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Jousting

Middle Ages Review



About the author

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Welcome to ***Jousting!***

Covers the emergence of the Germanic Kingdoms, the early Middle Ages, and the Byzantine Empire. The class divides into eight "Orders of Knights" and competes in jousting "tournaments" in which teams face off and try to answer more questions correctly than their opponents. Victorious teams move up in the tournament brackets until a winner is crowned.

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Preface

A couple of years ago, I found myself frustrated as a teacher. I wanted to push my students into deeper levels of thinking; however, they were not acquiring the basic knowledge they needed to get there. Most of my students know little of the world outside of inner-city St Louis, and little motivation to learn about people such as Julius Caesar, Simon Bolivar, or Saladin. So my task was to find a way to motivate them to learn while directing them towards a deeper way of thinking.

To solve this, I began to rely on my Peace Corps experience. Three years prior, I spent two years in Thailand teaching English. As in St. Louis, the students of Rong Rien Plu ta Luang were less than enthusiastic about learning English—especially the boys. To engage them, I began to use different “learning games.” These were simple, but pulled the students into the lesson and energized the material for them. The students became motivated to know the material so they could “win” the games. By playing the games regularly, the students began to learn the material in spite of themselves.

Using these experiences I was convinced that introducing review games into my classes would help increase the energy, motivation, and retention of my students. I began (as most teachers do) with the typical Jeopardy! and other such games available on the Internet. While these were effective at first, the novelty wore off quickly and I found myself back at square one.

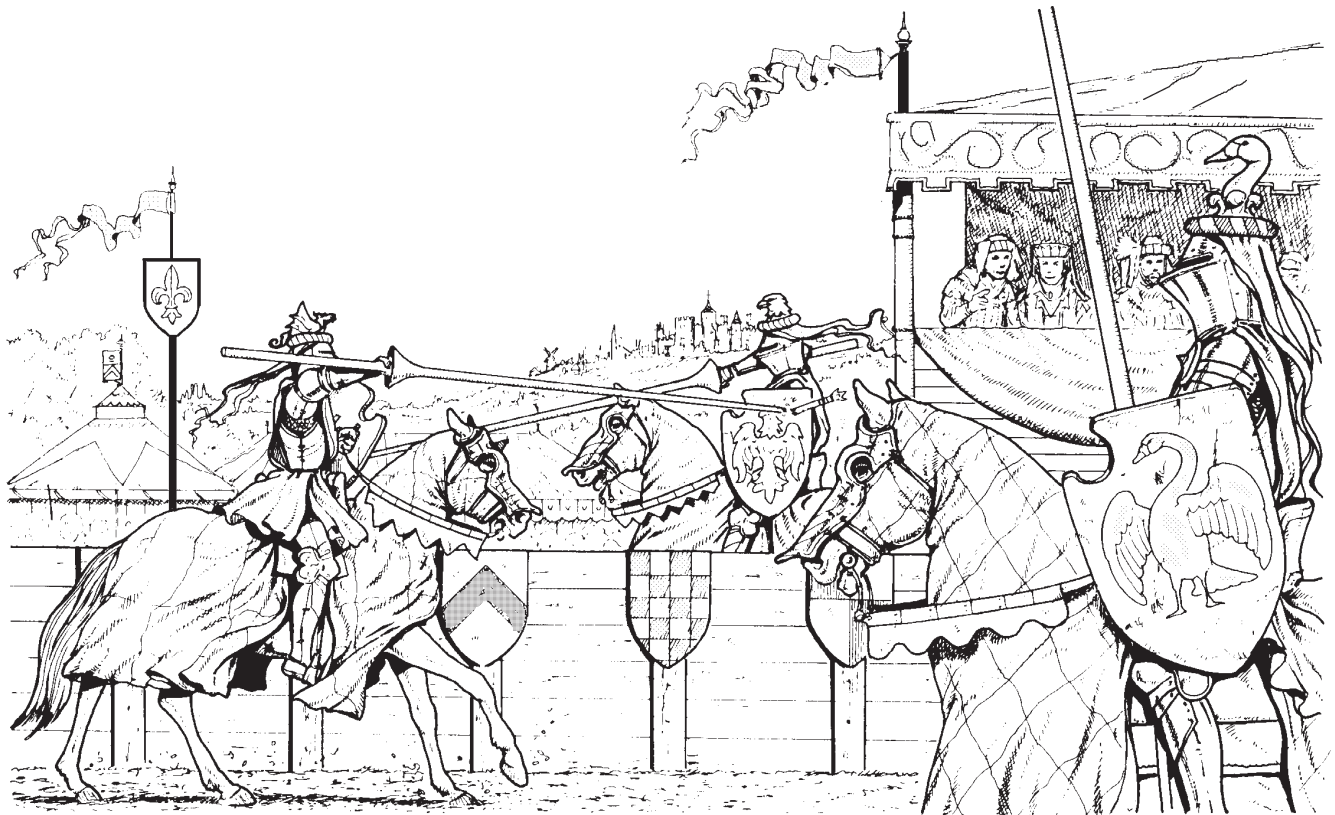
I then decided to try and develop games of my own. Having a background in computers as well as history, I started simply, using PowerPoint as my means of delivery. Simple hyperlink games such as basketball and volleyball seemed to hold my students’ interest longer, especially when used in a “tournament” style game, but students’ enthusiasm for these games also waned after a while.



Introduction

No other sport was as popular during the Middle Ages than the joust. Though kings forbade it and the Church discouraged it, the joust thrived nevertheless, in part because it gave knights the opportunity to show their skills and courage in something other than a battle setting. Often it was the knight who got knocked off but still arose to joust again who the audience looked upon as the "Man of the Match."

Questions from this review game are based on the emergence of the Germanic Kingdoms, the early Middle Ages, and the Byzantine Empire.



Tournament Slide

This slide depicts the tournament brackets. It has three main parts:

1. **Map button:** This button returns you to the entry screen.
2. **Joust button:** This button connects to the Joust slide.
3. **Brackets:** The Orders of Knights are already assigned their opponents. As one defeats the other, they move up in the brackets until one gets crowned champion. To move an Order up in the brackets, click on the shield you wish to move and then the box you want to move it to.

