

Middle Ages Research

What was life like in the Middle Ages? How does it compare to today?

Raymond and Evelyn

#1 Trebuchets as an example of Change - Trebuchet vs. Artillery today

#2 Spice Trade as an example of Continuity - Medieval Spice Trade + Modern Trade Routes

#3 Clothing as an example of Change - Medieval Clothing vs. Clothing Today

#4 Christianity as an example of Continuity - Medieval + Modern

#5 Road Travel as an example of Change - Horses vs. Cars

#1 - Trebuchet as an Example of Change

HistoryNet - Trebuchet Article

- First built in June 1210.
- The first one was oversized balance beam with a weighted bucket at one end.
- The powerful siege weapons hurled way bigger stones than any human could handle.
- The word Trebuchet comes from the Middle French verb *trébuche*, meaning to tumble or to fall over which is what the trebuchet does when it is released.
- The trebuchet was the first war engine that used the principals of gravity.
- The trebuchet was easy to make compared to other siege engines because other engines required precision made parts like metallic gears, locks and frames whereas a trebuchet could be made in a field made almost entirely out of rough cut lumber.
- The trebuchet was easy to make and also easy to maintain so it became very popular

COMPARED TO TODAY

sciencing.com - Modern Uses of a Catapult

- Used for launching aircraft into the sky on aircraft carriers
- Used in STEM education, to demonstrate gravity, kinetic energy, and math
- They are also used for entertainment: "pumpkin chucking"
- They look the same as in the Middle Ages

#2 - Spice Trade as an example of Continuity

Newberry Website - The Medieval Spice Trade

- Spices came from the East: mostly India, but other places too
 - They were luxuries for the Europeans and very expensive
 - Merchants sold pepper, ginger, cinnamon, clove, saffron, sugar, spikenard, and paradise (those are spices).
 - Muslims controlled the trade routes from Europe to the East
 - Spices were prized because they coloured food, flavoured food, and made it smell good
 - They were also used in perfumes and incense, and as medicine
 - Merchants made up stories to make the spices seem more valuable (ex. Cinnamon is harvested from the nest of a mythical bird)
 - It was dangerous for merchants to travel to get the spices: there were pirates and raiders, conflict, storms, and accidents
 - They also had to pay large tariffs (taxes), so they were sold for super high prices to make up for it (a month's wages for a pound of saffron)
 - Europeans started to look for new routes to avoid the tariffs
 - Some explorers found them, while some found North America
 - Eventually, spices became less and less popular
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COMPARED TO TODAY

SupplyChainxWebsite - Modern Spice Trade Article

- Today black pepper is the world's most traded spice and still comes mostly from the east like South India and Vietnam, Vietnam being the largest exporter of black pepper today.
- Still today almost all spices come from the east from various places like China, Vietnam, Malaysia and many more places.
- Spices travel all across the world, with the evolution of shipping spices can travel from south India to North America.

#3 - Clothing as an example of Change

Life In A Medieval Castle - Medieval Clothing

- Most people wore clothing made of wool, from sheep
 - Rich people wore silk
 - Dyes were very common, so almost everyone wore colourful clothes
 - Men wore stockings, pants and tunics
 - Noblemen wore all of the above, plus jackets, furs and jewellery
 - Women wore sleeveless tunics, long dresses, and hair coverings made of cloth
 - Noblewomen wore extra long gowns and headdresses
 - When it was cold outside, people wore cloaks, hats, and mittens
 - People almost never washed their outer clothes, but they did wash their underclothes
 - Everyone wore head coverings, like hoods (sometimes on cloaks, but sometimes alone, too), straw hats, bonnets, felt caps, veils, and sometimes fancy headdresses.
 - Most people who could afford them wore leather boots
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COMPARED TO TODAY

StreetDirectory - Modern Fashion Article

- Today people care a lot more about how they look unlike the Middle Ages where they would wear lots of used clothing.
- Jewelry is also a huge thing today and it costs a lot of money.
- Today colourful clothing is very popular amongst young people.

#4 - Christianity as an example of Continuity

TheFinerTimes

- Christianity emerged as a religion from Judaism and spread across Europe during the Middle Ages.
 - The rise of Christianity eventually reached the Roman Empire and Christianity replaced the Roman religion.
 - Christianity surrounded the concept of pilgrimage and the most popular destination was the holy land of Jerusalem.
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COMPARED TO TODAY

Harvard Divinity School - Religious Literacy Project
Major Religions of the World Chart - Evelyn's Notes

- Christianity follows one god
- They attend churches, usually one Sundays, but sometimes special services too
- They follow the Bible, and their religious leaders are priests
- The Pope is powerful, but not as powerful as in the Middle Ages. He does not rule any countries.
- Christianity is not as extreme as in Medieval Times
- Not everyone in the western world is Christian; there is more diversity
- The Bible is studied and analyzed, instead of blindly followed

#5 - Land Travel as an example of Change

Travelling in the Middle Ages

The Finer Times - Transportation in the Middle Ages

Medievalists.net - Medieval Travel: Going by Road

- People travelled by land on foot, on animals (horses, mules, donkeys), carts (for short distances)
- Upper classes could ride in covered carriages with poles balanced on horses
- Long lines of horses (sometimes up to 50) carried goods to be traded
- Medieval horses were smaller, and a different breed from modern horses
- Lots of people from different classes and backgrounds travelled
- Mainly, merchants, preachers, scholars, soldiers (knights), and the odd criminal travelled long distances by road
- Travellers on foot could travel around 30 miles a day: eight to ten hours of walking!
- Roads were made of stone and dirt, and were often uneven and in need of repair
- Smaller paths were sometimes just trampled earth

COMPARED TO TODAY

Vancouver Transportation Article - Travel.USNews

- People still walk to a lot of their destinations but a lot use cars or public transportation like buses and sky trains.
- Some people today use horses like the Middle Ages for getting around.
- A lot of people today use bikes for getting around too, this could be tied into travelling with carriages in the Middle Ages.
- People today don't walk nearly as far as people in the Middle Ages, instead we can just opt for a more efficient less tiring method.