Guilds

Guilds were a very important part of Medieval life and medieval jobs. They were bands of men and women that joined together for profit and mutual protection. Each guild revolved around a particular craft or the trade of a particular type of item. The Guilds established standards, set prices, and determined skills. A good example of this would be a merchant guild that dealt in wool.

1. What did each guild revolve around? __________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________________

2. What did guilds establish? __________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________________

Getting a job in a particular craft meant joining a guild and following the rules for craftsmanship and pricing. A young person could be given a job as an apprentice with a master craftsman. This wasn't a paid job however. It was often the case that the young persons family actually paid the master craftsman to take on the apprentice. After a period of time as an apprentice the young person could possibly be promoted to the position of journeyman. As a journeyman, he would now become an assistant to the master and get paid. He would learn the craft more fully. And eventually, if he had acquired the necessary skills, and had the money to pay his guild dues he could in turn become a master craftsman. This application to become a master craftsman often had some kind of a test where the journeyman would make something that showed he had fully mastered all aspects of the craft. This object was called a "Masterwork".

3. Identify from the text the two unique characteristics of each level of craftsmanship.

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<th>Apprentice</th>
<th>Journeyman</th>
<th>Master Craftsman</th>
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- There were basically two different types of guilds: The Merchant Guilds and the Crafts Guilds

**Merchant Guilds:** These were typically guilds of traders who were involved in the various aspects of trading items (commerce). They would typically purchase rights to trade from the king, would establish monopolies and set tolls and taxes on outsiders. Wool was one of the most vibrant types of merchant and a Merchant Wool Guild of a city or town would make rules that prevented outsiders from trading in wool. Some of the tasks of a merchant guild of this type would be to set the standards for weight of wool and the standards for price.

4. What would merchant guilds typically do?
   ______________________________________________________________________________________

**Craft Guilds:** This type of guild is more well known in modern times and it is what we think of when we think of guilds. Craftsmen banded together to set prices and standards for their craft. They could be stone masons, blacksmiths, cooper or any of a wide variety of crafts where things were made.

5. Which skills are included in craft guilds? Why did they band together?
   ______________________________________________________________________________________