

<h1 style="text-align: center;">Entertainment ~ dance, drama & tournaments</h1>

Songs and stories were very popular in the Medieval world. There was no TV, radio or internet, so people entertained each other with song, dance, music and stories. Wandering entertainers called minstrels or troubadours traveled from village to village providing such entertainment particularly music for the local people. They were paid in food and sometimes coins.

Other entertainers like jugglers, acrobats, puppeteers and those with trained animals travelled as well. These were the early origins of traveling circuses.

Card, dice and guessing games were popular. The noble classes began to play new games like chess and backgammon that were brought back from the Orient during this period.

<h4 style="text-align: center;">Religion and Music</h4>

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Art and music were an important part of religious life by the end of the Middle Ages. Singing without musical instruments was an essential part of church services. Monks and priests chanted prayers and the mass daily. Some churches had instruments such as organs and bells. Some churches had an organistrum or symphony (later known as a hurdy gurdy). Two people were required to play this stringed instrument - one turned the crank and the other played the keys.

Medieval drama grew out of the bible by the eleventh century. Some of the topics were Noah and the flood, Jonah and the whale and Daniel in the lion's den. Others were stories about the birth and death of Christ. These dramas were performed with costumes and music and at first took place directly outside the church. Later they were staged in marketplaces, where they were produced by local guilds.</p>

<h4 style="text-align: center;">Musical Instruments</h4>

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The pan flute, was popular in medieval times. Medieval music used many plucked string instruments, like the lute, mandora, gittern and psaltery. The dulcimer, similar to the zither, were originally plucked, but became struck in the 14th century, after the arrival of the new technology that made metal strings possible. The hurdy-gurdy was (and still is) a mechanical violin using a wooden wheel attached to a crank to "bow" its strings. Early versions of the organ, fiddle and trombone (called the sackbut) were also around.</p>

<p>The Bagpipes ~ The bagpipe has been traced back to the most ancient civilizations. The bagpipe probably originated as a rustic instrument in many cultures because a herdsman had the necessary materials at hand: a goat or sheep skin and a reed pipe. Through Celtic migration it was introduced to Persia and India, and subsequently to Greece and Rome. During the Middle Ages, however, the bagpipe was heard and appreciated by all levels of society, still scaring small children today. The Celts, and then Irish and Scottish were known to play the bagpipes before battle.</p>

<p>The Harp ~ One of the most ancient of stringed musical instruments. ♦ Harps use only open strings. The range of each is determined by the number of strings. In the Middle Ages the strings were made from twisted animal gut like sheep. Horse hair and even silk were used. It was important in pre-Christian cultures. ♦ The harp survives today in many forms worldwide.</p>

<p>Recorder ~ A recorder is a woodwind instrument of ancient lineage, made without a reed, with seven finger-holes in front and one thumb-hole behind, and a beak-shaped mouthpiece. The recorder is the forerunner of

the flute. Have you ever played a recorder in school? Did you know it was that old?

Seeking a good mp3 music sample. [Email me](mailto:linda@medievalfayre.com?subject=medieval music sample) if you've got one!

Classroom discussion

- What musical instruments do we still play today?**
- Which is better? TV and Video Games or making your own fun, like telling stories, playing your own music together and singing and dancing?**

[**NEXT >>> Marriage in the Medieval Era**](index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=74:marriage-in-the-medieval-era&catid=50&Itemid=81)