

The Norman Conquest

Page, Squire or Knight? Cards

Practised fighting with wooden swords and shields.	In times of war, led soldiers and archers into battle.	Looked after the armour, weapons and horses.
Took part in a dubbing ceremony where he swore an oath.	Developed leadership skills to know how to command others.	Played chess and other strategy games.
Learned to endure extreme cold, heat, hunger and tiredness.	Given courtesy lessons by the lady of the castle.	Practised their fighting skills at tournaments.
Ran errands for the lord of the castle.	Given land in return for overseeing the peasants who lived there.	Became a personal servant.

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Name: _____

Date: _____

Read the Page, Squire or Knight? Cards and place them in the correct column below according to whose role or responsibility they describe.



Page



Squire



Knight

Would you have liked to train to be a knight?
Explain your answer to a partner.

Dear Uncle Russell,

I hope you are enjoying your new knighthood. Father says it will soon be time for me to start my training in another castle. I am excited but nervous. What will it be like? What will I have to do? Can you give me any advice?



From your nephew, Arthur.

Dear Uncle Russell,

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How to Become a Knight

A knight was someone, usually of noble birth, who was trained to fight for his lord. Norman knights were well-trained and highly skilled fighters. They rode on warhorses, wore armour and carried weapons. They were formidable opponents. However, it took a long time to become a knight...

Being a Page (Training: 7 years)



Around the age of seven, a boy from a noble family who wished to become a knight was sent to another lord's castle to begin his training. He was called a **page**.

He **practised how to fight** with wooden swords and shields against the other pages, and learnt how to **ride a horse**. He needed to become fit and strong. He was also **taught how to hunt** with hawks and falcons. He might have played chess and other **strategy games**.

He was also expected to **run errands** for the lord of the castle, **serve him meals**, look after his clothes and assist him in dressing.

A priest would have given him **religious training**, and taught him how to **read and write**. Often, the lady of the castle would look after the page, and teach him the rules of **courtesy** (how to behave towards others). She may also teach him how to **sing, dance** and **play musical instruments**.

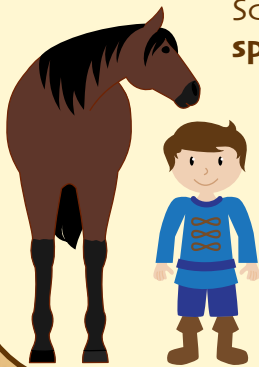


Being a Squire

(Training: 7 years)

Once a page reached the age of 14 or 15, he became a **squire**. He was now no longer considered a boy, but a young man. In this new role, he became the **personal servant** to a knight, who took over his training.

A squire was responsible for looking after the knight's **armour, weapons** and **horse**. His job was to **assist** the knight in battle, and **protect** him if he was injured. He had to be brave and ready to **fight** if the need arose.



Squires had to further develop their **strength** and **speed**, as well as learning how to climb and swim (important skills if attacking a castle). They also had to learn how to endure extreme cold, heat, tiredness and hunger. A squire needed to begin to show **leadership skills**, for as a knight he would be commanding others.

Squires were also expected to enter the **social life** of the castle, and demonstrate the skills in music, dance and courtesy that they learnt during their years as a page.

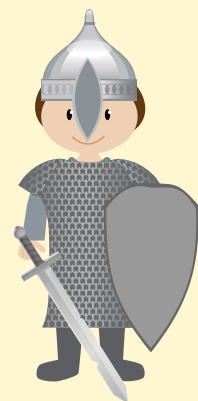
Being a Knight

If a squire's training was successful, at the age of 21, he was made knight at a **dubbing ceremony**. The squire had to **swear an oath** to be loyal to his lord and the king, defend the weak and uphold virtues like compassion, loyalty, generosity and truthfulness. The knight who had trained him then tapped the squire on each shoulder with his sword. The squire was now a knight!

Being a knight brought many privileges - he was given the title of '**sir**', sat at the lord's table at banquets, and was **given land** in return for overseeing the peasants who worked on it.

Knights practised their fighting skills regularly in **tournaments**. A tournament was a pretend battle or fight. However, they could still be dangerous, and sometimes knights were injured or killed.

In times of war, knights were called upon by their lords or the king. They were **in charge** of the soldiers and archers, and led them into battle.



Name: _____

Date: _____

You have just been dubbed Sir Russell, a knight. Read the letter your little nephew, Arthur, has sent to you, then write a reply below.

Dear Arthur,

From your uncle, Sir Russell



Name: _____

Date: _____

Imagine you have just completed your training to become a knight. Fill in the diary entries for each stage of your training, describing what it was like, and how you felt.

Dear Diary - I am a page!

April, 1075



Dear Diary - I am now a squire!

July, 1082



Dear Diary - I am finally a knight!

March, 1089



Name: _____

Date: _____

Imagine you have just completed your training to become a knight. Fill in the diary entries for each stage of your training, **describing** your roles and responsibilities, and **explaining** how you feel.

Dear Diary - I am a page!

April, 1075



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Dear Diary - I am finally a knight!

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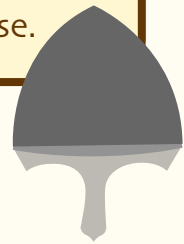
Lance

The lance was a long spear. It was tucked under the knight's armpit, or held overarm in their right hand. It was useful for thrusting through gaps in a shield wall, spearing fleeing enemies or throwing.



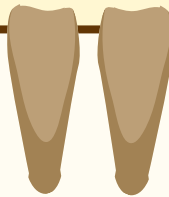
Conical Helmet

This metal helmet was protection for the head, with a nasal guard to protect the nose.



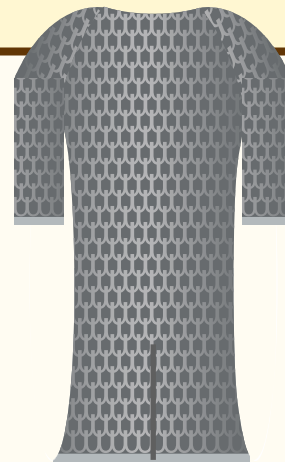
Greaves

These were usually made from leather or padded cloth and attached to the legs for protection.



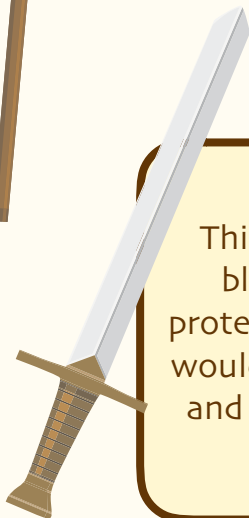
Hauberk

This was a chain mail shirt worn as armour for the body. It covered the knight down to his elbows and knees, and had splits at the front and back for when sitting on a horse.



Sword

This was a wide, double-edged blade, with a cross-guard to protect the hand. A knight's sword would usually be made from steel, and could cut through shields or even armour.



Kite Shield

Due to its shape, this shield could protect the whole body. It was slung around the neck on a strap, or attached to the left arm when riding. It was surprisingly light. A knight's shield was often decorated with designs in bright colours.

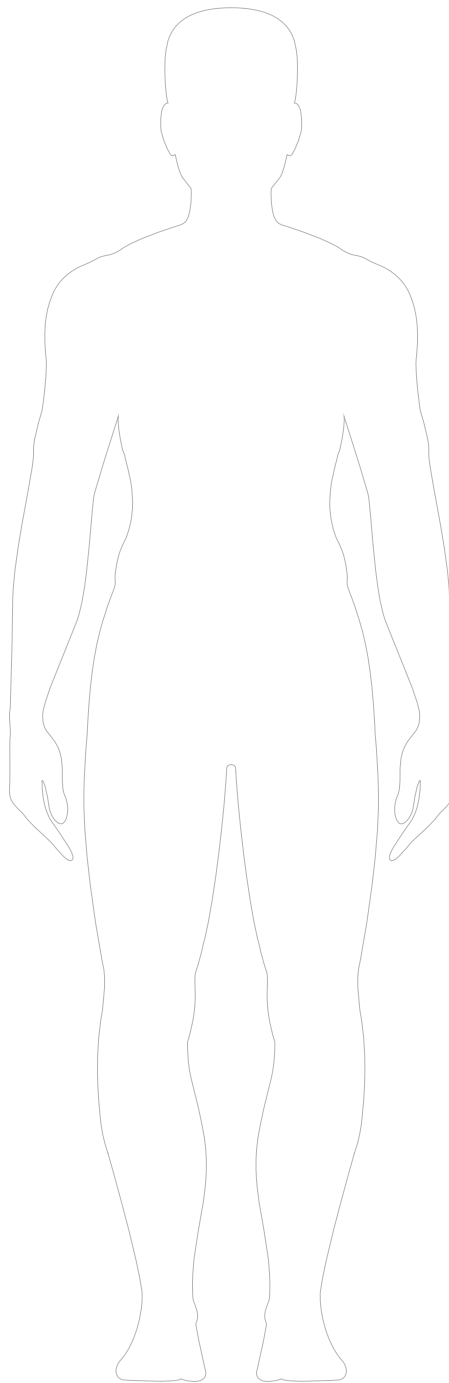


Name: _____

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Read the information on the Norman Weapons and Armour Sheet, then complete your own **labelled diagram** of a Norman Knight using the body outline below.



Read the Job Description Cards and place them in the correct column below according to whether they describe the role of a **page**, **squire** or **knight**.



Page



Squire



Knight

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