ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

KS1–2

KS3

KS4+

TEACHERS' KIT
Pevensey Castle

This kit will help teachers plan a visit to Pevensey Castle, originally a Roman fort and famously the place chosen by William the Conqueror to land his Norman army in 1066. A medieval fortress was built inside the Roman walls and eventually repurposed in the Second World War. Use these resources before, during and after your visit to help students get the most out of their learning.

Step into England's story

WELCOME

This Teachers' Kit for Pevensey Castle 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 have 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've created Hazard Information guidance, which you can download from the Pevensey Castle **Schools page**. If you wish to visit 1066 Battle of Hastings, Abbey and Battlefield as part of your trip, please go to the Battle Abbey **Schools page**, where you'll find more information and resources. You can find more practical information about your booked visit to Pevensey Castle 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.

KS1–2	KS3	KS4+

MAP	LOOK	CHALLENGE	ART	EXAMINE	ROLE PLAY

SPEAKING	GROUP ACTIVITY	QUOTE	WRITE	INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

CONTENTS

PRE-VISIT

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

AT THE CASTLE

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

POST-VISIT

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

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

PRE-VISIT

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

ENGLISH HERITAGE EDUCATION

PEVENSEY CASTLE
SITE PLAN

Roman east gate

East tower

North tower

Possible line of early Norman inner bailey

Chapel

Site of hall

F

INNER BAILEY

Keep

Well

Gatehouse

Ticket office and shop

Postern

South tower

Dam

Collapsed wall

Postern

Tudor gun emplacement

Ditch

Roman west gate

Norman ditch

F Fireplace (site of)

100 metres

250 feet

Roman, 3rd century AD

12th century

Late 12th/early 13th century

Mid 13th century

14th century

Later medieval

Uncertain

**ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION**

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

DISCOVER THE STORY OF PEVENSEY CASTLE

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

c.AD 300: THE ROMAN FORT

The coastal defences of Roman Britain were systematically strengthened in about AD 290. It's likely that the Roman fort at Pevensey – called Anderida – was built at that time, as suggested by tree-ring dating of wooden piles (posts) found sunk into the wall foundations.

Anderida was first written about in the 4th century, in a document called the 'Notitia Dignitatum', a list of the civilian and military posts in the late Roman Empire. It was one in a chain of nine Roman forts that defended a section of the south-east coast facing attack by Saxon pirates. The Roman fort at Portchester has many similarities with Pevensey, particularly the D-shaped wall towers, which were a new feature of Roman forts at the time.

A reconstruction drawing of Anderida as it may have looked in c.AD 300. Today the sea is a mile away because of sand deposited by the sea, but in Roman times it came right up to the walls in some places. For a full-page version, please go to page 53.

After the Romans withdrew troops from Britain in AD 410, a community of Britons continued to live inside the walls of the old Roman fort. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that, in AD 491, the fort was attacked by Saxon raiders who killed the Britons living there. After this massacre, Pevensey may have continued as a settlement but it seems to disappear from the historical record for 600 years and probably fell into ruin during this time.

1066: THE NORMAN LANDING

Pevensey played a crucial role in the Norman Conquest of 1066. Before dawn on 28 September 1066 – three days after King Harold's victory at Stamford Bridge – William, Duke of Normandy, sailed a fleet of about 700 ships into the Bay of Pevensey. After landing, the Normans immediately built a temporary fort, made of timber, almost certainly within the walls of the Roman fort. They cut a ditch across the peninsula to isolate the ruins from the mainland and repaired the walls to create a castle.

Detail from the Bayeux Tapestry showing the Norman fleet crossing the Channel and arriving at Pevensey.

The next day William marched his troops to Hastings, where he waited for Harold to arrive from the north. When William learnt of King Harold's approach, he moved his army 7 miles inland, where they camped overnight within sight of the enemy army. At 9am on 14 October 1066, the battle began. The two armies were so evenly matched that the fighting lasted for about nine hours. Eventually, King Harold was killed, possibly fatally wounded by an arrow that pierced his brain through his eye. Leaderless, the remaining English forces fled.

Find out more about the battle by visiting the battlefield itself and by exploring our online articles: www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/1066-and-the-norman-conquest

William the Conqueror, who won the Battle of Hastings and became the first Norman king of England in 1066.

WILLIAM'S SQUABBLING SONS

In 1088, the year after the death of William I, William's sons were arguing with each other about who should be the new king of England. When William died, he gave Normandy in France to his eldest son, Robert, making him the new Duke of Normandy.

Meanwhile, Robert's younger brother, William Rufus, succeeded his father as king of England, becoming King William II (r.1087–1100). Before he died, William I had expressed a personal hope that Rufus would be the next king. This infuriated Duke Robert and his supporters, who believed that Robert had the right to be king instead of his younger brother.

A scene from the Bayeux Tapestry showing Robert, Count of Mortain (right), and Odo, Bishop of Bayeux (left), sitting on either side of William, Duke of Normandy (who went on to conquer England in 1066). © Myrabella via Wikimedia Commons

William the Conqueror's half-brother, Robert, Count of Mortain, and Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, sided with Duke Robert. Together, they held Pevensey Castle against William II, on behalf of Duke Robert. The aim of their revolt was to replace William with Robert on the English throne. To achieve this, Duke Robert would need to invade England via Pevensey, in the exact footsteps of his father.

1088: A SIX-WEEK SIEGE

A medieval stone-throwing machine made of wood, called a trebuchet. During a siege, stone missiles were loaded into the sling and catapulted through the air to smash through walls.

To stop his brother invading England via the rebel stronghold at Pevensey, William II personally supervised a siege by land and sea in 1088. He was supported by his father's friend, William de Warenne. Warenne had fought alongside William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings and was rewarded with nearby land, at Lewes. Pevensey Castle's powerful defences resisted every attack but the rebels trapped inside were finally forced to seek a truce when they ran out of food.

Despite this rebellion, Robert, Count of Mortain, was allowed to keep Pevensey Castle. He passed it down to his son, who subsequently lost it, along with the other family estates in England, when he opposed the next king, Henry I (r.1100–35). Henry I granted most of this confiscated property to a Norman lord, Gilbert de l'Aigle.

In 1101, when Duke Robert again threatened to invade England, Henry I spent the summer at Pevensey in anticipation of an attack.

DEVELOPMENT AND CONFLICT

In the 1180s Pevensey's defences, except the Roman walls, were still largely made of earth and timber. From the 1190s, regular large payments were made towards unspecified works by Richard I (r.1189–99), suggesting the first major stone buildings may have been built at that time.

A reconstruction drawing of the castle's busy inner bailey c.1250. Daily services were held in the chapel (the white building with a tiled roof). For a larger version, please go to page 58.

By 1216, Richard I's successor, King John (r.1199–1216), was desperately fighting off an invasion led by the French king's son, Prince Louis. Lacking the resources to garrison Pevensey, King John gave orders to demolish it (along with Hastings, Portchester, Chichester and Knepp castles). He wanted to prevent them being used by Prince Louis in support of the barons. King John's orders were probably ignored.

After 1230 the castle passed to a sequence of royal favourites, including Peter of Savoy, who was granted it in 1246. By 1254 he had probably replaced the inner bailey's timber defences with the stone walls and towers we see today.

REBELLION, RUIN AND REPAIR

Pevensey Castle's new stone defences were soon put to the test. In the mid-1200s, England was divided by civil war. Henry III (r.1216–72) was fighting with a group of rebel barons who wanted to limit his power. In 1264, Simon de Montfort led a rebellion against Henry III. Pevensey Castle was under royal control, which made it a target. When the castle constable refused to surrender the castle to the rebels, a long siege began, with Simon de Montfort's army trapping and bombarding the king's supporters inside. Ultimately the castle held out, and Simon de Montfort lifted the siege in July 1265. In the course of the fighting the south wall of the Roman fort was destroyed.

A soldier in Simon de Montfort's attacking army, carrying a battleaxe. The red lion on his chest is Simon de Montfort's coat of arms, showing which side he is on.

Royal accounts from the 1270s onwards show that the buildings were continually on the verge of ruin despite regular and extensive repair. In 1306, the constable Roger de Levelande was accused of breaking up and selling the wooden bridge over the moat. The cost of repairs was estimated at more than £1,000, a huge sum of money at the time.

1399: UNDER SIEGE AGAIN

In 1372 John of Gaunt took ownership of Pevensey. In 1377, the English crown passed to Richard II (r.1377–99) when he was just ten years old. John of Gaunt was Richard's oldest surviving uncle and played a significant role in the government of England during his nephew's reign. Gaunt became one of the richest and most influential men in England, eventually having more say over how the country was ruled than King Richard himself. Gaunt appointed Sir John Pelham as constable of Pevensey in 1394.

The stone walls and towers of the inner bailey, surrounded by a water-filled moat, made Pevensey Castle highly defensive and able to withstand heavy siege.

Gaunt's banished son, Henry Bolingbroke, returned to England in 1399 to remove Richard II from the throne and claim his inheritance. The castle constable, Sir John Pelham, supported Henry Bolingbroke.

When Bolingbroke first landed in England, Pelham held Pevensey on his behalf. On 25 July 1399, Pelham wrote to Bolingbroke reporting that he was under heavy siege, and asking him 'to give remedy to the salvation of your castle'. His gamble in supporting Bolingbroke paid off. In 1399, Bolingbroke was crowned King Henry IV (r.1399–1413) and he gave Pevensey Castle to Pelham in reward for his services.

CHANGES IN THE 15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES

Pevensey Castle was used as a prison in the 1400s. The basement of one of the gatehouse towers can only be accessed through a hole in the roof, suggesting it may have served as a prison cell (or 'oubliette').

During the 15th century the castle became a state prison. Among those held there were James I, King of Scotland, and Joan of Navarre, the second wife of Henry IV, who was accused by her stepson Henry V (r.1413–22) of plotting his death by witchcraft. In the basement of the castle's gatehouse is a prison cell, called an 'oubliette', which could only be accessed via a hole in the roof. The term 'oubliette' comes from the French word 'oublier' meaning 'to forget'. It was probably used to punish low-status prisoners.

Under the Tudors the castle fell out of use altogether, and a survey of 1573 records that the buildings were totally ruined. The threat of the Spanish Armada (1588) led to the construction of a gun position armed with two cannons, one of which survives on site.

PEVENSEY IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In 1925, after centuries of decay, the site was given to the State and it was repaired as a historic monument.

The events of the Second World War gave a strange twist to Pevensey Castle's history. After France was taken by the Germans in 1940, Pevensey once more became a potential landing place for an invasion. Pevensey was turned into a command and observation post, the outer defences were strengthened, pillboxes for machine-gun posts were built, and a blockhouse (for anti-tank weapons) was constructed in the mouth of the Roman west gate. The inner bailey towers were refitted as barracks for the garrison, which included the Home Guard and British, Canadian and US Army Air Corps units.

American soldiers at Pevensey Castle during the Second World War. © David E Scherman/ The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

The Ministry of Works supervised these alterations to ensure the new work blended with the old. After 1945 most of the things added during the Second World War were deliberately left in place, as evidence of this important episode in the castle's history.

ENGLISH HERITAGE EDUCATION

GLOSSARY

TRICKY TERMS AND WHAT THEY MEAN

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

An aerial photo of the inner bailey at Pevensey Castle.

bailey – the strongly defended area at the centre of a castle, often surrounded by a stone curtain wall. Some castles, like Pevensey, have an inner and an outer bailey.

banish(ed) – send someone away from a country as an official punishment, making it illegal to return unless given permission

baron(s) – a land-holding nobleman who was granted land by the king for loyal service. Disloyal barons sometimes used their land to become very wealthy and powerful so that they could rebel against the king.

barracks – a large building or group of buildings used to house soldiers

bishop – a leader in the Christian Church who manages other people working for the Church (the clergy), usually within a large area (a diocese)

blockhouse – a reinforced concrete shelter

civil war – a war between groups of people who live in the same country

civilian – a person not in the army

command post – the place from which an army commander controls and organises their forces

confiscate(d) – take someone's property with authority

constable – the governor of a castle, responsible for its security

A late medieval castle constable.

count – a noble title given to noblemen in certain European countries, used in the same way as 'earl' is used in England

duke – a very high-ranking title given to a nobleman in England. It is the highest-ranking title outside the royal family.

earl – the title given to an important English nobleman

estate(s) – an area of land or property

garrison – a group of troops, including foot soldiers and cavalry (on horses), living in a castle, with the job of defending it

gatehouse – the highly defended entranceway to a castle

The gatehouse at Pevensey had two tall drum-shaped towers either side of the entrance – one of the earliest surviving examples of this popular medieval design. Only one of these towers still stands.

inheritance – money, objects or titles that are passed down to the next generation when someone dies

military – used to refer to anything relating to armed forces

moat – a ditch that wraps around a castle, for defensive purposes. These can be dry or filled with water.

Norman Conquest – the defeat of King Harold by the forces of Normandy after winning the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

observation post – a place for watching the movement of enemy forces

peninsula – a piece of land almost surrounded by water or sticking out into a body of water

A Norman soldier carrying a sword and kite shield.

pillbox – concrete guard post with small windows, dug into the ground to make it highly defensive

revolt – an illegal and often violent attempt by a group of people to change the way the country is ruled, or to remove its ruler (e.g. the king)

Saxon – a tribe of Germanic people (originally from the country we now call Germany) who settled in England in large numbers after the Romans left in AD 410

Copper alloy tweezers from the early 5th century, with expanded ends. These are a Germanic type so they may have belonged to a Saxon settler, probably dating to when the Romans left (AD 410) or just after.

siege – a military tactic in which an army surrounds a place and attempts to capture it, either by attack or by cutting off essential supplies (e.g. food and weapons) – thereby forcing the people inside to surrender

Spanish Armada – a huge fleet of approximately 130 Spanish warships that sailed up the English Channel in 1588 as part of an attempt to invade England

A 16th-century Spanish galleon, the likes of which were used by the Spanish Armada.

Stamford Bridge – a village in Yorkshire where, on 25 September 1066, the English king, Harold Godwinson defeated an army from Norway, led by Harald Hardrada. After this, King Harold marched his army south to Hastings where he fought and lost a battle against the Normans, led by William, Duke of Normandy.

timber – wood used for building or carpentry

tree-ring dating – a method of dating using the patterns of growth rings in trees

truce – an agreement between two warring sides or people to stop fighting for a certain amount of time

Tudor(s) – the name we give to the period of history between 1485 and 1603 when the Tudor royal family was on the throne. Henry VII (r.1485–1509) was the first Tudor monarch and Elizabeth I (r.1558–1603) was the last.

| ROMANS | ANGLO-SAXONS, VIKINGS AND BRITONS |

EVENTS IN BRITISH HISTORY

AD 306

Constantine 1 (r.306–37) becomes Roman Emperor.

AD 314

Constantine ends the punishment of Christians in the Roman Empire and Christianity is made legal, eventually becoming the official religion of the Roman Empire.

AD 367

Enemy tribes from Scotland, Ireland and Germany begin to launch raids on Roman Britain.

AD 401–406

Enemy forces continue to attack Britain's borders. The Roman Empire is focused on more serious threats to Italy, so they stop sending soldiers to help the Roman army keep control of Britain.

AD 410

The Romans are forced to withdraw from Britain. A system of tribes controlling different areas is put in place after the Romans leave.

AD 300 ➤ **AD 400**

HISTORY OF PEVENSEY CASTLE

c.AD 300

The Roman fort at Pevensey – called Anderida – is built as part of a programme to improve and strengthen the coastal defences of Roman Britain. It becomes one in a chain of nine Roman forts defending the south-east coast from attack by Saxon pirates.

AD 410–91

After the Romans withdraw troops, a community of Britons continues to live inside the walls of the old Roman fort.

AD 491

The fort is attacked by Saxon raiders who kill the Britons living there. It probably continues as a settlement until the Norman invasion but Pevensey seems to disappear from historical records at this time.

4TH CENTURY

5TH CENTURY

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

NORMANS
1066–1154

PLANTAGENETS
1154–1485

1066
Duke William of Normandy defeats King Harold of England at the Battle of Hastings. William becomes the first Norman king of England and divides English land between his loyal knights. The Normans embark on a country-wide castle and church building programme to secure their power.

1087
William I dies. His eldest son, Robert, is made Duke of Normandy, while one of his younger sons, William Rufus, is crowned king of England. This angers Robert who, as the eldest son, believes he should inherit all his father's lands and titles.

1100
William II dies and the crown passes to his younger brother, Henry I (r.1100–35). This angers their older brother, Robert, even further.

1135–54
Reign of Stephen.

1154–89
Reign of Henry II.

1000

1100

1066
William, Duke of Normandy, lands a huge Norman invasion fleet at Pevensey and builds a temporary wooden fort inside the Roman walls. The next day, he marches his troops to Hastings where they later defeat King Harold's Anglo-Saxon army.

1088
Robert, Count of Mortain, and Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, turn Pevensey Castle into a rebel stronghold. They hold it on behalf of Duke Robert, who plans to use it to invade England and remove his younger brother, William II, from the throne. In response, William II besieges the castle for six weeks, until the rebels run out of food and seek a truce.

1101
Robert, Duke of Normandy, threatens to invade England again. His younger brother, now King Henry I, spends the summer at Pevensey in anticipation of an attack.

1147
Gilbert de Clare is granted the castle by King Stephen, but rebels shortly after. King Stephen besieges the castle, cutting off all supplies from land and sea, thereby starving the rebels into submission.

11TH CENTURY

12TH CENTURY

PLANTAGENETS
1154–1485

1199–1216

Reign of King John. By 1216, King John is desperately fighting off an invasion led by the French king's son, Prince Louis.

1215

King John 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.

1327

Edward II (r.1307–27) is forced to give up his crown. His son, also called Edward (r.1327–77), becomes king.

1377–99

Reign of Richard II. His uncle, John of Gaunt, has great influence over the Crown at this time.

1399

Gaunt's banished son, Henry Bolingbroke, returns to England in 1399 to remove Richard II from the throne and claim his inheritance. He is successful and is crowned King Henry IV (r.1399–1413).

1200 ➤

1300

1216

Lacking the resources to garrison Pevensey, King John gives orders to demolish it. He wants to prevent it being used by Prince Louis in support of the barons. It seems King John's orders are ignored.

1246

Peter of Savoy is granted Pevensey Castle. He later replaces the inner bailey's timber defences with the stone walls and towers we see today.

1264

The rebel, Simon de Montfort, besieges Pevensey Castle. The king's supporters inside the castle resist the siege but damage is caused and part of the Roman wall collapses.

1372

John of Gaunt takes ownership of Pevensey.

1394

Gaunt appoints Sir John Pelham as constable of Pevensey.

1399

Pelham supports Henry Bolingbroke's cause and holds Pevensey on his behalf. On 25 July Pelham reports that he is under heavy siege. Pelham's commitment pays off when Bolingbroke becomes king and Pevensey Castle is gifted to Pelham in reward for his services.

13TH CENTURY

14TH CENTURY

POST–MEDIEVAL BRITAIN

20TH CENTURY
1900–1999

TUDORS
1509–1603

WW1
1914–18

WW2
1939–45

1534

The Act of Supremacy recognises Henry VIII (r.1509–47) as head of the Church in England. Pope Clement excommunicates Henry from the Catholic Church.

1536–40

Henry VIII destroys Catholic monasteries across England.

1538

France and Spain form an alliance against England. In response, Henry builds more forts on England's south coast.

1585

England, ruled by Elizabeth I (r.-1558–1603), declares war on Spain. Three years later, English ships defeat the Spanish Armada in its attempt to invade England.

1914–18

First World War.

1939–45

Second World War.

1940

France is taken by the Germans and Pevensey once more becomes a potential landing place for an invasion.

Times — BRITAIN AT WAR

1500

1900

1573

After being used as a prison for much of the 1400s, the castle falls out of use altogether in the Tudor period. A survey of 1573 records that the buildings are totally ruined.
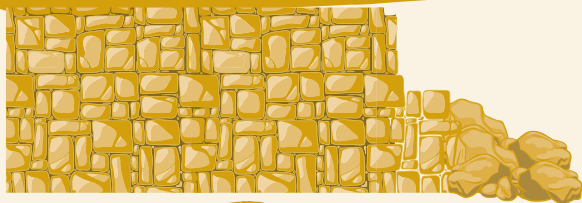
1588

The threat of the Spanish Armada leads to the construction of a gun position armed with two cannons, an example of which survives on site.

1925

The site is given to the State and is repaired as a historic monument.

1940–5

Pevensey is turned into a command and observation post, the outer defences are strengthened, pillboxes for machine-gun posts are constructed, and a blockhouse (for anti-tank weapons) is built into the Roman west gate. The towers of the inner bailey are refitted as army and navy barracks.

16TH CENTURY

20TH CENTURY

PEVENSEY CASTLE TIMELINE

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

KS3   KS4+

Recommended for

KS3 & KS4 (History and Geography)

Learning objectives

- Consider the geographical significance of Pevensey Castle's location.

- Identify how the Pevensey coastline has changed from Roman times to now.

- Analyse the relationship between geography and history at Pevensey.

Time to complete

45–60 minutes

An aerial photo of Pevensey Castle, looking towards the coast and sea.

SUMMARY

Pevensey has been geographically and strategically significant throughout its long history. This is demonstrated by four key periods of development:

1. The Romans chose it as a site to build a fort c.AD 300.
2. William of Normandy used it as his landing spot in 1066.
3. Until the 1500s, medieval kings and rebels fought to control the castle.
4. It was briefly reoccupied in the Second World War by Allied forces, and modern defences were built into the ruins.

MAPS FOR COMPARISON

Sand deposited by the sea (deposition) has caused the land around Pevensey Castle to build up over time. The coastline is now about a mile further away from the castle than it would have been in Roman times. Use the map sources below to visualise and analyse these geographical changes:
- Map 1 – Source 4 (AD 340) on page 54
- Map 2 – Source 6 (1066) on page 55
- Map 3 – The Haven of Pevensey (1698) via this link
- Map 4 – Ordnance Survey map (1892–1914), cross-referenced with present-day satellite image via this link

We have provided a table for students to complete on page 20. There is also a pre-filled table of answers for the teacher on page 21. Students could work alone or in pairs to complete this task. You can then work as a class to feed back and fill in the table together on an interactive whiteboard.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

If you wish to explore the Norman invasion in more depth, use the map (Source 7) on page 56, to understand the geographical relationship between Normandy, Pevensey, Battle and Stamford Bridge, and discuss the part Pevensey played in the wider story of 1066.

	DESCRIBE AND COMPARE What can you see? In what ways is it similar and different to the other maps? What changes have happened?	ANALYSE Why was the location significant at this point in the site's history? Make links between geography and history.
Map 1 – Source 4 (c.AD 340)	**Tip:** use the word 'peninsula' in your description.	**Did you know?** Saxon pirates raided vulnerable coastal locations from the sea.
Map 2 – Source 6 (1066)	**Tip:** tidal marshland is shown by a pattern on the map.	**Did you know?** William the Conqueror and his fleet of about 700 ships came from Normandy, in France.
Map 3 (1698)	**Tip:** use the word 'spit' in your description.	**Did you know?** Castles were vital for gaining and maintaining power in medieval times.
Map 4 (1892–1914)	**Tip:** look closely at the river, fields and buildings.	**Did you know?** France was taken by the Germans in 1940 and Britain was their next target.

	DESCRIBE AND COMPARE What can you see? In what ways is it similar and different to the other maps? What changes have happened?	ANALYSE Why was the location significant at this point in the site's history? Make links between geography and history.
Map 1 – Source 4 (c.AD 340)	The fort is on a peninsula, jutting out into the sea. Water comes up to the walls of the fort on the north and south sides. The Roman fort is isolated from the mainland, surrounded by water and accessible only via a narrow strip of dry land. This is no longer the case in future maps.	The Roman fort was built on the south-east coast, which was vulnerable to raids by Saxon pirates. A chain of nine similar forts was built by the Romans at this time in order to improve Britain's coastal defences.
Map 2 – Source 6 (1066)	The patterned area shows low-lying marshes have built up around the Roman fort. The marshy area to the north, south, and east was 'coastal' – it flooded at high tide and became accessible to ships. At low tide, it would have been a boggy area of land. The formation of the marshes has made the coastline less jagged. A river joins the sea at Pevensey.	With favourable winds, it is easy to sail from mainland Europe to Pevensey. It is big enough to land 700–800 ships. The walls of the Roman fort provided ready-made protection for William's troops, allowing them to set up a camp there as soon as they'd unloaded the ships.
Map 3 (1698)	The coastline has moved further away from the castle than in the previous maps. Where there used to be marshland, there is now an established sand beach, with the green colour suggesting vegetation is growing. A sand or shingle spit is starting to form across the mouth of the river. The river carves through the land and past the castle.	The addition of an inner bailey within the curtain walls improved the castle's defences. The river made it easy for supplies to be brought to the castle for the garrison stationed there. Its proximity to France made it a target for enemies in Europe but also a good place from which to muster troops and launch an invasion.
Map 4 (1892–1914)	The river mouth has closed up and the land between the castle and the beach is a patchwork of fields. The river has changed direction slightly and now forks in different directions to the south-west of the castle. Some buildings have appeared at Wallsend. From the present-day map on the right, we can see that the river eventually dries up completely and gets turned into a road, and more buildings are added.	After France was taken by the Germans in 1940, Pevensey once again became a potential landing place for an invasion. England's south east coastal defences were rapidly and systematically strengthened at this time. The castle was ruined but its location was still of great strategic importance for the home guard, so modern defences and barracks were built in and troops were stationed there.

ENGLISH HERITAGE EDUCATION

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
1066: PLAN YOUR CAMPAIGN

KS2   KS3

Recommended for

KS2 & KS3 (History, Geography, English)

Learning objectives

• Imagine being William of Normandy and make strategic decisions about how, when and where to invade England.

• Consider why William of Normandy chose Pevensey as a landing spot and staging ground from which to launch his take-over campaign in 1066.

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes

William the Conqueror (above) and his Norman soldiers (below) landed their ships at Pevensey on 28 September 1066.

SUMMARY

Start by showing students Source 7 (on page 56), which shows St Valéry, where William of Normandy and his fleet of Norman ships set sail from. It also shows Pevensey, where they landed, and Hastings, where they eventually met and defeated King Harold's Anglo-Saxon army.

Next, view our online article 'How to Organise a Norman Invasion Fleet', which features sections of the Bayeux Tapestry relevant to this activity: www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/1066-and-the-norman-conquest/how-to-organise-a-norman-invasion-fleet

MAIN ACTIVITY

Print and hand out the activity sheets (on pages 25 and 26), enough for one between two students.

Students should work through the questions in pairs, making decisions together to plan their Norman invasion campaign. Once everyone has completed the task, select a few different pairs to justify the decisions they've made during a class feedback session.

We have provided answers for the teacher on the next page. You could use this information to check student's answers and provide them with extra historical context during the feedback session.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Find out more about the Norman Conquest by using our online resources: www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/1066-and-the-norman-conquest

Watch our 'Live Schools Event with Dan Snow' (32 min 54 sec), filmed at Battle Abbey in 2016, for the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings:: https://youtu.be/AOGzsBEIYFE

1066: PLAN YOUR CAMPAIGN
TEACHERS' NOTES

1. Plan your Channel crossing using this map.

Pevensey

Saint-Valery-sur-Somme
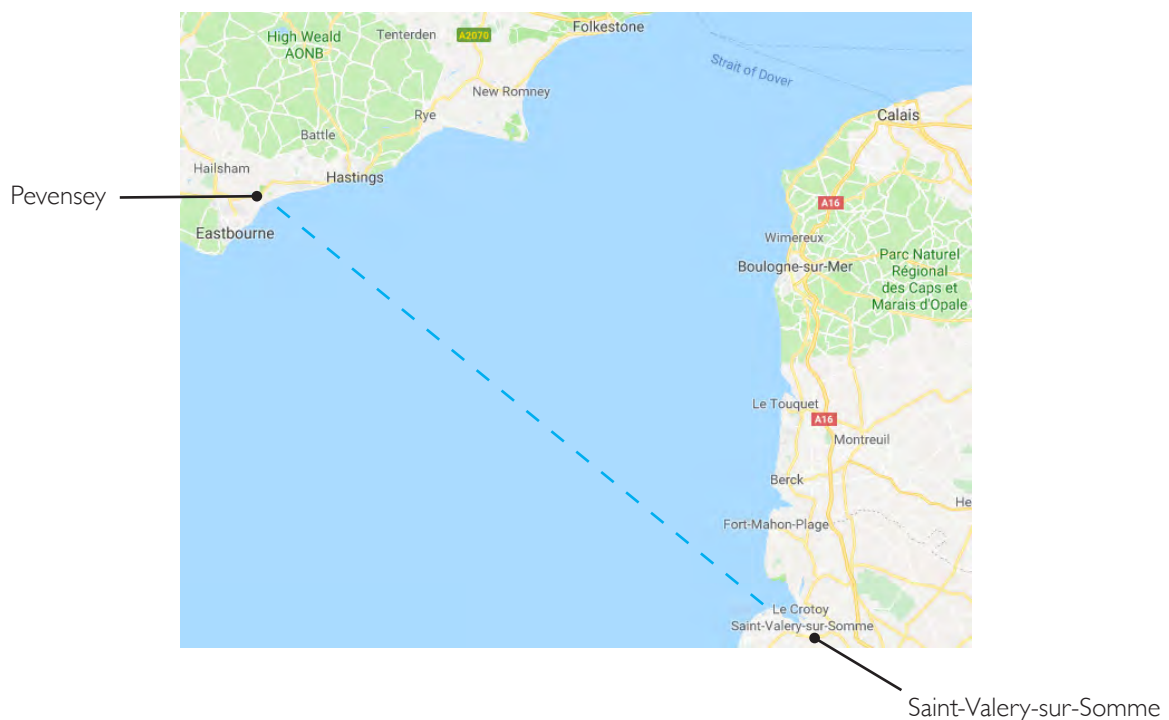
2. Pick a date to set sail.

C. 27 September 1066

On about 12 August, William's fleet assembled off the river Dives, north-east of Caen, but was stuck there for a month due to unfavourable wind. Then, on 12 September, a storm drove the fleet east to St Valéry at the mouth of the Somme, where it was stuck for another fortnight while William anxiously watched the wind gauge on the roof of the church, waiting for it to indicate a south wind. It blew at last on 27 September, and his fleet crossed the Channel during that night, landing at Pevensey the next day.

3. Order the things below, from 1 (highest priority) to 5 (lowest priority).

1. Unload horses, weapons and building materials from the ships.

2. Raid and burn nearby fields and villages, on a mission to find food and scare the locals.

3. Repair the Roman walls, dig an earth ditch, and build a temporary wooden fort to defend your position.

4. Set up an observation point to keep an eye on the surrounding area.

5. Gather troops for a motivational speech.

4. What tactics will you use to meet each of the objectives listed below?

Maintaining an active army in medieval times (keeping the troops fed and motivated) usually meant abusing enemy countryside and terrorising the people who lived there.

| Objective	Tactic
A. Provide your troops with food and water	Pillage the fields and villages you march through, stealing food and crops.
B. Annoy King Harold, who owns the land you are on	Damage the enemy countryside you march through, setting fire to places as you move on. Kill anyone who gets in your way.
C. Ensure the enemy can't use local resources against you	Steal or destroy local resources. Setting fire to things you don't need is the most efficient way of doing this.
D. Satisfy your soldiers' desires for plunder (stealing)	Allow your troops to treat enemy countryside and the people who live there with contempt. Turn a blind eye to things that would normally be illegal.

PLAN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Have you got what it takes to conquer England?

William, Duke of Normandy.

Imagine you are William, the leader of the Norman army. **Complete** these activities to plan your invasion.

1 **Plan** your Channel crossing using this map. **Put** an X on Saint-Valery-sur-Somme (where you'll set sail from) and Pevensey (where you'll land). Now **draw** a dotted line between the two.
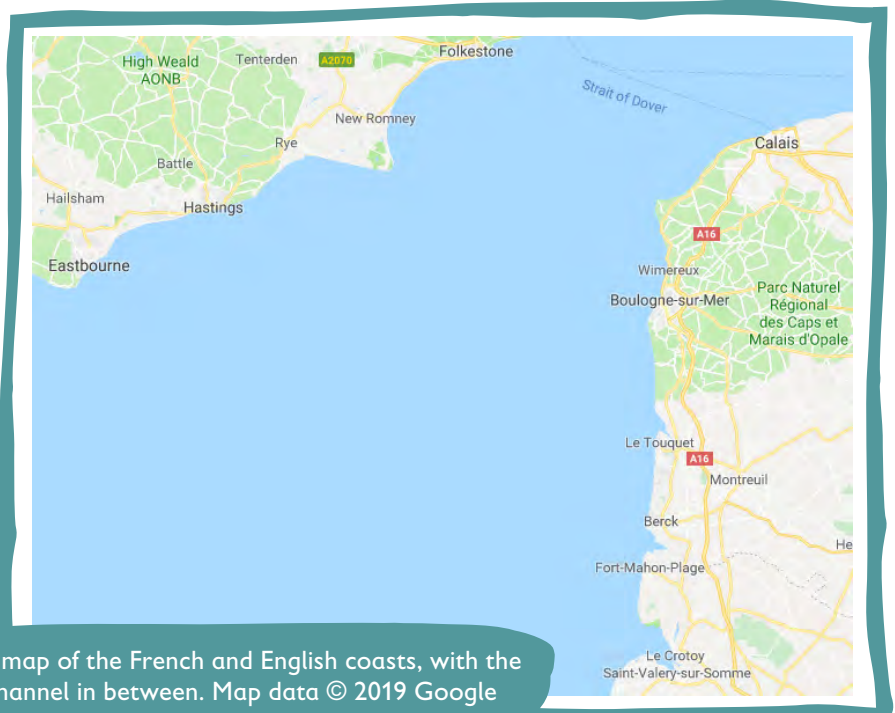
A map of the French and English coasts, with the Channel in between. Map data © 2019 Google

2 **Use** the weather reports below to **pick** a date to set sail. Your ships are completely dependent on the right wind direction (from the south).

A. August 12 1066 – The sea is calm, the sky is blue and there is a strong breeze from the north.

B. 12 September 1066 – The sea is very choppy and there are storm clouds overhead. There is a fresh gale blowing in from the west.

C. 27 September 1066 – The sea is fairly rough. There is a fresh southerly breeze, gusting to a high wind in places.

D. 9 October 1066 – The sea is very calm and there is a light air from the south.

HINT
Too much wind, not enough wind, or wind in the wrong direction will stop you from sailing.

3 Your ships land safely at Pevensey. What will you do next? **Order** the things below, from **1** (highest priority) to **5** (lowest priority).

☐ Repair the Roman walls, dig an earth ditch, and build a temporary wooden fort to defend your position.

☐ Raid and burn nearby fields and villages, on a mission to find food and scare the locals.

☐ Gather troops for a motivational speech.

☐ Unload horses, weapons and building materials from the ships.

☐ Set up an observation point to keep an eye on the surrounding area.

Why have you put them in this order?

....

....

4 The next morning, you march your troops east, towards Hastings. What tactics will you use to meet each of the objectives listed below?

Objective	Tactic
A. Provide your troops with food and water	
B. Annoy King Harold, who owns the land you are on	
C. Ensure the enemy can't use local resources against you	
D. Satisfy your soldiers' desires for plunder (stealing)	

5 To find out what happened next in the story of 1066, watch this video: https://youtu.be/wiaCId6pANI

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

AT THE CASTLE

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

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
1066: DRAW YOUR OWN RECONSTRUCTION

KS3 **KS4+**

Recommended for

KS3 & KS4 (History, Geography, Art)

Learning objectives

- Imagine how Pevensey Bay may have looked when the Norman army landed there on 28 September 1066.

- Use the reconstruction drawing brief provided to plan, draft and complete a reconstruction of the Norman landing.

Time to complete

Dependent on depth of study

The viewing platform at the top of the staircase in this picture is a perfect spot to show students the viewpoint required for their reconstruction drawing.

SUMMARY

During this activity, students will assume the role of a reconstruction artist, so they will need something to sketch onto. Use the brief on the next page to explain the task in full to students.

RECONSTRUCTION DRAWING PROCESS

The process of creating a reconstruction drawing can be broken down into four parts:

1. Before the visit: read and annotate the illustration brief (provided on page 29–32).

2. During the visit: investigate the site for research purposes. Take photos, make sketches and write notes.

3. After the visit: perfect the viewpoint and decide what to include in the foreground and background. See pages 33–34 for an example of Peter Urmston's work-in-progress. You could show this to students before they complete the task, or reveal it at the end, depending on the level of support they require.

4. After the visit: complete the final reconstruction drawing, adding detail and colour. We'd love you to share it with us on Twitter @EHEducation

During your visit, take students to the viewing platform at the top of the wooden stairs near the north tower (pictured left). At the top of the stairs students will get an excellent view to the south-east. In 1066, the beach at Pevensey Bay, and the Norman ships that landed there, would have been visible from this spot because the coastline used to be much closer to the castle than it is today. On the viewing platform (pictured left), you'll find a display panel featuring a 1066 reconstruction drawing by Peter Urmston, which you can also find on page 57 (Source 8) of this kit.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Research the work of other reconstruction artists who have done work for English Heritage, including Peter Dunn, Judith Dobie, Liam Wales and Richard Lea.

DRAW YOUR OWN RECONSTRUCTION

> I'm Peter Urmston, a reconstruction artist. I create historically accurate drawings of what places looked like in the past. I'm usually given a brief by a historian to help me with my work.

Use the brief below to **plan** and **produce** your own reconstruction drawing.

1 VIEWPOINT

The viewpoint is from the top of the north tower (see Figure 1), looking south-east towards the sea. The Roman outer walls would have been there in 1066, but the keep, towers and chapel of the inner bailey were added later, so don't include these. You can zoom in to focus on the events taking place on the beach, beyond the walls.

Roman wall
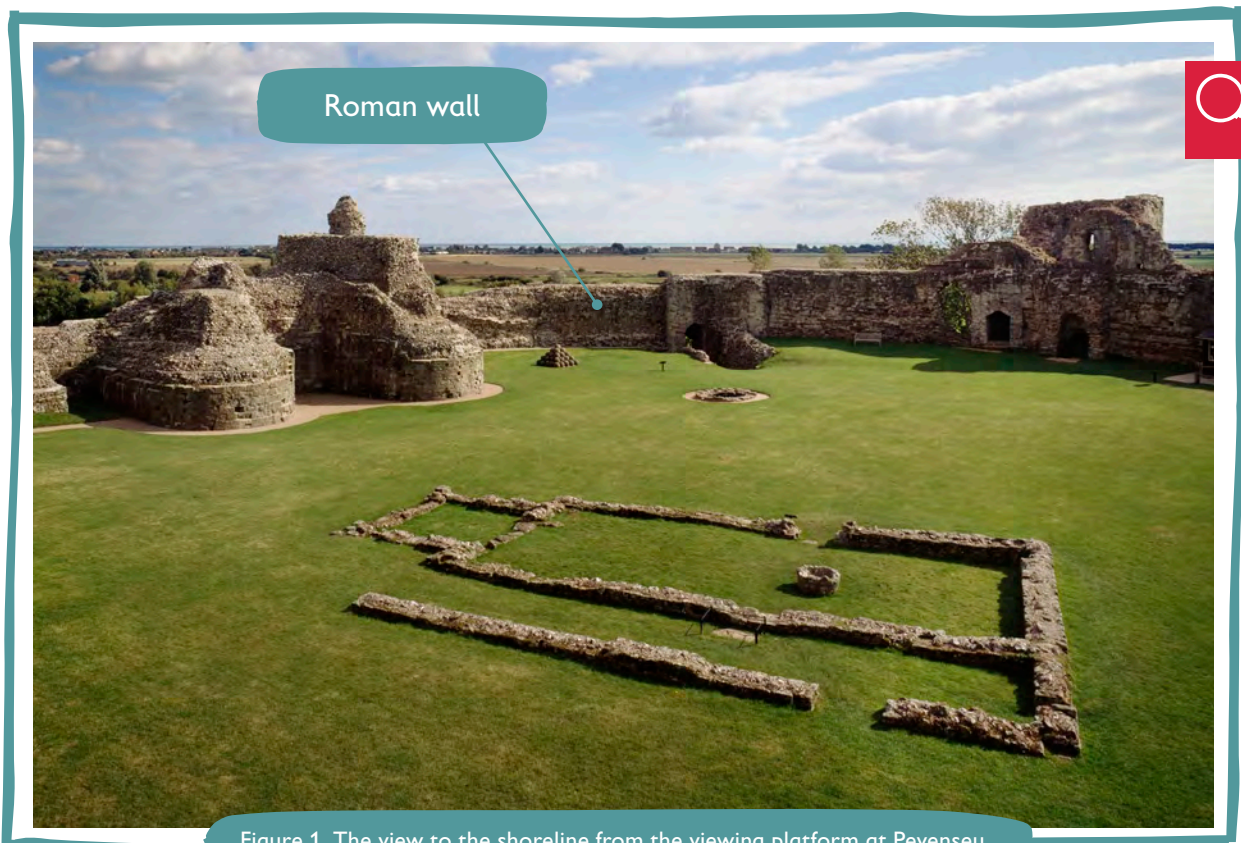
Figure 1. The view to the shoreline from the viewing platform at Pevensey.

2 STORYTELLING

It is the morning of 28 September 1066. A fleet of about 700 Norman ships is landing in shallow water at Pevensey. It is a damp, autumnal scene though the weather is fine. The Normans are at various stages of unloading: some ships approaching the shore, some with soldiers and horses disembarking, and some horsemen beginning to ride off to start the process of raiding the surrounding area. There are three aspects to the illustration – the weather, the landscape, and the Norman forces.

3 WEATHER

The weather was fair, and the area was looking a bit soggy. At 9am, the light would have been coming from east-by-south-east and the sun low – casting long shadows (a 1m-high object with a shadow c.3m long). The wind was strong enough to fill the sails of the ships without causing problems.

4 LANDSCAPE

In 1066, the coastline was much closer to the outer walls of the castle than it is today (see Figure 2). The area to the north, south, and east was 'coastal' – low-lying marshy areas that flooded at high tide and became accessible to ships.
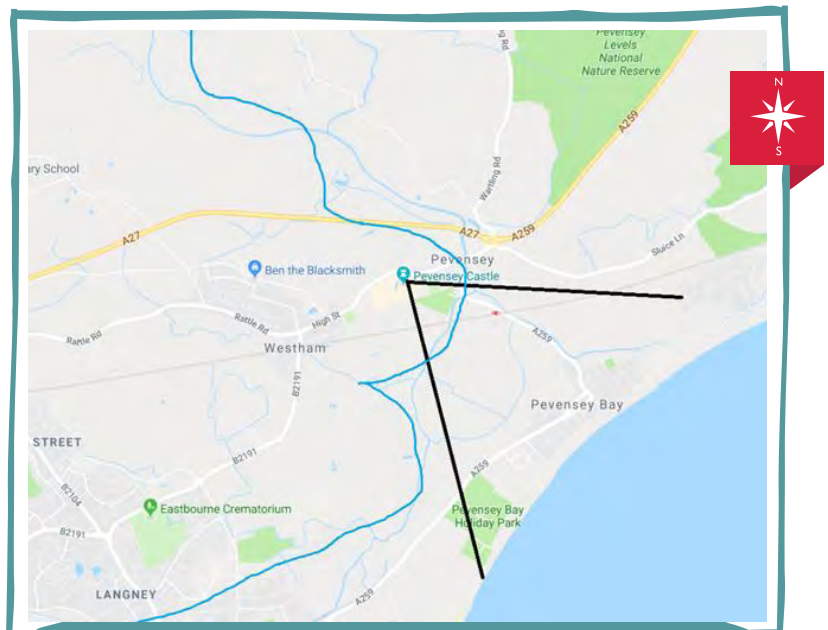

Figure 2. A rough approximation of the coastline in 1066. The wobbly blue line represents the boundary between dry land and the low-lying marshland that ships could sail into during high tide. The straight black lines show the rough direction of the illustration viewpoint. Map data © 2018 Google

5 SHIPS

William's army landed in about 700 ships (see Figures 3 and 4). The ships were long and shallow and of varying sizes, made from oak and pine, and a mixture of new and old. The largest ships were over 20m long (see Figure 5) and carried a few dozen people. Ships landed on the shore, and some smaller vessels helped ferry people and equipment between ships and the shore. Note the coloured sails, the round shields on the sides, and the carved heads on the front of some ships. William's flagship, the Mora, was the largest of the fleet – though we're not sure how big. It carried the papal banner the pope had given William – a white flag with a gold cross in a blue border (Figure 4).
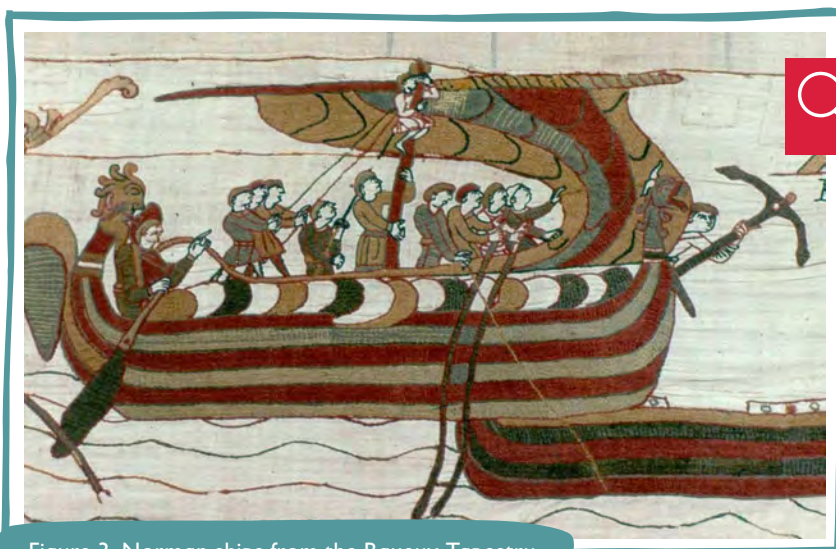
Figure 3. Norman ships from the Bayeux Tapestry.

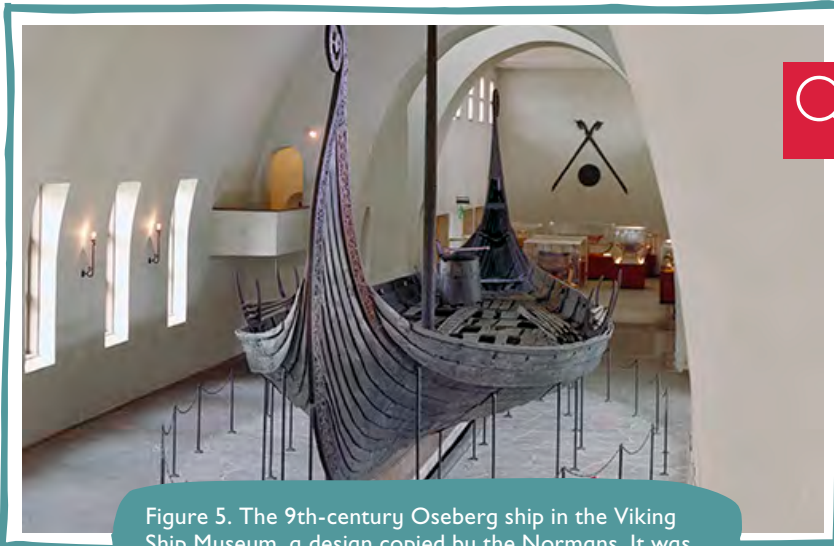Figure 4. William's flagship with the papal banner above the sail.

Figure 5. The 9th-century Oseberg ship in the Viking Ship Museum, a design copied by the Normans. It was 22 metres long, and the mast was about 12 metres tall.

6 SOLDIERS

The soldiers themselves didn't wear armour on board the ships, but did have swords and shields nearby, and they would have put on their chain mail when they came ashore. The Bayeux Tapestry shows the horses jumping over the side of the ships to disembark rather than having gangways to walk down. The soldiers also unloaded barrels of supplies. Apparently, William brought wine with him and had some on the morning of the landing! You could draw a group of soldiers mounted on horses (see Figure 6) riding off into the countryside to start raiding the area and setting fires.
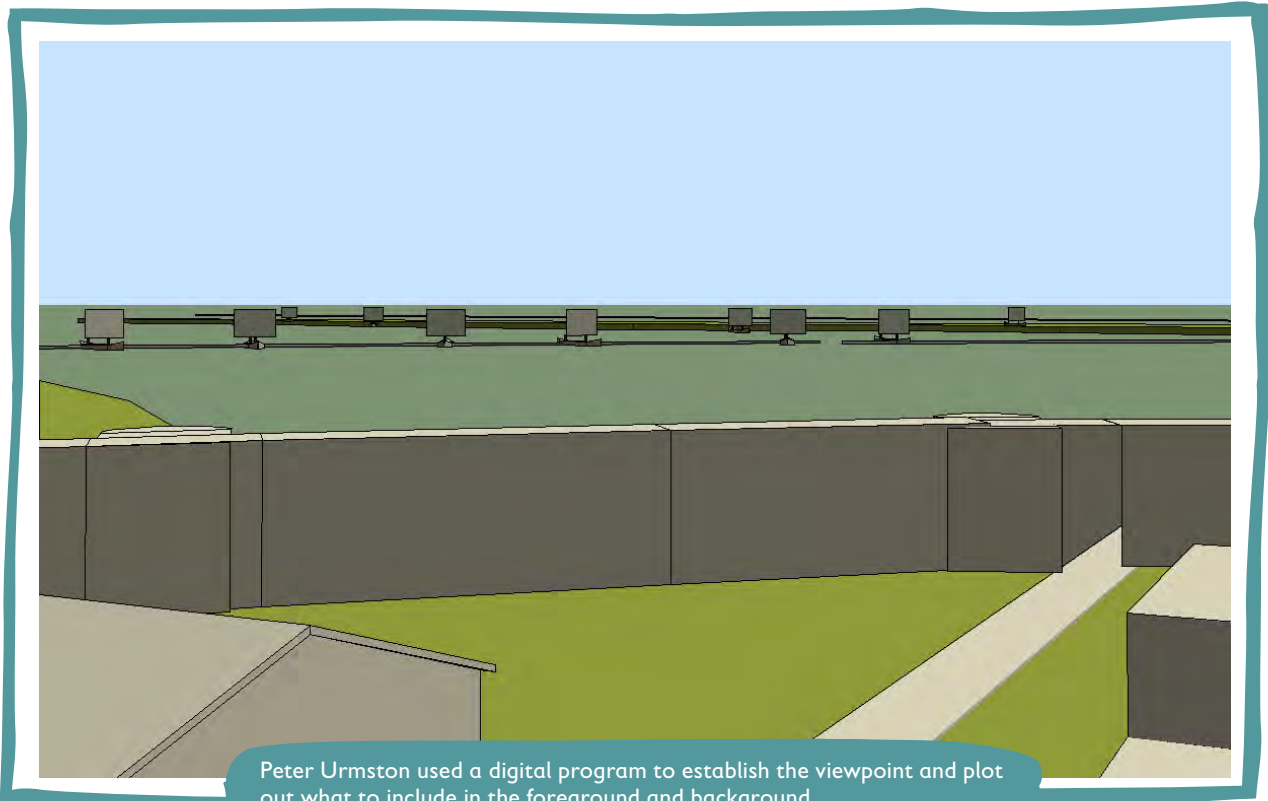

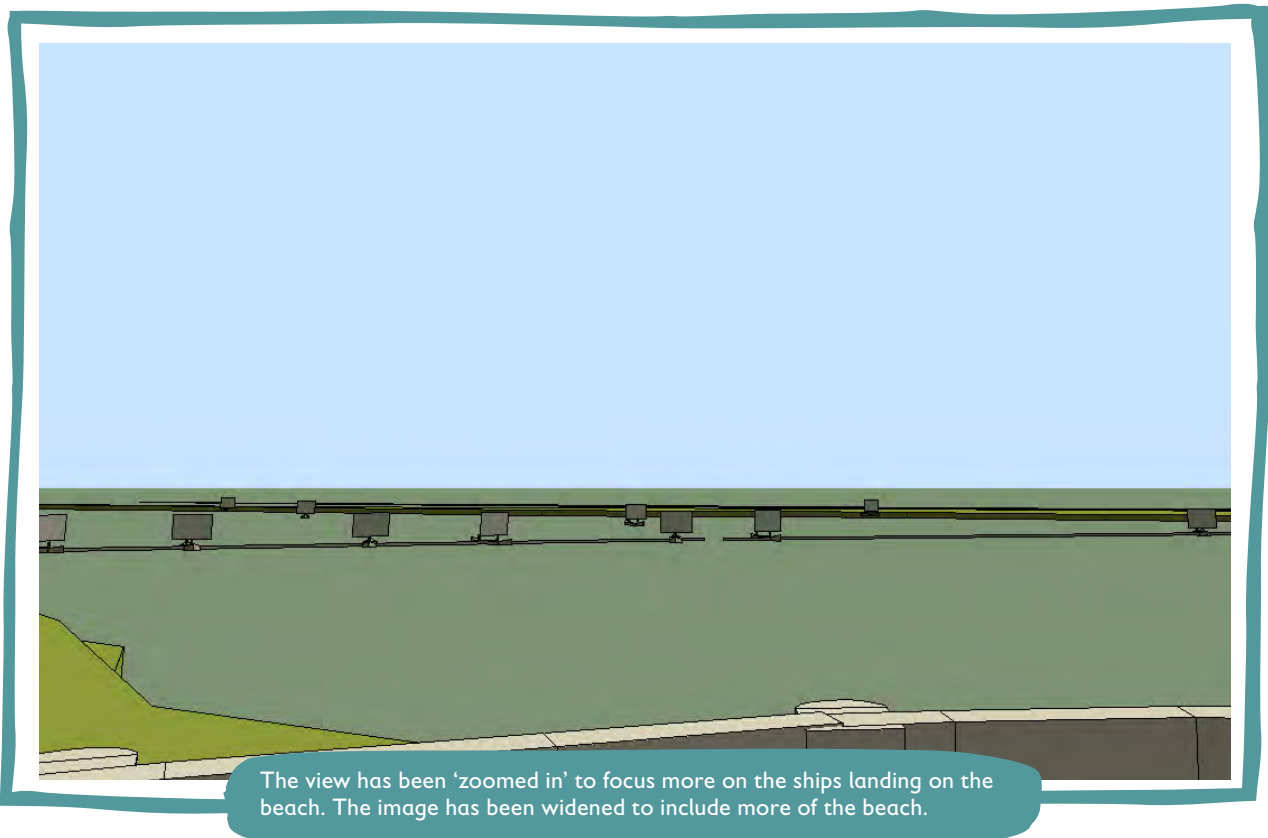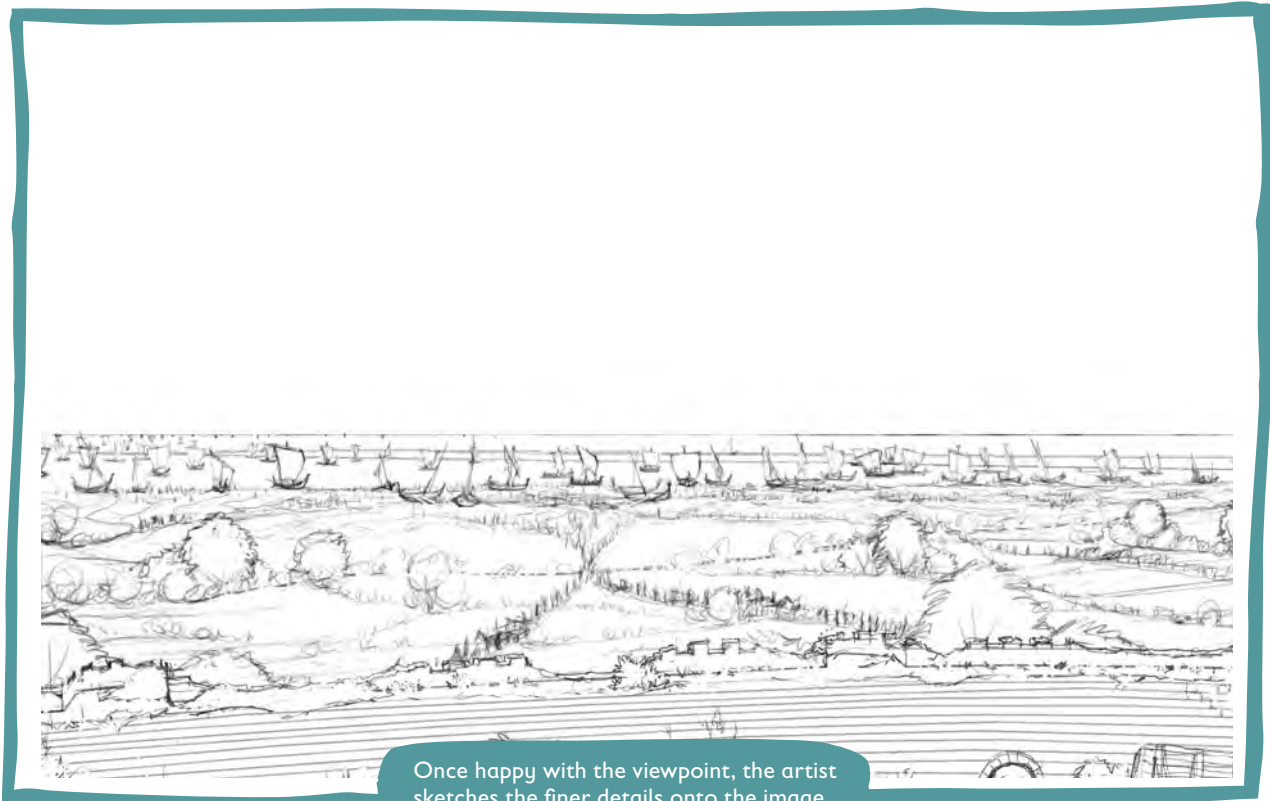Figure 6. Mounted soldiers (on horseback) from the Bayeux Tapestry,

DRAFT 1

Peter Urmston used a digital program to establish the viewpoint and plot out what to include in the foreground and background.

DRAFT 2

The view has been 'zoomed in' to focus more on the ships landing on the beach. The image has been widened to include more of the beach.

DRAFT 3

Once happy with the viewpoint, the artist sketches the finer details onto the image.

FINAL DRAFT

Colour is added to the pencil drawing to finalise the image.

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
ROYALS, REBELS AND ROLE PLAY

KS3

Recommended for

KS3 (History, English, Drama)

Learning objectives

• Explore themes of power, loyalty, conflict and rebellion during the Norman period.

• Use role play to consider different options about who should succeed William 1 as king of England in the months and years following his death.

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes

An illustration of a Norman lord, the character this role-play activity is based on.

SUMMARY

During your visit, gather your class on a patch of grass in the inner or outer bailey. Use the historical information entitled 'William's Squabbling Sons' and '1088: A Six-Week Siege' (on page 8) as context for this activity.

Divide students into seven groups (of about four) and give each group one of the seven scenes provided on pages 36–42. Students should decide among themselves which character each will play. Groups of two or three can still do this by sharing out the extra lines. We recommend giving the longer scenes to students who are more confident with reading and performing.

Ask students to spend a few minutes with their group, reading their scene out loud, from start to finish. Answer any questions that arise from this read-through. Let students rehearse their scene, roaming and offering assistance where needed.

CHARACTER IDEAS

Students can use their imaginations to interpret the characters how they wish but here are a few suggestions, if they ask for help:

• Loyal lords: well-spoken, slightly nasal, hands on hips, feet wide apart, shoulders back, proud chest, upright posture, looking down nose, long strides, worried facial expression, defensive gestures (shrugging, hands up in defence).

• Rebel lords: well-spoken, posh accent, arms crossed, fists clenched, chest and chin lifted, restless feet, pacing back and forth, annoyed facial expression, aggressive gestures (pointing, punching the air).

Finally, get students to sit as an audience. If the grass is wet, students can stand and imagine they are castle crowds witnessing an argument. See the scenes in order, starting with Scene 1.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

You could continue this work back in the classroom, giving students more time to develop their characters, learn their lines, find costumes and perform for an audience.

SCENE 1

CHARACTERS (4): Loyal lord 1, loyal lord 2, rebel lord 1, rebel lord 2

SETTING: Four Norman lords are standing in a cold castle in England, having an argument. It starts to become heated and a crowd gathers round them. They address the crowd.

Loyal lord 1: *(speaking to audience)* We are brave Norman lords.

Rebel lord 1: We are rich noblemen who fought alongside William the Conqueror and defeated the Anglo-Saxons in the Battle of Hastings.

Loyal lord 2: When we conquered England, King William took English land from the Saxon lords and shared it out among us Norman lords, as a reward for our good service.

Rebel lord 2: We have all been given English land by the king and we pay for it by offering him our services.

Loyal lord 1: *(pointing to rebel lord 1)* I was given more land than him.

Rebel lord 1: Well yes, but my land is better.

Loyal lord 1: No it isn't.

Rebel lord 1: Yes it is.

Loyal lord 1: No it isn't.

Rebel lord 1: *(shouting)* Yes it is!

Loyal lord 2: *(embarrassed, looking at audience)* Er, yes well, anyway… as decent, respectable lords, it is our duty and privilege to serve the king.

Rebel lord 2: We use the land to make money so that we can provide for ourselves and our family. We also support a number of knights.

Loyal lord 2: We do this by loaning bits of our land to other lords lower on the social ladder. Common people called peasants work on the land, looking after it, growing crops and raising animals.

SCENE 2

CHARACTERS (4): Loyal lord 1, loyal lord 2, rebel lord 1, rebel lord 2

SETTING: Four Norman lords are standing in a cold castle in England, having an argument. It starts to become heated and a crowd gathers round them. They address the crowd.

Rebel lord 1: *(speaking to audience)* Our society is like a pyramid, with the king at the top; noblemen like us, plus religious officials, in the middle; knights beneath us; and peasants right at the bottom.

Loyal lord 1: It's a bit unfair on the peasants but we don't care because we are filthy rich and we want to keep it that way.

Rebel lord 2: But enough about us. We've invited you here because we have some incredibly important news to share with you.

All: King William I is dead!

Loyal lord 2: *(upset)* The man who led the Normans to victory and bravely conquered England is gone for ever.

Rebel lord 1: England is in a state of confusion and chaos.

Loyal lord 1: William has three sons: Robert, Henry and William Rufus. He has given his inherited land, Normandy in France, to his eldest son, Robert.

Loyal lord 2: So that's Normandy sorted.

Rebel lord 2: But England is a mess. According to Orderic, an English monk, when he was dying, the king said 'I name no man as my heir to the kingdom of England, but entrust it to God alone.'

SCENE 3

CHARACTERS (4): Loyal lord 1, loyal lord 2, rebel lord 1, rebel lord 2

SETTING: Four Norman lords are standing in a cold castle in England, having an argument. It starts to become heated and a crowd gathers round them. They address the crowd.

Rebel lord 1: Well, you can imagine how confused we are! How on earth do we know what God wants?

Rebel lord 2: Rufus is younger than Robert, so he wouldn't normally stand a chance of being the next king of England.

Loyal lord 1: But he was William's favourite son. Before he died, William expressed a personal hope that Rufus would become the next king.

Rebel lord 1: So Rufus has acted quickly and taken the throne.

All: William Rufus is the new king of England!

Loyal lord 2: Rufus wants to stop his big brother, Robert, Duke of Normandy, from taking control of England too. He's worried because he knows that there are plenty of lords with land in Normandy and England who are on Robert's side.

Rebel lord 1: King William Rufus is very unpopular.

Rebel lord 2: England is restless. I feel anger in the air.

Loyal lord 1: I fear we may have a rebellion on our hands.

Loyal lord 2: *(standing beside the other loyal lord)* We are loyal lords and we believe the king has been chosen by God.

Loyal lords 1 & 2: We support William Rufus, king of England.

Rebel lord 1: *(standing beside the other rebel lord)* We are rebel lords and we believe the eldest brother deserves to rule over England as well as Normandy.

Rebel lords 1 & 2: We support Robert, Duke of Normandy.

SCENE 4

CHARACTERS (4): Loyal lord 1, loyal lord 2, rebel lord 1, rebel lord 2

SETTING: Four Norman lords are standing in a cold castle in England, having an argument. It starts to become heated and a crowd gathers round them. They address the crowd.

Loyal lord 1: *(to the rebel lords)* You brainless buffoons! How could you be so stupid? William the Conqueror made a fair decision when he gave Normandy to his eldest son and entrusted the rest to God.

Loyal lord 2: It must have been God's will for Rufus to take the throne and become the next king of England.

Rebel lord 1: *(offended)* How dare you call me a buffoon? I will not stand here and be insulted by two clueless clowns! In the words of Orderic the monk: 'How can we serve two brothers who are so different and so distant from each other?'

Rebel lord 2: I agree. It doesn't make sense to divide the land between Robert and Rufus. Normandy and England should be united and given to the eldest brother.

Loyal lord 1: But William loved Rufus and he wanted him to succeed as king of England. Doesn't that mean anything to you? We should honour the dying wishes of King William 1.

Rebel lord 2: Why should anyone care about William's dying wishes? He should've been clearer and named Rufus as his heir to the throne, if that's what he wanted. He had his chance and now he's dead.

Rebel lords 1 & 2: *(arrogant)* We can do what we want!

SCENE 5

CHARACTERS (4): Loyal lord 1, loyal lord 2, rebel lord 1, rebel lord 2

SETTING: Four Norman lords are standing in a cold castle in England, having an argument. It starts to become heated and a crowd gathers round them. They address the crowd.

Loyal lord 1: *(calm)* My good lords, let's be reasonable. You have to admit, King Rufus is very generous to his followers. He has promised us as much land and money as we want, as long as we stay loyal. That's an offer we can't refuse.

Rebel lord 1: *(dismissive)* Rubbish! King Rufus has only promised us land and money because he's desperate! He knows that he doesn't deserve to be on the throne and he is desperately trying to bribe us with gifts.

Loyal lord 2: Well sir, even if you are right, we still get gifts out of it! King Rufus is a fine soldier and a generous lord. He sometimes comes across as rude but he has the vision of an expert politician!

Rebel lord 2: *(getting angry)* Then why is England in uproar? We can't just accept things the way they are. Robert is the eldest and deserves to be on the throne. Do you really want things to go on like this? Doing nothing is not an option.

Loyal lord 1: *(in disbelief)* Let me get this straight. Are you seriously suggesting that we kill the king?

SCENE 6

CHARACTERS (4): Loyal lord 1, loyal lord 2, rebel lord 1, rebel lord 2

SETTING: Four Norman lords are standing in a cold castle in England, having an argument. It starts to become heated and a crowd gathers round them. They address the crowd.

Rebel lord 1: We should kill the king. That's what it will take to create the change this country needs.

Rebel lord 2: *(in agreement)* Hear, hear!

Loyal lord 2: *(shocked)* You pompous idiots! We can't murder the king! It would be high treason. The king has threatened to execute rebels in really gruesome ways. God would never forgive us and we'd go to hell.

Rebel lord 2: If I'm going to hell, then so is the king. William Rufus doesn't care about religion or the Church. He uses God's name in vain. He has proved himself to be an immoral tyrant! He should never have been made king in the first place.

Rebel lord 1: We are doing the work of God by removing him from the throne and there are bishops up and down the country who agree with me.

Loyal lord 1: I can't believe what I'm hearing. This is a disgrace!

SCENE 7

CHARACTERS (4): Loyal lord 1, loyal lord 2, rebel lord 1, rebel lord 2

SETTING: Four Norman lords are standing in a cold castle in England, having an argument. It starts to become heated and a crowd gathers round them. They address the crowd.

Loyal lord 2: *(to rebel lords)* Explain something to me. How exactly do you propose to rebel against the most powerful man in England? The king has more money and power than you and your rebellious gaggle of lords.

Loyal lord 1: Well said! Even if you win one battle, you will eventually lose. The English have no sympathy for you. They don't want a French duke to be their king. They support King Rufus.

Rebel lord 1: *(annoyed)* You quivering cowards! You of all people should know! We all have strong, defensive castles.

Rebel lord 2: We built them on the land given to us by William the Conqueror.

Loyal lord 1: Don't be ridiculous. You can't hide away in your castles for ever.

Rebel lord 1: *(in control)* We are highly skilled in the art of attack and defence. Plus, we have the support of important members of the Church. We can work together to defeat the king and put Robert on the throne, where he belongs. You should join us!

Loyal lord 2: You fools! What are you going to do when you run out of supplies? When the cracks start to show, the king will capture you and torture you. Then you'll wish you'd listened to us.

Rebel lord 2: Nonsense! We aren't stupid. If we run out of supplies during a battle, we can live off the land and plunder the surrounding villages. Why don't you join us?

Loyal lord 1: I value my life too much.

Loyal lords 1 & 2: We will never join you.

Rebel lord 1: Well, gentlemen, each lord will have to make up his own mind.

Rebel lords 1 & 2: Good riddance to you and your lousy loyal lords.

Loyal lords 1 & 2: Good riddance!

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
MEDIEVAL CASTLE CLUES

KS2   KS3

Recommended for

KS2 & KS3 (History)

Learning objectives

- Explore important medieval features at Pevensey Castle.

- Develop skills of observation and inference.

- Use evidence to draw conclusions about what the castle looked like during the medieval period and understand how it was used by the people living and working here.

Time to complete

45–60 minutes

During this activity, students will investigate architectural clues to draw conclusions about life in a medieval castle.

SUMMARY

During your visit, gather your students in the outer bailey. Explain that they are going to be history detectives, using the buildings to look for clues about what life was like here in medieval times. There are some bits of the site that were built earlier, or added later, than the medieval period so we are going to work out when each part was built as we go along.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Photocopy enough checklists and maps (on pages 47–48) for your class. Students should record their progress by ticking each thing off as they find it.

The tour starts in the outer bailey, and works inwards, finishing in the inner bailey. Gather students at the section of Roman wall to the left of the west gate. Use the teachers' notes (on the next page) to guide students around the castle, and tell them about important architectural details. At each stop, there is something for students to discuss, with answers provided for the teacher. Keen photographers could make a photographic record of the castle features as they go round.

Please be aware of other visitors as you do the activities. Supervise students closely at all times and take care going up and down stairs. You might like to split into three smaller groups, with an adult supervising each group.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Watch our YouTube video 'A Mini Guide to Medieval Castles' (1 min 54 sec): https://youtu.be/RXXDThkJ3Ew

MEDIEVAL CASTLE CLUES
TEACHERS' NOTES

LOCATION	DID YOU KNOW?	DISCUSSION POINT
1. West gate	This was the main entrance to the Roman fort, accessed via a narrow causeway. During the medieval period, a new gatehouse was built on the site of the Roman one. All that remains of this medieval work are a few stones of the western gatepost (the smaller wall, jutting out into the entranceway, as seen in the photo). There was also a medieval defensive ditch cut across the causeway at a different angle to the Roman one.	Look at the earthwork and use the map to work out which ditch was built by the Romans and which one was put there in medieval times (they are at two different angles). Answer: the map shows where the more curved, Norman ditch cuts across the straighter, Roman ditch.
2. Roman wall	When the medieval castle was built, the Roman wall was already here, so this saved the medieval builders a big job. The wall is about 3.7 metres thick, made from a core of flint, bonded together with mortar, and faced with a thin layer of finely cut stone. The fort was built in about AD 290, by a naval commander, called Carausius, who was in charge of protecting this bit of the coast from Saxon pirate attacks. In Roman times, the D-shaped towers would have been hollow, with open backs. They were filled in and platforms were added during the medieval period.	Look at the masonry of the Roman west gate. Notice the D-shaped towers and the stripes of terracotta running through them, which were used to provide stability so that the builders could continue upwards. Compare this with the small section of medieval wall still visible, which is more angular, and would've been rectangular rather than D-shaped. The stones used for the outer face of the medieval tower are larger than those used in the Roman towers.
3. Moat	When the Normans first created the inner bailey, it was much bigger than the one you see today. You can see the probable line of the early Norman inner bailey marked on the map. It was roughly halved in size in the mid-1200s to create the present layout. Around it a vast new moat was dug. Parts of this have been re-excavated to create the moat you now see. The original moat was massive – probably more than 18 metres wide – and the water in it would have lapped the bases of the walls and towers. A dam retained the water and the remains of this are visible in the ditch to the right of the gatehouse (southwards).	Imagine you are trying to attack the castle. Discuss a plan to get over the moat, past the walls and towers, and into the inner bailey. Answer: Find a way to go over, under or through the walls. Water made it very hard to get close enough to the walls to push a ladder, a siege tower or battering ram up to them. The moat meant the walls couldn't be undermined (digging underneath a section of wall to make it collapse). You could use stone-flinging machines to smash through the walls or attack the gatehouse across the narrow causeway.

4. North tower 	The interior of the north tower was updated during the Second World War but, from the outside, it looks much the same as it would have done in medieval times. Archers stood inside the towers and shot arrows at enemy soldiers. Engineering an arrowslit required a balance between a thick enough wall, a big enough field of fire outside the wall, and enough space for the archer to move inside the wall. It was a feat of engineering!	Count the number of arrowslits on the north tower (there are twelve; four on each level). Imagine you are an attacker approaching the north tower. What equipment do you need to protect yourself from arrow fire? Answer: padding, chain mail, armour, helmet, shield. How good your armour was often depended on your status and what you could afford. Therefore, poorer soldiers were more likely to get injured and die.
5. Gatehouse 	The gatehouse in front of you was probably built in about 1200. The original approach to the gatehouse was across a long (20.7 metre) wooden bridge, but this proved too expensive to maintain, and in 1405 it was replaced with the existing stone causeway (where the gravel path now is) and drawbridge pit (where the wooden bridge now is). The gatehouse had two drum-shaped towers either side of the entrance – one of the earliest surviving examples of this popular medieval twin-towered design.	Imagine approaching the gatehouse. If you managed to avoid arrow fire, there was a huge gate (portcullis) to get past. Defenders might throw stones or tip hot sand onto you from above. What character traits would you need to have to cope with this level of danger? Answer: physical and psychological strength, courage, bravery, skill, intelligence, stamina, fitness.
6. Oubliette 	Go through the gatehouse and look back at it from the inner bailey. Inside each of the gatehouse towers were rooms split across three floors. Only the basement rooms have survived intact. There is a dungeon in the basement of the north tower (on your right), which is only accessible through a hole in the roof. This is sometimes termed an 'oubliette', which comes from the French word 'oublier' meaning 'to forget'. It was used as a prison cell in the 1400s.	Shine a torch down into the basement to get a sense of the depth of the dungeon. Imagine you have been put down there. How would it feel to be 'forgotten'? What would you miss the most? What would you do to pass the time?
7. Well 	The well is over 15 metres deep. In medieval times, you couldn't get fresh water from pipes or taps, so this well was a vital water supply. During a siege, attackers would surround the castle and wait for the defenders to run out of supplies, so having access to fresh water in the inner bailey was crucial. Disease played an important part in medieval siege warfare. Attacking armies would try to contaminate (poison) the water supply from outside the castle walls. The reconstruction drawing on page 58 shows what the well would have looked like in the 13th century.	Imagine you are an attacking soldier outside the castle walls. Discuss the methods you could use to spread disease among the defenders inside the castle. Answer: throw rotten things over the walls using a trebuchet (a catapult-like machine made of wood). If one of these lands in the well, the fresh water supply will be contaminated.

| 8. Keep	The keep, now ruined, was once a great tower containing domestic apartments. Documents from the 1300s describe it as containing a kitchen and a chapel. Little of this once grand building survives today. Its most imposing features are the bases of two towers. The original keep was built up against the existing Roman wall some time between 1130 and 1200. It was then altered in 1325, with much of the building being demolished and replaced. Quite why this happened is still a mystery. Perhaps the keep suffered a major structural failure, possibly as the result of siege damage, and had to be rebuilt. A machine-gun post was added to the keep in the Second World War.	Stand between the two towers of the keep and look up at it. Come up with three words to describe it. Think about the size, colour and texture of the building, and how it makes you feel. Answer: suggestions include – ruined, huge, defensive, imposing, indestructible, dominating, safe, secure, grey, protective, sheltered.
9. Chapel	Records suggest there was definitely a chapel on this spot by the 1200s. It was entirely rebuilt in wood in 1302, either on this foundation or on a new site in the outer bailey. Medieval society was deeply religious. People believed the king was appointed by God himself. Everyone living and working at the castle was expected to attend religious services every day, led by the chaplain. There also used to be a chapel in the keep. There may have been one chapel for rich people and a separate one for the poor.	Work out where the east end of the church is. This is considered the most sacred end of the church, where the chaplain stood to lead services. The congregation entered and gathered in the western end. In medieval times, everyone went to church. Do a quick 'hands-up' survey to see how many people in your group regularly visit a religious building, and how many don't. Discuss how things have changed since medieval times.

ENGLISH HERITAGE EDUCATION

MEDIEVAL CASTLE CLUES

EXPLORE PEVENSEY CASTLE

KS2

KS3

See if you can find all these castle clues. Tick each one off as you find it.

---

1 WEST GATE ☐

Roman towers ☐ Medieval stones ☐
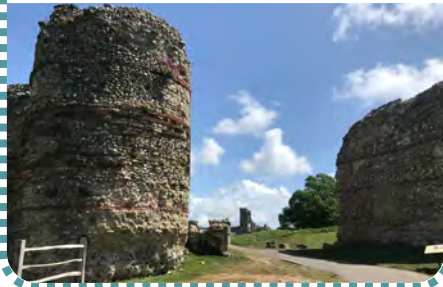
2 ROMAN WALL ☐

Layers of flint ☐ Mortar ☐

3 MOAT ☐

Dam ☐ (where the earth is raised to stop the water)

4 NORTH TOWER ☐

Three levels ☐
Arrowslits ☐

5 GATEHOUSE ☐

Stone causeway ☐ Drawbridge pit ☐
Portcullis grooves ☐

6 OUBLIETTE ☐

Trapdoor entrance ☐
Dungeon ☐

7 WELL ☐

Curved wall ☐
Water at the bottom ☐

8 KEEP ☐

Strong base ☐
Exposed rubble core ☐

9 CHAPEL ☐

Stone foundations ☐ East end ☐
Gravestone ☐

N

Collapsed wall
Postern
Possible line of early Norman inner bailey
Roman east gate
North tower
4
3
East tower
F
Chapel
Site of hall
F
F
5
F
9
6
INNER BAILEY
F
8
Gatehouse
Keep
Well
Ticket office and shop
7
Tudor gun emplacement
Dam
F
Roman west gate
South tower
Postern
Norman ditch
1
2
Ditch
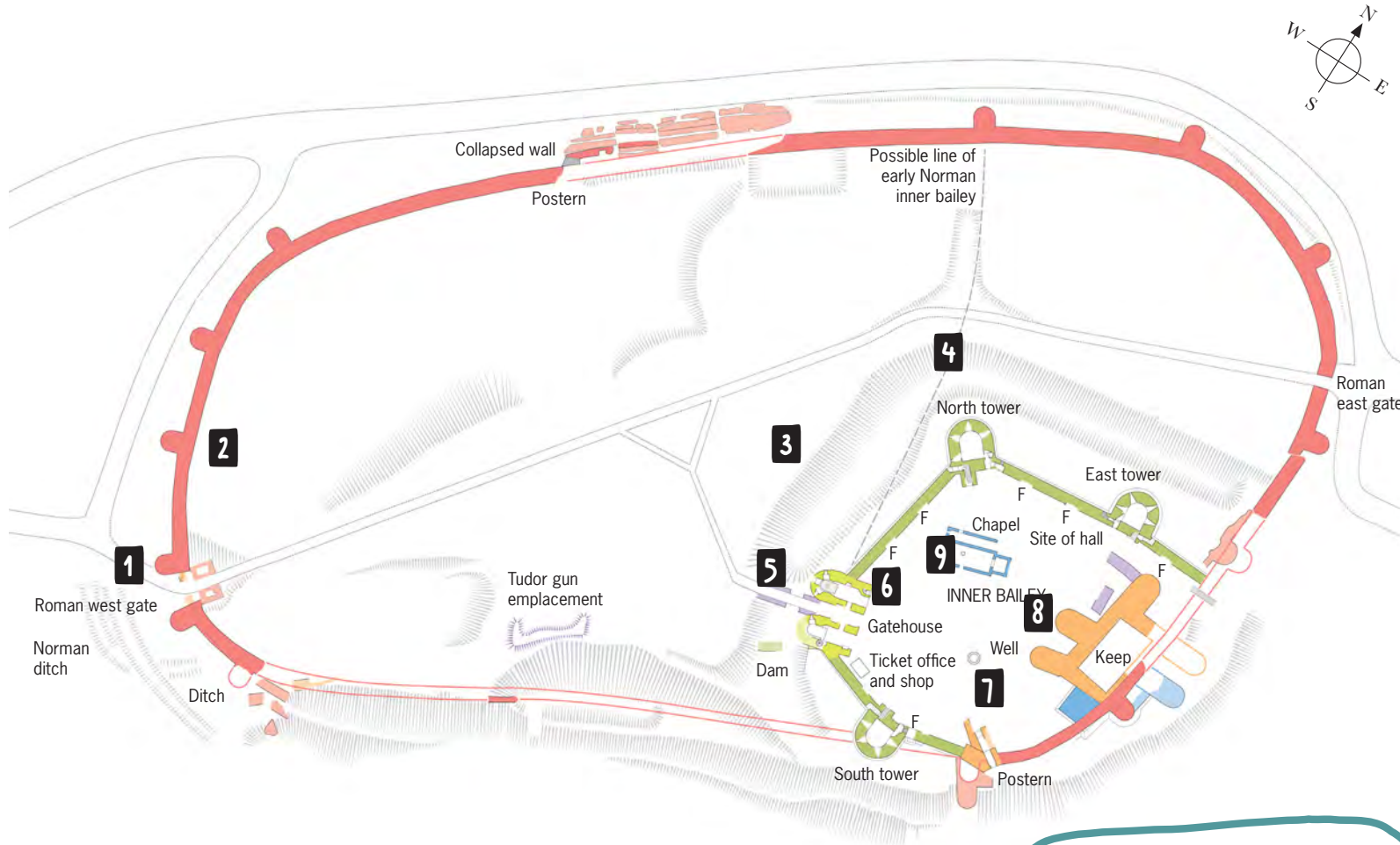
KEY

1	WEST GATE
2	ROMAN WALL
3	MOAT
4	NORTH TOWER
5	GATEHOUSE
6	OUBLIETTE
7	WELL
8	KEEP
9	CHAPEL

Roman, 3rd century AD
12th century
Late 12th/early 13th century
Mid 13th century
14th century
Later medieval
Uncertain

F Fireplace (site of)

0   100 metres
0   250 feet

HINT
Once you've found everything, go and look in the exhibition for medieval objects that were found at Pevensey.

ENGLISH HERITAGE EDUCATION

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
UNDER SIEGE!

KS2   KS3   KS4+

Recommended for

KS2–KS4 (History)

Learning objectives

• Understand the most common attack and defence strategies adopted during a medieval siege.

• Consider the pros and cons of using different siege weapons against a strong, medieval castle.

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes

A siege tower being pushed towards a curtain wall during a siege re-enactment.

A battering ram being pushed by siege re-enactors.

SUMMARY

Before your visit, watch our YouTube video 'How to Take a Medieval Castle' (1 min 49 sec): https://youtu.be/xNeNPk4D_Ng

Pevensey Castle was besieged on four different occasions during the medieval period, in 1088, 1147, 1264 and 1399. During your visit, gather in the outer bailey, looking at the curtain wall that protects the inner bailey. It has defensive towers at regular intervals and used to have a wall-walk on top for defending soldiers to patrol along. The soldiers were protected by crenellated battlements. Wooden fighting platforms were attached, for defenders to stand on.

Attacking armies could:

• trap (besiege) the garrison inside, starving them into surrender
• scale the walls with ladders or ropes attached to grappling irons
• push a siege tower up to the wall, as long as there was level ground
• destroy the walls using siege weapons such as battering rams and stone-slinging machines
• undermine (dig beneath) the walls and towers to make them collapse.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Split your class into five evenly sized groups. Give each group the 'Medieval Siege Weapons' table and illustration (on pages 50–51).

Assign one type of weapon to each group and ask them to:

1. read the information about their siege weapon
2. find their siege weapon being used in the illustration
3. discuss the pros and cons of using that weapon at Pevensey.

Finally, ask each group to feed back what they found out and have a whole-class discussion about which weapons would be most/least effective against Pevensey Castle's defences.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

For younger students, ask them to act out different siege tactics, e.g. scaling a ladder, pushing a battering ram, digging a tunnel, loading and firing a siege engine, hiding behind a mantlet.
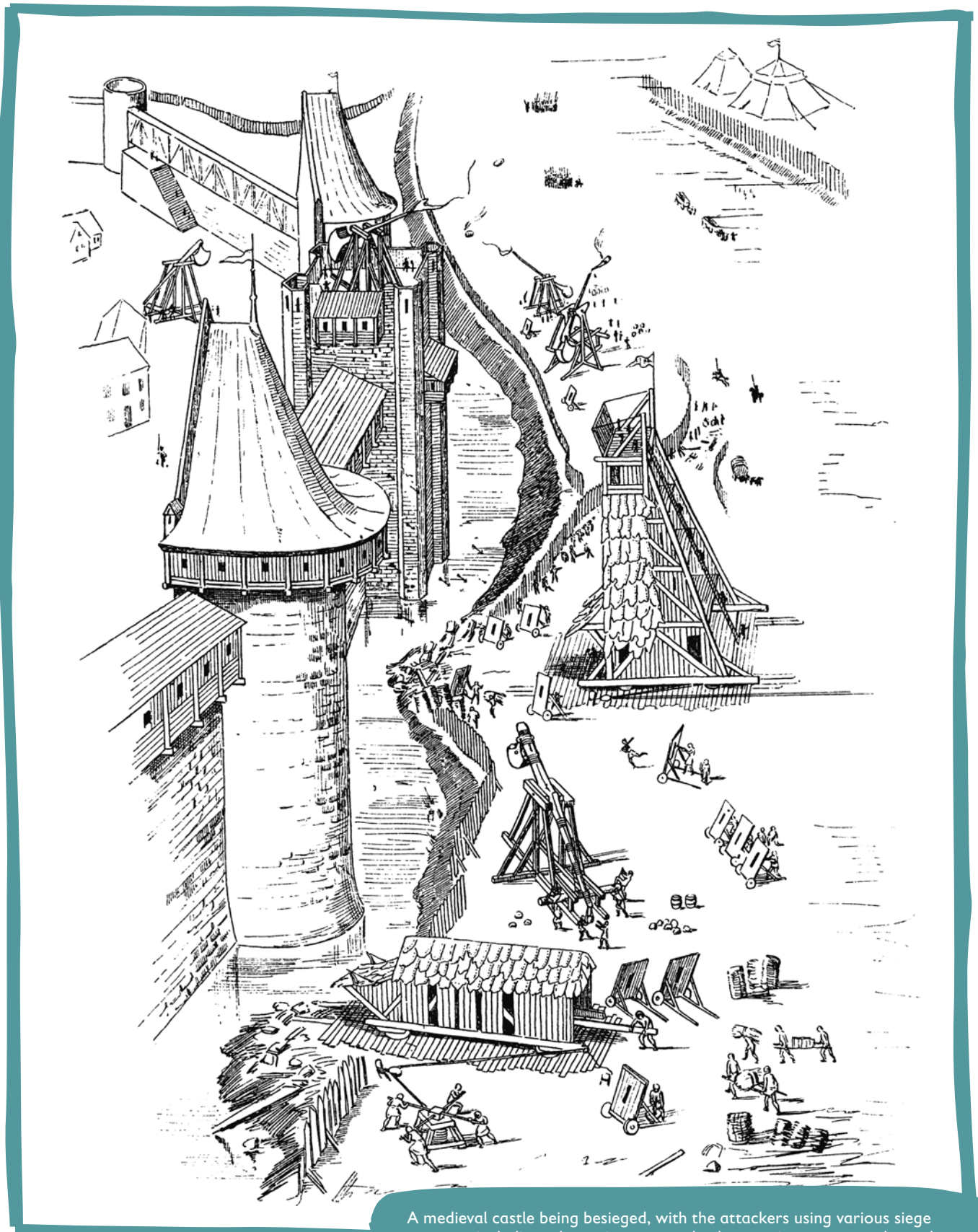
MEDIEVAL SIEGE WEAPONS

Name	How it worked	Pros and cons
siege tower	The tower was built high enough so that when it approached a castle wall, or tower, it could drop a platform down that let soldiers cross over it.	The tower protected the attackers inside as they approached the enemy castle, but it had to be on level ground and didn't work if there was a moat.
battering ram	This was usually a huge felled tree that was pushed on wheels into a castle door or wall to break it down.	The ram could break down a strong gatehouse door but needed to get to it before the drawbridge was pulled up.
mangonel	Like a catapult, the mangonel could fling a stone weighing up to 25kg. The stone sat in a cup, held down by a rope – when the rope was released, the cup threw the stone into the air.	The mangonel could launch projectiles over a moat but had to be aimed carefully so the projectile hit its target.
mantlet	This was a sloping board that covered attacking archers on the ground as they aimed arrows at a castle.	This provided good cover for the archers but it needed holes to let the archers see where to aim.
mining	Miners, or 'sappers', would have crept up to the base of the walls under the cover of a hurdle (frame) and mined into the foundations.	This was a skilled operation that needed trained miners. Square towers were easier to undermine than round ones.

A siege tower, catapult and battering ram being used in a re-enactment.

A medieval castle being besieged, with the attackers using various siege weapons including a battering ram, trebuchets, a siege tower and mantlets.

POST-VISIT

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

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

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 Pevensey Castle's history.

SOURCE 1

A reconstruction by Peter Urmston of Roman Pevensey (then called 'Anderida') as it may have looked c.AD 300. The water would have come up to the walls of the fort in some places. Today, the sea is about a mile away, due to sand deposited by the sea building up over hundreds of years to form new land.

ROMAN JEWELLERY

Pieces of Roman jewellery found at Pevensey, which are evidence of women and children living within the military fort. The small object at the top is a simple earring. The object in the middle is a fragment from a three strand cable armlet with catch. Armlets are like bracelets, but worn on the upper arm, often in groups; according to burial evidence some women wore as many as 14 armlets at a time. The object at the bottom is a thin, flat-sided armlet, the likes of which became fashionable among women in the later Roman period. The size of this one suggests it must have belonged to a child, which was not unusual in Roman times.
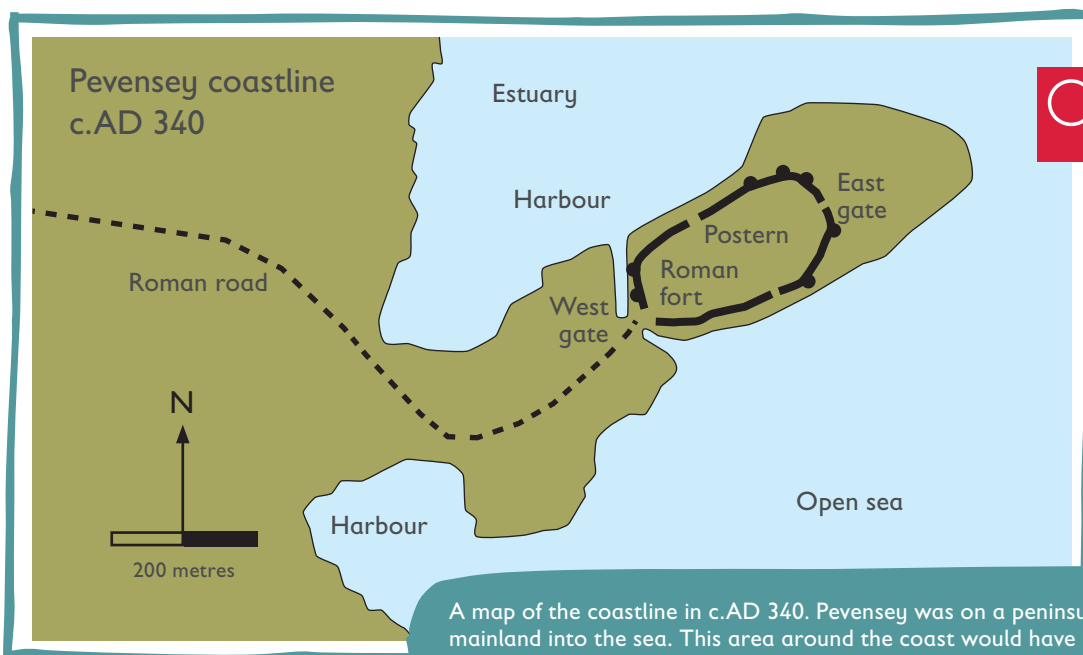
ROMAN FORK

A small three-pronged fork, from AD 250–300, that may have been used for eating shellfish.

Pevensey coastline
c.AD 340

Estuary

Harbour

East gate

Postern

Roman fort

Roman road

West gate

N

200 metres

Harbour

Open sea

A map of the coastline in c.AD 340. Pevensey was on a peninsula that jutted out from the mainland into the sea. This area around the coast would have been marshland. Today, however, the fort stands on dry land, with the sea about a mile away, so the landscape has changed dramatically since Roman times.
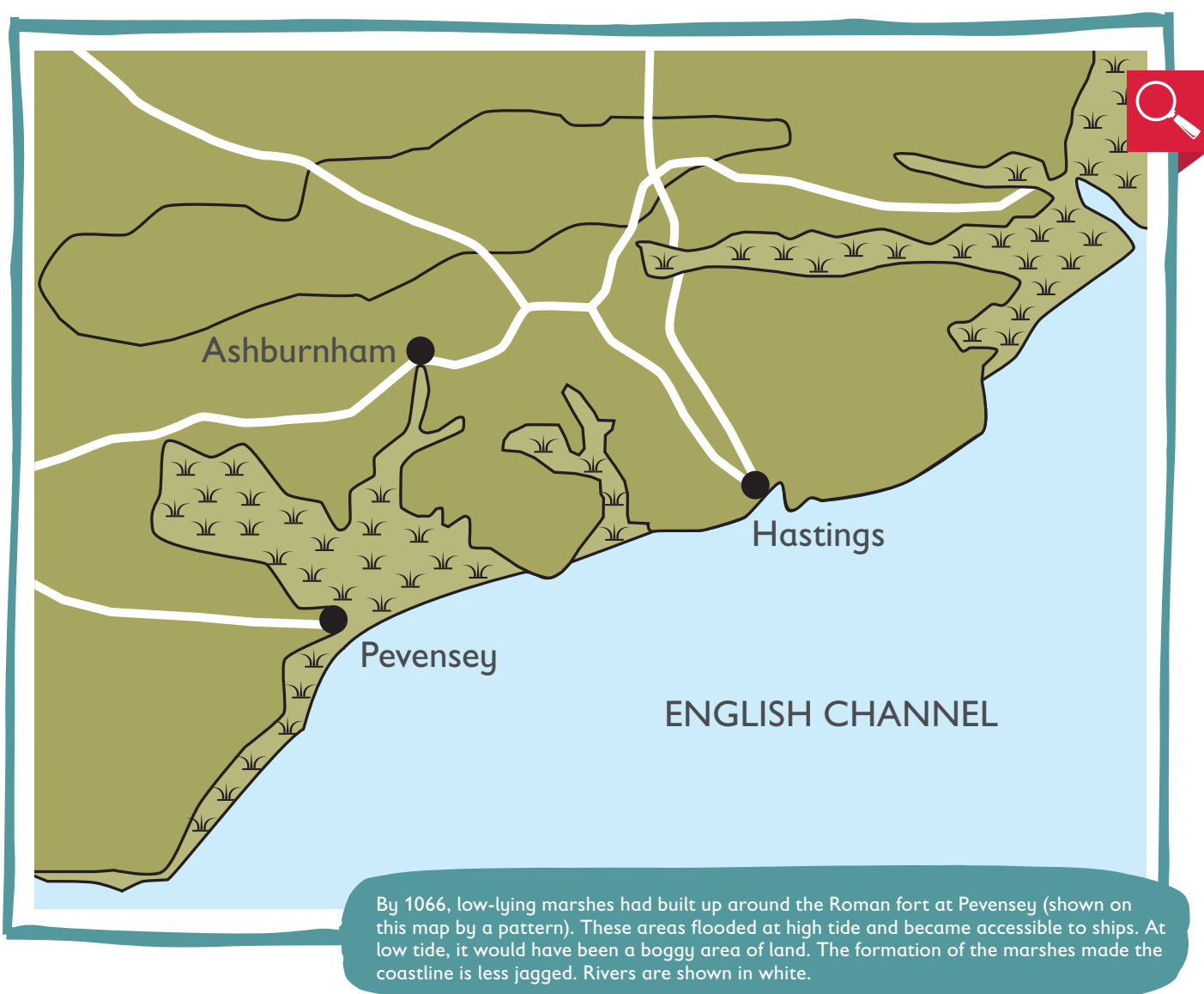
'In this year Aelle and Cissa besieged Andredesceaster and slew all the inhabitants; there was not even one Briton left there.'
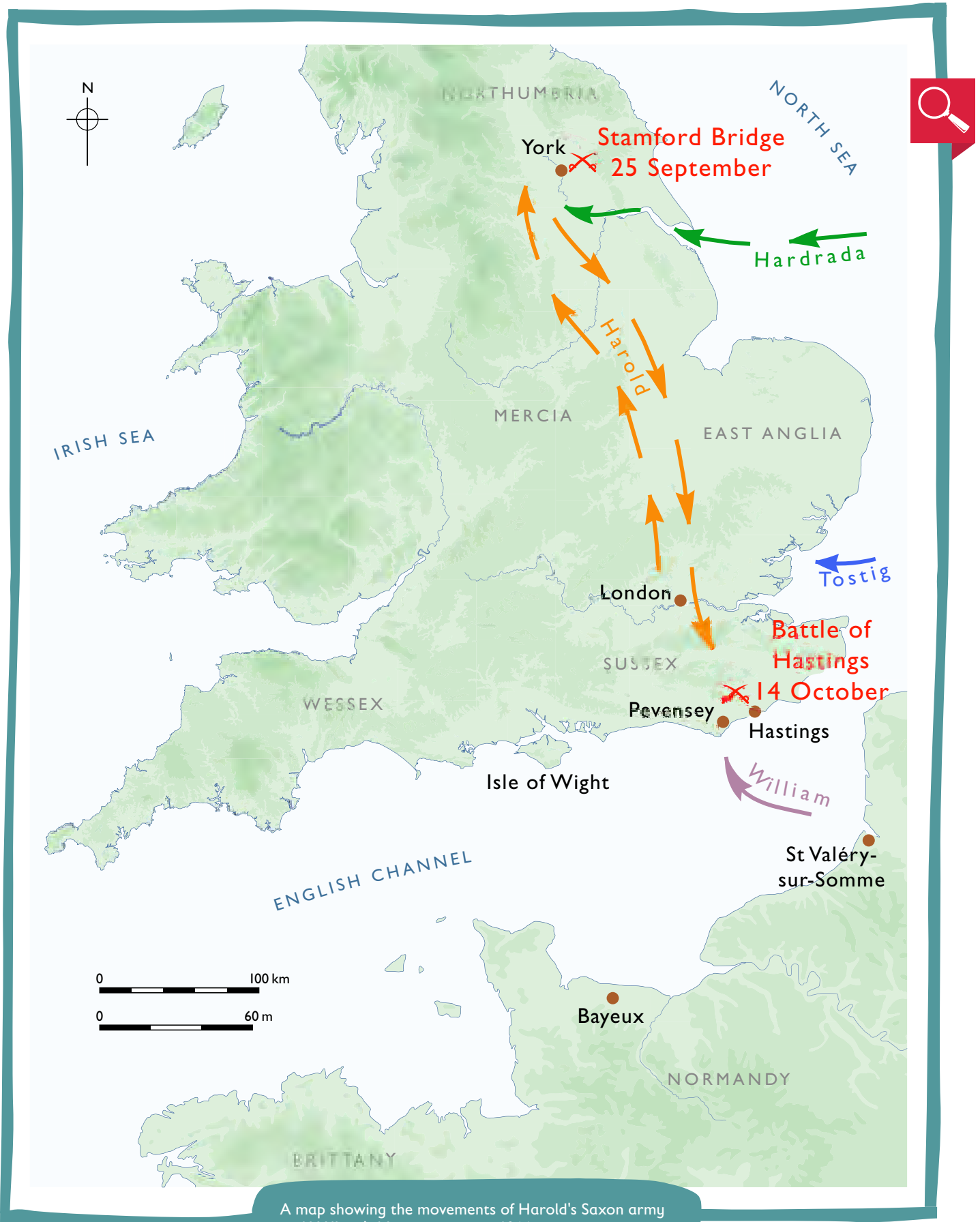
This extract is from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (entry for AD 491). It is an account of a violent Saxon raid on Pevensey (referred to here as 'Andredesceaster'), where a community of Britons were living at the time. After this, it is likely that a Saxon community settled within the Roman walls, but the fort at Pevensey disappears from the historical records at this time, and doesn't reappear until the Norman invasion in 1066.

SOURCE 6

Ashburnham

Pevensey

Hastings

ENGLISH CHANNEL

By 1066, low-lying marshes had built up around the Roman fort at Pevensey (shown on this map by a pattern). These areas flooded at high tide and became accessible to ships. At low tide, it would have been a boggy area of land. The formation of the marshes made the coastline is less jagged. Rivers are shown in white.

N

NORTHUMBRIA

NORTH SEA

York

Stamford Bridge
25 September

Hardrada

Harold

MERCIA

EAST ANGLIA

IRISH SEA

Tostig

London

Battle of
Hastings
14 October

SUSSEX

WESSEX

Pevensey

Hastings

Isle of Wight

William

St Valéry-
sur-Somme

ENGLISH CHANNEL

0   100 km

0   60 m

Bayeux

NORMANDY

BRITTANY

A map showing the movements of Harold's Saxon army
and William's Norman army in 1066.

A reconstruction drawing by Peter Urmston of Pevensey as it may have looked during the Norman landing. On the morning of 28 September 1066 William, Duke of Normandy, and his fleet of 700 ships sailed across the English Channel and landed at Pevensey Bay. They built a temporary wooden fort inside the Roman walls and raided and burned nearby Saxon villages.

SOURCE 9

'Pevensey is a castle rising on a very lofty mound, fortified on every side by a most beautiful wall, fenced impregnably by the washing waves of the sea, almost inaccessible owing to the difficulty of the ground. So when the king had betaken himself thither, accompanied by his army, and observed that the fortifications of the place were difficult to storm and the garrison ready to resist, he at once left there to besiege them a loyal and resolute body of his troops, on whom he especially relied, with emphatic orders to press on the siege with expense and toil, ingenuity and skill, on the side of the sea with ships, with soldiers where the castle faced the land, until at length the besieged, worn with vexation and weariness, should admit the impossibility of resistance.'

This extract, describing the 1147 siege on Pevensey Castle, is taken from Gesta Stephani, otherwise known as 'Deeds of King Stephen'. It is an account by an anonymous author describing King Stephen's response to the rebellious actions of Gilbert de Clare, whom the king had given Pevensey Castle to. This backfired when Gilbert de Clare rebelled, using Pevensey Castle against the king. King Stephen besieged the castle, cutting off all supplies from land and sea, thereby starving the rebels into submission.

SOURCE 10

A reconstruction drawing by Peter Urmston of the inner bailey of the castle as it may have looked c.1250, when it was probably humming with life as children, animals, soldiers and servants passed through here.

SOURCE 11

'My dear Lord it is right that you know of my position, I am laid here in manner of a siege… so that I may not out nor no vitals get without much difficulty. Wherefore my dear it may please you, by the advice of your wise council, to give remedy to the salvation of your castle and the malice of your enemies.'

This extract is from S Walker, 'Letters to the Dukes of Lancaster in 1381 and 1399', *English Historical Review*, 106 (1991), 75–9. Sir John Pelham was made constable of Pevensey Castle by John of Gaunt in 1394. When Gaunt's banished son, Henry Bolingbroke, returned from exile to claim his inheritance in 1399, Pelham sided with Bolingbroke. In this letter, Pelham writes to Henry Bolingbroke (later King Henry IV), reporting a heavy siege and requesting help.
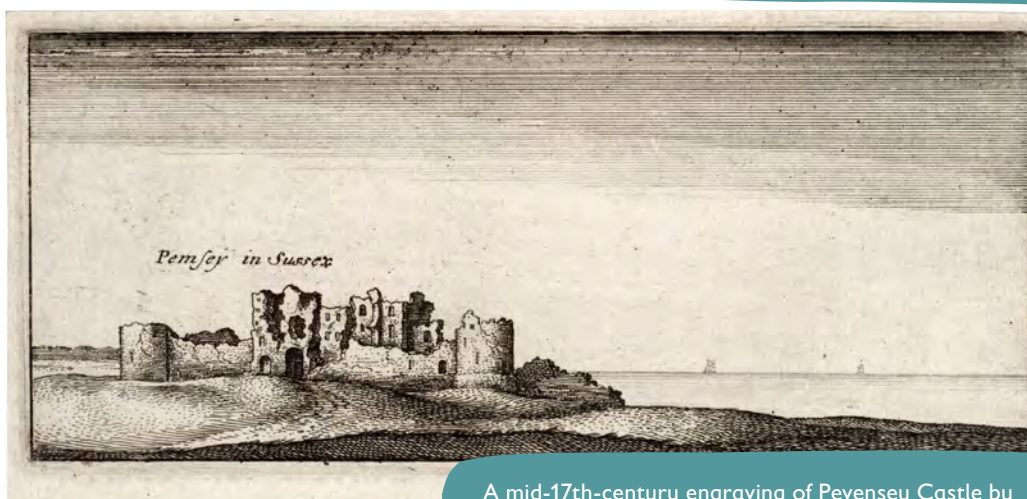
SOURCE 12

MEDIEVAL POSY RING

A gold ring from the 15th century found at Pevensey Castle. The term 'posy' ring has links with poetry. The name comes from inscriptions which tend to be love notes, meaning that the rings were often used as wedding rings. The gold band is engraved with letters (+VI E –VA) separated by patterns in trailing vine-like decoration. We don't know the meaning of this particular inscription. It isn't a standard phrase so it was probably a special commission, made to order for the gift giver. This was a very valuable, high-status object probably belonging to someone wealthy.

You can see a 3D photo of this object, and more objects from the Pevensey collection, on this web page: https://sketchfab.com/models/36f143b2ebcf4c70a4e2d2875d481e2a

SOURCE 13

A mid-17th-century engraving of Pevensey Castle by Wenceslaus Hollar – the earliest-known view of the castle.

SOURCE 14

A painting of the gatehouse at Pevensey, created by John Hamilton Mortimer in 1774.

SOURCE 15

'WAR STORY OF PEVENSEY CASTLE

Completely Modernised Anti-Invasion Bastion Staffed by Home Guard for Key Role

In this week of Victory it is interesting to recall the grim days of the years before V-day, and as the censor lifts his veil we are able to see more clearly the way in which catastrophe was averted in 1940, '41 and '42.

Perhaps the main bastion that protected Eastbourne – and indeed the whole of this area of East Sussex – was Pevensey Castle. This famous building was nothing more than a ruin before the war, a show-place for trippers and holiday-makers, but since then its grim walls have been returned to their original status; they have been part of a key position in the intricate home defence of this country.

Pevensey Castle has changed. Walls have been strengthened and replaced, whole rooms have been added, and the "show piece" becomes a fort as strong as ever it was in the days of the Norman Conquest.'

This extract is from an article in the *Eastbourne Chronicle*, published on Saturday 19 May 1945, a week after the end of the Second World War. During the war, a newly formed government department called the Ministry of Information controlled what the newspapers could and couldn't print, in order to stop news from Britain being seen in enemy countries. This strict press censorship was lifted after victory was declared, finally permitting journalists to write in detail about the events of the war. In this article, an *Eastbourne Chronicle* reporter reflects on the role Pevensey Castle played in the Second World War.

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
1066: DESIGN YOUR OWN NORMAN CASTLE

KS3 **KS4+**

Recommended for

KS3 & KS4 (History, Geography)

Learning objectives

• Understand that Pevensey was just one of many castles built by the Normans to establish control in England.

• Understand the key features of a Norman castle and use these to design one.

• Discuss the impact of Norman castle-building on England.

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes

An illustration of a simple motte-and-bailey castle (a wooden keep atop a mound).

SUMMARY

Show students our YouTube video 'A Brief History of the Normans' (2 min 16 sec): https://youtu.be/xCCTJKsLZxE

Explain that motte-and-bailey castles were almost unknown in pre-Conquest England, but about 500 had been built by 1100. Castles played a crucial role in both achieving and maintaining Norman rule, becoming lasting symbols of Norman authority.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Print and photocopy enough student worksheets (pages 62–63).

In this activity, students should imagine they are one of William the Conqueror's noblemen. William has given them a patch of land in England to reward them for their loyal service in the Battle of Hastings. They need to build a castle as a symbol of local power, but the king has given them a set of rules they have to follow. Hand out the worksheets and ask students to work through the tasks.

The answers to the 'Norman' or 'not Norman' quiz are:

• Norman: Old Sarum, Rochester, Castle Rising, Richmond.
• Not Norman: Deal (Tudor device fort), Bolsover (Stuart mansion), Stokesay (fortified medieval manor house), Orford (built by King Henry II), Clifford's Tower (original Norman tower was burned down and replaced).

Once students have completed their castle design, they should hand it to a classmate to get feedback on how well they have stuck to King William's rules.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Discuss the impact of the Norman castle-building programme:

• England was now fortified to a much greater extent. Other foreign invaders found it harder to repeat the Normans' success because they were now faced with fortified towns, residences and large castles. Control of any area could not be achieved without its most important castles being taken, thus shifting the balance of warfare away from battles and towards sieges.

DESIGN YOUR OWN NORMAN CASTLE

So, you want to build a castle on your land? Okay, but you must follow my rules...

King William I

A Norman castle must include:

1. a moat around the outside (can be dry or filled with water)

2. a wooden palisade (fence) or stone curtain wall, just inside the moat, surrounding a bailey (a protected area in the middle)

3. a gatehouse in the wall (the only entrance to the bailey)

4. a strong stone keep in the bailey (a tall, square tower, with only one entrance)

5. wooden buildings in the bailey with thatched or tiled roofs – somewhere for people to sleep, a kitchen, a barn, a forge for a blacksmith, and stables for horses.

1 Test your knowledge. Decide whether each English Heritage castle below is 'Norman' or 'not Norman'.
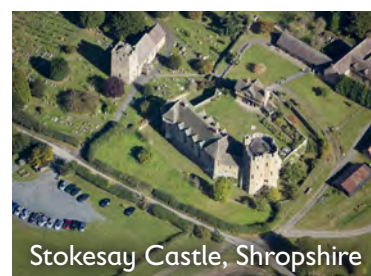
Deal Castle, Kent

Old Sarum, Wiltshire

Rochester Castle, Kent
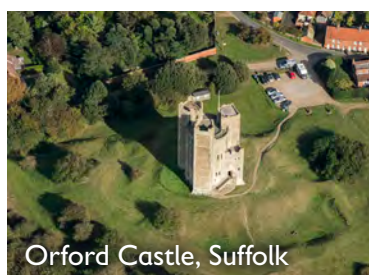
Castle Rising, Norfolk

Bolsover Castle, Derbyshire

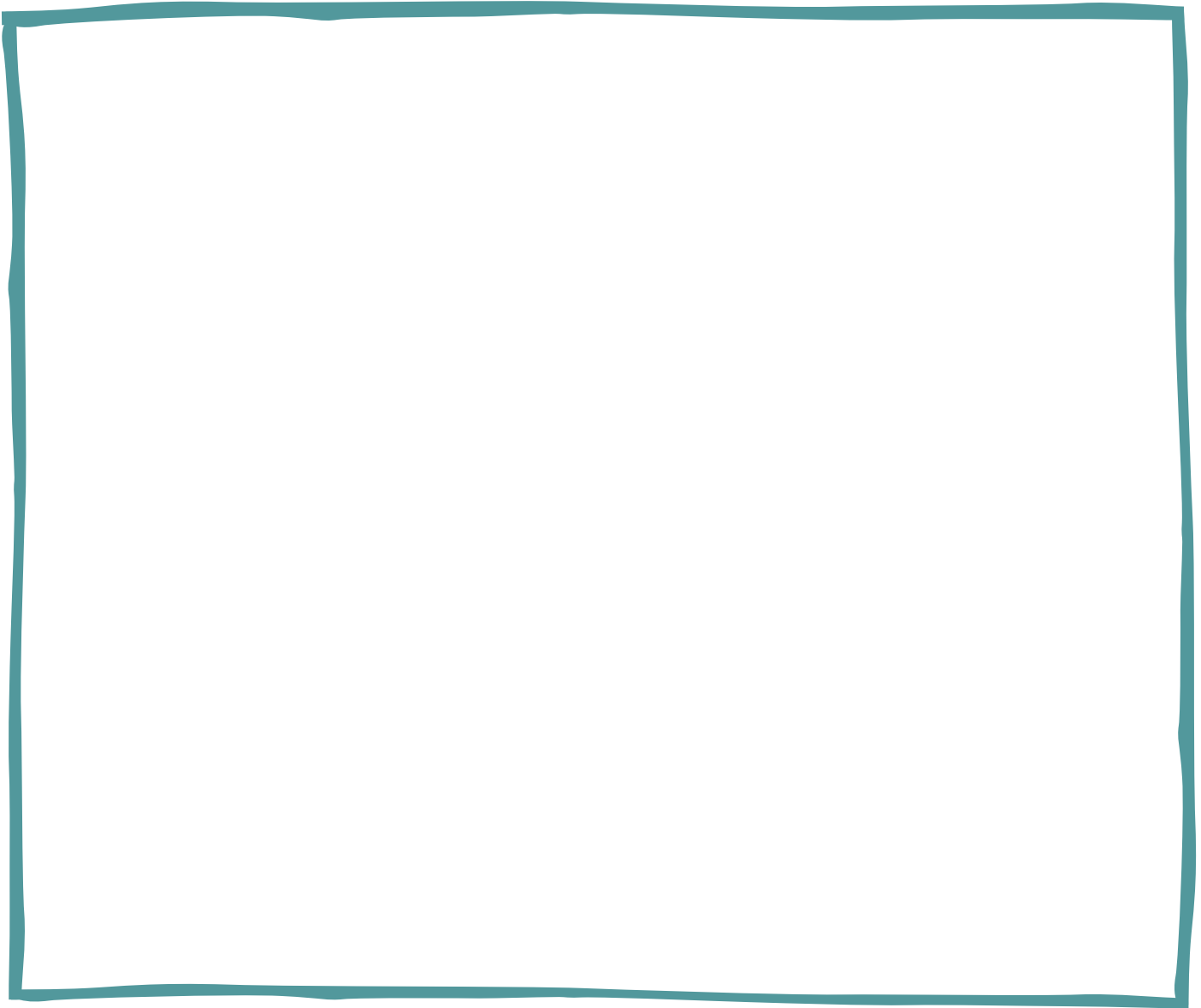Stokesay Castle, Shropshire

Richmond Castle, Yorkshire

Orford Castle, Suffolk

Clifford's Tower, York

2 **Design** your Norman castle in the box below. **Label** the different features you've included:

3 **Present** your design to a partner. **Get feedback**: what did you do well and what could you have done better?

....

....

....

....