

Unit Overview: Parent Guide

The Whipping Boy, Grade 4

What is the goal of this unit?

- Your child will read fiction and nonfiction texts to understand the class system of the Middle Ages through the fictional tale of two unlikely friends, Price Brat and his whipping boy.

What topics and skills is your fourth grader learning in this unit?

- Middle Ages
- Class systems
- Character action
- Character development
- Character's impact on events in a text
- Character's impact on development of theme
- Informational writing
- Research

What tasks will your child engage in to help them consider the topics and skills of this unit?

- **Culminating Writing Task:** Your child will bring together all her learning near the end of the unit by writing an essay in response to the following questions: *How do Jemmy and Prince Brat and their relationship change over the course of The Whipping Boy? What is a theme of the novel?*
- **Extension Task:** Your child will extend her learning by conducting research on a topic from the Middle Ages in connection to the book, *The Whipping Boy*.

Your child will read these texts:

Text Title	Author/Source	How it is used in the Unit
The Whipping Boy	Sid Fleishman	Main text of the unit
The Horrible, Miserable, Middle Ages	Kathy Allen	Group text
A Medieval Feast	Aliki	Student text
The Usborne Internet-Linked Medieval World	Jane Bingham	Group text
Magic Tree House Fact	Will Osborne and Mary Pope	Group text

Tracker: Knights and Castles	Osborne	
"The Middle Ages"	LDOE	Student text
Usborne Quicklinks for Medieval World	Usborne Publishing	Group text
The Amazing Middle Ages	History for Kids	Group text
Interactives: Middle Ages	Annenberg Learner	Group text
Middle Ages for Kids: Index	MrDonn.org	Group text
History: Middle Ages Timeline for Kids	Ducksters through Technological Solutions, Inc. (TSI)	Group text

Ideas for discussing the Middle Ages

- What were the Middle Ages?
- When were the Middle Ages?
- What century are we in now?
- What is a class system?
- What are the different classes?
- Who belongs in each class?
- Do we have a class system today?
- How are the Middle Ages similar and different from today?
- What is feudalism?

Want to deepen your and your child's knowledge on the topic being studied?

Here is a suggested book list:

Title	Author
<i>You Wouldn't Want to Be A Medieval Knight!</i>	Fiona MacDonald
<i>Don't Let the Barber Pull Your Teeth: Could You Survive Medieval Medicine?</i>	Carmen Bredeson
<i>Keeper of the Grail</i>	Michael Spradlin
<i>Gross Facts About the Middle Ages</i>	Mira Vonne
<i>Medieval Times: England in the Middle Ages</i>	Joanne Mattern

<i>Your Guide to Trade in the Middle Ages</i>	Rachel Stuckey
<i>Your Guide to Knights and the Age of Chivalry</i>	Cynthia O'Brien

What does independent reading look like at home?

Independent reading gives your child the opportunity to read and interact with books that are on her reading level and that address topics that she chooses. Supporting independent reading at home helps build your child's confidence with reading, her reading stamina and reading achievement, and will help her do better in school.

Here are some ways you can encourage independent reading at home:

- Let your child pick out books that she finds interesting
- Prioritize reading. Protect time every day for reading (weekends and school breaks too!). Before bedtime is a great time to read.
- Read together
- Read aloud
- Discuss your child's reading. Ask questions like:
 - What was that book about?
 - What did you like about it?
 - What didn't you like about it?
 - What did you learn?
 - What questions do you have about what you read?
 - What didn't you understand about what you read?
 - What do you want to learn more about after reading the book?
 - How does this book connect to other books you've read?