/making_art/manuscript.html
- Website: www.leavesofgold.org/learn/children/how_made/index.html

Curriculum outcomes

This activity can be used in the area of History but can also be linked to Visual Communication theory. The progression points students are working towards are:

History: HKU 4.25 – Knowledge of aspects of past societies; Comprehension of sources.

Visual Communication: ER 4.5 – Understanding of ways that designers from different times and places have presented visual communications.

Learning process

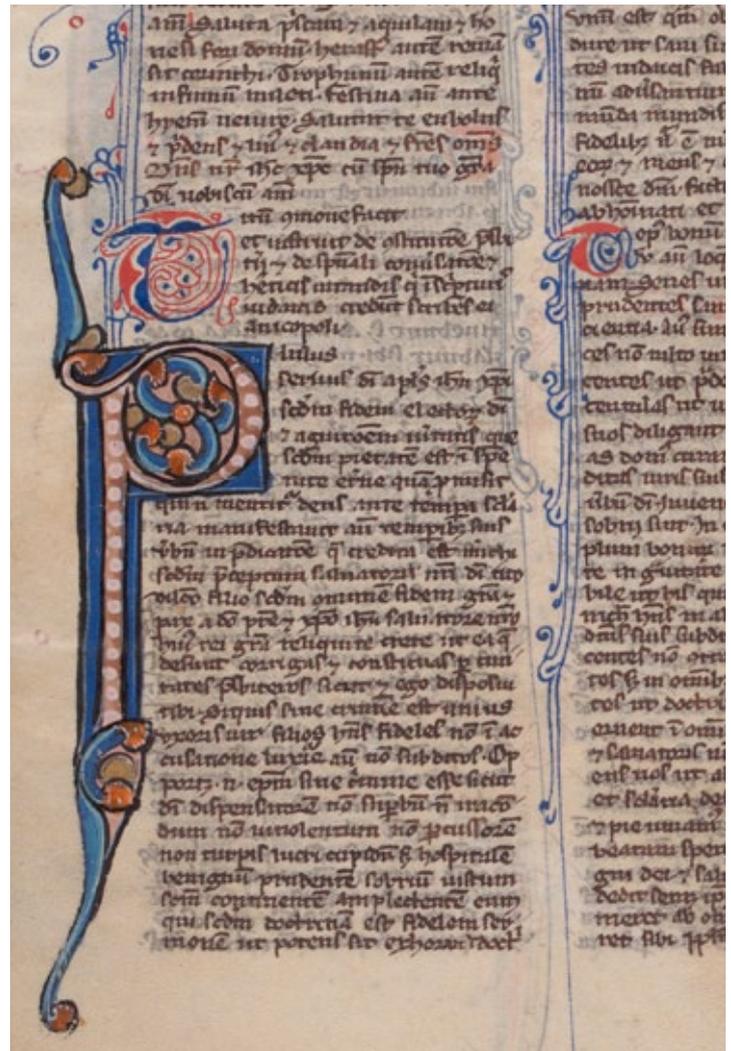
1. Discuss what the students know about manuscript production and life in the Middle Ages. Focus on discussing who would have owned manuscripts and why they were made.
2. Introduce the activity. Assist students, individually or in small groups, to develop a basic timeline of the process of medieval book production and thus to identify gaps in their knowledge.
3. Allow students time to research individually or in groups and to explore the two websites listed above. (If a computer room is not available, printed resources can be used as an alternative and then the websites can be displayed using a projector.)
4. As students are researching, encourage them to add to their timeline notes.
5. When students have gathered enough information they can use Photo Story software to create a storyboard of the process of making a manuscript. (If a computer room is not available, students can create a storyboard on paper.)
6. Students can print or present their storyboards.

Optional extension

This activity could be extended into a short unit with more detailed requirements that asks students to examine the roles of the people involved in making the manuscript and the society in which they lived. They could also use their storyboard to develop a short film or play where their assessment could be integrated with the Arts. (See integrated unit suggestion, page 28).

Assessment suggestions

The students' final storyboards can be used as assessment pieces for the progression points listed above, and their initial timeline could be used to compare the development of their understanding.



Bible. France or southern England, second half of 13th century. State Library of Victoria, RARES 091 B47C (detail)

A Touch of the Times

Aim

To develop students' understanding of the context in which medieval manuscripts were produced and how they changed according to the events and people around them.

Duration

One to two hours.

Resources

- Copies of A Touch of the Times resource sheet (page 26)
- Enlarged images of manuscripts, from this resource or from websites (see list on page 29)
- Website: www.mirroroftheworld.com.au/timeline.php

Curriculum outcomes

This activity can be used in the area of History but can also be linked to studies of texts and contexts in English. The progression points students are working towards are:

History: HKU 4.25 – Knowledge of aspects of past societies, such as daily life, work, family, education, community life and governance; Identification of change and continuity over time in a past society.

History: HKU 4.5 – Evaluation of the role and importance of leaders and leadership in societies.

English: R 4.5 – Recognition that texts are produced for multiple audiences, purposes and contexts.

Learning process

1. Introduce the theme and pose the question 'What effect does the context in which a book is produced have on the final product?' This could be done as a think-pair-share.
2. Discuss knowledge about historical events of the Middle Ages and create a timeline of known events on the board.
3. Read through the A Touch of the Times sheet as a class and add key events to the class timeline.
4. Discuss the examples of manuscripts referred to in the 'Manuscript production' column and illustrated in this resource.
5. Students can work in groups to create their own manuscript sketch that has clear links to the time in which it was created. For example, their manuscript may include an image of a king reigning at the time, or a style of script fashionable during that period.
6. Each group presents its findings and includes the sketch on the timeline.

Optional extension

This activity could be extended with students finding and researching examples of manuscripts. A good site that discusses the contextual information found in book production is the State Library of Victoria's *Mirror of the World* website (see Resources). The students could locate a chosen manuscript in history and analyse evidence of contextual information.

Assessment suggestion

The students' involvement in the activity could be used as evidence for the development of their understanding of the theme. The extension project or a reflective writing piece on the activity could be used as formal assessment.



Antiphonal-hymnal. France, Paris, c. 1335-45. State Library of Victoria, RARES F 096. 1 R66A, fol. 294 v. (detail)

Proving Provenance

Aim

To develop students' understanding of how historians locate information about a manuscript's origins and history, and ideas on how they can use these skills in their own work.

Duration

One to two hours.

Resources

- Images of manuscripts, from this resource or from websites (see list on page 29)

Curriculum outcomes

This activity can be used in the area of History but can also be linked to studies of texts and contexts in English. The progression points students are working towards are:

History: HRI 4.25 – Comprehension of sources.

History: HRI 4.5 – In historical explanations, use of evidence, relevant concepts and terms.

History: HKU 4.25 – Identification of change and continuity over time in a past society.

English: R 4.5 – Recognition that texts are produced for multiple audiences, purposes and contexts.

Learning process

1. Introduce the theme of provenance and give definition: the origin and history of an item.
2. List elements used in provenance research, such as:
 - inscriptions: notes or engravings
 - mottoes: phrases or belief statements used by particular families or people
 - bookplates: a decorative piece of paper stuck into the front of a book showing its owner's identity
 - heraldry: symbols or insignia on a coat of arms
 - pictorial representation of the owner, maker or location
 - other documents: tax records, personal financial accounts, bookseller records, library records etc
3. Use examples of manuscripts (from this resource or from websites listed on page 29) and help students to locate some of the above elements.
4. Students write a 'Guide to Proving Provenance'.
5. Students brainstorm some challenges that researchers of provenance may face, such as:
 - inscriptions and bookplates can be damaged, hard to read or removed
 - very old heraldry symbols may be difficult to decipher
 - some owners may have tried to 'upgrade' their ancestry
 - when books are rebound, evidence of provenance is often removed
 - illuminated manuscripts were often cut up so the illuminations could be sold individually
6. Students add suggestions for overcoming these challenges in their Guide.

Optional extension

This activity could be extended so that students research more deeply the context in which the manuscript was created. Alternatively, it could be extended into the area of Art, through the creation of a personal coat of arms, using references explaining symbolic meaning.

Assessment suggestions

The students' written Guide could be used as an assessment piece and combined with a know-wonder-learnt chart to show their knowledge development. The extension activity of researching heraldry and preparing a coat of arms could become a Rich Assessment Task.



Miniatures from the Hours of Albrecht of Brandenburg (detail). Flanders, Bruges, c. 1522–23. Artist Simon Bening (1483–1561) and assistants. The Annunciation: The Hours of the Virgin. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, MS 294b. Reproduced by permission of the Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Hunting Historiated Initials

Aim

To develop students' understanding of the construction, context and purpose of illuminated manuscripts.

Duration

One to two hours.

Resources

- Website: <http://www.metmuseum.org/explore/Jde/jde3.htm>
- 'Other resources and references' list (page 29)
- Images of manuscripts, from this resource or from websites (see list on page 30)
- Copies of Medieval Glossary resource sheet (page 22)

Curriculum outcomes

This activity can be used in the areas of Art or Visual Communication and connected to studies of medieval society in History. The progression points students are working towards are:

History: HKU 4.25 – Knowledge of aspects of past societies.

History: HRI 4.25 – Comprehension of sources, and questioning of their point of view, values and attitudes.

Art: ER 4.25 & 4.5 – Contribution to classroom discussion about the structure of artworks and ways they communicate meaning; Use of research into the influence of different social and cultural contexts on the work of a selected artist.

Visual Communication ER 4.25 & 4.5 – Awareness of influences on a range of visual communications; Understanding of ways that designers from different times and places have presented visual communications.

Learning process

1. Discuss the role of illustrations in manuscripts and introduce key terms such as: miniature, historiated initial and border, using examples.
2. Students can then use the Medieval Glossary to highlight words related to manuscript decoration.
3. Students then, either working individually or in small groups, choose three to five interesting manuscript pictures from the suggested websites and present them to the class, explaining why they chose them and what information they have found about them. (Encourage them to look for detail, such as the calendar in the book of hours at www.metmuseum.org/explore/Jde/jde3.htm.)
4. Students could write a reflection on the most interesting things they found.

Optional extension

This activity could be extended into an ongoing study of illuminated manuscripts. Students could keep a journal about features of, and methods of making, medieval manuscripts. They could then apply this knowledge to create their own manuscript.

Assessment suggestions

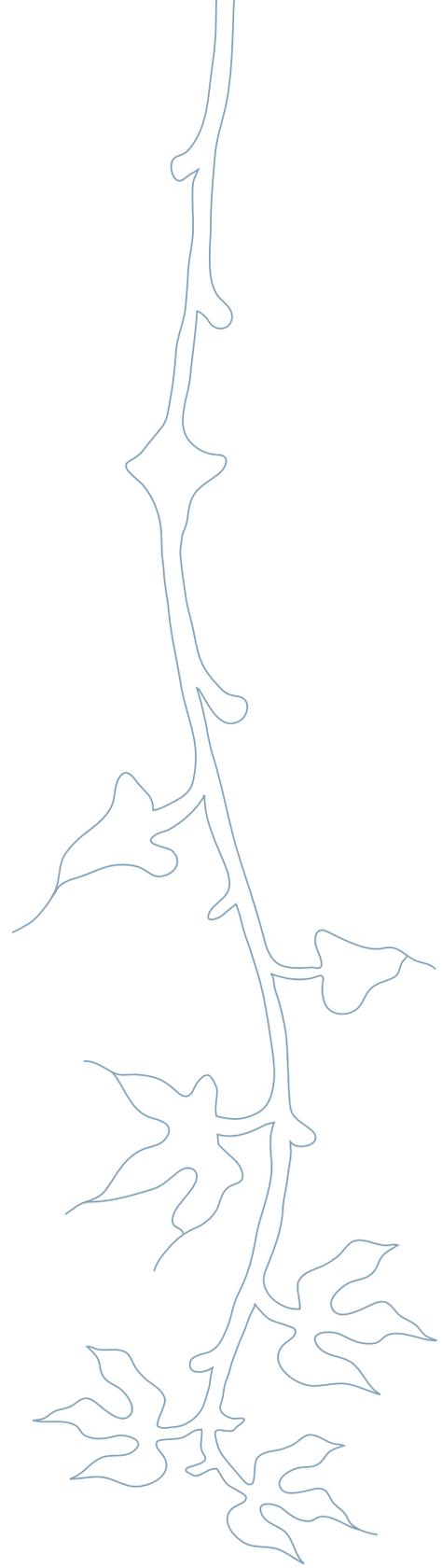
The students could be assessed on their notes or illustrated glossary. If the extension option was taken, students' journals and final products could be major assessment pieces.



Book of hours, printed (use of Rome). France, Paris, 9 March 1508 (n.s. 1509). State Library of Victoria, RARES 096 R66 HV (detail)

Thinking Trivia

1. What was the most popular book for almost 250 years during the Middle Ages?
2. How many animals would be needed to make a manuscript of 100 pages?
3. Which birds' feathers made the best quills for writing manuscripts?
4. How many canonical hours (church services) were there in a priest's day?
5. What colour is lapis lazuli?
6. What language was most commonly used in medieval manuscripts?
7. What does the calendar in a book of hours show?
8. Who worked in a scriptorium?
9. What were the four types of science studied in the Middle Ages?
10. What is the Divine Office?
11. If you were looking at a pietà, what would you see Mary holding?
12. If a picture of a person is 'nimbed' what has been done to it?
13. Where would a Gradual be used?
14. Why did medieval scientists think that if an elephant fell over it couldn't get up again?
15. What was St Jerome known for?
16. What is a Psalter?
17. True or false: some medieval manuscripts were made from cadavers (dead human bodies)?
18. True or false: some rich patrons would have their portraits painted into their manuscripts?



Answers:

1. The book of hours. **2.** Approximately 25 animals. **3.** Goose or swan feathers. **4.** Eight. **5.** Blue. **6.** Latin. **7.** The feast and saint days of the church. **8.** Scribes. **9.** Music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy. **10.** Choir services performed by the clergy each day. **11.** The dead body of Jesus. **12.** There is a halo, or nimbus, around the head. **13.** In a church, by a choir. **14.** Because they believed they had no knees. **15.** His translation of the Bible into Latin. **16.** A book containing the Psalms from the Bible. **17.** True. **18.** True.

Medieval Glossary

Antiphonal: a book containing sentences from scripture that are sung alternately during Mass

Apocalypse: a book from the Bible, also known as the Book of Revelations

Bestiary: a book with pictures of real and imaginary animals, intended to teach Christian morals

Bifolium: two pages of a book, formed by a piece of parchment folded down the middle

Book of hours: a book for private worship, containing a calendar, psalms and prayers

Border: a decorative border or surround on a manuscript

Breviary: a book containing the services for the daily Divine Office

Calendar: a list of feast days which form the Christian year

Canticles: texts sung in addition to the Psalms

Carolingian: created during the rule of Charlemagne

Codex: parchment sheets folded and sewn along one edge into a book

Codicology: the study of books based on examining their physical structure

Collectar: a book containing short readings, prayers and blessings to be said by the service leader

Colophon: an inscription in the text that gives information about a book's production

Deacon: a minister or servant of the church

Decorated initial: a first letter which is decorated, often with plants, but not people or animals

Decretals: letters or written laws set down by the Pope (Canon Law)

Divine Office: a daily cycle of devotions and choir services performed by the clergy

Ductus: the order and direction of strokes used to write a letter

Ecclesiastical: relating to the church or Christian religion

Epistles: a section of the Bible containing letters written by the Apostles

Foliate initial: a decorated initial that includes a floral design

Folio: the single leaf of a parchment, divided into recto (right) and verso (left)

Gesso: a type of thick paint used in manuscript illumination

Gloss: written additions to a text that serve as commentary or explanations

Gothic: a style of art etc widespread from the mid-12th century

Gradual: the principal choir book used in the celebration of Mass

Grotesque: an illustration combining human and animal forms

Historiated initial: a first letter within which is painted a narrative or image of a single figure

Illuminated: decorated and/or illustrated, originally referring to the use of metals

Inhabited initial: a large letter that has a human or animal figure unrelated to the text

Insular: a style of manuscript made in monastic centres in Britain around 600 to 700 AD

Laity: people who go to church but are not priests or clergymen

Lapis lazuli: a very costly blue colour used in manuscript illumination

Laudario: a choir book of the laity

Lectionary: a book containing readings used in the liturgy, usually read by the deacon or sub-deacon

Liturgy: the set Church rituals of Mass and the Divine Office

Lunellum: a crescent-shaped knife used to scrape the surface of a skin to make parchment

Mass: a Christian service that centres on the celebration of Christ's sacrifice

Magi: the three wise kings from the east who came to adore the baby Jesus

Miniature: an independent picture in a manuscript

Minium: a red colour from the sulphide of lead, commonly used on manuscripts and giving rise to the term 'miniature'

Missal: a book containing a collection of readings and directions for leading Mass

Nimbed: a figure with a halo (or nimbus) around the head

Ottonian: a style of manuscript associated with Saxon emperors from c. 900 to 1100 AD

Palimpsests: reused leaves of vellum from which the old text is removed

Papyrus: a very early type of paper made from reeds

Parchment: animal skin especially prepared and used to write on

Pen flourishes: fine linear decorations, often around initials

Pietà: an image of the Virgin Mary with Christ lying dead in her arms

Piety: reverence for God or strong adherence to religious practices

Provenance: the history of a book's ownership

Psalter: a book containing the 150 Psalms, usually for private use

Quire: a group of folios folded and bound together

Reformation (English): period of history when the Church of England separated from the Catholic Church

Romanesque: a style of art etc widespread from the 11th century

Rubric: a heading or instructions, generally written in red letters

Ruling: lines drawn on the vellum to guide the scribe, and often incorporated into the decoration

Sacramentary: a book containing Mass texts for the principal celebrant and short prayers for each feast

Scriptorium: a manuscript workshop, usually in a monastery

Tonsure: the shaving of the top of the head (usually by priests and monks)

Vellum: animal-skin parchment (specifically refers to calf, but used generally also)

Vermillion: a bright red colour, the most common used in medieval texts

Vernacular: language specific to a local area (often informal)

Vulgate: the full Latin translation of the Bible

Words with medieval origins

Breakfast

Eleven

Glossary

Holiday

Lettuce

Miniature

Noon

Punish

Puppy

Vulgar

Manuscript Labelling

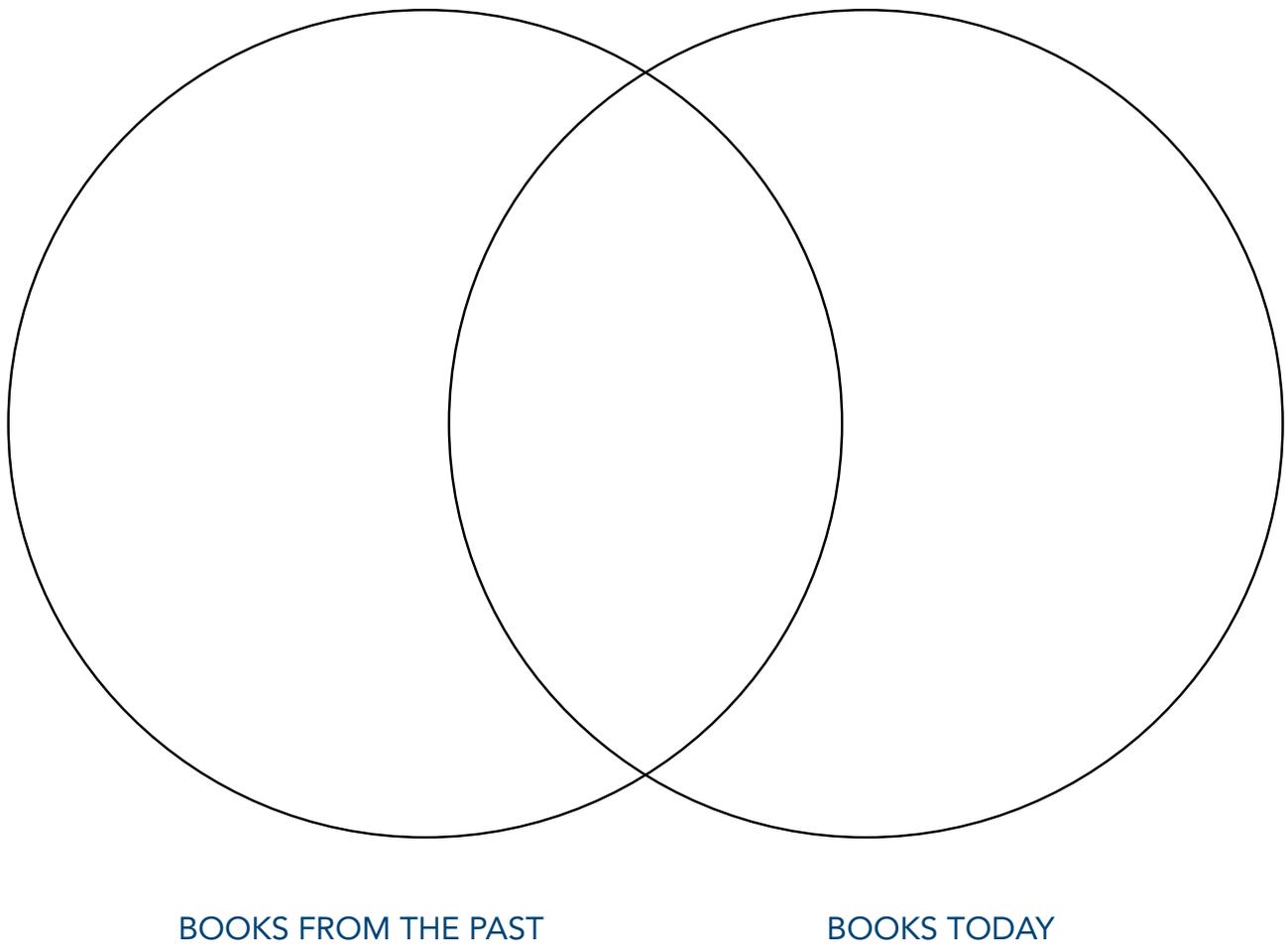


Label the parts of this section of a manuscript page by filling in each box with the correct word from this list:

- Border
- Decorated initial
- Historiated initial
- Miniature
- Nimbed figure
- Rubric

Image: Book of Hours (use of Sarum). England, London, c. 1415–20. Trinity College, Cambridge, MS B.11.7, fol 32v (detail). Image courtesy of the Master and Fellows, Trinity College, Cambridge

Past and Present



1. What do you believe is the most significant legacy of medieval manuscripts?
2. What are the main differences between illustrations today and those of illuminated manuscripts?
3. What would be the disadvantages of living in a society without access to books?
4. How can you find evidence of the culture in which the books were made?
5. Look at the ages of the manuscripts. What changes have been made over time, and why do you think these were made?

Searching Sources

| Primary sources | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Examples | Non-Examples |
| | |

What is a primary source?

What aspects of a medieval manuscript would be a primary source? What information can you find from the manuscript?

Identify a strength and a weakness of using primary sources in historical research.

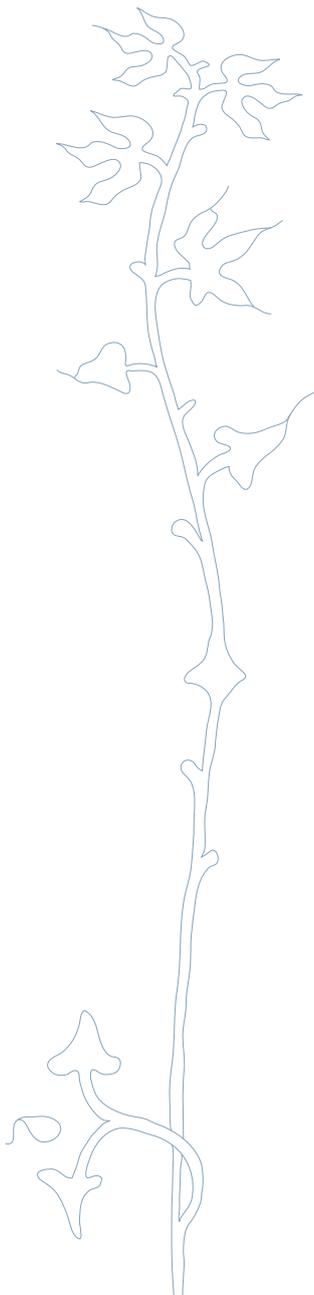
Identify a strength and a weakness of using secondary sources in historical research.

Why do you think some pictures show a lot of blood and torture?

A Touch of the Times

| Year | Event | Location | Manuscript production |
|-----------|---|----------------------|--|
| 380 | Theodosius I declares Christianity the sole religion of the Roman Empire. | Rome | Christianity begins to spread through Europe, and the demand for written texts increases. |
| 635 | Saint Aidan arrives at Lindisfarne and begins to build the first monastery. | England | Many early Christian missionaries in Britain are centred at Lindisfarne. <i>The Gospels of St Luke and St John</i> (No. 1 in the exhibition catalogue; see page 7 of this resource) is evidence of this movement in the surrounding area of Northumbria. |
| 800 | Charlemagne is crowned Emperor of the Romans and ruler of the Franks by Pope Leo III. | Rome | Charlemagne begins to support literacy and written publications. The Carolingian script is introduced. |
| 1085 | King William commissions the <i>Domesday Book</i> , which contains information on all of England's fiefs and manors. | England | An example of a manuscript used for social organisation. |
| 1115 | Saint Bernard founds the abbey of Clairvaux and begins to increase the strength and spread of the Cistercian Order and the Rule of Saint Benedict throughout Europe. | France | The 'Benedictional of Robert de Clerq' (No. 22 in exhibition catalogue) and 'Privileges of the Cistercian Order' (No. 75 in catalogue) show some of the values of this order. |
| 1198–99 | Pope Innocent III decrees that all adult Christians should take communion and make their confession at least once a year. | all Europe | The churches are required to be more organised and educated, therefore needing more Christian texts. |
| 1215 | King John of England signs the <i>Magna Carta</i> , a document that states and upholds the civil rights of the king's subjects. | England | The scribe of the <i>Magna Carta</i> , Stephen Langton, also devises the current Bible numbering system around this time. |
| c. 1240 | The first single-volume Vulgates were produced, often palm-sized. | Europe | An early Vulgate manuscript (see page 17) is on display in the exhibition. |
| 1254 | Henry III's African elephant, a gift from Louis IX, is the first elephant to be seen in England. | England | An illustration of the elephant can be seen in <i>Chronica Major</i> (No. 80 in the exhibition catalogue), and is different from an illustration in a bestiary (No. 68 in catalogue) where the elephant is depicted with no knees. |
| 1300s | The Renaissance begins in Italy (and spreads throughout Europe through the 1400s). | Italy and all Europe | Artists and scholars study and revive ancient Greek and Roman artistic and literary styles and begin incorporating them into their work, including manuscripts. |
| 1337–1453 | The Hundred Years' War between France and England included many battles and was eventually won by France. Contributed to the decline of feudalism and the rise of French Unity. | England and France | |
| 1347+ | The plague (the Black Death) sweeps across Europe, killing around 40 per cent of the population. | all Europe | |

| | | | |
|---------|---|---------|--|
| 1413–22 | Henry V is king of England | England | Current rulers were often depicted in manuscripts. A picture of Henry V appears in a book of hours shown in the exhibition (No. 46 in catalogue). |
| 1452–55 | Johannes Gutenberg develops movable type, and the first printed Bibles are produced. | Germany | A leaf from a Gutenberg Bible is on show in the exhibition. The impact of the printing press is also evident in a press-printed but hand-illuminated book of hours also exhibited (see page 20). |
| 1476 | William Caxton prints the first dated book in England, and later (1481) prints Sir Thomas Malory's <i>The Myrroure of the Worlde</i> . | England | The emergence of English literature is evident in works such as <i>The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode</i> and <i>The Pilgrimage of the Sowle</i> (No. 78 in exhibition catalogue). |
| 1534 | The Act of Supremacy is passed by the English Parliament, establishing the Church of England and signalling the beginning of the Reformation. | England | |



Other curriculum suggestions

An integrated unit: The Life of a Manuscript

In this integrated unit, students examine various facets of medieval life by following the journey of a manuscript through its production. In this way they could look at the role of the Church, various medieval professions, the feudal hierarchy and literacy. Their studies could accumulate into a Rich Assessment Task: creating a manuscript (Art – 2D); writing a script (English); demonstrating roles in a medieval society (History); filming the story (DCT/ICT); or acting the story (Drama).

The study of medieval manuscripts can be incorporated across different disciplines, as shown in the following table of VELS Domains and progression points.

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Humanities – History | HKU 4.25–4.75 HRI 4.75 |
| English | W 4.75 |
| The Arts | Art: CM 4.5 Media: CM 4.5 |
| Interdisciplinary | Thinking: RPI 4.5 & REM 4.5 Communication: P4.5 & LVR 4.75 |
| Other | Possible links to ICT and Geography |

Other resources and references

Books

The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life, Wieck, RS, 1988, Sotheby's Publications, UK – A guide to understanding the book of hours, with great pictures.

The Cambridge Illuminations, Binski, P & Panayotova, S (eds), 2005, Harvey Miller Publishers, London, UK – A comprehensive guide to the illuminated manuscripts housed at the University of Cambridge.

Discovering Art: Illuminated Manuscript, Gill, DM, 1996, Brockhampton Press, UK – A detailed guide to understanding the artistic aspects of illuminated manuscripts.

Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a medieval village, Schlitz, LA, 2007, Candlewick Press, Massachusetts, USA – A wonderful book of monologues for young adults.

Medieval Illuminators and their Methods of Work, Alexander, JJG, 1992, Yale University Press, London, UK – A very detailed examination of the styles and techniques of illuminators.

The Medieval Imagination: Illuminated Manuscripts from Cambridge, Australia and New Zealand. Stocks, B and Morgan, N (eds), 2008, State Library of Victoria, Australia – A comprehensive guide to the exhibition, including full-colour images and background information.

A Treasury of Hours, Faÿ-Sallos, F, 2002, Getty Publications, USA – Beautifully illustrated excerpts from illuminated books of hours.

Websites – general information

Mirror of the World: www.mirroroftheworld.com.au – A rich interactive site from the State Library of Victoria that looks in detail at the book throughout history, from manuscripts to the modern day.

The Fitzwilliam Museum – Making a manuscript: http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/pharos/sections/making_art/index_manuscript.html – A fantastic interactive site that shows the process of making a manuscript.

Leaves of Gold: <http://www.leavesofgold.org/> – A rich site with interactive programs and teacher resources.

Manuscripts: <http://www.zeroland.co.nz/manuscripts.html> – Contains references and links relating to manuscripts.

Medieval Realms – Learning Centre: <http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/medieval/medievalrealms.html> – A rich learning resource hosted by the British National Library.

British Library – Learning Sacred Texts: <http://www.bl.uk/learning/cult/sacredbooks/sacredintro.html> – An interactive resource that discusses the role of sacred texts in society.

ORB – Online Reference Book for Medieval Studies: <http://the-orb.net/> – An encyclopedia-style resource site.

Middle Ages: <http://www.middle-ages.org.uk/> – A detailed site containing a range of information about the Middle Ages in Britain.

Arts and Books: Illuminated Manuscripts: <http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/arts/humss/art317/manuscripts> – Information about the styles and types of illuminated manuscripts.

Metropolitan Museum of Art – Timeline of Art History: <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hm/06/eu/hm06eu.htm> – A very rich site that links art (including manuscripts) with events and dynasties of the era.

Medieval Manuscript Manual: <http://web.ceu.hu/medstud/manual/MMM/> – Contains a range of information about the production, use and influence of manuscripts.

End of Europe's Middle Ages – Language and Literacy: http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/endmiddle/langlit.html – An advanced guide to literacy in the Middle Ages.

Free Library of Philadelphia – Medieval Manuscript Guide: <http://libwww.library.phila.gov/medievalman/guide.cfm> – A great overview of manuscripts, with examples.

Fleur-de-lis Heraldry Designs: <http://www.fleurdelis.com/> – A commercial site that explains the different components of heraldry design.

Online Etymology Dictionary: <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php> – A search-based dictionary that details the origins of English words.

History Channel – The Dark Ages: http://www.history.com/marquee.do?marquee_id=53127 – An interactive and engaging site that covers the early medieval period and allows students to create their own character!

The Last Knights: <http://www.lastknights.com/> – An online strategy game set in medieval Europe that covers concepts of geographical location and battle.

National Archives: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/domesday/> – A great online reference about the Domesday Book.

Websites – pictures of manuscripts

British Library – Turning the Pages:
<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/ttpbooks.html> – Offers interactive viewing of manuscripts and other literary works.

British Library – Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts:
<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/welcome.htm>
– A database of digital manuscripts.

Metropolitan Museum of Art – The Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux:
<http://www.metmuseum.org/explore/Jde/jde1.htm> – A detailed guide to this example of a book of hours.

Gutenberg Bible – Digital Editions Online:
<http://www.bl.uk/treasures/gutenberg/homepage.html> – A full text digital copy of a Gutenberg Bible.

The Fitzwilliam Museum – Cambridge Illuminations:
<http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/gallery/cambridgeilluminations/>
– Digital images of manuscripts from the collection of The University of Cambridge.

