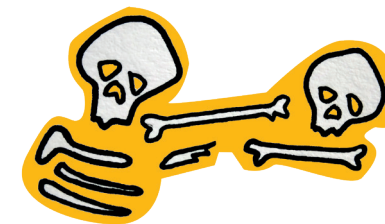


Tower of London: How gory a story?

trail map & timeline

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS



A self-led enquiry for KS3/4

This self-led trail helps your students investigate Tower history while navigating the site with you. Students may wish to explore the Tower in pairs or small groups (under teacher supervision).

As they do, students will consider the Tower of London's sometimes gory past and notorious reputation as a place of torture, execution and murder.

The overarching enquiry asks:

Does the Tower of London deserve its gory reputation?

Students investigate by exploring (up to) 15 stops around the Tower complex. The stops are divided into three walks (5 stops each) - and you may wish to divide up your group or offer a choice to students.

Students are first asked to record their initial judgement on the enquiry question.

Then, their task is to explore the Tower, giving each stop a GORE SCORE, rating the 'goriness' of the story or event described.

After their exploration, students are asked to review their initial judgement.

The trail is good preparation for a plenary session where students compare, debate and exchange views and arguments.

Each walk takes approximately **30-40 minutes** to complete. **All three walks** take approximately **1.75 hours** to complete.

Learning aims & outcomes

The trail **does not require prior knowledge** and is structured to help students:

1. Expand their knowledge of the Tower's history
2. Consult a diverse range of evidence and facts
3. Decide to what extent the Tower's 'gory reputation' is a fair assessment, a generalisation or in need of revision.

By engaging with the site and trail information, students should come away with a sense of the Tower's diverse history, having challenged the notion that it should be best known as a place where people were tortured and executed.

Skills development

- To practice questioning and challenging generalisations about the past
- To gain an appreciation of historical diversity; that more knowledge and additional evidence can provide a broader, fuller picture about a historical question
- To explore concept of historical significance and practice making judgements about the criteria and evidence they consider most persuasive
- To communicate their own view and support with reasons
- The trail stops and timeline offer students an opportunity to identify trends, make connections and draw contrasts

Getting around with groups

ADULT:STUDENT
ratio
1:10

The Tower of London is a very busy and popular historic site. Its narrow passageways and most popular attractions (eg, Crown Jewels) can become very crowded.

- **Popular spots** - This trail does not require students to go inside the White Tower, Jewel House (Crown Jewels display) or Bloody Tower. These areas attract large queues every day. If you plan to visit these sites, you may wish to go at the beginning or end of the day when they are less crowded.
- **Spread out** - To reduce congestion and the time it takes your group to complete the trail, you may wish to divide your group into three, assigning each sub-group a different walk.
- **Reminders for students** - If working in groups, please remind students to find an appropriate place to stop on the trail, away from other visitors, and to take particular care not to block entrances and exits.

Accessibility

For students with limited mobility, a number of stops on the trail are accessible or visible from the flat ground of the inner ward:

stop 4
Heads roll
Execution memorial

stop 5
Marking time
Beauchamp Tower (outside of tower is visible)

stop 6
A murder mystery?
Tower Green

stop 7
The monarch
Traitor's Gate

stop 10
Luxury lost
South Battlement Wall (remains of lost palace can be seen)

stop 11
Hanging tough
Salt Tower (outside of tower is visible)

stop 15
Rack and ruin
White Tower

Ideas & activities

PRE-VISIT

1. **Knowledge of the Tower** - Review existing knowledge of the Tower of London. The trail's timeline contains a range of graphics and facts about the Tower's history as a fortress, palace and prison - you may wish to share this with students in advance of their visit.
2. **Generalisations** - Discuss how historians resist generalising about an event, period or aspect of the past, and how they seek out additional and diverse evidence to reach a fuller picture.
3. **Significance** - Review or ask students to think about the concept of historical significance. What criteria might be used to assess the Tower of London and how its reputation should be interpreted? eg, 5 Rs or GREAT models might serve as starting points for capable students.

AT THE TOWER

1. **Social media** - Have students share their initial hypotheses and subsequent conclusions via Twitter or social media using a shared class hashtag, eg, #towertrail.
2. **Collect visual evidence** - Use of phone for photographing site as way of collecting evidence students find persuasive or to teach about significance, eg, Photograph your 'most ...' piece of evidence.
3. **Opposite worldview** - Challenge students to prove the opposite of their hypothesis. Can you make a convincing case?
4. **PMI** - Suggest students use the plus/minus/interesting framework as a way of processing their discoveries and talking about their findings.

ENQUIRY
QUESTION:

DOES THE TOWER OF LONDON DESERVE ITS GORY REPUTATION?

1

GETTING STARTED



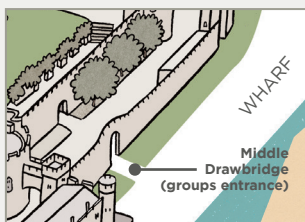
Adult: Student
ratio
1:10



One trail
map per two
students



Students can
record ideas
on trail map



All groups
should enter
via **Middle
Drawbridge**

2

BUILD KNOWLEDGE OF TOWER HISTORY

Knowledge of the Tower?

Students **do not**
require prior
knowledge of the
Tower. But some
familiar with the
Tower may wish
to share their
interpretations.

Use timeline to provide context

Ask students
to review **HOW
GORY A STORY?** It
contains dozens of
stories from Tower
history.



**HOW GORY A
STORY?** is on
the reverse of
the trail map

3

REFLECT ON THE ENQUIRY QUESTION

DOES THE TOWER DESERVE ITS GORY REPUTATION?

YES? ☐
NO? ☐
MAYBE? ☐

Why do you
think that?

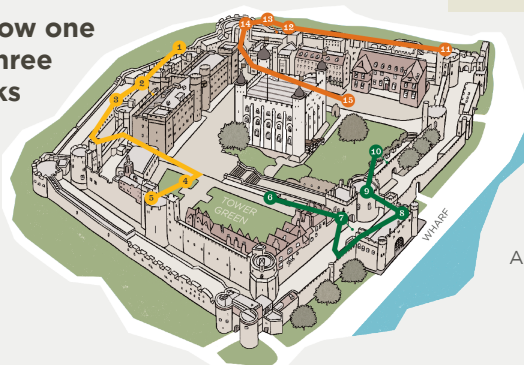


How would you
justify your
view?

4

INVESTIGATE TOWER STORIES, SITES & EVIDENCE

Follow one
of three
walks



- SENT TO THE TOWER
- MONARCH MYSTERIES
- TORTURE & REVOLT



Allow 30-40
minutes
per walk

Give each stop a GORE SCORE

Ask students to
rate the story at
each stop they visit
on this scale from
0-3.

9 MELANCHOLY KILLS
Wakefield Tower

Pass through St Thomas's Tower.
Wakefield Tower has a small chapel

Chapels were essential in a royal
residence, given the importance of
religion. King Henry VI is said to have
died in this spot, while at prayer, in
1471. Though he was a king, Henry
was a prisoner here. His rivals - the
Yorks - had taken control of the
throne in a series of civil wars. His
rivals' supporters said he died of
sadness (he'd recently lost his son in
battle), but it was widely suspected
he was murdered on orders of the
new king Edward IV.



**GORE
SCORE**

gore-free 0
potentially gory 1
plain gruesome 2
stomach-turning 3

5

REFLECT AGAIN ON THE ENQUIRY QUESTION

DOES THE TOWER DESERVE ITS GORY REPUTATION?

YES? ☐
NO? ☐
MAYBE? ☐

Has your view
changed? If so,
why?

How do you
justify your
view?



6

SHARE TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Discussion ideas



Compare how
different groups
interpreted
'goriness' at
different stops.

Encourage peer-to-
peer sharing before
or as an alternative
to a whole group
plenary.

Use Twitter or
social media to
share tentative
conclusion and
reasoning.

Agree or disagree
vote by show of
hands; take turns
justifying why
views changed or
stayed the same.