2. Put the cup into a strong plastic bag. Experience shows that two food bags are usually necessary because it is at this point that you have to hit the cup to produce your remnants. One volunteer from the class will love this part!

4. This exercise can be developed with the rest of the fragments. Drawings could be made of the pieces to help work out the original object. Some of the pieces which make up the body of the cup will be difficult to fit in. You could do a follow-up exercise using fragments of a piece of crockery the children haven't seen before.

This exercise will start them thinking about evidence and how we might approach it. The small piece left of that cup can be used on site to remind them that they are looking at, for example, only part of the keep of a castle. What remains on the ground will usually give them enough clues to work out what was once there. When this image is constructed in their minds (perhaps with the help of drawings) it can be peopled from the evidence of documents.

In further issues of REMNANTS we will be offering you practical and simple ways of helping your children understand the physical remains that form part of the evidence for the past.

Mike Corbally

En route

En route will be a regular feature in REMNANTS and is especially written by teachers who have used one of our less-visited monuments. The first is about Haughmond Abbey in Shropshire by Patricia Brittain, the head of St Andrew's CE School, Nescotlife and is called...

GET THE ABBEY HABIT

In 1985, during the Easter holidays, I attended the annual week-long course run by English Heritage and the Department of Education and called 'Learning from the Past'. This was both interesting and stimulating. I chose the monasteries group which, as it turned out, was the least popular option. Perhaps this says a lot about how most educationalists regard these monuments.

I had two reasons for choosing this particular option. Very early on in my career I had accompanied another teacher on a visit to an abbey. There we spent 10 minutes in an abbey, whisked round because there wasn't much there, and the rest of the day waddling through nettles by the river. I felt cheated. Some time later I used the same

Haughmond Abbey

abbey for work in school with my own pupils and saw the wide-ranging opportunities which visits to such monuments can give. There are abbey remains in most parts of our country but I feel that they are greatly undervalued as an educational resource.

During the autumn of 1985 following the course, I used Haughmond Abbey, near Shrewsbury, as a stimulus for a whole term's work with my class of 6-9/10 year olds. The children have a wide age and maturity span with equally wide and varied experiences, as my school serves an army camp as well as a village community.

Working from a central theme like 'Abbeys', allows all areas of the curriculum to be covered and skills can be taught or developed in a natural way. Taking into account what most children had already experienced, my aims for the term's work were:

- to examine and 'people the past';
- to provide direct experience in interpreting the history of a building;
- to examine and compare structures and values in society.

Several visits were essential. Haughmond Abbey is only 20 minutes by car from school and, as visits are free by arrangement, each child visited the abbey twice in a small group and once more to take part in a whole class drama event.

In our preparation for the initial visit we looked at blank plans of the abbey, discussing where we thought the church would have been, since working this out was to be one of the children's first tasks on site — and at Haughmond it is not at all obvious. Much work was to be done on site and each child was supplied with a clip board and sketch book. I also took large sheets of paper, drawing materials and a camera.

On this visit the children made sketches of the different parts of the abbey, numbering each sketch so that it could be marked by a corresponding number on their plan. In this way there was no need to name the buildings before their functions were understood. Detailed observation was required for these drawings as they were to be developed into various forms of art work back in school. This close attention led to questions about the techniques of building, the different types of stone, the arrangement of rooms, the statues and so on, which meant that the children had to suggest possible answers for later research and verification.

The second visit had more specific aims, sometimes set by the children themselves. Mathematical work on elevations was done by one group who measured walls and took height readings using clinometers or estimation, according to their ability. Another group wanted to find evidence of the drains on site, to plot their findings on the plan and write about them.

Others did more detailed work on the statues and took it in turns to go alone to a chosen place in the abbey to listen to taped plainsong and write.

The follow-up work in school took many forms. We carried out investigations into building techniques, the use of pulleys and the strength of rocks.

The 8-9 year olds made different arrangements of pulley wheels to lift a piece of stone, borrowed with special permission from the abbey's stone store. They used one wheel first and then two or more, to find out whether there was any advantage. They worked in groups of four, small enough for each member to have a vital practical part but large enough to provide the opportunity for exploratory talk. The children were encouraged to find solutions and express their ideas in their own way through a demonstration to the class, a piece of writing or a diagram.

The 10 year olds made a study of rock strength, by dropping weights down a tube on different types of rock to see which shattered first. Their findings were compared with the evidence of weathering in the abbey. Surprisingly they found that the strongest rock in the test was the one most prone to weathering, as sandstone crumbles rather than shatters. They tested this by soaking and freezing the rock and saw it crumble as it thawed.
This event was one of the highlights of our term’s work for the whole class, and was supported by our county English Adviser, Area Primary Adviser and the English Heritage Regional Education Officer following up the course. We had the help of another teacher and parents, who tape-recorded and filmed the children on video. Each child took on the role of a canon with a particular job, a novice learning about the abbey or a Commissioner from Henry VIII’s regime to decide the fate of the Abbey. Each canon was situated in an appropriate part of the abbey and at the signal of a bell a novice and a commissioner visited and interviewed each canon in turn. The morning was punctuated at frequent intervals with processions and church services led by the vicar. Later, when we read the sparse facts about the dissolution at Haughmond they made more sense, and children got some insight into what it must have been like to live as a monk.

All the work for the term came from or related to visits to the abbey, from the children presenting music and drama in assembly and at church, to binding their writing into individual books at the end of term. It was worthwhile and lively — abbeys are not just ruins they are foundations.

Patricia Brittain

Making history

In the past few years, BBC Schools television has been producing history programmes designed for lower secondary students. Units which have already been broadcast include The Middle Ages with documentary or dramatised programmes about the Peasants’ Revolt, the Black Death, the Tower of London, the Tudors with programmes about Tudor exploration and colonisation, a Great House, the Reformation, the puritan and the poor, and the problems posed to Elizabeth by the actions of Mary, Queen of Scots.

These two units will be repeated in Spring 1987, and followed in the Summer Term by five programmes on Local Studies. The producer, Jill Sheppard, had been having consultative meetings with teachers, and as a result the programmes will examine the kinds of research which students could undertake into families, streets, a workshop, the church as community centre, and the rural landscape.

Teachers consulted felt quite strongly that, if possible, the programmes should try to feature students at work. So if anybody reading this knows that their school has done some really exciting research on any of these topics, and would be prepared to let Jill film there, please could they get in touch with her urgently?

Write to: Jill Sheppard, Room 602, BBC School Television, Villiers House, The Broadway, Ealing, W5 2PA or phone: 01-591 8058.

In addition to these new programmes in the lower secondary area, The BBC is launching a new history series for top juniors this coming autumn entitled Now and Then. The series has been planned to run alongside a well-established geography series for the same age group ‘Near and Far’, and allow all kinds of cross-curriculum links to be made.

Buildings and Buidlers focuses on building materials which have predominated in three very different periods of time, that of our own, that of the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century — brick, and stretching back into earliest times, that of the slowly changing ‘traditional’ society for whom an indispensable material both for building and many other important uses was wood.

A secondary unit of programmes will look at the changing landscapes of the London Docklands and the Welsh coalfields.

Drains

Ferns growing like a maze
Red eyes watching me
Slime up the wall
Insects crawling on the floor
Misty shaped walls

Tom, 10 years old, following the second visit.

Belsay Hall, Northumberland.

“Ancient Monuments” and “Historic Buildings” are phrases which sometimes worry me. When you think of the thousands of 900-year-old building technocrats, tapping away on their home computers, their copies of Wind in the Willows, gathering dust on the shelf, you might despair and think that promoting the past as interesting or as an appeal to the imagination is a lost hope.

Not really. The other day I was at Belsay in Northumberland, walking from the Historic Building to the Ancient Monument: the hall to the castle. It was spring, a laic and welcome one. The guidebook told me that the stone for the building of the hall was hewn from the quarries I was walking through. It told me when, and who, and where, and what — but not why.

I 50 years ago, this place was a scar, a fresh quarry with rubble lying about, spoiling the view from the new hall. The owner (it doesn’t matter who he was, really) had a vision of a wild, romantic garden, full of exotic Asian trees, cliffs festooned with fern and moss, running water and some surprises. He turned the quarries into one of the most magical gardens in England.

It is a place full of hidden boxes: when you are in one, you can’t see the other. Here you are in a double square of yew with roses and lavender; there you are in a walled winter garden with heather. A door in the wall (dangerous things) leads you from geometry to wild woodland with twisting paths among wild flowers. Suddenly, you are enclosed by 50 cliffs, and at your feet frogs are leaping into pools. Round the corner, a secret, rock-hewn path and, at last, green fields and the towers of Belsay Castle are before you.

The experience of walking through Belsay’s quarry gardens has little to do with archaeology or history. It has more to do with Alice in Wonderland: it is magical and weird. Take kids there before adolescence darkens the eye. The stories that can be set in that honeycomb of special places are legion, and their response to the strangeness will have something of their dreams in it. And poetry, too: places like Belsay, and Asley End in Essex, appeal to the contemplative side of children, to the creative in them.

Anyone who doubts this should see the poems which kids wrote at Byland Abbey for Steve Gibson, our second teacher. There is no need, like Mr Gradgrind, to concentrate on Facts: not, like his latter-day counterpart, on "skill centred transactional learning". Youngsters, the lucky ones, respond to oddity. It provokes their imagination, it might even gradually frighten them. The quiet one, who gets the computer telling her she’s wrong, may simply find "the green thought in a green shade" and pen her poem. The boisterous one, like Dylan in The Magic Roundabout, may stop in his tracks, cliffs around and above him, frogs at his feet and say, "Man, this is something completely different".

Jim Lang
Games for the classroom

Number 1 – Fox and Geese

This game, which originated in Ireland, was known in England in the fifteenth century. Pupils could be asked to measure out and draw their own board.

RULES
1. The thirteen geese are placed on the board as shown in the illustration. The fox may be placed on any vacant point.
2. The geese win if they can stop fox from moving. The fox wins if it can take sufficient geese to stop them from immobalising him.
3. The fox and geese move in any direction along a line to the next vacant point.
4. The fox may take a goose by making a short leap over it to the vacant point beyond. If the fox can make a series of short leaps then more than one goose may be taken. These games are removed from the board.
5. Geese cannot jump over the fox but they aim to force him into a corner where he cannot move.

Gail Durbin

Competition

SUPER SITES...

is a new competition designed to interest children in historic buildings by introducing them to major historic buildings in London which they may not have known of, and to encourage use of the tremendous educational opportunities they offer. The competition will run in the autumn term 1986 with the closing date of 28th November.

Entries from schools will be produced either as a wallchart or a game based on first-hand observation of at least one of the following buildings:

- The Banqueting House, Whitehall; Chiswick House; Eltham Palace; Ham House; The Jewel Tower, Westminster; Kensington Palace; Kenwood House; Kew Palace; Marble Hill House; Osterley Park House; Ringer’s House; Syon House.

There will be prizes of books and guides for the school library, English Heritage membership for teachers and a celebration tea at the Banqueting House for the winners.

Full details and educational material will be sent out for the beginning of the autumn term to schools in London and nearby. If you work further afield but would like information please write to the address below. The competition is being organised by the department of the Environment with English Heritage; the Victoria and Albert Museum and Syon House participating. It is supported by the National Trust and the Heritage Education Trust.

Department of the Environment
Information Directorate
Rossetti Road
1/172B
London SW1P 2EZ
01-212 2056

Courses for teachers

Wroxeter Roman City — Training Excavation

The annual training excavation at the bauearc of the Roman city will take place this year from 17 to 28 August. The excavation is organised by the University of Birmingham, Department of Extra-Mural Studies and English Heritage. Applications from practising teachers will be welcomed as special sessions on the educational use of an excavation, a monument and an historic environment will be arranged. A few places are still available — contact Mrs Judith Burt
Department of Extramural Studies
University of Birmingham
PO Box 363
Birmingham B15 2TT
021-472 1300 Ext: 2108

Osborne House for Home Economics Teachers

A course for teachers will be organised by Pippa Henry and Gail Durbin at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight in the autumn term. For details (when available) contact Gail Durbin
Education Officer
Department of the Environment
2 Marshall Street
London SW1P 3EB
01-212 3358

Archaeology in Britain

English Heritage Education Service in conjunction with the British Museum Education Service is organising a series of courses to coincide with the Archaeology in Britain exhibition in the British Museum.

Avebury Study Centre, 13 September
Grimes Graves, 27 September
London 10 October
Birmingham 16 October
For details write to the British Museum Education Service
Great Russell Street
London WC1B 3DG
01-563 1555 Ext: 311

Hampton Court — Tudor Music and Dance

Tudor Music on 16th and 17th (repeat) October 1986 run by Michael and Alison Baggeal
Tudor Dance on 22nd January 1987 run by the London Early Dance Group. For details (when available) contact:
Bill Addison
Education Service
Room C11 /07
Department of the Environment
2 Marshall Street
London SW1P 3EB
01-212 0613

On-site facilities

Second teachers

This year English Heritage has been working closely with two local authorities so that teachers can be seconded to work on our monuments. In Wiltshire, Chris Spring, Deputy Head of Redlynch C. Inf. Primary School, was seconded by his county authority to spend a year at Avebury prehistoric site. He is promoting the use of the new purpose-built Study Centre, now attracting many school groups as well as producing a pack of resources on Avebury and its neighbouring monuments.

Chris has an archaeological background and in his visit to local schools he integrates that approach with other disciplines. He helped us get ready with the preparation of their visit and the follow-up too. He has also made valuable contributions to inservice courses held in the Study Centre.

From the beginning of September 1986, the seconded teacher will be Lawrence Coupland, at present Head of History at Comerham Comprehensive School. Their services are free to visiting educational groups, as is the use of the Study Centre. To make contact and discuss your needs, please telephone 0306 73320.

In addition to the monuments in and around Avebury there are two museums on site, the Alexander Keiller Archaeological Museum and the Wiltshire Folk Life Society Museum.

In North Yorkshire, Steve Gibson has been at Byland Abbey, hitherto an undeserved visitor monument. The prototype of the resource pack is already available through North Yorkshire LEA, and, like Chris Spring, Steve spends much time in the schools feeding in the children’s work to the pack. He has won the goodwill of local farmers so that schools can now visit the grangey and fishponds of the abbey.

Steve’s musical gifts have added to the success of ‘Living History’ sessions on the site, complete with medieval instruments. He too has participated in inservice courses at York and throughout the country.

During the academic year 1984-87 the Oxfordshire LEA are seconding a teacher who will be part-funded by English Heritage, to assist with Stage IV education and prepare teaching material on local sites. These will specially include Minster Lovell Hall and North Leigh Roman Villa. The teacher is Pat Emeny, at present Humanities Co-ordinator at Summertown Middle School, Oxford. After September she may be contacted on 0865 774668.

New sites in Northumberland

Two splendid and impressive castles are opening this summer in Northumberland.

Prudhoe lies hidden from the busy A695 by the Tyne on the way to Hexham. It has had a lot of restoration work in recent years and now houses an exhibition on castles. It lies very close to Tynedale railway and is a useful centre from which to explore the area, which has many Saxon churches, a Roman town at Corbridge and Hadrian’s Wall. Next year, Prudhoe will have a resource centre on Northumberland castles.

Aldbrough is even more hidden: three miles north of Corbridge and seven miles from the village of Aycliffe. Look out for the signs and the signposts, Aycliffe is really a fortified medieval farmhouse. It has tall, solid, kitchen and stable, all roofed and complete. Nothing from the 20th century is visible and the setting is beautiful.

It opens in July with a school from Cranham holing in a Living History day. The children will be in authentic 14th-century costumes, and try medieval crafts and games. Aycliffe will be a centre for Living History events.

Tilbury Fort

You will find Tilbury Fort in Essex as a fine example of a 17th century coastal fort with outer earthworks, immense picturesque walls of brick and interior buildings (including a prison cell, chapel and ammunition stores). It is also a quiet haven in a landscape dominated by the tall cranes of Tilbury Docks.

The Education Room there is equipped with tape measures, compasses, slide projector and clipboards with plans of the fort, which are printed on them. Courses for teachers are held there every term, to develop different aspects of teaching with this site. In the future, Tilbury hopes to obtain its own non-cleric knowledge of their fort with you. Their teachers will find out from them how to make your visit to this site more rewarding.

Footnotes

Grimes Graves

The first Neolithic flint mine near Brandon in Norfolk offers a spectacular insight into the prehistoric period. The experience of climbing down into a mine of this period is unique in this country. We are also proud of the extra service we are able to offer school parties. You may arrange for a demonstration of flint knapping with our custodian John Lord. He is well known among archaeologists and in museums as an expert knapper. He has made a large handling collection of flint and artefacts for schools to handle on site. Write to him to arrange a demonstration:

John Lord
Grimes Graves Cottage
Lynnford
Mundford
nr Thetford
Norfolk
Tel: 0842 810656

Deal Castle

A small display of visual aids on Deal Castle, prepared by teachers on the Canterbury English Heritage / DES Short Course in April is now being held by Mr C. Matthews, the Warden of the ILEA Residential Study Centre at Ripple Down House, Dover Road, Ringwould, Deal. He is prepared to help teachers in the area to make arrangements to see them and to discuss approaches to the castle. Telephone 0304 364 854.

Maiden Castle

The excavations which began here last year will continue this summer between mid June and the end of September under the direction of Mr S. Sharpe, information boards in the car park and on site. A visit to the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester is recommended as useful preparation or follow-up; for bookings contact the school officer at the museum, tel: 0306 62735. No booking is necessary at the monument.

Holiday Events at Royal Palaces

During the week of 18th November 1986 holiday events for young people will be held at the Alexander Kelsall Court Palace and Kenting Palace. There will be quizzes, talks and a variety of craft activities. For a copy of the programme contact:

Bill Addison
Education Service
Room C11 /07
Department of the Environment
2 Marshall Street
London SW1P 3EB