

History Odyssey: Middle Ages Level Two

Alternative Books and Additions



As the world changes, so does historiography. The approaches and methods used to tell the story of history are rapidly evolving to reflect a more inclusive, holistic view of world history. There are new resources, materials, and research that, even in just the past few years, have revealed how history as a subject has missed, marginalized, or distorted the past for many people and communities.

As I work on writing a new History Odyssey series, my goal is to present middle and high school students with a history education that embodies an intersectional, balanced, global experience that connects them with concepts and skills while underlining the impact the past has had on current events.

In the meantime, I've created a list of some alternative books to use with the current History Odyssey Level Two series that are more aligned with the goals mentioned above but still fit within the framework of the existing curriculum.

Thanks for choosing History Odyssey,

—Samantha Matalone Cook, MAT

Below is a list of titles from Middle Ages Level Two and the alternative books that could be read in their place or that could be added. Also included is a lesson schedule for the alternative books and additions.

The Story of Mankind by Hendrik Willem Van Loon

- ★ ***History Quest: Middle Times* by Lindsey Sodano.** History Quest, created for young children as a read-aloud, is appropriate for middle school students as an independent read.

Beowulf, A New Telling by Robert Nye

- ★ ***Beowulf: An Illustrated Edition* translated by of Seamus Heaney.** For older students who might appreciate the poetic cadence of *Beowulf*, I recommend the illustrated edition of Seamus Heaney's translation. It's the closest to reading this epic poem without learning Old English and contains photos of period artifacts.

The Story of King Arthur and His Knights by Howard Pyle

- ★ ***King Arthur* by Sidney Lanier.** Another great option, this book has color illustrations by N.C. Wyeth.

Adam of the Road by Elizabeth Janet Gray

- ★ ***The Midwife's Apprentice* by Karen Cushman.** A classic that follows a teen girl as she become an apprentice to a midwife. This book is a female-centered alternative option to *Adam of the Road*.

Castle by David Macaulay

- ★ ***Mosque and Cathedral* by David Macaulay.** *Cathedral* and *Mosque* can be read in addition to *Castle*.

One Thousand and One Arabian Nights retold by Geraldine McCaughrean

- ★ ***Tales from the Arabian Nights* by Donna Jo Napoli and Christina Balit.** An illustration-heavy that might be attractive to students on the younger end of this age group or for those who love a lot of artwork in their books.
- ★ ***The Arabian Nights* by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora A. Smith.** Another collection that is beautifully illustrated by Maxfield Parrish with more sophisticated text.

Additional books that could be added to Middle Ages Level Two

- ★ ***Anna of Byzantium* by Tracy Barrett**
- ★ ***Feathered Serpent Dark Heart of Sky: Myths of Mexico* by David Bowles**
- ★ ***Before Columbus: The Americas Before 1491* by Charles Mann.** Older or more advanced readers can read the original, *1491*, also by Charles Mann.

Reading schedule

Middle Ages Level Two Resources	Alternative and Added Books	Suggested Alternative Reading Schedule
<i>The Kingfisher History Encyclopedia</i>		The entire study guide is based on this encyclopedia, use this text as suggested.
<i>The Story of Mankind</i>	<i>History Quest: Middle Times</i> from Pandia Press	Refer to the TOC in <i>Middle Times</i> to match chapters to many of the lessons.
<i>The History Odyssey Timeline</i>		Use as suggested.
<i>The Door in the Wall</i>		Use as suggested.
<i>The Trumpeter of Krakow</i>		Use as suggested.
<i>Beowulf, A New Telling</i>	<i>Beowulf</i> translated by Seamus Heaney	Read during lesson 14.
<i>The Story of King Arthur and His Knights</i>	<i>King Arthur</i> by Sidney Lanier	Read during lesson 27.
<i>The Adventures of Robin Hood</i>		Use as suggested.
<i>Adam of the Road</i>	<i>The Midwife's Apprentice</i> by Karen Cushman	Read during lessons 41–42.
<i>Castle</i>	Add <i>Mosque</i> and <i>Cathedral</i> , also by David Macaulay	Read anytime during the course.
<i>The Canterbury Tales</i>		Use as suggested.
Additional book for Part II: Asia and Eastern Europe	<i>Anna of Byzantium</i> by Tracy Barrett	Add to Lesson 55 and either write a journal entry that Anna might have written or create a Byzantine-style drawing or painting of Anna.
<i>One Thousand and One Arabian Nights</i>	<i>Tales from the Arabian Nights</i> by Donna Jo Napoli and Christina Balit <i>The Arabian Nights</i> by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora A. Smith	Read during lessons 60.
<i>Tales from Japan</i>		Use as suggested.
Additional book for Part III: The Americas	<i>Before Columbus: The Americas Before 1491</i> by Charles Mann <i>Feathered Serpent Dark Heart of Sky: Myths of Mexico</i> by David Bowles	Read during lessons 80–86, review for discussion for lessons 98–99. If you didn't read this book in Ancients Level Two, I recommend adding it to lessons 80–86. The last 1–2 sections of the book in particular pair well with these lessons.
<i>Tales from Shakespeare</i>		Use as suggested.
<i>A Shakespeare Coloring Book</i>		Use as suggested.