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Exploring The Middle Ages (11 Vol. Set)



Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 6-10—An exceptionally well-designed and thorough encyclopedia for the years spanning 500—1500 C.E. The first 10 volumes offer alphabetic entries on a broad range of topics related to law, literature, commerce, medicine, daily life, philosophy, religion, science, and technology. Accessibility is enhanced in myriad ways. Each concise and engaging entry begins with a bold heading and topic overview in large print, followed by short paragraphs under subheadings. Pages are interspersed with high-quality color manuscript images, photos of artifacts and sites, and maps. Sidebar panels provide additional information on a variety of topics and people (Medieval Zoos, Caste and Karma, Ibn Sima), and excerpted passages from period texts. Occasional time lines provide further clarity. The writing and organization offer easier access to a broader range of users than Matthew E. Bunsons *The Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages* (Facts On File, 1995; o.p.) and this sets currency gives it an edge over *The Middle Ages: An Encyclopedia for Students* (S & S, 1996). While most resources on this period discuss guilds, *Middle Ages* highlights the role of women in the merchant guilds with detailed written documentation and color plates. Volume 11 is dedicated to a glossary, six indexes, a bibliography, a list of further reading, an annotated list of Web sites, and a time line color coded in the same manner as the entries. A great resource.—Tina Hudak, St. Albans School for Boys, Washington, DC Copyright © Reed

Starred Review Say the words Middle Ages, and standard images leap to mind: castles, monks, serfs, knights, and the omnipresent specter of the Black Death. Many reference titles concentrate exclusively on these medieval European phenomena, as if the rest of the world went into suspended animation for a millennium. This new set, appropriate for students in grades seven and up, presents a truly international survey of global events that occurred between 500 and 1500 C.E. The alphabetically arranged articles range from two to six pages. Each entry is color coded by continent or geographic region (Oceania, the Americas, Western Asia, etc.). Double-column pages feature a generous font size, manageable paragraphs set off by subheadings, and numerous full-color illustrations, often several per two-page spread. Some entries consider specific events or individuals; others offer broad survey treatments. Multiple see-also references steer researchers toward related articles. An international, multicultural approach is evident throughout. For example, the article on Sculpture includes subsections on Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Hindu, African, and Toltec and Mayan styles, with an insert on the moai (giant heads) of Easter Island. The entry on Peasants compares country life in European, Hindu, Incan, and Chinese societies. Abundant color photographs as well as charts, sidebars, time lines, and maps complement the text. In addition to an alphabetical table of contents, the first volume offers a "Thematic Contents" list grouping articles according to broad subjects. Additional access is provided by volume-specific indexes. Volume 11 is a comprehensive reference volume and features a time line and glossary, a list of maps, a master index, and several subject indexes. Additional offerings include bibliographies of print materials, Internet sites, sources appropriate for younger readers, and a list of "Places to Go": galleries, museums, and cultural institutions in North America, Europe, and Australia. The appeal of Exploring the Middle Ages is its overarching worldview, which will support research assignments requiring advanced applications such as comparing and contrasting, making connections, and tracing influences. Ideal for reports, and equally satisfying for browsers, this lavishly illustrated set will be of interest in public and school collections. Kathleen McBroom Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

Used these for home schooling middle school aged children. Bought them when they were a LOT more expensive. Definitely recommend them to other homeschoolers, especially at the prices they are currently going at.

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