

# MEDIEVAL TOWNS & TRADE





# LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ✓ Describe the factors that led to trade
- ✓ Explain how trade led to the need for and growth of towns
- ✓ Describe what life was like in a medieval town



# REVIEW: THINK/PAIR/SHARE

What was the **significance** of the 100 Years' War?  
(i.e. what changed?)







## Trade

- Crusades: influenced trade
- Traders would make journey for goods and sell them at local markets/fairs
- People began learning to produce their own goods to sell

## Towns

- The fair wasn't good enough... seasonal and had to travel for them
- Needed stability: permanent shops protected by town walls

## Craft Guilds

- Towns full of trade specialists
- Organized and controlled by experts in that trade: **"guild"**



# CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

- What factors led to the growth of trade?
- How did the growth of trade lead to the need for towns?





# MEDIEVAL TOWNS

Some medieval towns grew up around a **castle**, where people hoped to be safe from attack. Some towns developed around trading centres such as **busy crossroads** or a village where local farmers gathered to sell their produce. Others grew up near **natural harbours** and **rivers** where it was easy to bring in goods by ship.





# MEDIEVAL TOWN CHARTER



At first towns were parts of kings or lords domain. As they became richer, townspeople resented having to work on the lords land. Instead townspeople paid their lord a fixed yearly sum in return for a charter which gave them the right to govern themselves.



# MEDIEVAL TOWN CHARTER

## The Town Charter – Key Facts

- ❖ A charter made a town a free borough with the power to hold a market, make its own laws, form guilds and raise taxes.
- ❖ The townspeople became free citizens or burgesses.
- ❖ The towns were governed by an elected mayor and a local council.
- ❖ Any peasants who had run away to live in a town became free men if they avoided capture for a year.



# MEDIEVAL TOWN WALLS

Most medieval towns were fortified with high stone walls and strong gatehouses. This kept out enemies and also made sure that merchants and other visitors could only enter by the gates where they had to pay a toll.





# MEDIEVAL TOWNS

## Town Walls – Key Facts

- ❖ Town gates were opened at dawn and locked at dusk.
- ❖ At sunset the town bells rang to sound curfew, telling everyone to finish work and lock their doors.
- ❖ Curfew was also the signal for people to cover their fires with dome shape clay pots before they went to bed.
- ❖ As the dark streets could be unsafe, nightwatchmen patrolled them with lanterns to deter criminals.





# TOWN HOUSES



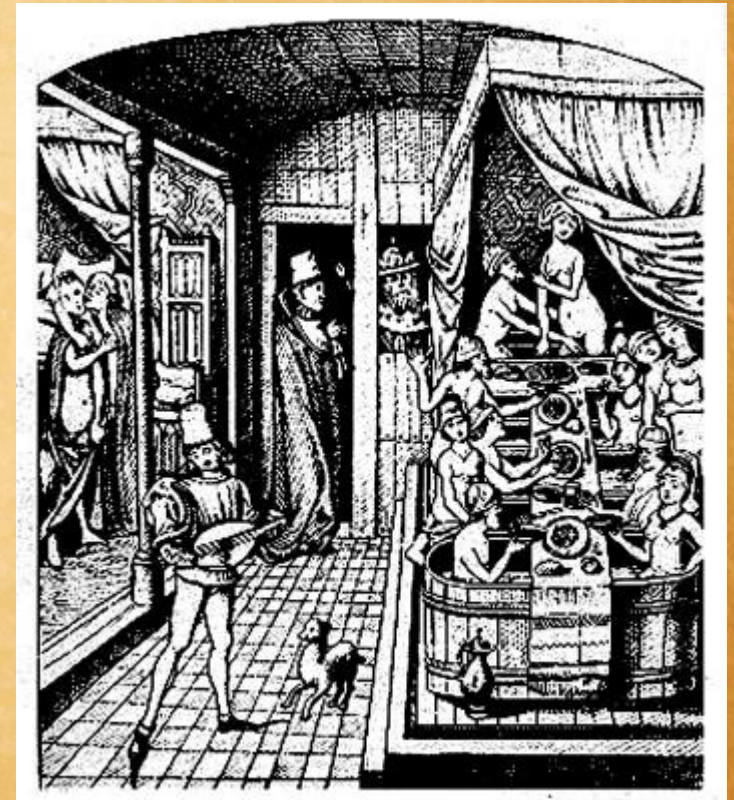
As space inside a towns wall was limited houses were built close together, Upper stories often jutted out above lower floors making streets dark and gloomy.



# MEDIEVAL TOWN HOUSES

## Town Houses – Key Facts

- ❖ Although houses did not have bathrooms or running water most towns had public bathhouses and some people bathed twice a day.
- ❖ As there were no drains or sewers people emptied slop pails and chamber pots out of windows onto the street below.
- ❖ Most craftsmen had workshops on the ground floor of their home.
- ❖ Goods were displayed on a hinged shelf at the front. Shutters were pulled down at night for security.





# LIVING CONDITIONS

- Dirty: no sewage system
- Many threw toilet waste and other trash into the street
- Rats were very common
- Water was NOT clean
- Disease was common and life expectancy was short









# YOUR TASK



**You have travelled back in time to a medieval town...**

- Task: Write a postcard to a friend/family member describing your experience living in a medieval town.
- Use pages 154-155 in your textbook, as well as the notes you took

**Try to summarize and describe key features and points by using some of these words:**

Walls	Curfew	Rats	Waste
Dirty	Close	Winding	
Dark	Disease		



# EXTENSION

- Explain how medieval guilds worked, why they were needed, and what they did for their members.
  - Textbook pgs. 151-152

