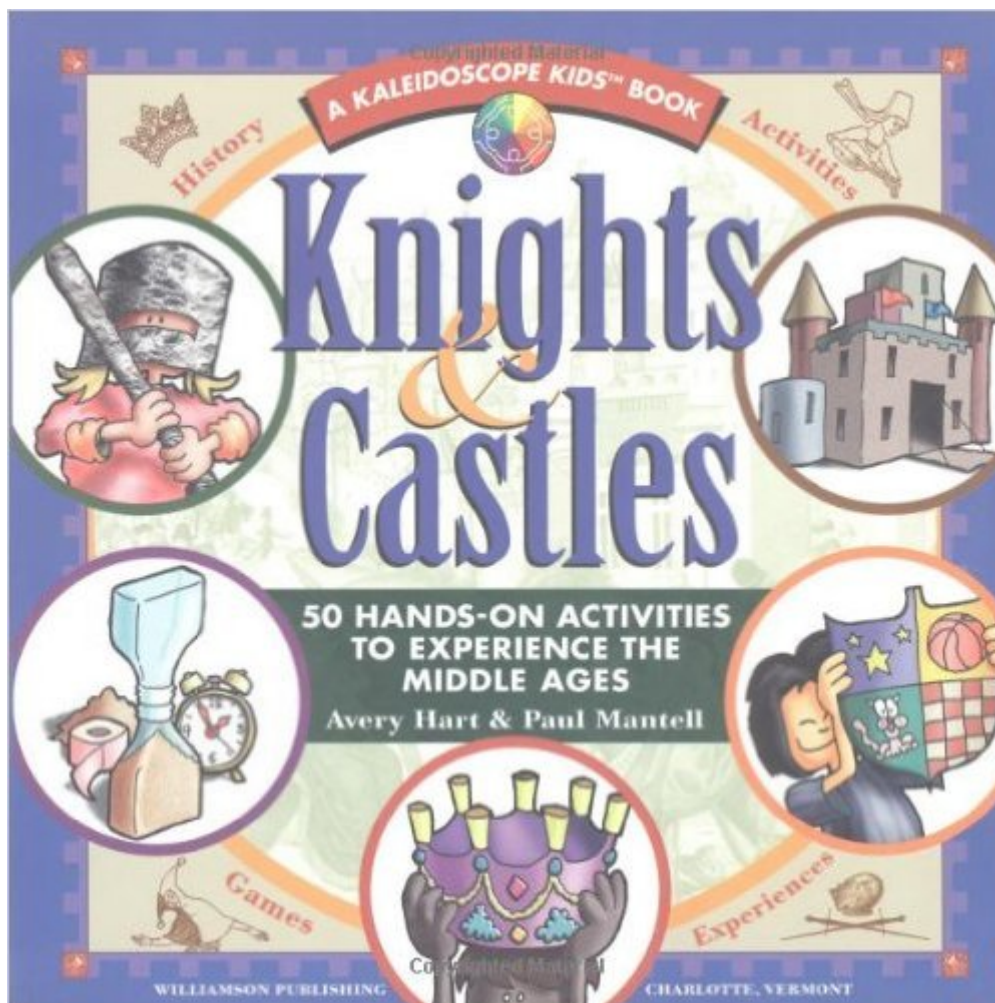


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# Knights & Castles: 50 Hands-On Activities To Explore The Middle Ages (Kaleidoscope Kids Books (Williamson Publishing))



## Synopsis

Dozens of games and celebrations invite kids to investigate the Middle Ages, while through descriptions of food, clothing and more, they can become part of a mythical time of castles and kings, cathedrals and conquests.

## Book Information

Series: Kaleidoscope Kids Books (Williamson Publishing)

Paperback: 96 pages

Publisher: Williamson Publishing Company (May 1, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1885593171

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Product Dimensions: 10.1 x 10 x 0.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (28 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #128,979 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #43 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Medieval](#) #66 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Europe](#) #98 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Cultural Studies > General](#)

Age Range: 7 and up

Grade Level: 2 and up

## Customer Reviews

Notice the extremes of the reviews. On one side, "KelleyG" gives it 5 stars and complains about "obvious religious zealots who feel they have a right to shove their beliefs down the throats of everyone else in this country", and 4 Christians give the book 1 star for its anti-Christian themes and statements. They're both right. The book does nice activities, but its strong point is the background info provided for each activity. I value how it asks us to think about living life in the Middle Ages, like how heavy armour would feel, living without modern technology, and how short life spans lowered the marriage age. I can do an activity AND present questions that help my child relate to the Middle Ages. But, the anti-Christian perspective is flawed to the point of giving an inaccurate perception of the Middle Ages. Pointing out the failures of the church is valuable and needed. Ignoring the contributions of the church is historically inaccurate. For example, nearly every expert credits the church as being the only source of learning and scholarship during the Middle Ages. The

handwritten manuscripts of the monks preserved great texts, both Christian and secular, that would have been lost forever. This vital fact is one of many that the authors ignore. Notice that "manuscript" is nowhere in the index, but "minds, open vs. closed" is an index entry. I appreciate that the book is more than just page after page of activity in that it provides historical and philosophical points. I really like it, and will use it. But, as a Christian, in the end, as I am using it with my child, I'll also be able to use it as an example of how bias distorts historical accuracy. We'll be able to talk about whether the church-bashing passages are really true, why somebody would write thus, and what is a more accurate position to take. I am absolutely not afraid to point out the failings of the church. I just wish the authors had been willing to consider the valuable contributions, also. If the church defined much of the Middle Ages, then the distortion is inexcusable. I own the book, I like it, but I'll call it what it is--biased historical perspective--and educate my kids accordingly when we read those passages.

As a homeschooling parent, I am always on the lookout for interesting and fun learning resources. This book was not a disappointment for our family. The activities truly range in age ability and interest from 6-12. So while a six year old fashions her knight helmet (one of the activities included), her older brother might discuss or write his opinion in response to one of the several interesting discussion topics sprinkled throughout the book. And many of the activities are enjoyable for kids of all ages, including adults. The norm with kid activity books is to state they are for kids ages 6-12, while in reality, they are geared more towards kids in the 6-9 age range. This book is full of fun activities, interesting information, and food for thought for learners of all ages! Can't wait to bake and paint the bread!

I found this book sadly lacking in substance and quality activities. Spend your money on Days of Knights and Damsels by Carlson.

As mentioned in other reviews, the writing is very biased and above the head of most grade school students. I don't take issue with discussing the problems of any given era (church or not), but the approach is very slanted and complex for its targeted audience. The tone is pervasively negative, which is an odd thing to say considering this book addresses the dark ages... but it's distinctly odd for a children's book. I was also disappointed in the activity offerings, as I have had such great luck with other books in this series. The ideas were vague, impractical and lacked instructions. Carlson's "Knights and Damsels" is much better if you are looking for activities to go along with a unit on the

middle ages.

This book really makes you feel like you are in Europe during the Middle Ages. Although a little of the book is for younger children, most of it is appropriate for all ages. All of the crafts are well explained. The only fault I find is that the book's explanation of chess is off. Other than that, it is very worth while.

We have had such great luck with Kaleidoscope Kids books in the past (Geology Rocks, Bridges!, Going West!, The Lewis and Clark Expedition), but the text of this book is dreadfully bad. Spare yourself the headache of sifting for gold dust in this book; go get "Knights and Damsels" by Laurie Carlson instead. Most of the book has your child making up whatever she or he wants instead of learning about what was done in the Middle Ages. Make up your own Code of Honor... Make up your own legend. Make up a special task for yourself -- call it a Quest! Celebrate trees -- you are wassailing! Give me a break. The book offers no context for why chivalric ideals were important, and gives no examples for children to base their learning upon. Also, the book gives no specifics for how legends or quests helped shape the times. Nada. It's almost as though whatever your child makes up will be as historically significant as what was done in the Middle Ages, and their ideas about medieval times as valid as historians' ideas. This book isn't going to help you teach your child things through hands-on activities. There are SO MANY materials available for kids studying the Middle Ages. Take a pass on this silly book. Go with a winner instead. I recommend "Knights and Damsels" by Laurie Carlson and "Medieval Projects You Can Do" by Marsha Groves. Days of Knights and Damsels: An Activity Guide (A Kid's Guide series) Medieval Projects You Can Do! (Medieval World (Crabtree Paperback))

This book is an excellent tool to use. The projects: Build your own castle & catapult was LOVED by my 9 & 7 yr olds. The information was in a way that kids could read & understand it all. Very useful for all.

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