Medieval Romance

A tale of adventure with knights & ladies who act out of love or religious faith or the desire for adventure. Told in verse or prose following a loose pattern of the quest. Hero encounters numerous adventures perhaps unrelated to the original quest.

Elements of a Medieval Romance:
- faraway settings
- courtly love
- noble heroes
- daring deeds
- supernatural events
- chivalry
- fantasy
- lighthearted tone
- quest

Famous Medieval Romances:

Author  Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (verse)
Sir Thomas Malory’s Le Morte d’ Arthur (prose)

verse=poem-like
prose=not a poem

Arthurian Legend

Tales of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.
Courtly Love:

An important element of medieval romances, is a love (which is supposed to be painful and full of crying and sighing and loss of appetite and just being pitiful—oh and by the way, there may not be anything “physical” about it) between a knight (who is supposed to be so devoted to this chick that he drops everything to do whatever she wants) and his lady (who is supposed to be some perfect female worthy of unending devotion and praise---oh, and by the way she’s probably already married to some other guy).

De Arte Honeste Amandi [The Art of Courtly Love], Book Two: On the Rules of Love
1. Marriage is no real excuse for not loving.
2. He who is not jealous cannot love.
3. No one can be bound by a double love.
4. It is well known that love is always increasing or decreasing.
5. That which a lover takes against his will of his beloved has no relish.
6. Boys do not love until they arrive at the age of maturity.
7. When one lover dies, a widowhood of two years is required of the survivor.
8. No one should be deprived of love without the very best of reasons.
9. No one can love unless he is impelled by the persuasion of love.
10. Love is always a stranger in the home of avarice.
11. It is not proper to love any woman whom one should be ashamed to seek to marry.
12. A true lover does not desire to embrace in love anyone except his beloved.
13. When made public love rarely endures.
14. The easy attainment of love makes it of little value; difficulty of attainment makes it prized.
15. Every lover regularly turns pale in the presence of his beloved.
16. When a lover suddenly catches sight of his beloved his heart palpitates.
17. A new love puts to flight an old one.
18. Good character alone makes any man worthy of love.
19. If love diminishes, it quickly fails and rarely revives.
20. A man in love is always apprehensive.
21. Real jealousy always increases the feeling of love.
22. Jealousy, and therefore love, are increased when one suspects his beloved.
23. He whom the thought of love vexes, eats and sleeps very little.
24. Every act of a lover ends with in the thought of his beloved.
25. A true lover considers nothing good except what he thinks will please his beloved.
26. Love can deny nothing to love.
27. A lover can never have enough of the solaces of his beloved.
28. A slight presumption causes a lover to suspect his beloved.
29. A man who is vexed by too much passion usually does not love.
30. A true lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved.
31. Nothing forbids one woman being loved by two men or one man by two women.

http://teacherweb.com/OH/WatkinsMemorialHighSchool/MrsWhitson/TherulesofCourtlylove.pdf
Code of Chivalry:

The Knight’s Code of Chivalry and the vows of Knighthood The Knight’s Code of Chivalry described in the Song of Roland and an excellent representation of the Knight’s Codes of Chivalry are as follows:

- To fear God and maintain His Church
- To serve the liege lord in valour and faith
- To protect the weak and defenseless
- To give succor to widows and orphans
- To refrain from the wanton giving of offence
- To live by honor and for glory
- To despise pecuniary reward
- To fight for the welfare of all
- To obey those placed in authority
- To guard the honor of fellow knights
- To eschew unfairness, meanness and deceit
- To keep faith
- At all times to speak the truth
- To persevere to the end in any enterprise begun
- To respect the honor of women
- Never to refuse a challenge from an equal
- Never to turn the back upon a foe

Knight’s Code of Chivalry described by the Duke of Burgandy. The chivalric virtues of the Knights Code of Chivalry were described in the 14th Century by the Duke of Burgandy. The words he chose to use to describe the virtues that should be exhibited in the Knights Code of Chivalry were as follows:

- Faith
- Charity
- Justice
- Sagacity
- Prudence
- Temperance
- Resolution
- Truth
- Liberality
- Diligence
- Hope
- Valour

http://www.middle-ages.org.uk/knights-code-of-chivalry.htm

How to write about what you read:

- Make a clear statement (thesis)
- Explain what you mean with reasons
- Support from text(s) with citations
- Organize so reader can follow
- Say something important or don’t say it at all
Question---How is the code of chivalry displayed in “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight”?  

• To serve the liege lord in valour and faith  

Possible short answer:  

In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the code of chivalry is displayed by Sir Gawain when he serves his liege lord with valor and faith. Sir Gawain willingly risks his life by accepting the Green Knight’s challenge for King Arthur by saying, “I think it unseemly...that challenges such as this churl has chosen to offer be met by Your Majesty...let it fall to me” (214).  

What could you do to expand the above answer?  
• add the author’s name and explain something about the author  
• give background information about the text  
• connect to important historic facts  
• explain more about what chivalry is  
• explain more about what a liege lord is and how a knight is supposed to serve him  
• Tell more from the story using any applicable literary element(s)  
• Find other instances when Sir Gawain shows service to Arthur with valor and faith and report about those.  
• Find other examples of how Sir Gawain is a chivalrous knight.  
• Find other quotes you can use to prove your point.  
• Sum up what you’re saying with a conclusion  
• Support with research from other texts.
Question: How is Sir Gawain’s chivalry tested?

- To always say the truth.

In “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight” Sir Gawain’s chivalry is tested when the Green Knight sets up a test to see if Sir Gawain always tells the truth. The Green Knight asks Sir Gawain to report to him about what the Green Knight’s lady gives Gawain each day. For 2 days Gawain is completely truthful, but when the lady offers him the opportunity to be protected from death, Gawain accepts the enchanted sash and honors the lady’s wishes to keep it a secret from the Green Knight.