



## Educational Guide



### *Inside:*

*Discussion Questions*

*Activity: Did She Rule?*

*Activity: How reliable can they be?*

*Activity: Who's your heroine?*

*Craft: Concertina Book*

*Craft: Inspiration Board*

## *Heroines Quilt V: From Dark to Light*

*Heroines Quilt V* explores the lives of girls in the Medieval and Renaissance periods. The concept of childhood, and more specifically girlhood, was very different from how we think of it today.

Use this education guide to interact with the exhibit and gain a deeper understanding of how girls lived during the Medieval and Renaissance periods, and reflect on why some are 'heroines' while other girls and women remain silenced.

Activities in this guide are aligned to U.S. and/or U.K. educational standards. They are designed to be used by students and teachers as school lessons or enrichment opportunities.

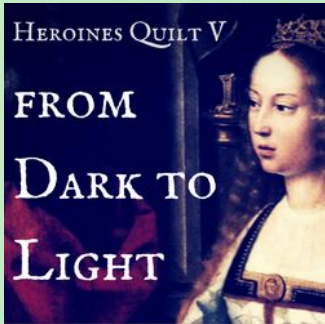


## Discussion Questions

*Students can answer the following questions on their own or discuss in groups.*

1. Select a heroine and compare your life to hers. What is similar or different? Why? What challenges did she face that you do not, and vice versa?
2. Compare and contrast the lives of young girls in two regions: Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. What do we know about one that we don't know about the other? Why is this?
3. How have our impressions of Medieval and Renaissance heroines shaped our understanding of women today?
4. The title of the exhibit is "From Dark to Light." Why is this? Do you see a difference in the lives of Medieval heroines and Renaissance heroines? Do you think this is an accurate metaphor?
5. Scholars often deny that Medieval/Renaissance childhood and childhood today are similar. Do you think this is true? Why or why not?

## Activity: How Did She Rule?



### Educational Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9

Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

Being a female member of the ruling class was not easy during the Medieval and Renaissance, but it was especially hard when women were placed in charge of their kingdoms. In France, the Holy Roman Empire and England, there were different traditions through which women could gain power. In some of these countries, women came into power through the absence of male authority or heirs, while in others it was nearly impossible for women to attain the highest political power.

*Using the information from our exhibit and your own research, investigate the lives of the following women:*

- Anne de Beaujeu
- Margaret of Austria
- Empress Matilda

*Once you have investigated the lives of the women above, answer the following questions:*

- Did she rule?
- How long did she rule?
- Why did she rule?
- Why did not she rule?

*Finally, think about modern female rulers, such as Queen Elizabeth II, and contrast the lives of the women above.*

*How have attitudes towards female rulers changed since the Medieval and Renaissance?*

*What avenues do women have to gain power today, and how are these avenues related to their historical counterparts?*

*What does this say about how our societies have come to view female rulers and their ability to reign?*

# Sources: How reliable can they be?

An important part of a historian's work is making sure that the sources they use are reliable. Historians do this by analysing the sources, and comparing them to similar sources. The more sources that appear to corroborate each other, the more reliable the source becomes.

For a long time, Medieval Childhood has been considered a dead subject with no evidence to support it. The introduction of Medieval Childhood studies in the 1960s has led us to think differently. This is primarily because of the sources that historians have found.

There are many different forms of information for historians to extract evidence from, so how do we know whether those sources are reliable?

## Activity 1:

*First, rank the following types of sources in terms of how reliable you think they are. Which is the most and least reliable? Why or why not? How can you use these sources to verify each other?*

- Archaeology
- Art
- Hagiography (biographies of saints)
- Coroner's inquests
- Letters
- Laws
- Training Manuals (published as books)

## Activity 2:

*Using the information from our exhibit and your own research, find an example of three types of sources and use them to consider the following:*

- When was this source made?
- Who made this source?
- What does this source tell you?
- Why did the person make this source?
- Is this source supported or opposed by any other sources you have gathered?
- What is missing from your sources?

Compare and contrast these sources to determine their reliability. What would you look for to make them more reliable?



## Educational Standards

### UK educational standards:

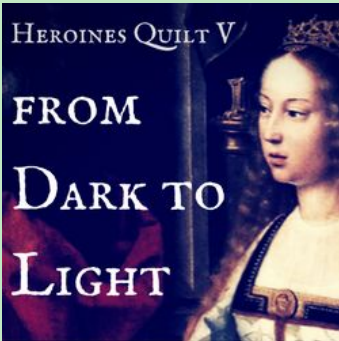
To understand how different types of historical sources are used rigorously to make historical claims and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed.

To gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts.

### US Common Core standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

# Activity: Who's your heroine?



## Educational

### Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.  
9-10.2.b

Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.  
9-10.6

Use technology, including the internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

Is there a woman or girl in history that you strongly admire? Is she your heroine? In this activity, choose your own heroine to research and write about!

The following questions may help you:

- Who is she? Where was she born, educated, and lived?
- What did she do that makes her remarkable to you? Was it a skill or achievement, or just the way she lived her life and the things she believed in?
- What challenges did she face, and how?
- Is there a specific quote of hers that you love? Why? What makes it inspirational?

## **In-Class Activity: Compare Heroines**

Partner with another member of your class. Read each other's heroine stories, and then discuss how your heroines are similar and different.

## **In-Class Activity: Make a Tribute Collage**

What do you think inspired your heroine? Create an inspiration board using poster board, magazines, scissors, and glue of all the things that your heroine was inspired by or accomplished during her life. Hang it in class to inspire others and teach them about your heroine.

## **Bonus: Submit to Girl Museum!**

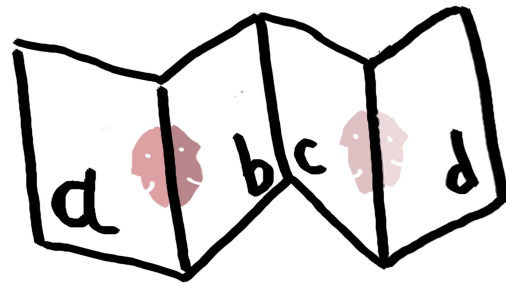
Every even year, Girl Museum launches a new quilt in our *Heroines* series. Using the activity above, submit an entry on your heroine, along with a picture, to [share@girlmuseum.org](mailto:share@girlmuseum.org) - and your entry will be featured in our next quilt!

# Craft: Concertina Book

— Cut along this line

... Fold along this line

This is your very first concertina (also called “accordion”) book! Cut and fold it according to the lines, then color it. It should look like this:



You can use the extra space to draw objects that remind you of the heroines and important moments in their stories.

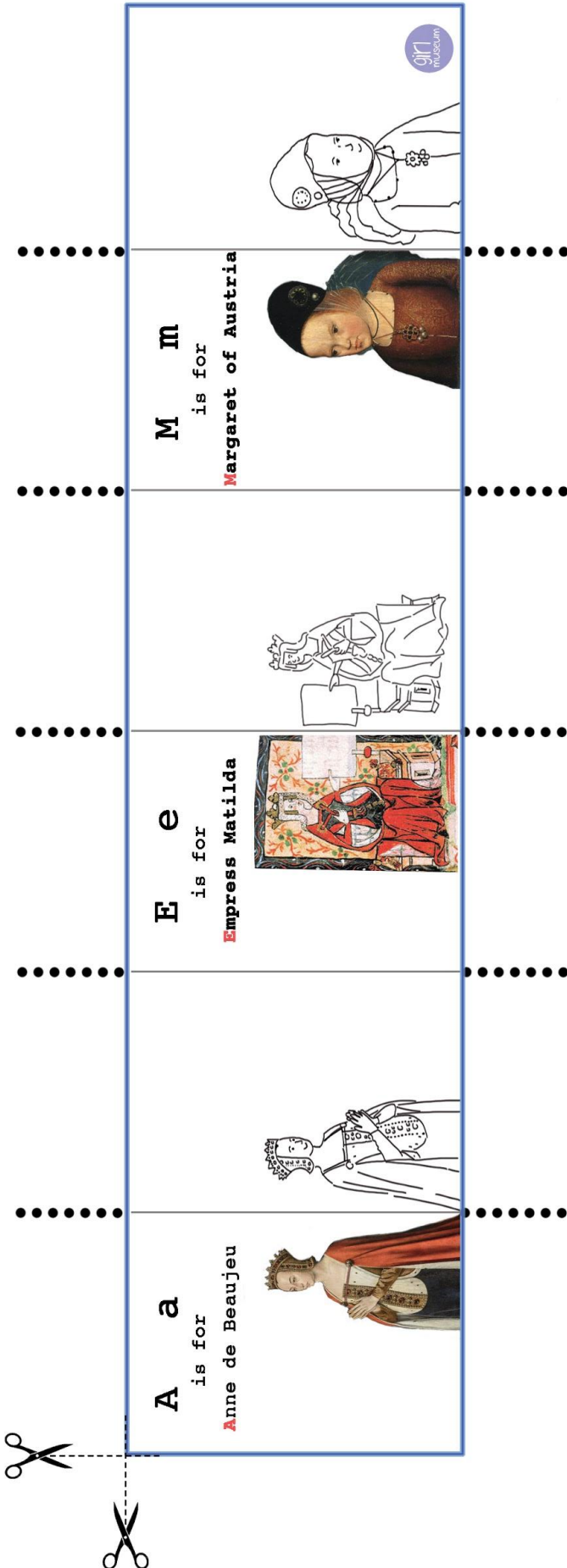
Use your book to study and tell the stories of these three heroines to others.

## Educational Standards

National Core Art Standards Anchor Standard 10

Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

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# Girl Museum

We are the first and only online museum dedicated to girls.

We exhibit, educate, and raise awareness about the unique experience of being born and growing up female around the world in the past and present.

As a community of passionate and creative individuals, we acknowledge and advocate for girls as forces for collective responsibility and change in the global context, not as victims and consumers.

We are a registered 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization.

Learn more and get involved at [www.GirlMuseum.org](http://www.GirlMuseum.org)



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## Craft: Inspiration Board

### Educational

### Standards

National Core Art  
Standards Anchor  
Standard 10

Synthesize and relate  
knowledge and personal  
experiences to make art.

Who or what inspires you?

Choose people or things that inspire you the most - they could be people, scenes, causes, or even ideas! Using magazines, printed pictures, or other items, create a pin-board or poster of all the things that inspire you.

Be as creative as you want with markers, words, pictures, and more. Focus on people who inspire you, things you want to accomplish, and causes you support. When you are done, hang your board somewhere you will see it often.

You could also create a board on Pinterest to share your inspirations with the world!

