**Document C: Abbey of Xanten Records (Modified)**

*The following document is from the yearly records of the Abbey of Xanten, a city in modern day Germany. An abbey is a place where Catholic monks and nuns live. The document describes Europe’s troubles in the mid ninth century. It focuses on invasions by heathens, or non-Christian barbarian tribes. Specifically, it mentions the Vikings, or “Northmen,” and Saracens, Arab tribes. Most of the names mentioned are cities or areas in Germany. Gaul is basically modern day France, and Christendom is the Christian part of Europe.*

845 Twice in Worms there was an earthquake. In the same year the heathen broke in upon the Christians at many points, but more than twelve thousand of them died. Another party of invaders devastated Gaul, and more than six hundred of them died.

846 According to their custom, the Northmen plundered eastern and western Frisia and burned down the town of Dordrecht, with two other villages, before the eyes of Lothair [The Emperor]. He was in the castle of Nimwegen but could not punish the crime. The Northmen returned to their own country with many men and goods.

At this same time the Saracens killed all the Christians whom they found outside the walls of Rome. They also carried men and women away prisoners. Their crimes from day to day bring sorrow to Christians.

849 The heathen from the North caused trouble in Christendom as usual and grew greater in strength, but it is revolting to say more of this matter.

853 A great famine in Saxony so that many were forced to live on horse meat.

Source: Modified excerpt from the “Annals of Xanten,” probably written by the abbey’s monks in the middle of the 9th century.

**Document D: Medieval Economic Laws (Modified)**

*The excerpts below come from different laws of the late 8th and early 9th centuries defining the worth of currency, regulating the exchange of currency, and establishing penalties for people breaking these laws. The first two come from what is today part of France and the third from what is now part of Germany.*

**Capitulary (Law) of Aix-la-Chapelle on the Value of Commodities, 797.**

C.11. Be it noted how much the solidi (unit of currency) of the Saxons ought to be worth. It should be worth a young ox. One solidus should also be worth forty bushels of oats and fifteen bushels of rye. For those who live near to us, 1 solidi should be worth 1/2 sigla of honey. For people who live in the north, 1 solidi should be worth 2 sigla of honey.

**Capitulary of Aix-la-Chapelle Concerning Adulterers of Money, 817.**

C.19. Concerning false money, we have ordered that he who has been proved to have made it shall have his hand cut off. And he who does not obey this, if he is free, shall pay sixty solidi; if he be serf, let him have sixty lashes.

**Capitulary of Frankfort on the Legality of Coinage, 794.**

C.5. In all places, in all states, and in all markets, the new denarii shall be exchanged as money and be received by all . . . If any one refuses to negotiate a purchase or a sale, they can bring the case before the king. They can do this only if they are a free man. But if they are servile and they own a business, let them lose the business, or be stripped any publicly beaten in the presence of people. However, if he refuses to use the money for purchase or sale because he was ordered by his master, then the master shall pay 15 solidi.

Source: 8th Century Economic Laws, from: J. P. Migne, ed., Patrologiae Cursus Completus, (Paris, 1862), Vols. XCVI, p. 1518, XCVII, pp. 194, 202, 287, reprinted in Roy C. Cave & Herbert H. Coulson, A Source Book for Medieval Economic History, (1965) 131-132.

Guiding Questions

**Round Two**

**Document C:** Abbey Records

1. When was this document written? By whom?

2. What kind of document is it? What do you think the purpose was for writing it?

3. Which textbook account (A or B) does this document corroborate, or more clearly

match, with? How and Why?

4. Do you think it is a reliable piece of evidence? Why or Why not?

**Document D:** Medieval Economic Laws

1. When and where were these laws written?

2. What was the purpose of these laws?

3. Compare this document to textbook A. Do you think these laws reflect how the

textbook describes life in the Middle Ages? Why or why not?

**Claims Organizer Was the time period between 400 AD and 1400 AD a “Dark Age” for Europe? Was this a time of cultural decay and decline?**

**Second Claim**

**List 2-3 pieces of evidence from these documents that support your claim**

**1)**

**2)**

**3)**