

Portsmouth 100: From the Tudors to Today...

Teacher's Guide - Key Stage 3

Portsmouth celebrates 100 years of city status in 2026. This workshop explores the local history, considering questions such as how did a small port become such a vibrant city, and how much has it changed? What does a city need? This workshop encourages students understand their concept of place and will foster a sense of belonging. The session explores how the presence of the newly established Fleet accelerated a growth in commerce and eventually, population. We will also look at what life was like for Tudor women, and how Portsmouth was, even in 1545, a city that welcomed migrants.

Skills covered:

- Examining continuity and change and analysing trends
- Testing how far sites in their locality reflect aspects of national history
- Exploring human geography
- Understanding how human and physical processes interact to influence, and change landscapes, environments and the climate

Links to the aims of the National Curriculum for History:

- 'know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative...how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world'.
- 'understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence...and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts'.
- 'gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales'.

Links to the subject content of the National Curriculum for History:

- 'The development of Church, state and society in Medieval Britain, 1066 – 1509'

- ‘Society, economy and culture: for example, feudalism, religion in daily life (parishes, monasteries, abbeys), farming, trade and towns...art, architecture and literature’.
- ‘the Black Death and its social and economic impact’.
- ‘The development of Church, state and society in Britain, 1509 – 1745’.
- ‘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’.
- ‘ideas, political power, industry and empire: Britain, 1745 – 1901’.
- ‘challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world 1901 to the present day’.
- ‘social, cultural and technological change in post-war British society’.
- ‘a local history study...a study over time, testing how far sites in their locality reflect aspects of national history’.
- ‘the study of an aspect or theme in British history that consolidates and extends pupils’ chronological knowledge from before 1066...Britain’s changing landscape...a study of an aspect of social history’ .

Links to other areas of the National Curriculum:

Geography: ‘understand, through the use of detailed place-based exemplars at a variety of scales...human geography relating to: population and urbanisation; international development; economic activity in the primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary sectors; and the use of natural resources’.

Geography: ‘understand how human and physical processes interact to influence, and change landscapes, environments and the climate; and how human activity relies on effective functioning of natural systems’.

Geography: ‘build on their knowledge of globes, maps and atlases and apply and develop this knowledge routinely in the classroom and in the field’.

Links to the Curriculum Review (November 2025)

- This workshop utilises multiple different sources, asking pupils to critically examine written text, pictures, and maps.
- It requires a significant element of oracy, with each presenting and justifying their decisions to their smaller group and the wider class.
- The session also includes discussions about sustainability and climate policy.

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...

- Take a history walk through their local area to explore features that might have been highlighted in the session.
- Create a guide to the city for Tudor or other historical visitors: what would they see, what could they do, where would they get food and drink?
- Research their own area of Portsmouth: each section of the city used to be a small village or distinct area, and each has its own individual character and history – why is Southsea so different from Hilsea?
- Expand on the design for their perfect city in a report about their ideas, including justification for their decisions.
- Investigate the environmental impact of some of their choices: if they chose to have no cars in the city, what would this mean? What other options are there for energy production if they don't use fossil fuels?
- Was Portsmouth sustainable in the past? When was the most sustainable period?
- Write an autobiography from someone living in Tudor Portsmouth – what changed over their lifetime? How did it affect them?

If you would like us to highlight a particular aspect of Tudor history during the workshop, such as trade, diversity, or social inequality, please do let us know.