

Animation Script



Medieval history and the 'Mobility of Objects' with Professor Katherine Wilson and Dr Tom Pickles

To make the most out of this script, you could:

- Stick it in your book as a record of watching Katherine and Tom's animation
- Pause the animation and make notes as you go
- Add your own illustrations to the sheet
- Create your own animation to accompany it
- Add notes from classroom discussions
- Make notes of areas you will investigate further
- Make notes of keywords and definitions
- Add questions you would like answered – you can message Katherine and Tom through the comment box at the bottom of their article:

www.futurumcareers.com/engaging-history-the-educational-impact-of-medieval-objects

SCRIPT:

If you've ever been to a museum, you'll know that they usually contain glass cases displaying different objects from different time periods. It can be easy to glance over these objects, without thinking about them in detail. Have you ever looked closely at one of these objects? Have you ever held one of these objects in your hands?

Everyday objects from the past can provide evidence of people, places and events. Each object has a story to tell, and holding an object can reveal fascinating details.

Professor Katherine Wilson and Dr Tom Pickles are historians at the University of Chester in the UK. They research medieval history, from the 11th to the 15th century. To help people understand more about life in the medieval period, they have put together a collection of everyday medieval objects, including keys, chests, shoes and tiles.

One fascinating object is a floor tile that was found in Chester Cathedral. It dates from the period 1300-1400. In medieval times, there was no electricity, and buildings would have been lit by candlelight. The glaze on the tiled floors would have shone in the candlelight and been impressive to see.

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This tile is made from clay that would have been dug out of the ground and formed into a series of squares using a mould. The glaze on top would have been made by a thin solution of clay mixed with water and coloured with natural ingredients.

The tile has three hares inscribed on it, but the way they are shown creates a visual puzzle. Although each hare has two ears, there are only three ears in total. The original design comes from a cave in China, and the design dates to the late 6th or 7th century. It's a design that is well over 1,000 years old and that has travelled 1,000s of miles. The fact the design is on a 14th century tile in Chester, shows how ideas, as well as objects, travelled across borders and time periods.

Imagining this tile as part of a larger floor makes us think about the people who walked over it. Who were they, what were their lives like, what did they wear?

One of these questions could be answered by looking at another object – a medieval shoe. This leather shoe dates back to the 13th to 15th century. Organic materials such as leather and wood don't survive often, but this shoe did because it was found in a waterlogged area, which used to be the city ditch. This was just one of many shoes found there – all different shapes and sizes. Everyone wore shoes in medieval times, not just rich people.

Looking at and holding this shoe, it's impossible not to imagine its owner. Who were they, what did they do? Did they ever walk across the tiled floor of Chester Cathedral?

If you get the chance to hold an object from the past, look closely at it and ask yourself: what is it made of? How is it decorated? Who did it belong to?