

Answer Key--Medieval Crime and Punishment: Fact or Fiction

Predict whether each of the following statements about Medieval crime and punishment is true or false.

During the Middle Ages...	True or False?
Judges usually decided very quickly whether someone was guilty or innocent.	True
Common criminals were regularly beheaded in the public square. Nobles who committed treason were beheaded privately at the castle.	False
There was no professional police force.	True
Thieves were punished by having their hands cut off. Cutting off a body part was usually only a threat not a punishment.	False
A body-stretching device called the rack was commonly used as a punishment. The rack was mostly used to torture religious opponents beginning in the 1500s (end of the Middle Ages).	False
Banishment was a common punishment.	True
Criminals could avoid punishment by seeking sanctuary in a church.	True
Many women were accused of being witches and were burned at the stake. During the Reformation (after the Middle Ages) many women were accused of being witches and mostly killed by hanging.	False

Then read Medieval Torture's 10 Biggest Myths <https://www.livescience.com/11338-medieval-torture-10-biggest-myths.html> to see which of the statements are fact and which are fiction. If a statement is not accurate, revise it to make it true.