

Hands-On History Fun

Create- A-Craft:

Twisted Yarn Belt

If you had lived in Europe during the late Middle Ages, you would have seen something astonishing and new: Trading Fairs! Merchants from many places came to an area of France known as Champagne to sell wonderful items from around the world. One of the most exciting products for the visitors at the fair was the beautiful fabric being created in Flanders (in modern day Belgium). Try your hand at creating this great belt and decide whether you would have been able to sell it at the fair.

You will need, for each belt maker: 4 strands of yarn, each 9 feet long (the thicker and knobbier the better!); scissors

Holding all four strands of yarn together, tie a knot at each end. You will need two people

to work together for the next part. Have each person hold one knot and then stand far enough apart that the yarn is straight and fairly taut. Each person then begins turning his or her end of the yarn clockwise, which will create twists in the yarn. Keep turning the yarn until it starts to "kink" or until no more twists can be put into the yarn.

Now, holding the yarn straight, have one person give his or her knot to the other person. Hold those two knots together, let go of the rest of the yarn, and watch the two parts wind around each other! If there are any loops, just smooth them out toward an end. Tie a knot around each end to secure the twist. One end will already have loose "fringe." Using the scissors, cut the loops on the other end to have fringe on both ends.

Fun Food to Fix:

Chocolate "Moose" (Normally spelled "mousse")

During the time period of the late Middle Ages, the pope moved his "court" from Rome to the south of France. The city he lived in is called "Avignon" (pronounced "av-een-yon").

French cooking is some of the most wonderful in the world. Here is a simplified-for-children recipe for one of the most beloved French desserts.

You will need: 2 packages instant chocolate pudding; 2 cups milk; 1

teaspoon vanilla; 1 cup whipping cream (or whipped topping, such as Cool Whip, if you prefer)

Make the pudding according to the directions on the package. Add the vanilla. Let the pudding set for five to ten minutes. Beat the cream until it is stiff (CAUTION: If you beat cream TOO long, it turns to butter!). Carefully stir the whipped cream into the chocolate pudding until it is well-blended. If you don't eat the "moose" immediately, refrigerate it until just before serving. Oo-la-la!