

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

MEET THE PEOPLE OF ORFORD CASTLE



KS2

Recommended for

KS2 (History, Drama, English)

Learning objectives

- Understand the roles of the different people who lived and worked at Orford Castle in medieval times.
- Make links between the building and the people who used it.

Time to complete

45–60 minutes

Group size

Split the class into 3 groups of approx. 8 students. Each group must be supervised by an adult.

Preparation

See Teachers' Notes on p.30.



Some of the characters students will find out more about during this activity.

SUMMARY

Most of the time, the castle probably had a small staff of perhaps 10 to 15 people. When the sheriff came to judge legal cases, do business and collect taxes on the king's behalf, however, he would have brought his own servants and staff, possibly his family, and several knights and soldiers. At these times, the castle would have filled up and really come to life.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Use the character cards (on **pages 31–34**) to introduce students to eight people who lived and worked at Orford Castle. You could do this in the classroom before your visit, or when you get to the castle.

At the castle, split your class into three smaller groups. Each group's supervising adult should use the teachers' notes (on the next page) to guide their group through a series of role play activities. The eight characters each link to a different location. Assign one character to each student in the group. Give them the relevant character card and ask them to be in charge of playing that character when it's their turn. Students could come dressed up as their character on the day they visit.

Please be aware of other visitors as you carry out the activities. We suggest one group starts down in the basement and works their way up, while a second group goes to the roof and works their way down. The third group can start in the hall on the first floor and explore the rooms above and below from there.

Back in the classroom, encourage students to come up with questions they want to ask each character. You could use teacher-in-role and hot seating techniques, with students asking their questions directly to you while you are in character.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Older students could write a diary entry or blog about what it's like to live and work at the castle, from their character's point of view. Alternatively, they could work in pairs to record an interview, with one person asking questions and the other in role as their character.

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TEACHERS' NOTES

KS2

Character	Location	Role play activity
Servant	Basement (barrels)	Ask the student playing the servant to read their character card. Check the supplies: lift the barrel lids to find out what's inside. The rest of the group use their bodies to make a table while the servant pretends to put piles of bowls and plates on the table, ready to dish up a meal.
Kitchen maid	Basement (well)	Ask the student playing the kitchen maid to read their character card. Collect water for the cook: stand around the well and mime pulling up a heavy bucket of water. Now try to carry it without all the water sloshing out.
Sheriff	Lower hall	Ask the student playing the sheriff to read their character card. Create a freeze frame: the sheriff stands in the middle of the hall, with a wide stance and hands on hips, while the rest of the group sit on the stone benches around the outside looking nervous. Discuss: why would they be feeling nervous?
Commander	Lower hall	Ask the student playing the commander to read their character card. Use your senses: students lie on the floor in the hall and close their eyes as if they are sleeping soldiers. What might you hear and feel at night time in the castle? Some ideas include: a crackling fire, snoring or whispering soldiers, echoing voices from upstairs, the commander telling you to wake up, footsteps on the spiral stairs, shutters rattling in the wind.
Cook	Lower hall (kitchen)	Ask the student playing the cook to read their character card. Prepare a meal: students work together, with the cook in charge, to mime lighting a fire, stirring a big pot, pouring water down the drain, turning meat on a spit etc.
Chaplain	Staircase to upper hall (chapel)	When you are on the section of spiral staircase between the first and second floors, dip into the little corridor and take the first left into the chapel. Ask the student playing the chaplain to read their character card. Create a soundscape: work together to hum, sing or chant, like a choir. Try repeating Latin phrases like 'Ave Maria' (hail Mary) and 'Deo gratias' (thanks be to God).
Sheriff's wife	Upper hall	You'll know you're in the hall on the second floor when you see Orford Museum's exhibition. Ask the student playing the sheriff's wife to read their character card. Create a conversation: in pairs, role-play a short conversation between the sheriff's wife and her servant. What might she ask her servant to do and how would the servant reply? Some ideas include: dress her, do her hair, make her food and take messages to people.
Baker	Roof (bakery)	Ask the student playing the baker to read their character card. Pass the bread: one student pretends to be the baker, standing inside the bakery. The rest of the class make a line. The baker gets an imaginary loaf of bread out of the oven and passes it down the line. Be quick (it's hot!) but careful (don't drop it!).

SERVANT

Name

Simon

Age

28

Job

I do all sorts of jobs around the castle. I collect water from the well, make sure the barrels are full of supplies, and serve food and drink at feasts.

More About Me

If someone special is visiting, like the sheriff or even the king, I spend most of my time getting the rooms ready by hanging beautiful tapestries, building colourful furniture and polishing the silver tableware.



KITCHEN MAID

Name

Maud

Age

21

Job

I'm a servant who helps in the kitchen. I clean, fetch water from the well and help with the cooking.

More About Me

I spend most of my time scurrying up and down the stairs between the basement and the kitchen. Preparing for a feast can be quite stressful. You should see the washing up afterwards!



SHERIFF

Name

Lord Bartholomew de Glanville

Age

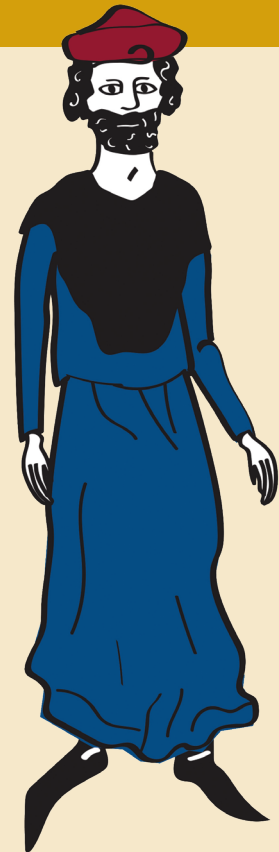
55

Job

I'm in charge. I visit the castle to collect money owed to the king from trade at the port of Orford. I also judge local cases where people have broken the law.

More About Me

When I visit with my wife and family, the castle really comes to life. The plain plastered walls are covered with colourful tapestries and there's feasting and music.



COMMANDER

Name

Sir Walter de Warenne

Age

50

Job

I'm a knight with lots of fighting experience. I got this injury during a battle. At the castle, I run a small crew of about five soldiers and ten servants. I take my orders from the sheriff.

More About Me

I spend most of my time on the first floor. The kitchen, toilets and chambers mean there's plenty of room for me and my staff to live and sleep here. The floor above is reserved for the sheriff and his family when they visit.



COOK

Name

Edmund

Age

31

Job

I make meals for the people living and working at the castle. A small team of kitchen hands help me cook.

More About Me

I spend most of my time in the kitchen on the first floor. It's big enough to cook for the 15 or so people who normally work at this castle. But when the sheriff comes with his family, officials and servants, we cook down in the bailey outside. There are no modern appliances like ovens, toasters and kettles... we do everything ourselves, by hand.



CHAPLAIN

Name

Roger de Wickham

Age

46

Job

I am trained by the church to conduct religious ceremonies and lead worship at the castle.

More About Me

I spend most of my time in the chapel. I sleep nearby in a private chamber. The people who live and work here attend worship every day, where we sing songs of praise to God. We all believe the king is chosen by God. The beautiful chapel is the king's way of saying thank you to God.



SHERIFF'S WIFE

Name

Lady Isabella de Glanville

Age

52

Job

If my husband needs to leave for a while, I'm in charge.

More About Me

I spend most of my time in the hall on the second floor. The side rooms are for us to get dressed in or for family and guests to sleep in.

We have our own little kitchen. I don't get my hands dirty in the kitchen but I do like to keep an eye on what the servants are cooking.



BAKER

Name

Thomas

Age

33

Job

I make bread in the bread oven.

More About Me

I spend most of my time in the bakery, up on the roof. There are plenty of mouths to feed. When the sheriff, his family and his officials come to visit, I have quite a job making enough bread to go round!

