

KS3 Castles Literacy Resource

LEARN

Contents Page

Introduction

Booking a visit.	Page 2
Health and safety	
Castles and the curriculum	
Castles and the Literacy Framework in Key Stage 3	

Before your visit

Activity suggestions	Page 3
--------------------------------	--------

Castle Inspiration

Exciting Writing

Many, many years ago	Page 3
Visit Wales	Page 4
In the mood	Page 5

Talk of the town

Building castles - Debating the issue.	Page 6
Castle conversations.	Page 8
Let's talk	Page 8

Just the job

Give us a clue	Page 9
Dirty work	Page 10
Help wanted	Page 11

Home sweet home

Now and then: Castle life poetry	Page 12
Room with a view	Page 13
Defensive or domestic	Page 13
Castle for sale	Page 14

Activity pages

Many, many years ago	
Story planning page	Page 15
In the mood	
Senses planning page	Page 16
Castle conversations	
Resource cards	Page 17
Castle careers	
Resource cards	Page 18

List of images

Rhuddlan Castle	front cover
Earls Chamber at Caerphilly Castle	page 3
Castle Coch	page 4
Dancing at Beaumaris Castle.	page 5
Kidwelly Castle.	page 6
Caernarfon Castle	page 8
Chepstow Castle	page 9
Criccieth Castle	page 12
Chepstow Castle wooden door	page 12
Harlech Castle	page 13



Introduction

The aim of this pack is to help teachers approach a self-led visit to a castle in a creative, confident and imaginative way. The activity suggestions are flexible and can be carried out in a number of ways. We encourage teachers to select and adapt the material to ensure it meets specific topic and year group needs.

Booking a visit

Did you know that self-led visits to Cadw sites are free to education groups attending education establishments in the European Union?

The following guidelines are for staffed castles only. If you are visiting a castle that is not staffed you do not need to book. To book your free visit, please follow these simple steps:

Please book your visit at least five working days in advance. Telephone the site to check the availability for the date you'd like to visit. Once you have agreed a date and time with the site, complete the online booking form.

We also offer interactive, curriculum-linked education activities at selected sites. Booking guidelines and other resources can be found on the Cadw learning pages www.cadw.wales.gov.uk/learning

Health and Safety

Teachers and group leaders are responsible for carrying out risk assessments prior to the visit, in accordance with guidance issued by local education authorities. We offer free teacher familiarisation visits to enable teachers to write the risk assessments and plan activities before bringing a group to the site. The learning pages on the Cadw website offer advice for planning your visit and site specific information.

Castles and the Curriculum

We have included a curriculum map to support teachers' planning. The map highlights how the activity suggestions in this pack are relevant to learning in Key Stage 3 and how they link to the National Curriculum Wales. The activity suggestions also support the delivery of Cwricwlwm Cymreig. They provide pupils with opportunities to develop and apply their knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental and historical characteristics of Wales.



Castles and the Literacy Framework in Key Stage 3

Welsh castles provide children with a dramatic, atmospheric and exciting environment in which to develop a range of literacy and language skills. The activity suggestions in this pack encourage pupils to immerse themselves in the castle's environment in order to generate ideas, viewpoints and first hand experiences. The activities also encourage pupils to explore, plan, develop and reflect upon their ideas for a variety of writing and oral language projects.



Before your visit

Activity Suggestions

And...action!

Research how castles are used as settings in films or dramas. View clips from various films e.g. Merlin, I Capture the Castle, Harry Potter and Tangled. Explore the castle's starring role in creating the mood and atmosphere in different scenes. Consider the period, the use of space and the contribution of lighting, decoration, materials and techniques. Plan how you could use a castle as a unique venue for a performance. In class create and rehearse a scene or play to be performed in the castle during your visit. You could do a dramatised performance of traditional tales, myths and legends, such as the Mabinogion or a performance poem. Design a scale model of the set and plan stage directions. You could create advertisements for the performance including posters, programmes and tickets.



Once upon a time...

Create a sense of place and use the castle to retell castle stories or poems students have written. Choose an area of the castle to share stories with an audience. Castles provide the ideal setting to share historical tales and legends about Wales' many heroes and heroines. A story collection is available to download from the Cadw website www.cadw.wales.gov.uk

Castle researcher

Carry out site-specific research of the castle you intend to visit and create a webpage or page for an information book about it. Include the history of the castle, who lived and worked there and a timeline of the castle's key events. You could include a glossary to explain castle terminology to your readers e.g. keep, feudal, siege, drawbridge etc. Start your research at www.cadw.wales.gov.uk. During your visit continue your research; take photographs and video to add to your pages. If you have created a digital page you could record castle sounds or interviews with custodians and visitors.

You will find activity sheets at the end of this resource



Castle inspiration

The following activities encourage students to study the castle environment closely in order to generate inspiration and gather material for a range of writing. As students explore the castle they will instinctively chat, discuss and listen. The activity suggestions also provide ideas to encourage focused talk to develop oracy skills.

Exciting writing

English: Writing
Skills: 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 & 9
Range: 1, 2, 3 & 4.

Other curriculum links: History and Geography.

Literacy Framework

Strand 3: Writing across the curriculum

Elements: Organising ideas and information.

Writing accurately.

Aspects: Meaning, purposes and readers. Language.

Many, many years ago...

Key Question:

How can we use castles in our stories?



Engage:

Use your trip to inspire castle stories. Think like a writer and use the visit to the castle to research story ideas. Put the castle setting at the heart of story plots and character choices.

Develop:

You are a writer - as you explore the castle plan your castle story. **Think about:**

Sensational setting Where? Inside the castle, outside the castle wall? In the dungeon? When? Today, when the castle was being built or during an attack? Create the atmosphere: mysterious, tense, safe or magical. **Think about** - The weather, time of day, time of year. Use all of your senses.

Winning words - Record vivid detail through careful word choices. Experiment with language and the use of powerful figurative language including similes, metaphors and personification. Remember to link word choices to the mood you wish to create.

Cool characters Are they brave, magic, super human, timid or resilient? Do they overcome difficulties or fears? Do they live or work in the castle?

Punchy plot What happens? Is there a siege or attack? Does a dramatic event occur? Does someone go missing or does something get lost? Is there a mystery or secret to be revealed? Is there a quest or journey?



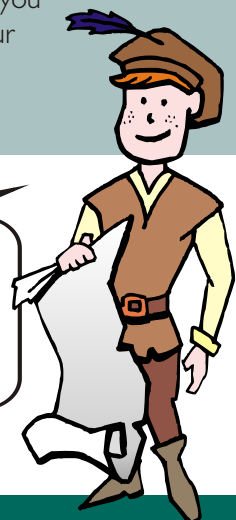
Inspiring images Take photographs or sketches as part of your research. They will jog your memory when drafting your story and they could be added to your final draft too.

Reflect:

Find a place for quiet contemplation. Think and talk about how you are going to develop your story. Share your ideas with others and evaluate each other's work.

In class: Use your plan to draft your castle story. Before you write your final draft share your stories with others. Gather feedback and make changes.

You could use the story planning sheet to help plan your story. You will find it at the end of this resource



Visit wales

Key Question:

What would you include in a castle brochure?



Engage:

You have been asked to create a leaflet, brochure or guidebook to help improve visitors' experiences during a castle visit. **Think about:** Your audience and how you will develop an informative leaflet for young children, for older children or for adults. Walk around the castle and gather evidence and information, thinking about your audience as you explore.

Develop:

Think about the detail you must include.

A detailed map to guide people around the castle

Historical background Why, when and how the castle was built? Who lived and worked there? Why is it special?

Language think about your audience and use informative, engaging and lively language to interpret the site.

Reconstruction drawings to show what the castle looked like in the past and how it was used.

Castle facilities E.g. toilets, parking, shops and accessibility

Opening and closing times

Different languages

Think about the detail you could include.

Information about Cadw and how they look after castles and the rest of the historic environment in Wales

Fun and intriguing facts

Information about the local area and other places to visit

Details about how to get there

Reflect:

Think about: Who you could ask to find out more information? How would you contact them?

In class: Continue your research using the Internet and information books. Analyse the language, design and layout of various leaflets and brochures. **Think about:** Your audience and plan how you are going to present your brochure, deciding upon the information and images you want to include. Are you going to create a digital brochure?

Undertake market research: Why do tourists visit? When do they visit? Do they return?



In the mood...

Key Questions:

How does the castle setting make you feel?
Can you describe the castle atmosphere?



Engage:

The castle setting conveys a mood or emotion. Share ideas about your five senses and how they influence your mood and emotions. Poets and writers often use a sixth sense to express a mood. They use their mind's eye, imagining beyond what they can see, smell, hear, touch or taste.

Develop:

Embark on a sensory trail around the castle. Your senses influence how you feel about a place. What are your senses telling you? What pictures are they putting in your mind? Use all of your senses including your sixth sense to collect and capture ideas, feelings and thoughts. Create a mood board to express how the castle makes you feel. Record words, take photographs, sketch views and objects and doodle imaginings. Does the castle atmosphere make you think of a particular colour? Use this colour to influence your mood board.



Reflect:

Did you feel the same in different places in the castle?
Why?

In class: Use your mood board to create a sensory poem about the castle. **Think about:** Your audience and the mood you want to create. Start with your chosen colour and end with your mind's eye. You could add a second verse with the opposite mood to your first. Explore literary devices - similes, metaphors, alliteration, personification and lists.

You could follow this pattern:

The castle is fluffy pink.
Its candyfloss scent fills the air.
It appears on the pages of a fairy tale.
It sizzles like popping candy on my tongue.
It exudes warmth, strength and security.
The castle has magic within its walls.

The castle is pitch black.
Rot and decay waft upon the stagnant air.
Shadows dance on the clammy stone.
Fear lingers in your mouth.
Ice cold fingers touch your skin within the gloom.
The castle has death around every corner.

You could use the
senses planning sheet
on the activity pages
to help plan your
poem



Talk of the town

English: Oracy
Skills: 1, 2, 3 & 4
Range: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6

Other curriculum links: History, Geography, and PSE.

Literacy Framework

Strand 1: Oracy across the curriculum
Elements: Developing and presenting information
Aspects: Speaking, Listening, Collaboration and discussion

Building castles - Debating the issue

Key Questions:

What impact did the building of castles have on local people and the local area?



Engage:

Vast amounts of time and money were spent building castles in Wales. They were usually built to secure control of land and then to suppress local people's resistance. Ambitious campaigns to invade and overtake castles and build new ones led to attacks and uprisings.

Think about: How did local people feel? What impact did the castle buildings have on the local area?

Develop:

At times local people were not permitted to live within castle walls and in some cases had their homes relocated to make room for the new town and castle. Sometimes people were not allowed to trade in the markets within the castle walls. At other times castles provided local people with jobs and trade.

Working in small groups, ask questions and discuss how you think local people felt. Discuss what you would have done had you lived at the time. Would any locals have supported the building of a castle in the area? Present a balanced view to other groups and express the people's views and perspectives. Put forward a persuasive argument supporting your views.

Reflect:

People often expressed their anger and frustration with a series of revolts against English rule. **Discussion point:** Is it ever ok to use violence?

In class: Research the development of political power and the reasons for castle building in Wales. Investigate the economic and social impact of castle building on towns and villages.



Castle conversations

Key Questions:

What would you do if your castle were attacked? How would you react?



Engage:

You live in the castle and it is under a surprise attack. No one within the castle has had time to prepare. As the attack rages on the people in the castle react differently.



Develop:

Choose a character card and think about how your character would have reacted during the attack. What was their role in defending it? What might they have done and said? Act out conversations between the characters involved in a castle attack. Imagine you are winning - would the conversation change?

Reflect:

This activity could be developed into storytelling. Stay in character but decades older and tell your story of "The Day of the Attack" to your grandchildren. Each character would have had a different experience and they may also like to exaggerate a bit, so let your imagination go!

In class: Write a diary account of "The Day of the Attack" and include an account of what happened the following day or write scripts for conversations between different characters for others to act out.

Let's talk

Teachers - You may wish to give students opportunities to discuss and think as they explore the castle. Below is a list of focused talking tasks and discussion points you may wish to use.

You could vary the ways in which students respond to the questions, e.g. thinking time, reporting back to a group, talking with a partner, discussing with a group etc.

How would you rule the castle if you were in charge?

What are the positives and negatives of living in a castle?

If you met a character from the past what would you ask them?

If you were stood here many hundreds of years ago what would you have seen?

If the castle could talk what questions would you ask it?

How would you describe the castle to someone who has never seen it?

If you were an archeologist what artefacts might you discover here?

What factors influenced the building of the castle here?

What was the economic impact of castle building in the area?

Castles were built as a means of control. Discuss.

Just the job

The following activities encourage students to think about the people who worked within the castle. They will explore the hustle and bustle of castle life through the people who worked there.

English: Oracy
Skills: 1, 3 & 4.
Range: 2, 3, 4 & 5.

English: Writing
Skills: 1 & 4
Range: 1, 2, 3, & 4.

Other curriculum links: History and PSE.

Literacy Framework

Strands 1&3: Oracy across the curriculum. Writing across the curriculum

Elements: Developing and presenting information. Organising ideas and information. Writing accurately

Aspects: Speaking, Listening, Collaboration and discussion. Meaning, purposes, readers. Language.

Give us a clue?

Key Questions: *What jobs did children do in the castle? What would it have been like to work here?*



Engage:

Children were kept very busy in the castle. There was always plenty of work for them to do and some of it was not very pleasant! Imagine you worked here in the castle each day. What do you think it would have been like?

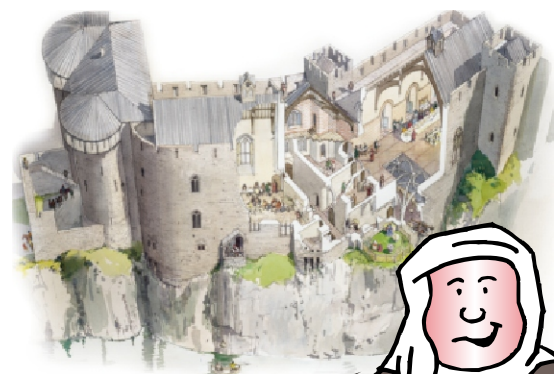
Develop:

In groups choose a 'Castle Career Card' each. Think carefully about the job you have chosen and the tasks you would have carried out. Act out your roles. Decide on appropriate movements, facial expressions and gestures that demonstrate what they are doing and how they feel. Can the rest of the group guess the job you do? You could freeze-frame your actions, take a photograph and discuss the emotions expressed. Repeat with a different castle careers card.

Reflect:

This activity could be steered into a hot seating activity where you focus upon the personalities of the people behind the job. Explore your character's story. Stay in role, take it in turns in the hot seat and answer improvised questions.

In class: Research your castle job and write a 'Job Advertisement'. List the main responsibilities, qualities and experience suited to the role. Students could also discuss child labour and debate the issue of children's rights.



Use the castle career cards with this activity. You will find them in the activity pages

Dirty work



Key Question: How did people keep clean?

Engage:

Living and working in a castle meant that you could not be fussy about being surrounded by horrible smells and dirt. Rats were everywhere and people knew nothing about germs and disease. It was difficult for people to keep clean as there was no clean, running water.



Develop:

Today we know a lot about how to keep clean and stay healthy. Although little was known about germs, people tried to care for themselves and their surroundings. How do you think they did this with the resources they had access to at the time? Imagine you are a health inspector. It is your job to inspect the castle, to interview the people who work there to keep it clean and to give them advice on how to rid the castle of smells, dirt and germs. Some of you will need to take on the role of the castle workers and answer the health inspector's questions.

Castle workers could be:

- Gong farmers** - they clean out the cesspit
- Scullions** - they wash the dishes and clean the kitchen
- Constable** - he is in charge of the castle
- Cook** - they prepare and cook the food
- Laundress** - she cleans clothes and bedding

Reflect:

Discussion point - Who had the dirtiest job? Why do you think that?

In class: Write up your report detailing what you have discovered about health and hygiene in the castle. You could research further and include additional information in your report. Write a formal letter to the Castle Constable (the person in charge of the day-to-day running of the castle) with your findings and advise him/her on how to keep the castle clean.

Design an information leaflet or poster to be hung around the castle advising people on how they can stay clean and healthy.

Help wanted

Engage:



Develop:

Write a formal letter of application in response to the advertisement for the job of a knight at the castle. In your letter include examples of your experience relevant to the job, your skills and personal qualities.

Reflect:

Why do you think you would be the perfect candidate for the job?

In class: Read the letters of application and shortlist the candidates. Conduct an interview and choose the new castle knight.



Home sweet home

Castles were much more than powerful strongholds. Within the solid walls they were also a home to many people. Through literacy tasks students will investigate the castle as a place to live.

English: Writing
Skills: 1, 4, 7, 8 & 9.
Range: 1, 2, 3, & 4.

Other curriculum links: History, Geography and Art and Design.

Literacy Framework
Strand 3: Writing across the curriculum
Elements: Organising ideas and information.
Writing accurately.
Aspects: Meaning, purposes and readers.
Language.

Now and then: Castle life poetry

Key Question:

What can I see as I walk around the castle?



Engage:

Quietly walk around the castle and look, smell, listen, touch and feel. Look at the highest part of the castle and the lowest part. Find the brightest area within and around the castle and explore the darkest area. What do you see? Look high, look low, crouch, stretch and look beneath. Look backwards as well as forwards.

Develop:

In 'Poet Partners' walk around the castle and describe to each other exactly what you can see. Be precise with your descriptions and start each description with *I can see...* e.g. *I can see rugged ruins as far as the horizon. I can see pitch black holes that I am afraid to put my hand into.* Record some of your sentences beginning with *I can see...*

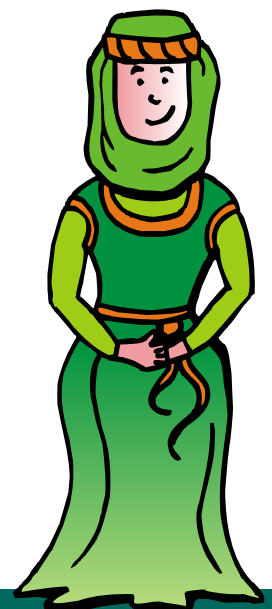
All 'Poet Partners' come together and contribute to a group poem. Choose two of your favourite *I can see...* descriptions and add them to one group poem. Share the poem with the group. Can you move some of the sentences around? Think about literary devices- similes, metaphors, alliteration, personification and lists. Can you improve the poem and make it more descriptive?

Reflect:

Choose a part of the castle to perform your group poem. Does it describe the castle? Does it capture the feeling and spirit of the castle?

In class: Research and write a second verse.

The second verse could be about what you would have seen *then*, in the past. Again start each description with *I can see...* e.g. *I can see people scurrying past with platters of food etc.*



A room with a view



Key Questions: What is the view like from the castle window? In the past what would the view be like?

Engage:

Castles were often built in prominent places, high above the surrounding area. As a result they have amazing far-reaching views.

Develop:

As you explore the castle look through all the windows and vantage points and take in the views. Choose a view that you particularly like, find a comfortable spot and sketch what you see. You could use your sketch as a postcard and on the other side write to a friend describing your visit.

Reflect:

Think about what the view would have been like many years ago. How has it changed? Sketch an 'artist's impression' of the view from the past.



In class: Investigate the area you can see from one of the windows. Can you see a town or village? Create a fact file with information about the history of the area, places to visit, shops and jobs etc.

Defensive or domestic?



Key Questions: Is this castle a stronghold or a home? Or both?

Engage:

Some castle features were built to look good, to show off to others and for comfort. Some features were built as part of military strategy, a stronghold of power and might.



Develop:

Look carefully at the castle features. Investigate whether they are defensive - to protect the castle. Or domestic - to provide comfort to the people living in them. Or are they both? List the features you can see and record the evidence. **Think about:** Are the features defensive, are they domestic or are they both?

What to look for:

Defensive Features

Location - rocky outcrop
Loophole
Thick stone wall
Curtain wall
Spiral staircase
Gatehouse with towers
Drawbridge and portcullis
Round tower
Moat
Battlements
Murder holes
Sally port

Domestic Features

Chapel
Carved stonework
Fireplaces
Bedchamber
Spiral Staircase
Glass window
Plastered walls
Large oven
Garderobe
Great Hall
Wider window

Reflect:

Share your evidence and decide together whether this castle was built to defend or built as a home. Was the castle built with both in mind? How do you know? Explain your decision.



Castle for sale



Key Question:

What are the castle's special features?

Engage:

The Lord wishes to move and sell his castle. He has instructed you, a medieval estate agent, to list the castle for sale.

Develop:

Take notes and jot down ideas for a 'For Sale' brochure. Include creative and exaggerated descriptions of the castle with a persuasive tone to really sell it. *E.g. This gracious castle with far reaching views has 12 spacious bedrooms and is situated in a sought after location.* Include flattering photographs of the castle and each room. Describe the special features found there. *E.g. Spacious and airy rooms retaining many original features, with open views over the Welsh countryside.* What are the castles key selling points? Location, condition, views, original features, open plan kitchen, price, extensive gardens etc.



Reflect:

How much do you think the castle is worth?

In class: Analyse the persuasive language and brochure layout used by estate agents to sell houses. Include the key language and layout features in your own brochure.

Why not have a go at the 'Castle for sale' activity in the STEM resource pack?



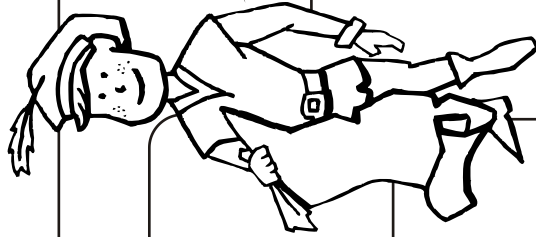
Name Date

Many, many years ago
Story planning page

Supporting Characters

Main Character

As you explore
the castle jot
down your
ideas here



Setting

Vocabulary

Genre

Title:

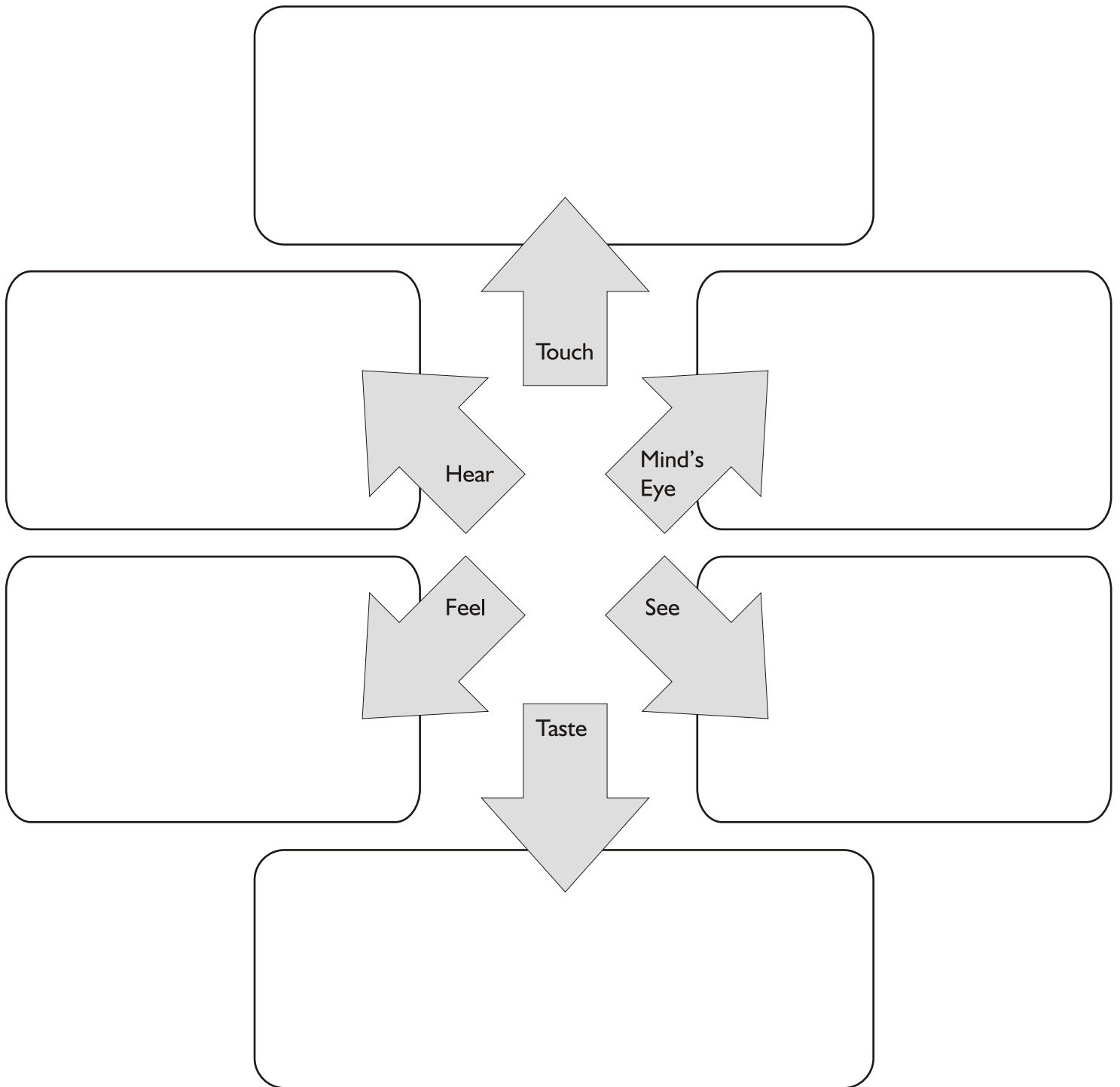
Author:

Problem

Solution

In the mood

Senses planning page



Castle conversations

Resource cards



Servant:

He is very lazy and is always being told off. When no one is looking he skulks off looking for a quiet place for a quick nap.

Knight:

He is always boasting about how brave and clever he is. But spends most of his time looking for excuses not to fight.

Laundress:

She is very strong and very nose-y but she is always there to help and support whenever she can. She likes to be in charge.

Page:

He is very brave and keen. He is always at the centre of any fighting and can't wait to become a fully-fledged knight.

Watchman:

He loves his job and he is very good at it. He is very observant and even on his days off you will find him prowling the passageways.

Lord and Lady:

They are very kind and generous but they are completely hopeless. They rely on everyone around them to do everything and panic at any shadow or sound.

Castle careers

Resource cards

Spit boy - A very lowly job:

A spit boy must: turn the heavy, hot iron spits used to roast meat over a roaring fire. This job can take many hours.

Stable boy:

A stable boy must: wake up very early each day to muck out the stables, feed the horses, clean and brush the horses and walk them around the yard.

Apprentice Fletcher:

An apprentice fletcher must: learn how to make the flights and shafts of an arrow. They must also carefully attach the flights to the back of the arrow shaft. They must do everything the fletcher says.

Apprentice Blacksmith:

An apprentice blacksmith must: forge weapons, sharpen tools and weapons, repair armour and make hinges for the castle doors. They must do everything the blacksmith says.

Gardener - A very important job:

A gardener must: be an expert on herbs, spices and flowers, keep castle walls clear of plants so they cannot be used to climb and help dig defensive ditches. They must also make sure the castles gardens look good and are well kept.

Page - Junior to the Squire:

A junior to the squire must: wait at the table, care for the Lord's clothes and help the Lord to dress. They must wear a uniform and have very good manners.

Scullion - A very lowly job:

A scullion must: obey the orders of everyone working in the kitchen. They must scrub the pots, fetch water from the well, peel the turnips, scour the floors and pluck the chickens.

Squire - Assistant to a Knight:

A squire must: assist the knight in the castle and on the battlefield. Learn the code of chivalry and heraldry, practice fighting on horseback and using weapons to become a knight. They also need to carry their knight's weapons and look after his horse.