

# LESSONS FROM THE MIDDLE AGES IN 7TH-GRADE WORLD STUDIES

## Knights, Plagues, and Faith

Our 7th-grade World Studies class has embarked on a captivating journey back to the Middle Ages, a time filled with knights, plagues, and the deep influence of faith. Through hands-on activities and thoughtful discussions, students have been exploring how religion shaped this historical period—for both good and bad—and how its legacy still resonates today.



## Crusades Simulation: Faith as a Tool of Power

One of the highlights of the unit was a Crusades simulation, where students stepped into the shoes of pilgrims and crusaders to better understand how religion influenced people's lives during this era. They discovered how faith was often used as both an inspiration for good and a tool for manipulation. This sparked meaningful discussions about the role of religion and government, then and now, and challenged students to think about how Christians should respond when faith is misused for power or control.

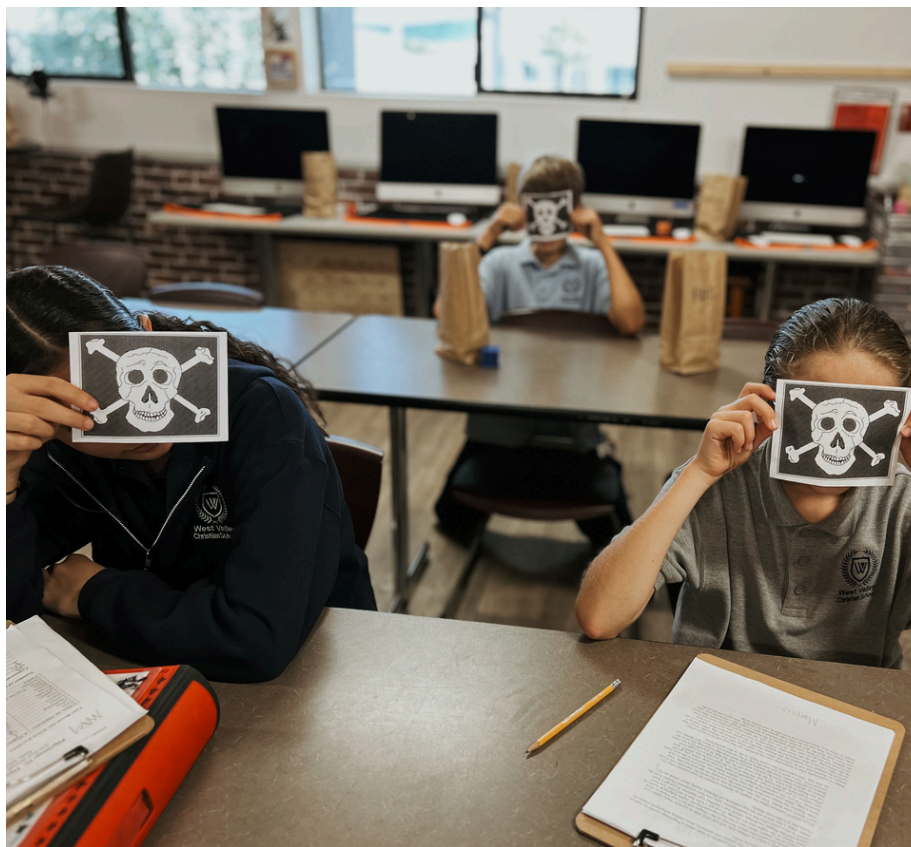




## Plague Simulation: Experiencing the Devastation

Another memorable moment came during a simulation of the Black Plague, where students followed journey paths from town to town, rolling dice to determine their risk of contracting the disease. With each extended stop, their chances of infection grew, and soon, nervous anticipation filled the room as the plague spread rapidly. This activity gave students a visceral understanding of the fear and devastation people faced during the outbreak, while also leading to deeper reflection on how the Church responded.

Through this activity, students learned that during the plague, the Roman Catholic Church turned inward, focusing on itself instead of serving those who were suffering. This withdrawal caused many to lose faith and turn away from the Church. It opened up a deeper question for students: How should Christians respond in times of crisis? Through thoughtful discussions, students reflected on the importance of embracing compassion, service, and love, especially in difficult times.



Our 7th-graders are not just learning about history—they are wrestling with important questions about faith, power, and how we are called to respond as Christians in times of hardship. We're proud of the mature and reflective approach they've taken in understanding these critical lessons from the past and thinking about their implications for the future.