


# Educational Approaches



## History

As part of Key Stage 3 History (Britain 1500-1750), a study of crowns, parliaments and people, including the local area if appropriate, the castle and the story of the siege and the Battle of Winceby are invaluable. Some suggested educational approaches might be:

- 1) As an exercise to encourage pupils to consider the available technology of the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century and the techniques of warfare at the time. *Either* pupils could imagine that they are Royalists who have been ordered to prepare the castle for an imminent siege. They should decide what needs to be done and how they can achieve it, *or* the class could divide into two groups, Royalists and Parliamentarians. It is Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October 1643. The Parliamentarians have arrived at Bolingbroke castle and demanded that the Royalists surrender. They have refused and the siege is now beginning. The Royalists must decide how they will defend the castle. The Parliamentarians must decide how they will attack it.

- 2)  Explore the earthworks in the rout yard and study the different theories about what they might represent, especially the large rectangular one at its centre. Encourage pupils to discuss what the earthworks might be and how they might have been used.



Aerial view of the castle and the rout yard from the west  
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- 3) A role-play activity linking through to *English/drama* to encourage pupils to put themselves in the place of a soldier involved in the siege. This is a paired activity. One person is an interviewer and the other is a person being interviewed. The one being interviewed decides whether he/she is a Royalist or a Parliamentarian. The interview is taking place at the end of the Civil War in early February 1649.

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King Charles I has just been executed and the person being interviewed was a soldier involved in the siege of Bolingbroke Castle. Pupils should think about what the interviewer might like to ask the soldier about his memories and involvement in the Civil War, and about the answers he might give. Working together, they should write a script for the interview and then act it out. They could even sound record or video their interview.

## Local History

A study based on Bolingbroke Castle is relevant in several ways to the local history element of the Key Stage 2 history curriculum. The history of the castle could form an ideal basis for an investigation into aspects in the local area that have changed over a long period of time. Alternatively, the impact of the siege and the Civil War on the castle and the village would be relevant to a study of how the locality was affected by a significant national or local event. Some approaches might be:


- 1) To consider changes over time, pupils could look at the history of the castle from the earlier Norman structure on Dewy Hill to the building of the new one on the lowland site, its use and function over time, its part in the civil war, its subsequent demolition and decay, its excavation by archaeologists in the 1960s and 1970s and its management as a scheduled ancient monument open to the public. How has the village been affected by these changes? This could also link to *Key Stage 3 geography - the changing characteristics of settlements*.



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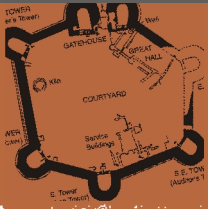
- 2) To consider the effect of a significant national event on the area, pupils could imagine that they are an ordinary person living in Bolingbroke during the Civil War. (They might choose to be a child, the village blacksmith or the vicar, for example). They could then produce their own account of what life is like and how it has been changed by the events going on around them.

- 3)  As a local history project (also linking to *geography*, *I.T* and *maths*), pupils could use appropriate measurement and surveying techniques to produce their own plans and maps of the castle and rout yard.

## English

The story of the siege and the battle could be used to practice speaking and listening and reading skills, and as the basis for a wide range of writing exercises.

- 1) To practice writing for a range of audiences and in a range of forms, pupils could take the part of a newspaper reporter on the scene and write a press report of the the events as they are happening, or Key Stage 3 pupils could rewrite Gervase Holles' 1640 description of the castle in modern English. They could be asked to do this as though they were writing so that a younger child could understand it.
- 2) To imagine and explore feelings and ideas, pupils could imagine that they are Royalist soldiers inside the castle and write a daily diary entry about what is happening and how they feel. What would they write for these specific dates?: (a) Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October 1643, the first full day of the siege, (b) Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 1643, when they have just heard about the outcome of the Battle of Winceby and (c) Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 1643, when they know that you they will soon have to surrender.



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## Art and design

The siege and battle could provide useful starting points for practical art and design work.

- 1) The sights, sounds and overall experience of battle, the costumes of the opposing sides, the shapes and textures of the surrounding landscape and the materials and technology available at the time could all become the basis for art and design work.
- 2) Pupils could produce their own 'reconstruction drawings', either of the castle as a whole or a part of it, based on how they imagine the castle would have looked in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and on Gervase Holles' written description of the castle in 1640.

