

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

I066: DESIGN YOUR OWN NORMAN CASTLE



KS3

KS4+

Recommended for

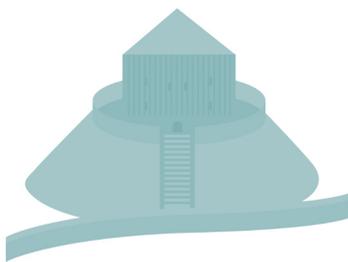
KS3 & KS4 (History, Geography)

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 65–66).

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



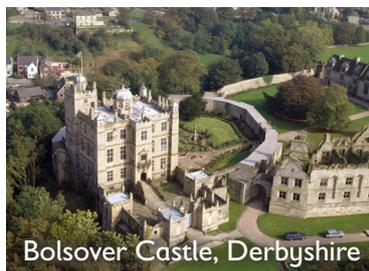
Old Sarum, Wiltshire



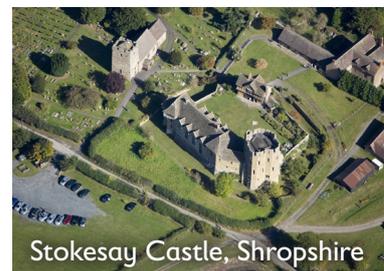
Rochester Castle, Kent



Castle Rising, Norfolk



Bolsover Castle, Derbyshire



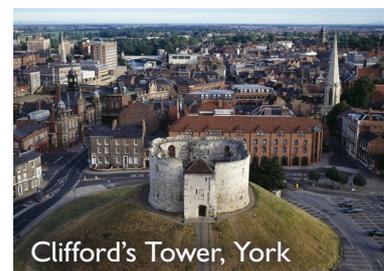
Stokesay Castle, Shropshire



Richmond Castle, Yorkshire

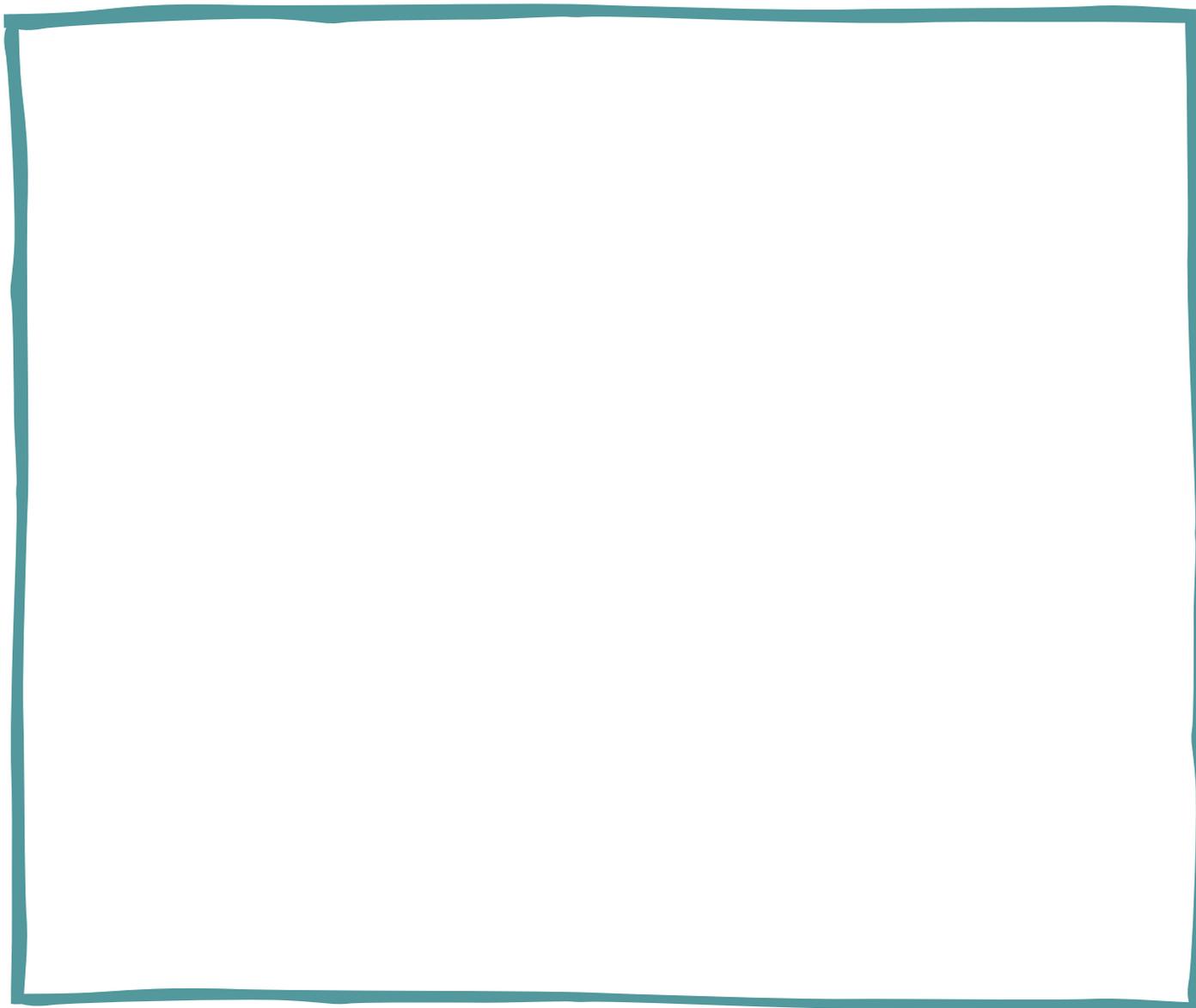


Orford Castle, Suffolk



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?

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