

# Feudalism

## Reading like a Historian: Life as a Serf

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### Interactive Notebook & Teacher Notes, S1\*

Inquiry Question:

What was life like for a medieval serf and how do you know?

**Teacher Notes:** When we first started looking at a unit to work on with the READi California Teacher Inquiry Network, we wanted to choose something we had struggled to teach 7th graders, so we choose a daunting topic from our curriculum: The Enlightenment. This topic seemed to baffle our students. The ideas of the Enlightenment thinkers were revolutionary at the time; however this concept was lost on our 7th graders who looked at these figures through 21<sup>st</sup> Century eyes, what historians might call “presentism.” They could not understand why different oppressed groups in their history books didn’t just “speak up” or “fight back.” We wanted our students to understand how people thought, felt and acted within their historical context, to develop historical empathy. In order to do this, they needed to build knowledge about feudalism so that they could see how life for the common person in Europe changed over time, starting with feudalism.

In this module, students read a set of five texts, practice identifying potential textual evidence, noting citations for that textual evidence, corroborating across documents, creating claims and finally creating touchstone characters from the time period (Serf Thomas and Serf Anne). For students, this turned out to be a tremendous support for our students understanding the time period. We chose a historical fiction writing piece at the end of the module because we felt that would help students get a feel for the life of a serf...walking around in the serf’s shoes for a little while. For the first time in our experience of teaching this topic, students could quickly answer why you wouldn’t talk back to your lord and who was in charge of a serf’s life. They saw that a serf was not a person who was “pushed around,” but a human who was “pushed down” by the structure of their society.

When we started this module toward the end of first quarter, our students had already been introduced to and practiced several Reading Apprenticeship routines: Think Aloud, Talking-to-the-Text, Think-Write, and working with partners. Our students did not, however, have experience with argumentation. For more about Reading Apprenticeship and routines to support students’ reading, see *Reading for Understanding*, by Ruth Schoenbach, Cynthia Greenleaf, and Lynn Murphy, ©2012

*\*S1 indicates page 1 of the student interactive notetaker. The Teacher Notes has smaller text boxes in some spots than the student version of the notetaker.*

READI Reading History Module

**Reading like a Historian: Life as a Serf, S2**  
**Student Interactive Notebook**  
Iteration 2, Fall 2014

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### **Hard Work, S3**

#### **Individual Think-Write**

Think about the hardest job you have ever had to do. Why did you have to do this job? What were your responsibilities? What were you expected to do? What made it so hard? Write about this experience below.

#### **Pair Share**

Now you are going to share your experience with your partner. You may either read what you wrote in the above box or just tell them about your experience. Notice the commonalities and differences between your experiences.

#### **Whole Class Share**

Be ready to share something you wrote or heard with the class when the teacher asks you for your ideas.

**Teacher Notes:** We start off by introducing Think-Write/Pair-Share, a routine we use throughout this unit. The Think-Write time gives students 1-2 minutes to reflect and silently record their ideas. This encourages students to make thinking time a habit and allows all voices to be recorded and documented. The pair time provides an opportunity for students to “try out” their answers in a pair or trio. This oral practice fosters positive or constructive feedback within pairs, and structures support for listening attentively to another person’s ideas. Before students begin talking with their partner, we recommend reviewing classroom norms and expectations for partner talk (e.g. look at the person talking, leaning in to hear them, listen attentively, lower your voice; SOLAR—Silent, Orient (your body toward your partner), Lean in/Listen, Affirm, and Reflect/Respect).

We like to take the partner-share time as an opportunity to listen in on student conversations and to give a few students, who may not have participated yet, a heads up that they will be called on. I might say, “That’s a question I’ve heard from other students as well. Can I call on you to share that one?” or “You seem to have a different idea than your partner. May I have you share your thought and then she can add her own?” When we’re able to do this pre-selecting first, we start off the whole class sharing by saying, “I’ve heard a lot of your thinking. We’re going to start by hearing from \_\_\_ and \_\_\_, and then I’ll take hands.” This gives another reminder to these students, sets the tone that their contribution is important, and lets the rest of the class know when their turn is coming.

We have also found that by taking the extra 3-5 minutes this strategy requires, we get more participation when we come back together for the whole class share. If you call on a student who didn’t know what to write, they can always share what their partner shared. This validates what their partner said and keeps an “I-don’t-know” student included in the conversation.

This particular Think-Write asks students to think about their own experiences and prior knowledge, activating their schema.

### **Text A: The Feudal System, S4**

### **Text B: The Peasant's Life and The Serf's Life**

We will be investigating the life of the commoner in Medieval Europe under feudalism. Common people were called peasants and serfs, but there were definite differences between these two groups.

#### **Individual Think-Write**

Read Text A and Text B. Try to identify what makes someone a peasant and what makes someone a serf. While reading, make your thinking visible by Talking to the Text. Your teacher will tell you which one to use.

**Teacher Notes:** The terms peasant and serf are often used interchangeably in texts, but we wanted students to understand that there is a difference. We also chose to provide two texts in order to encourage students to connect information between texts and to make use of a diagram often seen (but often not read) in the feudalism section of textbooks. Giving students a focused task while analyzing a diagram teaches students to use text features, a skill that can translate to their independent reading.

#### **Pair Share**

Before talking to your partner, star three ideas in your Talking to the Text that you want to share. These ideas might be questions, comments, connections, or predictions. With your partner, go through Text A and Text B, discussing your thinking. Take turns sharing and listening.

#### **Whole Class Share**

Be ready to share something you wrote or heard with the class when the teacher asks you for your ideas. The teacher will chart your responses on the board. Take notes, following along with your teacher on the graphic organizer on the next page. When the discussion is over, you will be making a statement about the life of a commoner.

**Teacher Notes:** At this point in the share out, teachers may want to start with clarifying questions. It is important that students feel comfortable asking questions, particularly identifying and revealing where they were confused during their reading process. Then, move on to words, phrases, or pieces of the picture that held an understanding for students. Be sure to emphasize or revisit those classrooms norms that allow students to feel safe to share in your classroom.

**Text A and B, S5**

<b>Peasants</b>	<b>Serfs</b>

Pull the information together. Make a statement about the life of a common person based on your notes above. Explain how you know and then highlight at least one piece of a text that you used to come to this conclusion.

**Teacher Notes:** Creating these statements can be a first step toward creating a claim. When students make claims about the life of a common person, they can practice backing up their claims with evidence. Students are making a claim, explaining their reasoning (how they know x is the case) and providing evidence— practicing the elements of argumentation. In this instance, the evidence is textual evidence.

## Text C: Life in the village, S6

Your teacher will briefly model strategic reading (by using Think Aloud) with the first paragraph of Text C. Pay close attention to the ways in which he/she makes sense of the text. Write down any reading strategies you notice that help your teacher read more deeply.

### Reading Strategies List

**Teacher Notes:** Strategies you might model include: asking questions, making connections, identifying confusions, using prior knowledge and using word parts to understand unfamiliar words. Turn this list into a poster for the classroom and reference it often. Add to the list as students discover other strategies. We call the poster our "Reading Strategies List" and it serves as a reminder for students as they read difficult texts throughout this unit.

We use Think-Aloud to model what we want our students to do. As reading apprentices, students observe the expert reader and writer in the room (the teacher) do the thinking work first. This gives students a clear picture of what they should do when it is their turn. They also learn new strategies for approaching texts.

Start by reading the first sentence. What comes to mind? This should be a short one-to-two-sentence model, not a lecture. For instance, after reading the first line, I might think-aloud, "What makes their work 'back-breaking?'" or "Are they really getting hurt or is 'back-breaking' just an expression?" Though students will not be annotating the text when they do their Think Aloud, we often annotate as we are talking, projecting the text so that there is a record of the Think Aloud for students to reference. Stop after the first or second paragraph and have students share out what they saw you do. List what they say as the strategies on your list.

If you are creating a Reading Strategies List for the first time, record all of the students' contributions. If you have already started a list, you can add any new strategies to the Reading Strategies List. This task should take no longer than 8 minutes, including the teacher's model.

You may want to ask your students to number the paragraphs for easy reference.

### Whole Class Discussion

How is your teacher making sense of what she is reading?

## Individual/Pairs Read, S6

Continue reading the text. While reading, make your thinking visible by Talking to the Text

### Pair Share of Your Reading

With a partner, go through the text sentence by sentence (or paragraph by paragraph) discussing your reading. Take turns sharing and listening.

- Share comments, questions, understandings, roadblocks, reading processes--*how* you made sense of the text, how you built new understandings.
- Listen to your partners' thinking and elicit more thinking with questions such as:
  - What did you do?
  - How did that help you understand the reading?
- Help each other clarify roadblocks.
- Add good ideas from your discussion to your notes.

**Teacher Notes:** Here are a few notes on partnerships. When first starting out in the year, students need more explicit instructions about how to share their thinking in partnerships. Students will also need refreshers throughout the year, so this work is ongoing. You might want to write detailed directions on the board and use a timer. For example,

- Partner A shares two thoughts aloud. Partner B listens attentively. (60 seconds)
- Partner B asks one clarifying question. For example, "How did that help you understand the reading?" Or "Did you find an answer to your question?" Student A answers. (30 seconds)
- Switch. (90 seconds)
- Talk together and choose two ideas you'd be willing to share with the class. (30 seconds)

These are meant to be quick reminders for the teacher and student as to what should take place during this partner time. It can be helpful for the teacher to guide which partner should share first to help jump start the talking. When possible, teachers should be roaming around the student partnerships and listening in on conversations for potential bits to share with the class. This helps to manage your classroom and helps you gauge your students' roadblocks and understandings. It is an opportunity for you to formatively assess.

Creating partnerships can help structure this time and provide additional student motivation. Each section of this module requires partner-talk time. However, talking to the same partner can be repetitive for students and lead to off-task behavior. One strategy we use is to create Clock Appointments. Students are given a paper with a drawing of a clock with four times & slots (12:00, 3:00, 6:00, & 9:00). We give them 3-4 minutes to move around the room, and sign up a different partner for each slot. When students have filled in all four slots, we ask them to sit down to signal they've finished. You can also change this up by using academic vocabulary related to this module. For example, instead of clock slots, students can find a monarch, lord, knight and serf partners. Having the pre-arranged partners allows you to change the partnerships quickly. For example, "Meet with your 3:00 (or knight) partners and talk about..." Designate a central location for students who have empty slots to meet so that you can help them pair up and fill in their slot. Students who have absent partners go to this same designated spot and temporarily pair up with help from the teacher.

Another strategy is to use scores or what you know about students to create strategic partnerships in advance. Remind students to be respectful when unveiling your created partnerships.

### Whole Class Discussion, S6

Be ready to share your questions and understanding of this text with the class.

- What were the roadblocks and how did you get through them?
- Are there any words or phrases that you and your partner could not figure out?
- Is there something you still need to clarify?
- What does this text tell you about the life of a serf?

Add any new strategies to your Reading Strategies List.

**Teacher Notes:** The goal of this Whole Class Discussion is to make sure students understand the text. In other words, the purpose is to surface student's thinking and to help them identify roadblocks, clarify confusions together and make the clarification processes visible. If a student brings up a roadblock, ask guiding questions to see if he/she (or other classmates) can find an answer or create a hypothesis. For example, after reading the last sentence, "Occasionally a travelling musician or bear-baiter would pass through," a student may ask, "What's a 'bear-baiter?'" In response, you might ask:

- Is there any part of this term that you *do* understand?
- Can you make a guess or a prediction about this?
- What else do good readers do if they still don't understand a term?

Any strategies that come up can be added to your Reader's Strategy List (poster).

As a last resort, you may want to ask a student to do a quick Google search or offer the answer as an extra credit homework assignment. (If you are curious, bear-baiting is an arena-like blood sport where bears are tormented, usually by hunting dogs, for entertainment.)



## Creating a Claim, S7

### Teacher model

Now that we have learned something about life at this time, what claims can we make about what life was like for a medieval serf living in the feudal system? Based on Texts A, B and C, what do we think we can say about a serf's life?

### My Teacher's Possible Claims

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In order to make a strong claim, you must find evidence in the text to support your claim and cite that evidence. Your teacher will briefly model how to consider evidence for his/ her claim by reading the first two paragraphs with you.

**Teacher Notes:** Use the same copy of the text that you used for your Think-Aloud model, so students can see your original thinking. This reinforces the idea that a second read can lead to a deeper understanding. The first time we read this text, we focused on understanding the text through metacognitive strategies. The second time--this time-- we read with a purpose of identifying important information that we might use as evidence later. The more times a student works with a text, the more chances they have to understand it and gain new knowledge.

Identify a direct quote or paraphrase the paragraph. Record this on the left side of the T-chart. Add a citation by including the text, page and paragraph number. Then write your insight, thought or question in the right column.

This is another opportunity to practice a Think-Aloud in front of students. Here is an example of what a Think-Aloud might sound like for the first paragraph:

*"When I read this the first time, I noticed that it described their lives as "hard" and "back-breaking". It also says that they worked from dawn--when the sun comes up-- to dusk--when the sun goes down. So, one claim I can make is that serfs were busy working hard all day long. That's what I'm going to write as my claim. Then, I need a citation, so I can prove that I found this information from a reliable source and didn't just make it up. So I'm going to add Text C, page 3 paragraph 1, in the middle column, and note my evidence from the text over here in the "Possible Evidence" column. What I wonder now is, "What did the children do?" I'm going to write that here in the right column.*

<b>Possible Evidence from the Text</b> (quotes and paraphrases that support my teacher's claims)	<b>Citation</b> (text, page & paragraph number)	<b>Insights, Thoughts and Questions</b>
<i>Example: "...followed the seasons--ploughing in autumn, sowing in spring, harvesting in August."</i>	<i>Text C, p.3, paragraph 1</i>	What did they do in the winter?

**Pair Work, S8**

With your partner, create a few claims that answer the Essential Question:

- What was life like for a medieval serf?

**Our Possible Claim(s)**

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In order to make a strong claim, find evidence in the text to support your claim and cite that evidence.

<b>Possible Evidence from the Text</b> (quotes and paraphrases that support my teacher's claims)	<b>Citation</b> (text, page & paragraph number)	<b>Insights, Thoughts and Questions</b>
<i>Example: "...followed the seasons--ploughing in autumn, sowing in spring, harvesting in August."</i>	<i>Text C, p.3, paragraph 1</i>	What did they do in the winter?

Continue gathering evidence for your claim(s) on the next page.

**Teacher Notes:** Since you will have modeled with the first paragraph of Text C, encourage students to focus on the other topics. This is a good time to check in with students who haven't yet shared their thinking on this piece in the whole group and ask them to get ready to share.

S9

<b>Possible Evidence from the Text</b> (quotes and paraphrases that support my claims)	<b>Citation</b> (text, page & paragraph number)	<b>Insights, Thoughts and Questions</b>
<i>Example: "...followed the seasons--ploughing in autumn, sowing in spring, harvesting in August."</i>	<i>Text C, p.3, paragraph 1</i>	What did they do in the winter?

### **Whole Class Discussion, S9**

Your teacher will be calling on several student pairs to share a claim you are considering and evidence from the texts that you think support your claim. You will need to explain *how* the evidence supports your claim. How do you know? Be sure to cite the paragraph and page number where you found this information. Your teacher will add this to the class notetaker. Add notes and citations to your notetaker, too.

**Teacher Notes:** After recording a student's thought, ask the class if anyone found another place where the shared statement was corroborated or where the reader was given additional information. This helps students see that there is often information within the text that is connected.

For example, a student shares that peasants had to wear uncomfortable clothing, from paragraph 5 "rough tunic" and "coarse gown". Another student might notice that in paragraph 3, it states that "the wife would weave (the wool) into rough cloth" OR in paragraph 5, "'sumptuary laws' forbade them to wear clothes above their class".

There is also an opportunity to support argumentation by asking for different interpretations of the same piece(s) of evidence. *"Did anyone see that differently? Did anyone have a different interpretation?"* Follow up with, *"How do you know?"* or *"What made you think that?"*

### **Individual Think-Write**

Look back at your claim(s). Now that you have discussed more possible evidence, are there any changes (revisions) you want to make to your claim(s)? Is there a new claim you want to capture?

## Feudalism--Serf Thomas & Anne, S10

### Draw Your Claim and Evidence

Your teacher will give you a simple drawing of a medieval couple named Serf Thomas and Serf Anne. Using the evidence you have gathered on your notetaker so far, add detailed pictures and phrases showing Serf Thomas and Serf Anne's life. Show your claim(s) your drawing and make it come to life! Use the questions below to guide you.

- What was life like for a serf living in Medieval Europe?
- What did serfs do during the day?
- How were serfs treated by others?
- Where did they live?
- What might they be thinking?

**Teacher Notes:** Figures of Serf Thomas and Serf Anne are in the student handouts. They are intentionally vague so that students can draw in details. A simple stick person also works well. The more information students share, the more detailed these drawings will become. We model this step by revisiting our triple-entry chart and adding 2-3 details based on the information we've found so far. For instance,

- adding a sun and moon across the sky to represent the serfs working all day.
- drawing a hooded tunic around Serf Thomas and a gown over Serf Anne. Adding some leather boot-like shoes and little lines on the edges of the clothing to make it look rough or coarse.
- drawing a scroll that says "sumptuary laws" and include a few beautiful outfits just out of reach of Serf Anne or Thomas.

This act of drawing may seem simple, but it can help students consolidate their learning and act as a catalyst for students to start or continue forming claims.

By adding a sun and moon to symbolize working all day, you can model asking new questions -- *How would a serf feel if they are working all day? Sad? Angry? Frustrated? Satisfied? What happens if they are sick or hurt and can't work? What about the kids--do they go to school or do they work all day, too?* This fosters the idea that even as we come to some understanding in history, there is always a search to know more.

### Pair Share

Turn to your partner and share at least two parts of your picture. Your teacher will ask for volunteers to share their drawings with the class and explain how they know.

**Teacher Notes:** Students will be adding more to these pictures after we read the last two texts. At this point, we encourage students to have at least 4-5 additions to their picture. When students share during the Whole Class Share, we ask them to describe exactly what they drew and how they know. If you have a document camera, they can project it to the class.

## Text D: Feudal Peasants, S11

### Individual Read

Read the Text C silently. Make your thinking visible as you read by Talking to the Text

### Pair Discussion

With your partner, go through the text discussing your reading bit by bit. Be sure to take turns sharing and listening.

- Share comments, questions, understandings, roadblocks, reading processes--*how* you made sense of the text, how you built new understandings.
- Listen to your partners' thinking and elicit more thinking with questions such as:
  - What did you do?
  - How did that help you understand the reading?
- Help each other clarify roadblocks.
- Note commonalities or differences between you and your partner in your reading process.
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**Teacher Note:** Take a few minutes to check in with students' metacognitive thinking. Add any new strategies to the growing class list.

- What reading strategies did you use with these texts?
- Are there some new strategies we can add to our list?
- Where did you get stuck? What did you do when you came to a roadblock or got confused?

At this point, to support students' metacognition, you might also want students to code their thinking. One option is to use the Metacognitive Bookmarks from *Reading for Understanding*. Students can read their own thoughts or their partners' and add tally marks to the appropriate strategy. We then ask students to reflect on their tallies with reflective questions, either orally or in writing.

- What was your most used reading strategy?
- Why do you think you used this strategy the most with this text?
- What strategy did you use the least?
- Why didn't you use this strategy as much with this text?
- What strategy would you like to use more in the future? Do you need more instruction on how to use this strategy? Or reminders to use it?

A second option is to create a coding system and ask students to place at least one code next to each thought. For example, a Q for questions, a P for predictions, a C for connections.

### Whole Class Discussion

Be ready to share your understanding of these texts with the class.

- What were the roadblocks and how did you get through them?
- Are there any words or phrases that you and your partner could not figure out?
- Is there something you still need to clarify?
- What does this text tell you about the life of a serf?

**Pair Work, S11 and S12**

- Now that you have learned more, what new claim do you want to make to answer our question?
- What claims do you now want to revise?
- What new evidence can you gather from this text to support your claims?

**New Claims and/or Revised Claims**

<b>Possible Evidence from the Text</b> (quotes and paraphrases that support my claims)	<b>Citation</b> (text, page & paragraph number)	<b>Insights, Thoughts and Questions</b>

**Draw Your Claims and Evidence**

Using your new or revised claims and the evidence you have gathered on your notetaker, add to your drawing of Serf Thomas and Serf Anne's life.

**Pair Share**

Turn to your partner and share at least two parts of your picture. Your teacher will ask for volunteers to share their pictures with the class.

## Text E: The Medieval Church, S13

### Individual Read

Read the Text D silently. Make your thinking visible by Talking to the Text.

### Pair Discussion

With your partner go through the text discussing your reading bit by bit. Be sure to take turns sharing and listening.

- Share comments, questions, understandings, roadblocks, reading processes--*how* you made sense of the text, how you built new understandings.
- Listen to your partners' thinking and elicit more thinking with questions such as:
  - What did you do?
  - How did that help you understand the reading?
- Help each other clarify roadblocks.
- Note commonalities or differences between you and your partner in your reading process.

**Teacher Notes:** By this time, students have better understanding of the tasks we are asking them to do and more knowledge about the life of a serf. This is a good time to focus students on identifying new understandings and/or revising "old" ones. They can also notice the same or similar information in different texts.

This is a possible time to explain corroboration to students. *What happens if two sources agree with each other? Does that make it more likely or less likely that the information is correct?*

One way to explain is to give a short narration of how you use corroboration as a teacher in solving conflicts. Here is what you might say or write for students.

*It looks like we have found more than one place in our texts that says the same (or almost the same) thing. Historians would say that one text **corroborates** the other. They call this corroboration. Corroboration is also something teachers do where there is a conflict in class.*

*For example, when Joey hits Tommy, Tommy comes and tells me. Now I have one source that this event has occurred. Lisa was sitting behind Tommy and told me she saw Joey hit Tommy. Now I have two sources that this event happened. Does that make it more likely or less likely that what Tommy is saying is true?*

### Whole Class Discussion

Be ready to share your questions and understanding of this text with the class.

- What were the roadblocks and how did you get through them?
- Are there any words or phrases that you and your partner could not figure out?
- Is there something you still need to clarify?
- What does this section tell you about the life of a serf?



**Pair Work , S13 and S14**

- Now that you have learned more, what new claim do you want to make to answer the question?
- What claims do you now want to revise?
- What new evidence can you gather from this text to support your claims?

**New Claims and/or Revised Claims**

<b>Possible Evidence from the Text</b> (quotes and paraphrases that support my claims)	<b>Citation</b> (text, page & paragraph number)	<b>Insights, Thoughts and Questions</b>

**Draw Your Claims and Evidence**

Using your new or revised claims and the evidence you have gathered on your notetaker, add to your drawing of Serf Thomas and Serf Anne.

**Pair Share**

Turn to your partner and share at least two parts of your drawing. Your teacher will ask for volunteers to share their drawing with the class.

**Teacher Notes:** Collect the drawings at the end of this lesson. In preparation for the next lesson, make a composite picture from various students' drawings. Make a copy of the composite picture for each student for the following lesson. Also, make a big poster of Serf Thomas and Serf Anne to use as a reference point for feudalism as you continue your course of study.

## Feudalism--Final Assignment, S15

### Individual Talking-to-the-Drawing

Look at the copy of your classmates' Serf Thomas & Serf Anne drawing. You are becoming an expert on this time period. Show off your knowledge by Talking to the Text on this drawing. Write comments, questions, understandings, and connections. What more could you add using the evidence we collected? What thoughts or comments might Serf Thomas or Serf Anne have in this scene? Add these as thought or speech bubbles.

### Partner Share

Share what you have added to the class picture with your partner. Then, at the bottom of your picture, write a claim that sums up your answer to the essential question, based on everything you have learned.

- What was life like for a medieval serf and how do you know?

Life as a serf was \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

### Whole Class Share Out

Your teacher will be calling on several student pairs to share the claims you have made about serf life. Be ready to cite your evidence and to explain how your evidence relates to your claim.

**Teacher Notes:** Now students are moving into making arguments. They are making a claim. As they support the claim with quotes from the text, those quotes (or paraphrases) become textual evidence. When they explain how the evidence is connected to the claim, *how* it supports their claim, they are articulating their historical reasoning.

Prompts to elicit student thinking in this discussion include:

- *What is your claim?*
- *How do you know?*
  - *What evidence supports your claim?*
  - *How is that evidence connected to your claim?*
  - *Explain the connection.*
  - *Explain your reasoning.*

## Writing Assignment: Serf Diary Entry, S15

You are going to write a diary entry as a medieval serf living under feudalism. Emphasize what occupies your mind, what you see and feel in your day-to-day life, and where you go throughout the day.

- Be sure your diary entry uses complete sentences.
- Include details from what you have studied in this inquiry. Only use claims that the class has supported with evidence.
- Your diary entry should be at least two paragraphs long.

### Teacher Notes:

There is a reproducible diary page in the student handouts. If your students don't bring it up first, acknowledge that most serfs did not know how to read and write, so they would have to imagine being one of the few who were literate.

Model what this assignment might look like. Using a Think Aloud, show students how to look at their Possible Evidence chart and turn their notes into sentences from a diary. For example I might say, *"My notetaker says that many serfs were farmers and that they worked all day. I made a claim that the life of a serf was horrible and exhausting. I think I will start, 'Dear Diary, Today I got up before the sun and made a simple breakfast for my husband and two children. I wish I could get more sleep, but I have to work so hard all day long.'"* I would demonstrate the writing in real time in front of the students with a document camera or smartboard. **DO NOT JUST SHOW THEM A FINISHED PRODUCT.** Students need to hear and see how the sentences were created.

## What I Learned (Final Reflection), S16

Teacher Notes: We had three objectives for this module.

1. Introduce claims, evidence and reasoning to middle schoolers and how to create claims, consider evidence, use evidence to support claims and explain reasoning.  
(This advances READI Learning Goals for History Inquiry #1, 2 and 3.\*)
2. Build knowledge about feudalism as context for understanding the Enlightenment.  
(This advances the content goals for the course.)
3. Lay the groundwork for students to be able to develop historical empathy. Modern students struggle at times to develop and understanding of life from a medieval point of view. Stepping into the shoes of Serf Thomas and Serf Anne and being able to continually reference the poster can become a touchstone for a middle school class.  
(This advances READI Learning Goal for History Inquiry #3 in that historical empathy emerges from contextualization.)

This final reflection connects directly to the goal of developing historical empathy by calling attention to the differences between the students' historical context and the serfs' historical context. The poster serves as a touchstone of the serfs' context as the class moves into the study of the Enlightenment.

\*See the READI Learning Goals for History Inquiry on p.4 of the Overview.

### Individual Think-Write

Silently read and answer the questions.

1. What do you understand about life as a serf that you didn't understand before?

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- 2. Compare your life with what you now understand about Serf Thomas and Serf Anne's lives. How are their ways of thinking and their power to make choices the same or different from yours?

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- 3. Think about how you read, created claims, cited evidence from the text, and revised your claims. What did you learn about reading history, historical claims and evidence?

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