ACTIVITY 2

Recommended For

KS2 & KS3
(History, Art)

Learning Objectives

• Understand the history of heraldry and mottos.

• Investigate the heraldic display on the Lion Tower at Warkworth Castle.

Summary

Before your visit, read 'Our Guide to Heraldry' with your students: www.english-heritage.org.uk/easter/preparing-for-easter-adventure-quests/our-guide-to-heraldry

Ask students to draw a symbol to represent their family, invent a family motto and explain why they have chosen this symbol and motto. They could do the same for their school or favourite sports team.

During your visit, take students to stand in front of the Lion Tower. The carvings above the door are an excellent example of family heraldry. The display was created in about 1480 as a symbol of power by Henry Percy, the 4th Earl of Northumberland. The sculptures would have originally been painted in bright colours.

Ask students to look for:

1) The Percy lion – a symbol of power and bravery used by Earl Percy of Northumberland and his family. Its collar includes the word 'Esperaunce' from the Percy family motto 'Esperaunce en Dieu', meaning 'Hope in God'.

2) The old Percy coat of arms – diamonds in a row on a shield – the Percy family stopped using this symbol in 1343 and replaced it with the lion because it was more fashionable.

3) The Percy family badge – a small moon shape or crescent.

4) The Lucy coat of arms – three fish (or 'luces') on a shield – a play on the name of the Lucy family from whom the Percys inherited land, buildings and money in the 1380s.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, students could conduct further research into the history of their family surname, motto and coat of arms. This would be a good opportunity to research the origin of their surname and the way that language has developed over time.

This website would be a good starting point for research into family history and the changing language of surnames: www.surnamedb.com/Surname