



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

KS1-2

KS3

KS4+

TEACHERS' KIT

Bolsover Castle

This kit helps teachers plan a visit to Bolsover Castle, a 17th-century retreat visited by intellectuals and royalty. Use these resources before, during and after your visit to help students get the most out of their learning.

GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR EDUCATION BOOKINGS TEAM:

📞 0370 333 0606

✉ bookeducation@english-heritage.org.uk

🌐 bookings.english-heritage.org.uk/education

Share your visit with us @EHEducation



Step into England's story

WELCOME

This Teachers' Kit for Bolsover 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 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 our activities have clear guidance on the intended use for study so you can adapt them for your desired learning outcomes.

To further aid your planning, we have created Hazard Information, which you can download from the Bolsover Castle **School Visits** page. Here you can also find information about our expert-led Discovery Visits and an overview of what your class can experience. You can find more practical information about your booked visit to Bolsover Castle on your Education Visit Permit and on the Bolsover Castle **School Visits** page.

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.

ICON KEY

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



CONTENTS

KSI-2

KS3

KS4+

PRE-VISIT

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

Site Plan	5–6
Historical Information	7–25
Glossary	26–32
Timeline	33–39
KSI Image Bank ■	40–45
Why Build Here? ■ ■	46–51
Who were the Cavendishes? ■	52–60

AT THE CASTLE

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

Top Things to See ■	62–70
The Natural Philosopher's Trail ■	71–79
Inspiration Trail ■	80–88

POST-VISIT

Information and activities to help you extend your students' learning back in the classroom.

Sources	90–95
Decorative Pastries ■	96–99
Close Observation ■	100–104
Design Your Own Outfit ■	105–110
Trailblazing Poetry ■ ■	111–115

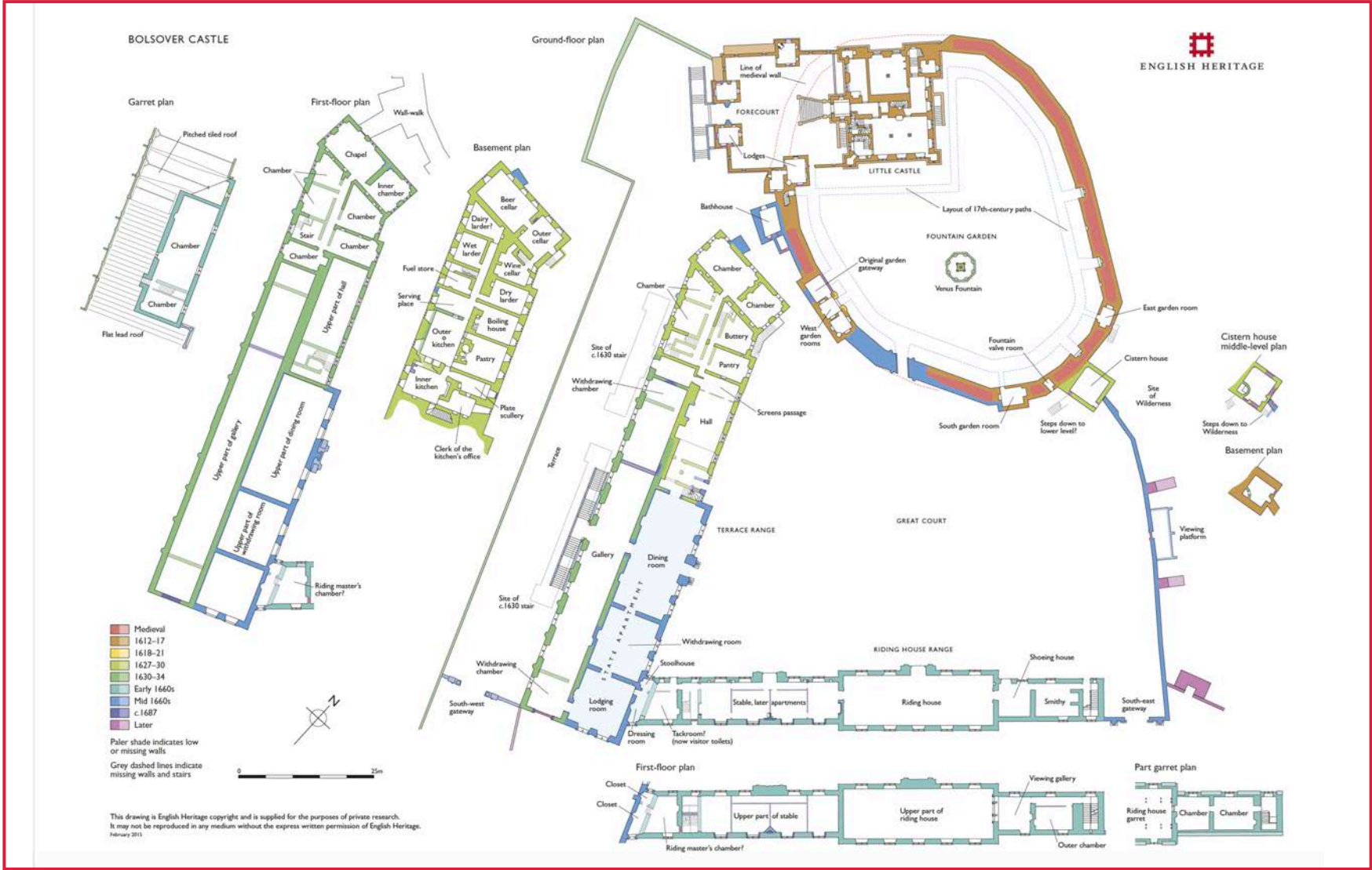


PRE-VISIT

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

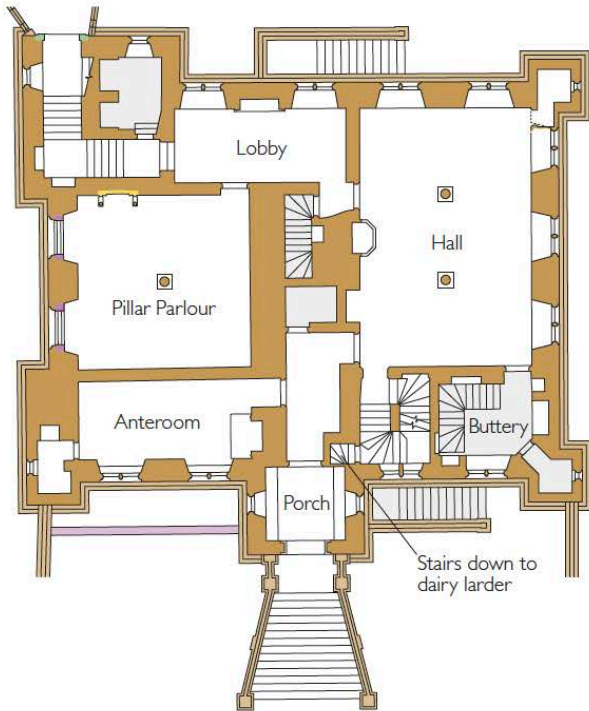
BOLSOVER CASTLE

SITE PLAN

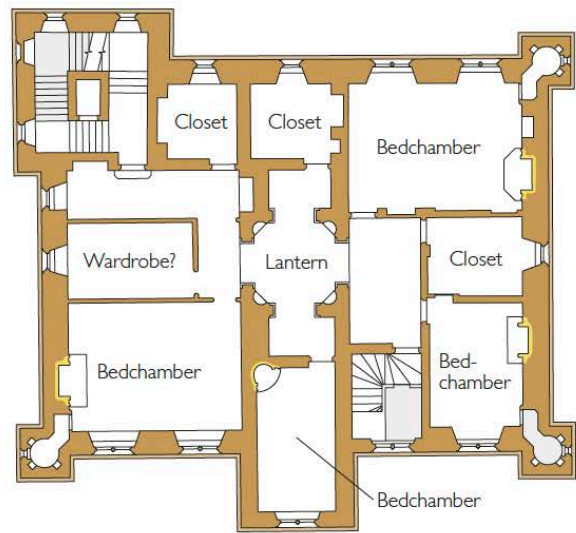


BOLSOVER CASTLE KEEP

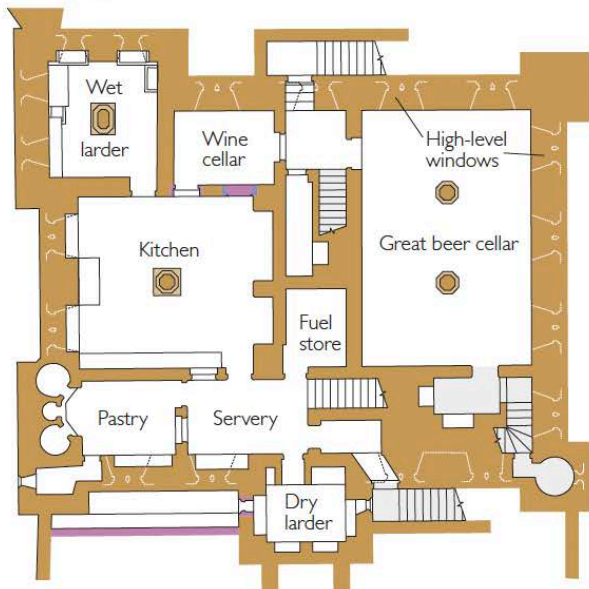
Ground floor



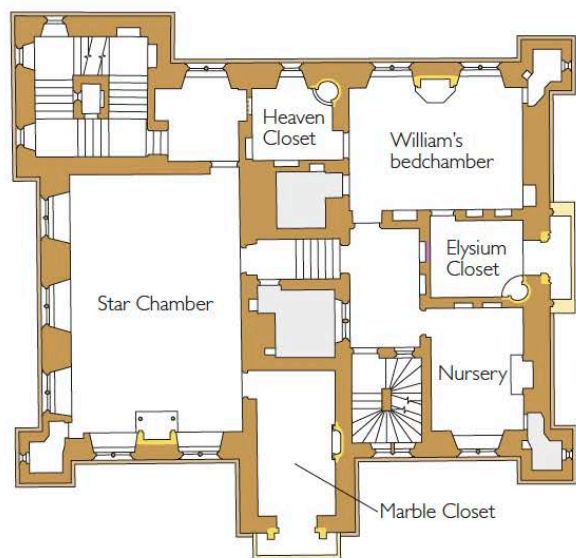
Second floor



Basement



First floor



- | | |
|--|---|
| Medieval | 1630–33 |
| 1612–17 | Later |
| 1618–21 | No visitor access |
- Paler shade indicates low walls or plinths

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

DISCOVER THE STORY OF
BOLSOVER CASTLE

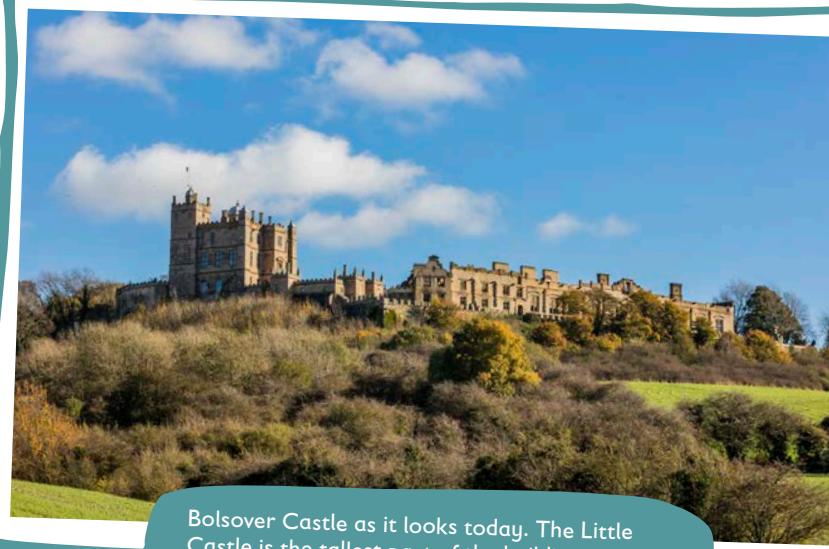
Below is a short history of Bolsover Castle. Use this information to learn how the site has changed over time. You'll find the definitions of the key words in the Glossary.

THE NORMAN CASTLE AT BOLSOVER

A **motte and bailey** castle was built at Bolsover in the late 11th century by William Peveril. Peveril took part in the **Norman Conquest** in 1066. He was a loyal supporter of William of Normandy who became King William I (r.1066–1087) after defeating Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings. Peveril was rewarded with land across the Midlands and northern England.

Owning land was the key to having power and wealth. England was an agricultural society, which meant it was based on farming. People who owned the land, controlled both food production and the people farming the land. Domesday Book of 1086 lists Peveril as owning 162 **manors**. This meant he was one of the

most wealthy and powerful men in England. He died in 1114, leaving Bolsover and his other **estates** to his son, also called William (the younger). William the younger fell out with King Henry II (r.1154–1189). As a result, his estates were taken away from him in 1155, including Bolsover Castle, which became a royal **possession**.



Bolsover Castle as it looks today. The Little Castle is the tallest part of the building on the left of this picture. This was where the Norman keep once stood.

TUDORS AND TALBOTS

Bolsover Castle was abandoned in the 14th century. During the 15th century different families **tenanted** Bolsover Castle such as the Tudors (including the father of Henry VII) and the Howards. In 1553 Bolsover Castle was bought from the Crown by George Talbot. He also inherited the title of Earl of Shrewsbury in 1560. This made him one of the wealthiest and most powerful men in England.

In 1567 he married Bess of Hardwick. She was born in 1527 to landowners in Derbyshire.

They were well respected but not very wealthy. They owned land and a manor house at Hardwick. Today, two houses still stand at Hardwick. Hardwick Old Hall was built on the site of the original house. Hardwick New Hall was added by Bess in the late 16th century.

George Talbot was Bess's fourth husband. She had six surviving children with her second husband, William Cavendish. To secure the **union** and her own children's inheritance, Bess arranged for two of her children to marry two of Talbot's children, including her daughter Mary who married Talbot's oldest son and heir, Gilbert.

Unfortunately, the marriage wasn't happy and by the 1580s the couple lived separately. When Talbot died in 1590, Gilbert inherited the ruined Bolsover Castle. He sold the estate to his stepbrother (and Mary's brother) Charles Cavendish.



Elizabeth Talbot, Countess of Shrewsbury, more often known as Bess of Hardwick. Her son, Charles Cavendish from her previous marriage to William Cavendish, inherited Bolsover Castle in the early 17th century.

THE LITTLE CASTLE

Charles Cavendish built the Little Castle in 1612 to look like a Norman keep. It has **turrets**, is on raised ground and is surrounded by a wall walk. However, it wasn't designed for **defence** and many of its features aren't very Norman. For example, the windows are large to provide visitors with fantastic views across the countryside. Charles died in 1617, before the **interior** decoration of the Little Castle was finished. Instead, it was left to his son, William Cavendish to complete.



A view of the Little Castle from the Fountain Garden.

ARTISTIC INTERIORS

William Cavendish finished the interiors with the help of the **architect**, John Smythson. They probably followed William's father's plans. The rooms are luxurious with beautifully painted **murals**, wooden panelling and carved fireplaces. It is unusual for such high-quality decoration from the early 17th century to survive, so they are very special. The paintings on the ground floor focus on the challenges and enjoyments of being alive. The upper floors have images of heaven, so it's as if guests are taken on a journey from earth to heaven as they go up inside the building.



A cutaway reconstruction of The Little Castle showing how William Cavendish and his family used the rooms inside to entertain guests.

PUZZLES, JOKES AND SECRET MESSAGES

Included in the paintings around the Little Castle are secret messages, puzzles and jokes that only the most cultured of visitors would understand. Portraits of family members or friends are also included in the interior design, which provided amusement when guests recognised them. For example, the painting of Aaron holding incense in the Star Chamber may be a portrait of Ben Jonson, a famous **playwright** and William's friend. Historians have compared the painting to known portraits of Jonson and they have similar facial features such as the heavily furrowed brow. Aaron is in the Christian Bible, Hebrew Bible and the Quran. He and his brother, Moses led the **Israelites** out of **enslavement** in Egypt. There is also a painting of Moses in the Star Chamber that is said to be a portrait of William. This might suggest William and Jonson were close, almost like brothers. It also suggests they are good Christians because they are shown alongside saints and other important religious figures. By including a famous playwright, William was showing his guests how well connected and cultured he was. You can explore the meaning behind the paintings in more depth using our trail on page 80.



A painting of Aaron in the Star Chamber that might be a portrait of Ben Johnson.

THE FOUR HUMOURS

The **anteroom** has paintings of three of the **four humours**. The theory of the four humours originated in **Ancient Rome** with a man called **Galen**. He said that bodies are made up of four humours which have corresponding personality types:

- **phlegm**, which makes someone **phlegmatic** (calm)
- blood, which makes someone **sanguine** (happy and outgoing)
- yellow **bile**, which makes someone **choleric** (angry)
- black bile, which makes someone **melancholic** (sad).

To stay healthy people had to keep all four humours balanced. If someone was ill, they had too much of one humour. The treatment was to get rid of the excess liquid. For example, blood could be removed using **leeches**. These beliefs continued through the Medieval period but were beginning to be challenged by the 17th century.

There are only three humours depicted in the anteroom, as blood is missing. Instead there is a painting that is designed to look like a stage using the kind of scenery that was common in 17th-century theatres. It is thought that William would stand here to represent the sanguine personality type and perform music to welcome his guests. When you visit the anteroom, look up to spot the fake **vaulted** ceiling. This was designed to look like Norman stonework, but it is actually painted onto the ceiling.



The painting in the anteroom that is designed to look like a stage.

STAIRCASE TO HEAVEN

Only the most **honoured** guests got to go upstairs to see the spectacular paintings in rooms such as the Star Chamber. The blue ceiling covered in gold stars reflects how the guests have gone upwards towards heaven. A smaller group of guests might progress further into the Heaven Closet or the **Elysium** Closet. Both of these rooms joined onto William's bedchamber. A bedchamber at this time was not just for sleeping. It was a place for chatting and socialising, but only special guests were allowed in.



A view of the Star Chamber. The wall hangings are reproductions of the kinds of hangings that might have been here in the 17th century. King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria might have sat on a raised dais (low platform) like the one in the image when they visited in 1634.

HEAVEN ON EARTH



The impressive ceiling in the Heaven Closet.

A spectacular Christian heaven is painted on the ceiling of the Heaven Closet. **Cherubs** play music around Jesus who dances and beckons the viewer to join him. Four cherubs hold sheet music, three of which come from 'A Round of Three Country Dances in One' in Thomas Ravenscroft's *Pammelia* from 1609. However, the fourth is from a drinking song about Robin Hood.

The Elysium Closet is a **classical** version of heaven. It is based on a painting that no longer exists but was on a ceiling in

Fontainebleau Palace near Paris. One of the figures on the ceiling is holding a moon. The moon was an important symbol for the family. It was on the Cavendish coat of arms and the coat of arms of Charles Cavendish's wife Katherine Ogle. It is sometimes used to represent the classical goddess Diana, who was the goddess of wild animals and the hunt.

A TERRACE TO IMPRESS

William wanted to gain a more powerful position at **court**. In the late 1620s he started building the Terrace Range, partly funded by his inheritance from his mother. He designed the range for entertaining and to impress. Part of the way through construction, he changed his plans to make it even bigger. He added a **state apartment** and **gallery**, perhaps with the thought that King Charles I (r.1625–1649) and Queen Henrietta Maria might visit, which they did in 1634. The rooms were lavishly decorated with marble fireplaces, wooden panelling and artworks. One of the paintings displayed in the gallery was of William in armour, on horseback. This made sure guests were in no doubt of his military and riding skills. William's efforts to please the royal couple were noticed. Four years' later William was given the role of tutor to the Prince of Wales.



King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria with their two eldest children, Charles and Mary. Painted by Anthony van Dyck in 1641. Image is in the public domain.

A DELIGHT FOR THE SENSES

During the royal visit to Bolsover Castle, William Cavendish put on a **country house entertainment**. This kind of entertainment derived from **masques** that were performed at the royal court. Masques included poetry, songs and dances. The performers wore extravagant costumes, jewellery and headdresses. Some of the performances used stage sets, lighting and smells to create a **multi-sensory** and **immersive** experience for the audience. At the end there was often dancing that the audience joined in with. For the entertainment at Bolsover Castle, a famous playwright called Ben Jonson wrote *Love's Welcome*. The performance probably took place across the Terrace Range, Fountain Garden and Little Castle.

First there was a welcome song. Music was important for William. He employed at least five musicians including a **lutenist** who had previously played for the royal family and he owned many musical instruments including:

- four **harpsichords**
- a pair of **virginals**
- an **organ**
- 11 **wind instruments**
- 22 other **stringed instruments**.

The welcome song was followed by a short meal, probably in the Pillar Parlour surrounded by paintings of the five senses (sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell). This reflected how guests' five senses would be delighted.



The Pillar Parlour in the Little Castle with its carved fireplace, vaulted ceiling and wooden panelling. The paintings of the senses are semi-circular in shape, about halfway up the walls.



A late-17th-century Italian harpsichord now on display in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image is in the public domain.

Next there was a dance by a cast of builders. Eight of these dancers were named after tools such as **chisel** and **twybill**.

Then guests watched a debate between two **cupids**, and finally there was a speech celebrating the house and the local area.

Bolsover Castle continued to be an important place for the Cavendish family to socialise. This is why it is sometimes referred to as a 'pleasure palace'. You can find out more about the preparations for the royal visit using our media guides.

BEHIND THE SCENES

All of this extravagant food and entertainment needed preparation and lots of work behind the scenes. In both the Terrace Range and the Little Castle there were kitchens and cellars in the basements. This was where beer and wine were stored, ingredients were prepared, and feasts put together. In the Little Castle there are three sets of internal stairs and two sets of external stairs. This can seem a bit confusing for visitors today. However, it is because originally, the kitchens and the cellars were separate parts of the basement that did not connect as they do today. There were different servants in charge of each section, and both had their own sets of stairs to get to the upper floors.



Students on a school trip look into the pastry ovens in the Little Castle.



A still life by Frans Ykens showing a pie with a decorated lid of the kind that was probably prepared and served at Bolsover Castle. In the public domain.

PERFECT PASTRIES

There are three pastry ovens in the Little Castle. Pies were topped with decorative lids that had intricate patterns. Some were inspired by a type of intricate garden design known as **knot gardens**. Once cooked the pies might be taken into the dry room to be stored before being taken upstairs to the Pillar Parlour on silver platters or glass dishes. Dishes were probably taken in one at a time so guests could admire each one before more food arrived.

STORING AND SALTING

The kitchen has two large fireplaces for boiling and roasting meats. Meat was prepared and stored in the wet room near to the kitchen. As there were no refrigerators, meat also had to be salted to preserve it. You can still see the vats in which beef was **brined** to create **salt-beef**. They probably originally had wooden lids. The stone slab in the corner was used for **dry salting** meats such as ham. The channels cut into the floor are drains to take away the mess. When you visit this room today you can see and smell the damp. In the 17th century, fires in every room encouraged air to circulate and heated the building, which prevented the damp. The chimneys were blocked up in the middle of the 20th century so fires can't be lit in them anymore.

BEER AND WINE

The wine and beer cellars originally had wooden frames known as **stillages** on which barrels were stored. The barrels had **bungs** in them and **bung-taps** to let the liquid out. Some also had beautifully carved **heads**. Servants filled up large jugs from these barrels to take upstairs and serve to the party-goers. The barrels of beer and wine were probably brought here by cart through the Fountain Garden, from the Cavendish's main house at Welbeck. Some of the barrels could hold 52 gallons of liquid. This is the same as 420 pints of milk. Sometimes wine was flavoured with spices before being served at banquets.

CHARLES I AND HIS PARLIAMENT

Charles I came to power in 1625. He did not have a good relationship with his **Parliament**. One issue that caused tension between them was religion. Many members of Parliament and people in Scotland were **Puritans**, a group of English Protestants who thought that the Reformation under the Tudors had not gone far enough. They were worried Charles wanted to make England a **Catholic** country again. He was married to a Catholic, Henrietta Maria, plus he tried to force Scotland to agree to religious changes they did not want.

Another problem was the way that Charles raised money to fight wars. He did not consult Parliament and people complained that the **taxes** he raised were unfair. As Charles believed in the Divine Right of Kings he argued he was chosen by God and didn't need to check any of his decisions with Parliament. A list of 204 complaints against the king known as the Grand Remonstrance was put together in 1641 by some members of Parliament (MPs). Although 159 MPs agreed with the list, 148 didn't, demonstrating how divided they were.



A portrait of Queen Henrietta Maria in which she poses as a Catholic saint. Puritans did not agree with the veneration of saints as Catholics did.

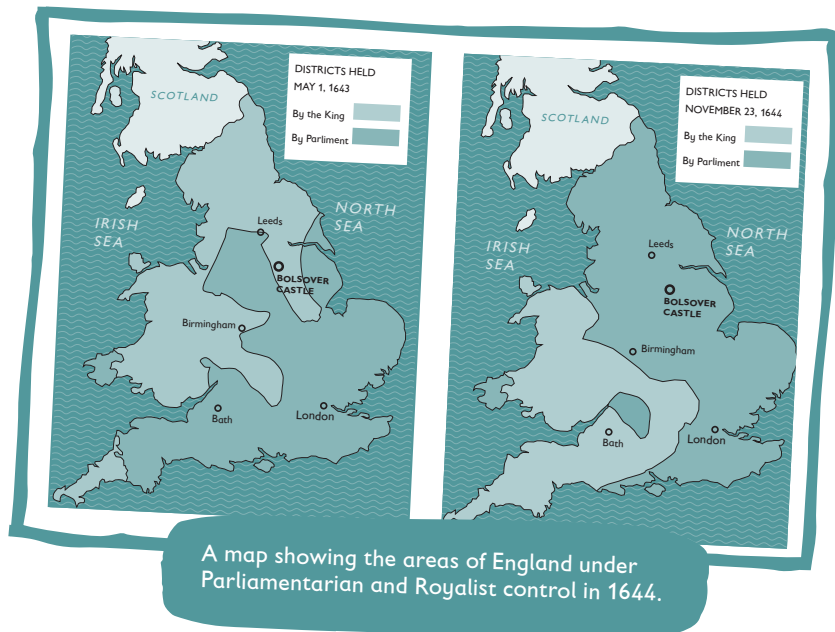
CIVIL WAR

By 1642, tensions were so great that civil war broke out. The country was split between those that remained loyal to the king, known as **Royalists** and those that fought against him and on the side of Parliament, known as **Parliamentarians**. Most of the north and west remained loyal to the king and much of the south and east supported Parliament.

William Cavendish was a Royalist. He was a member of the king's **Privy Council** from 1640, and in 1642 he became the commander-in-chief of the northern Royalist troops. At first, he was largely successful and was rewarded with the title **Marquis** of Newcastle in 1643.



Prince Rupert who was sent by Charles I to relieve Cavendish's troops at York. Image in the public domain.



In 1644 Scottish troops joined the war on the side of Parliament. As a result, Cavendish had to fight battles across two fronts. When Scottish troops successfully captured Selby, Cavendish moved his troops back to protect York. Parliamentary troops, known as **Roundheads**, surrounded the city, trapping Cavendish and his **Cavalier** troops inside.

The king sent his nephew Prince Rupert to **relieve** Cavendish's army. Afterwards, Rupert wanted to pursue the Roundheads and he ordered Cavendish to join him. While Rupert waited for Cavendish's army to reach the battlefield, the Roundheads attacked. It was 7:00 in the evening and this caught Rupert's army by surprise.

The battle of Marston Moor lasted for two hours. As Royalist soldiers began to flee, Cavendish's men stayed back to protect them. A total of 4,000 Royalists were killed and 1,500 taken as prisoners. The Parliamentarians reported that only 300 of their men died. It was the Royalists' biggest loss so far in the civil war and led to Parliament controlling most of northern England. The English Heritage website has more information about the origins, events and legacy of the English Civil Wars and interesting visual sources from the period. Search the website for 'The English Civil Wars' to find out more.

EXILE AND DESTRUCTION

William feared the war was over. He felt humiliated by the defeat. He had been a celebrated swordsman and gifted horse trainer, so losing the battle hurt his pride. He went into **exile** by fleeing to mainland Europe, taking his two sons with him.

William's wife Elizabeth died in 1643, so Bolsover Castle and their home at Welbeck were left to their daughters to look after. Jane, Elizabeth and Frances lived at Welbeck with a small Royalist **garrison**. Jane, as the eldest, took charge. She sold some of her jewellery to fund her father's household in exile. She knew other houses had been **looted** during the war, so she found ways to protect the family's possessions. For example, she hid silver plate in a **hogshead** and buried it in a well. The Parliamentarians took over Welbeck in 1644 and Bolsover Castle soon after. Jane persuaded them to let her rescue some of the hangings and artworks from the castle.

Bolsover Castle was used to garrison Roundhead troops until 1649. It was then slighted, which means it was deliberately damaged to stop the Royalists from taking it back. The garden was damaged, some of the walls were demolished, and doors and windows were removed so no one could live there.

Meanwhile, William remained in Europe. At first, he lived in Hamburg. Then in 1645 he moved to Paris to join Henrietta Maria's **court** in exile. This was her group of closest advisors, servants and supporters who came with her to Paris in 1644 such as her maid of honour, Margaret Lucas. Margaret and William met and fell in love.



The house that William and Margaret Cavendish lived in during their exile in Antwerp. The house was the former home of the artist Peter Paul Rubens. Image in the public domain.



A portrait of Jane Cavendish. Jane wrote in a letter that she and her sisters were treated with care by the Parliamentarian soldiers. This image is available in the public domain.

At first, the queen didn't approve of their relationship. However, they got her blessing and married in 1645. By 1649, they were living in Antwerp, renting a house from the widow of the artist Rubens. Rubens was Europe's most famous and popular artist. In 1622 he had painted the ceiling of a banqueting hall for Charles I.

A SCIENTIFIC CIRCLE

William continued to host his 'Cavendish Circle' in exile. This was a group of leading thinkers that discussed scientific and philosophical ideas. They also tried out new equipment such as microscopes. In fact, while living in Antwerp, William and Margaret built up a collection of telescopes and microscopes. Margaret shared William's interest in **natural philosophy** and she probably attended the Cavendish Circle's meetings.



An engraving of a flea under a microscope by Robert Hooke. CC BY 4.0, Wellcome Collection.

One of the members of the Cavendish Circle was Robert Hooke. He published *Micrographia* in 1665, which Margaret criticised. She challenged Hooke by arguing that microscopes only showed the outside of something and not its inner workings. She thought they might mislead people and that observing with your own senses and reflecting on your observations was a better way to learn about the natural environment. Find out more about natural philosophers in our trail on page 71.



A view of Bolsover Castle with the Little Castle in the foreground. The Terrace Range on the right of this image was damaged during the English Civil Wars.

THE IMPACT OF WAR

Margaret was shocked by the damage Bolsover Castle had suffered during the war. In her biography of William, she described it as 'half pulled down' with trees cut down and their deer all gone. All the furniture was removed and only a few hangings and pictures survived that had been saved by Jane. You can read a poem Margaret wrote about the damage done to Bolsover during the Civil Wars in the sources on page 92.

Wives in this period were dependent on their husbands for an income. It was believed that women were not political. Margaret took advantage of these attitudes by **petitioning** the government for an income from William's estates. She claimed she was a victim of William's political beliefs and actions as a Royalist. However, her petition failed because she married William after he'd already gone into exile. Therefore, she knew he was a Royalist and that his estates had been confiscated.

RETURN TO BOLSOVER

William's brother Charles apologised for his role in the war and was allowed to buy back his estates. He also bought Bolsover. After his death, William's eldest son, also called Charles, moved into Bolsover. He began to restore the castle. In 1656 he spent £15 14 shillings and 4 pence on new **glazing**. It would take a skilled tradesman 224 days to earn this much money and might be approximately £2,000 in today's money.

William and Margaret permanently returned to England in 1660, when the monarchy was restored. An Act of Parliament gave William all his estates back and improved their finances.



King Charles II came to the throne in 1660 when the monarchy was restored.

MANLY MANÈGE

Being able to train and ride horses in the 17th century was a sign of **masculinity** and **sophistication**. Having the skill to train horses in complicated **dressage** moves, known as **manège**, was a way to demonstrate skill and control. It also reflected some of the skills used on the battlefield. Horses were trained to carry more weight on their **hind** than their **forequarters** and to leap. This way of training and riding horses originally came from Italy but spread to England during Henry VIII's reign.



Cavendish performing manège in front of Bolsover Castle. Engraving by A. van Diepenbeeck. Image in the public domain.

William first learned manège as a child – from a French tutor who had accompanied a gift of six horses to King James I in 1603. The king was more interested in hunting. His son Henry, however, enjoyed learning manège, and William accompanied him during his lessons.

He continued to do manège during exile. William set up a riding school in Antwerp and wrote a groundbreaking manual on how to care for, and train horses. In it, he explained that it was important to understand horses and treat them with care, rather than using harsh discipline. Many of his methods still form the basis of how we train horses today.

THE RIDING RANGE

After William returned to England in 1660, he built a new riding range. It was built to impress, with grand doorways for riders and horses to enter the riding room. A viewing gallery allowed William to demonstrate his skills to special guests. The range also included a space for the grooms to live in, stables, shoeing house and harness room. It is one of the earliest complete examples of a riding range in England. Today, demonstrations of dressage and shows are put on for the public.



A demonstration of 17th-century manège being performed in the riding room at Bolsover Castle.



Part of a frontispiece (a page at the front of a book) printed in *Poems and Fancies*. Margaret is presented as a statue. She looks straight at the viewer with her hand on her hip in a confident pose normally reserved for high ranking men. She stands between Apollo, the god of music, poetry and art, and Athena, the goddess of wisdom and war.

AN UNUSUAL WOMAN: MARGARET CAVENDISH

William's second wife, Margaret, was an unusual and fascinating woman. She was one of the most published women of the 17th century. Her first book *Poems and Fancies* was published in 1653. She was particularly unusual because she published her books using her own name. Most women used a **pen name** or published **anonymously**.

She covered a range of **genres** and topics from fiction to natural philosophy. This also made her unusual because girls in the 17th century did not receive the same level of education as boys or study the same subjects. Girls from poor backgrounds received no schooling at all. Girls growing up in wealthy households often had a tutor at home, but they did not go to **university** and did not study the same subjects as boys. Margaret wrote that she

'never went to school, but only learned to read and write at home, taught by an ancient decayed gentle woman'.

NEEDLES OR PENS?

Another thing that made Margaret unusual was that she was 'addicted from childhood ... to write with the pen than to work with a needle'. Education for girls in the 17th-century focused on skills such as needlework or playing musical instruments rather than subjects like mathematics. Needlework was particularly useful for women to learn so that they could embroider initials onto linens or add decoration to plain materials. Girls made **samplers** to practise their skills and create a bank of patterns and letters to copy from. Instead, Margaret preferred to write, read independently and discuss ideas with her brothers who received a more advanced education.



A needlework sampler made in the 17th century and now in the Smithsonian Design Museum. Image is in the public domain.

MOVING UP IN THE WORLD

In 1643, at the age of 20, Margaret moved to court. This meant she lived and worked in the royal household. She was a maid of honour to Queen Henrietta Maria. This was a well-respected and prestigious role that meant Margaret was moving in the highest circles of 17th-century society. In 1644 she travelled to Paris with the queen to escape the violence of civil war. This was where she met William Cavendish.



Welbeck is in the background of this illustration showing a horse and groom. This was one of a number of engravings commissioned by Abraham van Diepenbeeck and published in Cavendish's book *A general system of horsemanship in all its branches*. Image is in the public domain.

William and Margaret married in 1645, even though the queen did not at first approve. When they returned to England in 1660, they brought some of their servants with them. It isn't certain what jobs these servants did. They may have been grooms like the one in the image, or perhaps they worked in the household cooking, cleaning or serving at mealtimes. The servants at Welbeck did not like the arrival of new staff. They blamed Margaret and plotted against her. She was also not popular with her

stepdaughter Jane. Jane complained about Margaret having too much power. Some of the land Jane was meant to inherit was instead transferred to Margaret.

THE BLAZING WORLD

In 1666 Margaret wrote one of her most famous works, *The Blazing World*, one of the earliest **science fiction novels**. It was published as an **appendix** to *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy*. By including both in the same book she hoped to appeal to a wider audience, especially women who more often read fiction than non-fiction. She hoped women might read non-fiction more as a result. The book was popular enough to be reprinted in 1668. *The Blazing World* was also reprinted again as a book in its own right.

In the story, a beautiful young woman gets transported through the North Pole into another world where she meets creatures that are half human and half animal. For example, there are bear-men, bird-men and even worm-men. The **Emperor** of the world and the young woman marry. She becomes **Empress** and **absolute** ruler. Later in the book she calls upon Margaret's soul to join her as a **spirit scribe**. Margaret and the Empress's souls travel back to Margaret's world. They learn about the impact of war, discuss forms of government, go to the theatre and watch William Cavendish perform manège and swordmanship.



An artist's illustration of a bear man, inspired by characters in *The Blazing World*.



An artist's illustration of the Empress, inspired by the character in *The Blazing World*.

Margaret uses *The Blazing World* to comment on England in the 17th-century. For example, Bolsover features in the book as an empty house without any furniture, perhaps referring to the impact of war. The Empress also criticises microscopes (just as Margaret went on to do), calling them 'false informers' that 'delude your senses'. She also challenges ideas about women by making the Empress the sole ruler over this alternative world.

MARGARET AND THE ROYAL SOCIETY

In 1660, the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge was set up to explore the natural world. Members in the 17th-century included Robert Hooke (who wrote *Micrographia*) and Robert Boyle (who carried out experiments on air and other gases). Members of the Royal Society carried out groundbreaking research and published their findings. In 1667 Margaret became the first woman to attend a Royal Society meeting. She watched experiments and listened to the latest ideas in natural philosophy. According to the diarist Samuel Pepys she was ‘full of admiration’ during her visit. She didn’t express any opinions during her visit. However, it’s known that she didn’t agree with everything the Society was doing and expressed this in her published works. For example, she was critical of the use of scientific instruments such as microscopes.



An artist's illustration of Margaret's visit to the Royal Society in 1667.



Margaret Cavendish in formal court dress painted by Peter Lely in 1665. This is the same year as she became the Duchess of Newcastle Upon Tyne. She is wearing a velvet cap that was usually worn by men in classical art. She is also shown in very rich clothing that showed off her wealth and status.

FAMOUS FIGURE

Margaret was famous in her time, and just like celebrities today, not everyone liked her. Some people, such as the famous diarist Samuel Pepys, found her behaviour shocking and he made spiteful comments about her work and her appearance, calling her ‘mad, conceited and ridiculous’. You can find out more about Samuel Pepys’ view of Margaret and analyse extracts from his diary in the activity on pages 52–60.

One of the things that caused controversy was her choice of clothing. She always tried to be different and not to look the same as everyone else. From a young age she liked to design her own outfits. It was important for her that she be remembered for her ideas and individuality and she tried to reflect

that in her clothes. In her autobiography, which she wrote when she was 33, she said ‘I did dislike any should follow my fashions, for I always took delight in a singularity’.

ATTRACTING ATTENTION

One of Margaret's most famous outfits was the one she wore for her visit to the Royal Society. She wore a dress with a train that was eight feet long and had to be carried by six waiting women. This attracted a lot of attention and people lined the streets to catch a glimpse of her extravagant clothing.

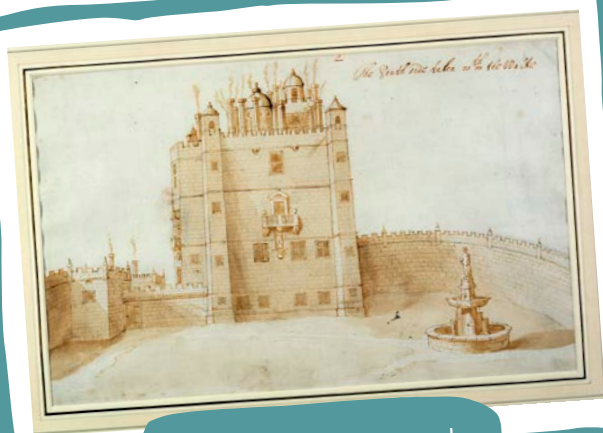
Her clothes also challenged ideas about **gender**. For example, she was seen wearing a coat known as a **justaucorps**. This attracted attention because it was normally something men wore. A **ballad** probably written by John Evelyn described her appearance as 'like a Cavalier, but that she had no beard'. You can read a longer extract of this ballad in the sources on page 88. Despite attracting all this attention, she described herself as shy. Perhaps her outfits were like costumes for an actor. They allowed her to play a part and go out in public with confidence.



An example of a 17th-century justaucorps that was once worn as a wedding outfit. Image is in the public domain.

BOLSOVER IN DECLINE

Margaret died in 1673 and William died in 1676. William's son, Henry inherited Bolsover Castle. He had not got on well with his father and fell out with his own wife too. He dismantled the state apartment and died in debt in 1717. The estate passed down through the female line of the family until 1755 when it passed to the 2nd Duke of Portland through his wife. The castle was repaired in the 1750s and a new roof put on the Little Castle. However, by the 1770s the Terrace Range was in ruins and the Riding Range was being used as a hay barn. Despite this, the dukes of Portland continued to use the Little Castle as a weekend retreat, just as the Cavendish family had done before them.



The Little Castle in around 1630 by Jonathan Bailey.

RUINS AND REPAIRS

In the early 19th century Bolsover Castle was rented out by the dukes of Portland. It became a **vicarage** for the local parish **vicar**. Alterations were made to the Little Castle in the 19th century, most of which have now been reversed. However, some of the sash windows that were added can still be seen, for example in the Pillar Parlour. In the late 19th century the Riding House roof was repaired and in 1896 and 1897 it was used as a temporary church while the local St Mary's church was rebuilt following a fire.



A view of Bolsover Castle from 1818 entitled 'North West View of Bolsover Castle'. Taken from E. Rhodes, *Peak Scenery, or excursions in Derbyshire made chiefly for the purpose of picturesque observation*. Image is in the public domain.

INDUSTRIAL IMPACT

In 1889 a **colliery** opened in Bolsover. This resulted in the village expanding. The castle became a meeting point for locals. The Boys' Brigade met in the Riding Range and during the First World War the gallery was used for rifle practice. By the end of the war the castle yard had a bowling green and tennis court. However, mining for coal made the ground less stable. Large cracks formed in the limestone under the castle,

causing **subsidence**. In 1904 a new smokeless coal was developed (known as coalite after the company that made it). By the late 1930s this was also being manufactured in Bolsover. The production of coalite resulted in acidic pollution affecting the stonework of Bolsover Castle.



The gallery which was used as a rifle range during the First World War.

BOLSOVER IN THE 20TH CENTURY

In 1945 Bolsover Castle was given to the Ministry of Works to look after. This was a government department that looked after a collection of historic sites and buildings with the aim of preserving Britain's heritage. Bolsover Castle was made stable and repairs were carried out. For example, 65 iron rods were used to stabilise the Little Castle and the chimneys were filled in.

In 1993 the coal mine closed. The production of coalite stopped in 1999. This loss of industry had a big impact on the local community, reducing the employment opportunities available. But it also reduced the risk of subsidence and acidic pollution.



Bolsover colliery in the early 1970s. Photo taken by David Dixon, CC BY-SA 2.0.

CARING FOR THE CASTLE

English Heritage began caring for Bolsover Castle in 1984. Since then, lots of repairs and improvements have been carried out. The paintings in the Little Castle have been carefully cleaned and repaired so visitors can continue to enjoy them. The wall walk was also restored and opened to visitors in 2013.



A conservator carries out repairs on a painting in the Heaven Closet upstairs in the Little Castle.

After careful research, the Fountain Garden is now planted with the kinds of plants that were probably there in the 17th century. Some of the plants include **climbers** such as clematis and jasmine. When jasmine is in flower it fills the air with its strong scent. There are also herbs such as rosemary that can be used in cooking. Many of the plants were introduced into England from elsewhere, especially those grown from **bulbs**, such as tulips. Tulips originated from Central Asia, but they

were introduced into the Netherlands in the early 17th century. They proved very popular and came to England soon after. Find out more about the plants at Bolsover Castle in our Natural Philosopher's Trail on page 71.

GLOSSARY

WEIRD WORDS AND
THEIR MEANINGS

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

absolute – the power to rule alone

Ancient Rome – the state that grew from the city of Rome in 753 BC to become a global empire that lasted until the 5th century AD

anonymous – nameless, not identified by name

anteroom – a small room that leads into a bigger one. It might be used as a waiting room.

appendix – a section of a book that is separate from the main part. It might give extra information, maps or illustrations. In this case, the appendix is an additional story that was added into Margaret's book.

architect – a person who designs buildings

ballad – a poem or song that tells a story

bile – a substance produced by the body that according to Galen's four humours theory could be either yellow or black. Today, we use the term bile to describe a yellow liquid produced by the liver.

brined – the process of soaking meat in salted water

bulb – a rounded part of a plant that sits underground and stores nutrients. It lies underground through the winter then in spring roots and shoots grow out from the bulb. Plants such as lilies, daffodils and tulips grow from bulbs.

bung – a stopper for closing up a hole in a barrel or other container



A group of daffodil bulbs.

bung-tap – a tap that is fitted in a bung. It can be opened to allow liquid out.

Catholic – a person who followed the Catholic Church rather than the Church of England. They remained loyal to the pope even though England had officially broken away from the Catholic Church under Henry VIII in 1533.



An illustration of a Royalist soldier, also known as a Cavalier.

Cavalier – a nickname for a soldier that fought on the side of the king during the English Civil Wars. At the start of the war they followed royal fashions, dressing extravagantly using expensive fabrics such as silk, velvet and lace. As the war went on, they

dressed more simply, but the stereotype of a Cavalier continued.

Cavendish Circle – the name given to William Cavendish's group of friends who gathered together to discuss the latest ideas and socialise. It is also sometimes called the Welbeck Circle after his main home, or the Newcastle Circle after his title the Duke of Newcastle, which he gained in 1665.

cherub – a winged angel that helps God. In European art they are usually depicted as chubby, healthy-looking children with wings.



Some of the cherubs on the ceiling of the heaven closet.

chisel – a woodworking tool that has a sharp square-shaped end, which acts as a blade. Striking the handle with a hammer pushes the blade into the wood to shape it.

choleric – angry. Believed to be caused by yellow bile in the theory of the four humours.

classical – a word to show something relates to Ancient Greece or Rome. For example, classical myths are traditional stories told by the Ancient Greeks and Romans to explain the world around them.

climber – a plant with long stems that can grip onto things such as walls, other plants or fences. They appear to 'climb'.

colliery – a coal mine and the buildings above ground

country house entertainment – a special kind of entertainment that took place in country houses in England in the 17th-century. It might include sensory experiences, acting, singing and dancing and originated from masques that were performed at court.

court – the royal household, the place where royal duties take place and all the monarch's closest advisors and servants live

cupid – a chubby, healthy baby with wings, often firing arrows. A cupid in art represents love and is based on the Ancient Roman god of love, also called Cupid, who shoots people with his arrows to make them fall in love.

defence – protection against attack

diarist – a person who writes a diary. A diary might just list the events and activities someone does each day, or it might include more personal reflections, opinions and ideas.

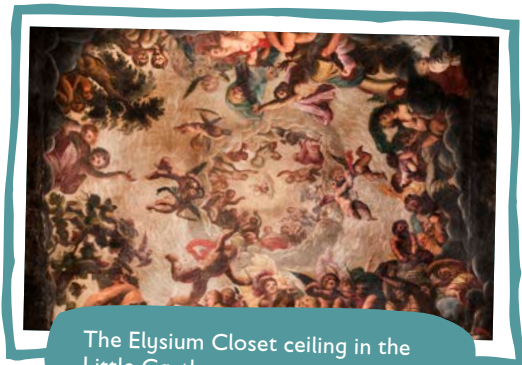


Samuel Pepys was a 17th-century diarist.

dressage – the art of training horses so that they are obedient and balanced

dry salting – the process of preserving meats using salt without any liquids

Elysium – a version of heaven or the afterlife that comes from Ancient Greek mythology



The Elysium Closet ceiling in the Little Castle portrays a version of the Ancient Greek afterlife.

emperor – a man who is the head of an empire, which is where one country rules over other countries. This is also the name of a character in Margaret Cavendish's book *The Blazing World*.

empress – a woman who is the head of an empire, which is where one country rules over other countries. This is also the name of a character in Margaret's book *The Blazing World*.

enslavement – the process of making someone a slave

estate – a piece of land, usually with a large house on it, owned by one person or family

exile – when someone is living away from their home country. They may have been forced to leave or chose to leave for their own safety. Someone in exile usually wants to return to their home country and views their exile as temporary.

forequarters – the front of a horse including its two front legs

four humours – the four liquids that Galen said needed to be balanced in order for a person to be healthy: phlegm, blood, yellow bile and black bile

Galen – the Ancient Roman physician who developed the idea of the four humours

gallery – a long room where people could walk when the weather was bad. They often displayed artworks and were used as an entertaining space.

garrison – a place where soldiers live

gender – in the 17th century there were two genders, male and female, and people were expected to conform to certain behaviours depending on which gender they belonged to

genre – a type, category or style of writing such as poetry, science fiction or non-fiction

glazing – glass windows

harpsichord – a stringed instrument that has a keyboard and looks a bit like a piano, but the strings are plucked rather than hit with a hammer, which gives it a very different sound

head – the flat circular end of a barrel

hind – the back of a horse, including its back two legs

honoured – a person who is respected and given special treatment

immersive – an experience that makes someone feel completely involved in it

interior – the inside of a building

Israelite – a member of the ancient Hebrew nation

justaucorps – a knee-length coat, often without a collar and sometimes with a

flared skirt. They were part of a three-piece suit with matching waistcoat and breeches (short trousers). The fashion for justaucorps came from France and they



A justaucorps, waistcoat and breeches that were worn by James, Duke of York on his wedding day in 1763. It is made of brown woollen broadcloth and embroidered with silver-gilt thread. It is now looked after by the V&A Museum.

were popular in England from the 1660s.

keep – a tower with lots of defensive features and the strongest part of a castle. It might be on a raised bit of land known as a motte.



Students examining a knot garden at Boscobel Castle.

knot garden – a style of garden that began in the medieval period where plants are arranged in intricate patterns that look as though they overlap or interweave like a knot. They often include herbs and medicinal plants and the plants may be different heights.

leech – a bloodsucking aquatic worm. Doctors following the four humours theory used leeches to treat people who were believed to be ill because they had too much blood. The leeches were attached to the skin to suck the patient's blood.



A woodcut showing leeches being used for medicinal purposes taken from *Historia Medica* by W. van den Bossche, 1638. In the public domain.

loot – the stealing of goods, especially during a war or riot

lutenist – a person who plays the lute, a stringed instrument a bit like a guitar

manège – a kind of horse training a bit like dressage where horses need to be obedient and balanced to perform elegant movements

manor – a large house with land around it. This was a way of dividing up the country during the medieval period. A lord and/or lady was in charge of the manor and everyone who lived on their land owed them loyalty.

marquis – a male member of the nobility whose status is above an earl but below a duke

masculinity – the characteristics that are said to be typical or ideal for a man to have. Ideas about masculinity or manliness can change. For example, in the 17th century, it was considered manly to be good at riding and training horses.

masque – a performance that involved dancing, acting and music and where the performers often wore masks

melancholic – sad. Believed to be caused by black bile in the theory of the four humours.

motte and bailey – a wooden castle first built by the Normans when they invaded England from Normandy in modern-day France. The castle has a raised area known as a motte on which a keep (tower) was built and a bailey that is a lower, flat area surrounded by a protective fence known as a palisade.



A motte and bailey castle under construction. This image is based on the castle that stood at Pickering before it was replaced with a stone building.

multi-sensory – an activity that uses or involves more than one of your five senses at the same time

mural – a painting done directly on a wall or ceiling rather than onto canvas for example

natural philosophy – the study of the natural world, what we now call science

Norman Conquest – the invasion of England by Norman knights. They were led by William the Conqueror who became King William I on Christmas Day in 1066 when he had successfully defeated Harold Godwinson in the Battle of Hastings.



A view across the battlefield where the Battle of Hastings took place. Today the battlefield is taken care of by English Heritage and is open to visitors.

novel – a story that has been published as a book. Although there isn't a set length, it is usually quite long and is often divided into chapters. Short stories (about the length of a chapter in a novel) and picture books are not novels.

organ – a musical instrument that has a keyboard and pedals and makes a sound using air through pipes

Parliament – the group of people who meet in the House of Commons and the House of Lords to debate and decide on the laws of the country. Those who meet in the House of Commons are elected representatives. Until the 17th century the houses met when summoned by the king or queen, usually because they wanted them to agree to extra taxation. The Long Parliament of 1641–1648 said that parliament should meet regularly, and have a greater share in government, and not just meet at the king's convenience when he was in need of money.



A photo of the Houses of Parliament taken from the River Thames. Big Ben is the clock tower to the right.

Parliamentarian – a supporter of Parliament during the English Civil Wars

pen name – a false name used by a writer

petition – an appeal or request made to the king

phlegm – one of the four humours identified by Galen. Phlegm is a thick substance produced in large quantities when someone has a cold. Also known as mucus.

phlegmatic – calm. Believed to be caused by phlegm in the theory of the four humours.

playwright – a person who writes plays

possession – something that belongs to someone or is owned by someone

Privy Council – the king's closest group of advisors

Puritan – a kind of protestant in the 17th-century who wanted to reform the Church of England to remove the parts of it they thought were too ceremonial

relieve – providing additional military support for a group of soldiers that are struggling to keep fighting

Roundhead – a nickname for a soldier that fought on the side of Parliament during the English Civil Wars



Royalist – a supporter of Charles I during the English Civil Wars

salt-beef – beef that has been preserved in salt. This was to help it last longer as there was no refrigeration.

sampler – a piece of embroidery to demonstrate a girl's needlework skills. It might include an alphabet, numbers and decorative patterns. It was a record of different types of stitches to refer back to when completing future embroideries.

sanguine – happy. Believed to be caused by blood in the theory of the four humours.

science fiction – a genre of literature that explores how science and technology might be used in imaginary worlds where the usual rules don't apply. For example, in Margaret's science fiction novel *A Blazing World*, a woman is put in charge of an imaginary world that can be entered through the North Pole. One way that it challenges the rules of 17th-century England, is by allowing a woman to be in charge.

sophistication – having lots of experience and knowledge of the world, fashion and culture

spirit scribe

– a supernatural being that records information for someone



state apartment – a set of impressive rooms designed to be used by royalty

stillage – a deep wooden shelf that often runs the length of a room, for storing barrels of beer or wine on. The barrels are placed on their sides on the shelf with their heads facing into the room to allow access to the liquid using a bung-tap.

stringed instrument – an instrument that makes sound through the plucking, hitting or bowing of its strings. Examples are guitars, pianos and violins.

subsidence – the process of a piece of land sinking over time, which can cause buildings to weaken and collapse. This can be caused by mining, as it was at Bolsover Castle.



In the past taxes were paid by handing over coins.

tax – a compulsory payment made by people to the government. Today in Britain we have lots of different taxes that are paid to the government to fund things like the National Health

Service. For example, value added tax is a payment on goods, or income tax, which is a payment based on how much people earn through work. In the 17th-century taxes were raised whenever the government needed more money and they had to be approved by Parliament first.

tenanted – lived in or occupied by someone



Turrets can be seen at the top of the Little Castle.

turret – a small tower often on the top of a larger tower and on the corner of a building like a castle



An illustration of a small twybill.

twybill – a woodworking tool that can chop and lever. It was often used to make holes in wood known as mortises. Another piece

of wood had a piece sticking out called a tenon. The tenon fitted into the mortise to join the two pieces of wood together.

union – the bringing together or joining together of two or more things

university – a place where people can study subjects at a higher level than at school. People might choose just one subject to learn about and go into lots of depth. It usually takes three or four years to complete a university course, which is known as a degree.

vaulted – an arched shape, often seen in medieval buildings such as churches

vicar – a member of the Church of England who was in charge of a parish. They carried out weekly church services and ceremonies such as weddings, christenings and funerals.

vicarage – the house lived in by a vicar

virginal – a stringed instrument with a keyboard that looked like a small piano

wind instrument – an instrument that makes sound when air is blown through it, such as a flute

NORMANS
1066–1154

PLANTAGENETS
1154–1485

1066

William the Conqueror is victorious at the Battle of Hastings. The Norman Conquest of England begins.

1086

Domesday Book is completed.



1154

Henry II is crowned king of England.

1215

King John signs Magna Carta at Runnymede. Soon afterwards the barons revolt against the king in what is known as the Barons' War.



1455–87

The Wars of the Roses between the Yorkists, who wore a white rose and supported Richard, Duke of York, and the Lancastrians, who wore a red rose and supported King Henry VI (1422–61 and 1470–71).

1000

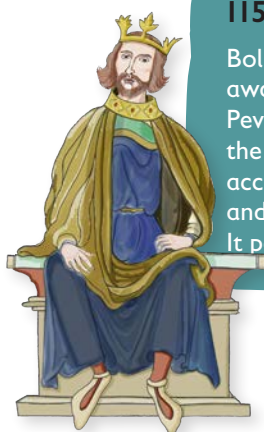
1200

c.1068

William Peveril is given estates in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire including Bolsover.

1068

According to Domesday Book, William Peveril owns 162 manors, including Bolsover.



1155

Bolsover Castle is taken away from William Peveril's son, William the younger, when he is accused of 'wickedness and treason' by Henry II. It passes to the Crown.

11–12TH
CENTURIES

1216–17

Bolsover is besieged during the First Barons' War and captured for the new king, Henry III. The Earl of Derby is made keeper of the castle.

1226

Henry III orders weekly markets to be held at Bolsover every Friday.

1249–53

Repairs are made to the battlements, tower and surrounding walls.

1390s

Bolsover Castle is abandoned and some of the materials are stripped.

13–15TH
CENTURIES



TUDORS

1485–1603

1509–1547

Henry VIII's reign

1547–1553

Edward VI's reign.

1553–1558

Mary I's reign.

1558–1603

Elizabeth I's reign.



1603

England makes peace with France and Spain following the union of English and Scottish Crowns under King James I (r.1603–25).

1603

The gunpowder plot to assassinate James I is discovered.

1500

1514

The Howard family rent Bolsover Castle.

1547

The crown takes Bolsover Castle back into royal ownership.

1553

George Talbot buys Bolsover Castle from the Crown.

1590

George Talbot dies and the ruined Bolsover Castle passes to Gilbert Talbot. However, he sells the estate to Charles Cavendish.

16TH
CENTURY

1600

1600

Charles Cavendish leases Bolsover Castle for 1,000 years at a price of £10 per year.

1613

Charles buys Bolsover Castle. Building begins on the Little Castle.

1617

Charles Cavendish dies and Bolsover Castle passes to his son, William.

1618

William Cavendish marries his first wife, Elizabeth Basset.

17TH
CENTURY



1625

James I and IV dies. His son, Charles I becomes king. Charles marries Henrietta Maria of France.

1629

Parliament issues the Three Resolutions refusing to accept religious change or taxation without Parliament's approval.



1629

Charles begins 11 years of personal rule (without calling Parliament).

1620

1621

The interior design of the Little Castle is completed.



17TH
CENTURY

1633

Archbishop Laud is appointed. This angers Puritans who view him as sympathetic towards Catholicism.

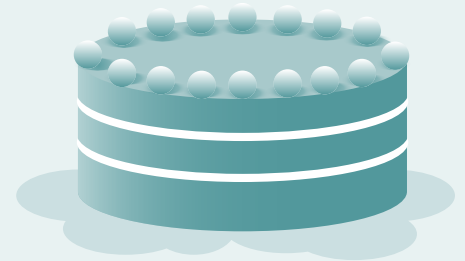
1638

Charles imposes the Book of Common Prayer on the Scottish Church. It refuses to use it and rebels.

1630

1634

William and his wife Elizabeth host the king and queen at Bolsover Castle.



1638

William becomes tutor to Henry, Prince of Wales. He is taught to ride horses.

17TH
CENTURY

1640

Charles agrees to Parliament meeting every five years.

1641

The Grand Remonstrance – 204 complaints are made by Parliament against King Charles I.

1642–9

The English Civil Wars divides the country into Royalists who support King Charles I and Parliamentarians who support Parliament.

1649

Charles is tried, convicted, and executed for high treason. The monarchy is abolished and the Commonwealth of England is declared.

1640**1651**

Charles I's son, also called Charles, is crowned king of Scotland and gains military support from the Scots.

1651

Charles II is defeated by the parliamentarians led by Oliver Cromwell at the Battle of Worcester.

**1653**

Oliver Cromwell becomes Lord Protector.

1658

Oliver Cromwell dies. His son, Richard takes his place.

1650**1640**

William joins the Privy Council.

1642

William is put in charge of the Royalist troops in the north of England.

1643

William becomes the Marquis of Newcastle. In the same year, his wife Elizabeth dies.

1644

William loses at the Battle of Marston Moor. The Parliamentarians take over Bolsover Castle and use it as a garrison.

1645

William meets Margaret Lucas in exile in Paris. They marry.

**17TH
CENTURY****1651**

Margaret Cavendish returns to England to petition the government for an income from William's estates.

**1653**

Bolsover Castle is returned to the Cavendish family when William's brother Charles apologises for his role in the war. When he dies, the castle is passed to William's son, also called Charles.

1653

Margaret Cavendish publishes her first book of poetry, *Poems and Fancies*.

**17TH
CENTURY**

1660

The restoration of the monarchy.

1661

Charles II is anointed as king.



1665

The Great Plague of London kills a quarter of London's population.

1666

The Great Fire of London destroys two-thirds of the city.

1660

1660

William returns to England. An Act of Parliament restores his estates to him.

1665

William and Margaret become the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle Upon Tyne.

1666

Margaret publishes the first science fiction novel, *The Blazing World*.

1667

Margaret is the first woman to attend a Royal Society meeting.

17TH
CENTURY

1685

Charles II dies and his brother James comes to the throne.

1688

William of Orange invades England and James II flees.

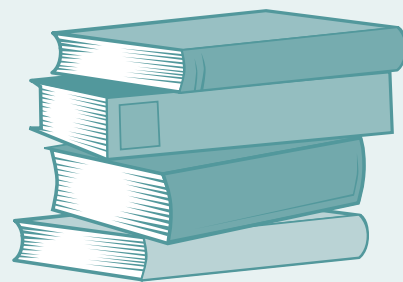
1689

William and Mary are declared king and queen in what is known as the Glorious Revolution.

1670

1673

Margaret dies. She had the most books published of any woman in the 17th century, and all under her own name.



1676

William dies. His son Henry inherits Bolsover Castle.

17TH
CENTURY

GEORGIANS

1714–1830

1775–83

The American War of Independence between Britain and its American colonies.

1789–99

The French Revolution leads to the end of the monarchy. Napoleon Bonaparte (r.1804–14) takes power and begins France's aggressive campaign to become a world power.

1793

Britain declares war with France.

1815

The Duke of Wellington defeats Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo.

1700

1717

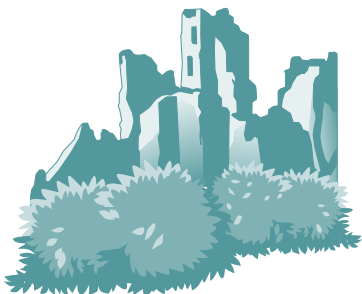
Henry Cavendish dies in debt and Bolsover castle now passes down the female line of the family.

1755

The Second Duke of Portland inherits Bolsover Castle through his wife. The castle is now passed down to successive Dukes of Portland.

1770s

By this time the Terrace Range is in ruins.



**18TH
CENTURY**

GEORGIANS

1714–1830

1830–37

Reign of William IV.

1826

The world's first photograph is taken.

1837–1901

Reign of Queen Victoria.

1845

The arrival of the railway.

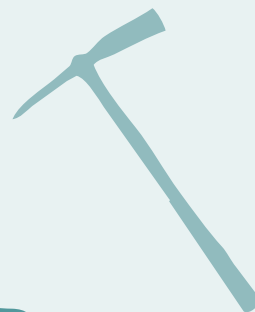
1800

1800s

The Little Castle is rented out to the local vicars. They made alterations to the building such as installing sash windows.

1889

A colliery opens in Bolsover.



1896–7

The Riding House is temporarily used as the parish church.

**19TH
CENTURY**



20TH CENTURY
1900–1999

21ST CENTURY
2000–PRESENT DAY

WWI
1914–18

WWII
1939–45

POST-WAR BRITAIN

MODERN DAY

1910–36

Reign of George V.

20 January 1936–11 December 1936

Reign of Edward VIII. Edward abdicates the throne.

1936–52

Reign of George VI.

1952–2022

Reign of HRH Queen Elizabeth II.

2020

Britain leaves the European Union.

2022

Prince Charles becomes King Charles III.



1900

2000

1943

William Arthur Henry, the 7th Duke of Portland, is the last Duke of Portland to own Bolsover Castle.

1945

Bolsover Castle passes into the care of the Ministry of Works.

1984

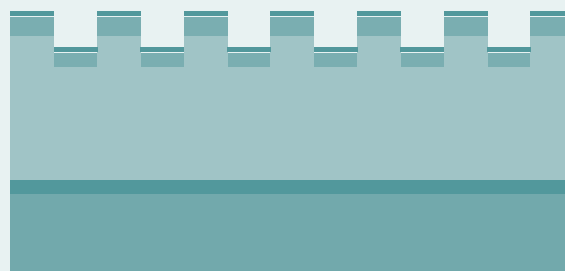
Bolsover Castle is now cared for by English Heritage.

1993

The colliery closes.

2013

The wall walk is restored and reopened to the public.



20TH
CENTURY

21ST
CENTURY

BOLSOVER CASTLE TIMELINE

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

KSI IMAGE BANK



Recommended for

KSI (History)

Learning objectives

- Know who lived at Bolsover Castle in the past and begin to understand what their lives were like
- Understand that Bolsover Castle has changed over time and what it was like within living memory

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes



Events for the general public take place at Bolsover Castle throughout the year. They often include entertainers such as 'Tom Fool' pictured here breathing fire in front of the Little Castle.

SUMMARY

These images are designed to spark conversations about Bolsover Castle and the people who lived and worked here in the past. The images selected have been inspired by conversations with teachers in Bolsover and the connections they'd like to make with the site to their curriculum. Images 1–5 relate to the lives of people living and working at Bolsover Castle in the 17th century. Image 6 could link to remembrance and the First World War. Images 7–9 focus on the story of the castle within living memory. Using these images with your class before a visit to the castle will set the scene for the trip.

EXAMINING IMAGES

Print off the images to use them as flash cards or project them onto a whiteboard screen to discuss as a class. Use 'See, Think, Wonder' to structure your class discussion:

See: Get students to spot the features in the images. Features could be circled and labelled.

Think: Prompt students to think more deeply with questions such as:

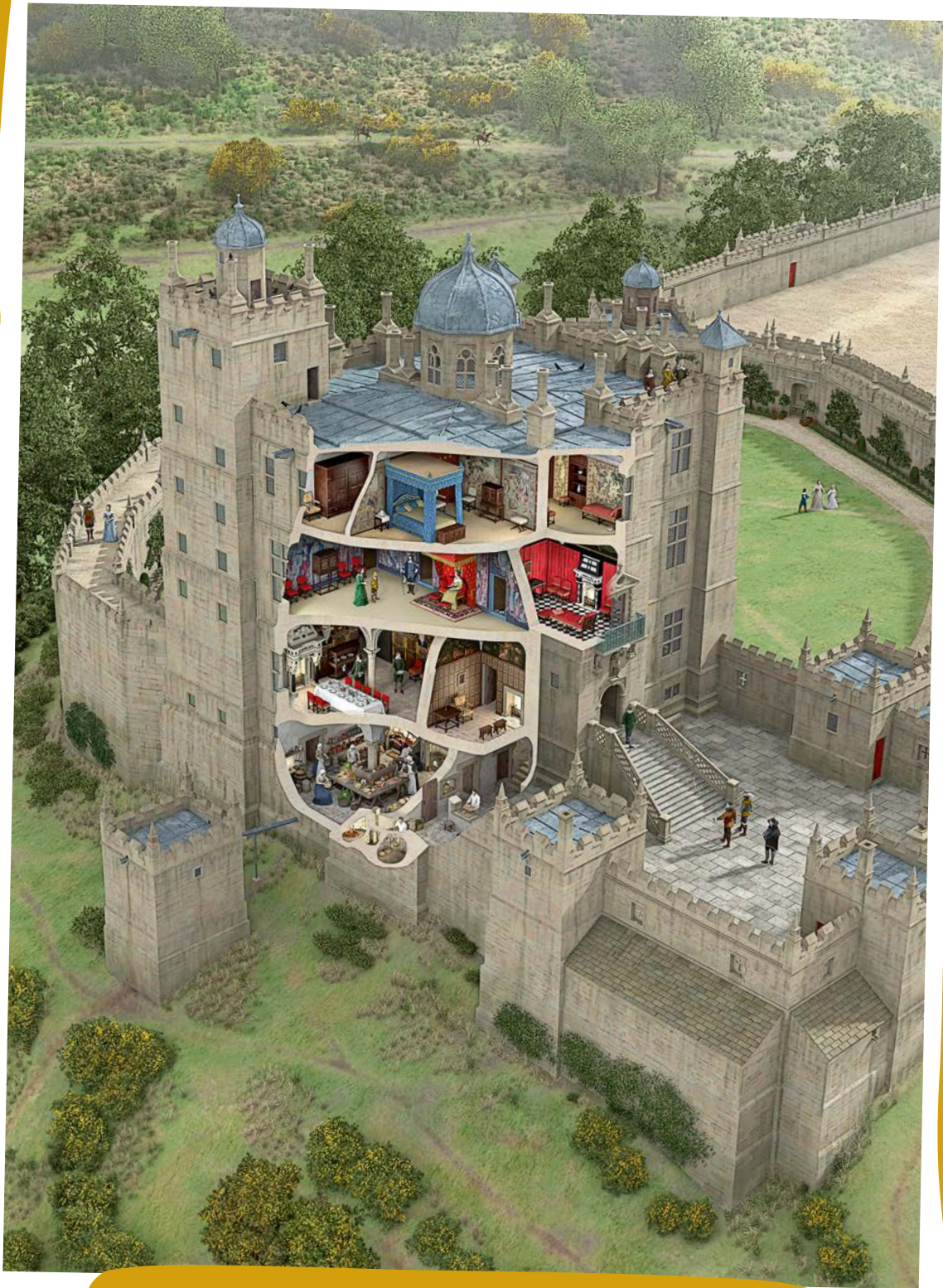
- Who might live in a place like this? What might they do here?
- What might you be able to smell/taste/touch/hear if you were in this scene?
- What kind of image is this (e.g. painting)? Was it made recently or a long time ago?
- How do you think the person feels in the picture? How can you tell?

Wonder: Then get students to suggest questions that could help them find out more.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

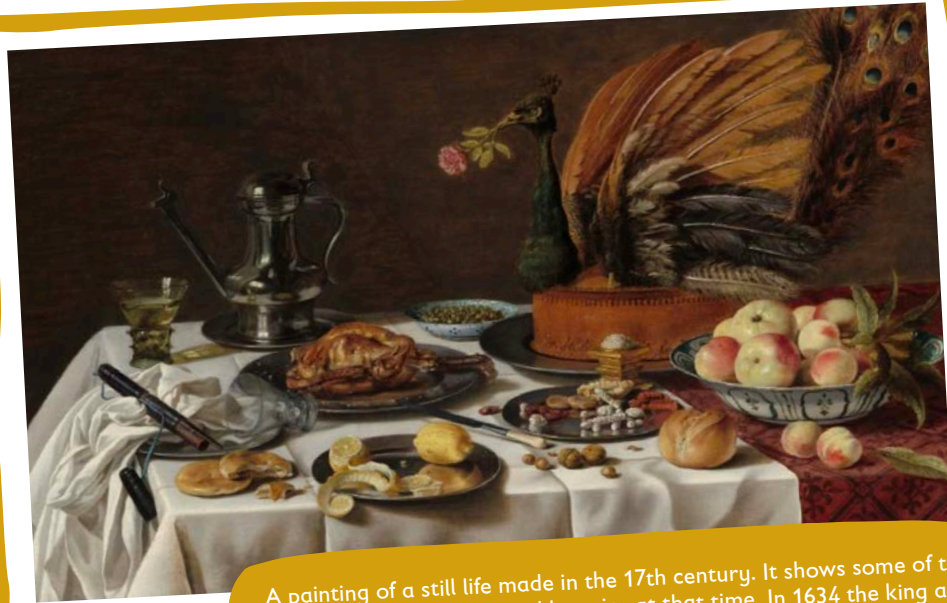
During your visit, you could re-enact scenes from the images around the castle grounds. For example, students could pose like Margaret in the Star Chamber or act out rifle practice in the Terrace Range.

IMAGE 1



A reconstruction of the Little Castle in around 1634, when William and his first wife, Elizabeth, hosted a party attended by King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria. Look carefully to spot all the activity going on in the kitchen.

IMAGE 2



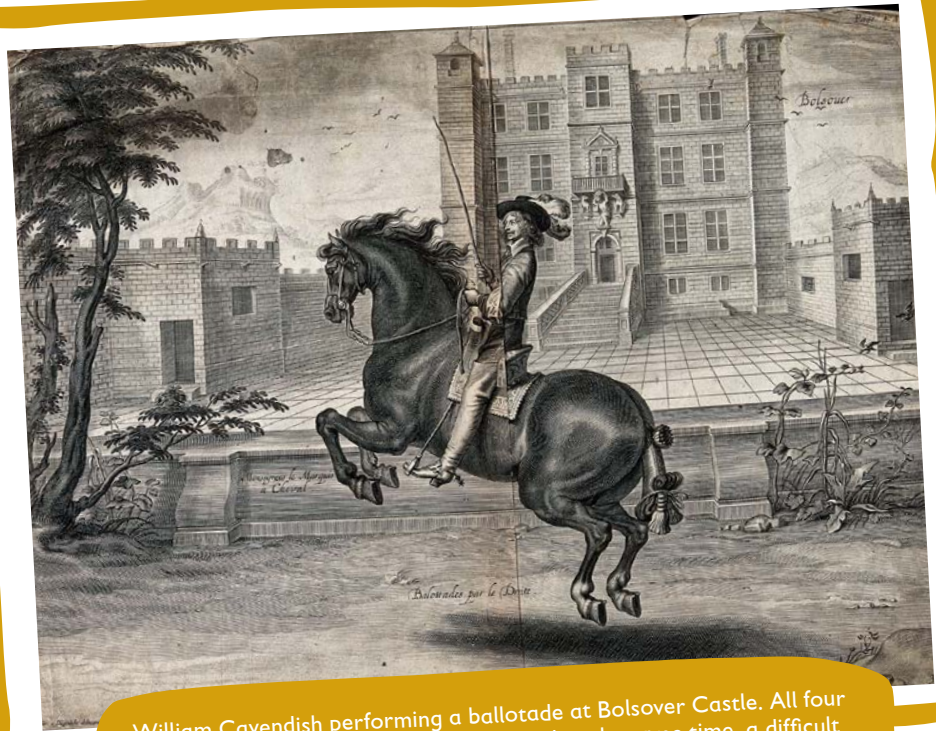
A painting of a still life made in the 17th century. It shows some of the foods that were considered luxuries at that time. In 1634 the king and queen attended a party at Bolsover Castle. A food bill from the events shows that over 41 species of birds were eaten, including 30 peacocks.



IMAGE 3

William's second wife, Margaret Cavendish, in the year that she became the Duchess of Newcastle. She is dressed in very expensive clothes made of silk and velvet. William and Margaret met during the Civil Wars when they fled to mainland Europe for safety.

IMAGE 4



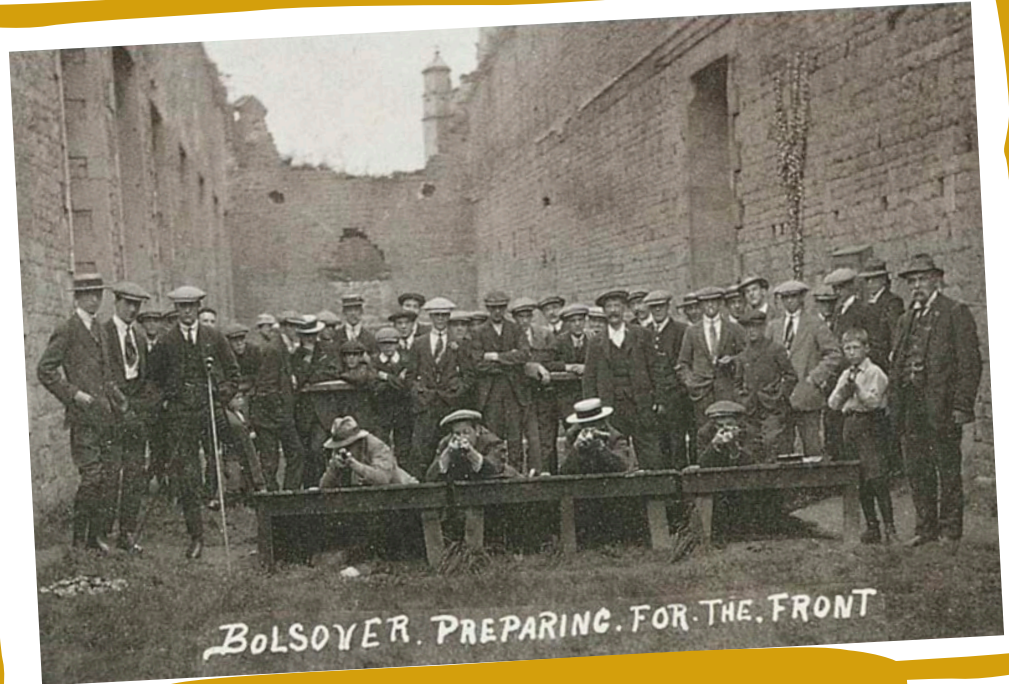
William Cavendish performing a ballotade at Bolsover Castle. All four of the horse's hooves have left the ground at the same time, a difficult move that required skill, patience and a very well-trained horse.



William Cavendish's horses and grooms. The grooms looked after the horses and lived in rooms in the loft of the Riding Range. They are all well dressed and three of them are black. We do not know their names or how they ended up working for William Cavendish.

IMAGE 5

IMAGE 6



During the First World War, the gallery was used as a rifle range. This was where soldiers practised using rifles before going to fight.



A horse and rider perform at Bolsover Castle. They use some of the same techniques to train their horses as William Cavendish did in the 17th century.

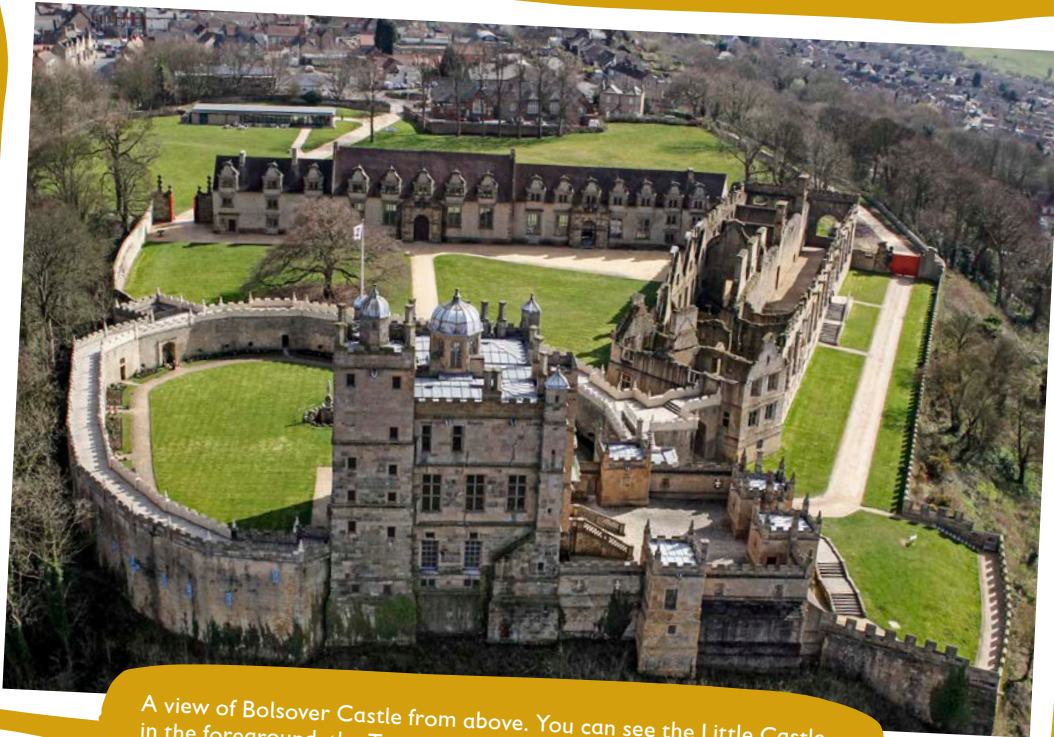
IMAGE 7

IMAGE 8



'Tom Fool' performs a fire-breathing trick at Bolsover Castle in 2023. A fool was someone who entertained royalty by making them laugh.

IMAGE 9



A view of Bolsover Castle from above. You can see the Little Castle in the foreground, the Terrace Range on the right and the Riding Range at the back. Some of Bolsover is visible in the background.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

WHY BUILD HERE?



Recommended for

KS2, KS3 (History, Geography)

Learning objectives

- Understand how castles like Bolsover Castle changed over time
- Analyse sources and organise information into chronological order
- Be able to explain why Bolsover Castle was built where it was

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes



A view of Bolsover Castle with the Little Castle on the left and the Terrace Range on the right.

SUMMARY

At first glance Bolsover Castle might look medieval in style. Its position high on a cliff also seems defensive. Closer examination reveals this isn't the full story. In this activity students think about the purpose of castles over time, then focus on two phases of building at Bolsover Castle: the 11th and the early 17th centuries. The Teachers' Notes on pages 47–48 provide some suggestions on how to support your students through these activities.

UNDERSTANDING CASTLES

It is important to first define castles – think about their purpose and how this changed over time. This will help students to understand Bolsover Castle much better and avoid misconceptions about it when they visit.

BOLSOVER CASTLE

Next, students can focus on two phases of building at Bolsover Castle. The key learning points listed in the Teachers' Notes could be used to support class discussion. For extra challenge, teachers of KS3 may want their students to write up a more extended answer to the title question.

ANSWERING THE QUESTION

At the end of the session, get students to discuss their answers to the title question 'Why build here?' and link back to their definitions of a 'good castle'. KS3 students might like to dig deeper using the MORE LEARNING IDEAS.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Students could explore Bolsover Castle's architecture and location in more detail using satellite and street view in Google Maps. They could examine the plans on pages 5–6 to discover how the castle changed over time.

TEACHERS' NOTES

WHY BUILD HERE?

SUGGESTED SCAFFOLD FOR UNDERSTANDING CASTLES

WHAT IS A CASTLE?

Ask students what a castle is. Depending on how much they have already learned, students may say castles are:

- for defence
- a place to live
- a power (and economic) base from which to rule over the country
- for display, especially as a visual reminder of power.



The Norman keep at Orford Castle.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD A CASTLE?

Gather ideas about what makes a good castle under three headings:

1. Location

- Students may mention raised ground, a source of water in case of besiegement, people and farms nearby to supply resources such as food and transport links.

2. Defence

- Students may mention keep, palisades or outer walls, arrow loops, turrets, towers, barbicans, battlements or crenulations, space for soldiers to live, space for weapons to be stored and stables for horses.

3. Home

- Students may mention great hall, kitchens, fireplaces, bedchambers, chapel and garderobes.

HOW DID CASTLES CHANGE OVER TIME?

Print off and photocopy enough of the matching activity on page 49 for your students. During feedback, link back to their definition of a castle and explain how castles changed to meet new demands:

- Where they were built in wood, they were sometimes replaced with stone as it is stronger and fire resistant
- During times of peace castles sometimes fell into ruin, but they could be brought back into use if required (as happened during the English Civil Wars)
- Castles needed to respond to new technology, weapons and methods of warfare so they might be updated to provide more up-to-date defences
- Comfortable living, showing off wealth and maintaining power
- In later periods castles were often built using more elaborate, showy architecture to reflect new fashions or increased wealth.

For more information about how castles changed over time, search the English Heritage website for 'castles through time'.



An aerial view of Bolsover Castle drawn by an artist.

BOLSOVER CASTLE

Now students are ready to focus in more detail on Bolsover Castle. KS2 and KS3 students might like to complete the activities on pages 50–51 independently.

Key learning points:

- Bolsover Castle began as a motte and bailey in the 11th century
- The castle may have been updated in the 12th century when it was a royal possession, but it was abandoned and then ruined by the early 17th century
- There are some records that refer to the maintenance of the castle but it isn't clear what it looked like for much of this period. For example, in 1250 repairs were made to the 'Great Tower'
- The 17th-century buildings visible today reflect the shape of the previous motte and bailey castle
- It is a good location for seeing, and being seen across the landscape
- It has an impressive backdrop for social occasions
- The Little Castle was deliberately designed to echo Norman castles (e.g. the arrow loops and battlements). It was designed in response to the ruins at Bolsover and was meant to be decorative and imply how well established the Cavendish family were.

CASTLES THROUGH TIME



Read the information about how castle design changed from the 11th to 17th centuries. Then **examine** the images of castles cared for by English Heritage. Can you **match** up the images to the correct castle design? The first one is done for you.

CASTLE DESIGN

MOTTE AND BAILEY

11TH CENTURY

Using wood made them quick to build. They had a raised area called a motte and a flatter part, the bailey.



Pickering Castle as it might have looked during construction in the 11th-century.

STONE TOWERS

12TH CENTURY

Stone towers (keeps) were stronger, more expensive and took longer to build than wooden castles.



Kenilworth Castle in the 15th-century. This was a luxurious home for Henry V.

MORE DEFENCES

LATE 12TH to 13TH CENTURIES

Extra defences such as towers were added to outer walls. High walls stopped missiles being flung over.



Goodrich Castle was besieged (surrounded and attacked) during the English Civil Wars, leaving it in ruins.

LUXURY LIVING

14TH to 15TH CENTURIES

Castles became more comfortable places to live. Larger windows started to replace arrow loops.



The 12th-century keep at Orford Castle was built of stone.

TUDOR GUN FORTS

16TH CENTURY

Coastal defences containing big guns (artillery). Castles inland were abandoned or continued as homes.



Dover Castle in the mid 13th-century, when defences such as outer walls and towers were added.

CIVIL WAR ERA

17TH CENTURY

During the English Civil Wars (1642–9), castles were once again used for defence. Many ended up in ruins.



Deal Castle was built by Henry VIII in 1540. Soldiers lived in gun forts, looking out for threats and manning the guns.

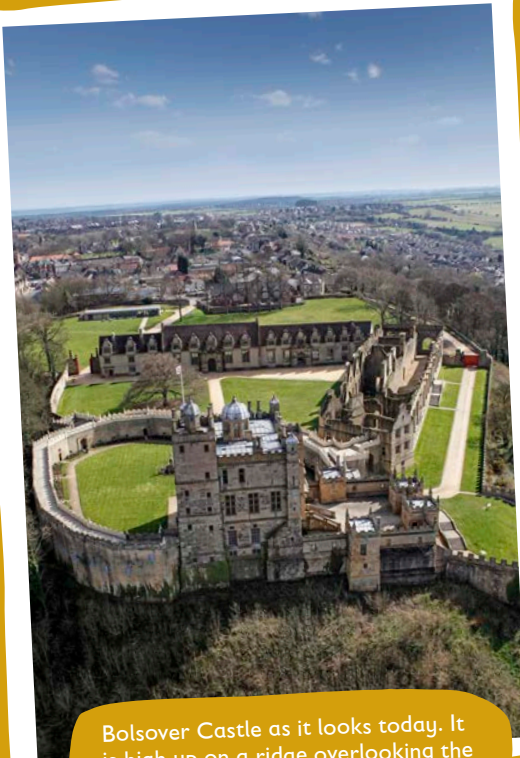


WHY BUILD HERE?

EXPLORE WHY
BOLSOVER CASTLE
WAS BUILT HERE

Bolsover Castle is built high up on a ridge. The first castle was built in the 11th century but the buildings you see today were built in the 17th century. Each of these castles was built here for different reasons. Follow the instructions to discover the story of Bolsover Castle.

1. **Examine** the image below.
2. **Discuss** what you can learn from the image about the location of Bolsover Castle. How might it be useful for defence?



Bolsover Castle as it looks today. It is high up on a ridge overlooking the Doe Lea valley. The town of Bolsover is visible in the background.

William Peveril

William Peveril was a Norman knight. He supported William the Conqueror in his invasion of England. The Normans won the Battle of Hastings in 1066 and William the Conqueror became king. He gave pieces of land to his most loyal knights. William Peveril was given lands in the Midlands and north of England, which he ruled on behalf of the new king. This was a responsibility but also an honour as it meant he was trusted by the king, which gave him high status. He needed to show people he was important and powerful, protect himself from attacks and prevent rebellions. He built a motte and bailey castle at Bolsover and castles elsewhere such as Peveril Castle.

3. **Read** the information in the box above about William Peveril.
4. **Underline** three things that Peveril needed to do.
5. How might the location of Bolsover have met Peveril's needs?

6. **Read** this information about Charles and William Cavendish.

Charles and William Cavendish

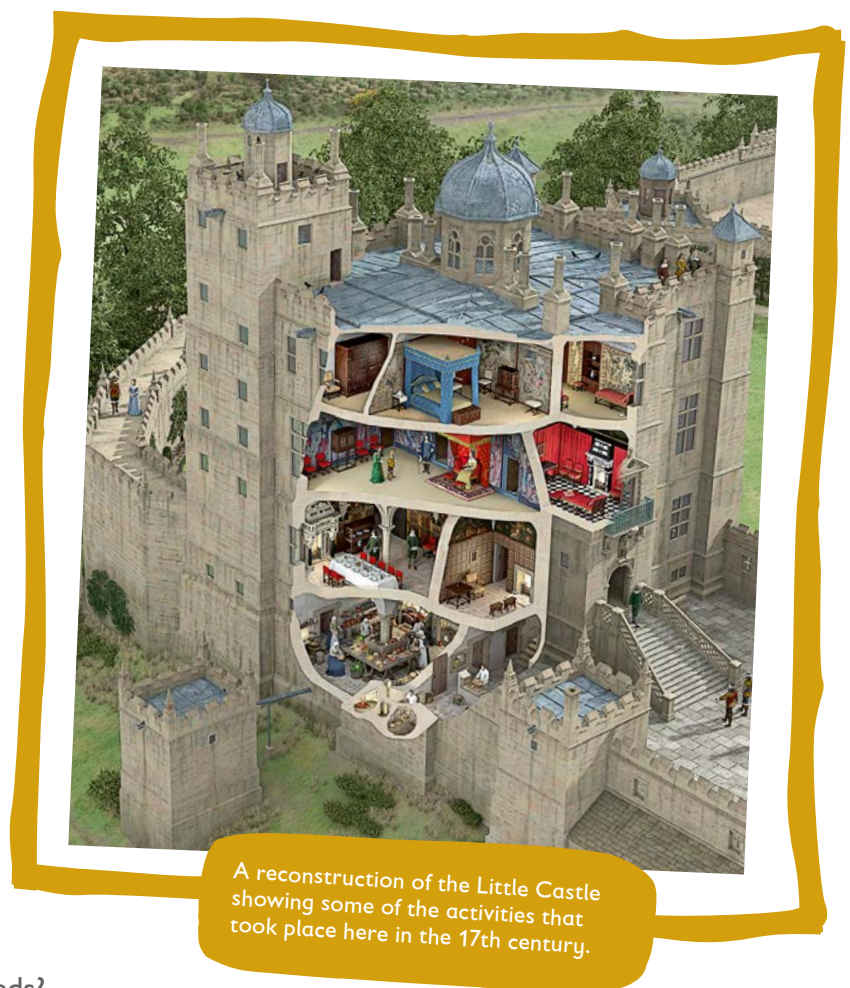
Bolsover Castle was a ruin by the early 17th century, when Charles Cavendish bought it. He lived 20 miles away at Welbeck and wanted Bolsover as a place to socialise and relax. He built the Little Castle in the style of a Norman stone tower. However, he died in 1617 before the interiors were completed. So, his son William finished it. William was ambitious and wanted to gain the king's favour. He needed an impressive home to entertain in.

7. **Underline** three things in the text above that Charles and William Cavendish needed to do.

8. **Examine** the picture of the Little Castle.

9. **Spot** the following features in the image:

- a) a banquet being prepared
- b) places to admire the view
- c) lavish decoration
- d) comfortable living conditions.



A reconstruction of the Little Castle showing some of the activities that took place here in the 17th century.

10. How might this have met William's needs?

.....

.....

.....

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

WHO WERE THE CAVENDISHES?



Recommended for

KS4+ (History, English)

Learning objectives

- Analyse primary sources to discover who William and Margaret Cavendish were and learn about their interests and opinions
- Analyse primary sources to understand how the Cavendishes were viewed by others
- Understand more about 17th-century society, culture and the impact of the English Civil Wars

Time to complete

Approx. 120 minutes depending on the time allocated for background reading



A portrait of Margaret Cavendish by Peter Lely made in 1665 after she became Duchess of Newcastle.

SUMMARY

William Cavendish was a staunch Royalist. Following a humiliating defeat at the Battle of Marston Moor in 1644 he went into exile. There he met the woman who was to become his second wife, Margaret Lucas. This activity examines this fascinating couple, and how they were viewed by others. From this, students can learn about 17th-century culture, society and the impact of the English Civil Wars on the aristocracy.

PREPARATION

Print off and photocopy the data capture sheet on page 57 on A3 paper. Students might find the language in the sources challenging. It is suggested you read them first to check suitability for your group. Background reading will help students access the sources. The historical information on pages 7–25 is useful for this. Your group may prefer to do this as pre-learning or it can be used in the classroom.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. Analyse the portraits of William and Margaret on pages 55–56. The Teachers' Notes on page 53 provide some additional notes on these.
2. Analyse the written sources and complete the data capture sheet.

FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION

Some suggested questions for class discussion are included in the Teachers' Notes on page 54. The MORE LEARNING IDEAS box provides some ideas for further research.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

The Bolsover History page on the English Heritage website includes useful links to find out more about Margaret Cavendish. Access published works on the website 'Early English Books Online' or search for the Digital Cavendish project.

TEACHERS' NOTES

WHO WERE THE CAVENDISHES?

PORTRAIT ANALYSIS

Margaret

Students may notice:

- Rich and formal clothing and jewellery to express her wealth and status. Her clothing is typical of court dress.
- She is also wearing peeress's robes of the kind worn for coronations and other important royal ceremonies. Her hand holds the robes back to reveal the expensive ermine fur trim.
- Rich surroundings, including a classical column in the background.
- Authoritative stance, looking directly at the viewer and with her hand on a carpeted table. This echoes the stance of Queen Henrietta Maria in some of her portraits.

It is also worth pointing out that she is wearing a velvet cap of the kind normally worn by men in 17th-century art depicting classical figures. This shows her sophistication and learning and also how she challenged ideas around gender and fashion. It is a direct reference to the 'masculine' side of her personality. She is not wearing her peeress's coronet (a small crown for royal ceremonial occasions) as she does in other portraits

William

Students may notice:

- The black groom. We know that William employed black servants when he was in exile and some may have returned to England with him in 1660. It was a sign of status and wealth to include well-dressed black servants in portraits. The Cavendish family did not, at this time, have any connections to the transatlantic slave trade.
- His coat of arms with the three stags to show his status and lineage.
- The military victory in the background (unlike his defeat at the Battle of Marston Moor).
- The wreath being handed down by an angel. They may be angels of victory, who are handing him the wreath, which represents victory as it did in Ancient Greece and Rome.

It is also worth pointing out to students that the text on the painting reads 'The battle won'.

SUGGESTED STRUCTURE FOR SOURCEWORK

You may wish to split your class into groups and give them a smaller set of sources to focus on. Students could focus on either William or Margaret and then feed back to one another in a marketplace-style activity where they exchange information with one another.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What impression do you get of Margaret/William?
2. Do the sources imply that Margaret/William is unusual for the time? Why? In what ways?
3. How far can we rely on these accounts? Such as Samuel Pepys' view of Margaret, or Margaret's account of William (or herself)? Why?
4. What do these sources reveal about 17th-century society and culture?
5. What can we infer from these sources about the impact of civil war?
6. What do these sources not reveal or whose story is missing?

MARGARET CAVENDISH



Margaret Cavendish in formal court dress, painted by Peter Lely in 1665. Peter Lely was a leading artist in the period who had painted other women of high status in England. This is the same year as she became the Duchess of Newcastle Upon Tyne.

WILLIAM CAVENDISH



William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle. Line drawing made in the mid 17th century by Peeter Clouwet after Abraham Diepenbeeck © National Portrait Gallery, London.

WHO WERE MARGARET AND WILLIAM CAVENDISH?

Use the sources on pages 55–56 to complete the table below.

	Margaret	William
Personality		
Interests		
How they were viewed by others		
How they viewed themselves		

MARGARET CAVENDISH

‘I was so afraid to dishonour my friends and family by my indiscreet actions, that I rather chose to be accounted a fool than to be thought rude or wanton ... I took great delight in attiring, fine dressing, and fashions, especially such fashions as I did invent myself, not taking that pleasure in such fashions as was invented by others. Also I did dislike any should follow my fashions, for I always took delight in a singularity ... As for my disposition, it is more inclining to the melancholy than merry ... I am tender natured, for it troubles my conscience to kill a fly ... I am very ambitious; yet 'tis neither for beauty, wit, titles, wealth, or power, but as they are steps to raise me to Fame's tower, which is to live by remembrance in after-ages ... some censuring readers will scornfully say, why hath this Lady write her own life? Since none cares to know whose daughter she was, or whose wife she is, or how she was bred, or what fortunes she had, or how she lived, or what humour or disposition she was of ... I write it for my own sake not theirs ... for my Lord having had two wives, I might easily have been mistaken, especially if I should die and my Lord marry again.’

Extracts taken from *The True Relation of my Birth, Breeding and Life*, Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle.

IF Atomes are as small, as small can bee,
They must in quantity of Matter all agree:
And if consisting Matter of the same (be right),
Then every Atome must weigh just alike.
Thus Quantity, Quality and Weight, all
Together meets in every Atome small.

Two extracts from Margaret's first book *Poems and Fancies* in which she explains her theory of atoms in verse.

‘Art makes Cylinders, Concave and Convex-glasses, and the like, which represent the figure of an object in no part exactly and truly, but very deformed and misshaped: also a Glass that is flaw'd, crack'd, or broke, or cut into the figure of Lozanges, Triangles, Squares, or the like, will present numerous pictures of one object. Besides, there are so many alterations made by several lights, their shadows, refractions, reflexions ... as the truth of an object will hardly be known.’

An extract from *Observations on Experimental Philosophy* by Margaret Cavendish, published in 1668. Here she is discussing microscopes. William and Margaret built up a collection of microscopes and telescopes when they lived in exile during the English Civil Wars.

WILLIAM CAVENDISH

‘Our Gracious and most Excellent KING, is not only the Handsomest, and most Comely Horse-man in the World, but as Knowing and Understanding in the Art as any man; and no man makes a Horse go Better than I have seen some go under His MAJESTY ... to see so Excellent a Creature, with so much Spirit, and Strength, to be so Obedient to his Rider, as if having no Will but His, they had but one Body, and one Mind, like a Centaur? ... there is nothing of more Use than A Horse of Mannage; nor any thing of more State, Manliness, or Pleasure, than Rideing ... it is the Noblest, so it is the Healthfullest Exercise in the World. In Hunting, Hawking, Bowling, Shooting, Cocking, Cardes and Dice, and many such things, there is no Use at all, but meerly Pleasure: But in A Horse of Mannage, both Use and Pleasure ... I have Practised, and Studyed Horse-manship ever since I was Ten years old; Have Rid with the Best Masters of all Nations, heard them Discourse at Large, and Tryed their several Wayes: Have Read all their Italian, French, and English Books, and some Latine ones ... I follow not the Horses Disposition, as most do; but I Make the Horse follow my Wayes, and Obey me: I seldom Beat them, or Punish them ... when they do Well, I Cherish and Reward them ... Hope of Reward, and Fear of Punishment, Governs this whole World; not only Men, but Horses: And thus they will Chuse the Reward, and Shun the Punishment.’

Extracts taken from William Cavendish's book *A New Method on horsemanship* giving readers advice on how to train horses in the art of manège.

‘all Books of Controversies should be writ in Latin, that none but the Learned may read them ... Disputations and Controversies are a kind of Civil War, maintained by the Pen, and often draw out the sword soon after ... all Prayer-Books should be writ in the native Language ... every Clergy-man should be kind and loving to his Parishioners, not proud and quarrelsome ... the Taxes should not be above the riches of the Commonwealth... to please his People... [a prince should] have many Holy-dayes for their ease, and order several Sports and Pastimes for their Recreation, and to be himself sometime Spectator thereof; by which means he'l ... busie their minds in harmless actions, sweeten their Natures, and hinder them from Factious Designs.’

An extract from Margaret Cavendish's biography of William Cavendish in which she quotes William's views on how to prevent a civil war.

CONTEMPORARY VIEWS OF THE CAVENDISHES

‘I may justly call him the best Lyrick and Dramatick Poet of this Age ... He is neat and cleanly; which makes him to be somewhat long in dressing ... he is so sparing and temperate, that he never eats nor drinks beyond his set proportion ... HIS prime Pastime and Recreation hath always been the Exercise of Mannage and Weapons ... The rest of his time he spends in Musick, Poetry, Architecture.’

An extract from Margaret Cavendish’s biography of William Cavendish.

‘He had, indeed, through his great estate, and liberal hospitality and constant residence in his county, so endeared [the gentlemen of the county] to him that no man was a greater prince than he in all that northern quarter, till a foolish ambition of glorious slavery carried him to court, where he ran himself much into debt to purchase neglects of the King and Queen, and scorns of the proud courtiers.’

An extract from *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson* written by his wife, Lucy Hutchinson. The book was not published until the 19th century and it appears she never intended to publish it. She was a Parliamentarian.

Saturday 30 March 1667

‘The most silly thing that ever come upon a stage. I was sick to see it.’

[Pepys commenting on the play *The Humourous Lovers*, which he mistakenly thought Margaret wrote, not William]

Thursday 30 May 1667

‘the Duchess of Newcastle, who had desired to be invited to the Society; and was, after much debate, pro and con ... Anon comes the Duchesse with her women attending her; among others, the Ferabosco, of whom so much talk ... She is indeed black, and hath good black little eyes, but otherwise but a very ordinary woman I do think, but they say sings well. The Duchesse hath been a good comely woman; but her dress so antick, and her deportment so ordinary, that I do not like her at all, not did I hear her say any thing that was worth hearing, but that she was full of admiration, all admiration. Several fine experiments were shown her of colours, loadstones, microscopes, and of liquors among others, of one that did, while she was there turn a piece of roasted mutton into pure blood, which was very rare ...’

Wednesday 18 March 1668

‘the ridiculous History of my Lord Newcastle, wrote by his wife, which shews her to be a mad, conceited, ridiculous woman, and he an asse to suffer her.’

Extracts from the diary of 26-year-old civil servant, Samuel Pepys. The Society is the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge. Ferabosco was probably an Italian musician. Black may refer to her hair colour.



AT THE CASTLE

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

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

TOP THINGS TO SEE



KS1-2

Recommended for

KS1–KS2 (History)

Learning objectives

- Spot the key features of Bolsover Castle
- Understand how the castle changed over time and what it was used for in the past

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes



A view of Bolsover Castle with the Little Castle on the left and the Terrace Range on the right.

SUMMARY

This activity takes students around Bolsover Castle, spotting key features that help them to interpret the architecture. From this, they will gain a better understanding of how the castle changed over time and what it was used for.

PREPARATION

Print off and photocopy enough copies of the Top Things to See trail for your group. The tick sheet on page 68 may be more appropriate for KS1 groups. The trail on pages 63–67 includes additional facts and challenges that may be more appropriate for KS2 students.

ON THE DAY

Teachers of KS1 students may wish to guide students around the site, supporting them to spot the features and understand their purpose. KS2 students may prefer to guide their own learning using the trail on pages 63–67.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Bring pencils for students to make sketches of some of the key features they spot. Use these back in the classroom when doing follow-up learning. For example, they could be used to inspire their pastry designs in the activity on pages 96.

TOP THINGS TO SEE

EXPLORE BOLSOVER CASTLE

See if you can find all of these things and complete each challenge. KS1 students can use the tick list at the back while their teacher guides them around. KS2 students may want to lead their own learning in small groups, supervised by an adult.

Can't find your way?
Use the map at the back to help.



1 SOUTH EAST GATEWAY

You are standing in what today is called the castle yard. The buildings to the left of the gateway are where a line of defences once stood. These defences divided the bailey into an outer bailey (the castle yard) and an inner bailey (the Great Court).


WHERE IS IT? South east gateway.

DID YOU FIND IT?



CHALLENGE TIME! 

Examine these pillars carefully. Can you find another gateway with similar decoration inside the Great Court?

DID YOU KNOW? 

A motte and bailey castle was built at Bolsover by William Peveril in the 11th century. The Little Castle stands where the motte was.

2 RIDING ROOM

The Riding Range included stables, a shoeing room, a riding room and accommodation for grooms who looked after the horses. Horses were trained in the art of manège (a kind of dressage). This took great skill and patience and it was considered manly and sophisticated to be good at this in the 17th century.



CHALLENGE TIME!



Count the external windows in this room. **Examine** them carefully. What is special about their design that prevented horses from being distracted or startled?

DID YOU KNOW?



People in the gallery looked through the internal window opposite to watch horses perform moves such as ballotades (a leap with all four hooves off the ground).

WHERE IS IT?

Riding room.



DID YOU FIND IT?

3 THE TERRACE



WHERE IS IT?

Terrace.



DID YOU FIND IT?

CHALLENGE TIME!



Suggest a reason why William Peveril chose this location for his castle in the 11th century. HINT: height is useful for defence.

DID YOU KNOW?



The outer wall looks like battlements on a medieval castle. However, it was added in the 17th century and is decorative not defensive.

4 FORECOURT

This is the courtyard outside the Little Castle. It has a surrounding wall with lodges built into it. Spend a bit of time exploring the forecourt looking for features that appear to be for defence but are actually for decoration.



WHERE IS IT?
Forecourt.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Find the features listed below. They are all for decoration rather than defence.

- Arrow slits
- Large windows
- Turrets
- Crenulations or battlements
- Balcony

DID YOU KNOW?



The arrow slits were not for firing arrows through. They are decorative, designed to make the Little Castle look more like a Norman tower.

DID YOU FIND IT?



5 A KNIFE

This painting was based on an earlier engraving. The knife was added into the painting, perhaps to represent Sheffield's cutlery industry.

WHERE IS IT?
Anteroom.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Examine the ceilings in the anteroom and the porch. Both are designed to look like medieval vaulted ceilings, but can you spot the difference?

DID YOU FIND IT?

DID YOU KNOW?



Charles Cavendish designed the Little Castle. He died in 1617 before it was completed. His son William finished the interiors using his father's designs.



6 TWO BROTHERS

These portraits are probably of William Cavendish and his brother, Charles. Other paintings in the Little Castle are said to include William's first wife, Elizabeth, and the famous playwright Ben Jonson.

WHERE IS IT?
Star Chamber.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Look carefully at the different types of stone used in the fireplace. Spot the special kind of marble that contains fossils.

DID YOU FIND IT?

DID YOU KNOW?



The name of this room comes from its beautiful blue ceiling covered in gold stars. Only favoured guests were allowed in here.

7 LANTERN

At the top of the Little Castle is a feature known as the lantern. There are windows set high into the walls, creating a calming space.

WHERE IS IT? Second floor.

DID YOU FIND IT?



CHALLENGE TIME!



Look up to spot the patterns of light and shadow in the lantern. Then explore the bedchambers and look out the windows.

DID YOU KNOW?



Lots of the surrounding land was once owned by the Cavendish family. Hardwick Hall, built by William's grandmother, was also visible from the Little Castle.



8 PASTRY OVENS

There are three pastry ovens in the basement where sweet treats, pies and custard tarts were baked for special guests such as the king and queen who visited in 1634.

WHERE IS IT? Basement of the Little Castle.

DID YOU FIND IT?

CHALLENGE TIME!



Find the drain in the floor of the kitchen. **Follow** it to see which rooms had drainage. **Suggest** reasons why these rooms needed drains.

DID YOU KNOW?



Meats were prepared in the wet room. You can see the vats where beef was soaked in brine and the slab where hams were salted.

9 WALL WALK

The wall walk was restored by English Heritage in 2013. This allowed visitors to walk along it for the first time in nearly 250 years. Access the wall walk using the set of stairs in the Fountain Garden.



CHALLENGE TIME!



Count how many steps it takes you to walk the full length of the wall walk. **Spot** the Venus fountain in the garden below.

DID YOU KNOW?



The 17th-century wall walk was built on top of the medieval outer wall. The medieval remains are inside the walls you can see today.

WHERE IS IT? Surrounding the Fountain Garden.

DID YOU FIND IT?

TOP THINGS TO SEE

EXPLORE BOLSOVER CASTLE

See if you can find all of these things. Tick each one off as you find it.



1 SOUTH EAST GATEWAY

Decorative pillars



2 RIDING ROOM

External windows

The gallery window



3 THE TERRACE

Decorative battlements



4 FORECOURT

Arrow slits Turrets

Large windows Balcony



5 KNIFE

Vaulted ceiling



6 TWO BROTHERS

Fossils in the fireplace



7 LANTERN

Views from the windows



8 PASTRY OVENS

Drains in the floor

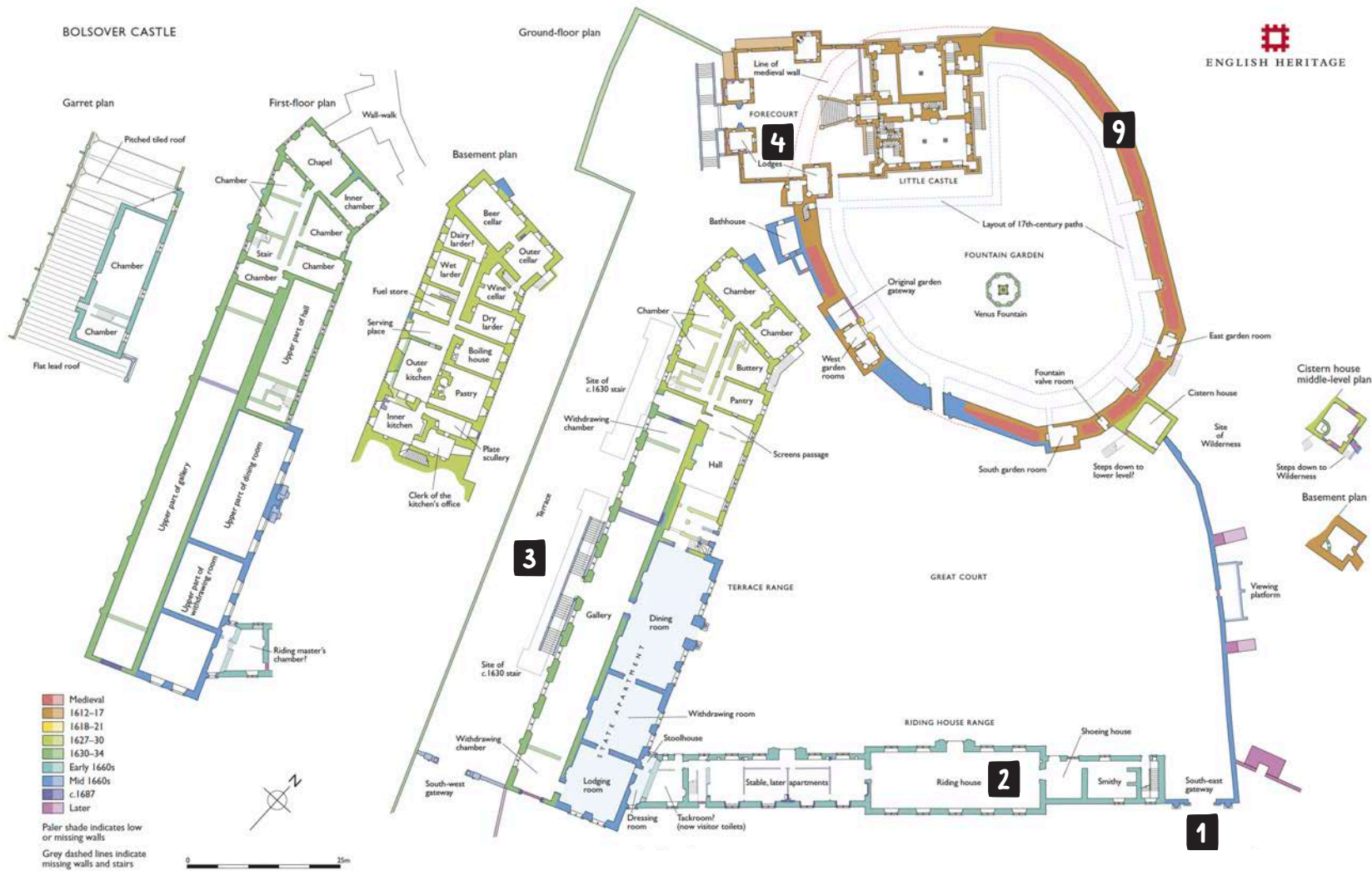


9 WALL WALK

Venus fountain

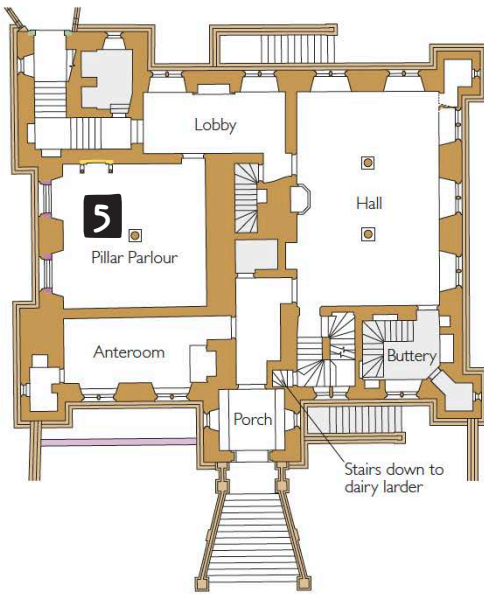


BOLSOVER CASTLE TOP THINGS TO SEE MAP

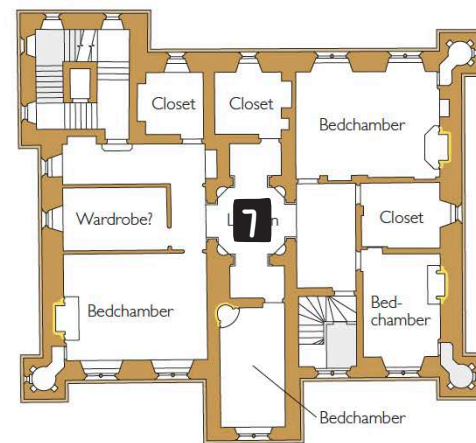


BOLSOVER CASTLE KEEP

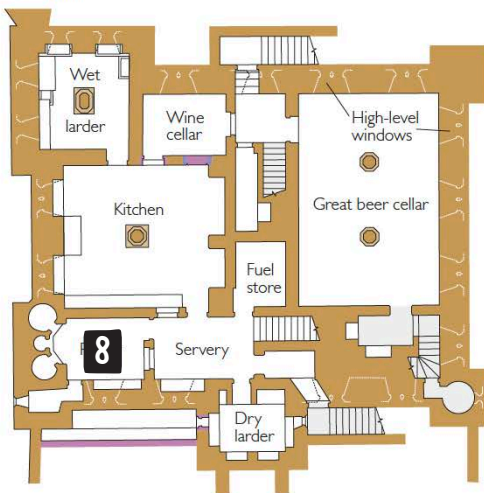
Ground floor



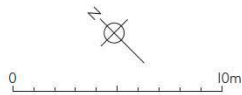
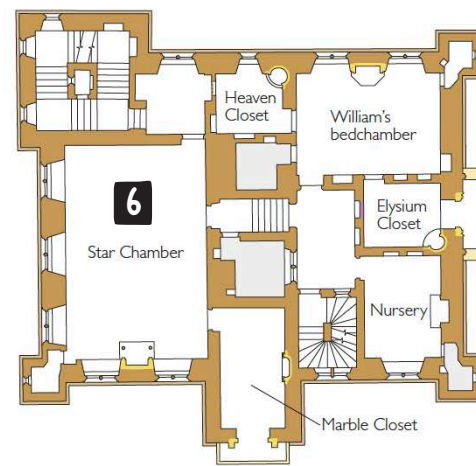
Second floor









Basement



First floor



 Medieval	 1630-33
 1612-17	 Later
 1618-21	 No visitor access

Paler shade indicates low walls or plinths

KEY

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 SOUTH EAST GATEWAY | 4 FORECOURT | 7 LANTERN |
| 2 RIDING ROOM | 5 KNIFE | 8 PASTRY OVENS |
| 3 TERRACE | 6 TWO BROTHERS | 9 WALL WALK |

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

NATURAL PHILOSOPHER'S TRAIL



KS3

Recommended for

KS3 (Science, History)

Learning objectives

- Learn about natural philosophy and the story of Bolsover Castle
- Explore Bolsover Castle, examining some of its key features and using the techniques and theories of natural philosophy to discover more about the castle and the people who lived here
- Understand the story of Bolsover Castle, its connections to natural philosophy and how science can help us learn more about the history of a place and its people

Time to complete

5–10 minutes per activity;
7 activities



Plants in the borders of the Fountain Garden with the Little Castle in the background.

PRIOR LEARNING

It would be helpful for students to have some contextual knowledge and feel confident with key terms before completing this trail. The glossary on pages 26–32 provides definitions of key terms and the timeline on pages 33–39 can support students' chronological understanding. The pre-visit activity 'Why build here?' can provide more context for their visit.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY

This trail includes a short, pre-visit activity that introduces students to Margaret Cavendish and natural philosophy.

PREPARATION AND RESOURCES

You may wish to read the historical information on pages 7–25 before your visit to familiarise yourself with the story of Bolsover and its connection to natural philosophy. To explore the story of William and Margaret Cavendish in more depth you could book our Discovery Visit. You will find the Activity Trail on the following pages. Please read our printing tips and photocopy enough for your class to bring to Bolsover Castle.

The booklet pages have their own sequence which differs from the rest of the Teachers' Kit and they will appear to be in a random order; this is to help you create an A5 booklet that can be easily followed by your students.

To do this you'll need to adjust your Print settings:

1. Select size A4.
2. Select a custom page range of 72–78 (to avoid printing unnecessary pages).
3. Select 'Print on both sides of the paper' and 'Flip on short edge'.
4. This will print four double-sided pages of PDF that can be folded in half and arranged in page number order.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

You could take students to visit the Cundy House on the other side of the valley to see where the water in the cistern house came from. Search the English Heritage website for 'Cundy House' to find out more.



ENGLISH HERITAGE
BOLSOVER CASTLE

WELL DONE!

Congratulations on completing the trail.
We hope you've learnt loads about Bolsover Castle.

Feel free to explore the rest of the castle with your group leaders.
There's a lot more to discover at Bolsover Castle.

WHAT NEXT?

You could:

- Visit the Cundy House where the water was piped from.
- Write a letter to English Heritage about your visit to Bolsover Castle.
 - Create a piece of art or write a poem inspired by your trip.
 - Make a short documentary about Bolsover Castle and film it.

Hint: read back through the booklet, including your answers, and look at the castle plan to jog your memory.



Step into England's story

NAME:

CLASS:

SCHOOL:

William Cavendish owned Bolsover Castle in the 17th century. It became an important place for intellectuals to gather and discuss ideas. Both he and his second wife, Margaret, were very interested in natural philosophy, what we today call science.

Margaret Cavendish believed it was important to use your senses to observe the world. Practise your observation skills before your visit.

A Study the image of the rose carefully.



Roses like this one have been planted at Bolsover Castle to recreate the gardens as they might have looked in the 17th century.

B Write down six things you observe about it. HINT: think about its colour, texture and shape.

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 1 | 4 |
| 2 | 5 |
| 3 | 6 |

The first microscopes were developed in the early 17th century. They could make things look 20 times bigger, but they could be unreliable. William and Margaret built up a collection, but Margaret did not think they were very helpful.



A flea drawn by Hooke and published in *Micrographia*. Fleas are so small that it is difficult to observe them without magnification.

B Examine the reconstruction drawing showing how the cistern house worked.

C Read this list of labels.

1. A person operated the wheel.
2. The wheel lifted a bucket full of water.
3. A reservoir of water was under the cistern house.
4. A pipe brought water across the valley and into the reservoir.
5. The bucket was emptied into the tank by a person on the top floor.
6. Underground pipes took water from the cistern house to the fountain.
7. The flow of water to the fountain was regulated in the valve room.
8. Rainwater drained from the lead roof into the water tank.

D Label the drawing by writing the numbers in the correct locations.

E Discuss with a partner why the water tank was up higher than the fountain.

HINT: think about water pressure and gravity.

Write your answer here:

.....

.....

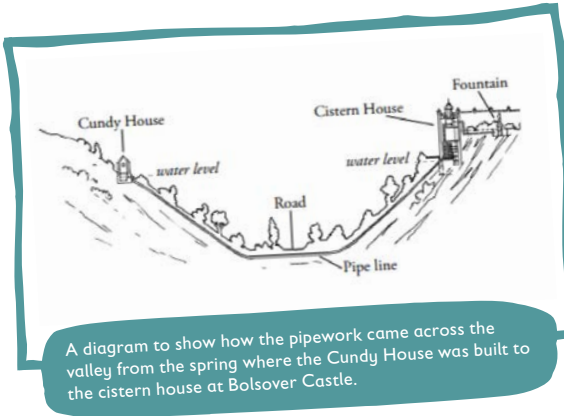
.....

.....

.....

.....

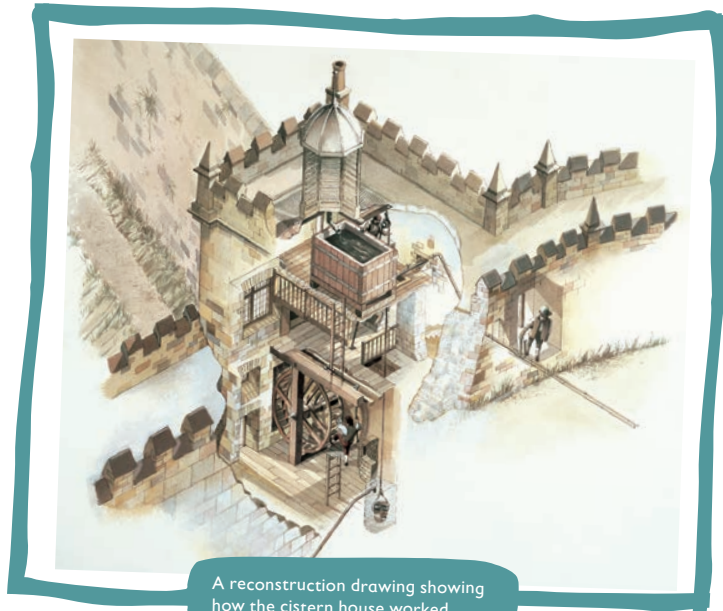
Bolsover Castle is high up on a cliffy ridge. This made accessing water a challenge that was overcome using 17th-century technology.



A diagram to show how the pipework came across the valley from the spring where the Cundy House was built to the cistern house at Bolsover Castle.

Bolsover Castle had three different water sources. One of them came into the cistern house from a natural spring across the valley using a pipe and gravity to get it to the reservoir beneath the building.

A Spend a few minutes looking round the cistern house.



A reconstruction drawing showing how the cistern house worked.

There has been a castle here at Bolsover since the 11th century. William Cavendish inherited it from his father in 1617. He hosted lavish parties here and pursued his intellectual interests, like natural philosophy. You are going to explore Bolsover Castle and discover more about 17th-century natural philosophy.

You'll learn about:

- Natural philosophy in the 17th century
- The scientific experiments that took place here
- How science can help us understand the story of Bolsover Castle

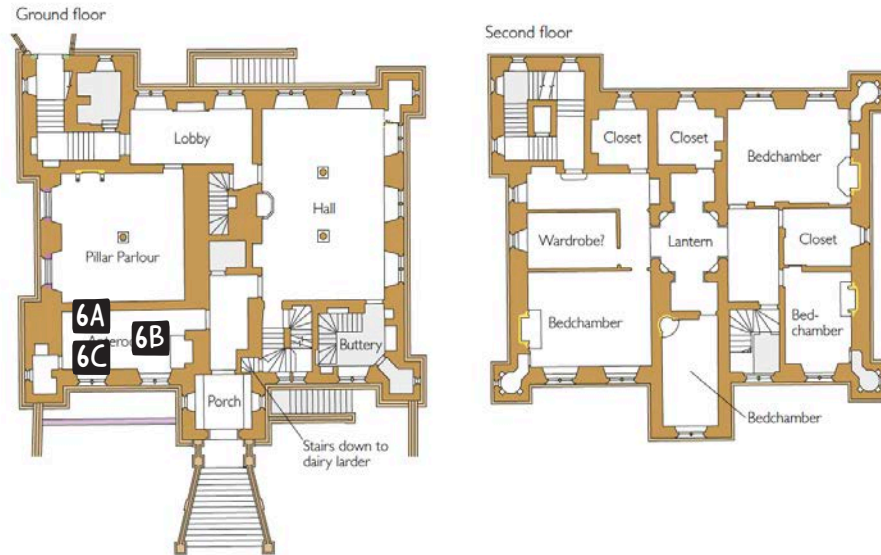
It should take you around 1 hour to complete this trail.



An aerial view of Bolsover Castle.

Use the plans on pages 3–4 to help you find your way around and keep track of the activities.

The trail begins at the **Great Court** (see pages 5–6)



1 ACTIVITY 1 – GREAT COURT

2 ACTIVITY 2 – GALLERY

3 ACTIVITY 3 – OUTSIDE THE RIDING RANGE

4 ACTIVITY 4 – FOUNTAIN GARDEN

5 ACTIVITY 5 – GARDEN ROOMS

6 ACTIVITY 6 – THE LITTLE CASTLE
(A, B AND C IN THE ANTEROOM AND
D IN THE STAR CHAMBER)

7 ACTIVITY 7 – CISTERN HOUSE

Some of the scientific ideas of the 17th century are no longer supported by modern-day science. In the anteroom of the Little Castle there are paintings depicting the theory of the four humours. It said that the body was made up of four liquids known as humours. It was important to keep the humours in balance to be healthy.

A Go into the anteroom.

B Examine the paintings carefully.

C Identify which painting matches each of the descriptions of the four humours below.

- Phlegm is said to make someone phlegmatic (calm). It is also connected to the element of water. The painting depicts this using a fisherman and his wife.
- Blood is said to make someone sanguine (happy and outgoing). The painting depicts this using a stage. It is thought that William performed for guests by standing in front of the painting as if he were on stage.
- Yellow bile is said to make someone a good leader but too much makes them choleric (angry). It is also connected to the element of fire. In the painting a man leads a woman.
- Black bile is said to make someone melancholic (sad) and introverted. They prefer to be alone. It is also connected to the element of earth. In the painting the woman is being offered earthly delights such as jewels, but she also has a book next to her. Perhaps she'd rather be reading and writing.

Beliefs in witchcraft and the supernatural also still existed in the 17th century. Protective marks, also known as 'witches' marks' were carved into walls. The Virgin Mary was said to provide protection to those living in a house with a letter M carved into a wall.

D Explore the Star Chamber to find a circular protective mark beside the fireplace.

Small rooms are built into the outer wall of the garden. The west garden room is believed to be a still room, where herbal remedies may have been prepared.



A view of the Fountain Garden with the doorways into two of the garden rooms visible in the wall.

William Cavendish carried out an explosive experiment in one of these rooms to explore what the sun was made of. He burned saltpetre and brimstone (two ingredients in gunpowder).

A Explore the garden rooms.

B Read this quote.

‘looking at it a while, I said, Mark it, Mr. Payn, the Flame is Pale, like the Sun, and hath a Violent Motion in it like the Sun; saith he, It hath so, and more to Confirm you, says he, look what abundance of Little Suns, Round like a Globe, appear to us every where, just the same Motion as the Sun makes in every one’s Eyes: So we concluded, the Sun could be nothing else but a very Solid Body of Salt and Sulphur, Inflamed by his own Violent motion upon his own Axis’

Taken from ‘His Opinion Concerning the Ground of Natural Philosophy’ by William Cavendish and published in *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* by Margaret Cavendish in 1663.

C Discuss how William reached his conclusion about the sun.





The plants in the borders of the Fountain Garden were chosen after careful research into 17th-century planting. They are designed to delight the senses and include bulbs such as lilies that originally came from central Asia and were new to English gardens.

Herbs provide food for insects and pleasant smells for visitors. They can be used in cooking or as herbal remedies.

- A** Walk along the Fountain Garden borders.
- B** Tick off the herbs when you find them.

ROSEMARY
 This herb was thought to relieve headaches and boost memory. It has light purple flowers in the summer. Older plants have wood-like stems.



THYME
 This herb was thought to relieve pain. It has much smaller, rounder leaves than rosemary. Older plants may have wood-like stems.



MARJORAM
 This herb was thought to help digestion. It has softer, rounder leaves than rosemary. The leaves are usually larger than those of thyme.



C Describe how each herb smells and feels to touch. Do not lick or pick them.

Rosemary

Thyme

Marjoram

Sir Isaac Newton was a member of the Royal Society. He came up with his laws of motion in 1686. His first law said that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

William trained horses using a technique called lunging. The horse wears a cavesson, a bridle with a tight noseband and no bit in the horse's mouth. A line is attached to it. The trainer holds the other end of the line and the horse is trained to walk in a circle. You can use Newton's law of motion to understand how William Cavendish trained horses.

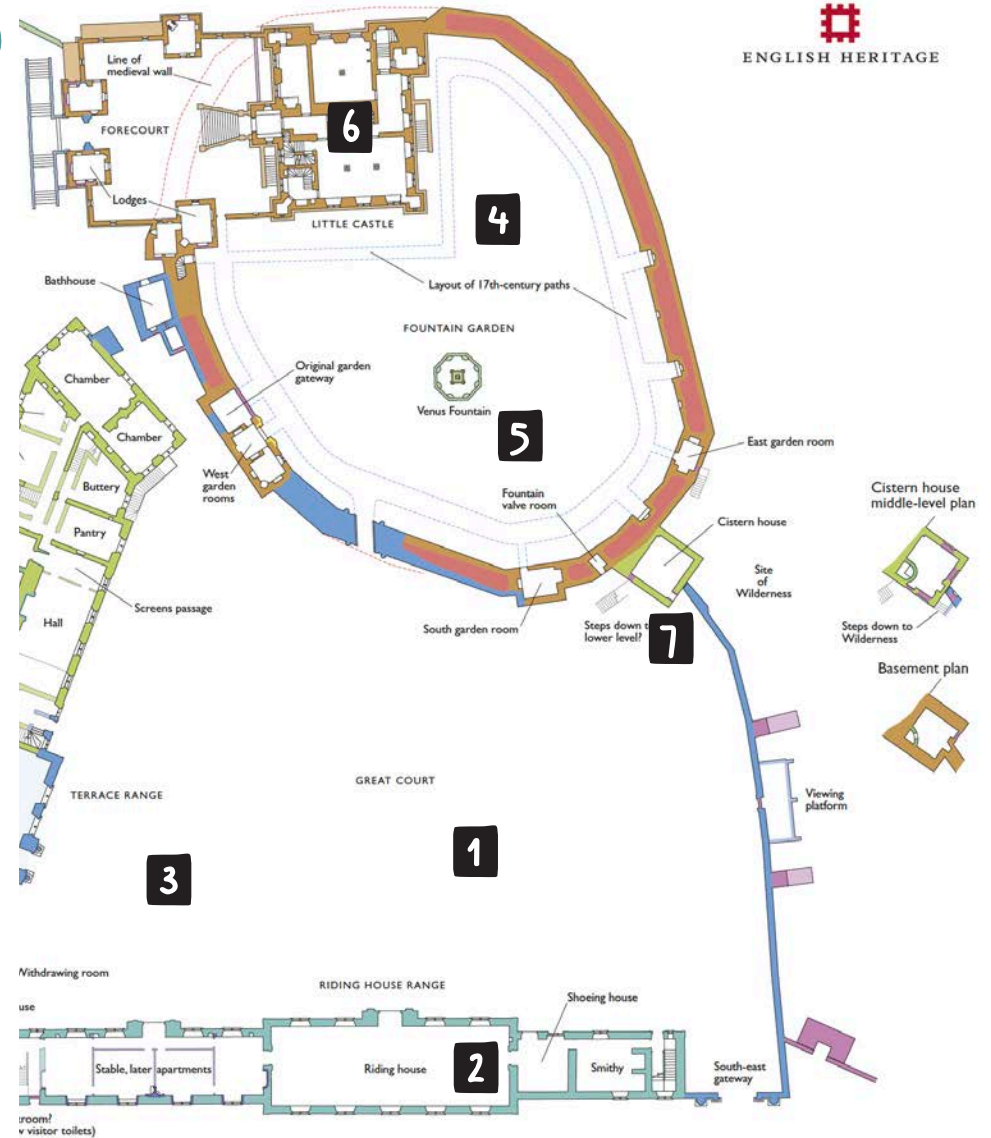
- A** Find a partner.
- B** Find a space outside the Riding Range.
- C** Complete the following steps:



The Riding Range is in the background of this view of Bolsover Castle taken from upstairs in the Little Castle.

1. Stand beside each other, holding hands.
2. Straighten your arms to create space between you. This is your line.
3. One person must try to walk forwards. They are the horse. The other must stay where they are but can pivot on the spot. They are the trainer.
4. Observe what happens.
5. How can Newton's idea of action and reaction help us explain what is happening?

The tension on the line (in this case your arm) is pulling inwards, what is sometimes called centripetal force. This is the action. The reaction is the horse leaning inwards and therefore walking in a circle rather than a straight line. In addition, this circular walking motion causes the trainer to pivot in the centre of the circle. The shorter the line, the smaller the circle will be.



ACTIVITY 1

The Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge was established in 1660 following a lecture by the architect Christopher Wren. In 1667 Margaret Cavendish was the first woman to attend a Royal Society meeting.

The Royal Society aimed to verify facts through experiments and share their ideas. One member of the society, Robert Hooke, created illustrations to share his findings. He used two techniques:

- look, then draw
- look and draw at the same time.



A view of the Terrace Range and Little Castle from inside the Great Court.

- A** Explore and examine the architecture in the Great Court.
- B** Choose one aspect to focus on such as a doorway, stone carving or window.
- C** Draw your chosen part using Hooke's drawing techniques in the boxes below.

LOOK, THEN DRAW

LOOK AND DRAW AT THE SAME TIME

- D** Discuss these questions with a partner:
- Which drawing technique did you prefer and why?
 - How did focusing on one part help you to understand it better?

ACTIVITY 2

This gallery was for visitors to look down onto the riding room and watch horses performing a kind of dressage known as manège. It took great skill and patience to train horses in this way.



The view from the gallery down onto the riding room where William Cavendish trained his horses.

William Cavendish believed it was important to understand horses and be kind to them to get the best out of them.

- A** Tick off the features as you find them:
- high windows to prevent horses from being distracted or startled
 - sand on the floor, which is the ideal surface for horses to train on
 - decorative plasterwork on the walls of the gallery
 - exposed beams that were not visible in the 17th century.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

INSPIRATION TRAIL



KS4+

Recommended for

KS4+ (Art, Literature, History)

Learning objectives

- Learn about the art that Bolsover Castle inspired
- Examine the art in the Little Castle, analyse some of the meanings behind the artworks and explore how Bolsover Castle inspired Margaret Cavendish in her written works
- Understand the purpose and significance of the art in the Little Castle and be inspired by Bolsover Castle in your own artistic practice

Time to complete

5–10 minutes per activity;
7 activities



A detail from the Heaven Closet ceiling.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY

In this activity students explore the Little Castle, examining artworks and reflecting on their meaning and purpose. A pre-visit activity has not been included in this trail. Instead, students could do the pre-visit activity on pages 52–60 to introduce them to William Cavendish, who owned Bolsover Castle in the 17th century, and his second wife, Margaret.

PREPARATION AND RESOURCES

You may wish to read the historical information on pages 7–25 before your visit to familiarise yourself with the story of Bolsover Castle. Teachers can also get a 10% discount on a guidebook during your visit. These may be useful for students too.

You will find the Activity Trail on the following pages. Please read our printing tips and photocopy enough for your class to bring to Bolsover Castle.

The booklet pages have their own sequence which differs from the rest of the Teachers' Kit and they will appear to be in a random order; this is to help you create an A5 booklet that can be easily followed by your students.

To do this you'll need to adjust your Print settings:

1. Select size A4.
2. Select a custom page range of 81–88 (to avoid printing unnecessary pages).
3. Select 'Print on both sides of the paper' and 'Flip on short edge'.
4. This will print four double-sided pages of PDF that can be folded in half and arranged in page number order.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

A link to English Heritage's [Google Arts and Culture Page](#) about the Elysium Closet in the Little Castle is available on the 'Bolsover History' page of the English Heritage website. This is a good place to discover even more about the paintings in the Little Castle.



ENGLISH HERITAGE
BOLSOVER CASTLE

WELL DONE!

Congratulations on completing the trail.
We hope you've learnt loads about Bolsover Castle.

Feel free to explore the rest of the castle with your group leaders.
There's a lot more to discover at Bolsover Castle.

WHAT NEXT?

You could:

- Explore the rest of Bolsover Castle and use the guidebook to deepen your understanding.
- Look up the engravings of the four temperaments by Maarten de Vos that the paintings in the anteroom are based on. Compare them to spot the changes William made to their design and explore the symbolism of those changes. For example, the fisherman's oar has been changed to Hercules' club.
- Find out more about masques and how entertainments blurred the lines between reality and art.
- Create a piece of art, some poetry or a play inspired by your trip.

Step into England's story

The English Heritage Trust is a charity, no. 1140351, and a company, no. 07447221, registered in England.

All images ©Historic England Archive unless otherwise stated.

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

KS4+

INSPIRATION TRAIL

DISCOVER BOLSOVER
CASTLE



NAME:

CLASS:

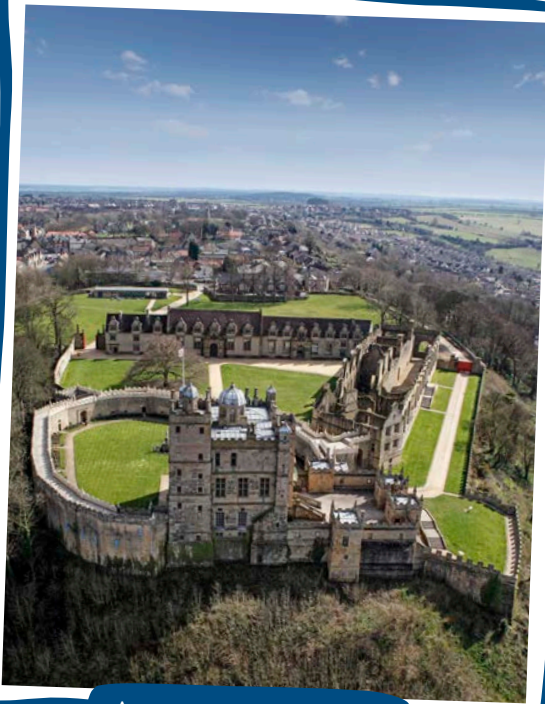
SCHOOL:

William Cavendish inherited Bolsover Castle from his father, Charles, in 1617. Charles built the Little Castle but died before it was completed and so William finished the interiors that you are going to look at today. They are a remarkable survival. You'll spend time analysing some of the paintings and taking inspiration from them.

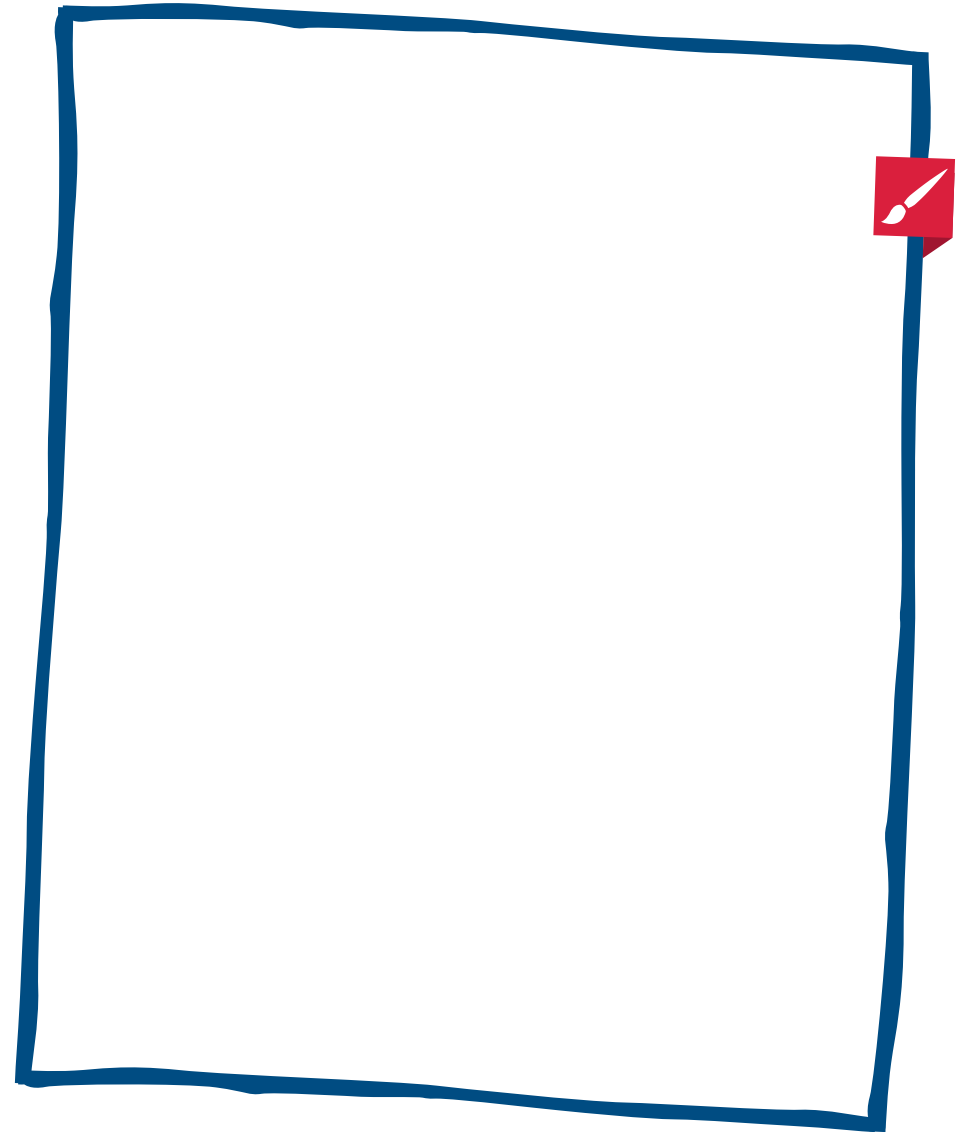
You'll learn about:

- The meaning behind some of the paintings in the Little Castle
- The written works that were inspired by Bolsover Castle

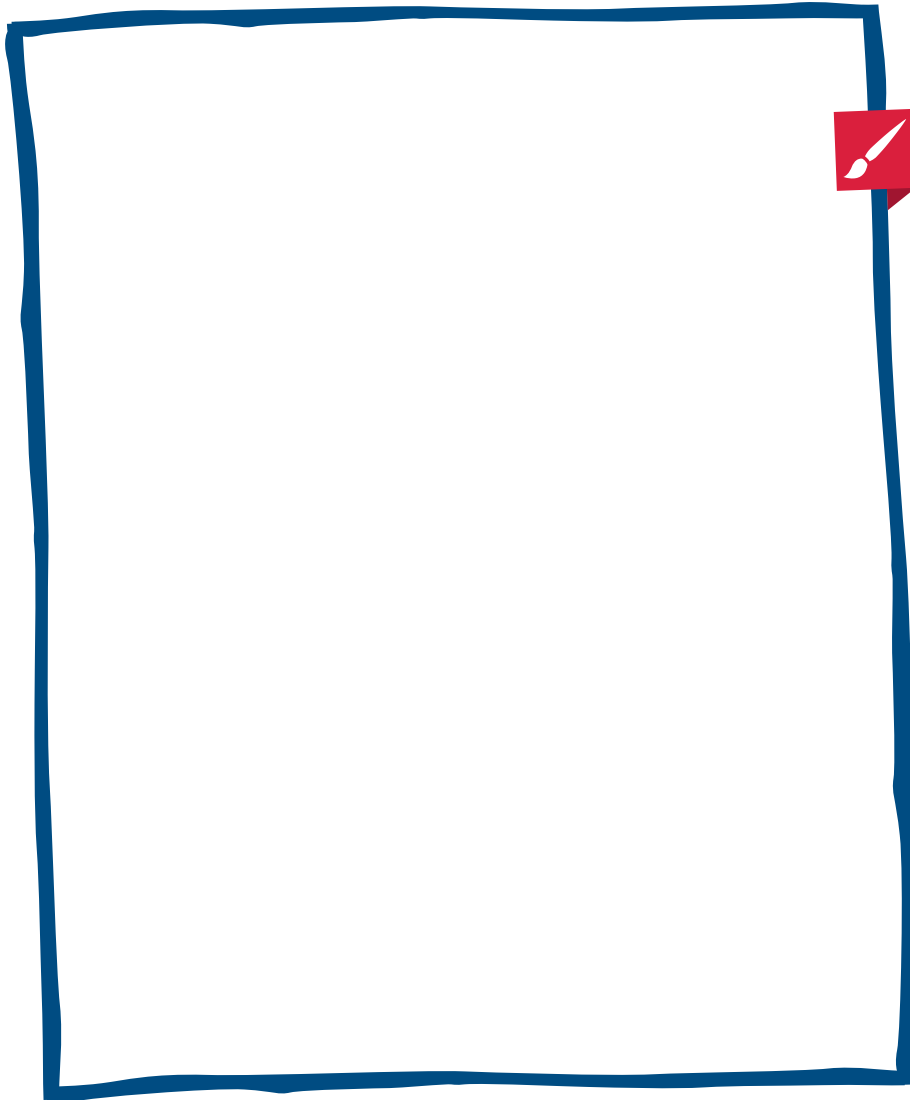
It should take you around 1.5 hours to complete this trail.



An aerial view of Bolsover Castle.



Use this space to sketch other parts of Bolsover Castle that have inspired you.



Use the plan below to find your way around the Little Castle and keep track of the activities.

The trail begins outside the Little Castle in the forecourt.



1 ACTIVITY 1 – FORECOURT

2 ACTIVITY 2 – ANTEROOM

3 ACTIVITY 3 – THE HALL

4 ACTIVITY 4 – PILLAR PARLOUR

5 ACTIVITY 5 – STAR CHAMBER

6 ACTIVITY 6 – MARBLE CLOSET

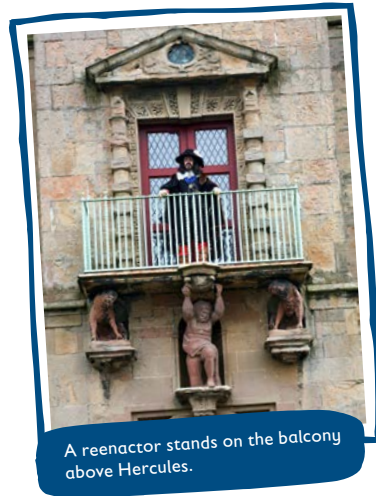
7 ACTIVITY 7 – HEAVEN CLOSET

8 ACTIVITY 8 – ELYSIUM CLOSET

1. FORECOURT

The Little Castle was built in the early 1600s and deliberately designed to look like a Norman keep. For example, you might spot arrow loops in the surrounding wall. This created the illusion that the Cavendish family had been here at Bolsover for generations.

The sculpture underneath the balcony is the Roman hero Hercules, famed for his bravery and strength and his ability to father lots of children. He performed 12 labours (tasks), including one where he held up the earth. He did these to gain forgiveness for killing his wife and children during a period of insanity caused by the wife of Zeus, his father. He represents man's ability to overcome vice and become virtuous.



A reenactor stands on the balcony above Hercules.

1 Spot the following features:

- Hercules, who is said to represent William Cavendish
- Globe, which might be a reference to Shakespeare's Globe Theatre
- The coat of arms of Charles Cavendish (William's father)
- The balcony on which King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria may have stood when they visited in 1634

2 Think about the symbolism of these features. What do you think William was trying to convey?

.....

.....

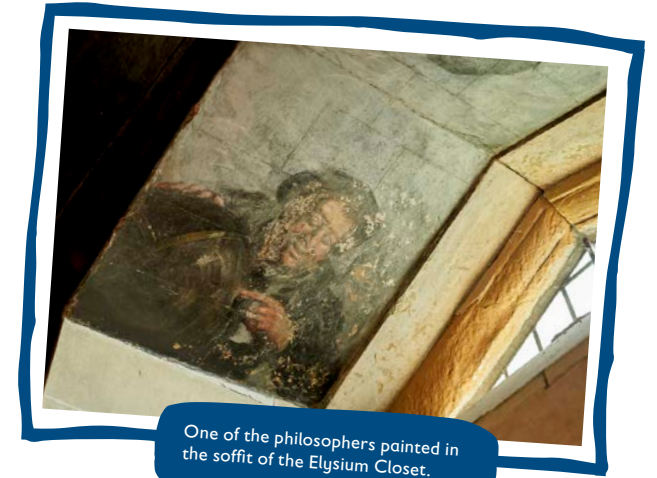
.....

.....

8. ELYSIUM CLOSET (CONTINUED)

2 Spot the laughing and crying philosophers beneath the banner, in the soffit, known as Democritus and Heraclitus.

3 Look back at the portrait of Ben Jonson on page 8. It has been suggested that the two philosophers are also portraits of Jonson.



One of the philosophers painted in the soffit of the Elysium Closet.

4 Identify the following features of the two portraits:

Heraclitus is dressed as a middle-class professional such as a doctor or academic. He wears:

- a shirt with a high frilled collar
- a fur-trimmed robe
- a brimmed bonnet.

Democritus appears quite differently. Some think he may represent an actor or craftsman:

- he wears a soft flat cap
- he is dressed more simply
- he is pointing to a globe and possibly also to himself as Pan on the ceiling.

8. ELYSIUM CLOSET

Many of the paintings in the Little Castle are based on well-known engravings that would be recognisable to William's guests. However, the painting on the ceiling of the Elysium Closet is based on a much less well-known painting by Primaticcio on a ceiling at Fontainebleau palace, France. This showed just how cultured and well travelled William was.

This set of paintings celebrates love and the creation of children. It depicts a classical version of heaven. The images in the cornice are connected to those on the ceiling. They all lead to a central figure of Apollo, or perhaps William's son. Just like the Heaven Closet, it is full of layers of symbolism, which cannot all be covered here.

1 Find the following groups of connected images:

- The classical goddess Venus holding a rose like the Virgin Mary. The crescent moon on her forehead may refer to the classical goddess, Diana or William's mother whose family emblem was a crescent moon. She looks at a younger version of herself flirting with Mars. Some believe this is a portrait of William's first wife, Elizabeth, and she appears to be pregnant.
- The banner that reads 'All is But vanite', which is a quote from the Bible. Vanity was also often used to mean masque or show. Pointing at the banner is a boy in Jacobean clothing. Above this, on the ceiling, there is a boy holding a crescent moon or C for Cavendish.



The quote painted in the Elysium Closet.

2. THE ANTEROOM

Some of the rooms in the Little Castle, such as the anteroom, have sets of paintings where one appears to be missing. This is where the hosts or guests come in, as they become part of the art by acting out a role and completing the set of images.

The paintings in this room are based on the four humours, a theory developed by the Roman physician, Galen.

- 1 Tick** the boxes below to show which of the four humours are shown in the paintings in the anteroom. Which one is missing?
- Phlegm was connected to water. It made someone phlegmatic (calm).
 - Yellow bile was connected to fire. It made someone a good leader or could make them choleric (angry).
 - Black bile was connected to earth. It made someone melancholic (sad) and introverted.
 - Blood was connected to air. It made someone sanguine (happy) and extroverted.
- 2** The fourth painting is said to look like a typical 17th-century stage. **Find** these clues that show it's a stage:
- stage flats (moveable scenery used in the background on a stage) resembling pillars that appear to extend above the framing arch
 - background scenery to create a sense of depth and perspective
 - light on the tops of the pillars suggesting lighting as on a real stage.
- 3** The pillars also cast shadows across the stage suggesting light is coming from the real windows in the room. **Discuss** why the artist might have done this.
- 4** It is said that William performed music to his guests here below this painting. Which of the four temperaments is he suggesting he is? Why might this be?

3. THE HALL

Four of the Labours of Hercules are depicted in the Hall. The paintings show Hercules overcoming wild and man-eating beasts.

The artist has tried to make it look like Hercules is in the room performing his labours.

1 Examine the paintings carefully.

2 Write down the ways in which the artist has tried to make these scenes look like they have come to life. HINT: examine the stonework in the painting and the room, the animals and Hercules.



Hercules taming the Nemean lion.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

7. HEAVEN CLOSET (CONTINUED)

2 In what ways is the viewer invited to become a part of this painting?

.....

.....

.....

3 Discuss what deeper meaning this invitation might have.

4 The date 1619 is painted above the narrow window. This could be the date the painting was completed. Or it could be to commemorate the birth of Cavendish's first son. This baby died just a year later. **Discuss** how this might have added another layer of meaning to the Heaven Closet.

5 Choose one aspect of the Heaven Closet to focus on. Sketch it in the box below.

7. HEAVEN CLOSET

Only William's most favoured guests would be invited into his bedchamber for conversation, drinks and music. From here guests chose to visit either the Heaven Closet or the Elysium Closet.

The Heaven Closet depicts a vision of Christian heaven. It is full of layers of symbolism, which cannot all be covered here.

1 Spot these features:

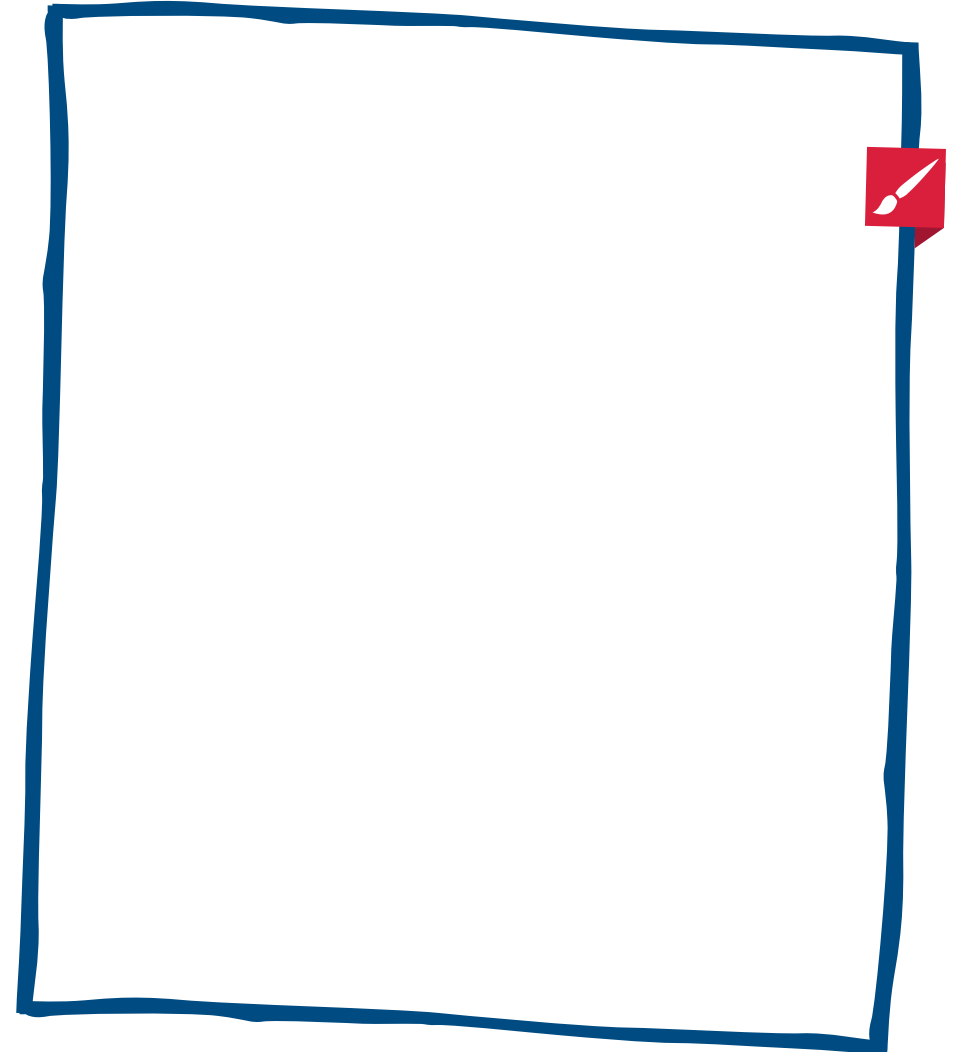
- Jesus in the centre, dancing and beckoning the viewer to join him
- 11 cherubs in a circle, perhaps representing the 11 loyal apostles
- Cherubs playing percussion, stringed and wind instruments
- Sheet music (three of which have been identified as 'A Round of Three Country Dances in One', the other is a drinking song)
- Weeping angels
- The cross on which Jesus was crucified
- An angel holding nails from the cross
- Jesus' crown of thorns being used as an embroidery hoop
- A piece of cloth with Jesus' face on it, known as a veronica after Saint Veronica who wiped the blood and sweat from his face using her veil
- A cherub holding out a garland of roses



The ceiling in the Heaven Closet.

3. THE HALL (CONTINUED)

3 Choose one aspect of the paintings in this room that you find appealing. Sketch it in the box below.



4 Discuss with a partner why this aspect appealed to you.

4. PILLAR PARLOUR

In 1634 Ben Jonson's play *Love's Welcome* was performed to King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria. The introduction is said to have been inspired by the paintings in this room.

Love's Welcome demonstrates that Jonson knew the building well. He understood how to use it for a combination of banqueting and drama.

1 Read the introduction from *Love's Welcome* then examine the paintings in this room to identify the connection.

CHORUS

If Love be called a lifting of the sense
To knowledge of that pure intelligence,
Wherein the soul hath rest and residence,

FIRST TENOR

When were the senses in such order placed?

SECOND TENOR

The sight, the hearing, smelling, touching, taste,
All at one banquet?

BASS

Would it ever last!

FIRST TENOR

We wish the same.
Who set it forth thus?

BASS

Love!

SECOND TENOR

But to what end, or to what object?

BASS

Love!



The painting representing the sense of smell in the Pillar parlour.

5. STAR CHAMBER

The Star Chamber is painted with biblical and Christian figures. Some of these figures resemble members of the Cavendish family and their friends.



A portrait of Ben Jonson that strongly resembles the painting of Aaron in the Star Chamber. In the corner diagonally opposite to the painting of Aaron is his brother Moses, which is believed to be a portrait of William Cavendish.

Some of the figures in this room have been painted in grey tones to trick the viewer into thinking they are stone sculptures. This technique is known as *trompe l'oeil* (trick of the eye).

- 1 Examine** the *trompe l'oeil* paintings. How has the artist created this illusion?
HINT: think about the use of light and dark shades.
- 2 Look up** at the ceiling. It resembles a starry sky. This was a common feature of theatres at the time, which suggests performances took place here.
- 3 Go** into the Marble Closet. Here you will find three paintings based on a set of four engravings known as *The United Virtues* by Hendrick Goltzius.
- 4 Stand** in the balcony doorway. It is thought that Charles and Henrietta Maria may have stood here to complete the set of paintings. They may have re-enacted a painting in which a couple exchanged an olive branch (representing peace) and laurel wreath (representing victory) to create the missing painting, *Unity and Peace*. **Discuss** what this suggests about the king and queen's rule and their relationship.



POST-VISIT

Information and activities to help you extend your students' learning back in the classroom.

SOURCES

PEER INTO THE PAST

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

SOURCE 1



A reconstruction drawing showing what the gallery of the Terrace Range might have looked like during the royal visit of 1634.

SOURCE 2

CHORUS

If Love be called a lifting of the sense
To knowledge of that pure intelligence,
Wherein the soul hath rest and residence,

FIRST TENOR

When were the senses in such order placed?

SECOND TENOR

The sight, the hearing, smelling, touching, taste,
All at one banquet?

BASS

Would it ever last!

FIRST TENOR

We wish the same.
Who set it forth thus?

BASS

Love!

SECOND TENOR

But to what end, or to what object?

BASS

Love!

Part of the introduction to Ben Jonson's *Love's Welcome* that was performed at Bolsover Castle in 1634 during the royal visit.



SOURCE 3

'When a Horse is OVER-RIDDEN, TO COMFORT HIM.

Take a Pinte of Sweet Milk, and put three Yolks of Eggs beaten into it; then make it Luke-warm, and then put in three Penny-worth of Saffron, and one Penny-worth of Sallet-oyle, which is Two or Three Spoonfulls, and give it the Horse, in a Horn: You may give him near a Quart of Milk. This is an Excellent Drink.'

An example of a remedy recommended in *The New Method, and Extraordinary Invention to Dress Horses* by William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle.



SOURCE 4

‘Knight

Alas, poor Castle, how great is thy change
From thy first form! To me thou dost seem strange.
I left thee comely and in perfect health;
Now thou art withered and decayed in wealth.

Castle

O noble Sir, I from your stock was raised,
Flourished in plenty, and by all men praised,
For your most valiant father did me build,
Your brother furnished me, my neck did gild,
And towers on my head like crowns were placed,
Walls, like a girdle, went about my waist.
And on this pleasant hill he set me high,
To view the vales below as they do lie,
Where like a garden is each field and close,
Where fresh green grass and yellow cowslip grows.
There did I see fat sheep in pastures go,
And hear the cows, whose bags were full, to low.
By wars I'm now destroyed, all rights o'erpowered;
Beauty and innocency are devoured.
Before these wars I was in my full prime,
And held the greatest beauty in my time.
But, noble Sir, since I did see you last,
Within me hath a garrison been placed,
Their guns, and pistols all about me hung,
And in despite their bullets at me flung,
Which through my sides those passages you see
Made, and destroyed the walls that circled me,
And left my rubbish on huge heaps to lie.
With dust I'm choked, for want of water, dry,
For those small leaden pipes which winding lay
Under the ground, the water to convey,
Were all cut off; the water, murmuring,
Run back with grief to tell it to the spring.
My windows all are broke; the wind blows in;
With cold I shake, with agues shivering.
O pity me, dear Sir, release my band,
Or let me die by your most noble hand.



SOURCE 4 (CONTINUED)

Knight

Alas, poor Castle, I small help can bring,
Yet shall my heart supply the former spring
From whence the water of fresh tears shall rise;
To quench thy drought, I'll spout them from mine eyes.
That wealth I have for to release thy woe,
I'll offer for a ransom to thy foe.
But to restore thy health and build thy wall,
I have not means enough to do't withal.
Had I the art, no pains then I would spare,
But all what's broken down I would repair.

Castle

Most noble Sir, you that me freedom give,
May your great name in after ages live.
This your great bounty may the gods requite,
And keep you from such enemies and spite,
And may great Fame your praises sound aloud.
Gods give me life to show my gratitude.'

'A Dialogue Between a Bountiful Knight and a Castle Ruined at War.' A poem by Margaret Cavendish published in her *Poems and Fancies* in 1653. The knight is believed to be Margaret's brother-in-law, Charles, who visited Bolsover in 1652 and was shocked by the damage caused by the Parliamentarians. In this poem, Margaret gives the castle a voice too.



SOURCE 5

'But, Jo! her head-gear was so pretty,
I ne'er saw anything so witty;
Though I was half afeared,
God bless us! when I first did see her:
She looked so like a Cavalier,
But that she had no beard.'

An extract from a ballad describing Margaret Cavendish's appearance and probably written by the poet John Evelyn.

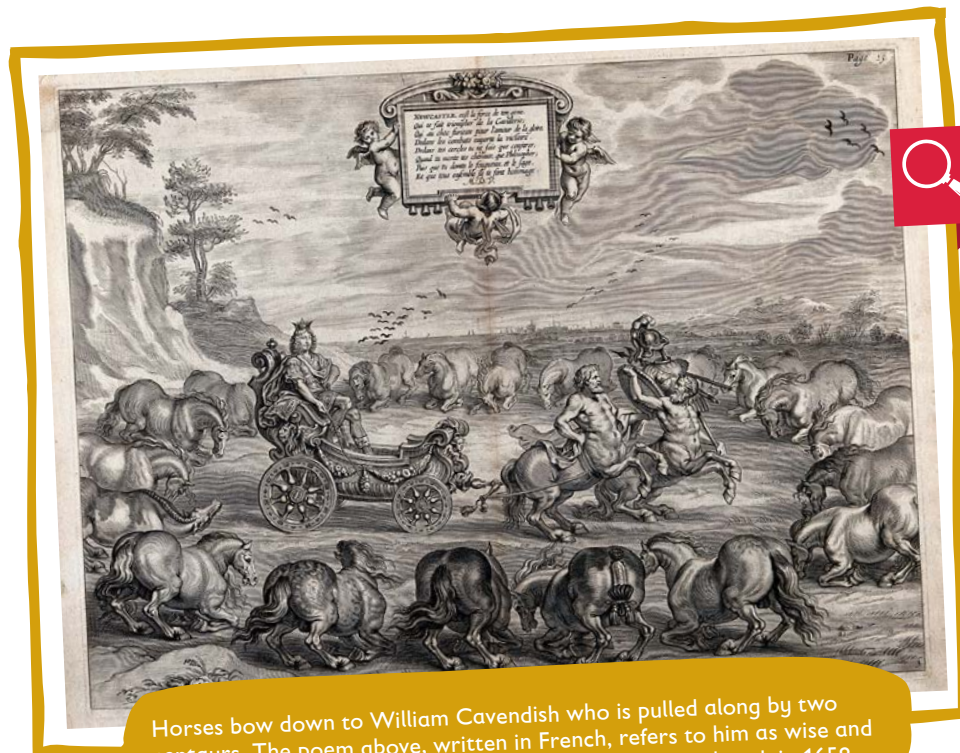


SOURCE 6



The frontispiece used by Margaret Cavendish in many of her books. It shows her alone at her writing desk receiving a wreath.

SOURCE 7



Horses bow down to William Cavendish who is pulled along by two centaurs. The poem above, written in French, refers to him as wise and triumphant. The engraving was made by A. van Diepenbeeck in 1658.

SOURCE 8

‘the inspection of the exterior parts of Vegetables, doth not give us any knowledge how to Sow, Set, Plant, and Graft; so that a Gardener or Husbandman will gain no advantage at all by this Art: The inspection of a bee, through a Microscope, will bring him [the person using the microscope] no more Honey, nor the inspection of a grain more Corn.’

‘a Lowse by the help of a Magnifying-glass, appears like a Lobster, where the Microscope enlarging and magnifying each part of it, makes them bigger and rounder then naturally they are. The truth is, the more the figure by Art is magnified, the more it appears mis-shapen from the natural.’

‘In short, Magnifying-glasses are like a high heel to a short leg, which if it be made too high, it is apt to make the wearer fall, and at the best, can do no more then represent exterior figures in a bigger, and so in a more deformed shape and posture then naturally they are; but as for the interior form and motions of a Creature, as I said before, they can no more represent them, then Telescopes can the interior essence and nature of the Sun, and what matter it consists of ... Wherefore the best optick is a perfect natural Eye, and a regular sensitive perception, and the best judg is Reason, and the best study is Rational Contemplation joyned with the observations of regular sense.’

Extracts taken from *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* by Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, 1668, in which she questions the use of microscopes.



SOURCE 9



The costumes designed for storytellers to wear at Bolsover Castle. The designs are based on the story of William and Margaret Cavendish, their interests and the activities that took place at Bolsover Castle. The costume in the middle is inspired by the paintings in the Little Castle.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

DECORATIVE PASTRIES



Recommended for

KSI-2 (Art and Design, History)

Learning objectives

- Know how pies and pastries were decorated in the 17th century
- Design a decorative pastry lid for a pie inspired by 17th-century designs and Bolsover Castle, with the option to make it in either pastry or modelling clay

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes for the design and another 30 minutes if doing the additional making part



In this modern example, strips of pastry have been woven over and under to create a lattice pattern.

SUMMARY

William Cavendish and his first wife, Elizabeth, hosted an extravagant party at Bolsover Castle in 1634 that was attended by the king and queen. They were no strangers to entertaining and Bolsover Castle was their occasional retreat from their main home at Welbeck, designed for just such occasions. The kitchens at Bolsover included pastry ovens where pies and pastries were baked. In this activity students discover how the pies and pastries served at banquets were decorated and have a go at designing their own.

DECORATIONS AND DESIGNS

Show students the pie designs on page 97. Discuss how pies and pastries could be in a range of shapes and designs. The decorations were made using pastry to create raised designs.

PASTRY INSPIRATION

Ask students to recall decorative features they saw at Bolsover Castle. Their answers will depend on which activities they did during their visit. They may remember seeing flowers, artworks in the Little Castle or architectural features. Any of these can be used to inspire their pie designs. If they need some help, use the images on page 98 to prompt discussions.

DESIGN TIME

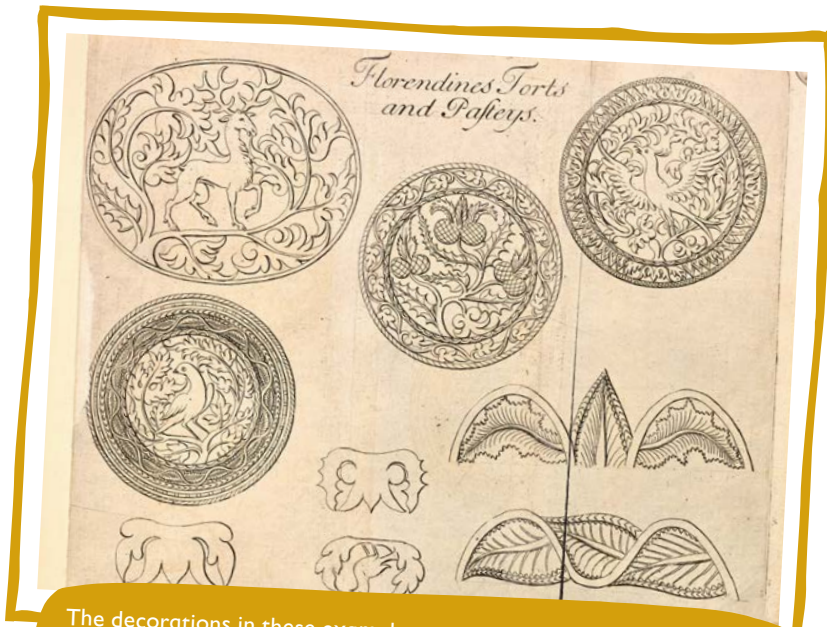
If you plan to do the MORE LEARNING IDEAS below, it is recommended that you use a circular shape for your pie lids. Print off and photocopy enough copies of the template on page 99 for your class to get designing.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Get students baking or making (using modelling clay) to bring their pie designs to life. They could make mince pies using jarred mincemeat and ready-to-roll pastry. You will need to provide some tools to help them cut and shape their lids to their chosen designs.

PASTRY DESIGNS

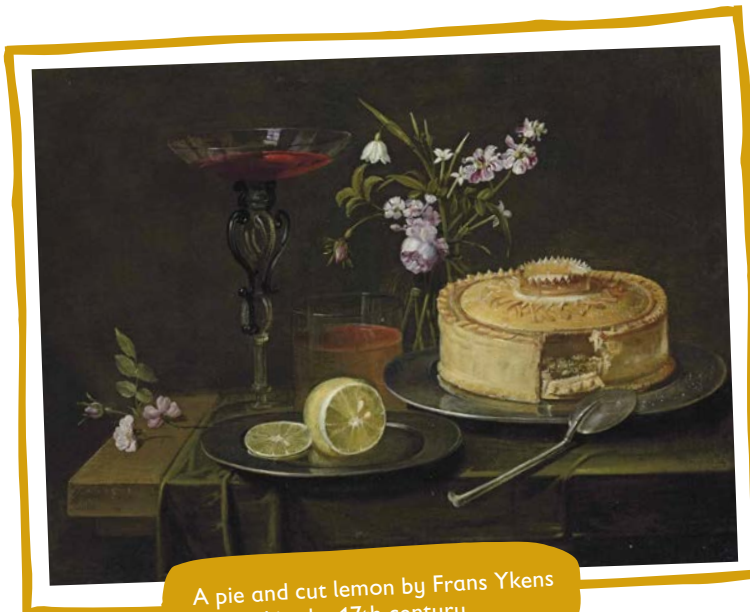
Today, we might imagine a pie being cylindrical in shape. However, in the 17th century this was not always the case. Pies eaten at banquets were also decorated with knotted patterns, designs inspired by nature or repeating or symmetrical patterns.



The decorations in these examples were made from pastry and stuck onto the lid, creating a raised design. Taken from Edward Kidder's *Receipts of Pastry and Cookery for the use of his scholars*, c.1720.



Pies and pastries were made in a variety of shapes. Taken from Edward Kidder's *Receipts of Pastry and Cookery for the use of his scholars*, c.1720.



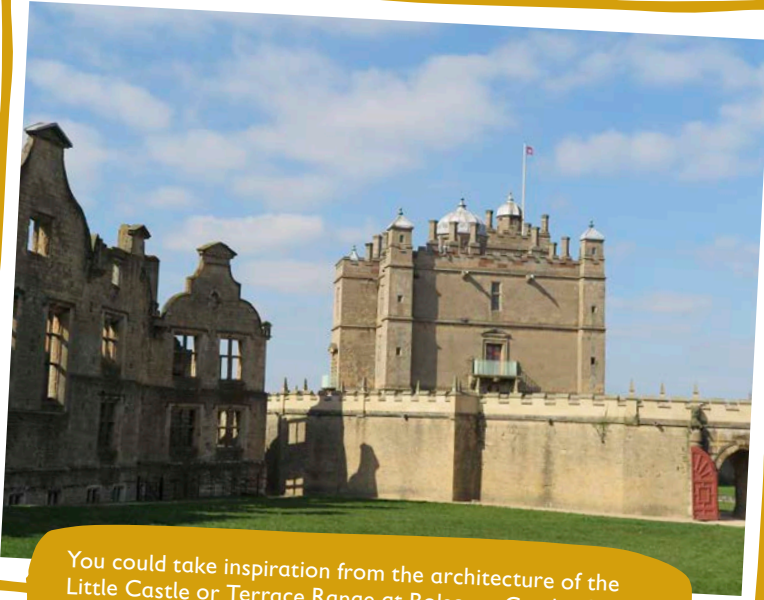
A pie and cut lemon by Frans Ykens painted in the 17th century.



In this modern example, strips of pastry have been woven over and under to create a lattice pattern.

PASTRY INSPIRATION

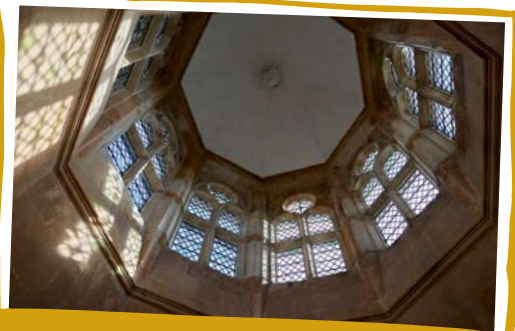
To create your pie lid design, you could take inspiration from the flowers or art you saw at Bolsover Castle. Alternatively, use the images below. For example, you could create a repeating pattern using a star from the Star Chamber ceiling.



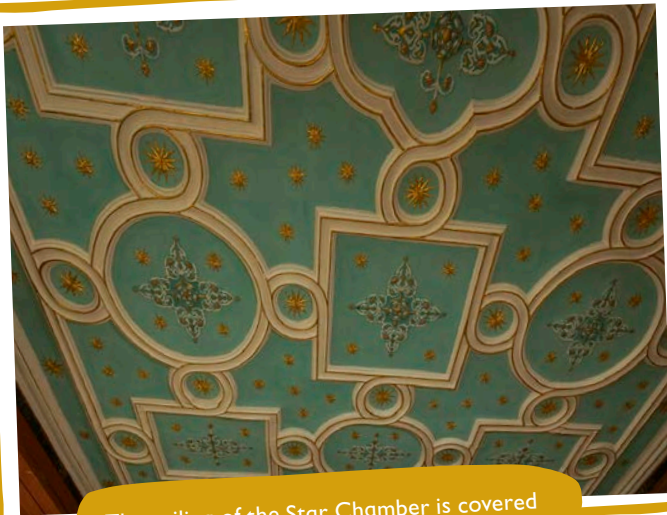
You could take inspiration from the architecture of the Little Castle or Terrace Range at Bolsover Castle. Or perhaps the red doors in the wall walk will inspire you.



You could take inspiration from the crown on this stone sculpture at Bolsover Castle.



The lantern at the top of the Little Castle has lots of interesting shapes that could inspire your design.



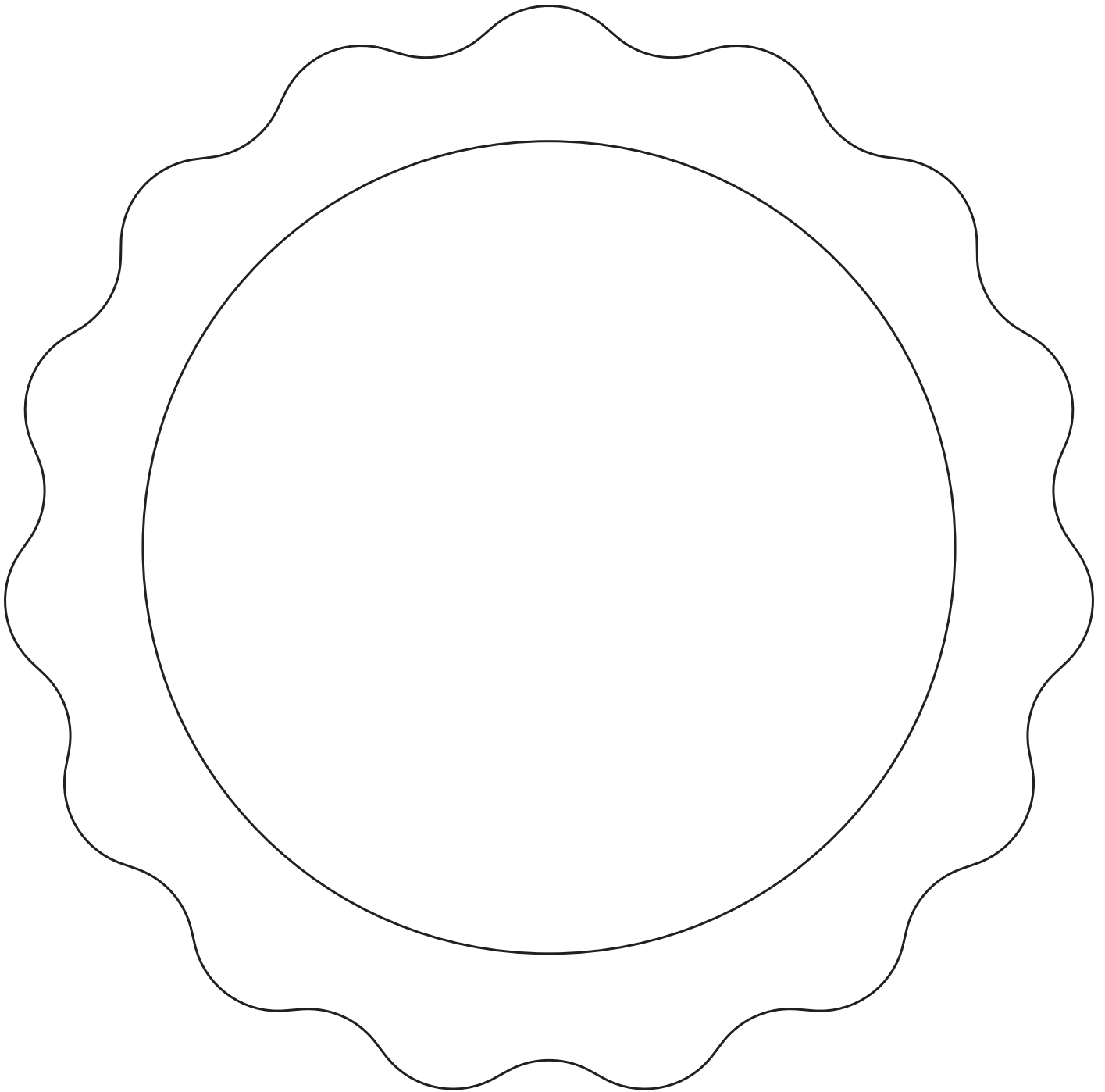
The ceiling of the Star Chamber is covered in shapes that you could recreate in pastry.



Perhaps some of the panelling in the Pillar Parlour could provide you with some inspiration for your pie.

DESIGN TIME

Use this template to design your pie lid. You could create a repeating design to fill the border.



SELF-LED ACTIVITY

CLOSE OBSERVATION



KSI-2

Recommended for

KSI-2 (Science)

Learning objectives

- Observe a plant closely to discover more about it
- Assess how useful close observation is for understanding a plant
- Work scientifically by making predictions, collecting data, reaching conclusions and reflecting on what further research could be done to understand the plant even better

Time to complete

Approx. 190 minutes, which can be broken down into a number of smaller sessions



Robert Hooke's detailed drawing of a stinging nettle. Hooke observed the plant under a microscope and published his findings in *Micrographia*.

SUMMARY

William and Margaret Cavendish were interested in natural philosophy. Margaret believed in using your senses to observe nature and 'reason' to reflect on these observations. Although microscopes were developed in the 17th century, not everyone was convinced of their utility, including Margaret. In this activity students carry out observations, record findings and reach judgements about a plant in a playground or local park. The Teachers' Notes on page 101 provide additional suggestions for the activity.

PREPARATION

Think through health and safety for your group. A useful starting point for KSI might be 'don't lick or pick and put your thumbs over sticks'.

To get the most out of this activity you will need:

- magnifying glasses
- clipboards

You could also use a tablet or other device to take photos and look up the species of plants using a plant identifying app such as iNaturalist from the National Geographic Society and the California Academy of Sciences.

FANTASTIC FIELDWORK

Print off and photocopy enough copies of the activity on pages 102–104 for your group. Start by discussing the images on page 102, then head outside to collect data and finish with some feedback.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Repeat the observations at different times of year to track seasonal changes and make comparisons over time. Or repeat observations of the same plant in different locations to examine how different environments can result in adaptations.

TEACHERS' NOTES

CLOSE OBSERVATION

SETTING THE SCENE

Show students the images on page 102 to discuss. Some students may need support to discuss what they can learn from the images. You could prompt them by asking about the plant's:

- colour
- texture
- shape.

You could also get students thinking about the parts of the plant that are visible in each image such as:

- leaves
- stem
- veins
- barbs.

Teachers of KS2 students may wish to share Margaret's comments on microscopes in the sources section on page 95 to explore what some people at the time thought of these new inventions.

FANTASTIC FIELDWORK: COLLECTING DATA

Explain to students that they will carry out some observations of nature using their sense of sight and magnifying glasses. You will record data (information) and then analyse your findings to reach conclusions about how useful it is to magnify nature when observing it. Before you set off, get students to make predictions – will the magnifying glasses help them with their observations? In what ways? Will there be any disadvantages to using them?

FEEDING BACK

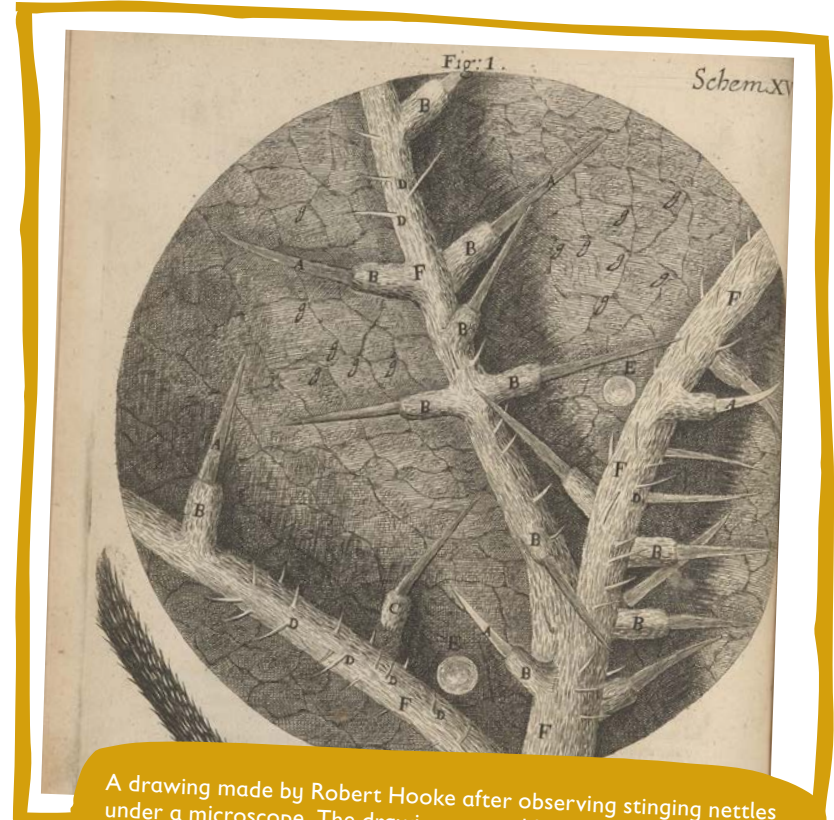
Students should reflect on the differences between their two drawings and what the advantages and disadvantages of using magnifying glasses to observe plants were.

CLOSE OBSERVATION

1 Examine these images of stinging nettles.



A modern photo of a stinging nettle available in the public domain.



A drawing made by Robert Hooke after observing stinging nettles under a microscope. The drawing was published in his book *Micrographia* in 1665. The first microscopes were developed in the early 17th century and at first, they weren't very reliable.

2 Discuss what you can learn from each image.

3 Discuss why close observation is helpful for a scientist.

4 Why might it also be helpful to look at the whole plant, not just one small part of it?

FANTASTIC FIELDWORK

1 Before you start, you need to make predictions. **Tick** the statements you agree with from the list below:

- Using a magnifying glass will help me to observe plants better
- Using a magnifying glass will not help me to observe plants better
- Using my senses will help me to observe plants and their environment better
- Using my senses will not help me to observe plants and their environment better

2 **Discuss** with a partner why you chose these statements.

3 **Choose** one plant to focus on. If you know its name write it here:

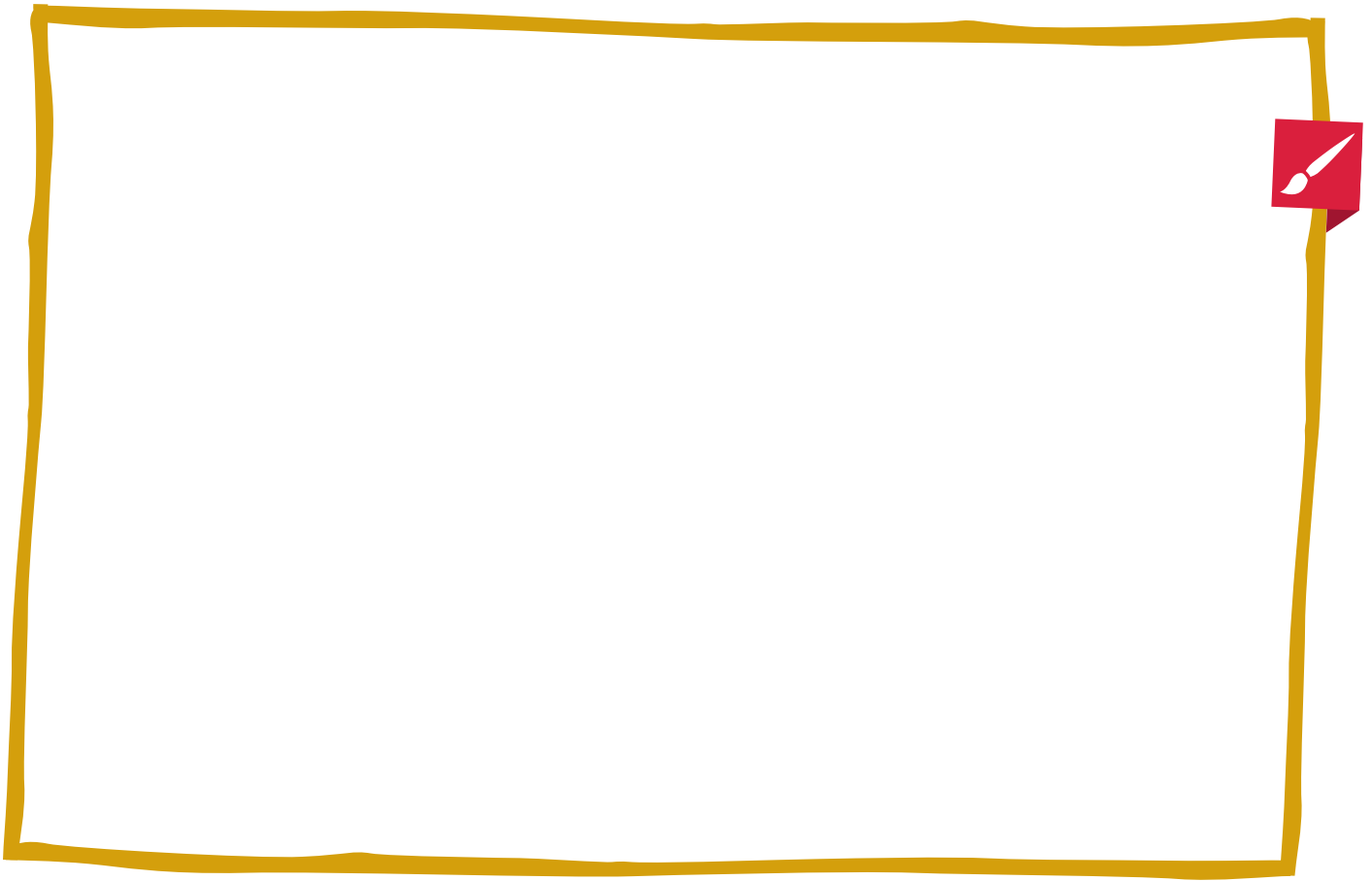
4 **Examine** your chosen plant carefully without a magnifying glass. Then **draw** it in the box below.



5 **Add** labels to your drawing to show the names of its different parts and any colours or defining features.

6 Choose one part of your plant to focus on in more detail, such as a leaf. **Examine** it using a magnifying glass.

7 Draw this part of the plant using the magnifying glass to help you.



8 Complete these sentences to reflect on your fieldwork:

Using a magnifying glass was useful for

.....

Using my senses was useful for

.....

The thing I found challenging was

.....

To find out more about this plant I could

.....

.....

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

DESIGN YOUR OWN OUTFIT



Recommended for

KSI–2 (Art and Design, History)

Learning objectives

- Understand what some of the main fashions were during the Restoration period
- Know how Margaret Cavendish challenged fashion conventions
- Design an outfit inspired by the story of Bolsover Castle and two of its inhabitants, William and Margaret Cavendish

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes for the design



Volunteers wearing the costumes inspired by the story of Bolsover Castle and its inhabitants, William and Margaret.

SUMMARY

Margaret Cavendish was well known in the Restoration period for her outlandish outfits that challenged conventions. In this activity students examine sources to understand what was in fashion during the 1660s and how Margaret challenged ideas about fashion for women. They look at how one designer used this to inspire her own designs and then it's over to them to create an outfit.

OUTFIT INSPIRATION

Start by showing students the examples of Restoration fashion on page 106. Get them to match up the labels to the correct parts of clothing.

Next, students can examine the sources on pages 107–109. These focus on William and Margaret. The written sources may be particularly useful for upper KS2 to see how Margaret challenged conventions of female dress.

DESIGN PROCESS

In 2019 a costume and prop designer, Sophie Fretwell, and costume maker, Hannah Gilbert created outfits for storytellers to wear when engaging with visitors at Bolsover Castle. The costumes were illustrated by Mel Northover. The information and images on page 110 explain some of the process they went through to create them.

OVER TO YOU

Now it's over to students to create their own designs inspired by the story of Bolsover Castle and its two famous inhabitants.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Students could have a go at making part of their outfit, such as a hat, and do a fashion show for other students, parents and carers.

FABULOUS FASHIONS

By the 1660s people in England had lived through the English Civil Wars, the overthrow of the monarchy, the Commonwealth led by Oliver Cromwell and now the restoration of the monarchy. Restrictions were lifted, theatres reopened, and fashions became more extravagant.

1 **Examine** the image below. Pay particular attention to the clothing people are wearing.



Charles II at a ball in the Netherlands before his restoration in 1660.

2 Tick off the items of clothing people are wearing in this painting.

- Doublet: a short jacket worn by men which allowed the shirt they were wearing underneath to be seen; often buttons were deliberately left undone at the bottom of the doublet
- Bodice: a fitted top worn by women. In the 1660s these had long waists, an off-the-shoulder neckline and full pleated sleeves that finished near the elbow
- Petticoat: a skirt that matched the bodice
- Petticoat breeches: a pair of knee-length breeches that are full like a woman's petticoat
- Ribbons: a fashionable decorative addition to any outfit for both men and women
- Cannons: a wide ruffe that was attached to men's stockings and sat around the knee

CAVENDISH FASHION

William Cavendish fought in the first of the English Civil Wars on the side of the king. He suffered a humiliating defeat at the Battle of Marston Moor. He went into exile on the continent where he met his second wife, Margaret Lucas. The couple returned to England in 1660, with the restoration of the monarchy. This was a moment for celebration for wealthy Royalists and fashion was one way to express this.

3 Examine the image of the Cavendish family.



Image of the Cavendish family made in 1656. William Cavendish can be seen seated on the right-hand side, wearing a wreath on his head. This was probably symbolic rather than something he actually wore. It perhaps was to show that he and his wife were both poets. Image is in the public domain.

4 Think back to the list of items of clothing you spotted in the painting. Which items can you also spot in this image?

5 Compare Margaret's clothing in the image with the women in the painting. What are the similarities and differences?



Margaret Cavendish pictured in extravagant robes of the kind that might normally have been worn by members of the nobility on special occasions. She also wears a hat that was normally worn by men in classical art.

6 Think back to the list of items of clothing you spotted in the painting. Which items can you also spot in this image?

7 Read the sources below.

‘I took great delight in attiring, fine dressing, and fashions, especially such fashions as I did invent myself, not taking that pleasure in such fashions as was invented by others. Also I did dislike any should follow my fashions, for I always took delight in a singularity, even in accoutrements of habits.’



An extract from Margaret Cavendish’s account of her own life *A True Relation of my Birth, Breeding and Life* published in 1656.

‘But, Jo! her head-gear was so pretty,
I ne’er saw anything so witty;
Though I was half afeared,
God bless us! when I first did see her:
She looked so like a Cavalier,
But that she had no beard.’



A poem believed to be written by John Evelyn describing Margaret’s clothing during her visit to the Royal Society in 1667. Samuel Pepys also described her wearing a justaucorps, a kind of coat usually worn by men. You can find out more about this item of clothing in the historical information on page 23.

8 What can you learn from these two sources about Margaret’s fashion choices and how others perceived them?

Write your answer here:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

DESIGN PROCESS

In 2019 Sophie Fretwell and Hannah Gilbert created costumes for volunteers at Bolsover Castle to wear. One was based on the story of William Cavendish and another on Margaret Cavendish. Volunteers wear the outfits and share the story of Bolsover Castle with visitors.

To create the costumes they first had to:

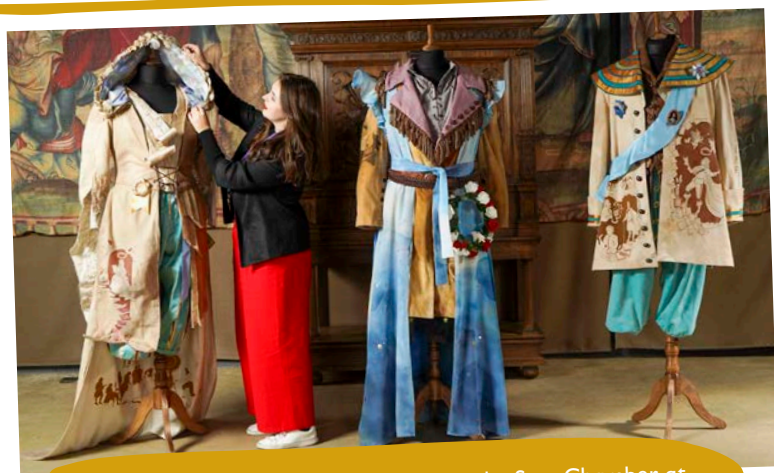
- understand 17th-century fashions
- know who William and Margaret were and the story of Bolsover Castle.

Next they had to:

- come up with designs
- choose fabrics
- develop patterns
- make toiles (practice garments in a simpler and cheaper cotton fabric) and fit them on a person to check how they look
- re-draft patterns
- dye fabrics to chosen colours, hand paint the stripes onto the lining fabric and screen print designs onto the fabrics
- cut out patterns and fit the pieces together, some of which need hand stitching
- add decorative features such as the embroidery on the sleeves and the quilting on the doublet
- adjust the costume after another fitting.



Hannah Gilbert checking the drawings for the costumes.



The finished designs on mannequins in the Star Chamber at Bolsover Castle. The costumes have illustrations on them by Mel Northover to represent different parts of William and Margaret's lives and the artwork inside the Little Castle.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

TRAILBLAZING POETRY



KS3

KS4+

Recommended for

KS3 and KS4+ (English Literature, History)

Learning objectives

- Know what *The Blazing World* is
- Identify what makes it one of the first science fiction novels and how it challenged society's norms
- Write a poem in response to the book

Time to complete

Depending on how many extracts and poems are used, between 60 and 120 minutes



An illustration of some of the characters in *The Blazing World* made by a modern-day artist for a project at Bolsover Castle.

SUMMARY

Margaret Cavendish wrote one of the first science fiction novels, *The Blazing World* in 1666. The book not only includes commentary on natural philosophy, war and conflict but it also challenges 17th-century society's norms and ideas about women. In this activity students examine some extracts from the book and explore imagined and alternative worlds before developing their own.

PRE-LEARNING

Students will need to understand some of the context of 17th century England, the civil war period and the restoration. The historical information on pages 7–25 can be used to set the scene. Doing the Inspiration Trail on page 80 will help them to understand written and visual art in the 17th century.

THE BLAZING WORLD

Choose the most appropriate extracts from *The Blazing World* for your group from pages 114–115. Get students to analyse the text for its meaning and think about the author's choice of language and how it challenges societal norms. The Teachers' Notes on page 112 provide a summary of the story and some suggestions of what to look for.

ALTERNATIVE WORLDS

Some suggestions of how to encourage students to imagine their alternative worlds are included in the Teachers' Notes on page 112.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Create a journey through alternative worlds for parents, carers and other students to visit. This could be an exhibition of students' works.

TEACHERS' NOTES

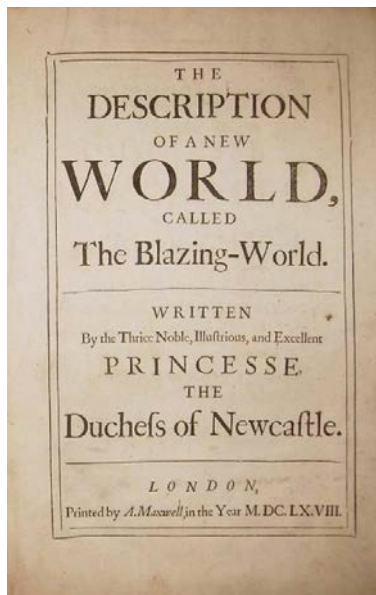
TRAILBLAZING POETRY

THE BLAZING WORLD

The book includes commentary on natural philosophy. It discusses the role of government and the impact of war, and critiques women's place in society. It also references William Cavendish and Bolsover Castle. Plus, it challenges the reader to create their own world:

'... and if any should like the World I have made, and be willing to be my Subjects, they may imagine themselves such, and they are such; I mean, in their Minds, Fancies or Imaginations; but if they cannot endure to be subjects, they may create Worlds of their own, and Govern themselves as they please.'

Margaret Cavendish's words at the end of *The Blazing World*.



The title page of *The Blazing World*.

In the story a young woman gets lost at sea during a storm. She travels through the North Pole to a new world called the Blazing World. She discovers creatures that are half human, half animal, and marries the Emperor who then makes her sole ruler. She calls upon Margaret Cavendish to help her as a 'spirit scribe'. Their souls leave the Blazing World to visit William Cavendish and Bolsover Castle. Then the creatures of the Blazing World fight a war in support of the Empress using submarines and fire stones as weapons. They are victorious and she becomes absolute ruler of the whole world.

ALTERNATIVE WORLDS

To support students in their development of an alternative world, they could start first of all by thinking about the five senses:

- What does it look like?
- What does it smell like?
- What sounds are there?
- What does it feel like?
- What can you taste there?

They could then explore their alternative world in more detail by thinking about how it challenges societal or cultural norms. For example, they may decide to challenge what clothing is considered acceptable for different occasions. They might put their characters in very casual clothing for formal occasions and then explore what impact this might have.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Search the Poetry Society's website for 'imagined worlds' to find some examples of poems that could inspire students before they start writing their own.

TRAILBLAZING POETRY

Building in time to plan, draft and re-draft their work will result in high-quality poems. You could do this as a peer-marking exercise. Students could give feedback on each other's work by answering the following questions:

- How successfully does the poem help me to imagine the alternative world? Does it use all the senses?
- In what way could this be improved?
- In what ways does the poem challenge society's norms?
- In what way could this be improved?
- Has the poem been checked for spelling and grammar?

EXTRACTS FROM *THE BLAZING WORLD*

These extracts are all taken from Margaret Cavendish's novel *The Blazing World*.

'the world where the Emperor did reside; which part was very pleasant, and of a mild temper: within it self it was divided by a great number of vast and large Rivers, all ebbing and flowing, into several Islands of unequal distance from each other, which in most parts were as pleasant, healthful, rich, and fruitful, as Nature could make them; and, as I mentioned before, secure from all forreign invasions, by reason there was but one way to enter, and that like a Labyrinth, so winding and turning among the rocks, that no other Vessels but small Boats, could pass, carrying not above three passengers at a time: On each side all along this narrow and winding River, there were several Cities, some of Marble, some of Alabaster, some of Agat, some of Amber, some of Coral, and some of other precious materials not known in our world'

A description of the Blazing World as it looked to the main character when she first arrived there.

'the first part of the Palace was, as the Imperial City, all of Gold, and when it came to the Emperors appartement, it was so rich with Diamonds, Pearls, Rubies, and the like precious stones, that it surpasses my skill to enumerate them all. Amongst the rest, the Imperial Room of State appear'd most magnificent; it was paved with green Diamonds (for in that World are Diamonds of all colours) so artificially, as it seemed but of one piece; the Pillars were set with Diamonds so close, and in such a manner, that they appear'd most Glorious to the sight; between every Pillar was a bow or arch of a certain sort of Diamonds, the like whereof our World does not afford; which being placed in every one of the arches in several rows, seemed just like so many Rainbows of several different colours.'

A description of some of the rooms inside the imperial city of the *Blazing World*.

'the Empress began to grow angry at their telescopes, that they could give no Intelligence; for, said she, now I do plainly perceive, that your Glasses are false informers, and instead of discovering the Truth, delude your sense; Wherefore I Command you to break them, and let the Bird-men trust onely to their natural eyes, and examine Celestial objects by the motions of their own sense and reason.'

Margaret was not convinced that microscopes or telescopes could really help natural philosophers to understand the world better. This is shown in her critique here of the bird-men's use of telescopes.

‘neither was there any ambitious, factions, malicious detractions, civil dissentions, or home-bred quarrels, divisions in Religion, Foreign Wars, &c. but all the people lived in a peaceful Society, united Tranquillity, and Religious Conformity.’

A description of the political situation in the Blazing World.



‘She was desirous to see the World the Duchess [Margaret Cavendish] came from, and observe therein the several Sovereign Governments, Laws and Customs of several Nations. The Duchess used all the means she could, to divert her from that Journey, telling her, that the World she came from, was very much disturbed with Factions, Divisions and Wars; but the Empress would not be perswaded from her design ... there had been a long Civil Warr in that Kingdom, in which most of the best Timber-trees and Principal Palaces were ruined and destroyed; and my dear Lord and Husband, said she [Margaret Cavendish], has lost by it half his Woods, besides many Houses, Land, and movable Goods; so that all the loss out of his particular Estate, did amount to above Half a Million of Pounds. I wish, said the Empress, he had some of the Gold that is in the Blazing-world, to repair his losses ... [Bolsover Castle] is but a naked House, and uncloth'd of all Furniture.’

A description of England during the visit made by the souls of the empress and Margaret.

