

Medieval English Legal & Constitutional Practices

Instructions

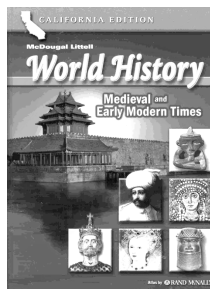
- Read the passage on each handout & discuss what it means with your group members
 - Write down any notes about the passage you feel are important
- Answer the questions on the back of the reading passage
 - Using the sentence starter if one is provided

Primary & Secondary Sources

(Copy definitions & complete back side)

- Primary Sources
 - Written or created around the same time that an event took place
 - Often show people's feelings & reactions to an event as it happens
- Secondary Sources
 - Written or created after an event took place
 - Often paints a "complete picture" of an event (i.e. tells you the whole story)

Primary or Secondary Source? Why?



7th grade history textbook



Newspaper



Bayeux Tapestry (1070s) created after conquest of England in 1066

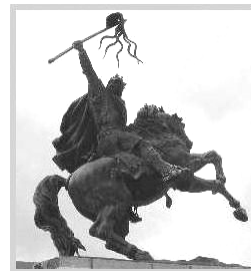
William the Conqueror (1066)

William, Duke of Normandy, was a French noble who claimed the English throne. After he conquered England in 1066, he became known as William the Conqueror and brought French customs and laws to England. His conquest of England also linked the nobility of England and France together, which would later result in the Hundred Years' War.

William & his successors introduced a new system of laws to England. They replaced "**common law**" (laws based on local customs and traditions) with "**royal laws**" that were the same all across the country. Although courts were not influenced by local leaders, they could still be affected by the king. For a time, the king of England was above the law and could do as he pleased in the land. This would not change until the **Magna Carta** required that everyone (including the king) follow the same set of laws.

William the Conqueror: Questions

- One result of William the Conqueror's conquest of England was that _____.
- Common law and royal law were different because _____.
- The _____ required all citizens (including the king) to follow the same set of laws.



The Magna Carta (1215)

A quote from the Magna Carta is provided below.

“For a trivial offence, a free man shall be fined only in proportion to the degree of his offence, and for a serious offence correspondingly, but not so heavily as to deprive him of his livelihood.

No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled... in any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by the law of the land.

To no one will we sell, to no one deny or delay right or justice.”

The Magna Carta: Questions

- Fines for crimes are determined based on _____.
- Before someone is punished, _____.
- The last sentence of the passage from the Magna Carta means that _____.

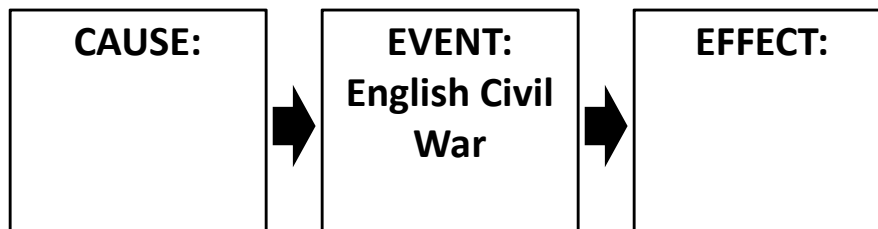
English Civil War (1642-1651)



The English Civil War was fought between the supporters of the English Parliament and the supporters of King Charles I. Charles I believed in the “**divine right of kings**,” which was the belief that kings were chosen by God to rule on earth and had absolute power to do as they pleased. The war broke out when Charles I suspended Parliament and began illegally collecting taxes to raise money. Eventually, the war ended with the capture, trial, and execution of King Charles I in 1649 by Parliament. As a result of the war, **monarchs**, or kings, could only rule with the approval of Parliament.

English Civil War: Questions

- The two sides that fought in the English Civil War were _____ and _____.
- “Divine right” meant that _____ & upset members of Parliament because _____.
- Complete the graphic organizer below in your notes



English Bill of Rights (1688)



After the English Civil War, Parliament passed a bill of rights to define what monarchs could and couldn't do. An excerpt is provided below:

"1. That the ...suspending of laws, or the execution of laws, by [royal] authority, without consent of parliament, is illegal...

4. That [raising taxes] ...without grant of parliament...is illegal

5. That it is the right of the subjects to petition the King...

6. That the raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of parliament, is against law...

All and every person and persons that [obeys the Pope in Rome] or shall profess the [Catholic] religion... shall be excluded and be for ever incapable to inherit, possess or enjoy the crown and government of this realm."

English Bill of Rights: Questions

- List the 5 things stated in the excerpt:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- Do you agree with all of the statements listed in the Bill of Rights? Why or why not?

Post-Activity Quiz

Quiz Yourself

(Copy & complete as a summary of your notes)

- The Magna Carta was important because

_____.
- What did the English Bill of Rights do?
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____