

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

CASTLE SENSORY: SIGHTS, SOUNDS AND SMELLS



Recommended for

KSI & SEND (History)

Learning objectives

- Explore key areas of the castle and identify what they were used for.
- Develop sensory observation skills.

Time to complete

45–60 minutes

SUMMARY

Please print the trail (on page 30) to help students explore six key parts of the castle through sensory activities. As you explore the castle, use the questions and suggestions in the Teachers' Notes (on page 29) to help connect the different parts of the castle to what they were used for. Although this is a sensory trail, please remind the group not to touch anything unless invited to.

The trail can be followed at the pace of the group and the stops can be visited in the order that best suits your group's needs. If any member of your group feels overwhelmed or overstimulated by the sensory input, Portchester Castle has plenty of calm spaces that you can use to reduce the student's anxiety. Please see the Access Map (on page 8–9) for information about sensory considerations around the site.



This activity suggests things around the castle to touch, see, hear and smell.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Create a bingo sheet with several sensory experiences for students to 'tick off' during a visit:

- Touch something soft/smooth/bumpy.
- Spot something red/man-made/an animal.
- Find a crunching sound/a sweet smell/a strange taste.

You could also play a game of 'I Spy...' as you explore different parts of the site. Each student could make a cardboard frame before your visit and then look through it while searching for things on site.

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TEACHERS' NOTES

- **Stop 1: Landgate** – Standing outside the Roman walls, between the small car park and the castle entrance, look up at the Landgate and the two towers either side. Imagine guards standing on top of the towers, aiming their weapons at you. How would you feel as you approach the wall and towers? Form a line and pretend you are an attacking army, marching in time with each other. You hear a 'ping' and 'whoosh' sound as an arrow flies through the air towards you. Duck for cover! Decide whether to carry on or retreat.
- **Stop 2: Roman walls** – Look along the length of the wall; can you see the straight layers of flint? The stones were put there by Roman builders more than 1,700 years ago and are still standing to this day. Touch the mortar between the layers of flint. Imagine the hard-working Roman builder who originally worked on this section of wall. How many stones do you think he had to lift and place into the wall in one day? How would you feel after a hard day of wall building, with no modern machines to help you?
- **Stop 3: Outer bailey** – Two English kings are known to have gathered their troops at Portchester, before sailing to France to fight important battles (Edward III in 1346 and Henry V in 1415). Imagine being in the English army, gathered on this spot. What things might you smell and hear in the outer bailey? Possible sounds include: armour clinking, water lapping outside the walls, swords being sharpened, the chatter/laughter/shouts of soldiers, heavy boots on the grass, fires crackling and commands being shouted. Possible smells include: smoke from the fires, food cooking for the troops, the salty sea air, sweat from the soldiers.
- **Stop 4: Lost buildings** – From historical plans and archaeological evidence, we know that the space in the outer bailey wasn't always an open, grassy area. At various times in the castle's history, it was used for buildings that are no longer standing, such as a Tudor storehouse and wooden houses for prisoners of war. In 1938 parch marks in the grass in the south-west corner of the fort revealed the site of a large building. When it was excavated in the 1970s glass and pottery were found that dated it to 1475–1540. Work together to mark out the shape of a building, either by joining hands and spreading out to become the 'walls' or by lying on the floor to become the 'foundations'. Why do you think these buildings are lost when others are still standing? Answer: they were probably made of wood, so rotted over time, or they weren't needed by future owners, so got demolished.
- **Stop 5: Graveyard** – There has been a cemetery inside the walls at Portchester since Anglo-Saxon times. Close your eyes and listen for all the 'daytime' sounds you can hear around you. Now imagine being in the graveyard at night. What shadows and shapes would you be able to make out in the dark? What different sounds might you hear? How would you feel? Make up a story about something spooky that might happen here at night.
- **Stop 6: Watergate** – In Roman times, boats could moor up right outside this entrance. In Saxon times, this was an important lookout to keep watch for Viking raiders trying to attack this part of the coast. Listen to your voices echo as you pass through the Watergate towards the sea. Try to make sounds associated with water such as: splish, splash, splosh, bubble, plop. Stand on the concrete area looking out to sea. How does it feel standing outside the walls compared to being inside them? Take a few slow, deep breaths in through your nose. What can you smell?

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See if you can find all of these things.
Tick each one off as you find it.



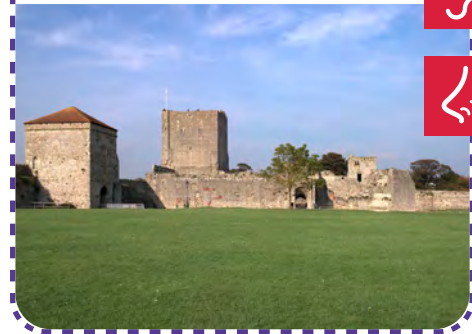
1 LANDGATE



2 ROMAN WALLS



3 OUTER BAILEY



4 LOST BUILDINGS



5 GRAVEYARD



6 WATERGATE

