<h1 style="text-align: center;">Marriage</h1> Marriage Medieval times was quite different than it is today.&#65533; For one, girls didn't have a choice who they married. Girls didn't even know the man before they wed most of the time. Boys were sometimes able to choose their bride. Marriage wasn't based on love. Marriages were political and social arrangements. Husbands and wives were mostly strangers until they first met. Love was expected to come after the couple had been married and if it didn't, the couple would at least developed a friendship of some kind. Parents arranged their children's marriages based on monetary worth. Children were married at a young age; girls were as young as 12, and boys as young as 17. The family of the girl gives a dowry, or donation, to the boy she is to marry. The dowry goes with her at the time of the marriage and is controlled by the boy. Once the marriage was arranged and a date was set, a wedding notice was placed on the door of the village church. This was meant to ensure that there were no grounds for prohibiting the marriage. It stated who was to be married, and asked anyone to come forward it they knew any reasons the two could not marry. If the reason was a valid, there would be no wedding. What would prohibit a marriage? Consanguinity - a big word that meant the couple was too closely related. Ew. If the boy or the girl had taken a monastic or religious vow, like to become a Nun, Monk or Priest, the marriage would have been prohibited. A couple could also not be married during a time of fasting, like lent or advent. A couple could also not be married by someone who had killed someone! A wedding in the middle ages never actually took place inside the church as it does today. They held the ceremony outside the church door before entering for a nuptial mass. The Groom stood on the right side and the Bride stood on the left side, facing the door of the church. The female was formed out of a rib in the left side of Adam by God and so had to stand to his left. Brides often wore blue as a symbol of purity and faithfulness. Symbolic stones were worn in medieval wedding wear. Red jasper was worn for love, Beryl for purification and Amethyst for piety and martyrdom. Many of the same wedding rituals from Medieval times are still practiced today. The marriage ceremony has most of the same wording, the man and the woman stand on the same sides of the altar, rings are exchanged, and the ring is placed on the fourth finger. Their families would have a large feast after the wedding similar to today's wedding reception. During a medieval wedding ceremony, the bride and groom would sit at a raised area facing the guests with other important members of the bridal party. The bridal party was there and dressed similarly to the bride and groom to fake out the bad spirits and to keep the new couple safe. A jongleur or minstrel would wander through the crowd during the feast singing love songs and reciting poems for the enjoyment of the guests. Divorce ~ Unlike today, there were few reasons a marriage could be dissolved in the Medieval era. If either the man or woman were not of legal age, if the husband or wife had previously made a religious or monastic vow or were not Christian, and if the woman, not the man, was incapable of sexual relations the marriage would be dissolved. <h4 style="text-align: center;">Classroom project</h4> Plan a Medieval Wedding! What will you wear? What will the priest say? Who will you invite? Most importantly, who will be the bride and groom? (Don't worry! You can use pets, or make some little people out of paper and cardboard!) <a

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