Invasion, Plague and Murder
Britain 1066–1485

Aaron Wilkes
James Ball

FREE Teacher Guide
Teacher’s Guide

About Key Stage 3 History by Aaron Wilkes

Introduction

The first Folens History series by Aaron Wilkes – published in 2003, and now published by Oxford University Press – has become one of the best-selling Key Stage 3 series in recent years. The series stuck rigidly to the idea that any books used in a history classroom should be as entertaining and as relevant as possible. To put it simply, children learn best when they are interested! And any half-decent teacher knows that if a class of students is hooked early on in a lesson by a disgusting picture, a curious title or a thought-provoking objective, a highly productive learning environment is created. The series successfully revamped traditionally ‘boring’ topics and surrounded the more interesting ones with academic rigour. There was a deliberate attempt to present the work in a way that made students go ‘Ugh!’ when they read the story of Thomas Becket’s murder, or ‘Yuk!’ when they examine medieval living conditions, or count their blessings when they study child labour during the 19th century. The books were dotted with weird facts (‘Fact’ boxes), extension opportunities (‘Hungry for more’), correct historical vocabulary (‘Wise-up words’) and formal assessments (‘Have you been learning?’).

New opportunities

In 2008, a revised programme of study – and developments in classroom technology that are now becoming the norm – gave us the chance to refresh and renew the series. The second edition of the Folens History series, now published by Oxford University Press as Key Stage 3 History by Aaron Wilkes, attempts to take on board the key themes that underpin the revisions and incorporate them in a series of that will inspire and engage a new generation of learners.

A flexible approach

The 2008 programme is made up of a broad framework of historical periods and strands. Students are still required to study aspects of British, European, and World history from medieval to modern times but the encouragement of an enquiry-based approach means teachers can focus on key aspects of the past within (and across) periods. Key Stage 3 History by Aaron Wilkes
allows teachers to do this by implementing six themed enquiries in each of the four books. These enquiries focus on:

- Tolerance
- Political power
- England’s relationship with Scotland, Wales, and Ireland
- Britain in a worldwide context
- Crime and punishment
- Religion

For example, the development of political power is the focus of a historical enquiry (*Who rules?*) across all four books. In this enquiry, students will assess the changing relationship between the Crown and the Church and later the Crown and Parliament. This includes examining topics such as Thomas Becket, Magna Carta, the Glorious Revolution, and the nature and motives of protest movements such as the Luddites, Chartists, and Suffragettes.

A diverse approach

Teachers have been asked to pay particular attention to diversity – highlighted as a key concept of history and as a curriculum dimension. In the series, Black and Asian history and Women’s history are covered in detail. Particular attention is paid to the work of Olaudah Equino and William Cuffay (*Book 3, Industry, Reform and Empire, 1750 –1900*), the contribution of Black and Asian soldiers in the Great War (*Book 4, Technology, War and Identities After 1900*), the impact of immigration to Britain in the 20th century (*Book 4, Technology, War and Identities After 1900*) and civil rights in the USA (*Book 4, Technology, War and Identities After 1900*). Strong female figures studied include Elizabeth I, Joan of Arc, Florence Nightingale, Mary Seacole, the suffragettes, and other important cultural icons of the 20th century.

A chance to develop students’ chronological understanding

Greater emphasis has been placed on developing students’ chronological understanding. By the end of Key Stage 3, students are expected to have developed a secure chronological framework of the past, so that they can identify and understand some of the major periods, events and developments in British, European, and World history. *Key Stage 3 History by Aaron Wilkes* provides an effective chronological base for teachers to do this throughout the whole of Key Stage 3. The books are written in chronological order – starting in the medieval period and going through to the 21st century. Within each book and CD-ROM students are encouraged to develop their
understanding of the relevant historical conventions by using precise dates, correct vocabulary, and chronological terms.

A student's sense of chronology, sequence, and duration is developed through repeated overviews, summative tasks, Historical Enquiries, and concept-specific work sections. For example, in *Book 2, Renaissance, Revolution and Reformation 1485–1750*, the development of man's scientific understanding is presented within a chronological framework as students study the change from the 'Age of Faith' to the 'Scientific Revolution'.

**A way of encouraging the development of skills**

The Second Edition provides a stimulating backdrop for promoting students knowledge, encouraging their communication skills and understanding historical evidence. Some topics, such as *The Princes in the Tower* (*Book 1, Invasion, Plague and Murder 1066–1485*), *Shakespeare or Fakespeare* (*Book 2, Renaissance, Revolution and Reformation 1485–1750*), or *Emily Davison* (*Book 4, Technology, War and Identities After 1900*), encourage students to evaluate a wide variety of historical evidence. They will be required to use a number of strategies and enquiry techniques to arrive at effective and reasoned conclusions. In each book, there are specific spreads which are designed to help students develop insights into values, beliefs and motives and encourage key processes, such as the ability to communicate ideas clearly and persuasively. Other topics, such as *Choose your weapons* (*Book 1, Invasion, Plague and Murder 1066–1485*) and *How religious were the Tudor monarchs?* (*Book 2, Renaissance, Revolution and Reformation 1485–1750*), focus on the ideas of change and continuity. The key concept of cause and consequence forms the central focus of topics such as *Why was there an English Civil War?* (*Book 2, Renaissance, Revolution and Reformation 1485–1750*) and *Why did the population explode?* (*Book 3, Industry, Reform and Empire, 1750–1900*).

**Key concepts: Significance and interpretation**

The two concepts of significance and interpretation are vital for a student’s understanding of the past. In *Book 1, Invasion, Plague and Murder 1066–1485*, students are encouraged to identify and assess the significance of the Norman Invasion of Britain. In *Book 2, Renaissance, Revolution and Reformation 1485–1750*, they are asked to judge the significance of the Reformation. In *Book 3, Industry, Reform and Empire, 1750–1900*, students get the chance to analyse and explain different types of historical interpretation when they study the success or otherwise of the British Empire.
In *Book 4, Technology, War and Identities After 1900*, they are asked to interpret the importance of the peace deals at the end of World War I.

**A citizenship resource**

*Key Stage 3 History by Aaron Wilkes* provides a stimulating history-based approach to teaching citizenship by addressing many of the issues, knowledge, skills, and understanding required by the Citizenship curriculum. For example, the value of democratic constitutions and the dangers of nationalisation and totalitarianism are covered in Book 4, when students address the rise of fascism and communism and their impact on the 20th century.

- Britain’s long history of cultural diversity is covered in-depth throughout the series in the Historical Enquiries.
- The importance of resolving conflict fairly is covered in Book 4, *Technology, War and Identities After 1900*, when the Paris Peace Treaties and their impact on Central Europe, the Balkans and Middle East is discussed.
- The impact of world events on British History (and vice versa) is covered throughout the series from the Crusades, to Columbus, to Britain’s Empire and modern terrorism.
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‘1066 and all that’

Rationale

The decision to examine the events of 1066 was rather straightforward. Indeed, the remarkable events of that year determine when this programme of study begins – so it would be rather strange if we didn’t look in depth at this iconic year. In order for the students to grasp just how seismic the changes were, it is necessary for them to be aware of what England was like before the Norman Invasion. To that end, we have included abroad outline of Saxon England’s system of government, population, wealth, religion, art, and architecture.

Once familiarised with pre-Norman England, the students can examine the power struggle that followed the death of Edward the Confessor. Students often reach very different conclusions when the various contenders are examined and they are required to make a judgement of the strength of the claims – leading to excellent class discussions on the nature of debate in history. The students learn of Hardrada’s fate through a causation task that relies heavily on the extraction of information from a cartoon. We have found that this is a very accessible and engaging way of getting the narrative of Stamford Bridge across. Once the scene has been set for the deciding battle, the students are extremely eager to look in more detail at how battles were fought. We decided to examine the weapons used by both sides in a way that will be familiar to teachers and students alike – although perhaps not in this context. The various strengths and weaknesses of the soldiers are displayed through basic horizontal histograms – enabling the students to make comparisons at a glance. This not only provides excellent numeracy links, it also allows the students to assess the two armies’ relative strengths and enables them to make sense of the tactics that both sides employ when the battle begins.

We decided to look at the Battle of Hastings itself in two separate sections – reflecting the ‘game of two halves’ nature of the fight. The students are then required to pull all the information together in a chronology task and make an overall judgement on the reasons for William’s victory, based on the knowledge they have gained through the whole unit of study. In our experience, by this stage the students are fascinated by all things Norman Invasion and the source-based task examining the possible fate of Harold is an ideal way to sign-off studying Britain’s most famous battle.
By looking at one of history’s greatest mysteries, the children learn about the nature of evidence and that history very rarely delivers a consensus – even on the most significant events.

Each individual lesson has specific starter and plenary ideas, tailored for the work the students are likely to do. However you might introduce the whole chapter with general chapter starter.

**Possible chapter starters**

As this is such a significant event, we believe that ideal starters for the early part of this section establish why 1066 was such an important year and when these events took place in relation to their lives. Some examples are:

- ‘How many different words can you make out of the letters I N V A S I O N?’ *(Links with literacy)*
- ‘What does the word invasion mean?’ *(Links with literacy)*
- ‘Give an example of when England was invaded and conquered by another country.’ *(Draws on existing knowledge; students will often mention Hitler, which enables the teacher to illustrate why the Norman Conquest is significant.)*
- ‘If it is 2012 now, and the Battle of Hastings took place in 1066, how many years ago was it?’ *(Links with numeracy)*

**Hungry for more?**

The quote, “I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand” is so apt for teaching. Why not try some of these ideas?

You could try some ‘contender role play’ with the students. Separate the class into three groups and assign them the task of writing a speech for their respective contender. They must nominate a spokesman to deliver it to the class.

Weather and access to sloping ground permitting, the Battle of Hastings is an ideal battle to re-enact. This not only delivers drama through the curriculum and appeals to kinesthetic learners, it also enables the students to grasp the importance of William's tactics and makes for a memorable lesson.
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England under the Normans

Rationale

Students often assume that all of England acquiesced to Norman control upon hearing of Harold’s death. The truth is very different and this section charts the tactics used by William to subjugate an entire nation. The conquest of England allows students, through source analysis, to see how William used ‘shock and awe’ tactics to brutally suppress the native populace. Once it has been established in the students’ minds that William had installed himself as King of a foreign nation, we decided it was time to look in detail at the three ways in which William consolidated his position.

Castles are things which all students are familiar with – or have some preconception of. The knowledge that they were first imported by the Normans in order to control England makes the students look at castles in a new light.

We decided to look at the Domesday Book in a degree of detail for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was of enormous value to William. The Domesday Book clearly illustrates the power and importance of knowledge, and helps students to make real sense of the saying that the pen is mightier than the sword. Secondly, we wanted to highlight its value to us. The Domesday Book is a peerless historical source that transcends the centuries and provides a comprehensive picture of life and development in England in the 11th century. Being teachers in the West Midlands, the source that describes Birmingham has a particular relevance to the students we teach. However, the Domesday Book is now online at the Public Record Office so it is possible to see what it was like in your area in the 11th century. This leads nicely to posing the question: ‘How would we know what it was like if it wasn’t for the Domesday Book?’ This reinforces the importance of sources in the study of history early on in the Key Stage.

The final element in William’s consolidation of power was the introduction of the feudal system. While examining this, it is not lost on the students that it is impossible for one man to control an entire nation alone. It not only teaches students about the nature of power, but introduces students to the concepts of delegation, hierarchy, and loyalty.
Possible chapter starters

- Ask the students to explain the hierarchy of power at their school, football club, family (*The Simpsons* can prove the source of debate over who really is in charge!). This sets up the class nicely for looking at the feudal system.
- Source some estate agents' brochures for various random properties. Ask the question, ‘Why are these given to would-be buyers?’ Then ask the question, ‘When William took over England, how would he know how big, rich, and populated the country was?’ This provides a nice entry into looking at the Domesday Book.

Hungry for more?

An extension task at home or in a computer room could be to track down the nearest town or village to your local area with a Domesday Book entry. Try [www.domesdaymap.co.uk](http://www.domesdaymap.co.uk) for the first online copy of the Domesday Book. This is a wonderful opportunity for a local history project and can really help history come to life.
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Castles

Rationale

Castles are probably the most visible evidence of the Middle Ages and have in many ways become synonymous with the period. In our experience, having been introduced to castles when examining the Norman Conquest, the students are hungry for more. For this reason, we decided to extend the section of the book that looked at castles in the new edition.

By the time the students study this section, they will already be familiar with Motte and Bailey castles – including their strengths and weaknesses. The evolution of castles – both in terms of materials and features – is charted in this section, taking the students from the most rudimentary wooden fortifications to the ‘stately home’ style that castles eventually evolved into. This provides an ideal opportunity to undertake a local history project where students can identify features of castle remains and attempt to explain their function as well as date them.

After this thorough examination of the defensive features of castles, we decided it was an ideal time to look at the methods people developed to attack castles. Sieges readily capture the students’ imagination and the Siege of Rochester in 1216 provides an excellent case study. Once the image of the attack has been examined, pose the question: ‘Which method of attack would you use if you were King John?’ Students never fail to be surprised and amazed by the revelation that it was burning pigs that ended the siege.

Sieges, of course, were very unusual occurrences in the life of a castle. We attempted to convey some of the flavour of everyday life in a castle in Who lives in a castle like this? By assigning a different student to each character, the whole class is engaged and their understanding of what it was like to live in a castle is broadened.

The 2008 programme of study requires the students to have a wider understanding of Britain’s place in the world. For this reason, we have included Castles around the world. This furnishes the students with the knowledge that castles were not a British or European phenomenon and that the creation of fortifications was a universal by-product of conquest and warfare.
The final part of this section attempts to explain why castle building came to an end and about the various roles that castles play today. We decided to include this as, in our experience, it was not readily apparent to the students why castles are no longer built. It is also an opportunity to explain how they are maintained and encourage students to take an active role in history.

**Possible chapter starters**

- Ask the students to explain what the word ‘castle’ means to them.
- Ask the students to list all the ways that people use to keep burglars out of their homes, factories, shops, etc. This leads nicely into examining the function and original role of castles.
- For a numeracy starter, conduct a survey of the class and establish: Who has been to a castle? Which castles have been visited? Who has been in the last year? Who went with school, family, youth group, etc.? Present results in histogram, pie chart, etc.

**Hungry for more?**

This is an ideal area to conduct a local history project. As outlined above, a local castle can be investigated to establish its history, usage, and what has been, or is being, done by way of preservation.

Again, what about role play? The *Who lived in a castle like this?* lesson is ideally suited for a schools version of the ‘What’s My Line?’ TV quiz show.
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How religious were people in the Middle Ages? Historical Enquiry

Rationale

Religion is such a dominant feature in British history, both in terms of the power it held and its influence on the everyday life of ordinary people, that we decided to dedicate a Historical Enquiry to it in each of the books in the series. Medieval religion provides such a stark contrast with today’s multi-faith and increasingly secular society, it is rich ground for comparisons that startle the students. The monopoly of the Catholic faith, its hierarchy and the use of fear to control the way people lived their lives, provide an excellent entry point into this Enquiry. In our experience, the task of creating their own Doom Painting not only helps students grasp their intended purpose, but also utterly engages them and can lead to some very interesting visions of heaven and hell! The use of fear is also countered by understanding the attraction of religion in explaining life’s mysteries and its role in people’s social lives.

We decided to examine the lives of monks and nuns for a number of reasons. Firstly, they reinforce the importance of religion and the duties performed in its name during the medieval period. Secondly, they provide an excellent opportunity for students to empathise with past lives by directly comparing their average day to that of a medieval monk. By examining the motives for adopting their lifestyle, students become aware of the stresses and strains that affected people in the Middle Ages.

The phenomenon of pilgrimages allows us to look at another manifestation of religion and its importance in medieval life. The various motives that the pilgrims give for undertaking their hazardous journeys provide a snapshot of hopes and fears of people in medieval England. The story, logistics, and details of their journey convey some of the colour of everyday life and give the students a broader understanding of the period.

Possible chapter starters

• Ask the students to list in their books the occasions in which they have visited a church. Go through the possible occasions, weddings, christenings, etc., asking for a show of hands for each. Explain that people went to church in medieval England too, but that it was very different.
• What does the word ‘church’ mean to them?
• Ask the students to list how many different churches they know of in the local area.
Hungry for more?

Try a research project on a local church: When was it built? What faith does it belong to?

Use OS maps from the Geography department or Google Earth™ to establish the number of local churches. Assign groups to research each church to find out which is the oldest, which denomination they are, whether they are still in use (have any been converted to flats etc.).

A medieval pilgrimage site in the local area would provide an excellent local history project, with the opportunity for an off-site trip, and would help reinforce the relevance of studying this period to the students.
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Life in the Middle Ages

In all our combined years of teaching, we have taught children from a variety of different backgrounds – but neither of us has taught a member of royalty. As much as our students are fascinated by the adventures and intrigues of the various monarchs, many are engaged most when studying areas that they consider directly relevant to them. The striking similarities and stark differences with their lives constantly cause the students to put themselves in the place of ordinary people in medieval England. This makes empathy far more achievable for the vast majority of students and leads to some very productive lessons. For this reason, we have extended the section of the book that addresses everyday life to make it as all-encompassing and accessible as possible.

We start the section by establishing where and how people lived in the Middle Ages by examining typical village and town life. The small scale, harshness and monotony of life for the majority of people is something that is not lost on the students. The scene is then set to look in more depth at various elements that provided so much of the colour in people’s lives.

Smells – especially bad ones – and basic bodily functions are the source of endless fascination for children. Public health is an excellent barometer of a society’s development and the contrast with today’s sanitised, squeaky-clean world never fails to amuse and engage the whole class.

In our experience, a world without televisions, music players of any description, computer games, and the myriad of other distractions that are available today, is almost beyond the comprehension of most students. With it firmly established in their minds that none of today’s leisure pursuits, including reading, were available – students quickly pose the question: ‘Just what did they do for fun?’ themselves. The brutal, and frankly bizarre, holy day pastimes provide an excellent opportunity to examine continuity and change – by identifying similarities and differences.

This is then continued by an in-depth examination of the ever popular and omnipresent football. We decided to include this as not only is football a major preoccupation for many students – it is a universal point of reference for all students.

Music is another thing that features, to some degree or other, in all students’ lives. Again, it is a rich ground for highlighting similarities (through
instruments and human beings’ apparently innate desire to hear and play music) and differences (its exclusively live and amateur nature).

Personal appearance is another preoccupation of young people and they are often fascinated to learn that the irrational whims of fashion are far from new. Although the styles are radically different, humans’ desire to make statements through their choice of dress is universal and timeless.

The Middle Ages were such a seminal time for the development and establishment of the English language, that we decided to dedicate a part of this section on everyday life to it. This not only increases links with literacy – it causes students to reassess just how ‘English’ some words in the English language are. There are obvious opportunities here to create curriculum links with both the English and MFL departments.

Food education and the importance of diet play a larger role in student’s lives than they did when the first editions were written. For this reason, we have included *Ready, steady, cook* – which outlines the typical diet of medieval people of different social standing. This not only helps to bring the Middle Ages to life, it also provides opportunities for links with your school’s Technology department.

Like castles, knights have become synonymous with the Middle Ages. For this reason, we have decided to revamp and extend the section that looks at these most romantic of medieval figures. The first section looks at chivalry, both in its medieval and modern context, and the process that young men went through to become knights. To many students, the idea that, at their tender age, they are too old to become a knight is one that fills them with disbelief. The romance and spectacle of medieval tournaments are endurably fascinating to people of all ages. The large cartoon we have included allows visual learners to investigate these events under their own steam.

To conclude this section, we decided to include a lesson on heraldry. Students love the idea of creating a badge or shield that represents them, their school or football team. By doing this, the original, intended purpose of heraldry is easily grasped.

**Possible starter activities**

*Fun*

List the five most popular participation sports in Britain today: golf, football, fishing, rugby, and cricket. Pose the question: ‘Which do you think would
have been played in the Middle Ages?’ Explain that rugby and cricket weren’t played and that fishing was a source of food rather than a pastime. They will start to think, ‘What did they do instead?’ and the scene is set for looking at Could you have fun in the Middle Ages?

**Fashion**

Ask the class to write down any fashion fads they may have fallen victim to. Are there any clothes that they used to love wearing but wouldn’t be seen dead in now? Ask for volunteers to give answers. Why is this?

**Food**

Ask the students to write down their favourite foods. Ask for volunteers and write them on the board. Go through the list with the class, asking whether these would have been available in the Middle Ages and explaining their origins (pizza, burgers, curry, etc.). Make the point that there was a lot less choice in medieval England and then begin the lesson.

**Music**

Ask the students to write down the names of their favourite musicians or bands. Ask for a show of hands for those who have seen them perform live. If they haven’t, how have they heard their music? Would any of the modern methods of listening to music have been available to people in the Middle Ages? Which?

**Knights**

Explain the modern definition of the word ‘chivalry’. Ask students for examples that they can think of, for example, giving up a seat on a bus for a pregnant lady, holding a door open, being quiet during a golf shot, etc. Explain that chivalry has its origins with medieval knights – begin lesson!

**Hungry for more?**

Investigate blood sports and chart the legislation that has developed around them. Which are now illegal? Why? This leads to excellent class debates and links with Citizenship.

Source some glossy Sunday-style magazines (ask students to bring them in) and distribute amongst the class. Get the students to work out the proportion of the magazine that is devoted to fashion and display this visually (through graphs – links with numeracy). This helps to emphasise the preoccupation with fashion that students often take for granted.
Ask the students to record what they ate for dinner one night in the week and where the ingredients came from. Once its cultural origins have been established, set a ‘food miles’ task that establishes how far the food has travelled to reach their plate. This provides an excellent contrast with medieval food and superb links with Geography and Citizenship.

Showing an extract from the Hollywood movie *A Knight’s Tale* reinforces the learning about tournaments (particularly the scoring system) and the cultural/class conventions regarding the participation of nobles and commoners.

Instruct the students to keep a ‘Chivalry Log’ for the following week. They must record every chivalrous act they commit in their log and report back the following week.
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How tolerant were people in the Middle Ages? Historical Enquiry

Examples of tolerance, or lack of it, are present in every period of history. For this reason, it is eternally topical and relevant to the lives of the students. This is why we have dedicated a Historical Enquiry about tolerance in every book in the series. The example provided by England’s medieval Jews enables the students to place the issue of immigration in its correct historical context. They can also examine the Jews’ motives for moving to England and the reasons that lay behind the intolerance displayed by the indigenous population. By examining the lives of women, both ordinary in What about her story? and regal in Matilda: England’s forgotten queen, students gain an insight into the female oppression of the period. The contrast with modern attitudes to sexual equality can lead to no small amount of amusement in the classroom but the inherent irrationality of sexism and prejudice is quickly grasped by the students when they examine the power struggle between Stephen and Matilda.

We decided to place the Crusades in the context of tolerance as it was a lack of understanding between the two faiths that led directly to the atrocities and bloodshed. The reasons for starting the Crusades and the significance of Jerusalem provide an obvious curriculum link with RE, and often help students to place existing knowledge in its correct historical context. We decided to emphasise the epic nature of the Crusades through a chronology task, while at the same time requiring the students to make judgements on the degree of tolerance displayed. The iconic clash between Saladin and Richard the Lionheart, the human tragedy of the Children’s Crusade and the bloody sieges all combine to form a fascinating narrative that grips the students.

The final part of this Enquiry focuses on the knowledge exchanged during this clash of civilisations. Not only does this inform the students of how and when everyday objects and ideas came to Europe, it leads them to the self-evident conclusion that more is to be gained from talking than fighting.

Possible chapter starters

• Mind-map the word ‘tolerance’.
• Ask the students to list in their books all the reasons why some people get bullied. Sensitive teacher guidance here should draw out answers such as a difference in appearance (glasses, clothes, etc.).
• What is a sexist joke? Do they know any? Why do people tell sexist jokes? This leads nicely to discussion of modern attitudes of sexual equality.
• Pose the question, ‘When you leave school, will there be any jobs that only the male members of the class will be able to apply for?’ This leads to the realisation that employers are now unable to discriminate against applicants on the grounds of sex and that women have been successful in every profession and trade.

Hungry for more?

This is an excellent Enquiry to undertake in tandem with the Citizenship teachers. Between the two subjects, students can establish the difference between prejudice and discrimination. An excellent research topic would be to find modern examples of both of these. This can then lead to examining the issue of immigration in today’s society.
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Who rules? Historical Enquiry

The shifting scales of power and the evolution of parliamentary democracy are obviously essential areas of study in any era of British history and none more so than in the Middle Ages. The concept of the monarch’s absolute authority will have been established in the students’ minds from studying the Norman Invasion and the feudal system. They will also be aware that, although we have a monarch, society is no longer organised in that way. This Historical Enquiry allows the students to chart the gradual shift in power by examining separate challenges to the King’s authority. These challenges also came from different sections of society and threw up all sorts of stories and scenarios that readily engage the students.

The story of Thomas Becket is not only a dramatic and gory narrative that grips the whole class, it provides an ideal launch pad for examining the debate over the role of religion in society and the importance of equality in the courts and a single system of justice. It also allows the students to assess the extent of the monarch’s power and perhaps amend their previous conception of power in the Middle Ages.

When studying the power struggle with the barons, the causation tasks that students undertake allow them to investigate the relationship between money and power. The significance of the Magna Carta in establishing a law that applies to all and that cannot be changed at the whim of a monarch is something that students can easily relate and readily respond to. By creating a charter for their school, students subconsciously take onboard the importance of laws and rules that apply to everybody. This point can be made more overtly by examining Princess Anne’s driving conviction! The Peasants’ Revolt enables the students to put together the version of events that they believe most likely through source analysis. This leads nicely to discussing the relative reliability of sources based on author, date, and intended audience. The revolt also provides an excellent opportunity to look at the power of collective bargaining over that of the individual and its role in today’s society through trade unions.

Possible chapter starters

• Pose the question, ‘Who had the most power in medieval England?’.
  Students will draw on their existing knowledge and give the answer of King. Then show them the image of Henry being whipped by monks. Then pose the question, ‘What on earth could have happened to create the situation where the King is allowing himself to be whipped?’ Examine the case of
Thomas Becket and revisit their answers to this question to see if any of them were right.

- Pull up or put on a sheet five or six images of famous or notorious people (royalty, famous footballer, pop star, notorious criminal, etc.). Set the scene that they had been caught speeding. Pose the question, ‘What would happen to each of these people?’ This enables you to establish that Britain is governed by the principle that everyone answers to the same courts of law – no matter what your station in life. This starter helps no end in establishing the significance of the Magna Carta.

- Set the scenario that a bypass/airport extension, etc. is planned for the area. Pose the question, ‘What could ordinary people do to protest?’ Go through the options; petitions, write to their MP, demonstrations, etc. This leads perfectly in to explaining the actions of some of the peasants during the revolt.

Hungry for more?

Research project linked with Citizenship: If we are unhappy with the way we are being ruled today – what options are open to us? This leads to an explanation of the actions of the barons and the peasants and an appreciation of democracy. An examination of the way we are governed leads to the realisation that we can vote governments out but can do nothing about the monarchy. This can be taken further to examine the role of the monarchy.

Why not ‘go global’? Ask students to look for examples of how people in other countries have reacted/protested/rebelled against their leaders in the past. The 2011 ‘Arab Spring’ is an obvious area of focus.
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Health and medicine

The catastrophe that was the Black Death is the headline story of Health and medicine in the Middle Ages and provides a dramatic entry to the subject area. We decided to begin the whole thing with a detailed examination of the painting The Triumph of Death. In our experience, students would stare at this picture for hours if you let them. But we haven’t only included it because it is an extremely effective tool for engaging even the most disruptive of students, but because it also conveys the way people saw illness and disease, and the terror they must have felt in the Middle Ages.

Once the horror of the plague has been established, we decided it was the ideal time to introduce the modern understanding of the biology behind the Black Death. The gruesome details of both plagues glue children to the page and provide an ideal opportunity to create curriculum links with the Science department. The lengths to which some people resorted in order to avoid a painful and terrible death may cause some amusement, but is a quick and effective way of conveying the fear and desperation felt by many people. After the students have been fully furnished with the effects of the Black Death on the individual, we then decided to examine the wider socio-economic effects. This enables students to understand that, even though two thirds of the population survived the epidemic, nobody’s life was left untouched by the Black Death.

Obviously, the Black Death was not the only threat to life in the Middle Ages or the only concern that people had regarding their healthcare. Students tend to believe that modern medical attitudes and techniques have always existed and are amazed to conceive of a world without the safety net of doctors and hospitals. Anything involving blood, bodily functions or excreta will instantly grab children’s attention, and the investigation into the beliefs and practices prevalent during the Middle Ages quickly causes expressions of gratitude for modern medicine from the class. Through this investigation, students can identify areas of continuity as well as change and attempt to explain the thinking or logic behind the treatments of various ailments.

The final lesson in this section looks at the demise of the most privileged members of medieval society – the monarchs. We included this because it not only provides an overall chronology of England’s Kings between 1066 and 1509, it also enables the various horrific, hilarious, and mundane ends to
be recounted. Once firmly engaged, students undertake some statistical analysis of the deaths – which requires them to draw on their numeracy skills – and results in a breakdown of the most prevalent killers in the Middle Ages.

**Possible chapter starters**

- Find some old/current news stories from the Internet that are concerned with Avian Influenza and distribute amongst the class. Pose the question, ‘Why were people so worried about a bird flu epidemic?’ Draw out the answer that the fear comes from the lack of a cure and the indiscriminate nature of an epidemic. This enables the students to empathise with medieval people far more easily and helps to convey the terror they must have felt.

**Hungry for more?**

A research project can be undertaken that looks at modern epidemics such as the Spanish flu of 1919, foot-and-mouth in Britain in the 21st century, and the AIDS pandemic in Africa. This is fertile ground for links with the Science department.
Could you get justice in the Middle Ages?
Historical Enquiry

We decided that the issue of justice was worthy of examination across the whole of the series for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is relevant to the students through its inherently topical nature. Crime, its investigation and the prosecution of suspects is a constant presence in children's lives through films, TV series, and the news. This provides numerous opportunities to reinforce the relevance of studying medieval crime and punishment, and a very accessible route in to the topic.

This is reinforced when the details of crime and punishment are examined. In our experience, kids love the strangeness of the idea of a world without a police force to act as a safety net. They are also utterly engaged by the bizarreness of trials by ordeal and the gore which typified medieval punishments. These are things that they will go home and tell their parents about.

When studying crime and punishment in the Middle Ages, students can identify similarities and differences with the justice system in Britain today. This enables them to evaluate the relative ‘fairness’ of both approaches to justice and to identify areas of strength and weakness. They can also come to a decision over whether religion has a role to play in justice.

Possible chapter starters

We have found that the best starters are simple questions that require the students to write down their answers, and draw on their existing knowledge or opinions. Three such examples are:

1. List all of the TV programs that you can think of that involve crime or punishment. (Leading to class discussion on the importance of crime and punishment in society.)

2. Who is responsible for catching and criminals? (Leading to a class discussion about the role of the police and if society could function without them.)

3. Who decides if someone is guilty or innocent? (Leading to a class discussion on jury service and the very real possibility that they may serve on a jury in the future.)
What is the most common punishment used today? (In our experience 99% of students will say jail. The correct answer is the use of fines – something that hasn’t changed since Saxon times. This provides an excellent opportunity to illustrate continuity with the past.)

Hungry for more?

The staging of a moot trial would be an ideal extension task for this topic – and provide excellent links with Citizenship and Drama. A written task could then follow which asks the students to consider which system of justice they would rather be tried under and to explain the reasons for their answer.
10 Teacher’s Guide

England at war Historical Enquiry

Wars, whether successes or failures, are often defining features of a nation’s history. The 2008 programme of study requires a greater emphasis on England’s relationship with its neighbours. For these reasons, we decided to dedicate a Historical Enquiry to the wars fought by England, and later Britain, in each book of the series. It is especially relevant in Invasion, Plague and Murder, as the wars fought in this period did so much to establish a national identity that still resonates today. Edward I is probably better known in Scotland and Wales than he is in England, and this Enquiry attempts to explain why. His campaigns in Wales, the effects of which are still clearly visible through the castles and towns of the North, all but ended Welsh independence from England. A clear understanding of this invasion not only equips the students with an insight into the relationship between the two peoples, it also gives them a broader perspective on the current debate over devolution and political parties such as Plaid Cymru.

Scotland’s successful repulsion of both Edward I’s and Edward II’s armies did so much to preserve the distinction and separate identities of the two nations, we decided that it deserved its own double-page spread in the Second Edition. William Wallace and Robert the Bruce are so central to Scotland’s history and national identity that their inclusion was a prerequisite. In our experience, students tend to be aware of Wallace through Mel Gibson’s film (even though it is clearly intended for adult audiences!) and are keen to separate the ‘Hollywood from the Holyrood’. By deciding whether Edward I deserved to be called the ‘Hammer of the Scots’, the students not only assess the success of his campaigns, they also gain an insight into his motives and low opinion of the Scottish people – and the subsequent attitude of some Scots towards the English. The relevance of these issues is reinforced by looking at the return of the Stone of Destiny and the chorus of ‘Flower of Scotland’.

We decided to complete the Enquiry by examining the Wars of the Roses. As the conflict was primarily a power struggle between two families that had a limited impact on the lives of ordinary people, we decided to provide an overview of the major twists and turns. As the outcome of the wars, and the future of England’s monarchy, hinged on the two Princes in the Tower, we decided to include an extended source-based exercise on this famous mystery. The age of the princes and the uncertainty over their fate quickly engages the students and provides a very accessible route to source analysis.
Choose your weapons not only indulges the students in their fascination for the gory side of history, it also provides them with the chronological framework of the development of military technology in the Middle Ages. They probably won't realise this – they'll be too busy enjoying themselves!

Possible chapter starters

• The modern relationship between England, Wales, and Scotland can be explored through a short questionnaire, for example: Do you need a passport to go to Scotland or Wales? Who is the Prince of Wales? What flag is this (Union flag)? What money is used? What is the national flower, patron saint, etc.?

Hungry for more?

This topic lends itself beautifully to being broadened to encompass devolution, nationalist parties, the West Lothian question, the Welsh assembly, etc. ‘Should Scotland and Wales be independent from England?’ is an excellent topic for a class debate and the students are eager to use their historical knowledge in a contemporary context.
England abroad

The new programme of study places a far greater emphasis on establishing England’s place in the wider world. For this reason, we have dedicated a Historical Enquiry in each book of the series that examines England’s (and later Britain’s) influence overseas. For obvious reasons, this is limited to France – and in particular the One Hundred Years War – during the Middle Ages but incorporates some of the most iconic figures and battles of British and European history. It also allowed us to make the point that, for the first time since 1066, England and France’s ruling elite were distinct from each other and, for the first time, people began to consider themselves English.

We decided to begin the enquiry with a chronological overview of the One Hundred Years War. In our experience, the students find it hard to comprehend a war that outlasts all of its initial protagonists and a war that lasts such a long time is an ideal opportunity to reinforce chronological skills. The relative fortunes of England and France are illustrated through the rise and fall of the rollercoaster and, by requiring the students to examine the image and its labels, the key events and the order they came in are firmly established in their minds.

From England’s point of view, the stand-out battle of the One Hundred Years War is that of Agincourt. With perhaps the exception of the Battle of Britain, Agincourt is probably the most firmly established victory in the nation’s psyche and is considered a ‘high point’ in British history. For this reason, we decided to examine not only the weapons, tactics, and possible explanations for Henry’s victory, but also the reasons for the battle’s enduring fame and notoriety.

The success and fame of Henry is then countered by examining the story of the French heroine, Joan of Arc. The reason we included a lesson on her was to draw attention to the fact, despite the sexist attitudes of the time, it was possible to be female and young, and still be an effective military leader. The aforementioned sexist attitudes make female role models rather thin on the ground during this period, so, in the interests of diversity and equality, we had to incorporate a lesson on Joan. She provides an excellent case study in leadership and what motivates people to fight and to be led.
Possible chapter starters

- Tell students that they are about to look at a war that lasted from 1337 to 1453. Ask them to work out and write in their books how many years it lasted (links to numeracy) and to come up with a possible name for such a war.
- Ask the students to write down the name of a famous battle that they know of (not necessarily studied) and what they know about it. Ask for examples and then explain that you are going to look at one of the most famous battles in English, and British, history.
- Mind map female role models. Then ask for examples of famous female military leaders. In our experience you won’t get many (Boudicca and Cleopatra have been mentioned!) and you can then explain that you are going to look at one today.

Hungry for more?

In recent years, the Agincourt legend – which is a keystone of the English self-image – has been called into doubt. Some historians have reassessed the battle and come to some startling conclusions. Why not ask students to research some of these ideas?