



A Teaching Resource

Priory Learning in conjunction with the Herbert

A Monks Life KS2 and KS3 Contents



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Children dressed as monks in the Priory Undercroft



INTRODUCTION

Session length: 45 minutes

Staff – pupil ratio: Please note the space in the undercroft is limited and larger classes will need to enquire before visiting.

Session Description: Children will visit the Priory's atmospheric medieval undercroft. They will begin to develop an understanding of what life was like for the monks at the time as well as the buildings surrounding them. An introductory tour of the surrounding 'first cathedral' and its remains today is a crucial part to this development.

This teacher's resource pack has been designed to support the KS2 and KS3 school curriculum.

Within this pack you will find a selection of cross curricular activities supporting the development of key skills and other useful resources to complement your work in the classroom. The activities are suitable to be carried out pre or post visit to the Priory and we strongly recommend a visit to the visitor centre to get the most out of your pack.

Learning Outcomes

Through attending this session your children will build on the following:

Essential knowledge - historical, geographical and social understanding:

- a better understanding of how the present has been shaped by the past, through developing a sense of chronology, exploring change and continuity over time, and understanding why things happened
- a better understanding of why places and environments develop
- a better understanding of how identities develop, what we have in common, what makes us different (from a time perspective)

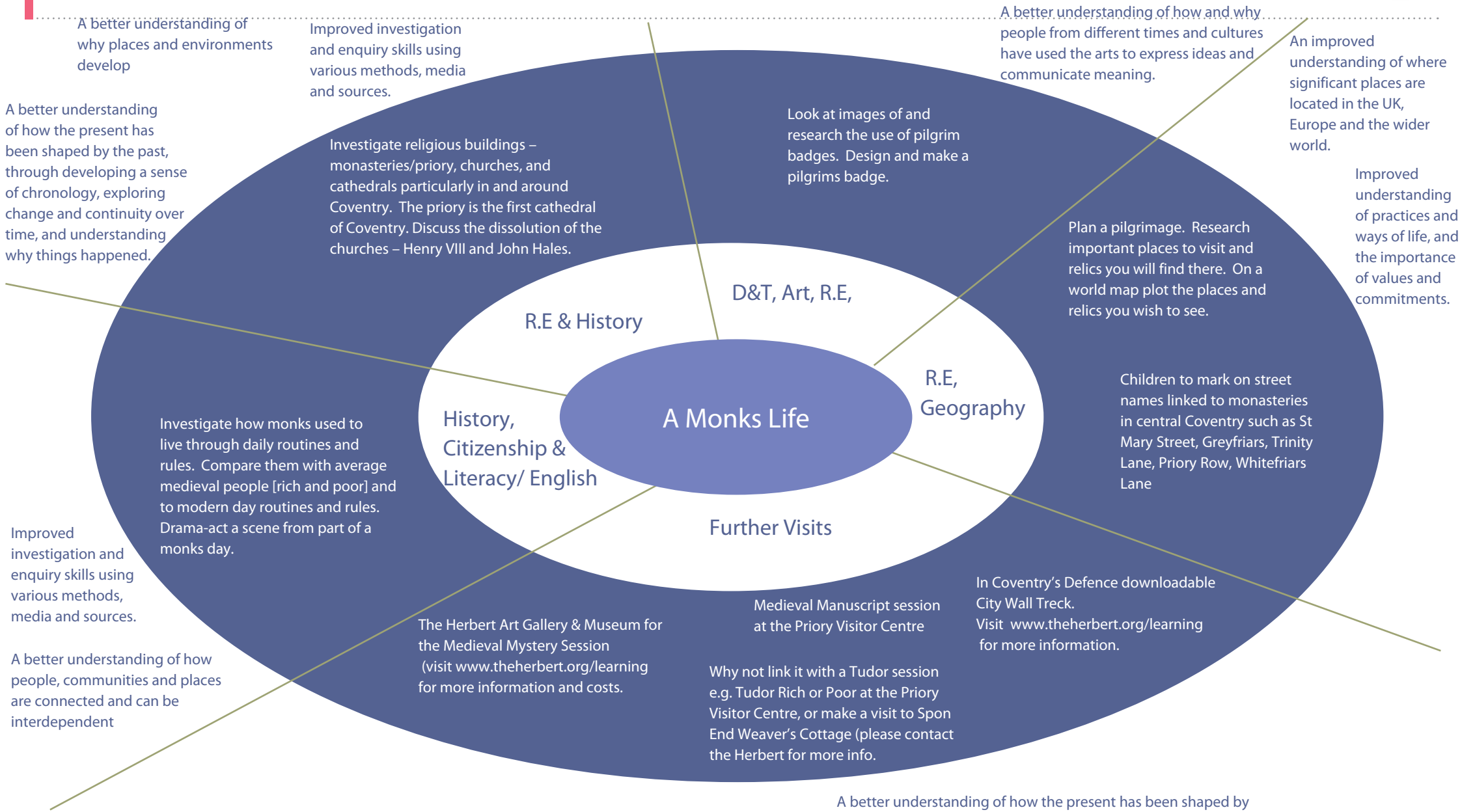
Key skills - understanding English, communication and languages:

- improved listening skills in order to understand and respond
- improved speaking skills in order to present ideas and opinions



Child wearing a pilgrims hat

Priory Learning in conjunction with the Herbert Curriculum Connections and Learning Outcomes 02





Why do we learn about Monks at the Priory Visitor Centre?

The Priory Visitor Centre was erected where the remains of the first Cathedral in Coventry stood.

The Monks

In medieval Coventry there were several different orders of Monks:

The Benedictine Monks – The Black Friars
The Cistercian Monks – The White Friars
The Franciscan Monks – The Grey Friars

So who would become a monk and why?
Men and boys from different backgrounds from the wealthiest to the poorest would turn to monasteries in order to:

Devote lives to serving God
Live life safely and secluded from violence
Or simply to lead a quiet and peaceful life

The Clothing

Monks would have worn:

Tunic – tied with cloth or leather belt
Scapula – wide piece of cloth worn over shoulders
Cowl – attached to scapula (hood) – worn for prayer or quiet time

Monks would have their head shaved in the centre with a rim of hair. This is called a tonsure.

The Buildings

- The chapter house was where the monks went to ask for pardon and accuse others of doing wrong.
- The dormitory would have been where the monks slept.
- The garderobe was the toilet area of the monastery
- The infirmary was where the sick monks would go.
- The cloister was usually a covered walkway or an area where the monks would gather.



This is a metal ampulla. It would have been used to carry holy water and worn around the neck. There would have been a pilgrimage to collect the holy water from a sacred place.

Ampulla



This catherine wheel pilgrim badge represents Saint Catherine, the Christian Martyr, who was nailed to a cross set on a post and then spun on a wheel which was set alight in 300s AD.

Catherine wheel pilgrim badge



This sword and buckler pilgrim badge is based on a small fist shield (the buckler) and sword. It would most likely have been worn / used by someone in the military.

Sword and buckler pilgrim badge



- The pilgrim badge that resembles a bull is actually a horse and links to Saint Thomas of Becket.
- The pelican in piety refers to how it plucked feathers out of its chest to feed its young in the nest. It symbolises the blood of Jesus.
- There is one representing a glove.
- The one with initials IHS is a Christian term for Jesus Christ.

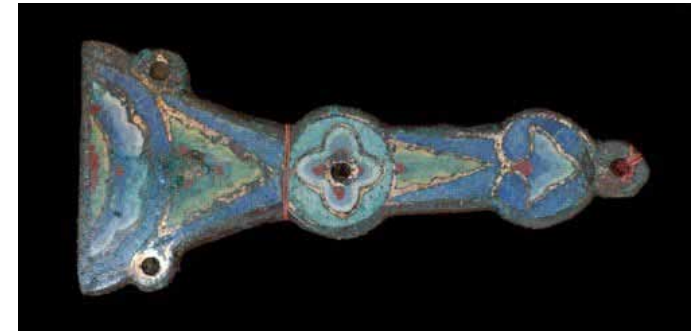
Pilgrim badges



This pewter plate is a rare survivor. It may have been used as part of the holy communion.

This can be seen in the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in the History Gallery.

Pewter plate



This enamel painted book clasp (used to hold a book closed) was used in about 1220. It is rare, particularly in this condition with its colours still visible. It would have been used on a very important book - if not the Bible another religious text.

This can be seen in the Priory Visitor Centre.

Enamel painted book clasp



This medieval wall painting depicts the Appocolypse (judgement day)

This can be seen in the Priory Visitor Centre.

Medieval wall painting of the Appocolypse



This is an example of illuminated text from Coventry's archives. A lot of illuminated texts were written by monks whose job would have been a scribe.

Example of illuminated text



This is a rare surviving leather medieval mystery play mask, which would have been used when performing mystery plays on the streets of Coventry.

This can be seen at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in the History Gallery.

Medieval Mystery Play mask



A misericord was used as a bottom rest for monks whilst singing for hours in church. It was carved underneath (the view seen here) so that when they were not in use and put up, it would have a decorative purpose. When in use it would create the effect of monks standing, but actually seated. Anything could be carved on these including family crests.

Some examples can be seen in the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in the History Gallery.

Misericord



Some examples can be seen in the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in the History Gallery.

Misericord



This is an example of a small misericord. The main difference is that it did not fold up.

Some examples can be seen in the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in the History Gallery.

Small misericord



This stone makers mark would show the identity of the person who created the stone. It would have been individual, although many were similar due to the lack of writing ability.

Makers mark on priory wall stone



This roof boss, which would have been part of the roof decoration and therefore intended to be viewed by looking up, shows a curled up dragon.

This can be seen at the Priory Visitor Centre.

Dragon roof boss



This statue has had many people in debate over who it is of. Some feel it could be Saint George because of the St. Georges cross, others feel it is simply a statue of an unknown person.

This can be seen in the Priory Visitor Centre.

Miscellaneous statue



PLAN OF COVENTRY'S FIRST CATHEDRAL





Timeline

1020-30s Earl Leofric and his wife, Lady Godiva, founded the monastery for 24 monks and an abbot and dedicate it to St Mary

1043 The abbey church of St Mary is consecrated

1057 Earl Leofric dies and is thought to be buried in the abbey church

1067 Lady Godiva dies and is possibly buried in the abbey church (no evidence of either tombs has been discovered)

1102 Bishop Robert de Limesey moves his seat from Chester to Coventry and the abbey church becomes a Cathedral. From this date St Mary's is known as a Benedictine Priory

1197 Rebuild of monastery and enlargements to cathedral after being partially pulled down eight years earlier

1345 Coventry becomes a city
The rule of St Benedict required monks to provide hospitality. Royalty and nobility exploited this, relying on monasteries to provide lodgings on

their travels. Visits included some of those below:

1397 Richard II stays at the Priory

1451 Henry VI stays at the Priory

1459 Parliament meets at the Priory

1467 Edward IV and his queen stay at the Priory

1487 Henry VIII and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, stay at the Priory

1534 Henry VIII breaks with the Church of Rome and is declared Supreme Head of the Church of England by Parliament

1536 Small monasteries are dissolved

1538 Larger monasteries are dissolved. Appeals are made to save the Cathedral

1539 The Priory is surrendered and the monks expelled

1545 The site is sold and the Cathedral is pulled down over a number of years

1572 The city buys the site and sells off any remaining stone

Who's who and what's what

Earl Leofric was a powerful Saxon noble, who held important positions at the court of Edward the Confessor.

Lady Godiva was a deeply religious Saxon noblewoman, who owned land in the South West of England.

St Mary's attracted many pilgrims who came to pray in the Cathedral and to pray at the shrines of the saints. Pilgrims provided a good source of income: like tourists today they spent money in the city, bought souvenirs and gave money to the cathedral.

Relics of saints known to be listed and kept within St Mary's included:

- The arm of St Augustine of Hippo
- The ass's jawbone that Cain used to kill his brother Abel
- The head of St Osbourne (Osbourne may have been another name for St Osburg)



- Part of the Holy Cross
- A relic of St Thomas of Canterbury
- A piece of Our Lady's Tomb
- A relic of St Ciscelie's foot
- A Cross with a relic of St James
- An image and bone of St George
- An arm of St Justyn
- A relic of St Andrew
- A rib of St Lawrence
- An arm of St Sibtyne
- An image of one of the children of Israel
- A small shrine of the Apostles
- A relic of St Katheryn
- A barrel of relics of confessors
- Two bags of relics
- Our Lady's milk

Benedictine monks

In the Middle Ages, Benedictines were known as the Black Monks because of their black cowl, usually worn over a black habit. Sir William Dugdale, a famous 17th century historian described their dress: a black coat loose and divided down to their heels, with a cowl or hood for their head a hair shirt with boots to their knees: their heads being shaved with a razor below the midst the top of the head is so shaved

is called the Corona. Most monks were recruited from the landed classes. Archaeologists have uncovered burials of monks on the site and have discovered that the average height varied from 5ft 2 inches (1.57 metres) to 6ft 1 inch (1.85 metres) — very similar to today. There was plenty of evidence of tooth decay, and in older monks, arthritis. St Benedict's Rule gives intriguing insights into the life and monastic standards of the day:

- Private ownership to cut out this vice everything necessary should be provided by the abbot — cowl, tunic, stockings, boots, belt, knife, pen, needle, handkerchief, writing tablets — so that all excuse of need may be removed
- Bedding let a straw mattress, a blanket, a coverlet and a pillow suffice. The beds must be searched by the abbot, because of possible secret hoarding
- Drink taking in to account the feebleness of the weak half a pint of wine is sufficient for each, daily. Those to whom God gives the power to abstain may be sure that they will have their own reward
- Porters at the monastery gate: let a sensible old man be stationed, who will know how to take a message and whose years will not let

him wander about

- Sleeping: they are to sleep clothed, with a girdle or cord around their waists, and they must not have their knives at their side for fear that these should injure someone in his sleep
- Conversation as for coarse jokes or frivolous talk or making people laugh, these we condemn to be forever barred in all places.

Other monastic orders

All monasteries in England were Benedictine until the 900s when a great revival of religious life began in Europe and several new orders were founded. Cistercians or White Monks were so called because their clothing was made of unbleached wool. They founded abbeys in remote areas and stressed silence, austerity and manual work. In late medieval, many Cistercian monasteries became extremely wealthy. Carthusians founded in the late 1000s as a strict order, lived in individual cells, each with a small garden. Carthusian monasteries were known as Charterhouses. Cluniacs founded in France in the early 900s, followed the Rule of St Benedict. They emphasised magnificent and solemn worship in highly decorated churches. Their influence quickly spread to England, especially



after the Norman Conquest in 1066. Friars were not monks but imitated the monastic way of life. They lived in friaries built for them by benefactors and were dependant on their income from charity so they tended to be established in towns. Their work concentrated on teaching and preaching in the community and they did no manual labour. There were four main orders of friars: Carmelites known as White Friars, Franciscans known as Grey Friars and Dominicans known as Blackfriars.

Daily life in a monastery

A monk's life was one of continual work and prayer, regulated by the Rule of the Order. The daily timetable (horarium) varied depending on the Order and the season but the average day of Benedictine monks at Coventry would be as follows.

- 2 am Monks woken in the dormitory (dorter) by a bell. They file into the choir of the church for Nocturns, the first service, followed by Matins. Then they might go back to bed
- 5 am (first light) In church for Lauds (praises)
- 6 am (sunrise) In church for Prime. Then work

- around the monastery or private study
- 8 am In church for Terce and Morrow Mass
- 9 am Meeting with the Prior and other monks in the Chapter House to deal with monastery business. Then work or quiet study
- 12.30 pm In church for Sext, Mass and None
- 2 pm The main meal of the day in the frater
- 3 pm Work or study
- 5 pm (evening) In church for Vespers. More quiet reading or study
- 7 pm (sunset) In church for Compline then to bed

Who's who in a monastery

Work was ruled by the hours of daylight. Without electricity or gas monks relied on candles during the hours of darkness. Work involved the many tasks involved in running a monastery and looking after the estates which supplied the food and drink and bought in money. Some monks (obedientiaries) had special duties: The abbot (in charge of an abbey) or prior (in charge of a priory) managed the estates The precentor organised church services and looked after the library and all scholarly work The sacristan was responsible for keeping the monastery clean, for repairs and alterations. He

also looked after the church, the altar vessels and vestments.

The cellarer looked after food, drinks, fuel and other provisions The almoner tended the poor and distributed alms (charity) to the poor The guest-master supervised the guest house and hospitality The infirmarer looked after the infirmary or monastery hospital The chamberlain was responsible for clothing, bedding and bathing.

John Hales

John Hales, a London speculator, bought the cathedral together with all the monastic buildings for about £1000. He also bought Whitefriars which he converted into a house and renamed it as Hales Place. There he also founded a boys grammar school in the church in response to Henry VIII's eagerness to see schools re-established. After John Hales died in 1572, the city bought the cathedral site and sold off any remaining stone or recycled it for use in other buildings.



The Benedictine Monks: the Black Friars

The Cistercian Monks: the White Friars. The White Friars were stricter in their vows and wore white un-dyed habits to proclaim poverty.

The Franciscan Monks: the Grey Friars

Abbot: head of the monastery

Prior: second in command to the Abbot

Almaner: dispensed alms to the poor or sick

Barber Surgeon: shaved monks faces and tonsures and performed light surgery

Cantor: lead the choir

Cellarer: supervised the monasteries provisions

Infirmarian: worked in the infirmary

Lector: read in church or refectory

Sacrist: safekeeping books, vestments and vessels and building maintenance

Illuminator: a skilled job illustrating the manuscripts

Novice: not yet taken final

Oblate: if not old enough to be a novice and you were given to the monastery by your father

Tonsure: head shaved in the centre with a rim of hair.

Tunic: tied with cloth or leather belt

Scapula: wide piece of cloth worn over shoulders

Cowl: attached to scapula (hood) – worn for prayer or quiet time

Chapter House: where the monks went to ask for pardon and accuse others of doing wrong.

Pilgrim / Pilgrimage: people or places people visited to worship beliefs



Pilgrim purse



If you are interested in finding out more detailed information about monks, their lives and / or pilgrimages then have a look at the following websites. Some of these will be useful for the pre / post suggested activities.

Places of pilgrimage
www.pilgrimsprogress.org.uk

Places of pilgrimage
<http://www.request.org.uk/main/dowhat/pilgrimage/places/places01.htm>

Medieval Monks / Daily Life of a Monk
www.middle-ages.org.uk/medieval-monks.htm / www.middle-ages.org.uk/daily-life-monk-middle-ages.htm

Medieval Monks
www.kyrene.k12.az.us/schools/Brisas/suna/ma/1xiao.htm

Medieval Sourcebook: The Rule of St. Benedict, c.530
www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/rul-benedict.html

Relics
www.metmuseum.org/TOAH/HD/relc/hd_relc.htm

The Medieval Pilgrimage
http://medievalhistory.suite101.com/article.cfm/the_medieval_pilgrimage