

1. Describe in detail, what the *Magna Carta* was. What was its purpose, and why did the barons force King John to sign the document?
 - The *Magna Carta* (Great Charter) was a legal document written by barons of England who forced King John to sign it in 1215
 - The primary purpose of the document was to limit the power and authority of the king by laying out in writing the specific powers that the king did and did not have
 - For example... (give at least one example of something found in the *Magna Carta* from your notes)
 - The barons forced King John to sign the document because he had been severely abusing his power since he became king (give an example of how)
 - By 1214, the barons had decided to rebel against King John. They gave him a choice between signing the *Magna Carta* or face a military overthrow
 - The *Magna Carta* is hugely significant because, even though it did not guarantee any rights for common people at the time it was written, it served as the basis for many laws and rights that exist in England as well as Canada even to this day

2. Describe the feudal contract. Who benefitted from the feudal contract, and how?
 - The feudal system was based on land, loyalty, and faith
 - Monarchs gave land (fief) and titles in exchange for loyalty to nobles, who then became the king's vassals
 - Land was the basis of wealth in feudal Europe
 - In exchange for fief, the king got loyalty and military service from his vassals
 - The vassals also provided other services to the king (give an example)
 - In addition to land, the vassals also got protection from the king
 - At the bottom of the feudal hierarchy (or pyramid) were the peasants, which made up about 90% of the population
 - Peasants included both freeholders and serfs who did almost all of the labour in the kingdom, but got very few benefits or rights in exchange
 - However, the serfs and freeholders did enjoy the protection of their lord