

THE

NATIONAL

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Project Resources



Discover the Dissolution

A local research project for schools and history clubs.

KS1-KS5

Early Modern 1485-1750

Discover the Dissolution

Project at a Glance

Suitable For:

KS1-KS5

Time Period:

Early Modern 1485 -
1750

Curriculum Link:

The Development
of Church, state and
society in Britain 1509
- 1745

Learning Objective:

- What can we find out about the Dissolution of the Monasteries?
- What was life like in my local area in the 1530s?
- How did the Dissolution change my local area?

Potential Resources:

- Internet access
- Library access
- Local archive visit
- Local site visit

A Local History Research Project

Discover the Dissolution is a national enrichment project run by The National Archives for schools and history groups. The aim is to allow students of all ages to practice their research skills.

Groups are encouraged to use the Discover the Dissolution resources to locate a local monastery or nunnery that was involved in the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1530s. They can then use the internet, libraries, local archives or other resources available to them to explore the story of the site.

Once the research is complete, students can present their findings to others in the school and submit their work to the Discover the Dissolution Schools Map to be published online and made available for other students to use as an educational resource.

The main resource can be found here:

Discover the Dissolution: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/eabbb11e62b941c1bf1474a83b5ce8a1>

Submit your research here: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/b7d67185e1c345ea99e1571d40c80ab6>

Explore the research of other students here: <https://nationalarchives.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/82b8d88cbbef40289a98866da10b6134>

"The history club are super excited about this - they even started researching/revising the dissolution in preparation during our last meet! Love the passion in youngsters for history research"

- The Mountbatten School, Romsey

Discover the Dissolution

The Dissolution of the Monasteries changed the religious and political landscape of Henry VIII's Kingdom dramatically in the 16th Century.

Your challenge is to find out how Henry VIII's orders affected your local area. To do this you will need to use the internet, explore some books, find some documents or even visit a site near to you.

You might not be able to find out a lot of information about your specific site, but don't worry, you can explore what life was like generally for people who lived or worked in monasteries and religious houses as well.

Below is a list of information you might want to look for:

- Where is the nearest monastery to your school?
- What order was the religion that it followed?
- How many people lived or worked there?
- What types of activities did they do?
- Was it a site of pilgrimage? If so, why?
- What type of clothes did they wear?
- Were they male or female, or was it a mixed house?
- How much was their monastery worth in 1535?
- What year did they surrender the monastery to the crown?
- Was the monastery connected to any rebellions or refusals?
- Was the monastery sold to someone else? If so, when?
- What happened to the monastery after it was closed?
- What happened to the people who lived or worked there?
- Did any of the people refuse to leave?
- What is the site like today?
- Are there any clues to the site's location in the place or road names nearby?
- What do you think was the impact of the closure on the people in your local area?



When you are ready to submit your research, follow this link or use the QR code to take you to our online form.

<https://arcg.is/1y4KKy>



Where to look:

Notes

If your site is still standing, it may have a website with some information about its history. This could be a good place to start. Search for the name of the monastic house as provided in our online map and see if there are any websites devoted to it and its history. These can be for the general public or for academic researchers so don't be scared if they look like a lot of writing!

You can use Wikipedia – but be aware that this can be written by anyone and the information you find may not be true.

Other resources include:

British History Online - <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/>

Historic England - <https://www.pastscape.org.uk/>

Local Archives – your local archive may have maps or other local historic information that may be relevant - <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/find-an-archive>

Your school may have reference books and textbooks that include the Tudors and the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

Your site may now be looked after by:

English Heritage - <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/>

The National Trust - <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/>

Or a private trust – try searching its name to discover if it has its own website.

It may also now be a Church of England site, many of these have their own website which may include a page on its history.

General information on the Tudors & the Dissolution:

- Chronicles of the Dissolution – key stories from the Dissolution of the Monasteries retold in our graphic novel - <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/chronicles-dissolution/>
- English Reformation c1527 – 1590 – Themed Collection of documents relating to the Reformation - <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/the-english-reformation-c1527-1590/>
- Henry VIII – A topic website devoted to the King - <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/henryviii/>
- Henry VIII Court Rules – a lesson exploring Henry's early rule and character - <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/henry-viii/>
- History Extra – Short article on the monks after the dissolution - <https://www.historyextra.com/period/tudor/qa-where-did-the-monks-go-after-the-dissolution-of-the-monasteries/>
- Historic England – Teaching Resources on the Dissolution of the Monasteries - <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/education/teaching-activities/what-effect-did-the-dissolution-of-the-monasteries-have-on-society-and-culture/>
- In Our Time – BBC radio production where Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss Henry VIII and the Dissolution of the Monasteries - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b009jtq1>
- Cistercian Monasteries - <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/cistercians/>
- National Trust Willington - An example of the outcome of the Dissolution - <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/willington-dovecote-and-stables/features/creating-a-great-manorial-complex-at-the-time-of-the-dissolution-of-the-monasteries->
- HA Topic Guides (A Level, The Tudors) – <https://www.history.org.uk/student/categories/915/module/8679/a-level-topic-guide-the-tudors>
- Remembering the Reformation – digitised documents relating to the Reformation - <https://rememberingthereformation.org.uk/>

Classroom Activities related to the Dissolution:

Valor Classroomiasticus

Write a Valor Ecclesiasticus entry for your classroom. Work out the total value of your classroom in a standard week then work out a tenth of the value. This tenth is the tax your classroom owes the king.

Discover the value of classroom using the following rules:

- The classroom is worth £3 in building materials.
- Each hour of class use gives a £1 tithe.
- Each teacher using the classroom gives £2 in oblations.
- Each Teaching Assistant supporting in the classroom gives £2 in oblations.
- Each glue stick is worth a value of 5s.
- Each pair of scissors is worth 3s.
- Each ruler is worth 1s.
- Each highlighter is worth 2s.
- Each textbook is worth 8s.
- Each bookcase is worth £1.

Note: one pound = twenty shillings, one shilling = twelve pennies.

£ = pound, s = shilling, d = pence.

A day in the life

Discover as much as you can about what daily life would have been like for a member of your monastic house. Can you create a timetable for their day?

Who's who in the Dissolution

Research a key figure of the Dissolution and create a report or presentation on their life.

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| ■ Thomas Cranmer | ■ John Tregonwell | ■ Henry VIII |
| ■ Thomas Cromwell | ■ Thomas More | ■ Catherine of Aragon |
| ■ Robert Aske | ■ Elizabeth Barton | ■ Anne Boleyn |
| ■ Richard Layton | ■ Thomas Wolsey | ■ Thomas Audley |
| ■ Thomas Legh | ■ Edward Lee | ■ John Fisher |
| ■ John Ap Rice | ■ Thomas Boleyn | |

Religious Orders:

Catholicism was not a single church in Tudor England. Research the different types of religious order to find out more.

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
| ■ Franciscan | ■ Cluniac | ■ Augustinian |
| ■ Dominican | ■ Gilbertine | ■ Cistercian |
| ■ Carthusian | ■ Benedictine | ■ Austin Friars |
| ■ Bridgettine | ■ Carmelite | ■ Premonstratensian |

Enquiry Questions:

What did the monasteries do for the community?

You could answer this question with specific details about your chosen monastery or a general view of monasteries around the country. Think about their role with education, health care and social care.

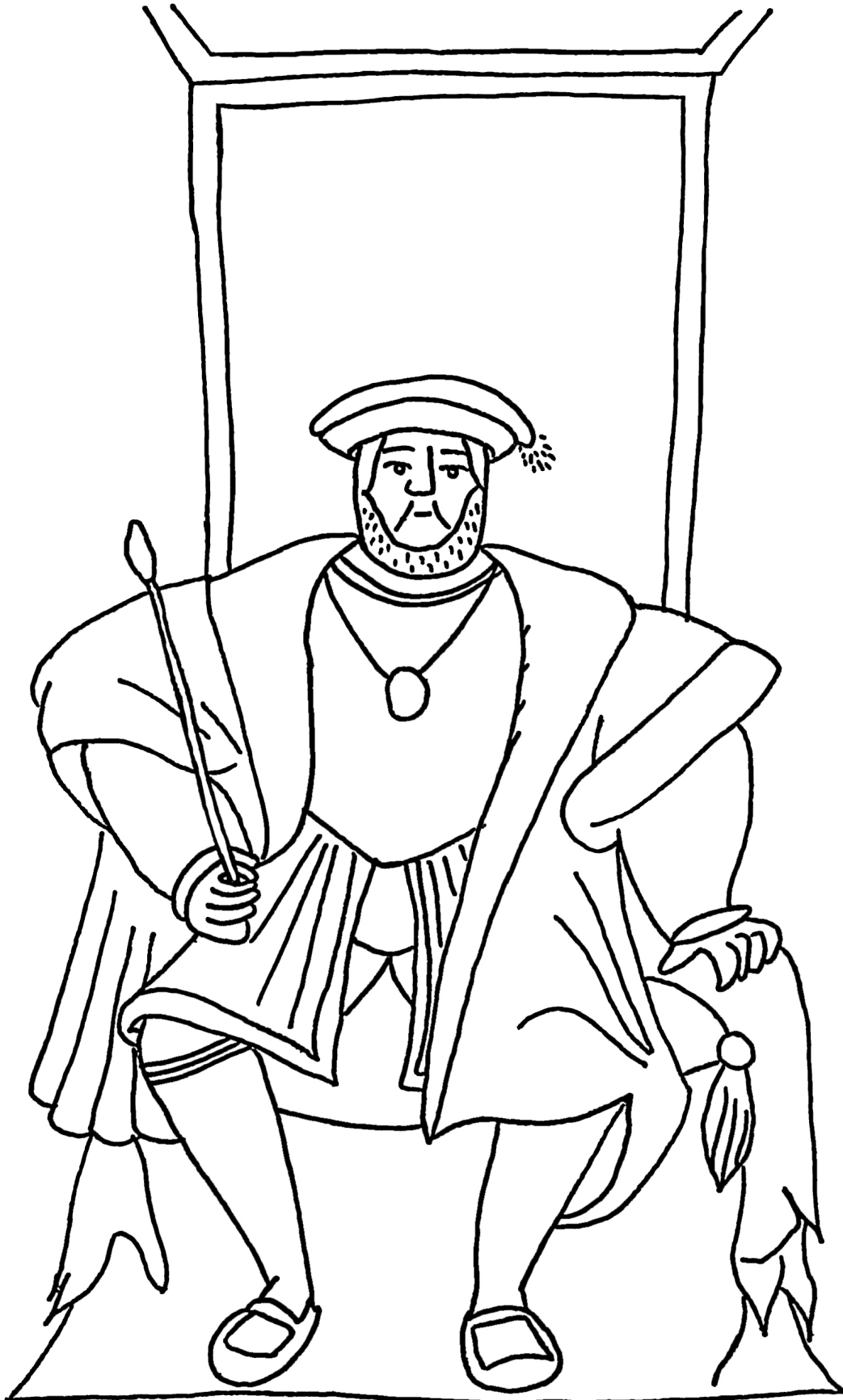
What was the impact of the dissolution on women?

While the majority of monastic houses were male, there were many more options available for men leaving religious orders. What happened to the women who were forced to leave?

How did the Dissolution change the finances of Henry VIII's Kingdom?

Henry VIII lived an expensive lifestyle. How did the Dissolution aid his financial difficulties and how did it boost the finances of the nobility?

Colouring Sheet: Henry VIII



Colouring Sheet: Henry VIII and his officials



Timeline of the Dissolution

1524	Wolsey's dissolution	Cardinal Wolsey closes 29 lesser monasteries to raise money to create an Oxford college (now Christchurch College) and a school in Ipswich.
1527-1529	Wolsey fails to secure an annulment of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon.	The pope is effectively being held captive by the Holy Roman Emperor, Catherine's Nephew, following the sack of Rome. The pope had to grant a special dispensation allowing the marriage in the first place and was unlikely to agree to the annulment.
1531	Henry VIII is given the title 'Supreme Head of the Church in England and Wales'	He is granted the highest title of the Catholic Church in England and a grant of £100,000.
1531	Thomas Cranmer is named ambassador at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor.	He travels through cities like Nuremburg and witnesses the Reformation in Europe.
March - May 1532	The supplication against the ordinaries	Parliament names 9 charges against the church. A meeting of the convocation of the church rejects the charges but uses humble language in order to not anger the King.
April - May 1532	The submission of the clergy	Henry makes three demands of the church: to give up their ability to make canons without royal licence, all existing canons must face a committee, the canons could only remain in position with the King's consent. After months of debate, and intimidation from the King's councillors, a majority vote agreed to the three articles.
16 May 1532	Thomas More Resigns	Thomas More, Henry VIII's chancellor, resigns after refusing to sign the oath of supremacy and refusing to support Henry's quest for an annulment.
1532	Act in conditional restraint of Annates	Henry orders that money normally sent to the Papacy is sent to the crown instead. Bishops could be named and consecrated by English authorities rather than the Pope.
October 1532	Thomas Cranmer is named Archbishop of Canterbury	His appointment had been secured by Anne Boleyn despite previously holding only minor roles in the church.
November 1532	Henry and Anne Boleyn marry in secret	They marry in Dover after a visit to France where Francis I supported their marriage.
January 1533	Henry and Anne Boleyn hold an official wedding in London.	Anne is already pregnant and needs her marriage to be recognised for her child to be considered legitimate.
May 1533	Thomas Cranmer declares Henry and Catherine's marriage invalid and void	Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn is now considered legal without the need for an annulment or divorce from Catherine.

1533	Act in Restraint of Appeals	Henry orders that legal matters cannot be appealed to Rome but will be decided in England with the King as supreme judge in all cases.
1533	Excommunication from the Papal church	The Pope excommunicates Henry and Thomas Cranmer.
July 1533	The Pope states Catherine and Henry's marriage was valid.	He orders the King to return to Catherine and reinstate her as Queen.
September 1533	Anne gives birth to a girl	Elizabeth is born despite all physicians and astrologers' predictions of a boy. Announcements are quickly adapted from prince to princess and a joust is cancelled. Henry believes male heirs will soon follow.
1534	The Act of Succession	Henry declares his daughter Mary as illegitimate and states Anne Boleyn's children as heirs to the throne. Any opposition to the act and or refusals to swear an oath of agreement would result in a death sentence.
1534	The Act of Supremacy	The act states that the English Monarch is the head of the Church of England and the pope has no authority in the kingdom.
1534	The Act of First Fruits and Tenths	The act diverts taxes usually paid to Rome to the Crown.
1534	Treasons Act	Any denial of supremacy or succession was a treasonable offence with severe punishment.
June 1534	Anne miscarries a son.	
1535	Thomas Cromwell is named Vicegerent in Spirituals	Cromwell is now in charge of religious policy. As a layman, this is very unusual.
1535	Visitation of the Monasteries and Valor Ecclesiasticus	Cromwell sends commissioners to visit churches across the country. Valor Ecclesiasticus records a survey of the value of monastic houses. Monastic wealth shows three times the income of crown lands.
1535	Second Visitation of the Monasteries	Cromwell orders a second visitation to find corruption providing an excuse for monastic reforms.
January 1536	Catherine of Aragon dies.	Her heart is found to have been blackened. It is rumoured that Henry or Anne poisoned her. Modern historians believe she had heart cancer.
1536	Henry VIII begins to court Jane Seymour	Jane had been a lady in waiting to both Catherine and Anne. Anne is aware of the affair.
January 1536	Anne miscarries another son.	
1536	Jane Seymour moves in	Henry declares he was tricked into marrying Anne. He moves Jane Seymour into the royal chambers.
March 1536	Act for the Dissolution of the Lesser Monasteries	The act orders the closure of monastic houses worth less than £200.

March 1536	The Court of Augmentations	Set up to receive the funds gathered from the closed monasteries.
2 May 1536	Arrest of Anne Boleyn	Anne is arrested at Hampton Court and charged with treason, incest and adultery. The sentence according to law would be death by burning. Henry lessens this to beheading.
14 May 1536	Cranmer annuls Henry and Anne's marriage.	Cranmer declares Henry and Anne's marriage null and void.
19 May 1536	Anne Boleyn beheaded at the Tower of London.	She is buried in an unmarked grave in the Tower's chapel.
31 May 1536	Henry marries Jane Seymour	They marry at the palace of Whitehall. Henry gifts Jane over 100 manors with a value of over £938.
15 June 1536	Princess Mary agrees to the Oath of Supremacy	Princess Mary submits to her father's Royal Supremacy after pressure from Cromwell.
July 1536	Act of Succession	A new act named Jane's children heirs to the throne and allowed Henry to choose his successor by patent or his will if something were to change.
August 1536	Act of Ten Articles	Henry endorses the Ten Articles, defining the practices of the Church of England and its differences from the church of Rome.
1-3 October 1536	The Lincolnshire Rising	Around 22,000 people join a protest against the closure of Louth Park Abbey and the suppression of the monasteries. After a few days their numbers grow to around 40,000 including the local gentry. They march from Louth to Lincoln and occupy the Cathedral. John Raynes, chancellor of the Diocese of Lincoln, is captured and killed in the mob and the commissioner's registers are burned.
4 October 1536	The Lincoln Articles	The Articles state demands against the Dissolution and the demand the right to continue worshipping as Catholics.
10-11 October	The Lincolnshire Rising ends	The King threatens the protesters to disperse. The Duke of Suffolk's army is nearby and many protesters flee. The King orders over 100 death sentences including the vicar of Louth and Nicholas Melton who had led the protest. They are hanged at Tyburn. 55 others are also put to death.
October 1536	The Pilgrimage of Grace	Immediately following the rising in Lincolnshire, Robert Aske leads 9000 followers to occupy York and drive out the King's tenants from the dissolved religious houses. They reinstate the catholic church and ask monastic members to return. The protest grows to 30,000-40,000 'pilgrims' who march from York to Pontefract Castle.

October 1536	Aske ends the Pilgrimage of Grace	Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk and George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury negotiate with the protesters promising a pardon and parliament's reprieve of the monasteries. They did not have permission from the King to make any agreements and their promises were not kept.
February 1537	Bigod's Rebellion	Sir Francis Bigod leads a further rising in Yorkshire. The rebellion fails and Bigod, Aske and many others are arrested, charged with treason, and executed.
12 October 1537	Jane Seymour gives birth to a son	Edward is born at Hampton Court palace at 2am after a labour lasting two days and three nights.
15 October 1537	Edward is Christened	His half-sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, are both present.
24 October	Jane Seymour dies	The exact cause of death is unknown other than complications from childbirth.
12 November 1537	Jane Seymour is buried	She is the only one of Henry's wives to receive a queen's funeral. Henry wears black for three months after and later requests to be buried by her side.
1538	The Duke of Norfolk instates martial law in Yorkshire	He is successful in suppressing further uprisings in the north.
1539	Act of Six Articles	Henry changes the practices of the Church of England to include a few more traditional ideas including all seven sacraments and transubstantiation.
1539	Act for the Dissolution of the Greater Monasteries	The Act closes remaining monasteries that had not already converted to the Church of England.
1540	Henry married Anne of Cleves	Cromwell, seeking a foreign alliance against a French and Spanish Catholic threat, arranges the marriage of Henry with the sister of the Duke of Cleves. Henry agrees to the marriage but is unhappy when Anne arrives and marries her for the sake of the alliance alone. He blames Cromwell for forcing through the marriage.
1540	The Duke of Norfolk brings his niece Catherine Howard to court	He sets about scheming to bring down Cromwell. He discovers a number of Cromwell's friends are preaching heretical ideas.
28 July 1540	Cromwell is found guilty of treason and executed.	His execution is botched, apparently due to the executioner's inexperience. Further evidence of Cromwell's fall from grace.
	Henry marries Catherine Howard	His previous marriage to Anne of Cleves was annulled and Henry declared Anne 'the King's sister.'

Where to start with Religious Orders:

Notes

Augustinians

- Named after St Augustine of Hippo
- Rule of St Augustine - <https://www.midwestaugustinians.org/roots-of-augustinian-spirituality>

Benedictines

- Named after St Benedict of Nursia
- Rule of St Benedict - <http://www.archive.osb.org/rb/text/toc.html>

Cistercians

- Named after Cîteaux, an area Burgandy, France.
- Follows the rule of St Benedict
- Cistercian life - https://www.dhi.ac.uk/cistercians/cistercian_life/

Franciscans

- Named after St Francis of Assisi
- Greyfriars
- Rule of St Francis - <https://www.ofm.org/about/rule/>

Dominican Order of Preachers

- Named after St Dominic de Guzman
- Blackfriars
- Follows the rule of St Augustine
- History of the Dominicans <https://www.english.op.org/about-us/dominican-order/history-of-the-order.htm>

Premonstratensians

- Named after Prémontré, France
- Norbertines (after the founder Norbert of Xanten)
- White Canons
- Follows the rule of St Augustine

Notes**Carmelites**

- Named after Mount Carmel where the order is thought to have been founded
- Whitefriars
- Follows the rule of St Albert - <http://www.carmelite.org/carmelite-spirituality/rule-of-saint-albert>

Carthusians

- Named after the Chartreuse Mountains, France –
- Follows its own statutes - <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/mount-grace-priory/history-and-stories/carthusians/>

Gilbertines

- Named after St Gilbert of Sempringham, England.
- Followed its own rule (with elements of Augustine and Benedict)

Bridgettines

- Named after Saint Bridget of Sweden
- Follows the rule of St Bridget

Cluniacs

- Named after Cluny Abbey, France.
- Follows the rule of St Benedict with Cluniac reforms.

Crutched Friars

- Named after the large cross they were asked to carry.
- Follows the rule of St Augustine

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Did you know?

The National Archives Education Service also offers free taught sessions onsite in Kew and online.

You can book a free **Virtual Classroom** session, an online lesson where students can use individual computers to interact with our Education Officers and explore original documents without needing to travel to The National Archives. You will need computers or tablets for your students to work on either individually or in pairs.

A free **Video Conference** session allows our Education Officers to teach through your projector, leading discussions and guiding students through activities based around original documents. All you need is a computer with a projector, webcam and microphone to set up this web-chat with us.

Our **Onsite Workshops** are available for free here at The National Archives and allow students to experience genuine original documents reflecting over 1000 years of history. From Elizabeth I's signature to the telegrams of the sinking Titanic, students love the wow-factor of being able to see real history on the desk in front of them.

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