Medieval Games & Entertainment
Why were games and entertainment important in the Middle Ages?

- Games and entertainment were important to help make everyday life more exciting!

- Everyday life in the Middle Ages was filled with long, hard work. Games and entertainment provided a much needed break for people!

- People from every class of life were able to take a break and enjoy games and entertainment.
Games for the Upper Class

- Members of the Upper Class, including Kings and Queens, enjoyed playing games like dice, checkers and backgammon.

- All of these games were meant to be played indoors, nobles did not play many outdoor games.

- Most games played by the upperclassmen, involved betting for money.

- Chess was a very popular game with upperclassmen. They played chess the same way we do today.
History of Chess

- Chess was a game played by upperclassmen only in the Middle Ages.

- Pieces included 1 King, 1 Queen, 2 bishops, 2 knights, 8 pawns, and 2 castles.

- The game was much like a Medieval society; there was a castle, king & queen, bishops, knights, and pawns (peasants).

- The object of the game was for one king to defeat the other king through different moves and strategies.

- The wealthier a king was, the more elaborate and costly his chess set.
Lower class games

- Members of the lower class played many of the games that the Upper Class people didn’t play.
- The lower class played many outdoor games, like hockey, stickball, soccer and golf.
- The lower class also played games like skittles, horseshoes, gameball (a simple game of football), archery, wrestling, Hurling and stool ball (an ancestor of cricket).
- There were no stores to buy things for games, they made their own footballs, bows and arrows and anything else needed to play games.
Knight Games

- Jousting was a popular game among knights. It kept their fighting skills sharp, and helped them stay in good physical shape for battle.

- Knights often competed in tournaments. Tournaments were real fights, with very few rules. They became so violent, that the church had to change the rules to keep people safe.

- Hunting was popular with knights. Knights often hunted deer, fox, rabbits, wolves and boars.
Tournaments were popular with all classes of people.

Tournaments at first were wild, bloody fights with few rules, but the church stepped in and changed that.

Tournaments were then sponsored by a noble, and he would supply a purse of money for the prize.

Knights would compete in jousting, foot fights and horse fighting in the tournament. The knight who made it to the final round got the prize.

Tournaments were often followed by big banquet celebrating the knights victory.
Jousting was the most exciting game, and a favorite form of entertainment for nobles and lords in the Middle Ages.

Jousting involved 2 knights in heavy armor on horseback. Using a long weapon (the joust) they would try and stab their opponent.

Jousting contests were very popular, and would draw large crowds of people.

Jousting help keep knights in good shape, and allowed them to practice their combat skills.

Jousts often ended with a big feast or banquet.
Banquets

Games were not the only source of entertainment in the middle ages. Banquets were often big, grand events for people of the Middle Ages.

On holidays, saints days, and after most tournaments and jousting matches, there were banquets to celebrate.

Banquets had lots of food and entertainers to entertain people. Jesters, jugglers, musicians and mummers often performed at banquets. They were there to entertain the King’s guests and make sure they were happy.

The chefs and cooks cooked many things at the banquets. They had all kinds of meats, cheeses and pastries for guests to enjoy. Wine, mead, and ale were served to drink.
Entertainers in the Middle Ages

- There were many people who provided different types of entertainment for all classes of people in the Middle Ages. They included:
  - Mummers – masked or costumed men or woman. They were also known as mimes. Mummers did not speak, but used their hands and facial expressions to entertain people.
  - Minstrels – created ballads and poems to perform for people. Most of their poems were about myths and legends. They often traveled all over to perform.
  - Troubadour - were more poetic than the minstrels. They performed songs and poems about love and chivalry. They also told stories about history and far away places.
  - Jugglers – used their hands and objects to entertain crowds
  - Acrobats- performed with their bodies. They walked tight ropes, did flips and other stunts to entertain people.
Jesters

- Jesters in the Middle Ages were like clowns.
- A Jester’s only job was to entertain the nobles and kings.
- They were suppose to use humor to make them laugh and keep them happy and entertained.
Thank you my lords and ladies!!!