

Heilewif's Tale

Summer Reading Assignment

Name _____

Heilewif's Tale is a novel that will help you to understand the reasons for the decline of feudalism and the rise of the Renaissance. The characters and the story are completely fictional, but it is set accurately into the late medieval period, so that the events mirror the kinds of things that actually happened at the time. It takes place in the German Rhineland sometime in the 1390's.

When you begin your World History class next year you will review and discuss this novel. To prepare for that, you will complete this workbook and bring it with you on the first day of class.

There are two types of questions you must answer for each of the first twenty chapters in the book.

1. Short identifications of important people or significant events mentioned in that chapter that will help you to better understand the story. *Explain the significance of each in one or two original sentences.* This guide includes the URLs for short Internet sources to make it easier for you to look up things you don't already know.

2. Short explanations of your views on values issues that emerge from the story and the historic period. *Answer these with a short statement to organize your thoughts for a more in-depth discussion when you return to class.*

Prolog

Steps to become a Knight. <http://www.authorsden.com/visit/viewarticle.asp?id=14481>

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It says in the Prolog that in the feudal system, "lying, cheating and reneging on your word were the greatest crimes." *Why do you think this was so important during the middle ages? Think about how common it is to lie to get out of trouble and about how common cheating is on a test in school and tell why you think lying and cheating are sometimes acceptable.*

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Chapter 1

Leprosy <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-leprosy.htm>

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How did inaccurate knowledge about leprosy influence the way it was treated during the middle ages? Compare Sir Shilgen's description of the disease with the real facts. *Think about the importance of knowing the real facts in making decisions.* Shilgen quotes several lines from Scripture that associate evil with darkness and the night. *Why is this fear of the dark consistent with the fear of leprosy?*

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Chapter 2

Knighthood and Chivalry <http://history.boisestate.edu/westciv/medsoc/11.shtml>

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The woodcutter, Zumwald, calls Sir Shilgen, "a man of honor." *Think about the concept of honor. What kinds of behavior were thought to be honorable in the middle ages? What is considered honorable behavior today? What similarities do you see?*

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Chapter 3

Christian Heresy http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_heresy (first 3 paragraphs only)

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Bodenolph Von Vulpes is Count Robert's vassal yet he is apparently not loyal to Robert. Knowing who to trust seems to have been a big problem in the middle ages. *Think about loyalty and compare the middle ages with life today.*

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Chapter 4

Black Plague <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/plague.htm>

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Zumwald blames the Jews for the Black Death. *What is anti-Semitism? Think about Ludwig's comments about Jews. What causes racial and religious prejudices to spread?*

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Chapter 5

Manorialism <http://web.nickshanks.com/history/medieval/manor#manor>

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Heinrich Zumwald and his family give us a picture of the communal nature of medieval life. *What do you think caused people to give up so much individual freedom and live such a cooperative group oriented life-style?*

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Chapter 6

Courtly Love http://www.medieval-life.net/courtly_love.htm

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Aurianna and her mother talk about love and several ideas about romance and love are woven into the story. *What is your definition of romantic love? What factors may have contributed to the popularity of courtly love during the middle ages?*

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Chapter 7

Fairy Tales http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fairy_tale (first few paragraphs only)

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Sir Shilgen struggles with the conflicts he sees in carrying out his duties. *Heilewif tells the knight that "...moral integrity makes one worthy of true love." What is integrity? Do you agree with Heilewif?*

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Chapter 8

Hanseatic League <http://www.wga.hu/tours/gothic/history/hansa.html>

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Heilewif says that while people in a group cannot talk at the same time, they can sing. *How does this express the essential conflict between individual freedom and group responsibility?*

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Chapter 9

Inquisition <http://galileo.rice.edu/chr/inquisition.html>

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Why won't it ever be possible for Heilewif to win an argument with the inquisitor?

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Chapter 10

Devil's Cherry (Deadly Nightshade) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deadly_nightshade

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Do you agree with Heilewif when she tells Sir Shilgen that: “freedom is deeply cherished and inextinguishable in the human soul?” Why was individual freedom a threat to the feudal system?

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Chapter 11

Exorcism <http://science.howstuffworks.com/exorcism.htm>

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The idea of human equality seems almost entirely absent from medieval life. Count Robert tells his wife that “equality is only for equals.” *What do you think he means by this?*

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Chapter 12

Heidelberg Castle <http://www.visit-heidelberg.com/tours/castle.htm>

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Family loyalty is the backbone of medieval society. *What do you think? How important is family loyalty today?*

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Chapter 13

Medieval Musical Instruments <http://www.themiddleages.net/life/music.html>

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Sir Shilgen considers Vulpes to be a traitor because he is disloyal to Lord Robert but Vulpes believes it is more important to protect one's own personal interests. *What do you think the limits are when it comes to loyalty to your country?*

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Chapter 14

Scientific Method http://www.visionlearning.com/library/module_viewer.php?mid=45

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Compare the way Heilewif is trying to solve the curse with the recommendation of the priest and then compare her to the methods of the university doctors.

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Chapter 15

Henbane (Hog's Bean) <http://www.whitedragon.org.uk/articles/henbane.htm>

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Does Sir Shilgen's free consent make it ethical for Heilewif to conduct medical experiments on him?

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Chapter 16

Opium <http://www.narconon.ca/opium.htm>

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Heilewif operates within a very small circle of trust. *Who do you trust and why do you trust them?*

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Chapter 17

Scopolamine <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/sci/A0844088.html>

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Do you agree with Aurianna when she says that happiness demands freedom?

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Chapter 18

Lighthouse of Alexandria <http://ce.eng.usf.edu/pharos/wonders/pharos.html>

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The middle ages are sometimes referred to as the “dark ages.” *Why do you think this is so? How is darkness used symbolically throughout the novel?*

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Chapter 19

Spanish Boot <http://www.occasionalhell.com/infdevice/detail.php?recordID=Spanish%20Boot>

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Define the idea of a “fair trial” *Why wasn’t the inquisitorial procedure fair?*

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Chapter 20

Making Morphine <http://www.poppies.org/news/104267739031389.shtml#morphine>

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Why is logical argument of no use to Heilewif in her confrontation with the Inquisitor?

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Chapter 21-23 and the Epilog

Heilewif's Tale is about the importance of relying on internal ethical authority in deciding what's right and what's wrong. *Finish the novel and think about how a person develops a strong personal ethical sense. Write a short essay about this and be prepared to share your thoughts with the class when you return to school.*

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[illegible]