Crime and Punishment: Unit 1 - Medieval England (1000-1500)

Term	Definition
1. Poaching	Poorer people, across England used to steal animals for food. These animals would include rabbits and fish. It was hated by landowners.
2. Social crime	Social crimes were crimes that were seen as acceptable by the majority of people. For example, poaching was a social crime as most people thought that it was okay.
3. Norman conquest	In 1066 William the Conqueror became the new King of England. The years after this are known as the Norman Conquest as the Normans took control of the Saxon people.
4. Forest Laws	These laws, brought in by William, were much hated. They forbid people from hunting on private land.
5. Tithings	TIthings were a group of men, usually ten, who would be responsible for one another. If one of them broke a rule the other nine were were expected to bring him to justice.
6. Hue and Cry	If someone saw a crime taking place they were expected to raise the hue and cry. The person would shout, everyone would be expected to give up whatever they were doing and join the hunt for the criminal.
7. Parish constable	The Parish constable was a local official expected to enforce law and order. They took on the work part-time, alongside their other work.
8. Corporal punishment	If someone was sentenced to be harmed, but not killed, then this was corporal punishment. This could include the cutting off of a body part, lashing or being put into stocks.
9. Capital punishment	Capital punishment was the death sentence. In Medieval England most crimes carried the death penalty.
10. Saxon Wergild	The Saxons had a system of fines that a person would pay to the family of the person they committed the offence again. It increased dependant on both the body part injured and power of the person hurt.
11. Sanctuary	If someone didn't feel they were likely to get justice they could go to a Church to claim sanctuary. Here they were safe and would be tried in the more lenient Church courts.
12. Benefit of the Clergy	People who could read the 'neck verse' and were Church goers could claim the benefit of the clergy, the right to be tried in the Church courts.
13. Trial by Ordeal	If guilt wasn't easy to prove, either way, judgement was left to God. Trials could include putting your hands into burning water to see how the wound healed.