

Archaeology and Creativity Resource Pack

Council for
British Archaeology



Introduction

CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2023

YAC
young
archaeologists'
club

ENGLISH
HERITAGE

Hello!



To celebrate the 2023 Festival of Archaeology, the Young Archaeologists' Club (YAC) have created a bumper resource pack with activity ideas based on the Festival's theme of Archaeology and Creativity.

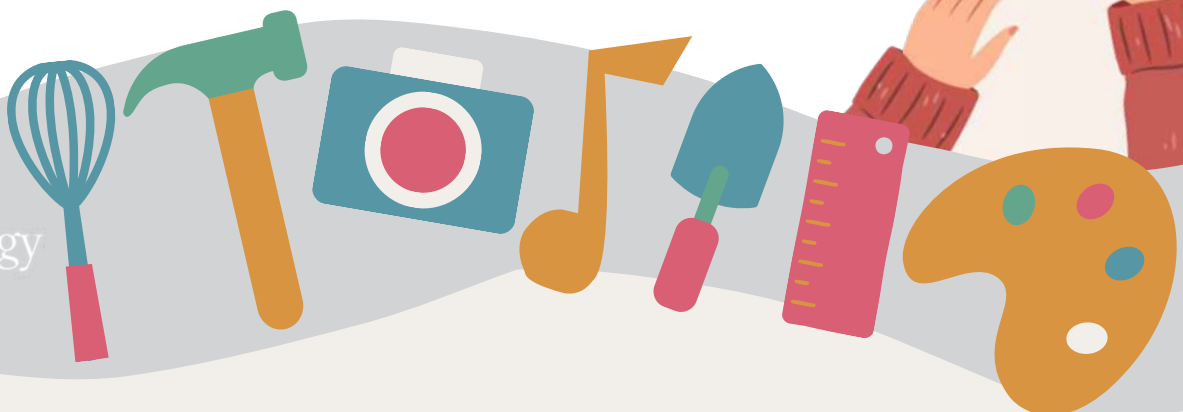
Archaeology, at its heart, is a creative process. It's about exploration and imagination, it's visual stimulation and inspiration; it's the process by which we create memory and meaning. By drawing on innovative technologies and using a wide range of tools, archaeology helps us think about the world we live in.

Archaeology is also about storytelling and archaeologists use creative practices such as art, music, creative writing, poetry and theatre to bring to life the material we uncover and the stories of the places and people around us.

In this new resource pack you will be able to explore this theme through a variety of activities, including creating your own plays, rock art and Viking armour. There's also an opportunity to explore how you view and understand the world around you and how others do that too.



Council for
British Archaeology



CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2023

YAC
young
archaeologists'
club

ENGLISH
HERITAGE

Thank you!

This resource pack is supported by English Heritage's national youth engagement programme, Shout Out Loud: <http://shoutoutloud.org.uk/>.

Both the Young Archaeologists' Club and Shout Out Loud believe in the power of youth voice; part of which includes providing young people the space to develop and deliver projects of interest to them.

This resource pack has been co-created by young people for young people. Three of the resources have been created by Young Producers from the Shout Out Loud project, Hetty, Niles and Megan. A further three have been created by Amelie who joined the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) as part of her MA work placement and one was created by Beth, who joined the CBA for six months on a Kickstart placement. Together they have created an exciting set of activities aimed at anyone aged 8–16 and are free to access.

We hope you enjoy your creative journey into the world of archaeology and heritage!



Council for
British Archaeology



CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2023

YAC
young
archaeologists'
club

ENGLISH
HERITAGE

Contents

- 1.** Storytelling: Myths, Legends and Folk History
- 6.** Creativity in Interpretation and Experimentation
- 12.** Prehistoric Rock Engraving
- 16.** Communicating Heritage with Voice
- 19.** Create Your Own Art Exhibition
- 22.** Write, Design and Perform Your Own Historical Play
- 29.** Art Rocks
- 33.** Make and Design Your Own Viking Helmet



CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2023

YAC
young
archaeologists'
club

ENGLISH
HERITAGE

Storytelling: Myths, Legends and Folk History

Created by Amelie Wiseman

History has often been remembered through stories. They are an important way for people to pass on knowledge about culture, the past, people and places. The most creative stories can entertain people as well as educate them. Many myths and legends have their roots in memories and oral histories, changing over time whilst still teaching us about the people before us.

YOU WILL NEED:

- A camera or recording device (like a phone)
- Some music or sounds
- Art or anything else to illustrate your story!
- Access to the internet or another person to help find and design your story



Council for
British Archaeology



Activity: Write our own myth!

1. Find a story about a person, place, object, or event in history. Perhaps a story you heard at school or from family or you read somewhere in a book.
2. Write down what you can remember or learnt, and think about how you might tell it to someone else – what bits are important to include? What is the point of the story? What can you add to make it more exciting or interesting?

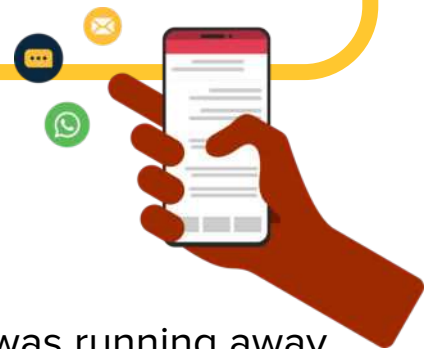


3. Tell your story! You could add sounds or actions or even a background and illustrations to your story.
4. Perform it for family or friends or record it to show at a YAC session.



BONUS ACTIVITY (for older children!)

You could share your story on social media if you are over 13 or with an adult's permission.



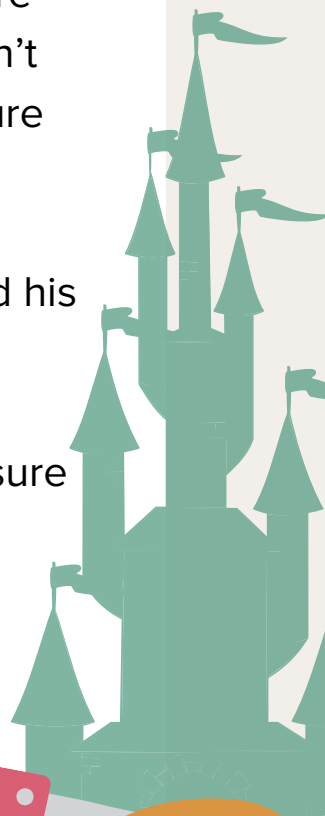
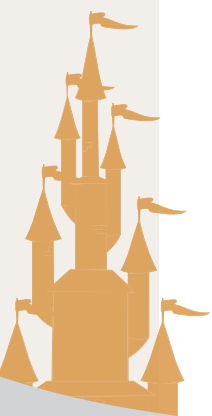
Example 1

Once upon a time, King Richard II was running away from London, where his people were very angry.

His plan was to get a ship from Chester to Ireland where he could hide until they calmed down but, as he couldn't take everything with him, he decided to hide his treasure along the way.

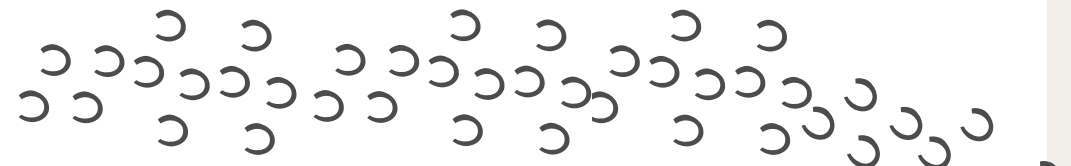
So he stopped at one of his castles in Cheshire and hid his treasure.

But he never came back, and folk still say that his treasure lies in the tunnels connected to Beeston Castle's well.



Example 2

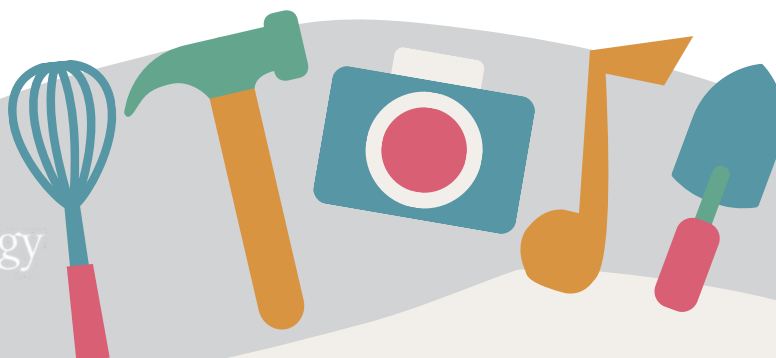
Once, a farmer was going to sell his white horse at Macclesfield when he came across a wizard with a long white beard, who asked to buy the horse. The farmer refused, hoping to get a better price at the market. The wizard cursed him, saying he wouldn't be able to sell his horse.



As it happened, the farmer couldn't sell his horse, and on the road home, the wizard stopped him again.

The farmer at last agreed to sell the horse to the wizard. The wizard led him up onto the edge at Alderley and hit a rock face with his staff, revealing a magnificent set of iron gates. The gates opened, revealing thousands of knights in armour astride magnificent white horses, all in a deep enchanted sleep.

Only one knight was without a horse. The wizard paid the farmer handsomely for his horse, which would be given to the horseless knight. The wizard told him that these knights would remain hidden until Britain's hour of need when they will wake up at last and defend the country.





The iron gates and horses have never been seen since, but sometimes, you can see the wizard's white hair caught in barbed wire in the countryside, the only evidence he was there at all.



BONUS ACTIVITY



Look up your story! Many myths and legends are associated with real places and objects, and many historical events still have sites or museums.

Can you find them online or perhaps even visit the places and landscapes that are mentioned?



CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2023

YAC
young
archaeologists'
club

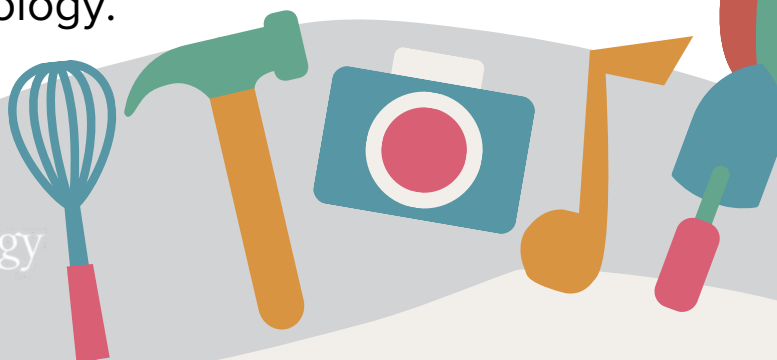
ENGLISH
HERITAGE

Creativity in Interpretation and Experimentation

Created by Amelie Wiseman

Often archaeologists may not have all the information. We need to find out what something is, how it works or how it was made. Using our imagination, as well as handling, looking at or researching objects, we can try and work out the answers to some of these questions.

We can also experiment with building or modelling things ourselves in order to understand them better. Through making art, models, or the real thing, we can think about how they would have been originally built and used. Archaeologists have recreated many different things like this – from entire buildings to small everyday objects. This is often referred to as experimental archaeology.



Before we can experiment with recreating something, we have to understand what it is and how it is made. This activity helps to show how archaeologists work something out when you might not have the finished object in front of you.

YOU WILL NEED:

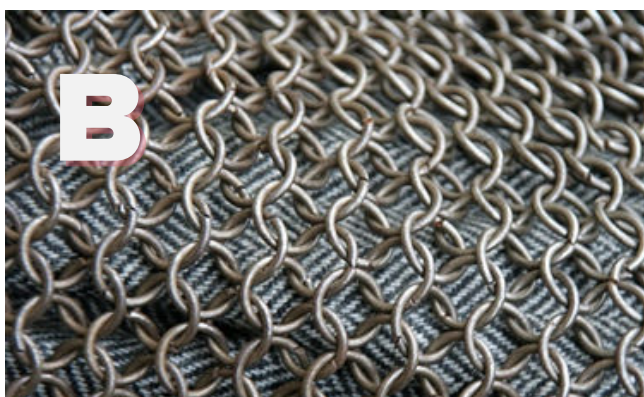
- Craft materials for creating your objects such as paper, cardboard, string, glue, sticky tape, etc.
- Scissors (perhaps get an adult to help you when using sharp objects)
- Access to the internet
- Worksheet and a pen
- Paint, colouring pens and pencils



Activity 1: Object ID

1. Have a look at these objects. Can you work out what they are just by looking at them? What might they be used for?

Write your answers in the boxes below.

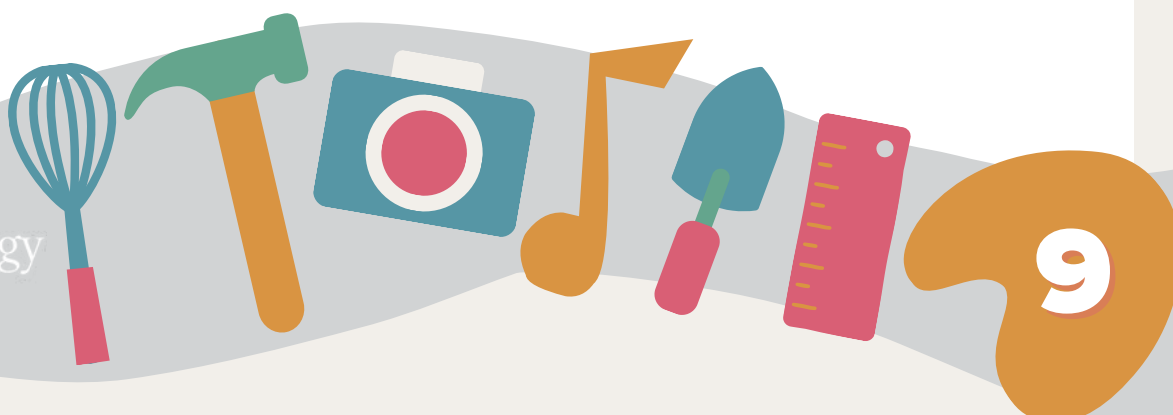




- 2.** Do any of these look like items we have now?
How do they differ?

Once you know what an object is, you have to think about how it was made and used. Making a model can sometimes help us understand how it worked or was created, or help us to imagine how we might build it in real life.

Answers to Question 1: axe, chainmail, hinge, cassette tape
Answers to Question 2: may include – no handle on the axe, hinge a different shape, the cassette tape is broken.



Activity 2: Experiment

Choose one of the objects above or find something at home. Using craft materials, can you make a model of it?

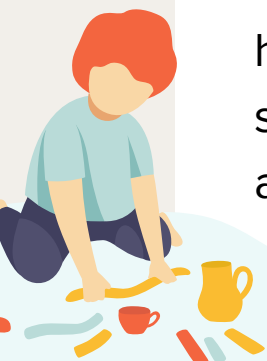
Guiding questions:

- How do all the pieces fit together?
- What was it used for?
- How would it work? Do you need extra pieces?
- What would it be made out of? What do you have that's similar?

Think about the differences between your model and the real thing. What would you need to make the real thing?



Through making a model you can imaginatively and creatively think about the different ways something works, which helps archaeologists understand and test how the original object might have been used and seen. A model helps to work out how you might be able to recreate it with other materials.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Can you decorate your model? What colour might it be? Does the decoration affect how it might be used?

Step up your research!

Check out some real-life models, replicas and experiments on YouTube (click on the yellow hyperlinks below):

- [CGI modelling of Sutton Hoo ship](#) – The Sutton Hoo Ship Company
- [Elizabethan dress reconstruction and interpretation](#) – Historic Royal Palaces
- [Can ancient roundhouses survive record-breaking winds?](#) – Butser Ancient Farm
- [Turning an excavation into a reconstruction](#) – Wessex Archaeology (13+)



CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2023

AGE
8+

TIME:
1 HOUR

Prehistoric Rock Engraving

Created by Hetty Lloyd

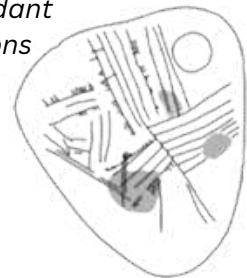
YAC
young
archaeologists'
club

ENGLISH
HERITAGE

Stone engravings are cut marks that are made into the surface of a stone to decorate it or signify meaning. Stone engravings have been made from prehistoric times to the present and range in size from large memorial stones to tiny pieces of jewellery.

The engravings on a shale pendant found at Star Carr, an Early Mesolithic site in North Yorkshire, have puzzled archaeologists since it was discovered. There are many different interpretations of what the engravings signify, for example, the series of lines have been suggested to represent a tree, a map, a leaf or even tally marks.

Star Carr pendant
© Wiki Commons



You can make your own stone engraving using a bar of soap!

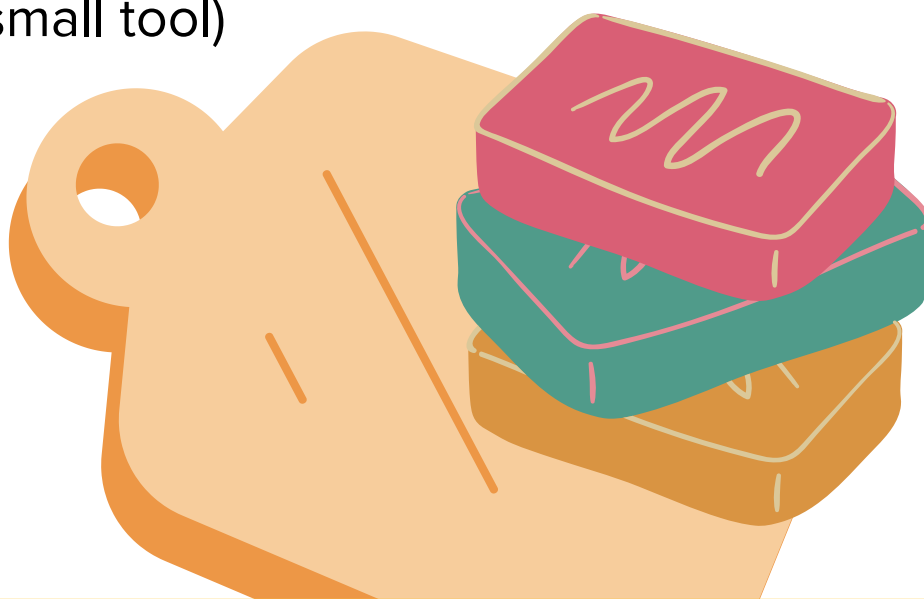
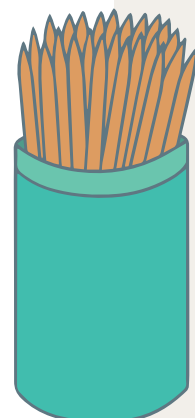


Council for
British Archaeology



You will need:

- A bar of hand soap and a flat surface
- Craft board, plastic sheet, newspaper or similar to protect your work surface
- Craft tools for making the engraving (you could also use a toothpick or other similar small tool)

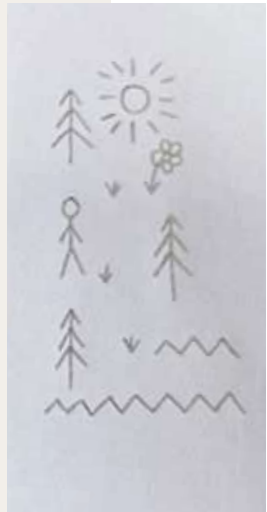


**SAFETY
FIRST**

- This activity may not be suitable for people with skin conditions or allergies.
- Be sure that the cutting tools are being used safely as they may cause injury.
- Hands should be washed after activity.



Method

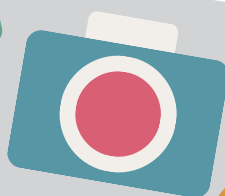


1. Think about the kind of engraving that you will make on your stone/soap. It could be anything you like. Some ideas could be repeating patterns or geometric shapes, drawings, maps or even a secret message.

2. Trace around your bar of soap onto a piece of paper.

3. Design a plan for what your engraving will look like inside the shape left on the paper. (You could draw a few designs before picking the one you will use.)

4. Use your tools to carve your design onto the bar of soap. You may want to lay the newspaper or protective surface down first to ensure an easy clean-up afterwards.



BONUS ACTIVITY

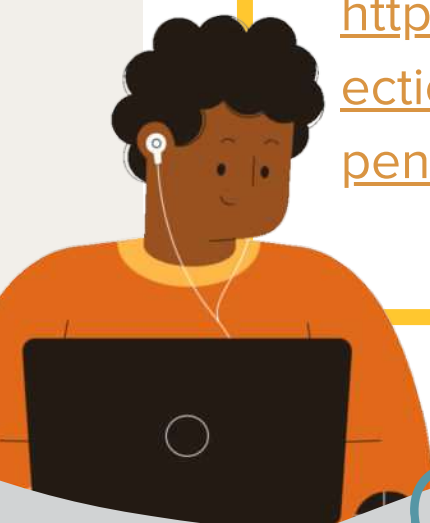


After you have finished your engraving, you can share the meaning or significance of the design with your friends and family or your YAC group. You could even see if they can guess the meaning themselves.

FIND OUT MORE

Discover more about the Starr Carr pendant or get inspiration from its engravings:

<https://www.yorkshiremuseum.org.uk/collections/collections-highlights/star-carr-pendant/>



CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2023

YAC
young
archaeologists'
club

ENGLISH
HERITAGE

Communicating Heritage with Voice

Created by Amelie Wiseman

Oral histories are the telling of first-hand evidence of the past. First-hand, recorded or spoken accounts from people can help us understand their culture, experiences and memories, and think about periods of recent history in new ways. It also helps us understand and record people's heritage and culture so that we can share it with others now and in the future.



YOU WILL NEED:

- Access to the internet
- The worksheet (see next page)
- Someone to talk to

Sharing oral histories can also inspire people to interpret archaeology, objects or landscapes connected with history in new and imaginative ways.

Many oral histories are available online, such as:

- [The North Staffs Miners' Wives Action Group](#)
- [Voices of the Holocaust project](#)
- [The George Ewart Evans Collection](#)



AGE
8+TIME
3 HOURS

Activity: Investigating History Projects

In this activity, we are going to explore an oral history project. This will help us understand what oral histories are and what type of information they contain.

1. Choose one of the above oral history projects or choose your own.
2. Listen to or read some of the interviews and histories associated with the project topic.
3. Answer the questions in the worksheet below.



TOP TIP

You can answer the questions on a separate piece of paper if you have lots to write.

**QUICK
TIPS**

1. What is the oral history project called?

2. What was it about?

3. Who was interviewed?

4. Where do the memories and histories come from?

5. Who ran it?

6. Are the videos/recordings available online? Can you listen to them?

7. What did people do with the recordings or knowledge from them?

8. Why do you think they were collected?



AGE
8+TIME
3 HOURS

Create your own Art Exhibition

Created by Beth Leathley

There are so many beautiful, historic, and unique places around us that can make for amazing photographs.

As well as being nice to look at, photographs are an important way to accurately show the features and conditions of different buildings and monuments over time.

In this activity, you will take your own photographs of historic places, buildings, monuments or objects near you and then create your own art exhibition by making frames and labels for them.

Rooms or buildings that display artwork are called art galleries.



Council for
British Archaeology



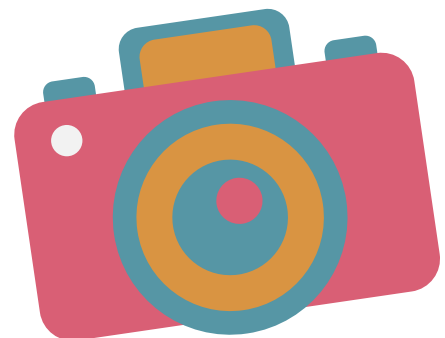
At first, galleries mainly exhibited extravagant paintings, but it was not long before sculptures, drawings, and textiles were also included. Although the camera was invented in the 1800s, the first photography exhibition did not happen until the 1900s.

Photography art was a new way to show realistic images of the world. Before then, only skilled artists could create accurate illustrations, which would take them much longer!



YOU WILL NEED:

- Camera/phone to take photos (or pencils and pens to create your own drawings)
- Printer (if you are taking photos)
- Cardboard
- White paper
- Gold paint
- Scissors



Method

1. First, you will need to choose a theme for your exhibition. You could decide to take photographs of nearby buildings, monuments, gardens, or objects you have at home. (Note: make sure you don't trespass onto other people's land!)
2. Now you need to go out and take your photographs using a camera, mobile phone, or another suitable device. Make sure you think about what you want to say about the place you are capturing. For example, do you want to show how big it is, the detailed decoration it has, or how long it has been there?

TOP TIPS

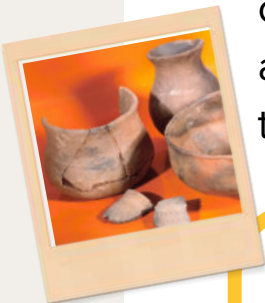
- If you do not have access to a camera or printer, you could include drawings in your exhibition instead.
- Try different angles and body positions to get the perfect photo!
- If you are creating a group exhibition, each person could contribute one photograph or drawing.

QUICK
TIPS

3. Once you have taken your photographs and picked your favourites, you will need to print them. You can do this straight away if you have a printer. If not, there are shops that have printing machines, or you could use an app like FreePrints to get your photos in the post.



- 4.** Next, you need to frame your pictures. You can easily create your own frames by cutting out a rectangular hole in a piece of cardboard. Make sure the hole is slightly smaller than your picture; otherwise, it will just fall through!

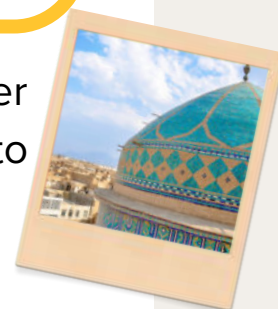
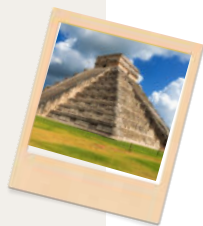


TOP TIPS

Simple black or white frames are also increasingly popular in galleries, as they help make sure visitors are fully focused on the artwork itself.

QUICK TIPS

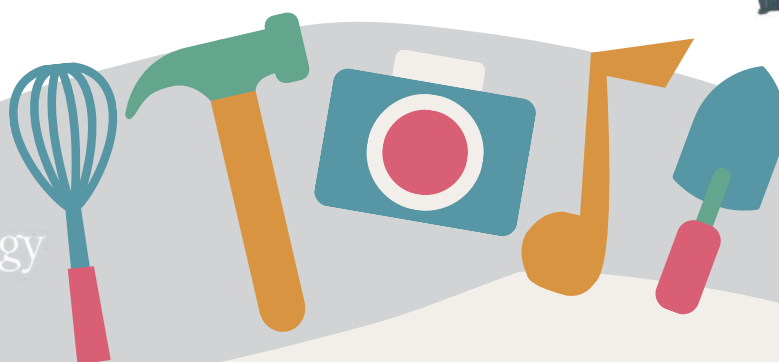
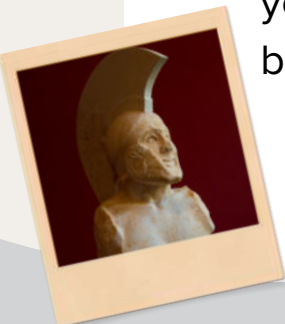
- 5.** You can get creative and decorate your frames however you like. Lots of galleries use extravagant gold frames to display their artwork. You could paint your frames with gold paint to get this effect and even add beads, gold flakes, etc., to make them super fancy.



- 6.** Cut out small rectangles from white paper to create labels for your photographs (or drawings). What do you think needs to be included on these labels? They need to educate visitors but also be interesting and not too long.



- 7.** All that is left to do is organise and display your exhibition. Make sure you find a suitable wall or floor space where you can do this (a plain white or black background works best).



TOP TIPS

QUICK
TIPS

If you are in a group, everyone could talk about their picture for a minute before doing an anonymous vote and announcing a winner. This would be like a 'juried exhibition', where a panel of judges chooses the exhibition prize-winners.



**Useful
Website**

[https://heritagecalling.com/
2015/10/08/tips-for-
photographing-buildings/](https://heritagecalling.com/2015/10/08/tips-for-photographing-buildings/)

BONUS ACTIVITIES



- Search online for old photos of the places or objects you chose and see how these compare to the ones you took.
- Have a go at editing your photographs using an editing app or programme.
- Create tickets for your exhibition and invite family and friends to visit.





CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2023



YAC
young
archaeologists'
club



ENGLISH
HERITAGE

AGE
8+

TIME:
2+ HOURS

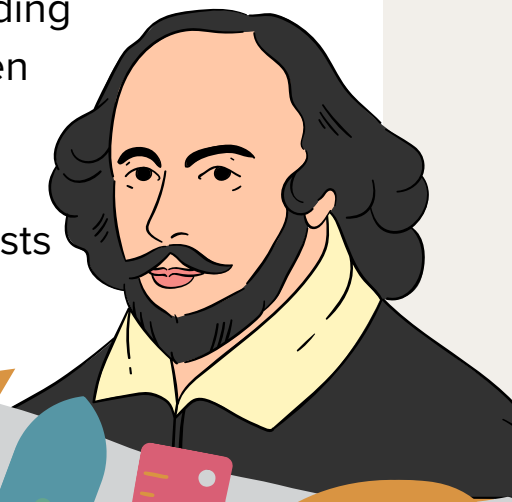
Write, Design and Perform Your Own Historical Play

Created by YAC

Theatre in Britain started in churches in the 10th and 11th centuries. It became popular in the 1350s when religious leaders encouraged plays about Bible stories and the lives of saints. These plays were performed on wagons that travelled through the streets and stopped at certain places. Eventually, towns created dedicated spaces for public theatre.

The first playhouse in Britain, called 'The Theatre', was built in London in 1576. Over the next 16 years, 17 more open-air theatres were built. The Globe Theatre is the most famous one and is where William Shakespeare wrote and performed many of his plays.

Historical subjects are popular among playwrights, and Shakespeare wrote 10 plays based on English history. While they are fictionalised, they still shape our understanding of the past. For example, Richard III is often seen as an evil, monstrous villain, thanks to Shakespeare's portrayal of his behaviour and appearance despite historians and archaeologists finding evidence that this was not accurate.



Activity: create your play

Modern theatre continues to draw inspiration from history. Popular musicals like *Les Misérables*, *Six*, *Newsies*, and *Hamilton* are based on historical events and figures.

In this activity you will have a go at writing your own play based on a historical event or person.

YOU WILL NEED:

- A computer, book, or other way of researching your event
- Pen and paper or a word document for typing on
- Some people to help you act your play out if you have more than one character

Method

1. Find an event or person from history with a story that you find interesting.
2. Research some facts about the event and/or learn about the characters you would like to include in your play.



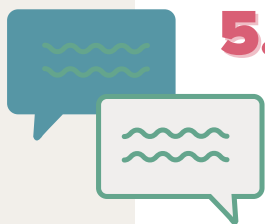
- 3.** Before you start writing your script, it's helpful to plan out your story. Think about the main characters, the setting (where the story takes place), and what happens in the beginning, middle, and end. You can draw pictures or make a simple outline to help you remember your ideas.



- 4.** Next divide your story into scenes, which are like different parts of the story. Each scene usually takes place in a different location or time. Decide how many scenes you need and what happens in each one to move the story forward.



- 5.** Then write your dialogue. Dialogue is what the characters say in the script. Remember to make it interesting and as true as possible to each character's personality.



- 6.** You can also describe the actions or movements of the characters in the script. Write these descriptions in between the lines of dialogue.

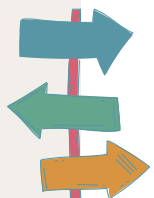
FOR EXAMPLE

Elizabeth I: (thoughtfully) Let me consider what to do about the Spanish Armada.

[Elizabeth I paces back and forth across her throne room.]



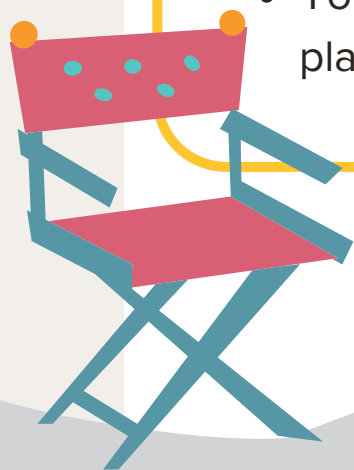
7. Finally, add stage directions to tell your actors what to do or how to move on stage. For example, if you want a character to enter from the left side of the stage, you can write – (Enter from stage left).



8. When you've finished writing your script, read it out loud to see how it sounds and make any necessary changes or improvements.
9. Once you're happy with your script, gather some friends, siblings, classmates or YAC branch members to perform it! Assign each person a character and have fun acting out the scenes you've written.

BONUS ACTIVITIES

- You can make props or costumes to make it even more exciting!
- You could create your own poster to advertise your play.



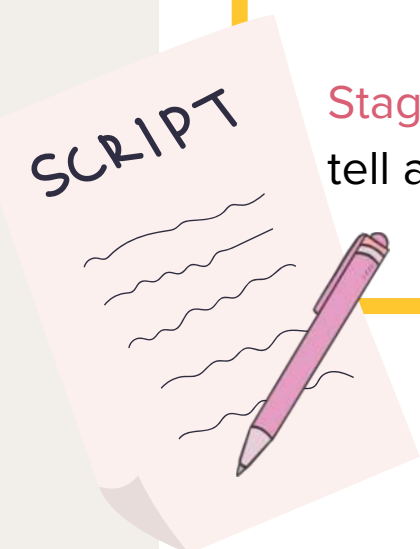
Glossary

Script: a script is the written version of a story that has been created for actors to perform.

Prop: a prop is any object used in a performance that isn't part of the set or worn by an actor. Props can be anything, from a pen to a bookcase.

Dialogue: Dialogue is a conversation – it's what the characters say to one another in the script.

Stage directions: these are instructions that tell actors what they should do on stage.



CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2023

AGE
8+

TIME:
30 mins-
1.5 hours

Art Rocks

Created by Megan Schlanker

For thousands of years, people have been making art about the things that are important and special to them. Cave paintings and other rock art are some of the earliest forms of art. Ancient people, from at least 35,000 years ago, often painted the animals they hunted, or painted hand prints and abstract patterns.

These paintings could have been created to communicate with other people, or they might have held a ceremonial purpose. Cave paintings are amazing, partly because they show us what people from thousands of years ago were thinking about!

There are lots of different styles of cave painting from all around the world and throughout time! Here are a few examples of the different styles of painting.

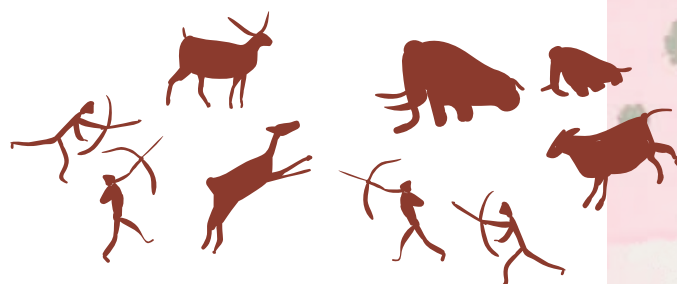




If you were making a cave painting, what would you paint? What sort of things are important to you in your daily life – think about what you eat, what you do for fun, what games you play, and your friends, family, and pets!



Pick a rock art style and have a go at creating your own cave painting!



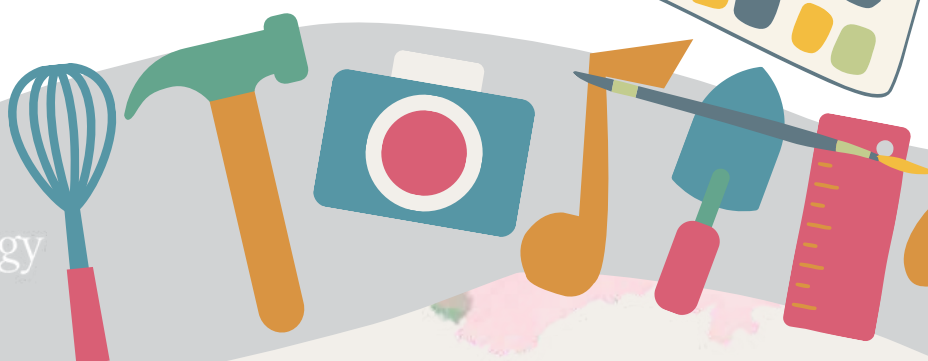
YOU WILL NEED:

- A large sheet of paper
- Something to paint with – poster paints or acrylics will work best!
- Brushes (or you can use your hands!)



Method

1. Find a tidy space to do your painting in, keep paint away from carpets or anything you don't want to get paint on.
2. Set up your paper.





3. Set up your paints, and something to mix them on. This can be an old cereal box, a clean yoghurt pot, or a mixing palette if you have one.

4. If you're painting with brushes, make sure you have a piece of kitchen roll or similar handy to wipe it on when you're changing colours. If you're using your hands, have some wet wipes nearby so you can clean most of the paint off as soon as you're done.

5. Think about what you want to paint and look at the different styles of rock art. What's important to you? Family? Pets? Friends? Games or food? Have a go at making a painting in that style!

6. Leave your painting to dry and tidy up or start another painting in a different style!

7. This activity is fun to do with friends and family. If you are doing this exercise as a group take a look at each other paintings. What do you paint that's different, and do you paint anything that's the same?





QUICK TIPS

TOP TIP

Make sure you cover your clothes so they don't get paint on them. It's also a good idea to use a newspaper under your painting to prevent mess.



BONUS ACTIVITIES

If you want to get even more adventurous and creative, you can build your own cave using this resource from the YAC website:

<https://www.yac-uk.org/activity/cave-painting>

(for older children!)

We'd love to see your creations on social media! If you're over 13, you can share them using the hashtag #FestivalOfArchaeology, or you could ask a trusted adult to share the post for you!



CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2023

YAC
young
archaeologists'
club

ENGLISH
HERITAGE

AGE
8+

TIME:
1.5 hours

Make and Design Your Own Viking Helmet

Created by Niles Schilder

The Viking Age, from the late 8th century to the early 11th century, saw the rise of Scandinavian seafaring and raiding expeditions.

While Vikings were skilled warriors known for their fearsome reputation, their choice of headwear may have differed from the

horned helmets often depicted in popular culture.

There is, in fact, no evidence to suggest that Viking warriors regularly used such helmets. Historical and archaeological findings indicate that Viking helmets were actually much simpler in design. However, very few fully intact helmets have ever been found.

Those that have survived were usually made of iron and consisted of a simple dome-shaped design. They provided protection for the head and often featured a nose guard made from a separate piece of metal attached to the helmet.



Yarm Helmet

© Preston Park Museum



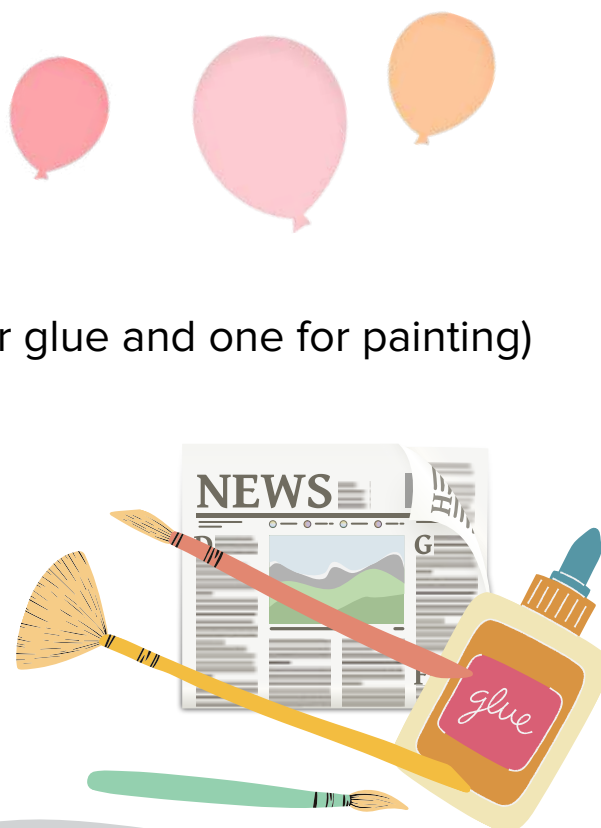
Decorations on Viking armour and weapons were typically added using etching, engraving, or inlaying techniques. Viking craftsmen were skilled in metalwork and could create intricate patterns, including interlacing knotwork, animal motifs, and geometric designs.



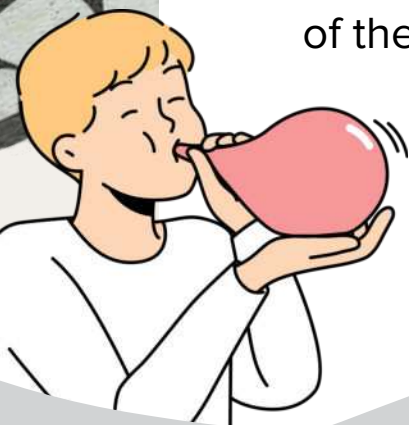
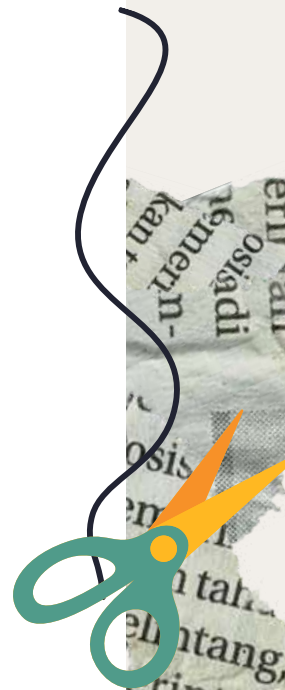
In this activity we want you to take on the role of a Viking craftsperson and design your own Viking helmet.

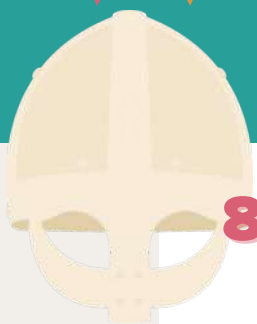
YOU WILL NEED:

- A balloon
- Old newspapers
- PVA glue
- Paintbrushes (one for glue and one for painting)
- Pens
- Paint
- Scissors
- A pot or container
- Water



- 1.** Wrap a piece of string around your head and mark the string with a pen where the two ends meet.
- 2.** Cut the string so it's a little longer than where you made the mark.
- 3.** Blow up a balloon until the string can wrap around it at its largest circumference. This is to ensure the balloon is the size of your head. Tie a knot in the balloon.
- 4.** Pour PVA glue into a container and mix in a small amount of water to loosen it.
- 5.** Drop in a little bit of water at a time until the mixture has the consistency of single cream. If there is too much water, it will take a lot longer to dry between layers.
- 6.** Rip the newspaper into pieces. Dip each piece into the glue mixture and run then your fingers along it to get rid of the excess then place it on the balloon.
- 7.** Keep adding glue-covered pieces to the balloon until you've covered the whole balloon





8. Leave the first layer to dry.
9. Add one or two more layers until it is completely dry and doesn't bend.
10. Pop the balloon!
11. Cut out the shape of the helmet that you desire.
12. Paint the base colour of your helmet, leave to dry and then decorate with paint or pen. You can finish it with a layer of PVA glue to make it shiny!



Here's one we made earlier!

BONUS ACTIVITY

If you are interested in Viking period art and looking for decorative inspiration why not take a look at the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture – <https://chacklepie.com/ascorpus/index.php>, which has many examples of Scandinavian inscribed stones, depicting mythical beasts and the stories of the Viking Gods. Why not create your own decorative design?

