



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

TEACHERS' KIT

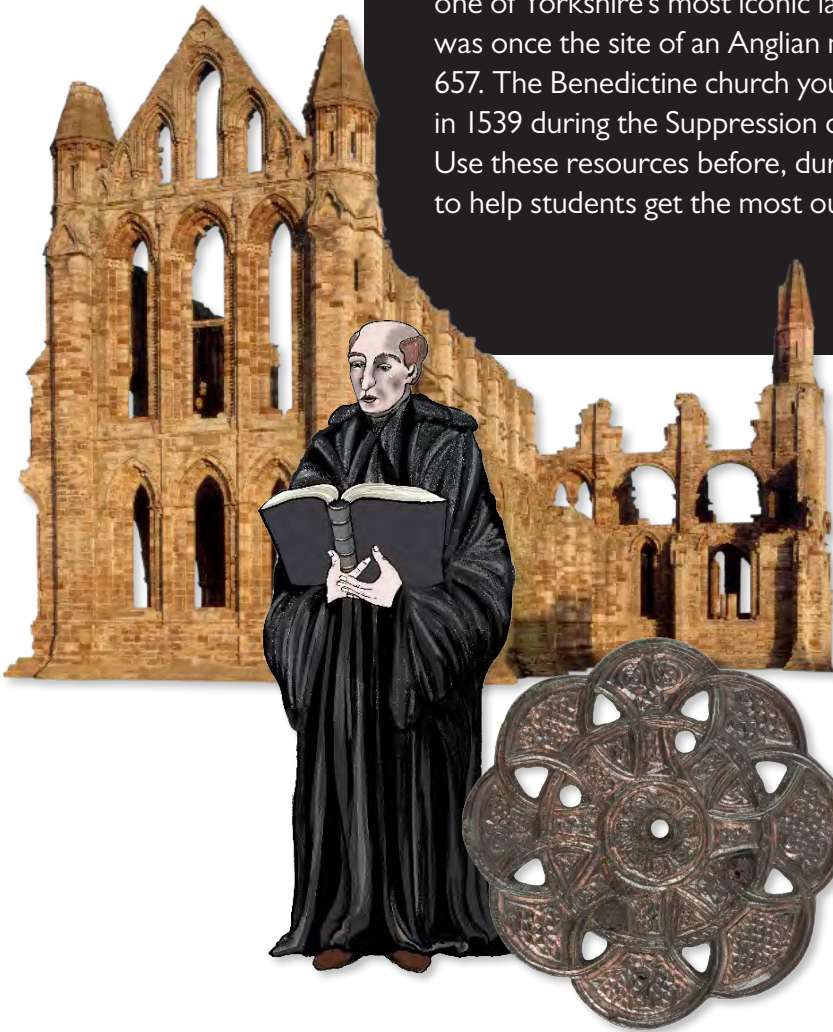
Whitby Abbey

KS1-2

KS3

KS4+

This kit helps teachers plan a visit to Whitby Abbey, one of Yorkshire's most iconic landmarks. The headland was once the site of an Anglian monastery, founded in 657. The Benedictine church you see today was ruined in 1539 during the Suppression of the Monasteries. Use these resources before, during and after your visit to help students get the most out of their learning.



GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR EDUCATION BOOKINGS TEAM:

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Step into England's story

WELCOME

This Teachers' Kit for Whitby Abbey has been designed for teachers and group leaders to support a free self-led visit to the site. It includes a variety of materials suited to teaching a wide range of subjects and key stages, with practical information, activities for use on site and ideas to support follow-up learning.

We know that each class and study group is different, so we've collated our resources into one kit allowing you to decide which materials are best suited to your needs. Please use the contents page, which has been colour-coded to help you easily locate what you need, and view individual sections. All of our activities have clear guidance on the intended use for study so you can adapt them for your desired learning outcomes.

To further aid your planning, we have created Hazard Information guidance, which you can download from the Whitby Abbey **Schools page**. Here you can also find information on our expert-led Discovery Visits and an overview of what your class can experience.

You can find more practical information about your booked visit to Whitby Abbey in the Education Visit Permit and the Site Information Pack which have been sent to you.

We hope you enjoy your visit and find this Teachers' Kit useful. If you have any queries please don't hesitate to get in touch with a member of our team either via bookeducation@english-heritage.org.uk or on 0370 333 0606.

English Heritage Learning Team

ICON KEY

The icons below will help you quickly identify the types of activities and information presented.

						
						
SPEAKING	LOOK	WRITE	READ	ROLE PLAY	CHALLENGE	ART
						
DID YOU KNOW?	GROUP ACTIVITY	MAP	QUOTE	EXAMINE	MATHS	MUSIC

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KS3

KS4+

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PRE-VISIT

Information and activities you can use in the classroom before your visit.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

DISCOVER THE STORY OF
WHITBY ABBEY

Below is a short history of Whitby Abbey. Use this information to learn how the site has changed over time. You'll find the definitions of the key words in the Glossary.

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Two hundred million years ago the North Yorkshire coast was under water, deep beneath a warm tropical sea. The remains of **prehistoric** sea creatures, including large, underwater **reptiles**, became **fossilised** in the seabed. The sea levels changed over millions of years and the seabed became dry land. **Erosion** along this new coastline turned the dry land into the cliffs we see today. The cliffs are still eroding and reveal fossils every year.

During the Iron Age (800 BC–AD 43) houses were simple round huts, made from wood and daub, with thatched roofs. The natural materials used to make these homes rotted long ago. **Archaeologists** look for holes in the ground where the timber posts used to be. Post-holes from Iron Age houses have been found on the headland, providing the earliest evidence of people living there.

No traces of Roman buildings have been found but some of their possessions have been dug up, including pottery vessels, coins and a brooch.



The Whitby headland has been shaped by millions of years of tidal movement and coastal erosion. © Graeme Peacock

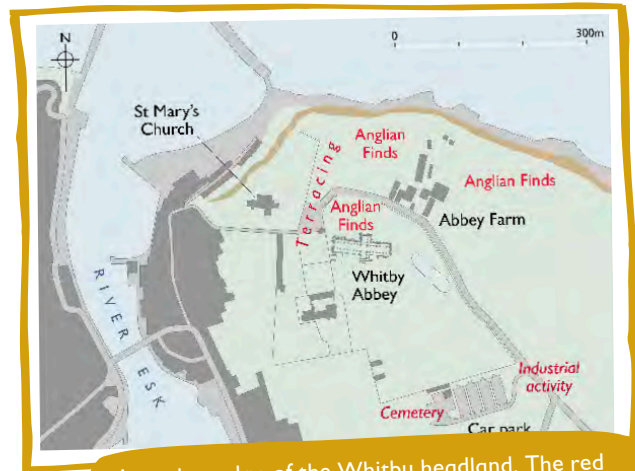
ANGLO-SAXON BELIEFS, BATTLES AND BUILDINGS

When the Romans left Britain, Anglo-Saxon people from northern Europe settled in England and the country split into seven warring kingdoms: Northumbria, Mercia, Anglia, Wessex, Essex, Sussex and Kent.

From the 6th century, Anglo-Saxon **pagans** started to convert to the **Christian** faith, including the king of Northumbria in AD 627.

Some people accepted Christianity and some fought against it. In AD 655 Oswiu, a Christian ruler from Northumbria, went into battle against a pagan army led by Penda, king of Mercia. The pagans were defeated, Oswiu became king of Northumbria, and Christianity became the main religion in Britain.

Oswiu had made a promise that, if he won the battle, he would found 12 churches and give his baby daughter up to be a nun for the rest of her life. After his victory, Oswiu took his daughter to the **abbey** in Hartlepool, run by a well-respected **abbess**, called Hild. Two years later, in AD 657, Abbess Hild founded a new **monastery** for nuns (women) and monks (men) at Whitby, with King Oswiu's support.



A modern plan of the Whitby headland. The red writing shows the approximate locations of Anglian features, found during excavations.

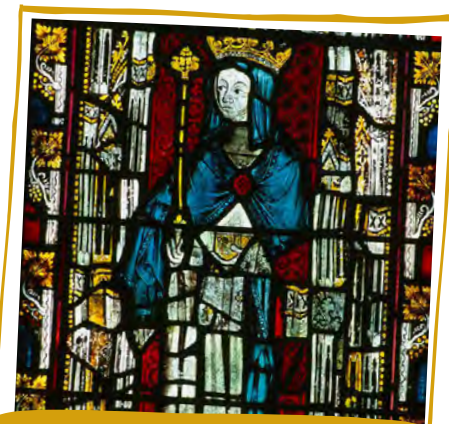
ABBESS HILD: A REMARKABLE WOMAN

As the abbess of Whitby, Hild led one of the most important religious centres in the Anglo-Saxon world. Hild was the great-niece of the Northumbrian king, Edwin. She and her sister were raised in Edwin's royal court after their father was murdered. At this time Christianity was spreading across the country and Hild was converted, along with the rest of Northumbria.

Most of what we know about Hild comes from Bede, the 8th-century historian. Bede describes how, when Hild was a child, her mother dreamt of a necklace that 'seemed to shine forth with such a blaze of light that it filled all Britain with the glory of its brilliance'. Bede said the necklace represented Hild's life of religious service. Kings and commoners alike came to Whitby to receive Hild's wisdom and advice.

Find out more about Hild:

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/whitby-abbey/history-and-stories/st-hild



A stained glass window at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, depicting St Hild. She is shown as a princess, with a crown and sceptre. © Matthew Power

CAEDMON: THE POET WHO DIDN'T KNOW IT

When Hild was abbess at Whitby, Caedmon's job was to look after cattle. According to Bede, Caedmon couldn't play music and didn't know how to read or write, until one night, a man visited him in a dream and asked him to sing of the Creation. Caedmon immediately started singing and when he woke up he could remember the whole song. He was taken to Abbess Hild, who recognised that his newfound abilities were a gift from God. Caedmon, the first named poet in the English language, was known for being able to turn any Bible story into a beautiful poem.

Explore Caedmon's story further online: www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/whitby-abbey/history-and-stories/caedmon-poetry



The Caedmon Memorial Cross in St Mary's churchyard, Whitby, erected in 1898. Caedmon's figure is at the bottom, beneath Hild, and his poem is carved into the stone.

THE SYNOD OF WHITBY

In AD 664, Hild's monastery was chosen by King Oswiu as the venue for the great **Synod** of Whitby. Northumbrians had been converted to Christianity from the 620s onwards by two different groups of **missionaries**: those from Rome, who were first on the scene, and those of the Irish tradition, from the island of Iona. The problem was that the two traditions had different Christian practices, including the way priests cut their hair, and, most important of all, the way they calculated the date of Easter. This caused confusion and, in some places, Easter was even celebrated twice. Oswiu and his wife celebrated Easter at different times. The king ordered religious leaders to gather at Whitby to settle the Irish and Roman differences. They agreed that the Roman Christian tradition should be followed in England.

Learn more about the Synod in this web article: www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/whitby-abbey/history-and-stories/synod-of-whitby

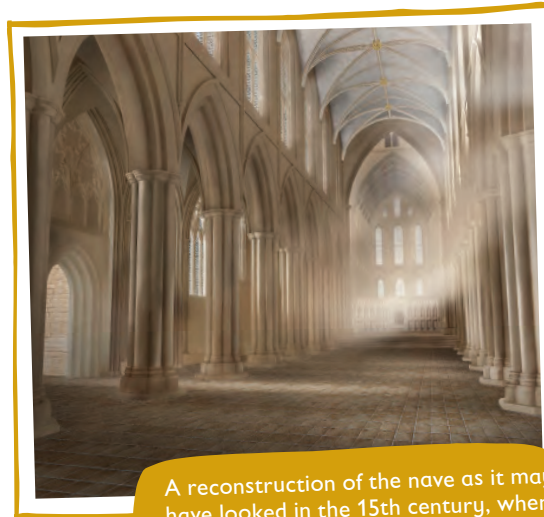
In the 8th and 9th centuries, **Viking** raiders with pagan beliefs attacked the coast and set fire to the monasteries in Northumbria. It is assumed that the **Anglian** church at Whitby was destroyed as part of these raids in 867.



A stone cross from the late 7th to early 8th century. It has a plain, smoothly dressed surface with double roll moulding. The good condition suggests that this cross originally stood indoors, but not against a wall since the reverse face is also carved.

THE BENEDICTINE ABBEY

In 1078 the abbey was re-founded by Reinfrid, a Norman soldier who fought in the **Battle of Hastings (1066)**. With permission from the landowner, William de Percy, Reinfrid founded a simple **priory** within the Anglian ruins. Whitby eventually adopted the **Benedictine** rule and became a full abbey with William de Percy's son, also called William, as its first abbot. The monks (men only) devoted their lives to serving God and followed strict rules that divided their day into periods of prayer, reading and work.



A reconstruction of the nave as it may have looked in the 15th century, when the work to rebuild the abbey in the Gothic style was finally completed.

Watch this video to find out what it was like to live in a Benedictine abbey: <https://youtu.be/ewbjWSAVDLI>

With financial support from the Percy family, the first stone buildings went up in the early 12th century, in the **Romanesque** style. About one hundred years later, the church began to be rebuilt in a **Gothic** style. Building work started with the **presbytery** at the east end of the church, followed by the north and south **transepts**, the central tower and finally the **nave**. By the time the nave was being upgraded in the 13th century, the abbey was in serious debt and building work had to stop. The nave wasn't finished until the 15th century.

RUINED BY HENRY VIII AND CHANGED BY THE CHOLMLEYS

The abbey was surrendered to the King's Commissioners on 14 December 1539, during Henry VIII's (r.1509–47) **Suppression of the Monasteries**.

In 1540–41 the abbey and its estates were leased to Richard Cholmley. He bought it in 1555 and his family owned it until the end of the 20th century. Their home, known as Cholmley House, was rebuilt several times, using stones from the abbey buildings.

The Cholmley family buildings used to be four wings around a central courtyard. At the back there is a medieval building that was transformed by the Cholmleys. At the front is a classical wing built by Sir Hugh Cholmley II in 1672, now used to house the museum and shop.



The hard garden and north wing of Cholmley House, completed in 1672.

A VICTORIAN HOTSPOT

In the 1800s, holidaymakers, writers and artists became more interested in England's ruins and landscapes. Lots of drawings and paintings of the abbey were made at this time. The arrival of the railway and growing interest in the abbey ruins meant Whitby developed steadily as a popular seaside resort.

Whitby's fossil-rich cliffs also helped to attract Victorian tourists. Whitby **jet** appealed to Victorian tastes and so, in the 1800s, the jet jewellery industry was born.

Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* was published in 1897, giving Whitby its first major literary link. *Dracula* came ashore at Whitby **harbour** in the form of a dog and attacked his first English victim in St Mary's churchyard. The sinister story has since passed into popular culture.

Read more about how *Dracula* came to Whitby in this online article:

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/whitby-abbey/history-and-stories/dracula



The abbey ruins, seen through the mist from St Mary's churchyard. The eerie atmosphere created by the changeable weather on Whitby's headland provided inspiration from Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula*.

WAR AND PEACE AT WHITBY

For hundreds of years, Whitby's exposed coastal position has made it an easy target for the enemy. On 14 December 1914, at the start of the **First World War**, four German warships appeared a mile and a half off the Whitby coast. They fired on the town, damaging the buildings on the headland, including the beautiful **west front** of the abbey. In 1920, the Office of Works (later English Heritage) began to look after the abbey ruins.



A photo taken in 1914 showing the final collapse of the west front of the abbey after the German shelling.

Raiders from the sea have had a dramatic impact on Whitby at various stages in its long history. These threats have passed and Whitby now welcomes thousands of visitors drawn by the sea, the pretty harbour and the dramatic abbey ruins. English Heritage continues to care for Whitby Abbey, protecting it against the ongoing impact of the wind and rain, so that people can enjoy it for centuries to come.

GLOSSARY

TRICKY TERMS AND WHAT THEY MEAN

Below is a list of words you might come across while exploring Whitby Abbey. Use this Glossary to find out what they mean.



A small, incomplete jet cross pendant with squared arms decorated with ring and dot motifs, dating to the medieval period. Archaeologists found this on the Whitby headland. © Whitby Museum

abbess – a woman who is the head of an abbey and has authority over a prioress and other nuns. The male version is called an abbot.

abbey – the building or buildings lived in by a community of monks or nuns. In the Anglian period, both men and women could live at Whitby Abbey. In the Benedictine period, only men were allowed.

Anglian – used to describe one of the people groups that invaded northern England after the Romans left. Their buildings and objects are also described as Anglian.

archaeologists – people who learn about the past by studying the remains of buildings and objects found in the ground

Battle of Hastings (1066) – one of the most famous battles in English history fought between William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, and Harold Godwinson, king of England. The Norman army defeated the Anglo-Saxons and William took the throne, becoming the first Norman king of England.

Benedictine – used to describe monks or nuns whose monastic life is regulated by the Rule of St Benedict. Their monasteries are described as Benedictine.

Christian – a person who follows the teachings of Christ, as set out in the Bible

erosion – the process of being worn away by wind and water



Benedictine monks like this one lived at Whitby Abbey during the medieval period.

First World War – a global war between 1914 and 1918 that began in Europe when Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated. It was one of the largest wars in history. Over nine million military personnel and seven million civilians died as a result of the war.

fossilised – when the remains of a once-living thing (e.g. a bone, shell or plant) is preserved in rock for a very long time, it leaves an imprint called a fossil



The pointed arches of the Benedictine abbey are a common feature of Gothic architecture, designed to draw the eye heavenward.

Gothic – a style of architecture popular between the 12th and 16th centuries, which includes high ceilings, pointed arches, detailed window frames and stained glass to create a feeling of grandeur and wonder. ‘Gothic’ is also used to refer to literature and sub-culture.

harbour – a sheltered spot on the coast, either natural or man-made, where boats can land and be left safely

jet – a type of black stone (fossilised wood) found locally that can be polished to achieve a shiny finish



A medieval chess piece made from jet, excavated at Whitby Abbey.

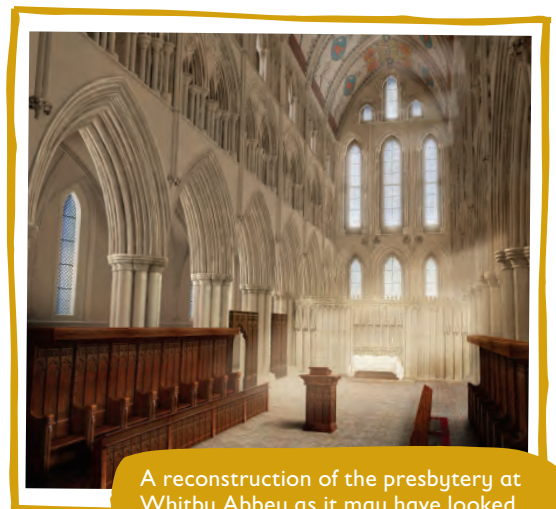
missionaries – people on a religious mission, usually with the aim of telling people in foreign countries about Christianity

monastery – a community of monks or nuns who have taken religious vows

nave – the large part of a church, usually at its west. In most churches it is used by the general population for worship. In monasteries, it was used for processions, religious services and the burial of important supporters of the monastery.

pagans – people whose religious beliefs are different to the main world religions, often worshipping many gods and feeling a strong connection to nature. Anglo-Saxon pagans were known to worship gods including Woden and Tiw.

prehistoric – used to describe a time in the past before writing was used. Prehistory is split into three time periods: the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age.



A reconstruction of the presbytery at Whitby Abbey as it may have looked during the Benedictine period.

presbytery – the sacred area of a church, usually at its east, reserved especially for the clergy (priests who have been ordained by a bishop and are able to carry out church services, especially the Mass or Holy Eucharist)

priory – a monastery of men or women under religious vows that is run by a prior or prioress

reptile – a type of cold-blooded animal (e.g. a snake, lizard, turtle or alligator) that breathes air. Their skin is usually covered with scales or bony plates.

Romanesque – a style of architecture common between the 11th and 12th centuries, which includes semi-circular arches, columns, thick walls and small windows to create a sense of awe and intimacy

Suppression of the Monasteries

– an important part of the English Reformation, alternatively called the Dissolution of the Monasteries. In 1534 Henry VIII was declared head of the Church in England after the pope refused to grant him a divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. Many aspects of traditional Catholic belief were attacked and between 1536 and 1540 every monastery in England was closed on the orders of Henry VIII. Many of the monastic buildings were destroyed and Henry seized the wealth of the monasteries.



King Henry VIII as he may have looked in the 1530s.



The north transept at Whitby Abbey still stands to its full height and features some impressive Gothic architecture such as pointed arches and foliate (leaf) carvings.

Synod – a gathering of church leaders, with the goal of making decisions together

transepts – the two building sections forming the arms of a cross-shaped church, sticking out at right angles from the nave

Viking – warriors from northern Europe who attacked England from the sea between the 8th and 11th centuries. They were given the name 'Viking' which means 'pirate'.

west front – the end of the church where the ceremonial entrance is. Most medieval churches are laid out in the shape of a cross, with the the high altar facing east, so that the sun rises behind it.

ANGLO-SAXONS, VIKINGS AND BRITONS

AD 410–1066

EVENTS IN ENGLISH HISTORY

AD 627

Paulinus, a Christian missionary from Rome, reaches Northumbria and converts the Northumbrian king, Edwin. The king and his household are baptised.



AD 655

Oswiu of Northumbria, a Christian ruler, defeats Penda of Mercia, a pagan ruler, at the Battle of the Winwaed. Oswiu becomes king and Christianity becomes the main faith in Britain. To fulfil a vow he made before the battle, Oswiu gives his baby daughter to be a nun at Hartlepool.

AD 600

AD 737–806

Ten different kings rule Northumbria. Three are murdered, five are expelled and two retire to become monks. This weakens the kingdom of Northumbria.

AD 793

In the first recorded Viking raid on Britain, the Vikings sack (steal from and burn) Lindisfarne Priory.

c.AD 793–800

Vikings from Denmark (Danes) sack the Christian monasteries in Northumbria.

AD 866

Osbert, king of Northumbria, is overthrown by his people. Meanwhile, the Danes launch a full-scale invasion of Britain's shores.

AD 700

AD 657

Abbess Hild, previously in charge at Hartlepool Abbey, founds a new abbey for men and women at Whitby, with King Oswiu's help.

AD 664

The great Synod of Whitby is held. Two types of Christianity (Irish and Roman) are being followed, which is causing much confusion. Religious leaders gather at Whitby and decide England will follow the Roman tradition.

c.AD 680

Caedmon, an illiterate layman, is visited in a dream and receives the gift of poetry. He is the first named poet in the English language.

AD 867

Hild's monastery is destroyed and abandoned, probably during a series of violent Viking raids on Northumbria.

From the 870s, Danes settle in large numbers in the north-east of England.

DID YOU KNOW?



The Danes left almost no written records so we have to use place names to work out where they lived. The most common Danish place names end with '-by' (meaning farm, village or place) so we can assume they settled in Whitby and the surrounding area.

7TH
CENTURY

8TH–10TH
CENTURIES

HISTORY OF WHITBY ABBEY



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

MEDIEVAL BRITAIN

1066–c.1500

1066

Duke William of Normandy defeats King Harold of England at the Battle of Hastings. The Normans take control of England. William the Conqueror gives land in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire to William de Percy, one of his most loyal knights.

1086

In the Domesday survey, Whitby is said to pay higher taxes to the king than other nearby towns, making it the most important place in the local area.



1000

1070s

Reinfrid, a Norman soldier who fought in the Battle of Hastings, visits the ruins while travelling in the north and is so moved that he decides to become a monk.

1078

Reinfrid sets up a simple priory for a group of monks in the ruins of Hild's Anglian monastery, given to them by William de Percy.

c.1090

William de Percy turns the priory into a full abbey and makes his son the first abbot. The abbey begins to follow the Rule of St Benedict.

**11TH
CENTURY**

1100–35

Reign of Henry I. He gives the abbey the right to run the town and collect taxes on his behalf. This means the abbot controls the anchorage in the harbour and has a stake in the town's fishing industry. All the town's profits go to the abbot. The local people feel this is unfair, which sparks an ongoing legal dispute between the abbey and the town.



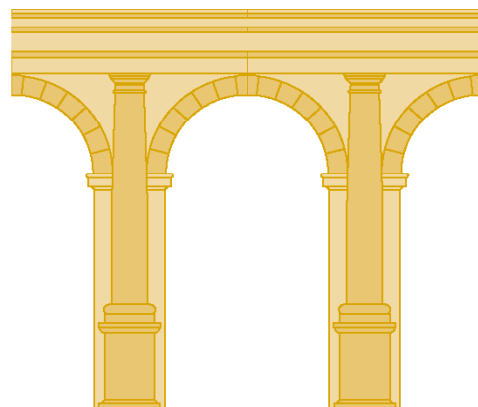
1154–89

Reign of Henry II.

1100

c.1109

The wooden priory buildings begin to be replaced with stone. The first stone buildings of the new Benedictine abbey are built in the Romanesque style with thick walls and round arches.



1148

38 monks are named as living at the abbey. Abbot Benedict is dismissed for wasting the abbey's resources.

**12TH
CENTURY**

MEDIEVAL BRITAIN

1066–c.1500

1215

King John (r.1199–1216) agrees to Magna Carta. The peace agreement soon fails, beginning the First Barons' War.

1216

King John dies. His son, Henry III (r.1216–72), is crowned at nine years old.

1260s

Henry III's government is challenged by a group of rebel barons, led by Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester.

1307–27

Reign of Edward II.

1327

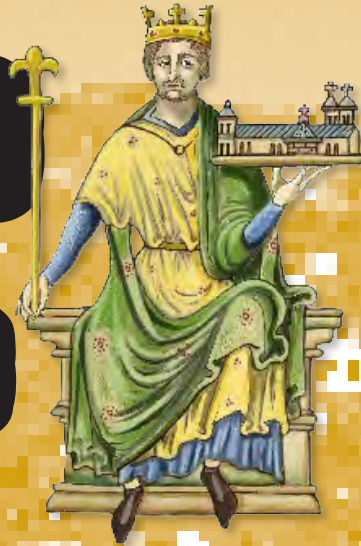
Edward II is forced to give up his crown. His son, also called Edward (r.1327–77), becomes king.

1348

The bubonic plague, later known as the 'Black Death', comes to England. It reaches Whitby in 1349, causing the number of monks living at the abbey to drop significantly.

1377–99

Reign of Richard II.



1200

1300

c.1200

Donations to the abbey slow down, meaning there is less money to spend on the buildings. Despite this, Abbot Roger of Scotland commissions the rebuilding of the abbey church in the 1220s.

1320

A religious official visits the abbey to check on the abbot and monks. The abbey is found to be in debt. The monks are reported to be spending their time hunting instead of praying, reading and working.

1225–30

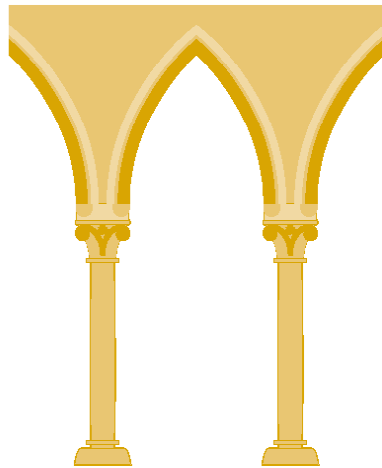
Rebuilding work starts on the presbytery, followed by the transepts and choir.

1334–40

Extra funds are raised and work on the nave continues, almost 100 years after it started. The abbey runs out of money again and work on the nave has to stop. The nave isn't finished until the 15th century. In total, the Gothic church takes about 250 years to complete.

c.1250

The nave and central tower start to be rebuilt. Part-way through, the abbey runs out of money and the nave is left unfinished.



**13TH
CENTURY**

**14TH
CENTURY**

TUDOR BRITAIN

1485–1603

1509–47

Reign of Henry VIII.

1536–40

Suppression of the Monasteries in England.



1558–1603

Reign of Elizabeth I.

1500

1539

The monastery is suppressed by Henry VIII.

1540–41

The abbey and its estates are leased to Richard Cholmley.

1555

Richard Cholmley buys the abbey and its estates outright. It stays in the Cholmley family for many generations. Over the years, their home, known as Cholmley House, is rebuilt several times, using stones from the abbey buildings.

**16TH
CENTURY**

STUART BRITAIN

1603–1714

1642–51

The English Civil War. Sir Hugh Cholmley supports the Parliamentarians at the start of the war, but switches to the Royalist side in 1643, in support of King Charles I.



1649

Execution of Charles I (r.1625–49).

1660

Restoration of Charles II (r.1660–85).

1600

1645

Sir Hugh Cholmley, the owner of Whitby Abbey and Cholmley House, defends the nearby Scarborough Castle on behalf of King Charles I. He is forced to surrender and goes into exile in France. His house on the cliff at Whitby is seized by his enemies.

1649

Sir Hugh Cholmley returns from exile and manages to recover his estates. He passes them on to his son, Sir Hugh Cholmley II.

1670s

Sir Hugh Cholmley II adds a grand new wing and entrance court to the house built by his father.

**17TH
CENTURY**

GEORGIAN & VICTORIAN BRITAIN

1800–99

1803–15

The Napoleonic Wars between France and several other countries, including Great Britain. The French leader, Napoleon Bonaparte, is eventually defeated at the Battle of Waterloo. Because of this war, fewer British people travel abroad, preferring instead to be tourists at home.

1837–1901

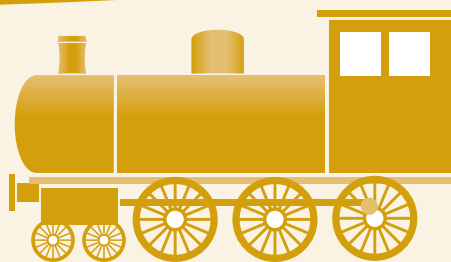
Reign of Victoria.



1800

1847

The old Whitby and Pickering horse-drawn railway is converted to a steam operation and a new railway station is built (the same one you see today). With people now able to get to Whitby by train, the town develops into a popular seaside resort for holidaymakers.



1866

Sir Charles Strickland adds a Victorian wing and a new gatehouse to Cholmley House.

1897

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is published.

19TH CENTURY

20TH CENTURY

1900–1999

1914–18

First World War.

1939–45

Second World War.



1900

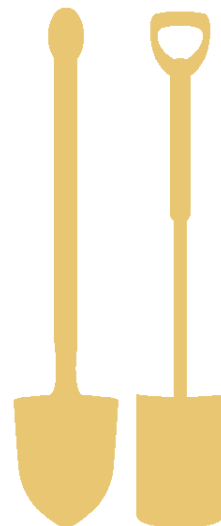
2000

1914

The German fleet shells Whitby and strikes the abbey ruins. The west front is badly damaged.

1920

The Office of Works (now English Heritage) begins to look after the abbey. Sir Charles Peers finds evidence of the Anglian monastery during excavations.



20TH CENTURY

WHITBY ABBEY TIMELINE

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

WHY BUILD HERE?



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2 and KS3 (History, Geography)

Learning objectives

- Understand the relationship between land and sea at Whitby.
- Analyse why St Hild and King Oswiu chose to build a new Anglian monastery on the headland at Whitby in AD 657.
- Consider how Whitby's history has been shaped by its location.

Time to complete

20 minutes



The abbey ruins on the headland with the town and River Esk below.

SUMMARY

On a class projector screen, use the 'map view' on Google Maps to locate Whitby Abbey on the coastline. Switch the view to 'satellite' to give your class a more detailed picture of the cliffs.

Ask students to discuss the pros and cons of each point listed below. Do this in small groups, using the card sort activity provided (on the next page).

TEACHER ANSWERS

Whitby Abbey stands above a busy harbour with international trading links.

- **Pro:** Money made from harbour trade can be used to build and maintain the abbey.
- **Con:** Harbour towns are vulnerable to Viking raids.

Whitby Abbey is high up on a cliff, overlooking the sea.

- **Pro:** It can be used to keep an eye on enemies trying to attack by boat.
- **Con:** There are no streams or springs on the headland because it's too high up.

Whitby Abbey is a symbol of the Christian faith, which can be seen from miles around.

- **Pro:** It will help to strengthen Christianity, which was still a fairly new religion.
- **Con:** It is a target for people who aren't Christian and want to seize the wealth of the monasteries.

Whitby Abbey is exposed to the sea, wind and rain.

- **Pro:** Rainwater can be collected as a source of fresh water.
- **Con:** Erosion means bits of the cliff will fall into the sea as the years go by.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Discuss topography and learn key terminology relating to coastal erosion. The cliff edge is being eroded at a rate of about 10m every 100 years. In Roman times the headland might have extended out another 200m or more. Visit our web page to find out more about Whitby Abbey's history: www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/whitby-abbey/history-and-stories

WHY BUILD HERE?



Sort the eight cards into the pros and cons table. Put one card in each box.

WHITBY ABBEY IS...	THIS IS GOOD BECAUSE...	THIS IS BAD BECAUSE...
... above a busy harbour with international trading links.		
... high up on a cliff, overlooking the sea.		
... a symbol of the Christian faith, which can be seen from miles around.		
... exposed to the sea, wind and rain.		

I think it was a good/bad idea to build an abbey here because:

.....

.....



It can be used to keep an eye on enemies trying to attack by boat.	Harbour towns are vulnerable to Viking raids.	It will help to strengthen Christianity, which was still a fairly new religion.	There are no streams or springs on the headland because it's too high up.
Rainwater can be collected as a source of fresh water.	It is a target for people who aren't Christian and want to seize the wealth of the monasteries.	Money made from harbour trade can be used to build and maintain the abbey.	Erosion means bits of the cliff will fall into the sea as the years go by.



AT THE ABBEY

Activities for students to do at Whitby Abbey to help them get the most out of their learning.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

HISTORY DETECTIVES



KSI-2

Recommended for

KSI-2 (History, Geography, English, Drama)

Learning objectives

- Explore some key features of Whitby Abbey and understand how the buildings were used in the medieval period.
- Use evidence to draw conclusions about what the buildings at Whitby Abbey used to look like and how they were used by the community living there.

Time to complete



Students should look closely at Whitby Abbey's unique architectural details to develop their skills of observation and inference.



Students inside the church at Whitby Abbey.

SUMMARY

Gather in front of the large timeline on the wall in the exhibition. Show students that there was originally an Anglian abbey here, built in AD 657 for both men (monks) and women (nuns), run by an abbess called St Hild. The Anglian buildings are now lost, but there are lots of objects in the exhibition that tell the story of St Hild's monastery. Look for the Anglian objects in the exhibition, before heading out to the medieval abbey ruins.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Gather in the grassy area between the exhibition and the ruins. Explain to students that the church they are looking at was re-established in the 11th century. They are going to be history detectives today, using the building to look for clues about what life was like here in the medieval period. The monks who lived here at this time were all men and followed the Rule of St Benedict, which set out a strict routine for the day. The monks made a vow to commit their lives to God, which included giving up all of their belongings. The abbot was in charge of the abbey and made sure everyone followed the rules. They could not leave the monastery unless the abbot gave them permission.

The remains of the Benedictine abbey tell us lots about life in this period. Use the teachers' notes (on the next page) to guide students through the abbey. Students should record their progress on the checklist and map provided (on pages 25–26).

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, look closely at Source 8 (on page 35) and ask students to imagine what they might have seen, heard and felt during a worship service in the 13th century. Some answers include: praying, singing, celebration, procession, observance, ritual, incense, silence, solemnity, peace, awe.

They could use these ideas to make a soundscape, draw a picture or create a piece of descriptive writing about a visit to the church in the medieval period.

HISTORY DETECTIVES

TEACHERS' NOTES

KSI-2

LOCATION	DID YOU KNOW?	CHALLENGE
1. Mystery door	There used to be a cloister (a covered, square-shaped walkway surrounding a garden) attached to the church. The monks walked around the cloister while thinking, praying and reading. You can still see the doorway and steps used by the monks to go between the church and the cloister. They were expected to be silent in the cloister, except for when they were singing or chanting.	Look closely at the door frame. Which way did the wooden door swing open? How can you tell? Answer: It opened from right to left, towards the church. When closed, the door rested against the lip of the frame and was held in place by a wooden bolt, which slid into the small square hole.
2. Early church outline	There was an earlier church here, built in the 1100s, which is marked out in the grass. Notice the semi-circular shapes and thick walls typical of Norman architecture. When this style went out of fashion in the 1200s, Abbot Roger of Scarborough started to transform the church into the Gothic style you see today.	Spot two differences between the early church and the church you see still standing today. Answer: The early church has apses, it is smaller and simpler and it uses more rounded shapes than the later church.
3. Overhead clues	The eastern arm of the church is called the presbytery. It is the sacred heart of the church, reserved for the clergy. Above you, the heads of saints and important patrons are carved into the arches at the very top, keeping an eye on the worshippers below.	On the third level up, spot the little dark passageways used by the monks to get around the top floor. On the same level, spot the carved heads looking down on you from above. Pull a silly face and imagine it's been turned to stone.
4. High altar	The high altar is where ceremonies including Mass – involving bread and wine to represent the body and blood of Christ – was celebrated by a priest. The table used by the priest has been lost but there are some clues, such as higher ground and wall cupboards, which suggest the high altar used to sit against the east wall.	Find the wall cupboards built into the east wall. What do you think they were used for? Answer: To store items (e.g. bread and wine) used by the abbot during special rituals and ceremonies done at the high altar.

Continued...

5. Wonky nave	The nave is the longest part of the church building, forming the 'bottom' of the cross shape. The nave at Whitby doesn't quite line up with the rest of the church. It's off by about four degrees, causing a slight bend in the building at the crossing. There is no other medieval church like it in England.	Walk down the north side of the church. Notice how the columns in the nave don't quite line up with the eastern end of the church. How do you think this happened? Answer: When the church was rebuilt, the builders probably had to fit the new nave around the old cloister, so things got skewed.
6. West front	The west wall features the ceremonial doorway into the church, which was mainly used by the monks and abbots for special services. It has been battered by the weather for hundreds of years. In the First World War it was damaged by German bombs and was rebuilt in 1920.	Look at the stones around the west door. Why are there strange lines worn into the stone? Answer: The marks are caused by the wind and rain, which beats against the stones from the same direction year after year, causing erosion patterns due to the softer layers in the sedimentary rock being worn away.
7. Changing arch styles	The three simpler windows were built in the 1200s in the lancet (tall and thin) style. There was a break in building work when the abbey ran out of money. More funds were raised in the 1300s so the two larger windows could be added. They are more elaborate, with ornate tracery. The doorway you came through was the main entrance into the church for visitors called 'lay people'.	Spot the difference between the three smaller windows and the two larger ones built along the wall of the nave. Why are these window styles so different? Answer: There was a break in building work because the money ran out. When the later windows were added, window styles had changed.
8. East wall	When the sun rose in the morning it shone its first rays through colourful painted glass in the east windows. Looking at this wall from the outside, you can see three tiers of lancet windows in the Gothic style, many with dog-tooth decoration. On either side are octagonal turrets. The stonework and glass used in the east wall were highly decorative as a way of giving thanks to God.	Spot the dog-tooth pattern used in the window frames. Count the number of arches used in the east wall of the church. Don't forget the ones that are damaged or missing! Answer: Twenty-three. This includes the two east-facing arches in each octagonal turret.
9. Inside the walls	The walls are made from two outer layers of stone, filled in with rubble, like a sandwich. The rubble core is hidden by the neat outer faces, which are made from blocks of finely cut stone, fitting closely together (ashlar masonry). You can see this demonstrated at the south-east corner of the church, where the wall is damaged and some of the rubble core is exposed.	Look closely at the stone used to build the wall. The stone used in this wall is a type of sedimentary rock called sandstone. Spot the small black chunks of iron in the sandstone blocks. These iron deposits got trapped in the rock when it was formed thousands of years ago.



HISTORY DETECTIVES

EXPLORE WHITBY ABBEY

Look for clues about what the building was like in medieval times. Go round the abbey and tick each thing off as you find it.



1 MYSTERY DOOR

- Decorated door frame
Bolt hole Steps



2 EARLY CHURCH OUTLINE

- Apse Transepts



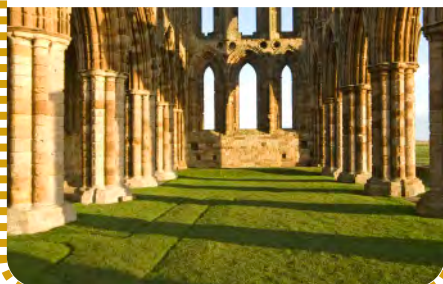
3 OVERHEAD CLUES

- Three tiers Carved heads
Passageways



4 HIGH ALTAR

- Higher ground Wall cupboards



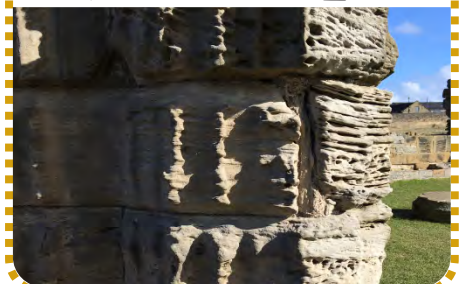
5 WONKY NAVE

- Pillars



6 WEST FRONT

- Big doorway
Strange lines on the stones



7 CHANGING ARCH STYLES

- 3 smaller windows 2 larger windows



8 EAST WALL

- Gothic window arches
Dog-tooth pattern Turrets



9 INSIDE THE WALLS

- Neat outer layers Rubble core





KEY

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 MYSTERY DOOR | 6 WEST FRONT |
| 2 EARLY CHURCH OUTLINE | 7 CHANGING ARCH STYLES |
| 3 OVERHEAD CLUES | 8 EAST WALL |
| 4 HIGH ALTAR | 9 INSIDE THE WALLS |
| 5 WONKY NAVE | |

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

INSPIRATION

TRAIL



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

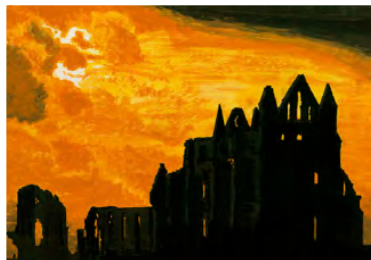
KS2 & KS3 (History, English, Art)

Learning objectives

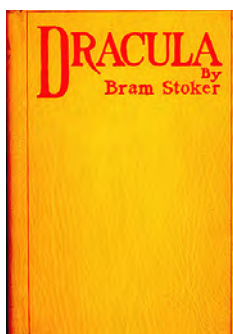
- Understand that Whitby Abbey has been, and still is, an inspiring place for writers and artists.
- Use the setting at Whitby as a stimulus for creative writing and art.
- Develop reading, writing and drawing skills.

Time to complete

45–60 minutes



A silhouette painting of Whitby Abbey by an unknown artist.



A reproduction cover of the first edition of *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, published in 1897.

SUMMARY

Print the trail (on **pages 28–29**) as an A4 or A3, double-sided resource and fold along the dotted lines. Photocopy enough trails for your class.

To get the most out of this resource, each student will need: a pen, a pencil, a notebook and a sketchbook. We don't recommend using loose paper as it can get windy on the headland.

ACTIVITY	WHERE?
1. DESCRIBE THE ABBEY	On the site of the cloister, between the Visitor Centre and ruins.
2. WRITE A HAIKU	At the west front of the church. Please be careful of the steep slope near the west front.
3. USE YOUR SENSES	On the patch of grass north-west of the abbey, overlooking the town, beach and sea below. Keep walking towards the perimeter wall until you get a good view of the beach below.
4. DRAW THE ABBEY	Looking at the east wall of the church from across the pond. Please keep walkways clear by gathering your class on the patch of grass by the bench.
5. FINISH THE STORY	In the open grassy area between the abbey and the car park.

Back in the classroom, students could turn the notes they made at Whitby Abbey into a longer piece of creative writing; or develop their sketches into a more detailed piece of artwork, choosing a medium other than pencil to work with. Share your artwork with us on Twitter [@EHEducation](https://twitter.com/EHEducation).

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

To adapt this trail for KS3, you could spend some time before your visit making a class list of key literary devices such as: simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia, sibilance, assonance, personification and hyperbole. You could use the literary sources 12 and 13 (on **page 37**) as exemplars. Ask students to identify and analyse how different writing techniques have been used in the extracts and encourage students to use them in their own writing.

INSPIRATION TRAIL

FOLLOW IN THE
FOOTSTEPS OF FAMOUS
WRITERS AND ARTISTS
AT WHITBY ABBEY

You will need: a pen, a notebook, a pencil,
a sketchbook.

3 USE YOUR SENSES

GET INSPIRED

Similes and metaphors are used to paint a picture for the reader. **Underline** one simile and one metaphor:

‘The sea is tumbling in over the shallows and the sandy flats with a roar... The horizon is lost in a grey mist. All is vastness; the clouds are piled up like giant rocks, and there is a “brool” over the sea that sounds like some presage of doom.’

From *Dracula* by Bram Stoker

HAVE A GO

Look out over the sea and beach. **Write** down some similes and metaphors to describe what you can see, hear, smell, taste and feel.

1 DESCRIBE THE ABBEY

GET INSPIRED

Underline four adjectives (describing words):

‘Jennet’s eyes scanned up beyond the houses to where the high plain of cliff reached out to the sea. She gasped and stared for there, surmounting everything, was a ragged crown of grey stone. The building was in ruins but that did not diminish its power... It was a worshipful thing.’

From *The Whitby Witches* by Robin Jarvis

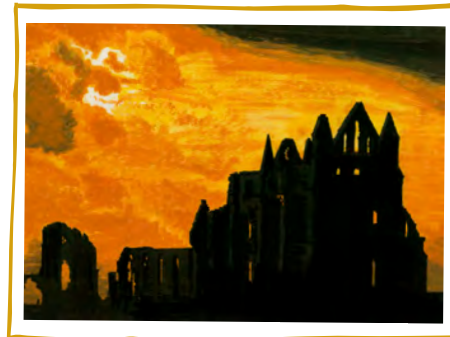
HAVE A GO

Look at the abbey ruins. **Write** five adjectives to describe it.

4 DRAW THE ABBEY

GET INSPIRED

Stand on the spot where you think the artist stood when they painted this:



HAVE A GO

Move around until you find a viewpoint you like. **Sketch** the abbey.

2 WRITE A HAIKU

GET INSPIRED

A haiku is a non-rhyming poem that has 3 lines. The first and last lines have 5 syllables and the middle line has 7.

Rough stone standing tall
A gloomy shell whipped by wind
Empty but mighty

HAVE A GO

Touch the stones of the west front. **Think** about how they look and feel. Use these ideas to **write** your own haiku.

5 FINISH THE STORY

GET INSPIRED

Stand in a clear space on the grassy area between the abbey and car park and **read** this:

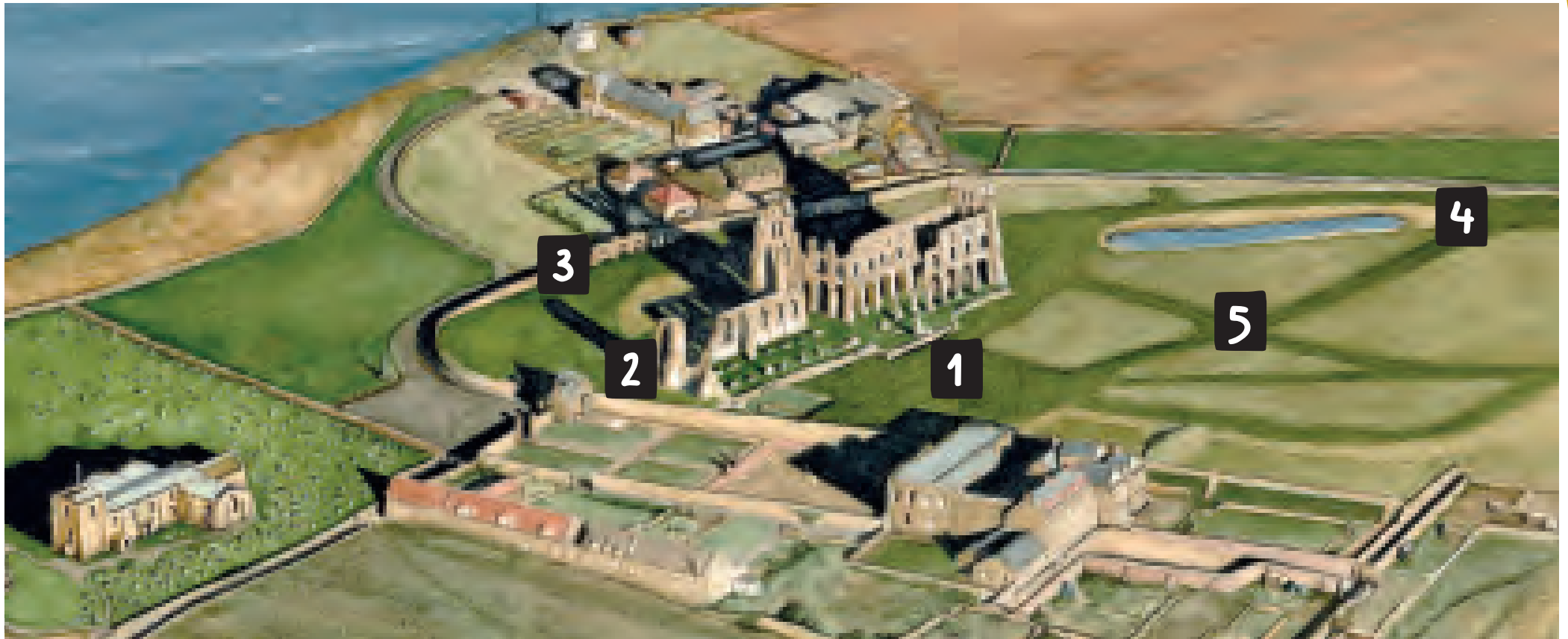
‘Below, the wild grasses bowed, slowly sweeping into a dry expanse, which mimicked the rippling water of the harbour. Yet beneath the swaying, seeding heads, the sleep of counted years was finally coming to an end. Presently the soil began to pulse, bulging upwards as if it were alive. There it parted, as its thick, knotted tangle of roots stretched and ripped apart.’

From *A Warlock in Whitby* by Robin Jarvis

HAVE A GO

What happens next? **Write** the rest of the story.

INSPIRATION TRAIL MAP



KEY

1 DESCRIBE THE ABBEY

2 WRITE A HAIKU

3 USE YOUR SENSES

4 DRAW THE ABBEY

5 FINISH THE STORY

EXTRA CHALLENGE



Back in the classroom, turn your ideas into a longer piece of creative writing or a more developed piece of artwork.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

ART AND ARCHITECTURE



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2 & KS3 (History, Art, Design and Technology)

Learning objectives

- Explore the Gothic stonework in the north transept of the church.
- Develop a better understanding of Gothic shapes, colours, textures and patterns.
- Apply understanding to a souvenir design.

Time to complete

20–30 minutes



Arch detail in the north transept.



A close-up of the rich foliate carving of the capitals in the north transept.

SUMMARY

During your visit, go to the north transept. The transepts jut out from the nave at right angles to create the church's iconic cross shape. The north transept stands to its full height and is an exceptional example of Gothic architecture. The lower part of the north wall has blind arcading (a row of arches and columns built into the wall). The columns have capitals with leaf and flower details carved into them. The buttresses (which support the outside wall) are very elaborate and have many niches with carved canopies.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Explore the Gothic architecture of the north transept with students, both inside and outside. They should find one piece of patterned stonework that intrigues them. Students should sketch patterns and shapes they feel demonstrate an important element of Gothic architecture, whether this be the window style, the pillar shapes, the pointed arches, the arcades, the foliate carvings, the vaulted ceilings, or the window tracery.

Their observational sketches could become the inspiration for a homemade souvenir that they design from scratch and make back in the classroom. The end product could be a key ring, bookmark, fridge magnet, ruler, snow globe, etc.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, students should use arts and crafts materials to develop their ideas and produce the final product. You may want to provide templates to help younger students with their souvenir design, such as an outlined shape of a ruler or key ring.



POST-VISIT

Activities and information to help you extend your students' learning back in the classroom.

SOURCES

PEER INTO THE PAST

A historical source is something that tells us about life in the past, such as a document, a picture or an object. It may be a primary source, from the time, or a secondary source, created later. Our experts have chosen these sources to help you learn about Whitby Abbey's history.

SOURCE 1

‘Then the daughter of King Oswiu, being consecrated to God, entered the monastery that is called Hartlepool, in which Hild was then abbess. She after two years acquired by purchase ten hides of land at the place which is called Streoneshalch [Whitby], and here erected a monastery, in which the aforesaid King’s daughter was first a pupil and novice in monastic life, and after mistress and teacher in the monastery, till the number of her days were fulfilled, that is to say, full 59 years. Then this blessed virgin passed to the embrace and espousal of the heavenly bridegroom. At this monastery, she and her father Oswiu, and her mother Eanflaed, and her mother’s father Edwin, and many other nobles, were buried, in the church of the apostle St Peter.’

This extract is from Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Book 3, Chapter 24. In Bede’s account, we learn that King Oswiu made a vow before he won the Battle of the Winwaed. He promised that, if he won the battle, he would give his daughter Aelflaed to a life of religious service. He also vowed to provide land on which to build a new monastery as a way of giving thanks to God. When he won, he immediately sent his daughter to become a nun at Hartlepool Abbey, under the careful guidance of Abbess Hild. It seems that it was Abbess Hild who bought the land and founded the new monastery at Whitby, presumably with support from King Oswiu. This account also tells us that the Anglian monastery at Whitby became a burial place for members of Northumbria’s royal family and other nobles.



SOURCE 2

ANGLO-SAXON STONE CROSS

A stone cross or crucifix from the late 7th to early 8th century. It was broken into three fragments and reconstructed. Its upper arm is missing. It has a plain, smoothly dressed surface with double roll moulding and a chevron at the base. The reverse face is not carved, which suggests that this cross originally stood against a wall.



SOURCE 3

ANGLO-SAXON BOOK FITTING

A decorative copper mount for a book cover, dating to the 8th century.

© Whitby Museum



SOURCE 4

‘And when discussion arose on the questions of Easter, the tonsure, and various other church matters, it was decided to hold a synod to put an end to this dispute at the monastery of Streaneshalch [Whitby], which means The Bay of the Beacon, then ruled by the Abbess Hild, a woman devoted to God.’

This account of the Synod of Whitby is from Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Book 3, Chapter 25. In AD 664, King Oswiu ordered religious leaders to gather at Whitby to settle the differences between the Irish and Roman religious traditions and agree the future direction of Christianity in England. Learn more about the Synod in this web article: www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/whitby-abbey/history-and-stories/synod-of-whitby

SOURCE 5

‘Caedmon was at a beer drinking, but he knew no poetry, so when the harp came near him, he withdrew in shame, and went out to the cattle-fold... A man came to him in a dream and greeted him, calling him by name, “Caedmon, sing me something.” He answered, “I cannot sing anything, and therefore I came out from this entertainment, and retired here.” Then said he, “What shall I sing?” He said “Sing to me of the beginning of all things.” On receiving this answer, he at once began to sing in praise of God the Creator, verses and words which he had never heard, the order of which is as follows:

Praise we the fashioner now of Heaven’s fabric,
The majesty of his might and his mind’s wisdom,
Work of the world-warden, worker of all wonders,
How he the Lord of Glory everlasting
Wrought first for the race of men Heaven as a roof-tree,
Then made he Middle Earth to be their mansion.

Then he arose from his sleep, and he had firmly in his memory all that he sang while asleep.’

This extract is from Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Book 4, Chapter 24. While Hild was abbess of Whitby, an illiterate man who looked after the cattle there named Caedmon had a dream in which he was taught to compose and sing hymns in praise of God. The account, from Bede, describes how singing and reciting poetry were part of an evening’s entertainment among ordinary people then. Caedmon withdrew from the hall when it was his turn to perform because he could not do these things and then had his vision. Caedmon was taken to see Hild, and sang to her, and entered the monastic community at her invitation, where he composed many more poems and songs. The only fragment of his poetry to survive, though, is the 9-line extract from his first composition on the Creation, given in Bede’s account, translated into modern English above. This is one of the earliest dated pieces of Old English verse in existence.

SOURCE 6

ANGLO-SAXON GLASS BEADS

These colourful beads were found near the neck of a skeleton belonging to an Anglo-Saxon woman. They are thought to be part of a beaded necklace. The other beads and the twine on which they were threaded were probably made of organic materials like wood and twine, which rotted away, leaving just the glass beads in the grave.



SOURCE 7

'Chapter 33 – Whether Monks Ought to Have Anything of Their Own

The vice of personal ownership must by all means be cut out in the monastery by the very root, so that no one may presume to give or receive anything without the command of the Abbot; nor to have anything whatever as his own, neither a book, nor a writing tablet, nor a pen, nor anything else whatsoever, since monks are allowed to have neither their bodies nor their wills in their own power.'

...

'Chapter 48 – Of the Daily Work

Idleness is the enemy of the soul; and therefore the brethren ought to be employed in manual labour at certain times, at others, in devout reading. [...] they go out in the morning from the first till about the fourth hour, to do the necessary work, but that from the fourth till about the sixth hour they devote to reading. After the sixth hour, however, when they have risen from table, let them rest in their beds in complete silence.'

Extracts from *The Holy Rule of Saint Benedict*, translated by Rev. Boniface Verheyen, 1949 edition. The Benedictine monks at Whitby Abbey swore an oath of obedience, vowing never to break these strict Benedictine rules.



SOURCE 8



A reconstruction of the Benedictine abbey as it may have looked in about 1500. By this date the rebuilding of the Gothic church, begun in the 1220s, was finally complete.

SOURCE 12

‘Right over the town is the ruin of Whitby Abbey, which was sacked by the Danes... It is a most noble ruin, of immense size and full of beautiful and romantic bits; there is a legend that a White Lady is seen in one of the windows. Between it and the town there is another church, the parish one, round which is a big graveyard all full of tombstones. This, to my mind, is the nicest spot in Whitby, for it lies right over the town and has a full view of the harbour. It descends so steeply over the harbour that part of the bank has fallen away, and some of the graves have already been destroyed... Everything is grey – except the green grass, which seems like emerald among it... The sea is tumbling in over the shallows and the sandy flats with a roar... The horizon is lost in a grey mist. All is vastness; the clouds are piled up like giant rocks, and there is a “brool” over the sea that sounds like some presage of doom. Dark figures are on the beach here and there.’

This extract is from Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, 1897, Chapter 6. In this famous Gothic horror novel, Dracula comes to Whitby in a Russian ship, the *Demeter*, during a storm. Having slaughtered all of its crew, Dracula leaps ashore in the shape of a black dog. Two Englishwomen holidaying in Whitby, Mina Murray and Lucy Westenra, witness the ship’s arrival. In this extract, Mina describes the abbey and churchyard, then records the atmosphere of dread immediately prior to the *Demeter*’s arrival.

SOURCE 13

‘Jennet’s eyes scanned up beyond the houses to where the high plain of the cliff reached out to the sea. She gasped and stared for there, surmounting everything, was a ragged crown of grey stone – the abbey. The building was in ruins, but that did not diminish its power. The building had dominated Whitby for centuries, and waves of invisible power flowed down from it. The ruin was a guardian, watching and waiting, caring for the little town that huddled beneath the cliff. It was a worshipful thing.’

...

‘Miss Boston nodded. “Yes”, she sighed dreamily, “the abbey. It is indeed lovely. There has been a church on that spot for at least fourteen hundred years. One gets a marvellous sense of permanence, living under such an enduring symbol of Faith. If one believes in the genius loci – the spirit of place – then surely therein dwells something divine. The Vikings came, Henry did his best to destroy the abbey with the Dissolution of the Monasteries, and in the Great War, German ships bombarded it. Yet it still stands – strong and wonderful. They say a true inhabitant of Whitby is lost if he cannot see the abbey.’

This extract is from *The Whitby Witches*, by Robin Jarvis, 1991, pages 11–23. At the age of 20, as a student, Robin Jarvis visited Whitby for the first time: ‘Well, from the moment I stepped off the train, I saw the ruined abbey high up on the cliff dominating the town, and the haunting atmosphere of the place captivated me.’ The town inspired him to write the Whitby Witches trilogy of supernatural novels for children. In the first book, two children, Jennet and Ben, come to stay in Whitby with Miss Alice Boston, a strange but kind 92-year-old. Here, Jennet and Ben meet Miss Boston and have their first sight of Whitby.

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.

- With a black pen, **write** your name in the centre of the paper. Include a large, colourful illuminated capital letter.
- Underneath your name, **write** 'sing this while walking around the cloister' in red pen.
- Above your name, **draw** a musical staff (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 staff with notes.

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



A Benedictine monk.

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

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

BRING IN THE TOURISTS!



KS3

KS4+

Recommended for

KS3 & KS4+ (English, Business Studies, Leisure & Tourism)

Learning objectives

- Understand Whitby Abbey's role as a popular heritage tourism destination.
- Plan and present a marketing campaign that encourages people to visit Whitby Abbey.

Time to complete

May vary, depending on depth of study



This iconic view of the abbey from across the pond is a popular photo opportunity for the thousands of visitors who come to Whitby Abbey each year.

SUMMARY

Whitby Abbey has been popular with tourists since Victorian times. Put students in groups and ask them to imagine they work for English Heritage and have been given the task of organising a marketing campaign to encourage people to visit the site.

Students can use their site visit as inspiration for their marketing campaign. They should take photos, gather information, make notes and observe the way different types of visitors engage with the site.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Ask each group to plan their marketing campaign, using these guidelines to help:

- **WHAT** – plan and create a marketing campaign to persuade people to visit Whitby Abbey.
- **WHO** – choose whether you are going to market to families with young children, families with teenagers, retired people, young professionals or couples.
- **WHY** – think about why your chosen audience would want to come to Whitby Abbey. What will they be most interested in when they visit?
- **HOW** – consider how best to communicate with your audience and decide which method/s you are going to use to reach them, e.g. leaflet, poster, banner, web page, social media, press release. Decide which 'tone of voice' to use, e.g. you could use simple, fun language and lots of pictures for families with young children.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Each group can use their plans to produce a set of marketing materials for their chosen audience and present these to the rest of the class. After each presentation, you could ask the rest of the class to evaluate how successful the group's marketing campaign is by asking:

1. Does this campaign make you want to visit Whitby Abbey? Why/why not?
2. How well does this campaign meet the needs of their chosen audience?
3. How could they make this campaign even better?