

LEEDS CASTLE'S FROM CAVE TO CASTLE



WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

This one day workshop is designed for children at all levels of Key Stage 2 learning. The workshop covers a range of sections within the History and English areas of the National Curriculum. It also looks at some significant historical events and places in the locality.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The workshop focuses on the history of Britain from the Hunter Gatherer period to 1066 in the form of a drama production, performed by the children. It covers the chronology and timeline requirements of the History curriculum and the listening, speaking and drama requirements of the English curriculum.

WORKSHOP SESSION

The one hour session tells the story of the South East area of Britain using characters that were significant to its history. From the time of the Ice Age until the building of the Castle, the children will learn, in a fun and imaginative way, about how man and the land developed

All of the class will be involved in the story; it is essential that you assign children to their characters before the day. This is important as you will know your class and each child's aptitude for role-play - it also saves a lot of time on the day.

Simple costumes and props will be available for each group to dress up as the main characters in the story.

The session will end with a brief look at the development of Leeds Castle after 1066.

TIMETABLE OF THE DAY

We are an inclusive venue and can accommodate groups of up to 100 children. The timetable you follow will depend upon the size of your group.

The timings shown are approximate and can vary depending on how the workshop and tours progress. We are able to be flexible and the Education Leaders will consult with you on the day if there are particular circumstances or considerations.

Timetable 1 - For group size 40 and below

WHOLE GROUP	
10.00 am	Coach to drive to Ticket Office where you will be met by your Education Leader.
10.15 am	Directed to the Education Centre by staff
10.30 am	Workshop session
11.30 am	Lunch & Free Time
12.45 pm	Guided Tour of the Castle
1.30 pm	Free time

Timetable 2 - For group size 41 – 75

GROUP A		GROUP B	
10.00 am	Coach to drive to Ticket Office where you will be met by your Education Leader.		
10.15 am	Directed to the Education Centre by staff		
10.30 am	Workshop session	10.45 am	Guided tour of Castle
11.30 am	Lunch	11.30 am	Lunch & free time
12.45 pm	Guided tour of Castle	12.30 pm	Workshop session (Ensure that toilets are used beforehand)
1.30pm	Free time	1.30pm	Free time

TIMETABLE OF THE DAY

Timetable 3 - For group size 76 – 100

GROUP A		GROUP B		GROUP C	
10.00 am	Coach to drive to Ticket Office where you will be met by your Education Leader.				
10.30 am	Arrive at Education Centre and workshop session	10.30 am	Free time & snack	10.45 am	Self-guided Castle tour
11.30 am	Self-guided Castle tour	11.45 am	Workshop session (Please arrive by 11:40 and ensure that toilets are used beforehand)	11.30am	Free Time & Lunch
12.30 pm	Lunch & free time	12.45 pm	Lunch & Self-guided Castle tour	1.00pm	Workshop session (Please arrive by 12.55 and ensure that toilets are used beforehand)

Cast List

Please nominate pupils to play the different characters in the story before attending the workshop. There will be enough costumes for every pupil to participate. Remember to bring this list with you on the day!

Main Characters	Pupil Name
Narrator (good level of reading required)	
Archaeologist	
Ig	
Ug	
Og (good level required)	
Iza (good level required)	
Mud (good level required)	
Augustus	
Claudius	
Vortigern	
Hengist	
Cuthbert	
Hilda	



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Pleistocene Geological Epoch (Ice Age).

During the last Ice Age, much of Britain was covered in a thick blanket of snow and ice and large areas were uninhabitable. As the glaciers melted, human settlers began to move into these areas. The landscape would have been cold and icy with few trees; but there was enough food for the herds of reindeer and elk which lived there. The first groups of settlers would have survived mainly by hunting these wild animals and gathering the few edible plants. It took a long while for the first early settlers to make their mark.

Paleolithic

The Palaeolithic (or Old Stone Age) in Britain spans a period of approximately 600,000 years. The Palaeolithic is traditionally considered to consist of three main periods: a Lower, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic. Currently the earliest evidence of occupation in Britain during the Lower Palaeolithic dates to at least 700,000 years ago; it was during this period that the Hunter Gatherers began to roam the inhabitable areas.

Mesolithic

The Mesolithic (or Middle Stone Age) brought higher temperatures, than even today. The warmer climate changed the environment to one of pine, birch and alder forest; this less open landscape was less conducive to the large herds of reindeer and wild horse that had previously sustained humans. Those animals were replaced in people's diets by pig and free-ranging animals such as elk, red deer, roe deer, and wild boar, which would have required different hunting techniques.

Tools changed to incorporate barbs which could snag the flesh of an animal, making it harder for it to escape alive. The dog was domesticated because of its benefits during hunting, and the wetland environments created by the warmer weather provided a rich source of fish and game. It is likely that these environmental changes were accompanied by social changes.

Mesolithic Britons changed over time from nomadic to seasonal occupation or, in some cases, permanent occupation.

Neolithic

The Neolithic period (or Late Stone Age) brought slow changes in life in England. As well as hunting and gathering, people began to plant crops and to domesticate animals. It took a long time for these early farming techniques to become the main source of food, and the sea in particular remained a vital source of nourishment. This slow growth of farming led to forests being cleared more permanently to allow animals to graze and crops to be planted. Copper was smelted ("melted" out of ore by heating it in a fire), it was used, along with silver and gold, mostly for ornamental purposes.

Tools continued to be mainly made of flint and other rocks, though their shape changed. Stone axes appear to have been particularly important. As well as having a practical use for clearing forests they may also have had a religious purpose. In some areas, where such axes have been found, they may have been deliberately buried as presents for the gods.



Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age

In the late Neolithic and Bronze Age there was a period of sudden change. New types of pottery were introduced, and were often used to contain the burnt remains of cremations, which increasingly became an important way of burying the dead.

For the first time bronze tools began to be used. In the late Neolithic and early Bronze Age farming became increasingly important. In some areas the land also had to be cleared of large stones to allow ploughing. For the first time the boundaries of fields can be seen. These fields often surrounded small settlements made up of groups of round huts. In many upland areas the circular stone foundations of these huts can still be seen.

Bronze Age

Bronze tools and weapons were used during this “age” (alongside still-useful stone and copper). Although the Bronze Age came before the Iron Age, bronze is actually superior to iron in many ways, eg it is less brittle, has a lower casting temperature, it resists corrosion and rust, and it is stronger. But, iron implements can be sharpened while bronze weapons had to be melted and remoulded. The tin that was needed to make the bronze became hard to find. Both copper and tin are relatively common, but they are rarely found in the same area, so, the ability to trade became important. It was during the Bronze Age that Stonehenge was completed.

Iron Age

Iron tools began to replace bronze tools from around 1000BC, though they did not become common until about 500BC, but many other aspects of life remained remarkably similar to earlier times.

People continued to grow crops and farm cattle and sheep; near the coast seafood was probably also an important part of the daily diet. They also still used the same kind of simple circular house. In lowland areas these would probably have had walls made from wood and wattle and daub, but in the uplands the walls were made from turf and stone. In the Bronze Age, the huts were unenclosed, but in the Iron Age many settlements had earth banks and ditches built round them. Wooden palisades also surrounded many farmsteads.

Celts

Before the Romans invaded, Celts lived in Britain. There were lots of different tribes ruled by kings or chiefs. Chiefs often fought one another. A chief would lead his warriors into battle in chariots pulled by horses. For defence against enemies, they built forts on hilltops. These hill-forts had earth banks and wooden walls.

In Celtic Britain there were no towns. Most people were farmers living in villages. They made round houses from wood and mud, with thatched roofs. There were no roads. People travelled by boat or along muddy paths. Some British Celts crossed the sea to trade with other Celts in the Roman Empire.

Romans

In AD43 the Romans under Emperor Claudius invaded Britain. Two previous attempts by Julius Caesar had failed but this time the Romans conquered the southern half of Britain and made it part of the Roman Empire. By the 5th century A.D. barbarian tribes were attacking other parts of the Roman Empire. Emperor Honorius decided that the Roman legions in Britain were needed elsewhere. He sent a letter to the people of Britain telling them the soldiers had to leave. They must fight the Anglo-Saxons and invaders on their own.

Anglo Saxons

The last Roman soldiers left Britain in AD 410, and then new people came in ships across the North Sea. Historians call them Anglo-Saxons. The new settlers were a mixture of people from north Germany, Denmark and northern Holland. Most were Saxons, Angles and Jutes.

When the Anglo-Saxons arrived in Britain, most kept clear of Roman towns. They preferred to live in small villages. However, warrior chiefs knew that a walled city made a good fortress. So some Roman towns, like London, were re-settled.

By around AD600 there were five important Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. They were Northumbria, Mercia, Wessex, Kent and East Anglia. From time to time, the strongest king would claim to be 'Bretwalda' - which meant ruler of all Britain.

Great Anglo-Saxon kings included Offa of Mercia (who built Offa's Dyke) and Edwin of Northumbria (who founded Edinburgh or 'Edwin's burh'). But the most famous of all is Alfred, the only king in British history to be called 'Great'.

The Vikings

The first recorded Viking raids in Britain were in the year 789 AD when the Saxons of northern England were attacked by three longships from Denmark. The Viking raiders stole, killed and burned villages. During the following years, the raids grew larger and more widespread and there were many violent raids all over the east coast of Britain. The Vikings, however, did not settle in the South East of England.

1066 and Beyond

It was the Vikings (Norsemen) of Normandy who finally conquered England in 1066 and changed British history for ever.

The manor of Leeds was a possession of the Saxon royal family, and it was likely that there was a wooden castle on the site at that time. The first stone castle however was built by a Norman, Robert de Crevecoeur in 1119. It has had many additions, repairs, rebuilding and refurbishment over the centuries but remains 'the loveliest castle in the whole world'.

Following the workshop session, the 3 minute digital film, on display in the Gatehouse will be shown on a screen, for the children to understand how Leeds Castle was built, lived in and adapted over the centuries.



Follow Up Ideas for the Classroom

Storytelling & Drama

- With the children sitting in a circle, start to retell the story of Leeds Castle. There are many variations to this idea. You could specify that each child adds the character, or just adds one sentence. You could go round the circle, or have a soft ball or object that could be thrown from child to child to continue.
- Ask the children to choose one of the historical characters and use mime to act the character to the rest of the class. Can they convey by movement and expression alone who they have chosen to be?
- Divide the children into pairs or small groups. Using one of the historical characters, ask them to devise a TV interview to tell the story of their time at Leeds Castle. They will need to think about the interviewer's questions as well as the answers from the character. This could be recorded, or performed in front of the class.
- Older children could choose a character and turn their story into a modern day version, performing in groups.

Finding Out

- Using available informational sources such as books and the internet, encourage the children to find further facts about the characters associated with Leeds Castle.
- Encourage research into the other important people connected with Leeds Castle, other than the ten owners we have already learnt about.
- Encourage the children to think about what life was like for the people in the castle during any one of the character's ownership.
- Encourage research into what life was like for ordinary people, like themselves. Did all children go to school at the time of the Tudors reign?

Writing

- A group of children could work together to design a comic strip, based on one of the incidents from the story of Leeds Castle e.g. the arrival of Henry VIII at the castle, or William I being crowned in Westminster. This will involve deciding how many frames they will need and how they can put the dialogue into its simplest form.
- Provide the children with a crossword or word search grid, and ask them to devise their own puzzle, using words connected with the castle and its owners.
- Either alone, or in groups, choose one of the characters and write a newspaper headline and article about him or her.

Art & Design

- Each of the owners of Leeds Castle had their own coat of arms. Provide a shield template and get the children to design their own coat of arms.
- The children could make puppets of the characters they have learnt about.
- Ask each child to draw up his/her family tree or a timeline of their own house or school.
- Ask the children to make a model of Leeds Castle. This could be a simple castle shape or an advanced model of the castle complete with the moat and other buildings, depending on ages and abilities.

