



FIEF

Definition: In medieval Europe, a powerful landowner who ruled over an area. **Context:** Even though they were below the king, local lords controlled most people's lives

VASSAL

Definition: The political and social system of medieval Europe, in which vassals received land from overlords in exchange for armed warriors and other services. **Context:** Under feudalism, the overlords, lesser lords, knights and peasants all depended on one another for survival.

LORD

Definition: A grant of land given by a lord to a vassal in return for an oath of loyalty and armed warriors. **Context:** In a formal ceremony, a monarch would give a noble a fief and promise to protect the noble.

KNIGHT

Definition: Someone who lives on the lord's land, providing loyalty in return for protection. **Context:** Through this "feudal contract," the noble became the vassal of a king or queen.

FEUDALISM

Definition: In medieval Europe, a soldier of high military Rank. **Context:** The most skilled soldiers were knights, who dedicated their lives to combat, a code of behaviour called chivalry, and service to their lords.