



## Take One Castle

### Take One Castle Starter Activities

The following activities can be undertaken as an introduction to the topic or can be delivered by Gloucestershire Archives as part of a taught session (chargeable).

#### 1. In the News!

This activity essentially asks the pupils to imagine that they are media reporters and their job is to report on the siege of Gloucester Castle in 1265. They can do this in a number of styles:

- A TV reporter
- A radio reporter
- A newspaper journalist

This activity would work well by dividing the class into groups, each to deliver a report in a certain style, although the newspaper journalist option could be a topic, delivered at the end of a week of work. It would also work as an ICT topic with the reports being videoed or recorded to be broadcast to the rest of the class.

Pupils will need to think about the main differences between the styles and how they are presented by drawing on their own knowledge of news programmes. There could be a news studio 'anchorman/woman' who is talking to a reporter on the spot, or a more prepared piece reporting on the action. Perhaps there is a 'live' report with the reporter speaking to soldiers, civilians or even an interview with Prince Edward.

#### 2. Get off my land!

This activity is a role playing or dramatic interpretation, dealing with events that took place in March 1264 after Prince Edward and Henry de Montfort had agreed a truce and the rebel barons had left Gloucester.

Background: After the rebel forces had left Gloucester, Edward seems to have made an inspection of the castle's and city's defences. He realised that one of the reasons the castle's defenders and its siege engines had not been able to inflict more casualties on the attackers was that they enemy had used the cover provided by buildings and houses that had been built almost up to the castle's curtain walls. Edward subsequently ordered that the buildings were to be demolished in order to clear the area to create a defensive fire zone for the castle's crossbowmen and archer and a new defensive ditch dug to protect the castle and slow up any troops trying to advance to the walls. The inhabitants of the houses that were destroyed in the course of these works were evicted without any recourse or compensation.



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It is not known exactly how many houses and other buildings were pulled down or burnt by Edward's troops but in creating a 'bareland' in front of the castle, but it must have been a fair number. In 1267, a royal inquisition found that the Llanthony Priory – the major land and property owner in the area - suffered a loss of rent amounting to 31s 10d (£847) caused by '*the levelling of houses and buildings in front of the castle*', plus a loss of £8 6s 8d (£4440) for the demolition of houses near the castle's bridge over the Severn and a loss of 42s 4d (£1128) of rents from houses destroyed by the digging of the defensive ditch. A door to the Priory's church of St. Kyneburgh was also blocked and made useless. All this amounted to a loss of income for the Priory of £12 1s 10d (£6,415) but despite an admission of responsibility, the Crown did not actually pay this compensation until the reign of Henry VII – 200 years later!

Edward's instructions were carried out and a 'bareland' was created in front of the castle, which was subsequently used as a muster space for the castle's garrison and also as a shooting range for the castle's archers. Despite taking place almost 750 years ago, this incident and the area it created has survived in Gloucester's folk history for the area is known today as 'Bearlands'.

It is also interesting to note that the new defences did prove effective – and the first person to find this out was Edward himself, for when he attacked the castle in June 1265, it was able to successfully withstand a siege that eventually lasted over three weeks!

### Dramatis personae:

*Prince Edward*

*Sir Roger de Clifford (Constable of Castle)*

*Royal soldiers*

*Castle watchmen*

*Abbot of Gloucester*

*Abbot of Llanthony Priory*

*Inhabitants of 'Bearlands' plus assorted livestock (pigs, chickens, cattle, dogs & cats)*

This could be a whole class activity or the pupils could be divided into groups to provide different interpretations. Some of the main themes are:

- Ask the pupils how they might feel if this happened to them.
- How might the troops ordered to evict the occupants and destroy their homes have felt?
- Debate whether Edward was justified in his decision?

This activity could be part of a longer topic, with a full script and play being created for an assembly.



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**3. How much?**

This is a mathematical activity that asks the pupils to create graphs/pie-charts of the castle accounts for the cost of garrison and the cost of making two catapults. They then need to answer the questions at the end of the exercise. Amounts can be rounded up or down to suit pupils' abilities. As medieval money was more complicated than today (£1 = 20 shillings, 1s = 12 pennies), modern money has been inserted. The figure used is a true representation of the real costs based on the National Archives' Currency Converter (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/results.asp#mid>).

**Exercise 1: Cost of Garrison**

Draw graphs or pie charts to illustrate the costs of the castle garrison, then answer the questions at the end.

**Garrison of Gloucester Castle & wages for week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> July 1265**

Item	Approximate cost in modern money
Sir William de Cheney and servant	£372
8 knights under the aforesaid Sir William	£142
11 esquires under the aforesaid Sir William	£1012
14 crossbowmen on foot	£124
50 Welsh and 20 English foot soldiers	£310
2 porters for the great gate	£9
1 porter for the door of the tower	£4
4 watchmen	£18
<b>Total for week</b>	<b>£1938</b>

**Garrison of Gloucester Castle & wages for week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> August 1265**

Item	Approximate cost in modern money
For 1 constable with 1 horse	£186
For 2 sergeants-at-arms each with 1 horse	£186
For 6 crossbowmen	£40
For 12 Welsh foot soldiers	£53
For 1 porter with 1 boy	£31
For 2 watchmen	£47
<b>Total for week</b>	<b>£1103</b>

**Questions**

1. What was the weekly wage of:



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- a) One of William de Cheney's knights?
- b) A crossbowman in July
- c) A crossbowman in August?
- d) A welsh foot soldier

2. On 31<sup>st</sup> July, how many people were in the castle?
3. On 10<sup>th</sup> August, how many people were in the castle?
4. For each week what was the percentage of:
  - a) Foot soldiers?
  - b) Crossbowmen?

### **Exercise 2: Cost of Catapults**

Draw a graph or make a pie chart to illustrate the cost involved in making the two catapults that were built at Gloucester Castle for its defence. Then answer the questions.

#### **Costs of repairing Smaller catapult**

Item	Approximate cost in modern money
Wages for a Master carpenter for 6 weeks	£320
Wages for 3 carpenters for 6 weeks	£719
For timber bought for the aforesaid catapult	£1,199
For carriage of the aforesaid timber	£266
For 2 tubes of iron and other small pieces of iron and nails	£1332
For rope	£346
For one good oak trunk	£27
<b>Total for the smaller catapult</b>	<b>£4209</b>

#### **Cost of repairing Greater catapult**

Item	Approximate cost in modern money
Wages for a Master carpenter for 10 weeks	£533
Wages for 4 carpenters for 10 weeks	£1598
For timber bought for the aforesaid catapult	£1864
For carriage of the aforesaid timber	£665
For 1 hammer, pieces of iron and nails	£1812
For rope	£693
For one good oak trunk	£53
<b>Total for the greater catapult</b>	<b>£7218</b>



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### Questions:

1. For each catapult, list the expenditure in order from the most to the least. (smaller = iron components, timber, carpenters wages, rope, master carpenter's wages, carriage, oak. Greater = timber, iron components, carpenters wages, rope, master carpenter's wages, oak)
  - a. What was the greatest expenditure on each catapult? (smaller = iron parts, greater = timber)
  - b. What was the least expenditure on each catapult? (smaller = oak trunk, greater = oak trunk)
2. How much per week was the Master carpenter paid? (£53.33 a week)
3. What was the total cost of the catapults to the Castle Custodian? (£11427)
4. What was the percentage cost of the total spent for the catapults? (smaller = 37%, greater = 63%)
5. Which catapult do you think was the best value? Things that might influence your decision are:
  - a. Big catapults took longer to load and fire, smaller ones were faster.
  - b. Big catapults fired heavier projectiles and did more damage, while smaller ones fired lighter ones.
  - c. Big catapults were more difficult to aim while smaller ones were easier.
  - d. Big catapults needed more men to fire them than smaller ones.

### Question answers

#### **Cost of Garrison Answers**

1. What was the weekly wage of:
  - a) One of William de Cheney's knights? – A: £17.75
  - c) A crossbowman in July – A: £8.86
  - d) A crossbowman in August? – A: £6.66
  - e) A welsh foot soldier – A: £4.41
2. On 31<sup>st</sup> July, how many people were in the castle? A: 112
3. On 10<sup>th</sup> August, how many people were in the castle? A: 25
4. For each week what was the percentage of:
  - a) Foot soldiers? A: 1<sup>st</sup> week = 62.5%, 2<sup>nd</sup> week = 48%
  - b) Crossbowmen? A: 1<sup>st</sup> week = 12.5%, 2<sup>nd</sup> week = 24%)



### Cost of Catapults answers

1. Smaller catapult = iron components, timber, carpenters wages, rope, master carpenter's wages, carriage, oak.  
Greater catapult = timber, iron components, carpenters wages, rope, master carpenter's wages, oak.
  - a) What was the greatest expenditure on each catapult?  
Smaller = iron parts, Greater = timber.
  - b) What was the least expenditure on each catapult?  
Smaller and Greater = oak trunk.
2. £53.33 a week
3. £11427
4. Smaller = 37% of total expenditure. Greater = 63% of total expenditure.
5. No right or wrong answer! In most cases, a balance would be between cost, firepower and rate of fire, coupled with space available to position catapults and the available fields of fire.

### 4. Let's Make a Plan?

This is an art or DT activity to create and draw a ground plan of a castle. Ask your class to undertake some research into castles and then draw their plan to reflect what they think should be there and what would you put there!

Things to think about: living quarters, toilets, water, toilets, food storage, kitchen, armoury, dungeon, stables, animal food storage, moat, gate/drawbridge.

Resources:

A good introduction can be found on the following sites:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castle>

<http://www.chiddingstone.kent.sch.uk/homework/Castles.html>

<http://www.castlexplorer.co.uk/> - good for locating castles near you!

<http://www.castles-of-britain.com/>