The Norman conquest

The Normans came to Britain from France in 1066. Norman French, or Old French, became the language spoken in the king’s court; but ordinary people continued to speak a form of English. However, between 1066 and 1350 over 10,000 words came from Norman French, and about 75% remain in modern English.

GETTING STARTED

Can you find the Old French origins of these words?

1. butler _____________________
2. portcullis _____________________
3. parliament _____________________

MOVING ON

Try this crossword by finding the modern English meaning of the Old French words in the clues.

1. Woollen cloth woven in a pattern of coloured stripes crossing at right angles, from Old French tertaine.
3. An underground prison cell.
5. From the Old French word pé de grue which means ‘foot of a crane’.
7. An animal or person that is being hunted, from the Old French cuire meaning ‘entrails’.
8. From the Old French word recerche which means ‘careful search’.

2. From the Old French balade meaning a poem or song to dance to.
4. A small ornamental case for holding a portrait or lock of hair, worn on a chain round the neck, from Old French locquet meaning a small latch or lock.
6. From the Old French pijon meaning ‘young bird’.
9. From the Old French porc espin which means ‘spiny pig’.
10. To act as a scout or search an area thoroughly, from Old French escouter meaning to listen.

How many did you get right? 2 = NOVICE 5 = EXPERT 10 = MAESTRO

You can use your Oxford English Dictionary for Schools and your Oxford Student’s Dictionary for these activities.