

THE MEDIEVAL CASTLE
A Topic Outline

Storyline	Key Questions	Pupil Activity	Class Organisation	Materials	Outcome
1. A castle	What do you think a castle is? Why do you think castles were necessary in medieval times? What geographical conditions do you think would make an ideal site for a castle?	Brainstorming leading to a list of elements that makes a castle. Feedback to class. Discussion of law and order / medieval times and the learners' starting knowledge of the feudal system. Feedback to class followed by general discussion. Discussion leading to creating a list of geographical criteria for a favourable site to build a castle. Each case is argued and defended.	Groups of 6/8 and whole class. Same groups of 6/8 and whole class Same groups of 6/8 and whole class	Flip-chart Flip-chart Flip-chart	List of elements of a Castle List of reasons List of criteria
2. A model castle	Using a three- dimensional model can you show me in your groups a really effective design for a castle? Which of these models presents the most effective castle design and why?	A model castle is designed and constructed by each group using cardboard boxes tubes, paper etc.. These designs are based on the results of the discussions above. Each group in turn presents its castle model with arguments for the design decisions taken. Other groups are then given an opportunity to criticise	Same groups of 6/8 but jobs can be divided to individuals or pairs. Same groups of 6/8 and whole class	Cardboard boxes, tubes, knives, glue etc..	A model castle that has an effective design matching the criteria listed above. A presentation by one or more members of the group.
3. The people	Who do you think might live and/or work in the castle in medieval times? Do you think you might recognise their role by their dress and why? How do you think they might look?	A class discussion which follows from the second key question above. The significance or otherwise of dress is discussed. After being shown a technique for making visuals of these people the learners each create a person who lives or works in the castle.	Class Individuals	Flip-chart Paper, cloth, wool, glue, scissors, coloured pens.	A list of categories of people who would live and work in the castle. Visuals of the people who live and work in the castle.
4. Living space	What kind of names do you think they had? From this list of names used commonly in medieval times which would you choose for your character and why? What accommodation do you think would be needed inside the castle?	Discussion of 'old' names. Each learner selects a name for their character and provides a short biography based on their existing knowledge. Group discussion on the types of rooms required inside the castle. Feedback to whole class.	Class Individuals Groups of 6/8 and class	Flip-chart Small sheets of paper for biographies and name labels Flip-chart	List given by learners. Biographies and name labels are attached to the characters. List of rooms in castle.

5. Daily Life	What do you think daily life would be like for the people living in the castle? What kind of events would lead to parties or celebrations?	Role play, diary writing, drama, interviews etc. are only some of the possible activities with which pupils can explore daily life in and around the castle. Group discussions lead to suggestions that are listed – ‘an important visitor arrives’, ‘a wedding feast is organised’, ‘a tournament is arranged’. These events create possibilities for class activities – planning a programme for a feast, a wedding or a tournament.	Individual, paired or group activities. Small groups.	Material related to activity. Materials related to activity.	Play, drama, interview, story, diary, letter etc.. List of events.
6. Incidents.	What kind of incidents would concern the residents? If you were the invaders how would you attack the castle? How does your castle and its residents compare with a local example?	Class brainstorm leading to list of suggestions – plague, attack on the castle, famine or drought etc.. Groups or whole class explore reactions to these tragedies using a variety of forms of communication. Groups design a strategy for attack. Each castle group compares and contrasts its design with the information provided about a real example and then shares its ideas in a general discussion.	Small groups. Groups or whole class. Small groups.	 Materials related to activities selected.	List of disasters. Developments of reaction to these events. The illustrated design for attack. Debating the advantages and disadvantages of design and researching detail from all possible evidence sources..
7. A local example.	What questions about medieval life would you still like to ask?	These questions are listed. Individuals present the questions to a visiting expert or a visit is made to the local castle to meet with an informed guide. Pupils are asked to review what they think they have learned and which were the most valuable activities and why?	Design groups. Individuals. Class	Tape recorder or video camera.	List of questions. Final discussion of answers to important questions.
8. Review	What have we learned and how?		Individuals, groups and class.		Results of review discussion which will influence further study and teaching methodology.