

Year 7 KO4: “Women were treated as equals to men in Medieval Europe” How far do you agree?

Key terms	Definitions
Matilda the Empress	Granddaughter of William the conqueror and mother of Henry II, she competed for the throne with her cousin Stephen in 1135.
Scold's Bridle	Headgear a woman had to wear if she was accused of nagging or being a scold.
Joan of Arc	A woman who dressed as a man to help the French fight in the 100 Years War.
Witchcraft	The practice of magical skills, spells and abilities.
Witches	People who practised witchcraft, usually elderly women who lived alone.
Devil's mark	A mark on a witch, which was thought to be where they fed their familiars with their blood.
Familiars	Supernatural animals which would assist witches in their practice of magic.
Ducking	A woman's hands and feet would be tied and then she was put into deep water.
Pricking	Pricking someone all over with a sharp instrument to search for the “Devil's mark”
Burning at the stake	Tied to a vertical piece of wood on top of a bonfire. Witches were commonly burnt at the stake in the medieval times.
Stoning	If a woman was unfaithful or a witch, she was tied to a horse and dragged around, people would place stones and other materials on the floor to increase suffering.

Key questions:

- Why did England never have a medieval Queen?
- What was women's role in medieval society?
- What jobs did women do?
- Who was Joan of Arc and how was she treated?
- How were witches identified?
- Who was most likely to be accused of being a witch?
- How were witches treated and punished?
- What were medieval attitudes to witches?

Things you need to know for your assessment:

We nearly had our first ever queen of England in 1235 but Matilda lost the civil war to Stephen and was viewed as too arrogant. However, the Baron's of England also broke their promise to support her claim to the throne.

Poorer women contributed to their households by doing many of the same jobs as men in agriculture, but also looking after their families, and often side jobs such as textile work.

Richer women were treated more as objects and possessions by their husbands, only socialising when he allowed her.

The Law for men and women was different, women had very few rights to things like property.

Women who did not get married or were widowed were often thought to be witches and could be punished and tried as such.