

## Discovering Medieval Manuscripts

Look at the book in front of you. One at a time, you may touch it with clean hands and turn the pages, but please do not lift it off its support.

Examine the book thoroughly, and answer the following questions:

1. How big is the book?
  - Is this book easily moved from place to place? How many people do you think could comfortably read it at once?
2. How is the text laid out (large/small, dense/generous, etc.)? What is the proportion of text to empty space on each page?
3. Is the hand easy or difficult to read? Can you make out any letters?
  - Can you tell what language it's written in?
  - How many different hands can you see? Has anyone written corrections, or notes in the margins?
4. Are there any paintings or drawings (illumination) in the book? How much? Of what quality?
  - Is there any gold in the book, either in the text or the illuminations?
5. Is the book itself in good condition?
  - Are the pages clean, or worn?
  - Does the binding look new or old? Is it worn or fragile, or is it fresh and strong?

Based on what you have seen, answer these questions:

*Who do you think this book was made for?*

*What kind of text do you think this book contains? What function do you think it served?*

*What questions does this book raise for you?*