

# Portraits of the Working People of Somerset

## Strand 1



## The Medieval World

Introducing Primary Aged Children to the Early Tudor World

As part of this project we invite you to take part either in a visit to Glastonbury Abbey or to hire our team of medieval re-enactors to come to your class, so as to provide a taste of what the medieval world might have been like.

At Glastonbury Abbey the main focus of a school visit is to help children experience for themselves something of the distinctive features of the world in the early Tudor period. To help us we have the ruins of one of the foremost abbeys ever built in England, which has claims to be one of the first Christian communities to be founded in these islands.

We also have a team of experienced Living History re-enactors, who try to bring to life some of the things that set us apart from these people living 500 years ago. They work in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Abbot's Kitchen where they can demonstrate how the ordinary things of life, food, drink, work and worship can be very different when seen through the lens of history.

If the cost of coach hire and a visit to the Abbey is beyond the budget of your class, we can also bring a team of 3 or more re-enactors into your classroom for a day to demonstrate the skills of everyday life in the medieval world.

Costs for these activities:

#### 2011 – 2012 Visit to the Abbey

£4.00 per student under 16 years old  
1 free supervising adult with every 10 children  
Other adults £5.00 per person

#### 2011 – 2012 Visit to the school

£200.00 per day, all materials supplied  
If your children would like to buy their own braiding rings, these can be supplied at £1.00 each. Orders can be taken on the day of the visit.

Concepts underpinning the practical activities:

- Learning from first hand experience, modelling going back in time to see what the world was like 500 years ago.
- Talking and asking questions of a Living History re-enactor in role as a member of the Abbey team before the Reformation.
- Compare and contrast the life of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century child with the life of a 16<sup>th</sup> Century child
- Find out how food was created out of basic ingredients by hand and compare with today's consumerism.
- Begin to understand that money was both less important in a world where barter was the norm, and more important, since the state did not provide for the poor in medieval times.
- Realise that skills such as dressmaking, woodwork, spinning and weaving were not hobbies but ways of clothing the family and perhaps making a living.
- Appreciate that leisure time is not a concept that was understood for most people in the past.

Focus Questions:

Why did they live like that?

Why do we do things differently?

Were people more skilful in Tudor times? What can they do that we would find hard? What can we do that they would find unusual?

## Timetables:

### A Visit to the Abbey:

We expect that school trip visits will start at the Abbey between 9.30 and 10.00 and last until 14.00 or 14.30 depending on the length of your school day and how far you have to travel to reach us. Your base room for a day at the Abbey is our Outdoor Classroom with seats for 40 people and storage for lunchboxes etc.

A standard timetable for a "Tools of the Trades" visit for a class of 30 KS2 children might look something like this:

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 09.30 – 10.00 | Arrive and settle in, look around the museum.   |
| 10.00 – 10.30 | Whole class visit to Abbot's Kitchen to discover some of the similarities and differences in everyday life between our world and the world of the Abbey |
| 10.30 – 10.45 | Comfort/snack break   |
| 10.45 – 12.00 | Group Activity sessions on aspects of medieval life<br>Making a medieval cheese sandwich  |
| 12.00 – 12.30 | Lunch   |
| 12.30 – 13.00 | Tour of the ruins, history of the local area,   |
| 13.00 – 14.00 | Group Activity sessions on aspects of medieval life   |
| 14.00 – 14.30 | Time to visit the shop, comfort break before journey  |

If you would like the Living History Team to visit your classroom a standard timetable might look like this:

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 9.30  | Team arrives and sets up in classroom   |
| 10.00 | Introduction and first demonstration, usually whole class   |
|       | Making furniture with a pole lathe and a spoke shave  |
|       | Break time to fit in with school timetable  |
|       | After break small group activity sessions until school lunchtime  |
|       | Preparing a medieval cheese sandwich, making bread, butter and cheese by hand,                          |
|       | Using a weaving loom  |
|       | Afternoon session   |
|       | Short whole class activity completing morning activities  |
|       | Eating the samples of food from the morning session   |
|       | Small group activity sessions for another hour  |
|       | Spinning, drop spindle, Cadeous wheel, Basket making  |
|       | Last session usually on playground or in school hall - Children's games, singing, dancing, music making |