Art
Sites are a safe and stimulating place for pupils to draw from first hand experience or take photographs for photomontage 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 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.


ea 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.

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

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

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 individuals 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

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?

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 for people with whose times your pupils are unfamiliar, there is no

Environmental studies at Hailes Abbey, Gloucestershire.

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.
MAKING A SITE VISIT PREPARATION

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.

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.

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?

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

ACTIVITY

Chair - complete, machine-made, comfortable (adjustable 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.

Does your class now how to record what they see? Choosing the salient features requires quite sophisticated powers of categorisation and practice by drawing some classroom objects and labelling them.

THE SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room</th>
<th>Heat</th>
<th>Light</th>
<th>Space</th>
<th>Floor</th>
<th>Decor</th>
<th>Walls</th>
<th>Furniture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffroom</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>/ / /</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boiler House</td>
<td>/ /</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloak room</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caretaker</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Order of importance
- Head
- Staffroom
- Classroom
- Kitchen
- Boiler house
- Cloak room
- Corridor
- Caretaker

// lots or excellent
// a lot or good
// a little or fairly good
0 = poor or nothing
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.

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?

**Activity Sheets**
The text 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 tied in as an activity in itself. It is an excellent way to learn about the material world. Understanding of construction comes through the careful observation of buildings and the way the building is put together, and helps pupils to use their eyes.

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