

Art

Sites are a safe and stimulating place for pupils to draw from first hand experience or take photographs for photo-montage work.

It is easiest to use dry materials, like chalks, charcoal, pencils and crayons but the effect can be varied by using different colours and qualities of paper. Younger pupils can use a hand lens or a viewfinder to focus in on their subject or they can experiment with simple perspectives by drawing a dramatic feature from different angles or distances. KS2 and KS3 pupils can concentrate on shapes by drawing, in silhouette if they wish, different parts of the site which could be put together at school to form a diorama. They can find examples of repetition sequence and symmetry in patterns of stonework or carving and discuss the colours they see in terms of tones, warmth, coolness and complementary qualities.

Pupils might be asked to sketch or photograph an image on site which they feel best reflects the atmosphere of the place. They can refine this into a poster using a different medium or printing technique.



Ben Barnes

Thick felt tips or wax crayons will help pupils produce bold drawings.

Music

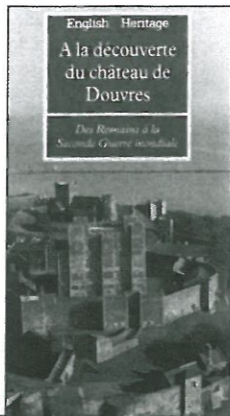
Sites provide a historical context for the study of music: pupils can find out about the type of music that might have been played at the site in the past, and

At Dover Castle, Kent, the chapel has especially fine decorative details.

listen to it in situ. Alternatively they can use the grounds or buildings to inspire their own work. This can be based on sound pictures of the site or on the pattern of the day followed there by a former inhabitant, or you might ask pupils to create sounds and rhythms to accompany a video of the site.

Modern Languages

Written exercises from a visit might include a slide or video commentary for foreign tourists, a post-card home from a foreign visitor to the site or the preparation of a foreign language version of an information

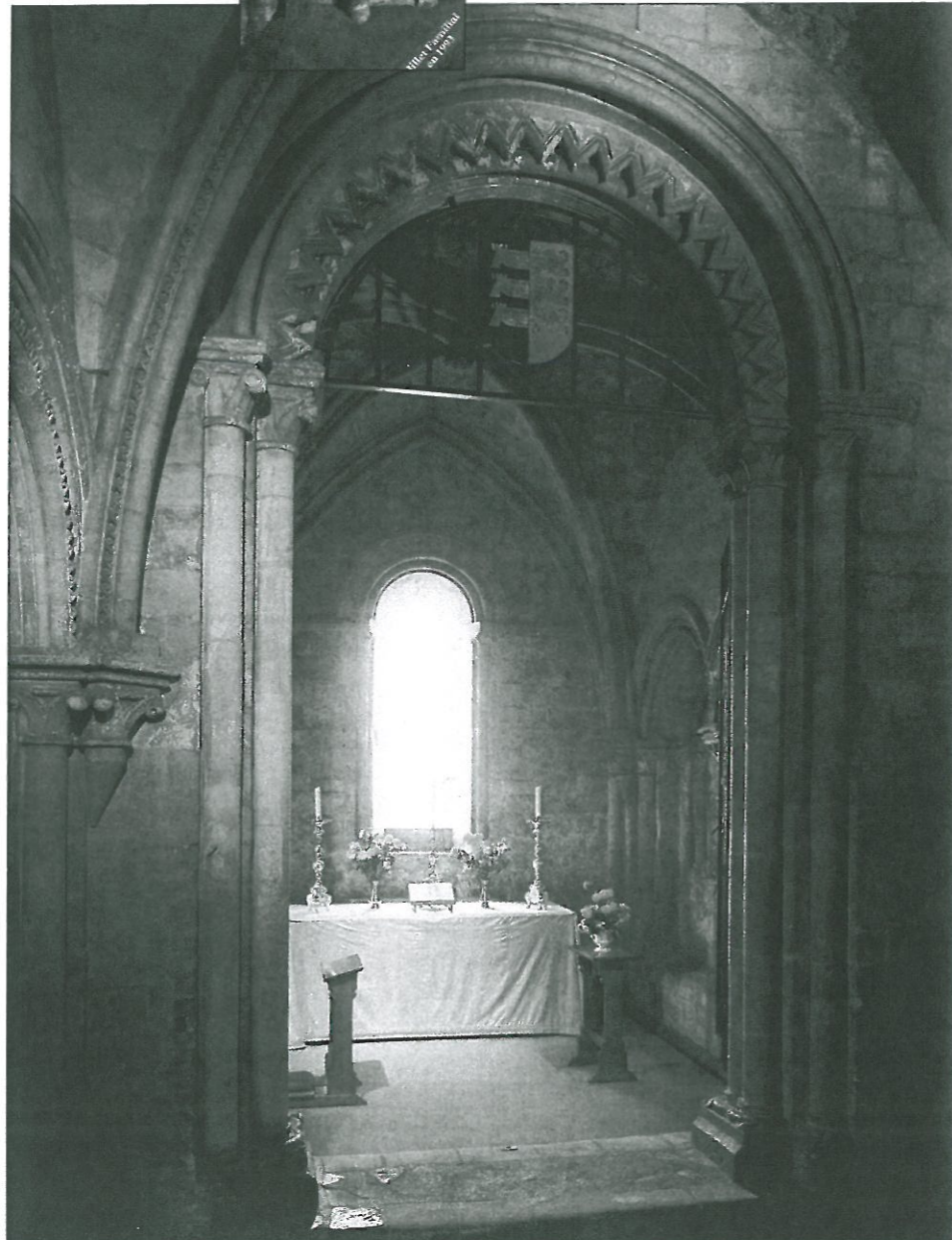


leaflet about the site.

Vocabulary can be extended by devising signboards which give practical information for foreign visitors, or by labelling sketches of the site in another language. If you visit a popular site there may well be a foreign language tape commentary which your class can use instead of the English version, perhaps also using it to help them write an account of the visit to a pen-friend. A discussion of what pupils found out about the site and its history could form the basis for an oral assessment.

Religious Education

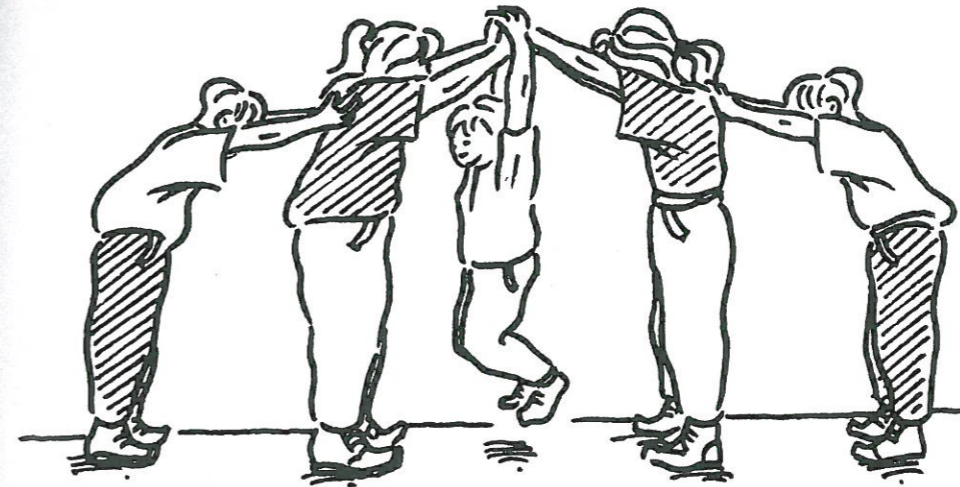
A study of a building with direct religious links like an abbey, reflects both the spiritual and the wide practical interpretation of Christianity in medieval times. Even secular buildings like castles or historic houses often had



a private chapel, usually distinguishable because of the fine decorative detail. This provides a good starting point for research and discussion on the role of religion in everyday life in former times, leading into a comparison with present attitudes.

PE

Research into entertainment which might have taken place on a site can lead to work on dance movement and the performance of period dances. Pupils can also use their bodies to experience the forces that act on buildings.



For example, by making arch shapes in pairs with their arms, and asking another pupil to pull down on the centre, pupils can feel where the pressure exerted by the weight on an archway is most felt. By getting others to add their weight on either side, the function of buttresses can be appreciated.

Cross-Curricular Themes

Personal and Social Education

Often the most efficient way of covering as many aspects of a site as possible is by groupwork, which promotes social skills and encourages individual responsibility. Discussion on preservation of sites and related conservation issues opens up the concept of responsibility for their environment which pupils will later exercise as adults.

Multi-Cultural Education

Many sites are excellent places to demonstrate that culture in England is an amalgam of many cultural influences, from Norman castles to Greek architecture. In furnished houses in particular it is hard to enter a room without coming across items and ideas

from other cultures.

The skills used in effective sitework need not rely on advanced reading or writing ability. Information can be recorded by drawings, photographs, video or tapes which enable pupils for whom English is not the first language, to have an opportunity to undertake and satisfactorily complete sitework.

Careers Education and Guidance

There are many different careers involved in looking after historic sites and presenting them to the public. Pupils might make a list of the different



types of work involved and research what body of knowledge or personal and academic qualifications are needed to undertake them.



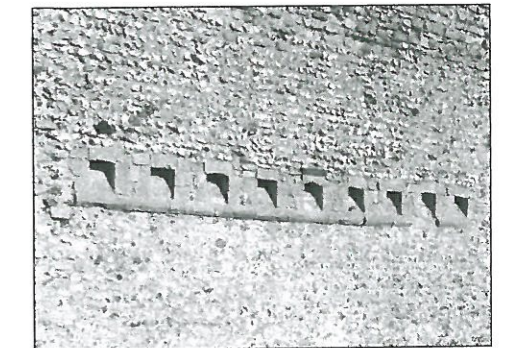
Gender Issues

If you embark on drama or role play with mixed classes at historic sites keep a check on who is playing the exciting active roles and who the passive ones. If the purpose of role play is to develop empathy for people with whose times your pupils are unfamiliar, there is no

reason why boys always have to take on male roles and girls female ones. Recent studies have shown that key business roles were played by woman in medieval and merchant families, and Victorian women, who were often forced into particular domestic roles, had considerable management responsibility either as the lady of the house or as a housekeeper.

Health Education

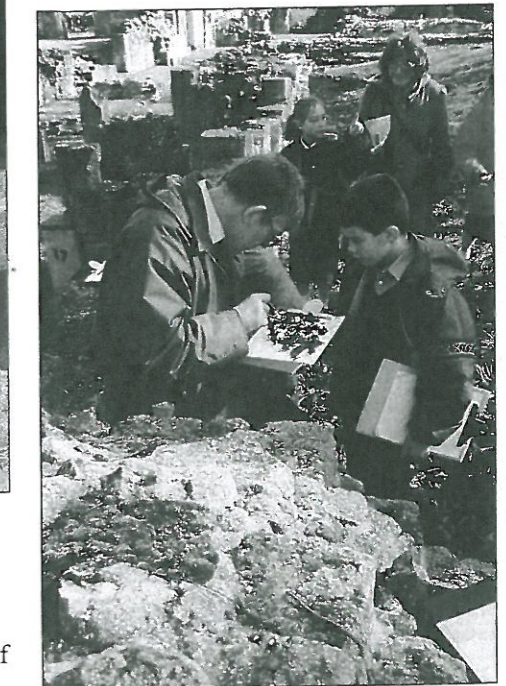
Some sites can provide a historical context to work on personal hygiene through a study of sanitation and the provision of heated or running water.



The latrine chutes at Portchester Castle, Hampshire.

Environmental Education

Pupils can look for measures taken to conserve the site, and discuss if they are sufficient or are too intrusive. Do they interfere with visitor enjoyment or are they justified in order to protect the site?



Environmental studies at Hailes Abbey, Gloucestershire.

First of all, decide why you want to make a site visit. What are your aims? Which National Curriculum subjects are you covering and which Attainment Targets do you hope to meet?

Preparing yourself

Choose the site, preferably one near your school. If it is an English Heritage site book a free visit and an exploratory visit for yourself. When you book a free site visit you will be given information about the facilities available for educational groups. Many of our sites have a free information leaflet especially prepared for teachers. Visit the site, study the guide book and if there's a **Handbook for Teachers** read that, as we have tried to include information and ideas in an easily digestible form. Decide on what topics you are going to concentrate on and what preparation is necessary for you and your pupils.

Preparing your pupils

Decide what you are going to tell them before the visit and what you are going to let them discover at the site. You might, for instance, talk about life in a castle at school, but leave the pupils to discover about attack and defence at the site by setting a problem-solving exercise during the visit.

No one visit is going to cover every-

thing. Be selective in your aims and stick with them.

Information

What information do you want to get across? First you need to decide where the visit will fit in the sequence of your planned activities. Is it to be an introduction, a climax or the central part of your work? The latter will allow you to prepare the pupils so that important features do not escape their notice and still leave time for you to capitalise on their heightened interest when you are back in the classroom.

Skills

Have you taught your class the necessary skills? The visual skills required on a site visit are often taken for granted but these need teaching just as much as do literary ones. Do not wait until you are at the site.

A site visit might call upon following skills:

- observation and recording
- comparison and deduction
- reading, writing and comprehension

- measuring and estimating
- map and plan reading
- number and scientific skills
- social skills, sharing and communicating.

Ideas

Working from the physical evidence of a site visit, it is possible for quite young pupils to grasp some difficult concepts. The idea of historical evidence can be introduced. How do we know about the past? What are the different types of evidence and what does each offer? A sense of chronology can be encouraged even if, at first, it is only an understanding of long ago/more recent.

An aesthetic sense can be encouraged. Our sites can generally be touched and texture, colour and form discussed. The sites can be used to stimulate the imagination and develop the ability to empathise with people in other situations.

The concept of change and continuity can be introduced. Which human needs reflected in buildings are likely to remain unchanged over time? How might the buildings change? Ask pupils to imagine their classroom after 100 years' neglect. What would remain? What might happen to everything else?

Introduce your pupils to the idea of observation - to understand monuments and buildings you need to think and record like a detective.

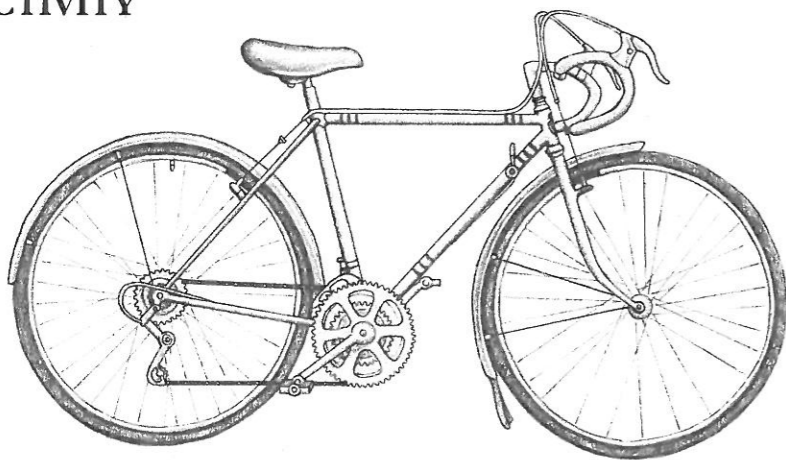
Adult helpers

You may decide to bring some additional adults with you on the day. On visits to English Heritage sites we require at least one adult to fifteen pupils. They will need to be prepared in advance especially if they are not professional teachers. Tell them what you expect of them. Will they be working with a small group? Will they be expected to impose 'control'? Show them the work that is expected of the pupils and suggest that they merely hint at answers and provide ideas, leaving the pupils to do the work.

Types of visit to be cautious about

Be cautious of the 'general visit' where the intention is to follow up interest that

ACTIVITY



The visual skills required on site visits are often taken for granted but these need teaching just as much as do literary ones. Do not wait until you are on site. Practise close observation in the classroom.

Place an object in front of pupils for a given period of time. Cover it and

ask pupils to draw it from memory. Allow them time to look at the object again to correct and add to their sketch. Repeat this several times. This exercise shows how time and concentration can reveal information which is not absorbed at first glance.

may develop. Think carefully about the purely social visit too. Pupils will often enjoy the visit more and learn to co-operate and communicate better if they have been given a structured activity.

Looking at plans

Using ground or floor plans at a site is very helpful, as they give a good overview of the place and you can see at a glance the size of each and its relationship to the whole. Introduced your pupils to plans by asking them to draw their worktop, preferably to size and including whatever is lying on it. Then in pairs or groups ask them to draw a plan of the classroom and its furniture, marking on doors and windows.

Comparison and deduction

Pupils can get a great deal of satisfaction from finding out information themselves as opposed to passively receiving facts and figures from an outside source. Practise on familiar territory by getting them to conduct a survey to find the relative status of the different rooms at school. By drawing up a list of relevant features and awarding each room marks out of ten they will be able to identify the most prestigious room. SEE BELOW

ACTIVITY

Chair - complete, machine-made, comfortable (adjusts to weight). Useful, with clean unfussy design. Expensive but not valuable.

Back

42x24 cm. Goes in at front when pressed, like foam, but hard at back and sides.

Seat

46x36 cm. Metal frame, curves down in middle and is padded. Welded to frame at front and fixed with three screws each side underneath.



Arm

Rigid, feels like wood underneath. Shaped to metal underneath and fixed with three screws.

Dull, black plastic covering, shiny where worn. Feels soft, non-slip

Frame

Shiny, cold metal frame (sounds hollow). Ends covered with conical caps. Bent at right angles to make seat shape.

Does your class know how to record what they see? Choosing the salient features requires quite sophisticated powers of categorisation and a precise vocabulary. Try to get the class to understand that naming something

alone is not sufficient in itself; labels can also show materials, size, methods of construction and state of repair. Practice by drawing some classroom objects and labelling them.

THE SCHOOL								
Room	Heat	Light	Space	Floor	Decor	Walls	Furniture	
Head	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	21
Staffroom	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	18
Classroom	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	12
Kitchen	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓				8
Boiler House	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		7
Cloak room	✓	✓		✓		✓		4
Corridor	✓	✓				✓		3
Caretaker	✓	✓				✓		3

- ✓✓✓ lots or excellent
- ✓✓ a lot or good
- ✓ a little or fairly good
- 0 = poor or nothing

Order of importance

- Head
- Staffroom
- Classroom
- Kitchen
- Boiler house
- Cloak room
- Corridor
- Caretaker

Whether you are going to study an ancient monument such as an English Heritage site or your own high street you will need to make practical arrangements and decide what educational activities you are going to organise there.



Things to look for at the site

- **Education Centre** - if there is an Education Centre visit it and examine the facilities. Plan how you might make use of them.
- **Lavatories** - many historic sites have no sanitation. What arrangements are you going to make?
- **Lunch** - many sites do not have cafes nearby. Decide on the provision you are going to make.
- **Educational resources** - Handbook for Teachers, information leaflets, guide books, slides, videos - what useful materials are available?
- **Vantage points** - if you plan a guided tour, what are the safest and most convenient vantage points?
- **Equipment** - do you need to bring cameras, tape-recorders and other equipment?
- **Shop** - is there a shop and are you going to allow time for pupils to buy postcards etc?
- **Special needs** - are there going to be any problems of access, for example?
- **Parking** - will you have to allow time for getting from coach to site?
- **Clothing** - what type of clothes should the pupils wear? Will they need waterproofs and wellingtons?

Site Activity Sheet 2

The waiting chamber and upper room

1 Go into the waiting chamber to the north of the gatehouse. This was where people who had business at the castle would have had to wait before seeing the lord. It was probably also the guardhouse where the guards for the main gatehouse would have kept warm. You are just next to the Great Hall, the most important building of the castle.

This upper room may have been the steward's office or it may have been a room for the lord who would have been able to get easy access to it from the high end of the Great Hall. We know that it had very large well-built windows as they are shown in the eighteenth century engraving by the Buck brothers.

Most people who went into the Great Hall would have entered by the main doorway on the south side of the hall. However, there was another entrance that led from this room. The steps that take you into the Great Hall pass through a very narrow doorway - probably built this way so that it could be defended more easily. Measure the remaining base of the doorway and then compare your measurements with doorways at home or at school. (If you do not have a ruler or tape-measure what other measure could you use?)

2 Which way did the door open? What does this tell us about which rooms were to be protected?

3 As you go through the doorway look for evidence as to how people would have been able to get to a room above the waiting chamber and gatehouse. Add your evidence to this illustration.

Task 1 Look at the plan and sketch a rough sketch of a section of the Old Sarum wall. Show the position of the wall that was built in the twelfth century and the position of the wall that was built in the thirteenth century.

Task 2 Check the following facts provided by the plan and sketch:

- Good building stone
- Rubble
- Flint and Meort

Activity sheets from Okehampton Castle and Old Sarum Handbooks for Teachers, English Heritage.

Activity Sheets

The test of a good activity sheet is whether it acts as an aid to observation. If you could answer it with your back to the site then it has been badly constructed. Are the answers useful? Questions that ask pupils to count things are generally less useful than the type that asks, for example, how something was made and require deduction from observation.

Some of the best activity sheets are the ones designed by teachers for their own classes, especially those which have been adapted and improved with use.

Drawing

Good activity sheets will include a high proportion of drawing and this can be used as an activity in itself. It is an excellent way to learn about the material world. Understanding of construction comes through the careful observation that drawing demands. It slows pupils down and helps them learn to use their eyes.

From A Teacher's Guide to Geography and the Historic Environment, English Heritage.

VISITOR SURVEY

Date: _____ Site: _____

1. Why did you visit the site?

(a) interested in history
(b) attracted by the view
(c) came with a group
(d) filling in time
(e) other (please specify)

2. How did you travel to the site?

(a) by car
(b) by train
(c) by coach
(d) by bus
(e) on foot
(f) other (please specify)

3. Where do you live?

(a) locally
(b) within 75km
(c) elsewhere in UK
(d) other (please specify)

4. How long are you spending in the area?

(a) just visiting the site
(b) half a day
(c) one day
(d) more than one day

5. What is your opinion of facilities at the site? Excellent Good Poor

(a) information about the history of the site
(b) the guidebook
(c) information for children
(d) audio tour
(e) general surroundings
(f) refreshment area
(g) shop
(h) access for disabled visitors
(i) car parking
(j) access to public transport

6. What will you remember most about your visit to the site?

A questionnaire, devised to suit the particular site, will provide pupils with information about visitors and their impressions of the site.

Studying the natural environment

Make use of the educational potential of the landscape surrounding the site. Look at the buildings in their setting to see how each influenced the other. To integrate a visit into the curriculum devise scientific studies. Study the flora and fauna, make bark rubbings, compare the differing habitats of various trees and use a clinometer to calculate their height.

Remember to follow the Countryside Code.

Problem-solving and role-play

An alternative to activity sheets is to set up a more open-ended activity. Give the pupils a problem in the past, for example 'You are the warden of this castle. You have been warned of an attack. Decide where the castle's weakest points are and what men, weapons and supplies you need to defend it' or in the present, for example 'You have been asked by a travel firm to prepare a trail for tourists round this site. The visitors will only be able to stay for 3/4 hour. What route will you recommend and what information will you provide?' In both cases pupils will be expected to research and record their



findings. Allow plenty of time for discussion.

Living history

This is more ambitious than role-play. Pupils could have made their own costumes before the visit, for example Roman tunic or Norman armour. Alternatively they could wear something that symbolised the period, for example medieval headdress or sixteenth century ruff. The site could then be used to re-enact one of the events from its history. The drama could be written and rehearsed beforehand or situations could be improvised on the spot. Either way will require considerable thought and preparation on the part of the teacher.

SAFETY

Remember that many ancient monuments can be dangerous, and whilst every effort has been made to protect visitors from unsuspected hazards, it is not possible to make a ruined castle or abbey as safe as a modern building. Teachers must stress this to pupils before the visit, and ensure that they are closely supervised at all times while on site. Check with your Local Education Authority about insurance and Health and Safety requirements.

ENGLISH HERITAGE EDUCATION CENTRES

Wherever possible English Heritage Education Service is setting up Education Centres at its sites for use by visiting groups.

What's in an Education Centre?

Practical equipment
At some sites the Centres are provided with equipment appropriate for practical on-site activities. There may be tapes for making measured drawings and binoculars for close observation. Centres usually have clip boards that can be borrowed.

Primary sources
Some Centres are equipped with a variety of primary sources. These may be maps or plans, documents archive photographs or old engravings. Some Centres also have a

range of books to help teachers with their planning.

Projectors, slides and videos
Some Centres have a slide projector and sets of appropriate slides are being built up. You may also use projectors to show your own slides. Most Centres have a video and monitor and a range of video tapes.

Handling material
Some sites have small collections of archaeological or historic materials or replicas for groups to handle. For examples, at Kenilworth Castle there are a series of model room sets with costumed figures and at Wroxeter a collection of archaeological finds. Osborne House has Victorian toys for pupils to play with and replica costumes that can be tried on.

Using an Education Centre
Look at the Education Centre when you make your preliminary visit to the site. Examine the materials available and assess their value to your class and the curriculum aims of your visit. Will any preparation be required? A simple idea is to use the Centre as a place to gather children to remind them of preparatory work done in class and set tasks for the visit. Then, after some work has been done, you might discuss results and problems and reinforcing teaching points in privacy and relative comfort whilst all is still fresh in their minds. Parts of the site could then be revisited to solve problems or answer queries. A complete list of English Heritage Education Centres is contained in the **Free Educational Visits** leaflet. To obtain a free copy see **How to Find Out More** on the back page of this booklet.