

Reading Abbey Music Resource

Suggested Lesson Activities for Lesson 1

| Plan | | |
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| Objective: To learn about the History of Reading Abbey and the music of the past. To understand how music shapes culture and everyday life. | | |
| Activity | Learning | Location on Abbey Map and Resources |
| <p>Introduction to the Abbey The Abbey was built in 1121, 900 years ago by Henry 1. He was the son of William the conqueror so he still had connections to France and Normandy.</p> <p>The Abbey was built here as it was a great location between large cities like London and Bristol. This still benefits Reading today, with lots of people living here and working in London.</p> | <p>Establish what an abbey was and how it fit into daily life in England.</p> <p>Establishes local history connection.</p> | |
| <p>Map of the Abbey The Abbey was huge religious business that welcomed all sorts of visitors from royalty to the poor and unwell. There were lots of different buildings where different jobs were done.</p> <p>Match the monk job to the location in the Abbey: Each part of the Abbey had a different job. Can you match the monk to the part of the Abbey that they would have worked in?</p> | <p>Children use the cards and the definitions of jobs to learn new words and understand what jobs needed to be done in an Abbey. Establishes connection between it being a business and running very much like a conference centre.</p> | <p>Abbey Map (Whole) Abbey monk cards Photos of locations</p> |
| <p>Sounds and Symbols What sounds would those jobs have made? What symbols could you use to show those sounds? What could you do to make sure you understand those sounds and symbols later?</p> <p>Get the children to make the noises associated with their group. Share your noise with the rest of the class.</p> <p>Extension - then get different children to direct the 'orchestra'. What movements could you put with those sounds</p> <p>Extension - Finish by showing the symbols in sequences to make the sounds.</p> | <p>Children make the connection between symbols created and the sound they represent.</p> <p>Establishes connection in how music and composed and written.</p> <p>Literacy connection to words being symbols that represent objects and concepts.</p> | <p>Symbol Sheet Suggested sounds with pictures Symbol sequencing</p> |
| <p>Sumer Is Icumen in Teach the children about Sumer is Icumen in by using the 'we find it' or the 'we will wash it' song from Bagpuss.</p> | <p>Children learn about <i>Sumer is Icumen in</i> and how it has been used more recently in pop culture.</p> | <p>Chapter house Tablet to play music We will wash it song - https://www.youtube.c</p> |

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| <p>Play <i>Sumer is Icumen in</i>. Tell the children that they are going to learn it. Does it sound easy? No? Well we are going to look another song that was based on <i>Sumer is Icumen in</i> called <i>We will wash it</i>. This was sung by helpful mice in a programme called Bagpus. Can you sing it in a round? What movements would we do to go with this song? Could you create other lyrics about other jobs in the Abbey?</p> | <p>Children learn how to sing <i>Sumer is Icumen in</i> in a more simple form to help build learning later.</p> | <p>om/watch?v=WVzAJbEkyU Sumer is Icumen in - https://soundcloud.com/reading_museum/01-anon-sumer-is-icumen-in Written up sheet with lyrics</p> |
| <p>Visit to Abbey Gateway and Ruins Show the character notes for Adeliza the washer woman. Set up an interview with children playing the character of Adeliza. Extension - Do the washer woman dance.</p> | <p>Children put themselves in the place of someone who lived and worked in the Abbey in the medieval period. They could research some of the other characters to do 'hot seat' questions to understand their lives.</p> | <p>Dormitory Washer woman character notes Tablet with music to play - https://soundcloud.com/artinutler/german-washer-woman Washer Woman Dance</p> |
| <p>Creating a soundscape What sounds can you hear right now, here by the river? What sounds do you think you would have heard 900 years ago? Create a soundscape in groups. Children discuss what sounds washer women would have made by the river for five minutes. Perform the sounds together. – You have made a sound scape!</p> | <p>Children consolidate what they have learned by creating a soundscape of their own imagining what sound they would have heard.</p> | <p>The Abbey Wharf Sounds and symbols sheets Tablet or phone to record soundscape</p> |
| <p>Conclusion Can you tell me one thing that you didn't know before today? What worked well? Is there anything you would change in your soundscape?</p> | <p>Children recall and recount some of their learning. Hopefully, remembering things they may have forgotten.</p> | |

Map of the Abbey

Resources

Map

Monk cards

Monk Jobs

The first thing that we are going to do is find out a bit more about the Abbey, when it was built, who built it and who used it.

What is an Abbey? An Abbey is a huge church and monastery. A monastery is where monks live and pray. It was their job to pray for people and to look after their souls. Pilgrims would come and visit the Abbey to pray, give money and sometimes seek help if they were ill.

The Abbey was built by Henry 1st in 1121, 900 years ago. He built it to honour God but also to show how wealthy he was. However, Henry 1st didn't actually live in the Abbey, though, he would just visit from time to time or hold his royal court there.

The monks in the Abbey had lots of different jobs to do and we are going to find out a bit more about those jobs now. We have some monks with their job labelled and we have a map of the Abbey. I want you to talk in your groups and see if you can find out where each monk would have worked in the Abbey.

Activity

Split the children into groups of four or five and sit them on blankets with the map and the monk cards. The children should look at the pictures and discuss what job they think the monk does and where they might do that job in the Abbey.

Bring the groups together to discuss where they might put them. Are they right?

Not all the locations on this map exist today. We will see the Forbury Gardens, the Church, The Chapter House and the Dormitory!

Sounds and symbols

Resources

Sound scape sheet

Prepared symbol sheet

List of sounds for each group

Symbol sequencing instructions

Keep the children in their groups of 4/5 to come up with one symbols for a sound of their choice. They can keep this and add to it later in school.

Now all those jobs would make a sound. There would be lots of different sounds all around the Abbey 900 years ago, with all those people working away. What sort of noise might a Sacrist make as he opens a door with a key? What sort of noise might a laundress make as she cleans the bed sheets for the Chamberlain?

If we wanted to remember these sounds for later, how would we record that? What symbols could we use? I have done one here, it looks a little like sheet music doesn't it? I want you to remember this later because we will want recreate the sounds again in the future.

Activity

The children make one symbol in their group for one sound of their choice from the cards. Get them to write their one symbol on A4 card. All groups demonstrate their sound and show their symbol.

Extension:

Use the Symbol sequencing sheet to explore different ways to 'play' your sounds as a class.

Write down some of the sequences you create with the symbols to 'play' later in other lessons.

Sumer Is Icumen in (Chapter House)

Resources

Tablet with *Sumer is Icumen in*

Bagpuss song lyrics printed out

Sumer Is Icumen in printed out

One sound and location that we haven't talked about is the Chapter House and singing. That is where a special song would have been sung called *Sumer is Icumen in*. This song was written in the 1200s.

Now this is the first music found in Reading written onto a manuscript which shows a song for 6 voices! It is a very special song about summer coming in and the creatures who will be happy about that. We think that it was sung for a noble who lived nearby and would go hunting in the surrounding land because it is not a very religious song!

Listen to the song. Does that sound like it might be hard to sing? Well, luckily, we have another song we can sing. This is a song sung by some mice who work very hard but it is to the tune of *Sumer is Icumen in*. They sing about the jobs they do as they do them. The monks may very well have sung about their jobs as they did them back in the Abbey.

Activity

Shall we try one? (Sing the wash it song one line at a time and get the children to repeat it.)

Shall we try to sing it in a round? Do you know what that means? It gets very confusing because one half of the room starts to sing later than the other half and we get all mixed up!

Are there are jobs that we talked about before that we could sing songs about? Could we change the lyrics to this song and create your own job song?

What about the sounds that we made earlier? Could some of us make the job noises whilst some of us sing the song? What does that create? Can you make the noises to the tune?

Washer woman

Resources

Jane as the laundress - notes

Washer woman music

Washer woman dance steps

Next we are going over to where all the washing and cleaning would have been really important, the dormitory where all the monks slept. Does anyone remember the Chamberlain, he would have made sure the bed linen was all prepared but we are going to meet someone who would have actually done the work!

This is Jane our laundress, she lives in 1135 so she doesn't know much about modern life but she can tell you a little bit about what it was like to live and work in an Abbey.

Activity

Look at the character of Adeliza. Why was she a washer woman? What sort of things did she have to do? Was it a good job?

Extension: Play the washer woman song and do the washer woman dance in a circle.

Creating a Soundscape

Resources

Phone or tablet to record the soundscape

What is a soundscape? What do I mean when I say to create one? Has anyone heard of a landscape before? So a landscape is a painting or picture of the land. It can be a large part or it can focus on a small

area. The landscape is also all around you. When you are at the top of a hill, possibly your parents have said, 'look at the landscape'.

So, if landscape is what we can see, what do you think a sound scape might be? It is all the sounds that we can hear around us. What sounds can you hear? (Water, birds, people talking, maybe lawn-mowers, cars, etc). Do you think that these are the sounds that you would hear 900 years ago? Think back to earlier and the sounds we made of jobs. What sounds do you think we would hear if we were here in 1135. The Abbey was still being built at this time. Even though it started in 1121, it wasn't actually consecrated until 1165 and even then it wasn't complete! They had to keep going around doing repairs for 200 years!

Activity

Get the children back into their groups

So thinking back to the sounds that you came up with earlier, do you think we could make the Abbey sound like it did 900 years ago, right now? What sounds would we hear right next to the river? What sounds do you think washer women would be making?

Get each group to make their sounds of the washer women in turn.

Now do you think that everywhere in the Abbey would have sounded the same? We are in the dormitory and near the river so it makes sense that we would hear more things to do with the water and with sleeping.

Over at the mill, we would hear different sounds again as compared to the infirmary or even the Hospitium.

Conclusion

You have created and composed a sound scape. When you listen to it, does it make you think of the medieval washer woman washing clothes?

What soundscapes could you make next to build a picture of the Abbey? Could you create a soundscape for each location using some of the sounds for jobs that you created earlier?

Next Steps

You could create soundscapes for:

Chapter House

Mill

Stables



Infirmary

Hospitium

Dormitory

Cellarer's offices

You could create sheet music with the symbols you have created and teach other class how to 'perform' your sequences.

You could organise a performance in your school.