

# ARMA (Primary) Learning Scenario

## Title

Reading Medieval Coins

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## Abstract

This lesson plan introduces primary school students to medieval coins. It focuses on how important these small objects were, not only for trade but in forging the identity of medieval rulers and their territories. Students will discover the different ways in which coins were used in the Middle Ages: From buying, selling and accumulating wealth, to political, religious and historical propaganda, to being used as spiritual tokens and amulets in pilgrimages. The aim of this learning scenario is to come into contact with medieval coins, not only as objects of economy but as objects that connect word and image in order to create a sense of identity and belonging. During this lesson, students will learn about medieval coins through an interactive online activity. They will then create their own coin, imagine and map their own land, and use their coins to trade resources with their classmates.

## Table of summary

Subject / Field of study	History, Art
Topic	Reading Medieval Coins
Is Part of ... / Category	ARMA (The Art of Reading in the Middle Ages)
Age of students	10-12
Preparation time	5 min
Teaching time	2.5 hours
Online teaching material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Online interactive activity: Medieval Coins</b> <b>(link)</b></li> <li>- <b>Money changer's book available on Europeana:</b> <a href="https://www.europeana.eu/it/item/9200519/ark_12148_btv1b525090833">https://www.europeana.eu/it/item/9200519/ark_12148_btv1b525090833</a></li> </ul>



Offline teaching material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Design Your Own Coin activity workbook:</b> <a href="#">(link)</a></li> </ul>
Europeana resources used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Europeana gallery on coins:</b> <a href="#">(link)</a></li> </ul>

### Integration into the curriculum

This learning scenario can be adapted to History, Art and Mathematics curricula. Through exploring the medieval coin, students will better understand what life was like in the Middle Ages as well as the different ways in which coins were used on a daily basis. By designing their own coin and creating a map of their land, students will develop their creative and artistic skills, expressing their own identity through visual representation. Lastly, through the role-play activity, they will trade amongst themselves, actively calculating their territory's budget and understanding how ratios work.

### Aim of the lesson

1. To learn about how medieval coins used text and image to express ideas
2. To make their own coins as a symbolic representation of themselves
3. To practice how to express ideas creatively through drawing and coloring
4. To develop creativity and planning skills

### Outcome of the lesson

Students will learn about medieval coins and about how coins were a means of economy, propaganda and territorial identity. Students will better understand that reading does not only take place by understanding written text but also by understanding images. Students will discover what the important aspects were behind the emission of a coin and in what ways coins were used and exchanged to accumulate wealth and build and develop territories.

### Activities

Reading	Medieval coins	Procedure	Time
		<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce students to medieval coins by starting a discussion on what coins are used for in the present. Teachers can ask the students what the different ways of using a coin might be.</li> <li>- <b>Using the Europeana Gallery on medieval coins:</b>  ( link )</li> </ul>	20 min

Reading Medieval Procedure coins	Time	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Show students all the different types of coins and ask them to identify what type of signs and images they can observe on the coins.</li> <li>- Show students the money changer’s book and explain to them what their role was.</li> <li>- Ask the students what they think those signs and symbols mean and why they are there to begin with.</li> <li>- Do they think that the coin would be worth the same without those symbols?</li> <li>- Who decides what the value of a coin is?</li> </ul>	
<b>Interactive online activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- After this introduction and discussion, ask students to open the interactive activity on <b>Reading Medieval Coins:</b>  (link)</li> <li>- Students will be able to contextualize the coins they have discussed and learn about how text and image work together to give the coin value and authority.</li> <li>- After the activity, ask students the same questions they were asked during the introduction. How have their answers changed? Why?</li> </ul>	Approx. 25 min
<b>Activity Part 1: Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Print out as many copies as needed of the <b>Design your own coin!</b> Booklet.  (link)</li> <li>- Print out the <b>Money Changer’s</b> booklet with as many copies of pages 3 and 4 as needed.  (link)</li> </ul>	

Reading Medieval Procedure coins	Time
<b>Activity Part 1: Design your own coin!</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hand out the <b>Design your own coin!</b> booklet to each student. 45 min</li> <li>- Ask them to follow the instructions. Students will have to create their own land, give it a name and choose a title for themselves. They must also choose a couple of words that best describe them and/or their land and choose a legend for their coin. Once this is done, they must choose a primary source for their land and design a coin that represents them.</li> <li>- They must make a number of smaller coins (which they will use to trade) and a bigger coin (which they will give to the changer/teacher).</li> <li>- Finally, students will draw and color a map of their imaginary land.</li> </ul>
<b>Activity Part 2: Let's trade!</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow the rules on the second page of the <b>Money Changer's</b> booklet to explain the rules to the students about how they can trade their coins, passing through the money changer in order to purchase the primary sources that they will need to build on their land and improve the living conditions of their people. 30 min</li> <li>- Explain how wood and stones are necessary to build houses, how clay is needed to make cooking utensils, how cloth is needed to make clothes and how sheep, pigs, apples and wheat are necessary for food.</li> <li>- Students will have to think about how they want to improve and develop their land and make a budget of what they want to purchase in order to do it. They must take into account the amount of coins they have and how their choice in primary resources has conditioned the amount of each one of the different primary resources they can buy with one coin.</li> <li>- Students will have to go to the changer to exchange their coins for the primary resources they need. The changer must calculate the amount of each resource that their coin is worth according to the main primary resource they have chosen for their land. Each coin's purchasing power will</li> </ul>

Reading coins	Medieval Procedure	Time
	<p>vary greatly from resource to resource.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Once the exchange has taken place, the money changer will give the player a Purchase note with the amount of each resource that they can now draw onto their map.</li> <li>- Students can chose whether they want to draw the resource in the exact amount they purchased or to draw what they have built or what they have achieved with that resource (They may have built a series of houses, a fence, a tower, they may have planted pastures, or an orchard, etcetera.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Presentation, discussion and final thoughts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Once all the lands have been completed and the maps have been drawn, ask the students to paste them one next to the other, in order to make a continental map containing all the territories.</li> <li>- Ask the kids to come forward and present their coin, their land, and all the things that they achieved, explaining the choices they made.</li> <li>- Ask students what it is that they have learnt about what coins meant in the Middle Ages, how they were used and how they allow us to better understand everyday life in the Middle Ages.</li> </ul>	<p>30 min</p>