

Teachers' Activity Pack for Old Sarum

> Also available to download

THE OATH OF SARUM (1086)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS



OATH SCRIPT

Repeat after me:

On this day (pause for response) the 1st August 1086 (pause) I swear my oath of allegiance (pause) to King William the Conqueror (pause) above all other men. (pause) Amen. (pause)”

A role-play activity for every member of the class to participate in at Old Sarum. There is a role for everyone, and some bigger characters for more confident performers. Costumes and props are available to book before you visit.

1. GATHER

Take students to the outer bailey and gather by the bridge.

2. CAST

Select someone to play the role of William the Conqueror. Pick a further three students to play his two Norman guards and the archbishop. Tell the rest of the class that they will be the assembled nobility (landholding men from across the country).

3. PREPARE

Hand out costumes and props. Give William the chainmail coif, crown and sword. Give each guard a Norman kite shield and a helmet.

QUESTION 1: Why do you think King William wanted these particular men by his side during the Oath of Sarum?

QUESTION 2: Why might William want a religious man/head of the church to be present?

4. CHECK

Make sure everyone is in the correct position. Look at the reconstruction drawings to help you.

QUESTION 3: Look at the army surrounding the assembled lords, making sure they can't leave. What does this suggest about how much choice the lords had?

5. READ

Ask the person playing William the Conqueror to read the scroll (overleaf) in a loud, assertive voice to the rest of the group.

QUESTION 4: This event took place twenty years after the Battle of Hastings. Landholding noblemen had travelled far and wide to swear the oath. Do you think all of them were happy to swear this oath in 1086? Why/why not?

6. RESPOND

Other students go down on one knee and repeat the Oath script (left) as call and response. The person playing William I takes the lead.

QUESTION 5: This was a theatrical show of power for an audience of lords who the king needed to keep on his side. Do you think all of the noblemen kept their oath of allegiance to the king in the years after? Why/why not?



READ

“I, William the Conqueror, am the first Norman king of England. Twenty years ago, on 14th October 1066, my Norman army defeated the Saxons. We killed your old king, Harold Godwinson and I took my rightful place on the throne.

I decided to build this castle, and many others, to send a strong message to all who live in England. I will rule this country with a firm hand. The Normans are in charge and there’s nothing you can do about it. You must obey me.

You are about to swear an oath of allegiance to me, the king, so that even if your own lord does not remain loyal, you will still promise to follow me. Rebels will be punished by death.”

THE OATH OF SARUM (1086)

RECONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS



Landholding men and nobility from across the country are summoned to Old Sarum by King William I to swear the oath.



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FOLLOW OR REBEL

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- WE ARE LEARNING TO... explore themes of power, loyalty and rebellion during the Norman period
- BY... using role play to empathise with the conflicting opinions of Norman lords in the years following William the Conqueror's death
- SO THAT... we can develop supported opinions about the actions of rebel and loyal lords

SET UP (5 MINUTES)

Gather class on an open patch of grass in the outer bailey.

Divide students into seven groups (of four) and hand out the scripts. Students can decide amongst themselves which characters they would like to play. Groups of two or three can still do this by sharing out the extra lines.

READ THROUGH (5 MINUTES)

Here you will find everything you need to conduct a role play which explores the conflict of loyalty presented to the Norman nobility in the months and years following King William I's death.

Ask students to spend a few minutes with their group, reading the whole script out loud, from start to finish. Answer any questions that arise from this read-through.

Now assign a different scene to each group. Explain that each group will get to perform their scene once they have had chance to rehearse it.

WARM UP (10 MINUTES)

Explain to students that, if caught, a rebel lord would often have to take part in a trial by battle. This is what happened to lord called William of Eu, who rebelled in 1095. He was part of a group of rebels plotting to kill King William II and put the king's cousin on the throne instead. William of Eu was captured and brought to Old Sarum for trial by battle against the King's Man, Geoffrey Baynard.



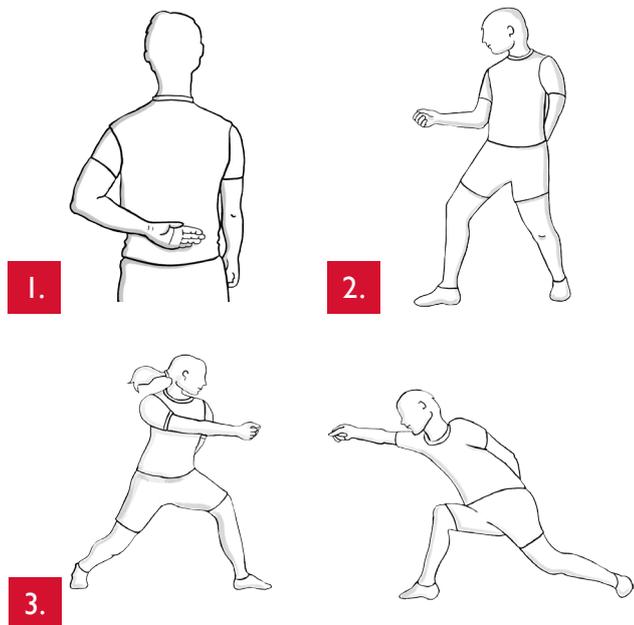
Staying in their groups, ask students to split into pairs.

WHAT IS A TRIAL BY BATTLE?

'Clad in full armour, each party would be expected to fight armed with longsword, dagger and spear though, in truth, they made use of almost anything they could lay their hands on. Fighting was not necessarily to the death; a panel of up to three judges were empowered to call an end to the trial if they thought one party had been truly overwhelmed by the other.'

Bloody British History Salisbury (David J. Vaughan)





Now guide them through the following Air Battle Activity:

1. Bend your left elbow and place your left hand at the base of your spine, with the palm facing out.
2. Stretch your right arm out in front of you and pretend you are holding a sword in your right hand.
3. Try to tap your partners' palm (at the base of their spine) with your pretend sword, whilst protecting your own palm from their attack.
4. The first person to get three taps on their partner's palm wins the trial by battle.

REHEARSE (10MINUTES)

FIRST DECISION POINT: Before they start rehearsing, ask students to show you whose side they are on by standing on the left for 'loyal', or the right for 'rebel'. Count the votes. Was anyone influenced by their peers? How might this be similar to medieval times?

Let students rehearse their scene, roaming and offering assistance if they need it. Give students regular time checks so they can use their rehearsal time effectively.

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

BODY

LOYAL LORDS: hands on hips, feet wide apart, shoulders back, proud chest, upright posture, looking down nose, long strides, worried facial expression, defensive gestures (shrugging, hands up in defence)

REBEL LORDS: arms crossed, fists clenched, chest and chin lifted, restless feet, pacing back and forth, annoyed facial expression, aggressive gestures (pointing, punching the air)

VOICE

LOYAL LORDS: well-spoken, slightly nasal.

- When in control: calm and assertive tone, steady pace, medium pitch, controlled volume.
- When losing control: panicked tone, stuttering, fast pace, higher pitch, loud volume.

REBEL LORDS: well spoken, posh accent.

- When in control: steady pace, arrogant tone, booming volume, medium pitch.
- When losing control: lower pitch, louder volume, defensive tone, fast pace, nervous laughter.

SHARE (10MINUTES)

Get students to sit as an audience. If the grass is wet, students can stand and imagine they are castle crowds witnessing an argument.

See the scenes in order, starting with Scene 1.

DECIDE (5MINUTES)

Last Decision Point: Ask students to make a final decision about whose side they are on (A: Loyal lord or B: Rebel lord). Get students to close their eyes and vote by putting a hand in the air so that they aren't influenced by their peers. Count the votes. Find out from a few students why they have voted that way.



FOLLOW OR REBEL

SCRIPT

CHARACTERS

1. Loyal lord 1

2. Rebel lord 1

3. Loyal lord 2

4. Rebel lord 2

SCENE 1

- Loyal lord 1:** *(speaking to audience)* We are brave Norman lords.
- Rebel lord 1:** We are rich noble men who fought alongside William the Conqueror and defeated the Anglo-Saxons in the Battle of Hastings.
- Loyal lord 2:** When we conquered England, King William took English land from the Saxon lords and shared it out between the Norman lords, as a reward for our good service.
- Rebel lord 2:** We have all been given English land by the King and we pay for it by offering him our services.
- Loyal lord 1:** *(pointing to rebel lord 1)* I was given more land than him.
- Rebel lord 1:** Well yes, but my land is better.
- Loyal lord 1:** No it isn't.
- Rebel lord 1:** Yes it is.
- Loyal lord 1:** No it isn't.
- Rebel lord 1:** *(shouting)* Yes it is!
- Loyal lord 2:** *(embarrassed, looking at audience)* Er, yes well, anyway... as decent, respectable lords, it is our duty and privilege to serve the king.
- Rebel lord 2:** We use the land to make money so that we can provide for ourselves and our family. We also support a number of knights.
- Loyal lord 2:** We do this by loaning bits of our land to other lords lower on the social ladder. Common people called peasants work on the land, looking after it, growing crops and raising animals.

SCENE 2

- Rebel lord 1:** *(speaking to audience)* Our society is like a pyramid, with the king at the top, noble men like us, plus religious officials in the middle, knights beneath us and peasants right at the bottom.
- Loyal lord 1:** It's a bit unfair on the peasants but we don't care because we are filthy rich and we want to keep it that way.
- Rebel lord 2:** But enough about us. We've invited you here because we have some incredibly important news to share with you.
- All** King William I is dead!
- Loyal lord 2:** *(upset)* The man who led the Normans to victory and bravely conquered England is gone forever.

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

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

Loyal lord 2: So that's Normandy sorted.

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

SCENE 3

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

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

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

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

All: William Rufus is the new King of England!

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

Rebel lord 1: King William Rufus is a very unpopular.

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

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

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

Loyal lord 1 & 2: We support William Rufus, King of England.

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

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

SCENE 4

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

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

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

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

- Loyal lord 1:** But William loved Rufus and he wanted him to succeed as King of England. Doesn't that mean anything to you? We should honour the dying wishes of King William I.
- Rebel lord 2:** Why should anyone care about William's dying wishes? He should've been clearer and named Rufus as his heir to the throne, if that's what he wanted. He had his chance and now he's dead.
- Rebel lord 1 & 2:** (*arrogant*) We can do what we want!

SCENE 5

- Loyal lord 1:** (*calm*) My good lords, let's be reasonable. You have to admit, King Rufus is very generous to his followers. He has promised us as much land and money as we want, as long as we stay loyal. That's an offer we can't refuse.
- Rebel lord 1:** (*dismissive*) Rubbish! King Rufus has only promised us land and money because he's desperate! He knows that he doesn't deserve to be on the throne and he is desperately trying to bribe us with gifts.
- Loyal lord 2:** Well sir, even if you are right, we still get gifts out of it! King Rufus is a fine soldier and a generous lord. He sometimes comes across as rude but he has the vision of an expert politician!
- Rebel lord 2:** (*getting angry*) Then why is England in uproar? We can't just accept things the way they are. Robert is the eldest and deserves to be on the throne. Do you really want things to go on like this? Doing nothing is not an option.
- Loyal lord 1:** (*in disbelief*) Let me get this straight. Are you seriously suggesting that we kill the king?

SCENE 6

- Rebel lord 1:** If that's what it takes to create the change this country needs.
- Rebel lord 2:** (*in agreement*) Here here!
- Loyal lord 2:** (*shocked*) You pompous idiots! We can't murder the king! It would be high treason. The king has threatened to execute rebels in really gruesome ways. God would never forgive us and we'd go to hell.
- Rebel lord 2:** If I'm going to hell, then so is the king. William Rufus does not care about religion or the church. He uses God's name in vain. He has proved himself to be an immoral tyrant! He should never have been made king in the first place.
- Rebel lord 1:** We are doing the work of God by removing him from the throne and there are bishops up and down the country who agree with me.
- Loyal lord 1:** I can't believe what I'm hearing. This is a disgrace!

SCENE 7

- Loyal lord 2:** *(to rebel lords)* Explain something to me. How exactly do you propose to rebel against the most powerful man in England? The king has more money and power than you and your rebellious gaggle of lords.
- Loyal lord 1:** Well said! Even if you win one battle, you will eventually lose. The English have no sympathy for you. They don't want a French duke to be their king. They support King Rufus.
- Rebel lord 1:** *(annoyed)* You quivering cowards! You of all people should know! We all have strong, defensive castles.
- Rebel lord 2:** We built them on the land given to us by William the Conqueror.
- Loyal lord 1:** Don't be ridiculous. You can't hide away in your castles forever.
- Rebel lord 1:** *(in control)* We are highly skilled in the art of attack and defence. Plus, we have the support of important members of the church. We can work together to defeat the king and put Robert on the throne, where he belongs. You should join us!
- Loyal lord 2:** You fools! What are you going to do when you run out of supplies? When the cracks start to show, the king will capture you and torture you. Then you'll wish you'd listened to us.
- Rebel lord 2:** Nonsense! We aren't stupid. If we run out of supplies during a battle, we can live off the land and plunder the surrounding villages. Why don't you join us?
- Loyal lord 1:** I value my life too much.
- Loyal lord 1 & 2:** We will never join you.
- Rebel lord 1:** Well gentlemen, each lord will have to make up his own mind.
- Rebel lord 1 & 2:** Good riddance to you and your lousy loyal lords.
- Loyal lord 1 & 2:** Good riddance!

BUILD ME A CATHEDRAL

RECONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS



The first cathedral at Old Sarum was built by Bishop Osmund at the end of the 11th century.



After the first cathedral burnt down, Bishop Roger built a second cathedral in the 12th century, on the same spot.

BUILD ME A CATHEDRAL

MEASURING CHALLENGES

After the first cathedral burnt down, Bishop Roger built a second cathedral in the 12th century, on the same spot.

1. Measure the length and width, in metres, of the first cathedral (the smaller one, now marked out in stone on the floor).

KS3 extension: Calculate the area, in m^2 , of the nave (the rectangular area with the pillars marked into the turf).

2. Measure the length, in metres, of the second cathedral (the larger one, marked out with the original flint wall bases).

KS3 extension: What is the difference, in metres, between the length of the first and second cathedrals?

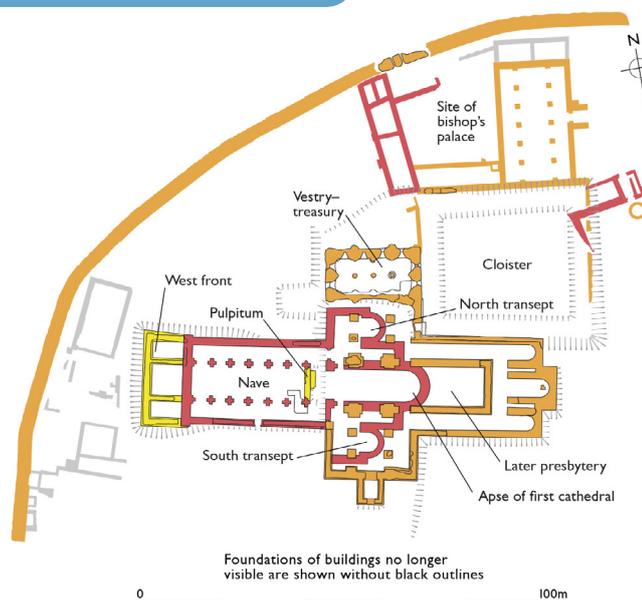
3. Measure the width, in metres, of the second cathedral (include the vestry and south transept).

KS3 extension: What is the difference, in metres, between the width of the first and second cathedrals?

4. Calculate the distance, in metres, between the castle and the cathedral.

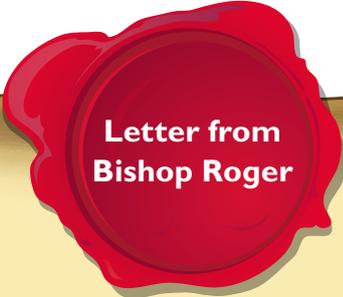
KS3 extension: How many centimetres would this be?

For accurate answers, I suggest you use a measuring wheel. Alternatively, you can practice taking metre-long strides to estimate the answers.



CATHEDRAL PRECINCT

- Late 11th century (Bishop Osmund)
- About 1102–39 (Bishop Roger)
- 1142–84 (Bishop Jocelyn)
- 13th century
- Uncertain



Letter from Bishop Roger

Dear stonemason,

Bishop Osmund's first cathedral burnt down just five days after it was consecrated (dedicated to God). This was a dreadful shame but it is now fallen to me to build a replacement cathedral at Old Sarum.

I need your help! I want to build something far more impressive than the old cathedral. This church will be our way of giving thanks to God for helping the Normans to conquer England.

It's vital that you build my cathedral in the Norman style, so here are some basics you need to know about Norman architecture:

- Church built in a cross shape, as a symbol of the Crucifixion of Christ
- Outer faces of the walls made of finely cut stone, with the blocks fitting closely together; this is called ashlar masonry
- Small windows, with curved arches
- Thick pillars used inside to hold up the heavy roof
- Large, impressive doorways, with columns holding up a semi-circular arch
- Patterns around the doors, windows and arches, made up of bold shapes, including zig-zags, chevrons (arrow-shapes), step-shapes, and circles

- No pews to sit on; you'd have to stand up during a service

Designing a cathedral is a huge challenge so I have broken the task down into six jobs. Read your Job Sheet very carefully before starting your design:

Job 1 - West Front

Job 2 - Nave Exterior

Job 3 - Choir and Transepts

Job 4 - Vestry

Job 5 - Presbytery Exterior

Job 6 - Cathedral Interior

Work in groups of 3-5 to complete your job. Build your section of the cathedral onto the floor plan provided. Try to include everything on your Job Sheet, and don't worry about building the roof!

I look forward to seeing your plans for my new cathedral.

From,

Bishop Roger

Instructions:

- Make sure you have read my letter carefully
- Organise your team so that you can get the job done in 20 minutes
- Use the plastic building blocks and cathedral floor plan to build your own version of the **West Front**
- Communicate with other teams as you work (see below)
- At the end, see if you can join your design with the other teams to create one whole cathedral

Description:

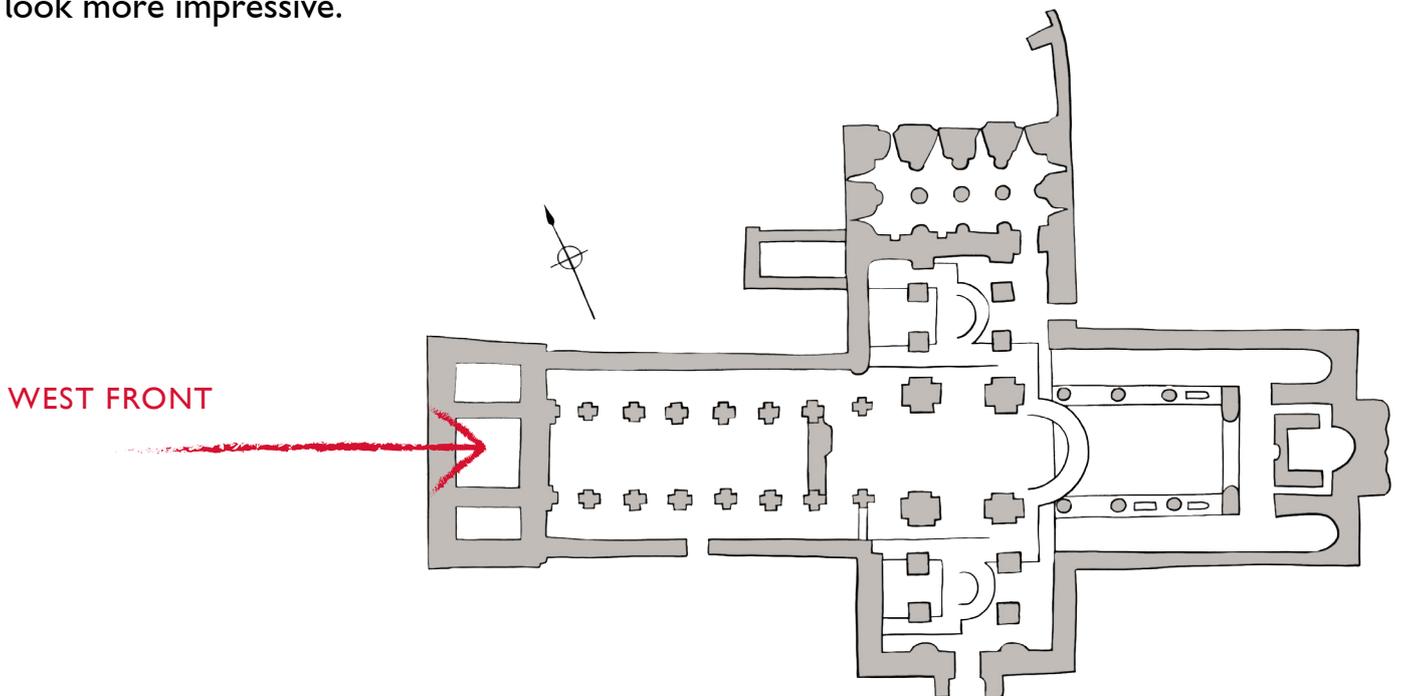
The **West Front** is a carved stone front which faces west, with two towers either side. A bit like a 'porch', it was added onto the front of the church to make it look more impressive.

Include:

- ✓ A huge, arched doorway in the centre, with a big window above it
- ✓ The doorway should have columns either side, which support a big, semi-circular arch
- ✓ The arch should be decorated with carved patterns
- ✓ Two towers either side of the arched doorway
- ✓ Remember, you don't need to add the roof

Communicate:

Check-in with the team designing the **Nave Exterior** to make sure that their church door lines up with the archway in your west front design.



Instructions:

- Make sure you have read my letter carefully
- Organise your team so that you can get the job done in 20 minutes
- Use the plastic building blocks and cathedral floor plan to build your own version of the **Nave Exterior**
- Communicate with other teams as you work (see below)
- At the end, see if you can join your design with the other teams to create one whole cathedral

Description:

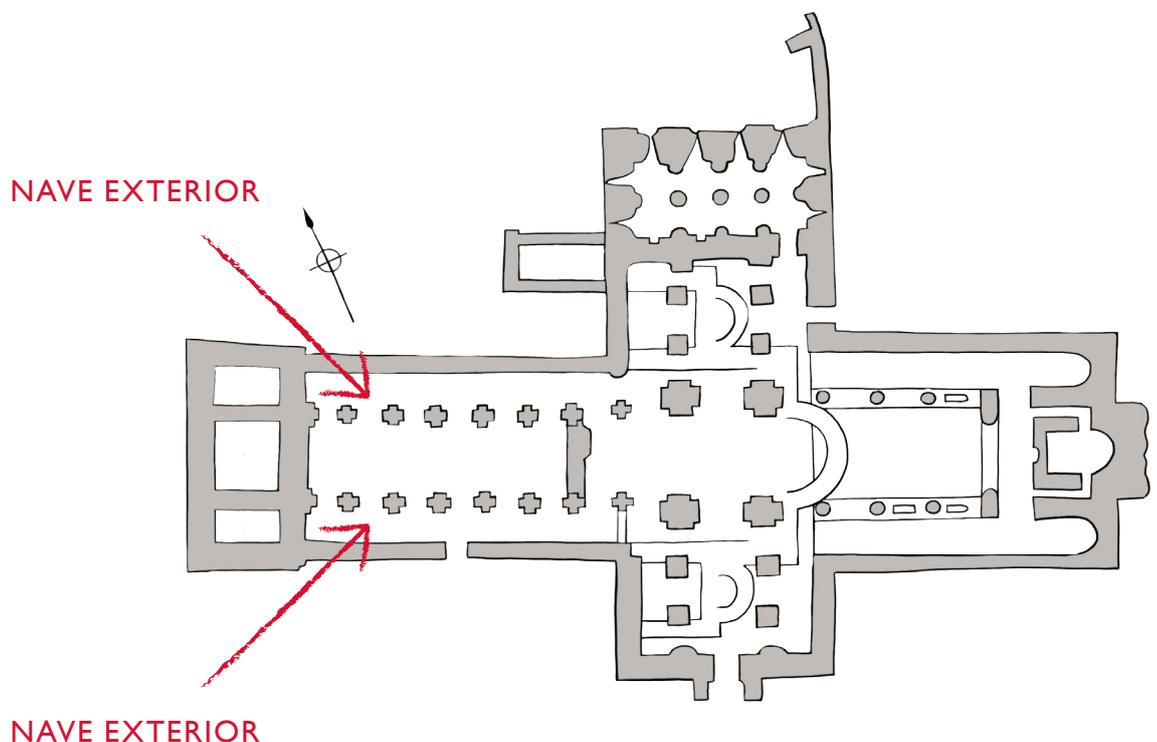
The **Nave Exterior** refers to the outer walls for the 'bottom' (or western end) of the cross shape. It is the section between the **West Front** and the **Choir**.

Include:

- ✓ Walls with building blocks fitting closely together (ashlar masonry)
- ✓ An arched entrance door - make sure it is in the centre of the west wall
- ✓ Small windows up high to let light in
- ✓ Remember, you don't need to add the roof

Communicate:

Check-in with the team designing the arch for the west front to make sure that your church door lines up. Speak to the team designing the choir and transepts because their horizontal part of the cross will join onto your walls.



CHOIR AND TRANSEPTS

Instructions:

- Make sure you have read my letter carefully
- Organise your team so that you can get the job done in 20 minutes
- Use the plastic building blocks and cathedral floor plan to build your own version of the **Choir** and **Transepts**
- Communicate with other teams as you work (see below)
- At the end, see if you can join your design with the other teams to create one whole cathedral

Description:

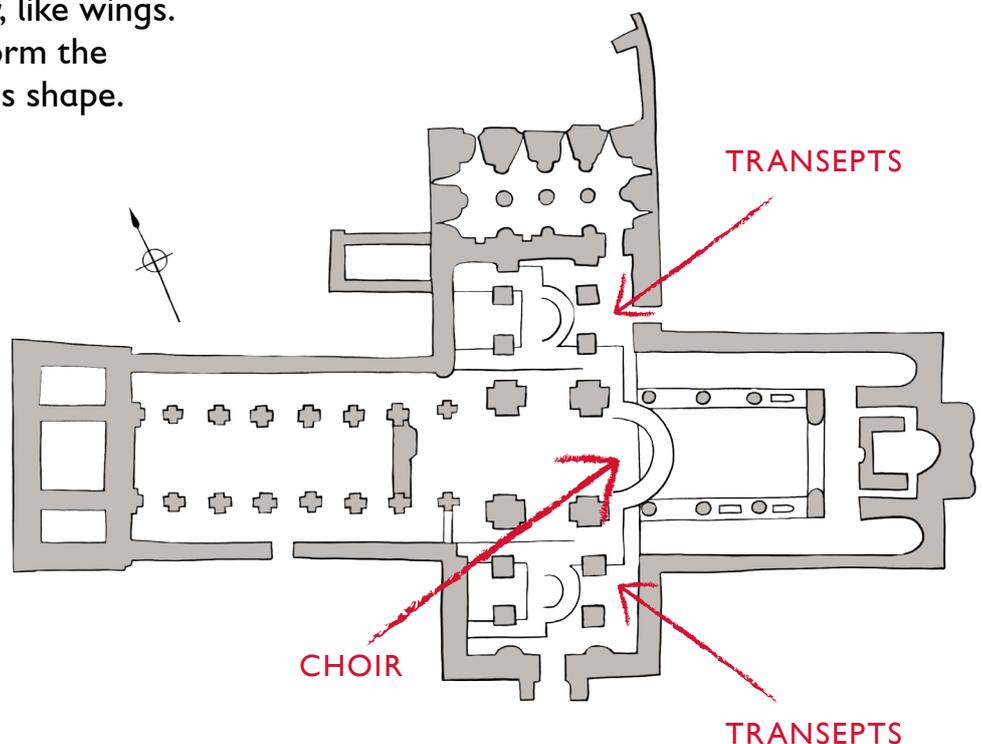
The **Choir** is the central tower, which housed a large bell. This is where all four arms of the cross shape met in the middle. The north and south **Transepts** branch off from the **Choir**, like wings. Together, these sections form the horizontal part of the cross shape.

Include:

- ✓ Walls with building blocks fitting closely together (ashlar masonry)
- ✓ A tall central tower between the two transepts
- ✓ North and south transepts either side of the choir
- ✓ Small windows to let light in
- ✓ Remember, you don't need to add the roof

Communicate:

Check-in with the team designing the **nave exterior**, the **vestry-treasury** and the **presbytery** to make sure your design for the horizontal part of the cross works with the rest of the building.



PRESBYTERY AND CHAPELS

Instructions:

- Make sure you have read my letter carefully
- Organise your team so that you can get the job done in 20 minutes
- Use the plastic building blocks and cathedral floor plan to build your own version of the **Presbytery** and **Chapels**
- Communicate with other teams as you work (see below)
- At the end, see if you can join your design with the other teams to create one whole cathedral

Description:

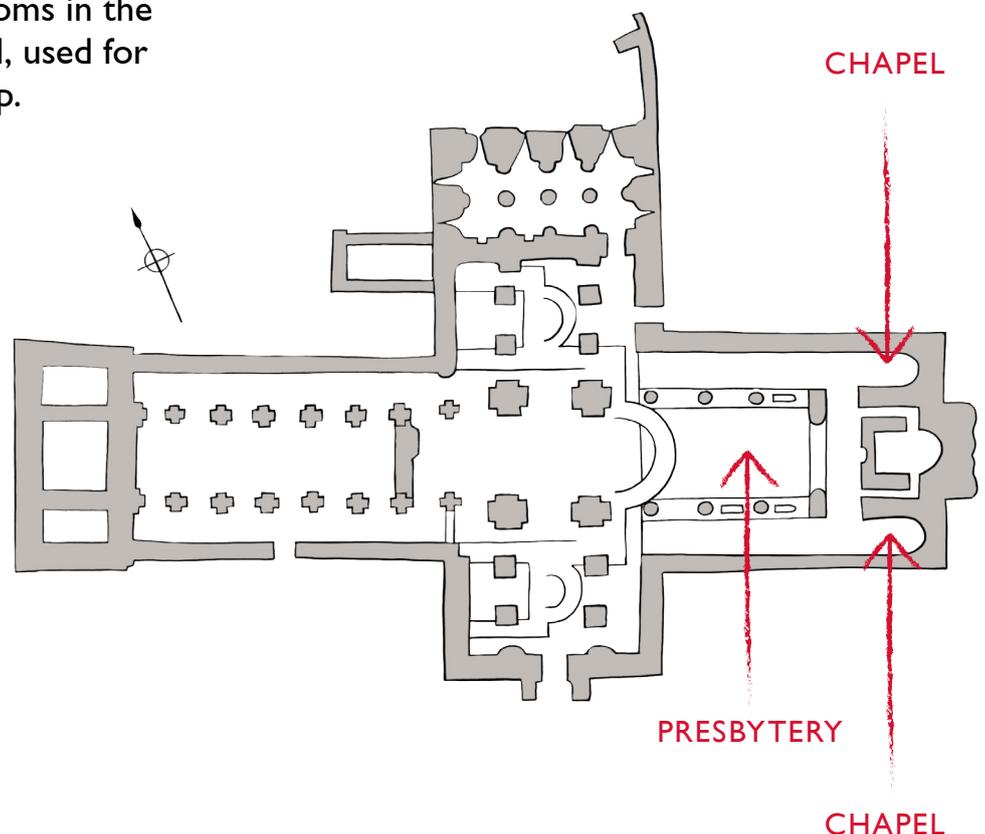
The **Presbytery** is the 'top' of the cross shape. It was the eastern end of the church, reserved for the clergy. The **Chapels** were smaller rooms in the corners of the eastern end, used for private prayer and worship.

Include:

- ✓ Walls with building blocks fitting closely together (ashlar masonry)
- ✓ Small windows up high to let light in
- ✓ North and south chapels (separated by screen walls) in the corners
- ✓ Remember, you don't need to add the roof

Communicate:

Check-in with the team designing the horizontal part of the cross (**Choir** and **Transepts**) to make sure your design for the 'top' of the cross works well with the rest of the building.



Instructions:

- Make sure you have read my letter carefully
- Organise your team so that you can get the job done in 20 minutes
- Use the plastic building blocks and cathedral floor plan to build your own version of the **Vestry-Treasury**
- Communicate with other teams as you work (see below)
- At the end, see if you can join your design with the other teams to create one whole cathedral

Description:

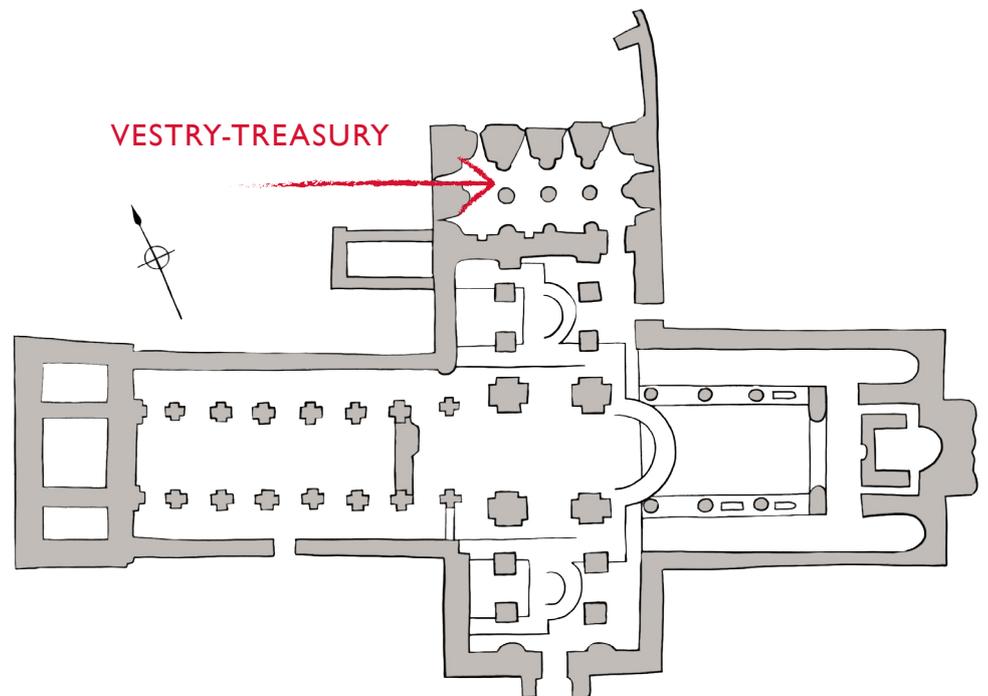
The **Vestry-Treasury** was the rectangular room attached to the north transept, where the bishop stored his special clothes and dealt with money.

Include:

- ✓ walls with building blocks fitting closely together (ashlar masonry)
- ✓ small windows up high to let light in
- ✓ three pillars down the centre of the room
- ✓ a chest inside for the bishop's garments
- ✓ remember, you don't need to add the roof

Communicate:

Check-in with the team designing the **Transepts** to make sure your vestry design can be attached to the north wing.



CATHEDRAL INTERIOR

Instructions:

- Make sure you have read my letter carefully
- Organise your team so that you can get the job done in 20 minutes
- Use the plastic building blocks and cathedral floor plan to build your own version of the **Cathedral Interior**
- Communicate with other teams as you work (see below)
- At the end, see if you can join your design with the other teams to create one whole cathedral

Description:

The **Cathedral Interior** refers to all of the features inside the cathedral: pillars, screens, arches and altars. This includes everything from the 'bottom' (or western end) of the cross shape to the 'top' (or eastern end).

Include:

- ✓ Building blocks stacked up to create pillars down the length of the cathedral
- ✓ The pulpitum (a stone screen separating the western end from the eastern end)
- ✓ Big arches called arcades, held up by the pillars
- ✓ The high altar (a platform with a table used for sacred rituals) in the presbytery
- ✓ Remember, there were no pews and you don't need to add a roof

Communicate:

Check-in with all of the other teams to make sure that your internal features support their plans e.g. are your pillars evenly spaced in the main **Nave**? Is your pulpitum (stone screen) in the right place, in relation to the **Transepts**? Is your altar suitable for the **Presbytery**?

