

# MEDIEVAL TIMES

## WORKSHEET PREVIEW

### Meals in Medieval England

Families have always gathered together to eat meals. But during the Medieval Period, which took place from about 400 to 1400, families in England ate slightly different meals than families do today.

#### Dinner and Supper

Families in medieval England usually ate only two meals each day. Most people back then did not eat breakfast. If a farmer had a hard morning of plowing to do, he might eat bread and cheese first.

But usually, everyone stopped work in the late morning to eat their first meal of the day. It was called **dinner** and was the main meal of the day. The entire family gathered together to eat dinner. In the late afternoon, families ate a smaller meal, known as **supper**.

#### No Green Vegetables, Thanks!

Throughout medieval England, families ate bread, grains, cheese, meat, fish, and apples. Many people thought fresh fruits and greens were unhealthy. Most people believed green vegetables could even hurt you if you ate them raw. They thought cabbage was especially dangerous!

People ate vegetables that had been preserved in oil or pickled in vinegar. They also ate grapes, apricots, and pears that had been dried in the sun.

Families in medieval England also ate a dish called **pottage**, which was vegetables and meat boiled with water until they became a thick mush.

#### Special Occasions

In medieval England, special occasions such as weddings were celebrated with festive meals. If the lord held a feast, peasants were allowed to beg at the meal. Sometimes the noblemen gave the poor people scraps of food.

A wedding feast often started with a meat and vegetable soup. If the families wanted to impress their guests, the next dish might be a peacock, stuffed with bread, fruit, and vegetables. Roasted wild boar was also often on the menu.

Dessert at the wedding feast could be pears cooked in red wine. The feast ended with nuts, candied fruit, and cheese.

Even at important banquets, most people ate with a spoon, a knife, and their hands. They also used bread to pick up food. Only royalty and wealthy people used forks.

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### "Meals in Medieval England"—Think About It!

1. What did people think about fresh fruits and vegetables in medieval England?

2. What is *pottage*?

3. Create a sample menu for a medieval wedding feast.

Starter:

Main Course:

Dessert:

4. What utensil did royalty and the wealthy use that others did not?

5. Why do you think peasants were allowed to beg at special occasions?

6. List two similarities and two differences in the way people ate medieval meals, compared to how you and your families eat meals today.

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