ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
MAKE YOUR OWN MANUSCRIPT

KS2　KS3

Recommended for

KS2 & KS3 (History, English, Art)

Learning objectives

• Develop skills of creativity by exploring the art, craft and design of the Benedictine period at Whitby Abbey.

• Understand how Benedictine monks produced the pages of a medieval chant book and apply this understanding to create your own chant book page.

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes

SUMMARY

Print and photocopy enough activity sheets (on the following pages) for your class. Students will start by learning about the use of chant books by Benedictine monks in the medieval period then make their own handmade chant book page, using similar techniques.

Supervise students as they follow the instructions on the activity sheets. We recommend you purchase some red and black calligraphy pens and parchment paper to help with this activity.

TEACHER ANSWERS

The answers to the gap fill activity are:

The people who lived and worked at Whitby Abbey were monks. The word monk comes from an ancient word meaning 'one who has intended to **live alone**'. The monks at Whitby Abbey were committed to the Rule of St Benedict and tried to achieve an ideal **love of God** by rejecting their own interests and needs. They followed a **strict** daily routine which was based around church services, prayers and songs. Latin chants were used to assist them in their life of **worship** and **sacrifice**. In an attempt to bring **glory to God**, chant books were beautifully decorated. The chant **book** would have been small enough to hold in one **hand** and carry around the **cloister**. It tells the monks exactly where, when and what to **sing**.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

You could bind students' pages together to make a class chant book. This would be a good opportunity to research the methods used to bind parchment sheets and decorate book covers in medieval times.

MAKE YOUR OWN MANUSCRIPT

1 Fill in the missing words and phrases. The first letter hints at the words you need to look for. Use the word bank to help.

The people who lived and worked at Whitby Abbey were monks.

The word monk comes from an ancient word meaning 'one who has intended to l_____ a_____'. The monks at Whitby Abbey were committed to the Rule of St Benedict and tried to achieve an ideal l_____ o__ G_____ by rejecting their own interests and needs. They followed a s_____ daily routine which was based around church services, prayers and songs. Latin chants were used to assist them in their life of w_____ and s_____. In an attempt to bring g_____ t_ G___, chant books were beautifully decorated. The chant b_____ would have been small enough to hold in one h_____ and carry around the c_____. It tells the monks exactly where, when and what to s_____.

WORD BANK:

book, cloister, glory to God, hand, live alone, love of God, sacrifice, sing, strict, worship.

2 Plan your chant book page.

A page from a chant book used at Castle Acre Priory, in Norfolk. The brown text (which has faded over time) contains the lyrics of the hymn. The red text tells the monks where to sing this hymn.

a) With a black pen, write your name in the centre of the paper. Include a large, colourful illuminated capital letter.

b) Underneath your name, write 'sing this while walking around the cloister' in red pen.

c) Above your name, draw a musical stave (5 lines) and plot any notes you like – don't worry if you don't know music.

3 Design a rough copy below.

4 Make a neat version of your chant book page.

HINT:
Use parchment paper and calligraphy pens to make it look authentic.

5 Pair up and evaluate your partner's chant book page. Look for these four things and tick them off if you spot them:

☐ A large, illuminated capital letter.

☐ Beautiful handwriting (called calligraphy).

☐ Red letters giving you instructions.

☐ A musical stave with notes.

Let's see... is your manuscript fit for a monk like me?

6 Give feedback on your partner's creation. Tell them something they did well and suggest something they could do even better.

A Benedictine monk.