

**MEDIEVAL ENGLAND  
(410-1485): RICHARD  
THE LIONHEART**



# MEDIEVAL ENGLAND (410-1485): RICHARD THE LIONHEART

## Description

Through an in-depth analysis of various primary and secondary sources, students in this lesson will identify, understand and be able to explain Richard the Lionheart's actions in the Third Crusade, how the British king's adoption of the nickname "Lionheart" helped his image, and how and why after three years of back and forth conflict Richard and Saladin finally agreed to a cease fire.

## Subjects

World History  
European History

## Grade Level

11-12

## Duration

90 minutes

## Tour Links

- Fontevraud Abbey, France
- Rouen Cathedral, France
- Westminster Palace, London
- Jaffa and Acre, Israel
- Jerusalem

## Essential Questions

- Who was King Richard I? How did he get the nickname of "Lionheart"?
- Why did Richard go on the Third Crusade in 1189? What were the results of the expedition?
- Who was Saladin? Why are he and Richard linked together in stories of the Third Crusade?

## Academic Summary

I am born in a rank which recognizes no superior but God, to whom alone I am responsible for my actions; but they are so pure and honorable that I voluntarily and cheerfully render an account of them to the whole world. The treaties I have concluded with the King of Sicily contain no infraction of the law of nations. I do not understand how I can be reproached for the conquest of Cyprus. I avenged my own injuries and those of the human race, in punishing a tyrant and dethroning an usurper; and by bestowing my conquest on a prince worthy of the throne, I have shown that I was not prompted by avarice or ambition; so much so, that the Emperor of Constantinople, who alone had any right to complain, has been wholly silent on the subject. In reference to the Duke of Austria, he ought to have avenged the insult on the spot, or long since to have forgotten it; moreover, my detention and captivity by his orders should have satisfied his revenge. I need not justify myself against the crime of having caused the assassination of the Marquis of Montferrat; he himself exonerated me from that foul charge, and had I my freedom, who would dare to accuse me of deliberate murder? My pretended correspondence with Saladin is equally unfounded; my battles and victories alone disprove the false assertion: and if I did not drive the Saracen prince from Jerusalem, blame not me, but blame the King of France, the Duke of Burgundy, the Duke of Austria himself, all of whom deserted the cause, and left me almost single-handed to war against the infidel. It is said that I was corrupted by presents from the sultan, and that I joined the crusade from the love of money; but did I not give away all the wealth I seized in capturing the Bagdad caravan, and what have I reserved out of all my conquests? Nothing, but the ring I wear on my finger. Do you, then, render justice to me; have compassion on a monarch who has experienced such unworthy treatment, and put more faith in my actions, than in the calumnies of my deadly foes.

*King Richard I's statement before the Diet of Speyer, Easter 1193*

King Richard I of England is one of the best known British monarchs of all time. Commonly known by his nickname, Richard the Lionheart, today he is seen by most Britons as a brave and noble king who stood up to infidels abroad and treachery at home. Yet, during his 10 year reign from 1189-1199, Richard spent just under six months actually in the British Isles. He did not speak English. He is even buried in France, and yet the English people still love him. Over the centuries, countless books, plays and songs have been written about his exploits and adventures. The Lionheart is even linked to many of the stories and much of the folklore surrounding Robin Hood.

Richard was born in 1157 as the third son (and fourth child) of King Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, so far down on the line of succession that he never expected to be crowned monarch. Circumstances out of his control, however, brought him to the throne. Each of his older male siblings died without heirs, and when his father Henry II died in 1189, the young knight was crowned as Richard I.

Richard, like many young noblemen and knights of the age, was deeply religious and yet seemingly flawed in character (there were many rumors about the young Richard's scandalous behavior on a number of fronts). When he became king, the young monarch swore an oath to renounce his past wickedness and to go on a crusade to recapture Jerusalem, the recently lost holy city that had fallen to Islamic forces under Saladin two years earlier. Richard's expedition to retake Jerusalem is known as the "Third Crusade."

Christian forces under Richard fought Saladin's army for three years, winning a few battles and capturing some Muslim strongholds, but they were unable to take back the city of Jerusalem itself. Eventually, with each side suffering from heavy casualties and exhaustion, Richard and Saladin signed a treaty on 02 Sep 1192 at Jaffa. The terms of the agreement left the Holy City under Muslim control, but it allowed Christian pilgrims and merchants unrestricted access to Jerusalem. The two sides also agreed to suspend hostilities for at least three years. In the end, it was a draw.

Through an in-depth analysis of various primary and secondary sources, students in this lesson will identify, understand and be able to explain Richard the Lionheart's actions in the Third Crusade, how the British king's adoption of the nickname "Lionheart" helped his image, and how and why after three years of back and forth conflict Richard and Saladin finally agreed to a cease fire.

## Objectives

1. Students will identify, analyze, understand and be able to explain King Richard I's actions in the Third Crusade.
2. Students will identify, analyze, understand and be able to explain how Richard's adoption of the nickname "Lionheart" helped his image.
3. Students will identify, analyze, understand and be able to explain why after three years of back and forth fighting in the Holy Land, Richard the Lionheart and Saladin agreed to a peace treaty stopping hostilities, leaving Jerusalem in Muslim hands and guaranteeing Christian pilgrims safe passage to the holy city.

## Procedures

### I. Anticipatory Set

- Writing / Question: Is there a difference between “crusade” and “jihad”? (5 min)
- Handouts – Copies of the primary sources and readings from the websites listed. (5 min)

### II. Body of Lesson

- Lecture / PPT – Brief overview of The Crusades and Richard the Lionheart. (20 min)
- Videos – Richard and Saladin (40 min)
- Independent Activity – Students read the primary sources and articles on Richard the Lionheart and the Third Crusade, taking notes as appropriate. (10 min)
- Suggestion: Have the students read some of these articles for homework to prepare for class discussion.
- Suggestion: Break students into groups and assign different articles to each group.
- Group Activity – Socratic Discussion: Discuss Richard the Lionheart’s actions in the Third Crusade, how the British king’s adoption of the nickname “Lionheart” helped his image, and how and why after three years of back and forth conflict Richard and Saladin finally agreed to a cease fire. (10 min)

### III. Closure

- Assessment – Essay / DBQ: Explain in detail Richard the Lionheart’s actions in the Third Crusade, how the British king’s adoption of the nickname “Lionheart” helped his image, and how and why after three years of back and forth conflict Richard and Saladin finally agreed to a cease fire.

## Extension

### **On tour: Westminster Palace - Statue of Richard the Lionheart**

While on tour in Great Britain, students will visit Westminster Palace, where they can see the famous statue of Richard the Lionheart outside the Houses of Parliament. Based on a clay model originally displayed at the Great Exhibition, an international exhibition in 1851, the statue was finished in bronze in 1856 by artist Baron Carlo Marochetti, a favorite sculptor of Queen Victoria. The statue still shows some bomb damage from an explosion during the Luftwaffe’s bombing of London during the Second World War. Along with images of St. Paul’s Cathedral standing against the Blitz, the statue became a symbol for British citizens to rally around as they stood up to the Nazi air raids.

### **On tour: Rouen Cathedral - Tomb for Richard the Lionheart’s Heart**

While on tour in France, students can visit the cathedral at Rouen. Known primarily as being connected with Joan of Arc, the cathedral also contains a tomb which contains Richard the Lionheart’s heart. His body is buried in Fontevraud Abbey (also in France). Students should be reminded that western France was under English control for many centuries, including the time of Richard’s rule. Saladin’s tomb is in Damascus, but due to the current political and social situation in Syria, students cannot visit the ancient city at this time.

## Web Links

### Lesson Plan Websites

- [www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/1191acre.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/1191acre.asp)  
The Siege and Capture of Acre, 1191 (primary source) – from the Medieval Sourcebook at Fordham University
- [www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/1191hostages.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/1191hostages.asp)  
Muslim Hostages Slain at Acre, 1191 (primary source) – from the Medieval Sourcebook at Fordham University
- [www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1192peace.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1192peace.asp)  
Richard the Lionheart Makes Peace with Saladin, 1192 (primary source) – from the Medieval Sourcebook at Fordham University
- [www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/richard\\_i\\_king.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/richard_i_king.shtml)  
Richard I (website) – from the BBC
- [www.royal.gov.uk/historyofthemonarchy/kingsandqueensofengland/theangevins/richardicoeurdelion.aspx](http://www.royal.gov.uk/historyofthemonarchy/kingsandqueensofengland/theangevins/richardicoeurdelion.aspx)  
Richard I Coeur de Lion (website) – from the official website of the British Monarchy
- [www.authorstream.com/Presentation/toheeb1-434366-the-crusades/](http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/toheeb1-434366-the-crusades/)  
The Crusades (PowerPoint)
- [www.teachingchannel.org/videos/choosing-primary-source-documents?fd=1](http://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/choosing-primary-source-documents?fd=1)  
Reading Like a Historian: Primary Source Documents (video) – great 2-minute video on how to incorporate primary sources into the Common Core and history classes. From Shilpa Duvoor of Summit Preparatory Charter High School in Redwood City, CA. Highly recommended for teachers.
- [www.youtube.com/watch?v=J59hvGrikFM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J59hvGrikFM)  
Richard the Lionheart and Saladin: Holy Warriors (video). Outstanding video by the BBC. At 90 minutes, this video is probably too long for most classes, but it is really worth it. Highly recommended for students and teachers.
- [www.youtube.com/watch?v=XSHrtAkyqxA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XSHrtAkyqxA)  
Crusades: Saladin and Richard the Lionheart (video). Part 4 of a BBC documentary on the Crusades, this 50-minute video (short enough for most classes studying the period) does a good job of explaining Richard's role in the 3rd crusade.

### Background Information

- [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard\\_I\\_of\\_England](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_I_of_England)  
Richard I of England – Wikipedia article
- [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third\\_Crusade](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Crusade)  
Third Crusade – Wikipedia article
- [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saladin](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saladin)  
Saladin – Wikipedia article
- [www.passports.com/group\\_leaders/on\\_the\\_road/the\\_united\\_kingdom/country\\_profile](http://www.passports.com/group_leaders/on_the_road/the_united_kingdom/country_profile)  
On the Road: Britain (country profile) – from Passports Educational Travel

### Other Relevant Passports Lesson Plans

- [www.passports.com/lesson\\_plans/england/medieval-britain-chaucer-canterbury-tales](http://www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/medieval-britain-chaucer-canterbury-tales)  
Medieval England – Chaucer's Canterbury Tales
- [www.passports.com/lesson\\_plans/england/medieval-britain-henry-ii-and-thomas-becket](http://www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/medieval-britain-henry-ii-and-thomas-becket)  
Medieval England – Henry II and Thomas Becket
- [www.passports.com/lesson\\_plans/england/medieval-britain-king-arthur](http://www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/medieval-britain-king-arthur)  
Medieval England – King Arthur and the Arthurian Legend
- [www.passports.com/lesson-plans/england/norman-invasion-of-1066](http://www.passports.com/lesson-plans/england/norman-invasion-of-1066)  
Medieval England – Norman Invasion of 1066
- [www.passports.com/lesson\\_plans/england/magna-carta-of-1215](http://www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/magna-carta-of-1215)  
Medieval England – Magna Carta of 1215
- [www.passports.com/lesson\\_plans/england/medieval-britain-robin-hood](http://www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/medieval-britain-robin-hood)  
Medieval England – Robin Hood

## Key Terms

- Crusades
- Jihad
- Richard the Lionheart
- Saladin

