

Pre-visit activities

Below are some simple questions that you can ask your class before you visit the Finchingfield Guildhall.

- Have you ever visited a museum before?
- If so which one? What was it like?
- Who do you think a museum is for?
- Why do people visit museums and what do they do there?
- What are you expecting to see there?



Introductory Activity Pre-visit: Hidden expectations

Before your visit ask your group to write down a selection of words which describe what they are expecting to see. These could be in answer to previously suggested questions or just general descriptions of the Museum and Guildhall and its exhibits. Alternatively use drawing with a younger group. Encourage the group to work as individuals on this and ask them not to put their name on their papers. Give each participant an envelope and ask them to seal their 'expectations' inside the envelope, leaving it at school.

After your visit, use the contents of the envelopes as a basis for a discussion. Mix them up so they remain anonymous and ask your group to work in pairs or small groups to see how their expectations compared to their actual visit. This activity will help your group to develop interpretive language and communication skills.

Introductory Activity Pre-visit: First impressions

This activity could work as an introduction to a gallery visit for an older age group. Set them a research task of find out as much as they can about Guildhalls. They could research Dodie Smith or Norman Lewis both famous local authors. The following is list of the exhibits that could lead to other areas of research.

- Corn dolleys and straw weaving
- Essex witches and witchcraft
- Medieval architecture
- Village settlements and how they evolved
- Comparing a Victorian child's village life to contemporary times

Using this research as a basis, ask each of them individually to devise five questions prompted by what they have discovered. The questions should not be ones with closed answers (simple yes or no), but must be open enough to require a fuller answer generating a more general discussion.

Either during the visit itself or on your return, the group could then work in pairs to answer or talk about each other's questions, utilising what they have discovered during the visit to inform conversation. This activity is designed to develop your group's research skills while fostering a sense of confidence in 'un-picking' meaning for themselves.

Guildhall Questions for Key stage 1

Where is the mouse in Museum Room 2?

What is he made of?

Draw him here

A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a thin black border and a light grey drop shadow, intended for drawing the mouse.

Building

When was the Guildhall built?

What are the walls made of?

Draw one of the panels here.

A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a thin black border and a light grey drop shadow, intended for drawing one of the panels.

Why do you think the Guildhall is made of wood?

What has been used to insulate the building?

What animal's hair has been added to the lime plaster?

Why do you think this was done?

What was the Guildhall used for in the past?

What lies behind the large doors in Museum Room 2?

What is the special name of the floor tiles?

What are they made of?

What shapes are in the panes of glass? How many shapes can you count in each pane?

How many taper marks can you find?

Use the table in the inglenook (fireplace) to make some rubbings. What do the disks show?

Windmill

Where did Finchingfield make flour?

Spains Hall

For how many years did William Kemp stay silent?

What did he dig and how many?

What was found when the lake was drained?

Where are these now?

Who lives in Spains Hall today?

Victorian School

What would have been used to stop children from picking their noses?

What games did the children play?

What did they eat for lunch?

Talking Portraits

Who are these people?

Where did Sir Robert Kemp live?

What was Stephen Marshall's job?



Stephen Marshall

Building

In whose name can you sit down in the graveyard?

Is the church on the north or the south side of the Guildhall?

How old is the building?

How are the walls constructed?

Draw the panels

A large empty rounded rectangular box with a thin black border and a light grey drop shadow, intended for drawing panels.

Why do you think there is so much wood in the building?

What are the differences between the old construction and the new method?

What has been used to insulate the building? Why was this a good material to use?

What animal's hair has been added to the lime plaster? Why do you think that was done?

What is the name fo the window with three sides that overlooks church Hill?

When was the glass installed in the windows?

What would have covered the windows before this? Name the disadvantages of these coverings?

What shapes are in the panes of glass?

How have these patterns been made?

Choose a window and draw it.

A large empty rounded rectangular box with a thin black border and a light grey drop shadow, intended for drawing a window.

For how many years did William Kemp stay silent?

What did he dig and how many?

What was found when the lake was drained?

Where are these now?

Who lives in Spains hall today?

Time line

How many Roman villas can you see on the map?

When does the Guildhall appear?

Why is development clustered around the pond?

Where did William the Conqueror come from?

What food was eaten by an ordinary person in 1790? What do we have today that wasn't available then?

Almshouses

Who would have lived in the almshouses?

What did ladies wear instead of tights?


What sort of food would almshouse people have eaten?

Did almshouses have a bath? Or shower? Or toilet? What did they have?

Victorian England

In Victorian England bread tokens were issued to the poor from the Guildhall. Describe and draw the process of making bread from the field to the table.

Draw the process of bread making here



What is a quern and what is it made of?

Make a list of the businesses that people in the village had in Victorian times.

Look at Arthur Legge's paintings in the chest upstairs and describe what you see. Name as many as you can of the jobs people are doing.

Do any of these jobs exist in England today? If they do how have they changed?

Victorian School

What would have been used to stop children from picking their noses?

What games did the children play?

What did they eat for lunch?

Dodie Smith

Where did Dodie Smith live?

How many puppies did her dalmations have?

Who was the inspiration for Cruella DeVil?

Which grand house in Finchigfield was home to Cruella DeVil?

What did she want to do with the puppies?

Talking portraits

Who are thes people?

Where did Sir Robert Kemp live?

What was Steven Marshall's job?

How do we remember these people today?



Stephen Marshall

Listen to some tales on the telephone. Back at school write a story based on your favourite one. Make notes to help you remember.