

Civilizations of the World – Possible Research Topics

Castles and Palaces-- choose a **specific** castle, palace or Medieval fortress. You can write about history, construction or destruction. Don't forget castles of Japan, South Asia and the Islamic World.

Games and Entertainment-- How did people of the Middle Ages entertain themselves. Some games are athletic, some strategic, and some barbaric.

Hair, Fashion, Jewelry -- Looking good is not easy – in the Middle Ages, it was often painful.

World Religions – Monotheistic, polytheistic, philosophical. Ramadan. The Hajj. Animism. The power of the Pope. Orthodox Christianity. Buddhism in the Middle Ages. How did kings and leaders use religion to keep power? Inca Sun worship, Aztec blood rituals.

When Different Religions Meet – Catholic vs. Islam, Islam vs. Animism, Catholic vs. Jewish, Aztec, Inca, Maya mythology vs. Spanish Catholicism. Sometimes they got along; sometimes it was a fight to the death!

Medicine, healthy herbs and surgery – How did medieval doctors keep their patients stitched up and healthy?

Music and Instruments – With no iPods, the do- it- yourself variety was a little more popular. All performances were live!

Village Life – How did villages serve to take care of needs of their people? Who were the real-life Village People?

Oral Tradition -- From griots to wandering minstrels to mythology – go on tour with the hip-hopsters of the Middle Ages.

Growing the Empire – What were the important steps taken by great leaders to expand their empires? Suleyman I and Mehmed II, China's Taizong, Mali's Mansa Musa, the Incan leader Pachacuti, Europe's Charlemagne.

Decline of Empire and Civilization – How did Rome fall apart? Why did the Maya civilization decline? What happened to the Shogun?

Famous people -- Sundiata, Genghis Khan, Moctezuma and Queen Elizabeth I, why did a specific leader have such a huge impact? What makes a leader great?

Important Women in the Middle Ages – Empress Wu, Joan of Arc, Malintzin, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Elizabeth I, Lady Murasaki Shikibu. What was it like to gain power despite the challenges of sexism?

Disease - The Black Death, The Plague, Malaria outbreaks, a really bad flu epidemic? How did the Mayans Disappear?

Maps and Map Making – Who were the best cartographers? What was so difficult about making a good map? How did people get around without one?

Famous Battles of the Middle Ages – Choose a battle. Why did it happen? What weapons were used? What weapons failed? How did it change history? Could it have been avoided?

Medieval Art and Artisans – stained glass windows, mosaics, Japanese Gardens, African masks, Chinese Calligraphy. Was the artist important in his/her culture? How did she go about her craft? How did he make a living?

Customs and Rituals – Pick a culture, describe a wedding, a funeral, the crowning of a king or emperor.

Samurai, Knighthood, Codes of Honor and Chivalry – traditions, training, belief and lifestyles

Science and scientists – great theories, advances, discoveries, calendars, transportation, medicine, agriculture, irrigation, clean water

Inventions – the printing press, the compass, gunpowder, paper money,

Challenging Trade Routes – survival on the Sahara, on the Silk Road, over the Andes, Across the Hialayas or around the Cape of Good Hope?

Pick a city - Venice, Baghdad, Tenochtitlan, Constantinople, Heian, Shanghai, Timbuktu. How did it begin? When did it become great?