

## GAME OF THE CRUSADES

"Crusades" were military expeditions sent by the Pope to capture the Holy Land from people called Muslim Turks. The empire of the Turks included Palestine, the land where Christ was born. Several crusades between 1096 and 1272 failed to win the Holy Land, but nevertheless had important results for the people of Western Europe.

Causes, notable events, and results of the Crusades are described on the outline which follows. Information from this outline will be used during the playing of the GAME OF THE CRUSADES.

### The Crusades



#### I. Causes of the Crusades.

- A. Muslim Turks captured Jerusalem and neighboring lands from the Byzantine Empire.
  - 1. Before this happened, the Byzantine emperor allowed pilgrims from Western Europe to freely visit the Holy Land.
  - 2. After Jerusalem fell, the Muslim Turks prevented Christians from visiting the Holy Land.
- B. Pope Urban II called a meeting of churchmen and feudal lords in 1095.
  - 1. In an emotional speech, he called upon the knights of Europe to defeat the Turks.
  - 2. The Pope also saw the Crusades as a way to get feudal lords to fight together against a common enemy -- instead of fighting against one another as they often did.
  - 3. Urban further thought military expeditions under his direction would increase the power and influence of the Catholic Church.
- C. Feudal lords had several reasons for going to the Holy Land.
  - 1. They felt it was their religious duty to support the wishes of the Pope.
  - 2. They hoped to gain land and wealth by defeating the Turks.
  - 3. Some went for adventure and the chance to become a hero.
- D. Merchants, especially those from the Italian port cities of Venice and Genoa, backed the plans of the crusaders.
  - 1. They provided ships for crossing the Mediterranean Sea.
  - 2. Merchants believed expeditions to the Near East would lead to an increase in trade with that part of the world.

#### II. Many Crusades are organized during a 200-year period.

- A. The First Crusade (1096-1099).
  - 1. Preachers, such as Peter the Hermit, traveled through the countryside and convinced thousands of peasants to leave for the Holy Land.
    - a. The peasant army, led by Peter the Hermit, was untrained and lacked adequate military equipment.
    - b. Some crusaders starved to death, while others were killed by the Muslim Turks.
    - c. The peasant army never reached Jerusalem.
  - 2. A later expedition of knights reached the Holy Land and succeeded in capturing Jerusalem and other areas.
- B. The Second Crusade (1147-1149).
  - 1. After their victory in the First Crusade, most Christians returned to Europe.
  - 2. Eventually the Turks won back some of their lost territory.
  - 3. The King of France and the Emperor of Germany led armies to the Near East, but were defeated.

- C. The Third Crusade (1189-1192).
  - 1. It began when Jerusalem once again fell into Turkish hands.
  - 2. Led by Richard the Lion-Hearted, King of England, the crusaders convince the Turks to let Christian pilgrims freely visit Jerusalem.
- D. Other Crusades.
  - 1. Several more expeditions were organized during the 1200's, but each met with little or no success.
  - 2. One of these later expeditions was called the Children's Crusade.
    - a. There were two armies of children -- one from France and one from Germany.
    - b. The "soldiers" included many boys and girls under the age of 12.
    - c. A total of 30,000 young crusaders were led by a boy named Stephen who believed God wanted him to take an army to the Holy Land.
    - d. The Children's Crusade met disaster as youngsters died from starvation, cold, exhaustion, and drowning.
    - e. None of the boys and girls reached the Holy Land and few ever returned home safely.

### III. Results of the Crusades.

- A. The Holy Land remained under Turkish control.
- B. Europeans learned how to build better ships and draw better maps -- a skill which later contributed to the success of New World explorers.
- C. Trade increased between Western Europe and the Near East.
  - 1. Europeans wanted such products as fruit, spices, silk, cotton, perfume, sugar, mirrors, and dyes.
  - 2. The Italian cities of Venice and Genoa grew wealthy by controlling the Mediterranean trade routes to the East.
- D. The power of feudal lords declined as many lords were killed in battle while others spent all their money on military supplies and equipment.
- E. The desire to travel increased among Europeans.

### Game Rules

The class will be divided into four teams. Each team will be a group of crusaders who will follow one of the four routes to the Holy Land shown on the map on the next page.

Since the Crusades failed to permanently conquer the Holy Land, the losers of this game will be the three teams who reach the Holy Land first. These teams will lose because they will have been defeated in battle by the powerful Muslim Turks. The remaining team will be the winner because it successfully avoided battle with the Turks.

The game begins when the teacher asks a question about the Crusades. Look for answers on your outline. The first person to raise their hand will be called on. If their answer is correct, space 10 on the map will be crossed out for two other teams. These <sup>two</sup> teams are now one space closer to the Holy Land and thus one space closer to defeat. No space will be crossed out for the team answering the question correctly.

If the person being called on answers a question incorrectly, or does not answer immediately, their team will have one of its spaces crossed out. Whenever a team has all 10 of its spaces crossed out, it is out of the game. Play continues until three teams have been eliminated and only one -- the winner -- remains.