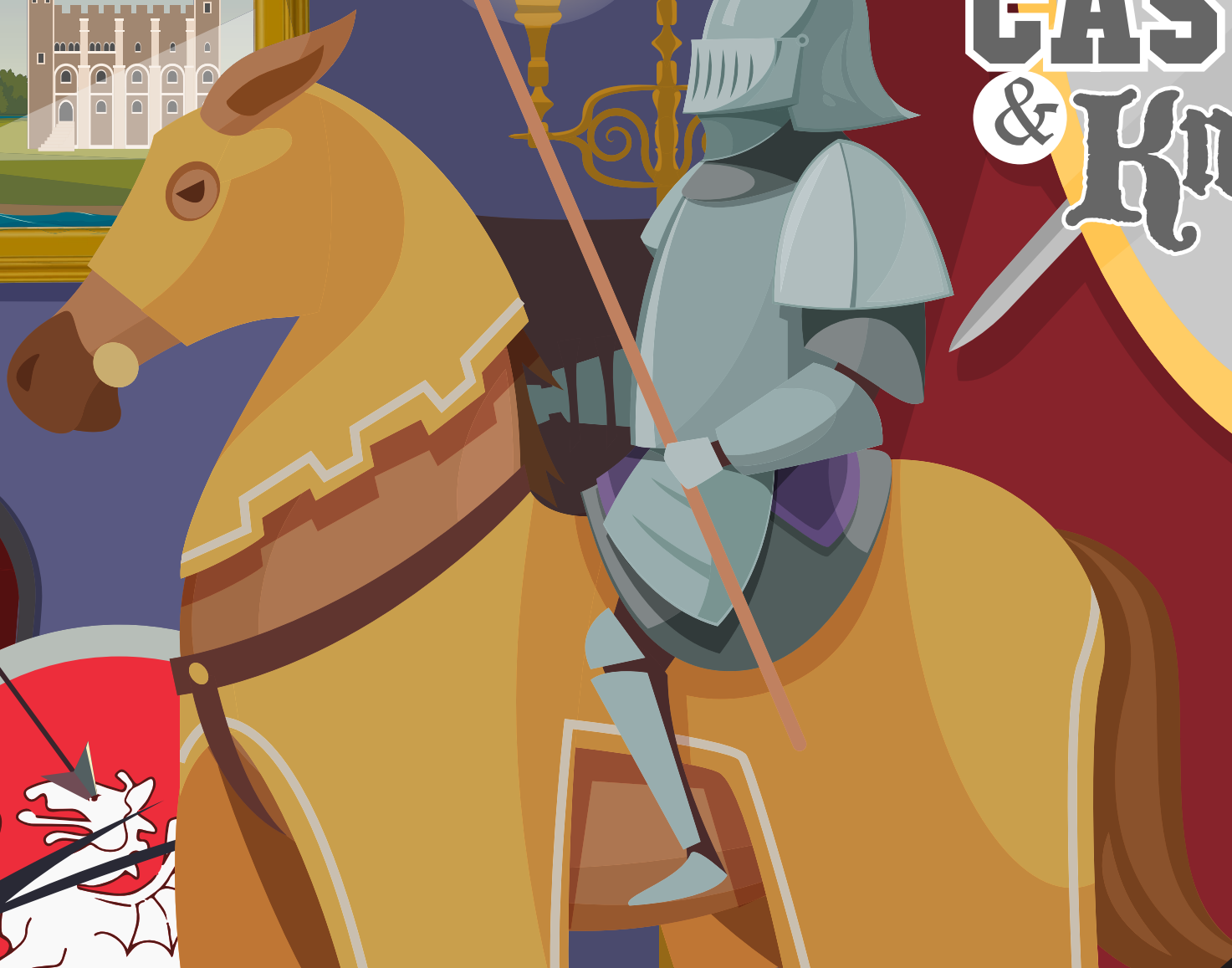
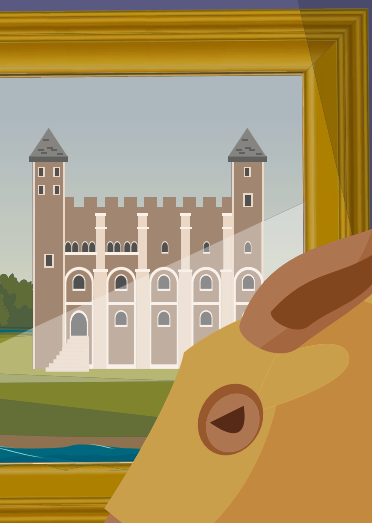


BBC

Teach



CASTLES & Knights



CASTLES & Knights

William the Conqueror

The Tower of London

The Features of a Castle

Famous Sieges

The Legend of King Arthur

The Real Life of a Knight

Links

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Through the course of the animations Fatima and Harry find out about:

- the development of castles and their purpose
- the design, build and features of a medieval castle
- the inhabitants of a medieval castle
- the lives of two significant individuals highlighted in the KS1 curriculum - William I ('William the Conqueror') and Queen Elizabeth I
- Harold II and the Battle of Hastings
- the design of a *motte and bailey* castle
- the history and functions of The Tower of London
- the ways castles could be attacked, including by siege
- the development of armour
- the location of castles, including three significant castles in addition to the Tower of London from around the UK: Edinburgh Castle (in Scotland), Caernarfon Castle (Wales) and Warwick Castle (England)
- elements of medieval society and the feudal system
- stories about knights that became popular in medieval times and remain popular today - for example King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table.

The six animations in this suite of content from [BBC Teach](#) follow two children - Fatima and Harry - and their visits to a Virtual Reality Museum, where they find out about the exciting subject of Castles and Knights.

They join one of the museum's guides - Sally - as they explore some of the museum's exhibits, with the aid of virtual reality headsets.

Using the headsets Fatima and Harry are able to witness real events from the past (including the Battle of Hastings, the building of the Tower of London, the siege of Edinburgh Castle, etc) and also some 'made up' events (such as King Arthur and the *Sword in the Stone*).

In these Notes you will find a brief introduction to each animation and some suggestions for how to use each video before, during and after playback. There are also a number of worksheets - and other support materials - that can be used to consolidate and extend learning - and a series of questions about each animation.

On the [final page](#) we have included some links to third party content where these match closely with the follow-up activities (some of which may require a subscription to the service).

William the Conqueror

Introduction

The animation tells the story of William the Conqueror's invasion of England in 1066 and its aftermath.

It starts with the background to the invasion, including the claims to the English throne made by both **Harold of Wessex** and **William Duke of Normandy** ('William the Conqueror'). It continues with Harold's accession to the throne and William's subsequent decision to invade.

The Norman invaders win at **The Battle of Hastings** and William is crowned King of England shortly after. William then sets about protecting his new throne by building a number of impressive castles - the best known of which is the **Tower of London**.

Video questions

Some questions to help pupils recall information from the video:

- Can pupils remember any of the places, people or events shown in the gallery of paintings in the museum? (Windsor Castle / Victoria / Elizabeth I / Henry VIII / William the Conqueror)
- About how long ago was William born? (About 1000 years ago)
- What area of France was Duke William the ruler of? (Normandy)
- Why was there a struggle for the English throne? (Two men - William and Harold - both believed they should be the next king. Harold was chosen to become king on the death of Edward ('the Confessor') and so William chose to invade England.)
- In what year did the events - including the Battle of Hastings - happen? (1066)
- What did William do once he became King of England? (He sought to protect his position, which included building castles)
- What is the name of William's most famous castle? (The Tower of London)

Before and after watching the video

Set the scene for what is about to take place using a chronology activity. The class could be asked to stand up and spin around to 'go back in time' - similar to the characters in the video. They could first go back 10 years and pupils could be asked to describe what they can see. They could be asked what is similar / different about the past compared to today.

They could repeat the time travel for 100, 1000 and 10,000 years. Support the activity with images / props / artefacts to prompt thinking.

Show some images of medieval Britain so that pupils have an idea of what the world would have been like when the events of the video take place.

During the video stop and ask pupils to think about what they would do in each circumstance. If they were William would they choose to invade? Why? Why not? What factors have they got to consider?

After watching the video use role-play / story-telling to explore the events further. Pupils can recreate what they saw in the video and perform their retellings for the class. The class could ask questions of each character.

Show a picture from the Bayeux Tapestry and explain that 1000 years ago, many people could not read, so people told stories using images instead. The pupils could try to retell the story as a 'tapestry' (the Bayeux Tapestry is actually an embroidery) which would link to the NC objective in Art of 'using drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination'.

The **image on page 6** shows the Norman knights coming ashore. Can pupils count the number of ships? Can they see the waves? The shield and lance held by each knight? The spurs on their heels? What do pupils think they are wearing?



Edinburgh Castle



Caernarfon Castle



Warwick Castle



Windsor Castle



The Tower of London



Dover Castle

England



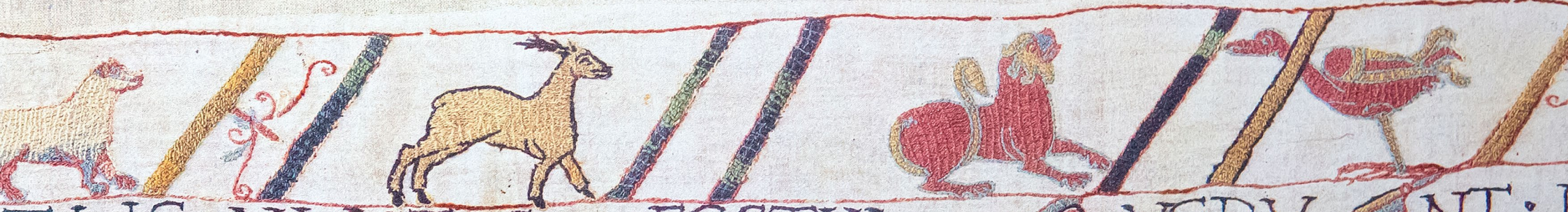
King Harold
Crowned 6th January 1066

Duke William

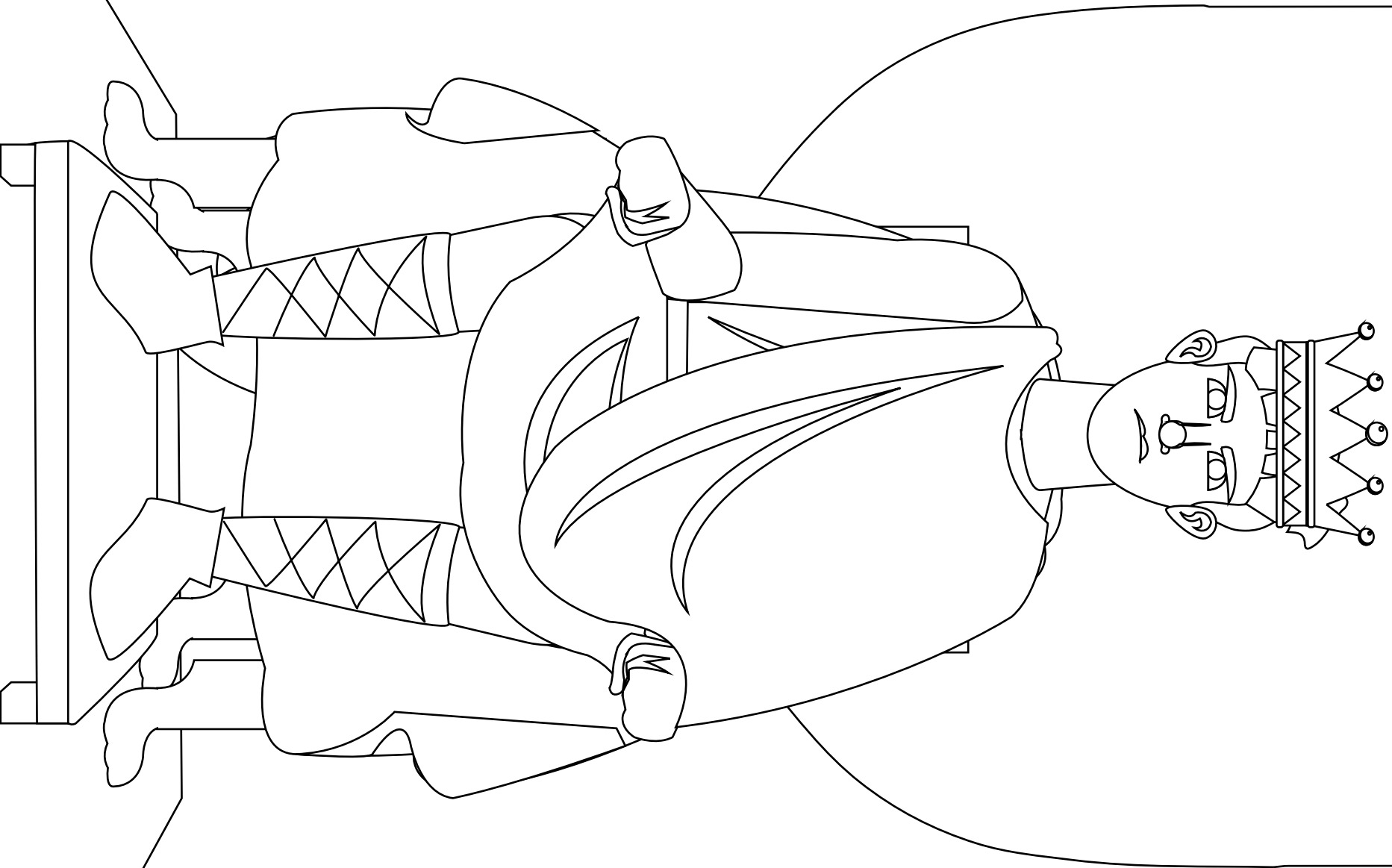


Normandy

THIC:MI LITES: FESTINA VERY ANT:I



King William 1 ('William the Conqueror')
Ruled England 1066 - 1087



The Tower of London

Introduction

This episode explores one of the most famous castles in the UK - the **Tower of London**.

The Tower was one of the first castles to be built by William, Duke of Normandy, following his successful conquest of England. Our guide to the Tower and the many functions it has served over the centuries is **Queen Elizabeth I**, who was imprisoned in the Tower by her half-sister, **Mary I**.

The animation can be used to help pupils understand some aspects of chronology - as they walk down the corridor highlighting some 'significant individuals in the past' and it references the Tower being built 'around 1000 years' ago.

This can be used as a starting point to explore the life of Queen Elizabeth I (as referenced in the National Curriculum) and for pupils based in the South East it would also be a good base to explore the 'history of their local area'.

Video questions

- Can pupils remember any of the places, people or events shown in the gallery of paintings in the museum? (World War 2 / Victoria / Great Fire of London / Elizabeth I)
- What does Queen Elizabeth tell Fatima and Harry they must call her? ('Your Royal Highness')
- In what year did William the Conqueror start building the Tower of London? (1078)
- What is a 'moat'? (A channel of water around the castle to protect it)
- Who imprisoned Elizabeth in the Tower? (Mary I, her half-sister)
- What type of birds live at the Tower and what is the story about them? (Ravens. There is a story that the Tower will fall if the ravens ever leave)

Before and after watching the video

Show the picture of the Tower of London opposite and explore what pupils already know (if anything) about it. Use the image to identify some of the features described in the video. Can pupils see the River? The towers? The outer wall?

During the video the corridor scene could be used as a way to draw out chronology and explore some of the 'significant individuals and events from the past' as they are mentioned. You may also [use this image](#) of the gallery paintings to sequence them in the correct chronological order.

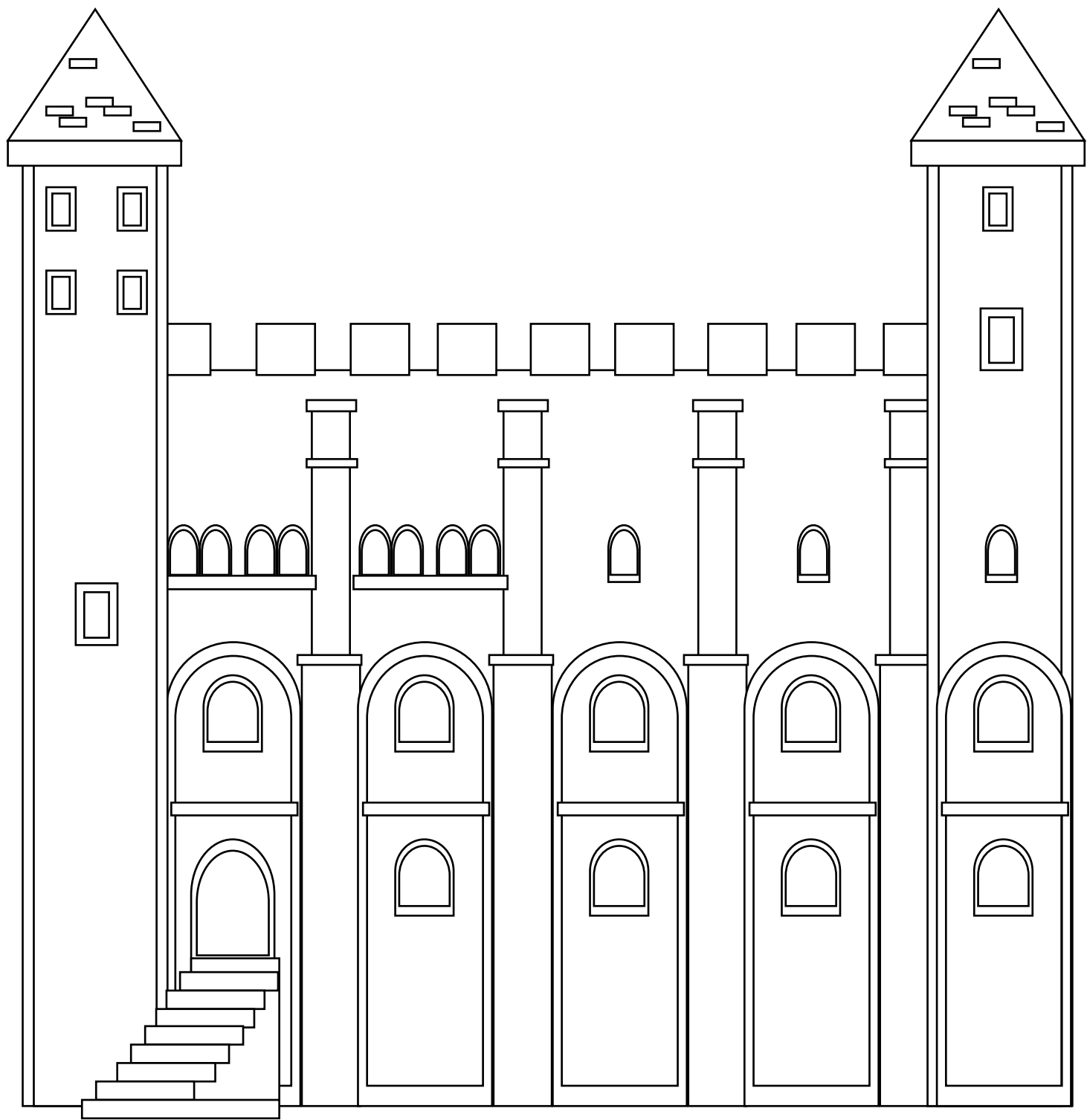
After the video lead a discussion (links to the English spoken language objective: 'participate in discussions...debates') by asking questions about the Tower. Why was it built? What was it / is it used for?

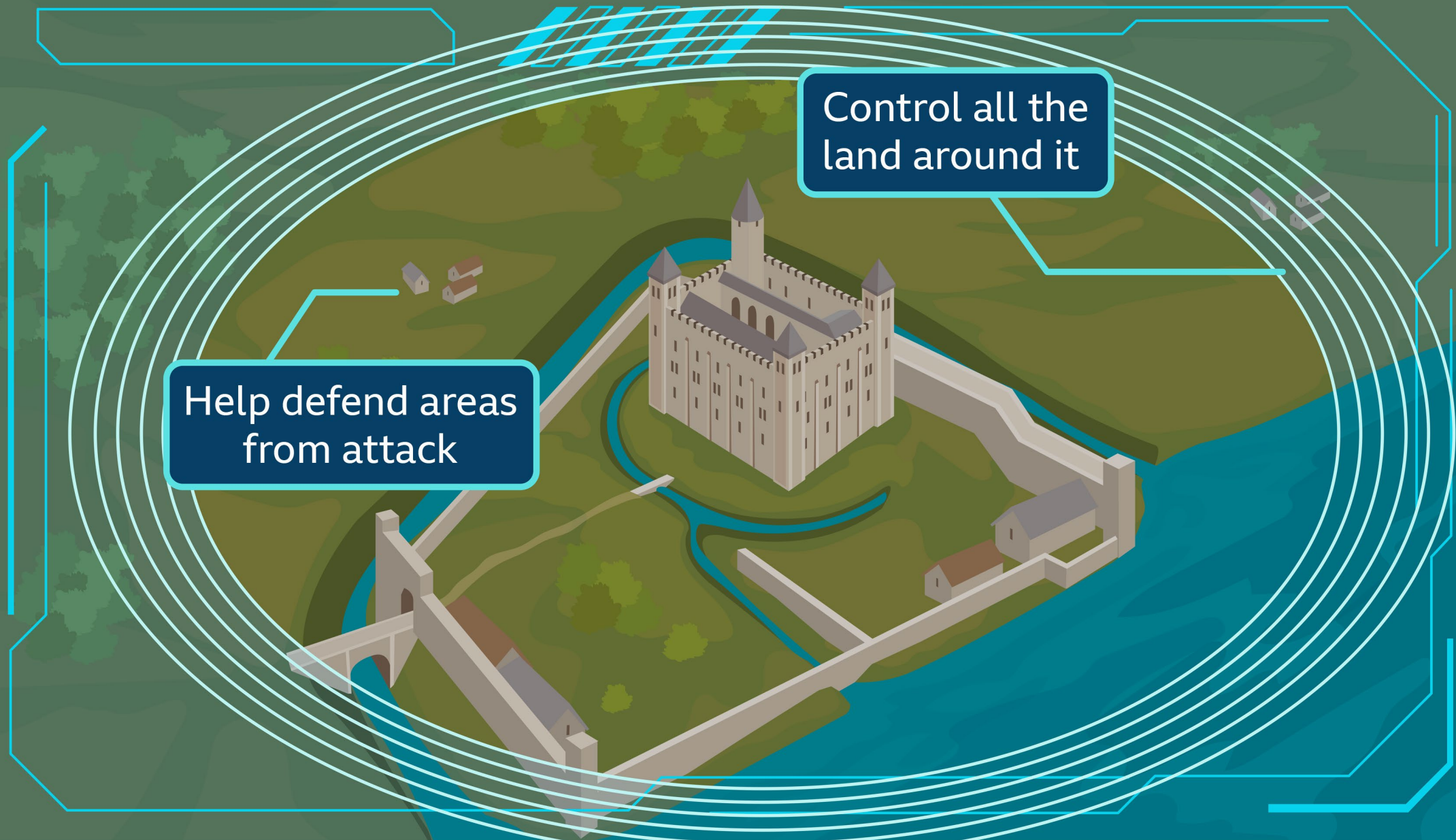
You could make a statement - eg 'The Tower of London was not a safe place' - as sometimes statements elicit a more passionate response from the younger pupils. Then ask them if they agree / disagree / somewhat agree with the statement - and why - before moving into a more conceptual discussion around what important 'jewels' pupils would keep in the Tower of London.

Pupils could be asked to draw three important things they would want to keep protected. To try to draw out the concept of chronology. Pupils could pretend they were living 1000 years ago. What would they value then?

What is similar and what is different compared with today? This could be represented by two hoops laid out as a Venn diagram to capture pupil reflections.







The image shows the strategic location of the Tower of London beside the River Thames, with a moat around the castle area for further protection.

The Features of a Castle

Introduction

In this episode Sally shows Fatima and Harry the main features of a castle. It is a stimulus for a range of activities, in particular for showing changes beyond living memory ('What was life like for people who lived in castles?')

During the animation the characters explore a number of castles - including **Warwick Castle** and **Edinburgh Castle** - which is useful for schools in these regions wanting to teach 'significant places in their locality'.

The castle features that Sally shows Fatima and Harry include:

- the significance of location (eg on top of a hill / beside a body of water)
- external features - such as towers battlements, thick walls, a moat, a drawbridge, etc
- internal features - such as a well for water, large stores to guard against siege, a hall for everyone to socialise.

Video questions

- What were the first castles built from? Why was this a problem? (Wood - but wood burns too easily, whether due to accident or attack)
- In which country is Edinburgh Castle located? (Scotland)
- What castle features can pupils remember from the video? (The features include thick walls / built on a hill / battlements / towers / portcullis / drawbridge / moat / a hall to socialise together / a water source, such as a river or well / livestock and grain). These features can be identified by analysing the images opposite and there is a [summary sheet here](#).
- What is a 'siege'? (When attackers prevent anything or anyone from going in and out of the castle - so that those inside gradually run out of food or water)

Before and after watching the video

Pupils can draw their own castles and present them to the class. This will help develop pupils using art to express their ideas and thinking as well as develop the spoken language skill of presenting. They can revise their drawings once they have watched the video.

Compare and contrast the pictures of Edinburgh Castle and Warwick Castle. What is the same? What is different?

During the video stop and ask pupils to reflect if what they thought castles were like is true. It might also be good to check for clarifying questions as there is a lot of new vocabulary which may need explaining.

After the video pupils can either revise their drawings of a castle (and they can use the image called Some features of a castle to help them) or they can build their own model. This will meet objectives in the NC for Design Technology (eg building structures, exploring how they can be made stronger, stiffer and more stable and using a range of tools and materials). When the pupil presents their castle they will also be meeting the spoken language objective of using spoken word to present.

This is also an opportunity for pupils to develop their spoken language skills by taking part in a discussion on which feature of a castle is the most important. Each group could be given one feature of a castle and asked to explain to the rest of the class why that feature is the most important. At the end of the discussion the class can take a vote.

The video includes the need to build castles on hills or near a water supply. This could be used as a way into pupils being able to understand some of the physical features highlighted in the curriculum (beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation). This could be combined with the above activity of building a castle making it cross curricular between history, geography and DT.









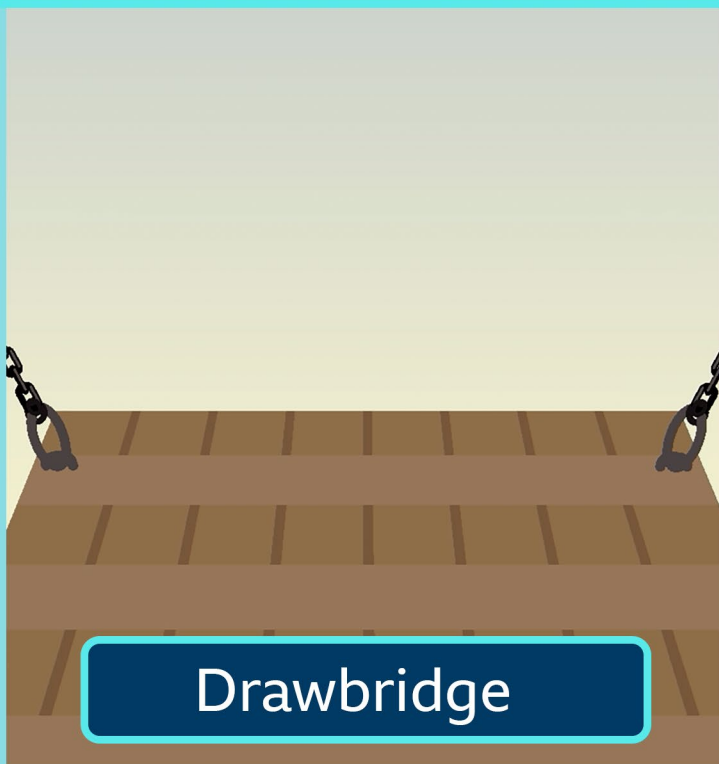
Towers



Thick walls



Portcullis



Drawbridge



Moat



Battlements

Famous Sieges

Introduction

In this episode Fatima and Harry learn how castles defended against attack by hearing the stories of two famous sieges: that of **Dover Castle** in 1265 and of **Edinburgh Castle**, beginning in 1571.

The animation explores the techniques used to attack castles and some of the strategies that were employed in defence, including having a source of water inside the castle, huge stores for food and plenty of livestock within the castle walls.

The animation also references 'the lives of significant individuals in the past...and events', including two women: **Eleanor de Montford** and **Mary, Queen of Scots**.

Depending on where in the UK this is being taught, it would also meet the National Curriculum objective of 'significant places in their locality'.

Video questions

- What does Sally say are the two main ways to attack a castle? (Either attack the castle with force and break down the defences, or lay **siege** to the castle)
- In which country is Dover Castle located? (England)
- Why did Simon de Montford have an argument with the king? (Simon wanted to be the king himself)
- Why did Eleanor have to surrender Dover Castle? (Some of her loyal soldiers switched sides - so she had enemies both inside and outside the castle)
- What method of attack was used at Edinburgh Castle? (The attackers fired cannons continuously for ten days and nights until the castle walls collapsed. They also poisoned the castle well). Edinburgh Castle was substantially rebuilt after this attack - to become the castle that we know today.

Before and after watching the video

Show pupils the pictures of Edinburgh, Dover and Warwick Castles. The pupils can work in small groups to determine as many possible ways for attacking each castle as they can. Groups can present their ideas to the class (and if necessary be ready to explain that some things hadn't been invented when the castle was built!)

During the video be ready to run a 'guess what happens next' style activity as the story of the sieges continues. The teacher could support pupil thinking by providing statements and asking if pupils think this will happen / not happen and explain their answers. This will help to develop the historical skill of interpretation and also helps with the predictive skill used to develop reading.

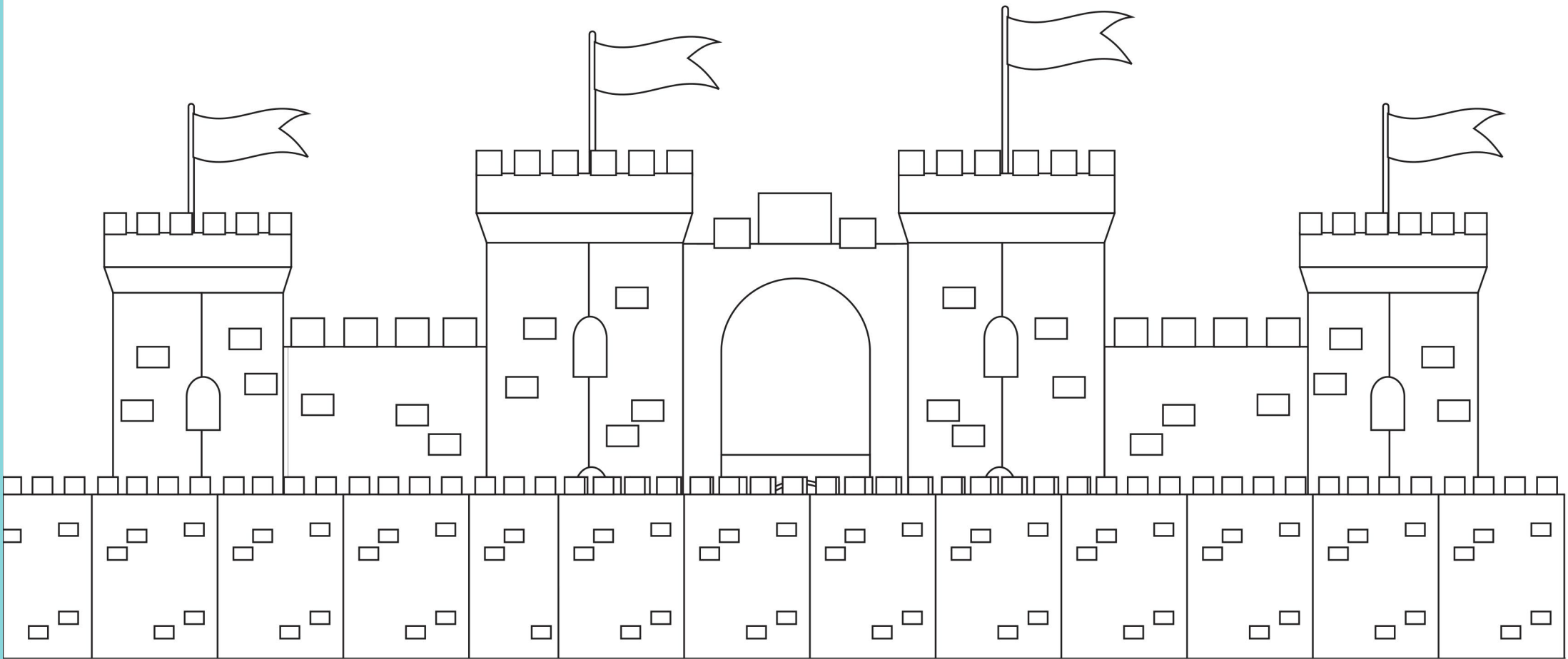
After the video use the resource to practise storytelling, leading to writing. Pupils can use the stories in the video - perhaps even the characters involved - to tell a fictional account of their castle being attacked (or being the attackers). This can then be used to practise writing sentences based on their story.

The video also brings in different parts of the UK - Dover, London and Edinburgh. This could be used as part of a geography activity to target the objective of 'name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the UK and its surrounding seas'. Pupils could draw pictures of the castles on a map of the UK, labelling the countries and identifying the flags. **There is a map** showing the location of each castle in the UK here.

Build a castle! This would fit with the Art NC objective of 'using a range of materials creatively to design and make products...to use drawing...and sculpture to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination...to develop a wide range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space'. See **Links**.







The Legend of King Arthur

Introduction

In this animation Fatima and Harry learn about the difference between 'fact' and 'fiction' - thus they begin to establish the difference between history and story / myth. Pupils may have encountered knights in fairy tales and myths and this video begins to unpick the difference between the fictional depictions and 'real' history.

The animation starts with Sally, the museum guide, using the example of dragons and dinosaurs to explain the difference to the two children: we know dinosaurs are real because we have the physical evidence - fossils - to prove they existed.

Sally then introduces Fatima and Harry to some of the best-known stories from the myth of King Arthur.

Video questions

- Why is the story of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table different to the other events Fatima and Harry have learnt about? (We are not sure if King Arthur ever really existed - so his story is presented in a different part of the museum)
- What does Sally say a 'legend' is? (A story passed down from generation to generation, without any clear evidence for the story being true)
- What is the evidence Sally mentions for dinosaurs being real? (Fossils)
- According to the story of Arthur, why did the wizard Merlin hide him away as a child? (To make sure that no harm came to him)
- How did Arthur prove he was the true King of England? (He pulled the sword from the stone - placed there by Merlin)
- What were Arthur's knights called? (The Knights of the Round Table)
- What sort of adventures did Arthur and his knights have together? (Fights with dragons / fights with evil knights / witches / wizard / etc)

Before and after watching the video

Use the 'Telephone Game' to demonstrate how things can get 'distorted' as they are passed down through the generations. Whisper a sentence into the ear of one pupil who then passes this on to the next. The class can then compare the sentence at the end of the chain with how it started!

Use this as the starting point for a discussion: why do some things which didn't happen become stories? This links to the NC objective of participating in 'discussions...and debates'.

Ask pupils if they have ever heard of the stories of King Arthur? Briefly gather what pupils know of him.

During the video pause to ask questions. Use the snippets of the King Arthur myths as a teaser for either fleshing out the stories in more detail or for future reading.

After the video undertake a 'detective' activity. Begin with the pictures on [this page](#). Which of the events / people do pupils think are real? Why? Move on to asking pupils about how we know certain things have happened - the evidence we evaluate. Ask pupils to gather evidence to find out if something really happened. This can be based on something in the modern world but will help to develop their historical skills of understanding and evaluating evidence.

This could also be quite an active task - pupils could literally be sent to hunt to find clues of an event happening!

The video could also be used as a good stimulus for reading some of the King Arthur myths. [Go here](#) for the Arthurian story of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.



Siege of Edinburgh Castle



George and the Dragon



Queen Elizabeth 1st



King Arthur

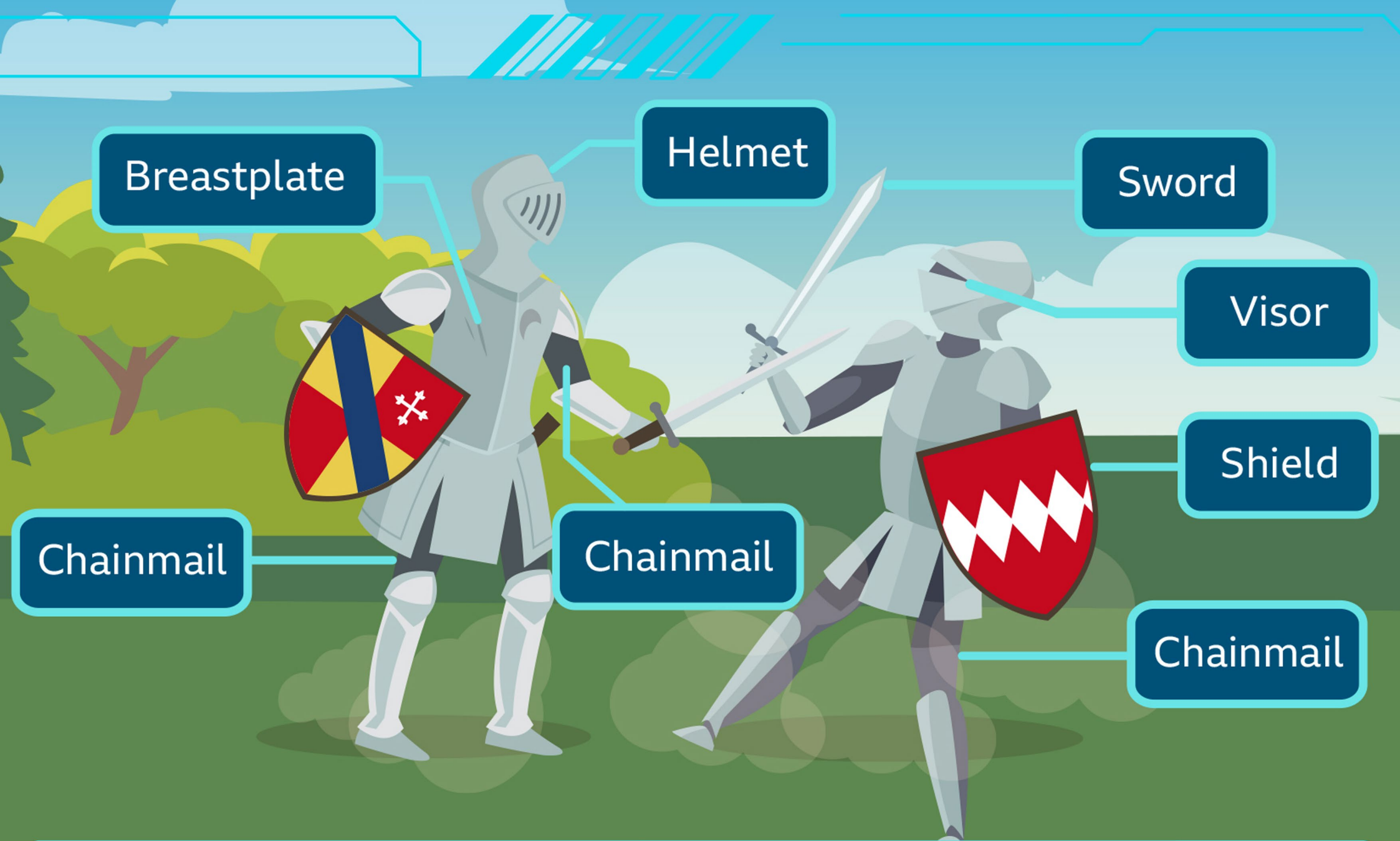


The Battle of Hastings



The Tower of London





Breastplate

Helmet

Sword

Visor

Shield

Chainmail

Chainmail

Chainmail

Research the names of some other pieces of armour.
For example, what are *gauntlets*? Where would you wear them?

The Real Life of a Knight

Introduction

In this animation Fatima and Harry learn some of the ways in which life in medieval times was different from today.

Sally tells them about how society was organised - a very basic explanation of the **feudal system** - and some of the ways that the life of a real knight was different to what we read in stories. They learn about armour (hugely expensive) and coats of arms (each picture tells a story).

The video can be used to help pupils understand some basic elements of chronology (ie things were different in the past) and can form a good base for the curriculum objective of studying 'events beyond living memory'.

Video questions

- Who does Sally say was in charge of the country? (The King or Queen)
- How did the King or Queen gain the support of the nobles? (They gave them land...just as the nobles gave land to the knights to ensure their loyalty)
- Who were the 'ordinary people' of society? (The peasants - poor farm workers)
- According to Sally, why were knights important in battle? (They often rode on horseback - so they could move around the battlefield very quickly and cause a lot of damage to the enemy)
- What is a 'coat of arms'? (A design used by knights to identify themselves - for example on their shields. Each coat of arms indicated something important about the knight and their family)
- What two layers of armour does Sally identify? (1. Chainmail - flexible armour made from hoops of metal. 2. Plate armour - sheets of metal worn over the chainmail, such as a breastplate)
- Was armour expensive? (Yes - very!)
- What is 'jousting'? (A sporting contest in which two knights try to unseat the other from their horse using a lance)

Before and after watching the video

This video is a good initial stimulus for an introduction to the way society was structured in medieval times - ie who had power?

The class could explore what they already know about knights. This would be helped by showing some images of armour and clothing. Ask questions to promote discussion, such as where pupils have seen knights (books, cartoons, films, etc).

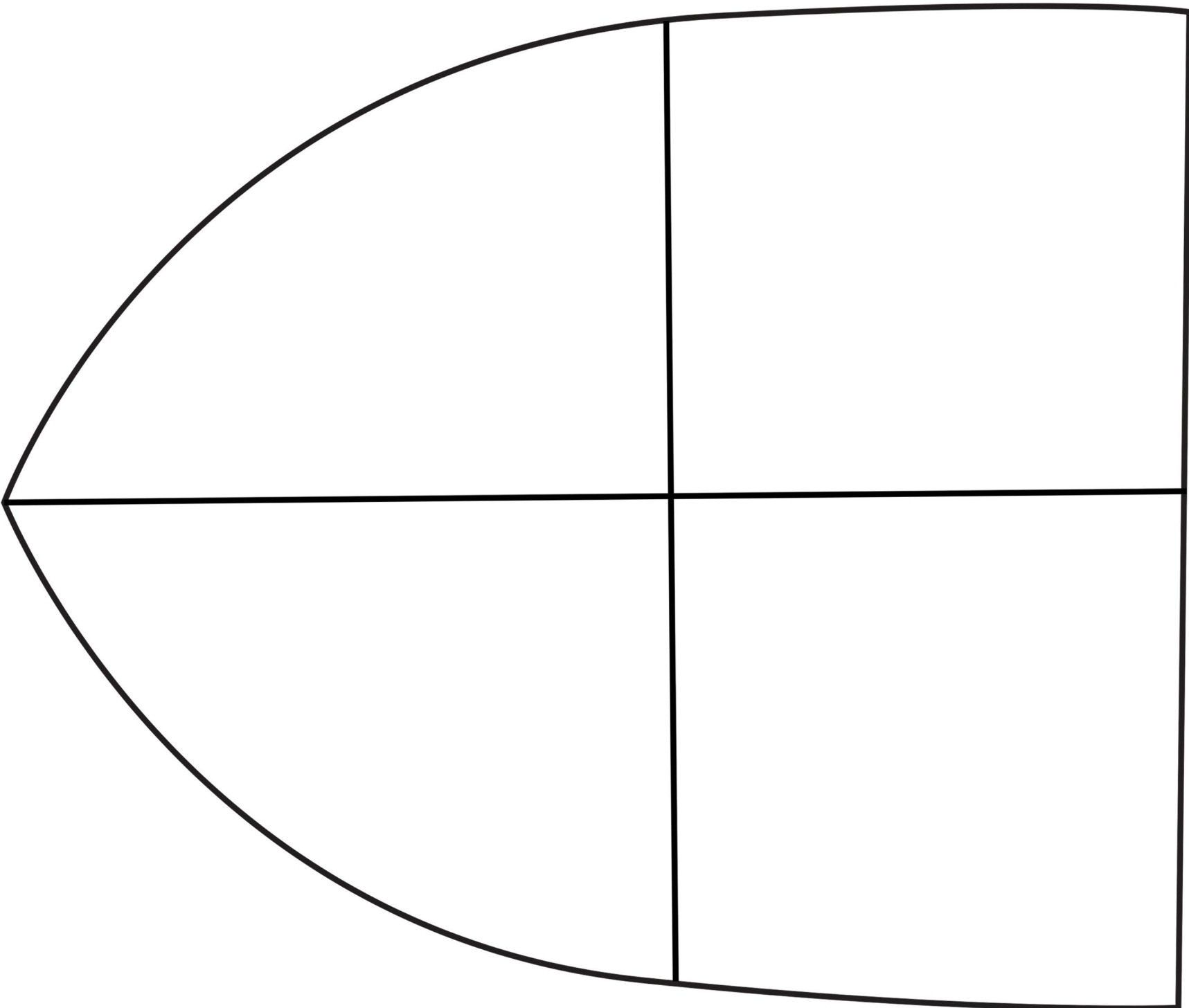
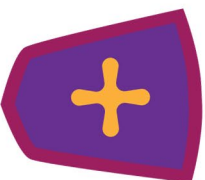
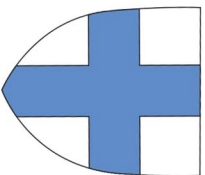
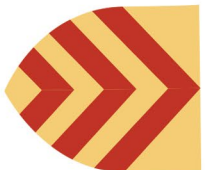
Ask pupils what they know about kings and queens? What were they like in the past? What are the similarities and differences between a queen in the past and the Queen today?

Pause the video at various points to ask about the things that are the same today and the things that are different. Use a Venn diagram to help pupils visualise this.

Pupils could also be asked to check if what they originally thought turned out to be true. For example, are knights what we expected? Is the king or queen really powerful?

After the video extend what pupils have learnt into written activities. Ask them to imagine they are a knight for a day. What is life like? Make up a story about a knight and a castle. Pupils could work in groups to come up with a story about what it is like to be a knight and then the teacher could use this as a stimulus to get the pupils to compose some writing.

Art - use the image of a **blank shield** below to create coats of arms. Share some of the popular shield designs (chevron, pale, gyronny of eight, etc). Then ask pupils to think about what they might draw on their shield to represent themselves or their family.





King or Queen



Nobles



Nobles



Knights



Knights



Knights



Peasants



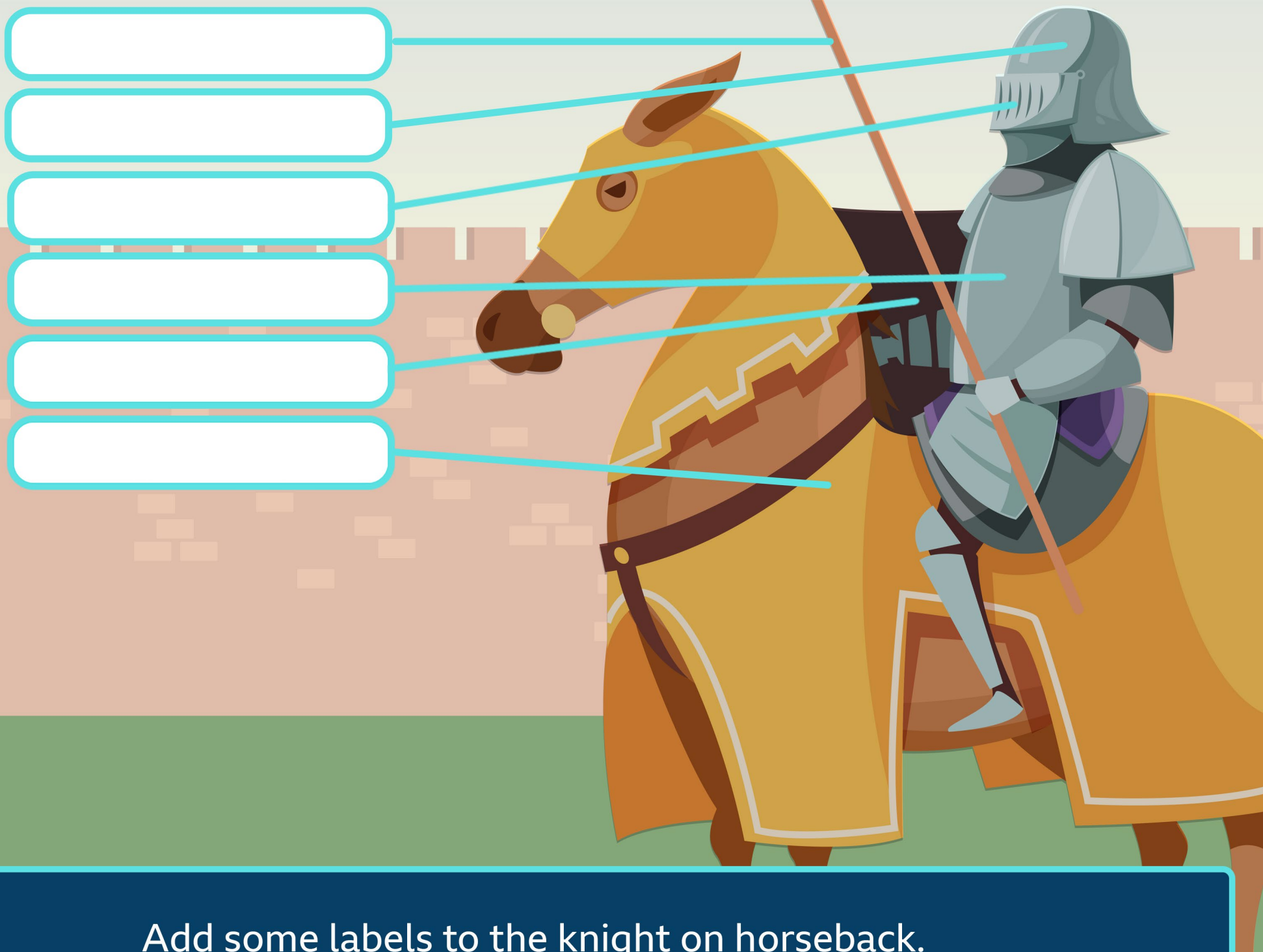
Peasants



Peasants



Peasants



Add some labels to the knight on horseback.



Links

Below are some links to relevant content from third party providers, some of which may require a subscription and which may also include advertising on the pages.

William the Conqueror

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t-t-17080-william-the-conqueror-facts-powerpoint>

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/home-key-stage-1-subjects/history/the-battle-of-hastings>

<https://www.bayeuxmuseum.com/en/the-bayeux-tapestry/>

The animated Bayeux Tapestry: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtGoBZ4D4_E

Britain's Bayeux Tapestry: <https://www.readingmuseum.org.uk/collections/britains-bayeux-tapestry> (Good for viewing details of the tapestry - a recreation in the Reading Museum)

The Tower of London

Tower of London augmented reality model: <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/Tower-Of-London-Augmented-Reality-AR-3D-Quick-Look-Model>

Download a paper model of the Tower of London: <https://www.3dgeography.co.uk/uk-themed-model-making>

The Features of a Castle

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t-h-80-parts-of-a-castle-powerpoint>

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/T-CR-5904-castle-parts>

Famous Sieges

<http://www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/castles/dover/index.htm>

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/dover-castle/family-guide/>

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/histories/women-in-history/eleanor-de-montfort/>

<https://kidskonnect.com/castles/edinburgh-castle/>

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/cfe-t-007-edinburgh-castle-information-sheet>

The Legend of King Arthur

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/wl2-t-16676-the-legend-of-king-arthur-story>

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/stories-stories-nursery-rhymes-and-poems-english-key-stage-1-year-1-year-2/fables-for-children-story-resources-english-key-stage-1-year-1-year-2/king-arthur>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zgt76sg>

The Real Life of a Knight

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/the-feudal-system-display-poster-t2-h-5802>

Coats of arms: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/753086368916737025/>

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t-tp-5730-a-knights- armour-powerpoint>

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/knights-6398240>