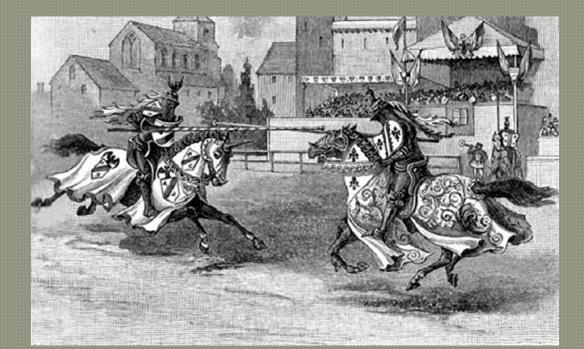
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

Background and Important Terms



The Middle Ages (Medieval)

The Middle Ages lasted from 1066-1485. France's William of Normandy conquers England in 1066, bringing a new emphasis on law and order, including feudalism.



Big Events

 The Crusades (1095-1270): European Christians fought Muslims, with Jerusalem and the Holy Land as the prize; the Europeans failed.
The Black Death (1348-1349): Caused a labor shortage, eventually leading to serfs' freedom and the end of feudalism

Feudalism

Feudalism was a pyramid system based on a religious concept of a hierarchy Any males above the social class of serf were expected to serve the king as warriors

King Lords Vassals Knights **Serfs**

Women in Medieval Times



 Women had no political rights and were subservient to men
A woman's social standing depended on

her husband's or father's status

Chivalry

Chivalry (or the Chivalric code) was a system of ideals and social codes governing the behavior of knights and gentlewomen Militaristically, knights had to keep their oaths of loyalty and observe certain rules of warfare



Courtly Love



Courtly love required a knight to admire and act in the name of a certain lady However, courtly love was not supposed to cross the line into physical love; the lady should always remain pure and out of reach

SGATGK Facts

 Composed after the Crusades, around 1375
Though composed in the 12th century, it is set in the 500's
The tale centers around

the semi-legendary King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table (King Arthur ruled from 516-537)



SGATGK Context

 During and after the Crusades, promoting Christianity (particularly Catholic beliefs) became very prevalent
Even though not set during the Middle Ages, SGATGK includes feudalism, chivalry, and courtly love



SGATGK = Romance



Chivalry gave rise to a new genre of literature, called romance Romance: a poetic narrative which usually records the adventures of a brave knight who must go on a quest and overcome great danger for love of a noble lady or high ideal Romances typically contain supernatural or magical events The world of romance suspends the laws of nature and idealized heroes almost always conquer evil

SGATGK Literary Terms

Alliteration

Symbol Bob and wheel: in alliterative verse, a group of five lines with an "ababa" rhyme scheme. The "bob" is the first line in the group and is shorter than the rest; the "wheel" is the quatrain that follows. Foreshadowing: the use of clues to hint at what is going to happen later in the plot; builds suspense

SGATGK Characters

Sir Gawain

Green Knight

King Arthur

The Lord

•The Lady

