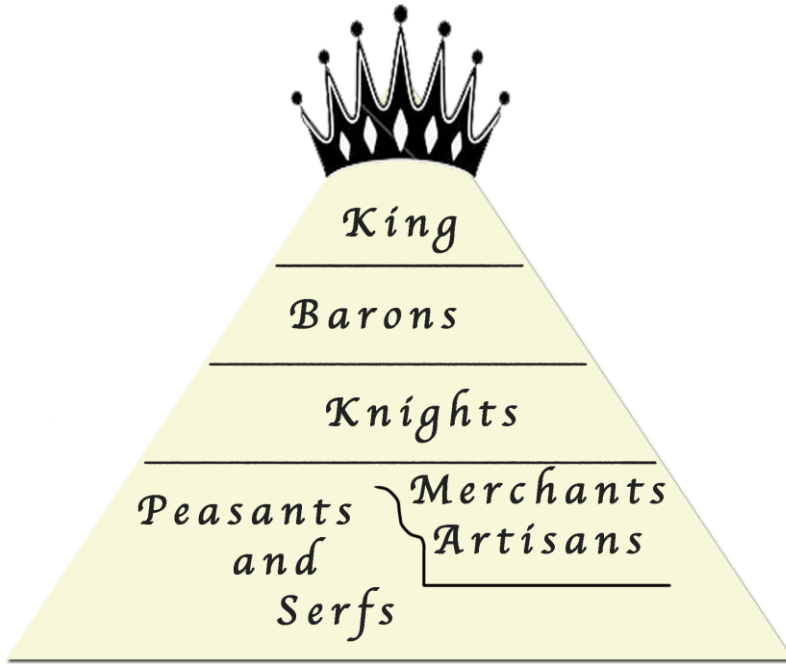


Task 1 – England 800 years ago: Vocabulary

Look at the diagram of English society in 1200, with the king at the top.

Work in pairs. Match the social groups in the picture with the descriptions on the right. If you know the words in your language, write them next to the picture.



- people who buy and sell things
- farmers
- the ruler
- landowners (people who own land)
- fighters who ride horses
- skilled workers
- unfree farmers (they have to stay in their village)

Task 2 – Reading: King John

Now read about King John.

Eight hundred years ago, the king was John. He **inherited** the title because his father and his older brother had both died. However, although he was powerful, he was not popular.

He was fighting a long war in France and he was not winning. He needed more and more money and fighters, so he made the **landowners** pay higher and higher taxes. The barons also had to send him fighters for his armies.

Poor people did not own land, so they had to pay **rent**. The landowners made them pay more to get money for the king.

Check you understand this vocabulary. Write your definitions or translations below.

| | |
|-----------|--|
| inherit | |
| landowner | |
| rent | |

Task 3 – Reading: Peasants and Serfs, Merchants and Artisans, Barons and Knights

Your teacher will give you another text to read so you can find out more about England 800 years ago. Make notes on your reading under the following headings. Then tell others about your group.

| | |
|--|--|
| Which groups did you read about? | |
| What work did they do? | |
| What was their diet? (What did they eat/drink?) | |
| Where did they live? | |
| How big was the group? | |
| What problems did they have? | |

Listen to the others talk about their groups. Check they tell you the answers to the questions above. Ask questions if any information is missing.

Task 4 – Discussion

Tell the class or your group about the following:

- What surprised you?
- What was life like in your country 800 years ago?
- What do you think the barons did next?



Report back to the class.

Task 5 – Grammar: Irregular past tenses and ‘used to’

Write the irregular past tense for these verbs, then look at the A, B and C texts to check your answers.

- | | | | |
|----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| 1. eat | _____ | 7. sell | _____ |
| 2. grow | _____ | 8. become | _____ |
| 3. can | _____ | 9. build | _____ |
| 4. drink | _____ | 10. mean | _____ |
| 5. think | _____ | | |

6. buy _____

Task 5 (continued) – Grammar: Irregular past tenses and ‘used to’

Read the following fun facts. Underline ‘used to’. How many can you find?

| A or B? | Answer |
|---|---|
| 800 years ago, people used to travel by: (A) horse (B) bicycle. | (A) Bicycles were not invented for another 600 years. Poor people used to walk a lot. |
| 800 years ago, people used to eat with: (A) knives and forks (B) knives and fingers. | (B) People in England did not use forks until 500 years later. People used to have their own knife, which they would carry with them. |
| 800 years ago people used to write in (A) Latin or French (B) English. | (A) English was spoken mainly by poor people (who usually couldn’t write). |
| 800 years ago, English people used to drink (A) tea (B) beer. | (B) Beer, although the alcohol level was low. Tea was introduced to England from China and India 450 years later. Beer making used to be a popular job for women. |

We use ‘used to’ to talk about past habits or repeated actions: **People used to travel by horse.**

We also use ‘used to’ to talk about past states. **People used to be frightened of the king.**

- a) You can only use ‘used to’ for things that don’t happen now. TRUE / FALSE
b) You can use “used to” for things that happened once. TRUE / FALSE

Which of these sentences can you re-write with ‘used to’?

- 800 years ago, people made their clothes from wool.
- People cooked all their food, even fruit.
- About 25,000 people lived in London.
- Barbers did tattoos as well as shaving men and cutting their hair.

Write six sentences about EITHER your childhood OR life in the past in your own country, using ‘used to’.

Texts for Task 3 – to be cut up

TEXT A Peasants and Serfs

Peasants and serfs were usually farmers. Life was hard and peasants only ate what they grew. Their diet was mostly bread with thick vegetable soup but sometimes they would have meat, usually pork. If they were lucky, they lived near a river and could catch fish. Peasants generally drank beer because they thought that water was dirty and unhealthy.

Peasants did not own their land and were tenants, so they had to pay rent to the landowner. This could be a knight, a baron or even King John. This rent was usually 10% of all the food they produced. They lived in small houses built with wood, with just one room.

The serfs were unfree peasants. This meant they were not allowed to leave their villages. As well as giving food to the landowner, they also had to work for him for no pay. However, if a serf escaped from the village and lived for a year in a town, he or she became free and could stay to make a new life. More than 80% of England's population were peasants and serfs and they had the lowest social status in society.

TEXT B Merchants and Artisans

Around 10% of England's population lived in towns. These were small but growing quickly. Merchants bought and sold goods such as wool, cloth, food and wine. Although some merchants were very rich, their social status was not high. Artisans were skilled workers, e.g. bakers, carpenters and builders.

Houses in towns and cities often had two or three floors. Most of the houses were built with wood and built close together, so people often died in fires. The tallest buildings were usually the churches, which were built with stone. The first London Bridge made of stone was finished in 1209 and King John allowed people to build houses and shops on the bridge in return for taxes. People also had to pay to cross the bridge. King John wanted power over London and other towns because they were rich.

There was a great variety of food in London from all over England and abroad and there were lots of restaurants and takeaways. Even poor people ate takeaways because they often did not have fires at home, so they couldn't cook. They also used to prepare food at home, then take it to a 'cookshop' to be cooked.

TEXT C Barons and Knights

Barons' families got large areas of land from the King, which they rented to smaller tenants. In return for their land, the barons had to pay taxes to the king and provide armies for his wars. King John used to put barons in prison if they did not give him what he wanted. However barons were still rich and powerful and were often relatives of the king. After a baron died, the eldest son inherited the title. A daughter could only inherit the title if her father had no sons.

Knights were fighters who rode horses. They were given land by the barons in return for fighting in wars. The knights also rented farms to tenants. The knights were often younger sons of barons and began their training when they were children.

Barons and knights usually lived in castles or houses made of stone. Because they had horses and were allowed to hunt animals, they ate plenty of meat. They also were able to afford some imported foods, such as sugar. They drank beer but generally preferred wine, which came from France or Italy. Less than 10% of the population belonged to these groups.