

KS3

# Life in a medieval castle

TEACHING  
PACK

- Learn about the people and rooms in a castle
- Write and perform a play
- Design and build a model castle



# Lesson plan: Exploring life in a medieval castle

## About this project-based lesson

This project-based learning unit is designed to teach and reinforce the concepts in a ks2/3 history unit on medieval castles and can be used in conjunction with existing curriculum materials.

The project is divided into 5 milestones; each milestone includes a self-contained student project activity. Done in sequence, the milestones connect to enable students to produce a comprehensive final assessment activity.

The minimum suggested duration for completing this project is 5 lessons. However, it is completely flexible and can be lengthened or shortened as necessary, based on your professional opinion.

## How to use this teaching guide

Each milestone for this project-based learning unit includes detailed daily activities presented in step-by-step order, with teaching notes, instructional guidance, and page references to resources and materials included in the teacher pack and student pack.

Daily activities are organized for you as follows:

- **Prepare (bell-ringer/opener activity)**  
Use these short opening activities at the beginning of class.
- **Present (teacher-led instruction)**  
Use this portion of the lesson to deliver new subject material and project information, and to model any instructions or activity required for produce or participate elements.
- **Produce (student project work)**  
Use this portion of the lesson to allow students to work independently or in small groups on activities and other project elements.
- **Participate (student/group share)**  
Use this portion of the lesson to allow students to share out any project, research, or presentation materials.
- **Practice (homework/assessment/independent)**  
Use this optional portion of the lesson, if desired, to give students homework activities.

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## How to do good research

### Follow these steps when you are doing research in a book.

1. Choose a book about your topic.
2. Use the table of contents to find the chapter that has information about the question you are trying to answer.<sup>9</sup>
3. Go to that chapter and read until you find the information you need. Put the answer in your own words. You can't just copy what the author wrote. This is called plagiarism, and it can get you in trouble
4. Go back to the table of contents and find the chapter that will answer your next question.
5. Repeat these steps until you find all the answers you need.

### Follow these steps when you are doing research online.

1. 1. Open your search engine and type in your keywords. These should be as specific as possible. For example, type in 'Medieval Castle Grand Hall'.
2. Click on the top link. Read the article and look for useful information to answer your questions.
3. When you find an answer, put the information in your own words. You can't just copy what the author wrote. This is called plagiarism, and it can get you in trouble.
4. Keep reading the first website to find more information you need.
5. When you get to the end of the article, click the back arrow to go back to your search results. Click on the second article and read it to find the answers to more of your questions.
6. Repeat these steps until you find all of the answers you need.



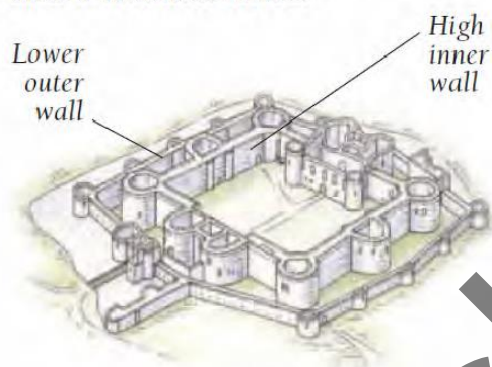
# The age of castles

A castle was the fortified residence of a king or a baron, built to keep its occupants safe from enemy attack.

Although a castle was a stronghold, with towering walls, watchtowers, and heavily fortified doors, it was also an administrative center and a home, and its occupants could live there in comfort and style.

## Castle development

The earliest castles appeared in the 9th and 10th centuries, in areas now part of France, Germany, and northern Italy. Most were earth ramparts, or walls, surrounded by a ditch and a wooden fence.



Concentric castle

### Key facts

- Motte and bailey castles were built in the 11th and 12th centuries.
- The motte was an dirt mound, topped by a wooden tower. The bailey was a courtyard, surrounded by a ditch and a wooden fence.
- By the 11th century, some towers (called donjons, or keeps) were built of stone.
- In the 13th century, the keep was usually surrounded by a stone "curtain wall."
- From the mid-13th century, people built concentric castles, with rings of stone walls, one inside the other.

## Castle people

The household of a large castle could easily contain as many people as a village. As well as the lord and his family, there were officials, soldiers, and a host of servants and craftsmen.

### Key facts

- The lord's second-in-command was called the constable.
- Domestic servants included the cook, scullions (who helped prepare the meals), laundresses, and spinsters (who spun wool).
- Outdoor servants included dog-keepers, gardeners, and grooms.
- The castle's garrison was made up of knights and hired soldiers.
- Skilled craftsmen included carpenters, blacksmiths, and armorers.



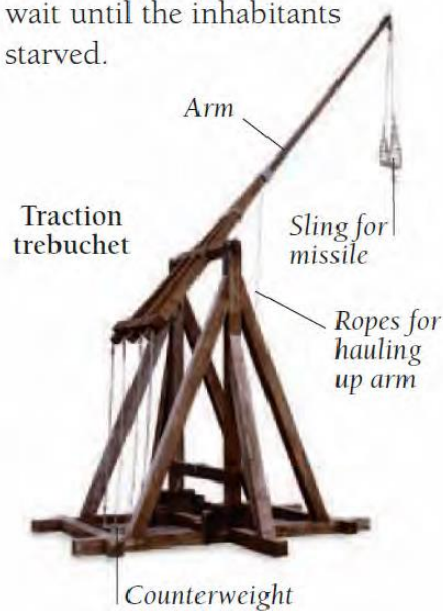
## Attack and defense

Castles were built to be defended, with strong walls and doors. They also needed plenty of storage space for food and a deep well for water, to withstand a long siege if surrounded by enemy soldiers.

### Key facts

Castle attackers could:

- shoot arrows
- hurl missiles over the walls with trebuchets and other catapults
- scale walls with ladders
- break down walls and doors with battering rams
- try to undermine walls by tunneling beneath them
- wait until the inhabitants starved.



Castle defenders could:

- shoot arrows
- hurl missiles over the walls with catapults
- push away scaling ladders with forked poles
- lower hooks to catch the heads of battering rams
- dig countermines to break into tunnels
- ration supplies to make them last.

Name: ..... date: .....

**3-2-1 Castle notes**

**Directions:** Read 'The age of castles' article. Use information from the article to complete the chart.

<p><b>3 Things I Learned</b></p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>
<p><b>2 Important People in the Castle</b></p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>
<p><b>1 Question I Still Have</b></p>	

Name: ..... date: .....

Things in a castle

**Directions:** Think about movies or TV shows you've seen that take place in a castle. In the box, draw pictures of things you might see in a medieval castle, and write words to label your drawings.



Teachit sample

Name: ..... date: .....

**Parts of a medieval castle**

**Directions:** Fill in the notes as you learn about medieval castles.

The earliest castles were built of ..... and .....

Stone castles had tall ..... and were topped with lookout  
.....

Many castles were also surrounded by a ..... of water, which made  
it harder for ..... to approach and attack.

Inside the walls of the castle, the most important activities took place in the  
.....

This large room was used for ....., meeting, entertaining, and even  
.....

..... and ..... were popular foods in a medieval  
castle.

....., pigs, ....., and chickens provided food  
for the people who lived in the medieval castle.

