



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

KS1–KS4

TEACHERS' ACTIVITY IDEAS

Scarborough Castle

This resource has been designed to help teachers plan a visit to Scarborough Castle, which provides essential insight into 3,000 years of history. Use these activity ideas in the classroom and on site to help students discover more about Scarborough Castle.

Get in touch with our Education Booking Team:

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- ✉ bookeducation@english-heritage.org.uk
- 🌐 <https://bookings.english-heritage.org.uk/education>

Don't forget to download our **Hazard Information Sheets** to help with planning.

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Step into England's story



TOP 5 ACTIVITIES

EXTRAORDINARY OBJECTS

AT THE
CASTLE

ACTIVITY 1

Recommended for

KS1 & KS2
(History, Art & Design)

Learning Objectives

- Use objects to consider the parts of Scarborough's history that aren't so clear in the building remains on site.
- To understand how Scarborough was used by Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman people.



Objects on display in the exhibition at Scarborough Castle.



One of the objects on display: a replica Bronze Age sword, 1000–700 BC.

Summary

Before your visit, introduce students to the term 'archaeology', which is the study of things people made, used and left behind at historical sites. Ask students to think of one object that is important to them. Discuss: If this object could talk, what story would it tell about you?

You can find information about some of the objects on display at Scarborough here: www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/scarborough-castle/history/collection

During your visit, take your class to the exhibition upstairs in the Master Gunner's House. We recommend you do this in small groups.

Ask students to look closely at the objects in the display cases. To help them interrogate the objects, get them to pick one and draw it as accurately as they can. Then pose questions such as:

- How old is this object?
- What is it made of?
- Does it have any distinctive features?
- How is it different from other objects in the case?
- How might this object have been used and by whom?

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, ask students to reflect on the objects they have seen by discussing these questions: Which object did you find most interesting and why? Why is it important to look after these objects? Have you ever lost something that an archaeologist of the future might find?

ACTIVITY 2

Recommended for

KS1 & KS2
(History, Art & Design)

Learning Objectives

- Identify the key architectural features of the great tower (both decorative and defensive).
- Understand how and why the great tower was built.



Window detail on the more complete side of the keep at Scarborough.



The ruined keep at Scarborough.

Summary

Before your visit, show students the reconstruction drawing of the great tower on the next page and ask them to identify these things:

- 1) Forebuilding – a small tower which protected the stairs used to enter the great tower.
- 2) Chapel – used for private worship and prayer by the royal household.
- 3) First-floor chamber – probably a hall for the royal household.
- 4) Second-floor chamber, with a throne at one end – part of a set of inner apartments for the king.
- 5) Latrine chutes – a way for waste to escape from medieval toilets.

While the great tower would have looked like this in about 1200, it was bombarded with cannon-fire during the English Civil War. In 1645, during a five-month siege, the massive walls of the great tower split in two and half the building collapsed.

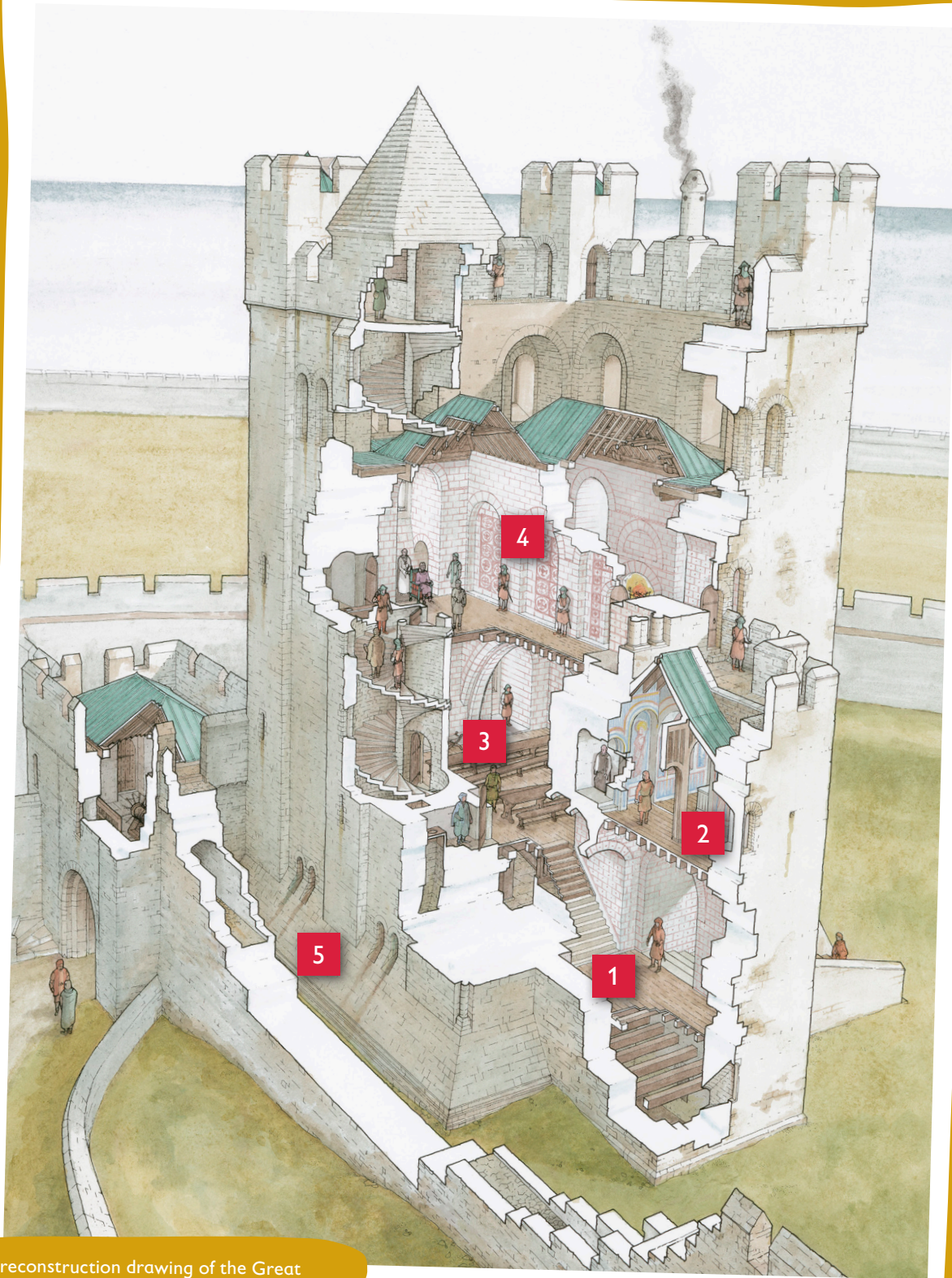
During your visit, explore the keep with your students and ask them to compare the reconstruction drawing with what remains of the great tower. Can they see where the different floors would have been? Can they spot what's left of a spiral staircase? Can they point out the latrine chutes and fireplaces?

You could bring some clipboards, paper and pens so that students can sketch the great tower.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, students could use their sketches to design and make souvenirs to remind them of their visit. The end product could be a key ring, bookmark, fridge magnet, ruler, badge etc. You may want to provide templates to help younger students with their souvenir design, such as an outlined shape of a ruler or key ring.

ACTIVITY 2 continued



A reconstruction drawing of the Great Tower as it may have looked in about 1200.

ACTIVITY 3

Recommended for

KS2 & KS3
(History, Geography)

Learning Objectives

- Identify the difference between natural and man-made defensive features of the castle.
- Consider how these features work together to create strong defences.



An aerial view of Scarborough Castle.



Landscape and man-made features work together to make Scarborough Castle highly defensive.

Summary

During your visit, ask students to look for these defensive features:

- surrounded by water
- steep cliffs
- high ground
- curtain wall
- banks and ditches
- towers
- keep
- gatehouse

To help with this activity, use the Site Plan, which you can find online in the Teachers' Resource Pack: www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/scarborough-castle/school-visits.

Students could take photos or draw the features when they find them. They could discuss whether these are landscape features or man-made features, how they might beat each defensive feature and what might happen to them if they fail!

Back in the classroom, get students to sort the features they identified into two categories: 'landscape' or 'man-made', e.g. river = landscape, curtain wall = man-made. You could use the photos they have taken during the visit and do this as a visual sorting exercise. Students could then try to rank each defensive feature in order of importance. What might happen to the castle if you removed one or two of them? Are there any that are absolutely central to defending the castle?

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

You could use the Google Earth function on Google Maps to give your class an aerial view of Scarborough. This should show the features of the landscape and the layout of the castle.

You could also compile student photos and drawings into a class archive.

ACTIVITY 4

Recommended for

KS3 & KS4
(History, English, Geography,
Leisure & Tourism)

Learning Objectives

- Understand Scarborough Castle's transition from intimidating, defensive fortress to popular tourist destination.
- Consider the reasons for the tourism boom in Scarborough in Victorian times.



A view of the beach from the viewing platform at Scarborough Castle.

Summary

Before your visit, ask students to research Scarborough's history as a popular Victorian seaside spa resort.

By the 1730s, large numbers of tourists were flocking to the town to bathe in the sea as a health and leisure activity, which was a new idea at the time. The ruined castle is in a dramatic position, high up on the headland, which appealed to writers and artists. Tourist numbers increased further with the arrival of the railway in 1845.

During your visit, students can view the beach from the viewing platform and imagine Victorian holidaymakers relaxing on the beach and bathing in the sea.

As they explore the site, students should make notes and sketches to answer the following questions:

- What are the most interesting things to see at Scarborough Castle?
- Which parts of the castle's history are the most interesting for people?
- What adjectives would you use to describe what a visitor sees when they come to Scarborough Castle?
- What other things are there for visitors to do in Scarborough?

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, it might be helpful for students to carry out some research on the heritage tourism industry. They could look at advertising material for other heritage attractions in their area and try to identify what features of the site advertisers emphasise.

Using their observational sketches and notes from their visit, students could design their own tourist poster or leaflet encouraging people to visit Scarborough Castle.

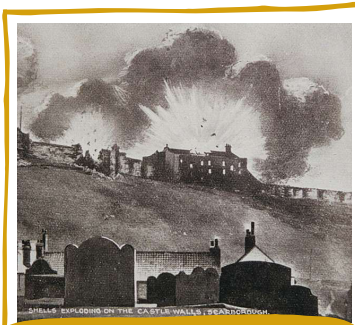
ACTIVITY 5

Recommended for

KS2–KS4
(History)

Learning Objectives

- Explore the story of the WWI German shelling at Scarborough and its impact on the local and national war effort.
- Imagine what it may have been like to live in Scarborough during the 1914 bombardment.



A retouched photograph from 16 December 1914 showing the First World War bombardment of the castle and destruction of the barracks.

Summary

On the morning of 16 December 1914, in the opening months of the First World War, the sea fog lifted to reveal three German warships off the coast at Scarborough. One was laying mines in the distance but two battle cruisers were in the bay itself and at 8.05 they opened fire.

During your visit, take students to stand on the grass in the outer bailey and read the extract (provided on the next page) from the Western Daily Press, published on Friday 18 December 1914. It's an account given by a child from the Bennett family, a family of six who lived in Wykeham Street. Ask students to imagine the sights, sounds and feelings they would experience if they were stood on this very spot during the 1914 German shelling. Once you have finished reading the extract, they could get into pairs and discuss their responses.

Back in the classroom, students could write a diary entry from the perspective of a child in the town on the day of the German shelling.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Students could research the country's reaction to the terrible events at Scarborough. The British public were shocked that innocent civilians had been killed and there was national outrage at the tragedy. Recruiting officers across the country used the slogan 'Remember Scarborough!' to try to persuade more young men to join the army. To explore this further, students could create their own 'Remember Scarborough!' recruitment poster.

ACTIVITY 5 continued

‘Everything fell on top of us all. Father and mother and two children were downstairs in the kitchen. Father had called out to me “Come on, lad, let’s get away downstairs. It’s the Germans. Come and look after mother.” But before I had time to get downstairs, it had all happened. [...] When at last I could look round me, I had only the shirt and slipper on [...] I found mother and the children all up in one corner. [...] Mother was on a chair [...] she had lost her hand. [...] Father was covered with debris, but somehow he pulled himself out. I don’t remember much about what happened after that, it was too terrible. My father and I got the others out as best we could. Eventually we moved mother into the yard, with little Jack and little George, but it was all too late. Mother was not dead when I was pulling them out, but she was gone by the time I got her into the yard. I then carried George into the next house, but he died as I put him down.’

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