

History Mystery

Teacher's Guide – Key Stage 3

A historical enquiry workshop for pupils to develop key skills: analysing sources, using archaeological evidence, and constructing rigorous arguments. They examine written accounts, archaeological evidence from the excavation of the Mary Rose, and analyse replica objects. Pupils consider the significance of the Mary Rose as a whole and communicate how it contributes to social and cultural history.

Skills covered:

- Society, culture, and economy in the Early Modern Period
- Local history
- Investigating historical claims
- Using critical thinking

Links to the aims of the National Curriculum for History

- 'understand historical concepts such as...cause and consequence...and significance',
- 'frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses'.
- 'understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims'.
- 'discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed'.
- 'understanding the connections between...cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history'.

Links to the subject content of the National Curriculum for History

- 'understand how different types of historical sources are used rigorously to make historical claims and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed'.
- 'the English Reformation and Counter Reformation (Henry VIII to Mary I)'.
- 'society, economy and culture across the period: for example, work and leisure in town and country, religion and superstition in daily life, theatre, art, music and literature'.
- 'a depth study linked to one of the British areas of study listed above'.

Links to other areas of the National Curriculum:

English: 'Teachers should show pupils how to understand...nuances in meaning'.

English: 'knowing the purpose, audience for and context of the writing and drawing on this knowledge to support comprehension'.

Citizenship: 'are equipped with the skills to think critically and debate political questions'.

Links to the Curriculum Review (November 2025)

- A workshop to embed key disciplinary skills, in particular, rigorous media literacy and source investigation.
- Students are required throughout the session to apply critical enquiry skills to sources and historical judgments and articulate why these judgements have been made.

Expanding the Learning:

Here at the Mary Rose we understand the importance of making the most of educational trips and giving students experiences and memories to last. We aim to support teachers in giving their students the chance to reflect upon their time here at the museum and relate that to their classroom work to make it more fun, enjoyable and memorable.

The following are some ideas for classroom activities that could aid students in recalling what they have learnt here at the Mary Rose Museum and to solidify that understanding.

Students can...

- Research the individuals involved and write up profiles for each viewpoint. What were their motivations? What were their roles at their respective courts?
- Write a survivor's point of view.
- Write a spectator's point of view.
- Hold a court of enquiry: make it modern or Tudor and adjust the parameters appropriately.
- Investigate the scientific aspects of the theory: why do boats sink? What does buoyancy mean? How could the historical evidence interact with the scientific?
- Explore some of the other sources about the sinking: Hall's Chronicle (1548) <https://archive.org/details/hallschronicleco00halluoft/page/n870/mode/1up> [p.871] or Sir John Oglander <https://www.proquest.com/openview/95d2c40436e0bb54/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=3029> or the more outlandish ones <https://maryrose.org/blog/rubbish-theories/> and assess them for validity! What evidence would you need to prove that ghosts did sink the *Mary Rose*?