

# From serf to citizen

**1** IN THE MIDDLE AGES IN ENGLAND ALL LAND WAS OWNED BY THE KING, HIS BARONS OR THE CHURCH.



THE WORK ON THE LAND WAS DONE BY SERFS.

**2** SERFS HAD FEW RIGHTS: IF A SERF WANTED TO MARRY, ...



... HE HAD TO ASK HIS OWNER'S PERMISSION.

**3** AN OWNER COULD THROW HIS SERFS INTO PRISON FOR NO REASON.



**4** BUT IT WAS THE KING WHO HAD REAL POWER. HE COULD, FOR EXAMPLE, DEMAND MONEY FROM HIS BARONS AT ANY TIME.



**5** SOME OF THE BARONS DECIDED THAT THE KING HAD TOO MUCH POWER. IN 1215 THEY DREW UP A CHARTER AND FORCED HIM TO SIGN IT. NO ONE WAS NOW ABOVE THE LAW, NOT EVEN THE KING HIMSELF!





### 1 Magna Carta

- a) You already know a bit about the Middle Ages and Magna Carta. Write down what you can remember and then check your book on page 28 and add to your notes.
- b) Look at the comic strip and find out more. Add to your notes.

### 2 Life in the Middle Ages

Use your notes from Ex. 1 to answer the questions.

- 1. What more have you found out about the life of a serf in the Middle Ages? (2 facts)

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- 2. What problem did the barons have?

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- 3. What did they do about it?

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- 4. Magna Carta was drawn up for England. Where else was it important?

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### 3 Let's listen: A 'real' copy

- a) Read the questions carefully.
  - 1. John mentions two more countries where Magna Carta has been important. Which are they?
  - 2. How did they make copies of Magna Carta in the Middle Ages?
  - 3. Why did they make so many copies? What do you think?

- b)  Listen to an interview in Lincoln, England, to find the answers. Work in a group.

## Listening text

### 3 Let's listen: A 'real' copy

- Reporter: Good afternoon: This is Susan Perry. You are listening to 'Down the lanes of England', which takes us to interesting places and people each week. Today we are in Lincoln and I'm speaking to John Sargent, who works in the museum here. Hello, John.
- John: Hello, Susan. And welcome to the museum.
- Susan: I can see lots of teenagers here, John. And they aren't all speaking English! I think I heard some Japanese! Is that usual?
- John: Oh, yes! We get lots of students and young people here, especially in the summer. They come to summer schools to improve their English: They all want to see Magna Carta, too, of course.
- Susan: What? Do they know about Magna Carta in Japan?
- John: Oh, yes! Everybody has heard of Magna Carta. It wasn't just the English who were inspired by it, you know. The French copied ideas from it and even the Indian Constitution is based partly on Magna Carta. Many see it as the mother of the US constitution and the first step in the fight for human rights. And we have one of the best copies.
- Susan: Oh! It's only a copy then!
- John: Yes, but the copy is almost as old as the real charter, which King John signed.
- Susan: Just a minute, I think some of the students here want to ask you something, John.
- John: Hi! How can I help you?
- German boy: Excuse me. We saw the 1297 copy of Magna Carta in Canberra last year. I told my girlfriend that this one here in Lincoln is older and that it's the real Magna Carta – the one that King John signed in 1215. But she doesn't believe me. She says it can't be so old!
- John: Well, you have got one thing right. It is very old. It's from 1216. But it's only a copy.
- German girl: So where can we see the real charter?
- John: Well, I'm sorry but no one can see it.
- German boy: Aw! But why not? We've come all the way from Berlin.
- John: Because if there ever was one single charter, it hasn't survived. Today you can see Magna Carta in lots of different places in England but it will always be a copy.
- German girl: Oh! So how did they make so many copies then?
- German boy: They probably used a very old photo copy machine! Ha! Ha!
- German girl: I'm sorry about my boyfriend. He's got a very strange idea of what's funny. ... So they had to write it all down again?
- John: Yes, that's right. They probably made about 50 copies of the 1215 charter. They sent them all over England, you know.
- German girl: And have they all survived?
- John: Sadly, no. A lot have been lost or destroyed in fires. But this is one of the four oldest copies.
- German girl: Well, that's good enough for me! Thank you. Bye! Come on, let's buy a poster ...
- German boy: OK. (*turning to John*) Thank you! Bye!
- Susan: Two happy customers, John?
- John: Yes! But not everybody goes away happy when I tell them the truth. They don't understand that a copy doesn't mean a photo copy. This 'copy' is really valuable.
- Susan: Oh! How valuable?
- John: Well, the last copy that was sold was from 1297 and it made over 20 million dollars.
- Susan: Wow! That's good enough for me, too, John. (*fade*) That means you've got at least three happy customers today ...

## Lösungen

Lösungsvorschläge Seite 2

Ex. 1

a) + b) *Individuelle Schülerlösungen*

Ex. 2

1. If a serf wanted to marry, he had to ask his owner's permission. An owner could throw his serfs into prison for no reason. 2. The king could demand money from them at any time. 3. They drew up a charter and forced the king to sign it. 4. In Wales and in the US.

Ex. 3

a) + b) 1. France, India. 2. They wrote everything down again. 3. They had to send them to all the important towns in England, so that everyone knew what their rights were.