

Welcome to the Tower of London

Visual Story Support Notes

Who are the slides for?

The slides on the Visual Story are for teachers to use with their students and assisting adults to help them prepare for their visit to the Tower of London. They highlight some of the key aspects of the tower.

How will the slides support my students' understanding of the tower?

Each slide has a different focus or learning point, to help your students understand a particular aspect of the historical site. These points include:

- introducing them to some of the staff they will meet during their visit to the tower;
- learning about some of the key people who went to the tower and their stories;
- familiarising them with some of the spaces or rooms they will visit;
- illustrating a sensory aspect of the session, e.g. 'This is something you can touch';
- highlighting how they may feel or what it may be like moving around the tower, e.g. it is busy;
- flagging up themes which you may like to investigate in more detail either before or after the visit, e.g. Tudor Life;
- highlighting a 'special object' which they can look out for during their visit;
- encouraging students to view the tower in a particular way, e.g. to 'look up!' or to look out for particular features.

The Visual Story Support Notes correspond with the Visual Stories slides and give you contextual information which you may wish to use with your students.

1. Welcome to the Tower of London.

The Visual Story will help to familiarise students with the spaces around the tower.

2. This is the Tower of London. Come and look around.

This slide shows the site of the Tower of London. The oldest part is the castle in the centre called the White Tower. Ask your students what the tower looks like,

e.g. it is big, old. What sort of person or people do they think might have lived there? What might it look like inside? The White Tower was built in the 11th Century. The Tower of London has been used as many things over the last 1000 years including a castle, a fortress storing weapons and armour, a palace, a prison, a mint (place where money is made), a menagerie (a collection of animals kept for display) and a place to keep the Crown Jewels safe.

Your session will focus on the coronation of Henry VIII's second wife Anne Boleyn in 1533. Anne Boleyn stayed at the Tower of London before her coronation ceremony at Westminster Abbey. The session focuses on Anne's coronation but she was also executed at the Tower of London almost three years later.

3. Anne Boleyn was at the Tower of London 500 years ago.

Anne Boleyn stayed at the tower before her coronation in 1533. Henry VIII had the royal apartments repaired and redecorated especially for her!

4. At the Group Entrance you will enter through this archway.

You will be able to spot lots of different features on buildings at the Tower of London. You can see some battlements (gaps for archers to shoot through) here. You can touch the stone walls on the side of the archway as you pass through.

5. Many things at the Tower of London are white or silver in colour.

The image on the left shows the roof of the Wakefield Tower, which is where the Crown Jewels were displayed from 1870 for nearly 100 years. The image on the right shows Queen Mary's Sceptre with Dove, 1689. Most of the Crown Jewels are silver gilt (solid silver with a thin layer of gold.) On your visit ask your students to look out for other examples of things which are white or silver in colour. These colours remind us that many things at the tower are made from stone or silver.

6. You can see the famous White Tower from here!

William the Conqueror's Norman fortress was whitewashed about 200 years after it was built and since then has been called the White Tower. It is nearly 30 metres high. This is roughly the height of 30 polar bears standing on all fours on top of each other!

7. Look out for this sculpture of a polar bear on the way.

There are 13 wire sculptures of animals around the Tower of London. They are an 'exhibition' or display which shows the different animals that were kept in the Royal Menagerie at the Tower from the 1100s. This polar bear was a gift from the King of Norway to Henry III in 1251.

8. You can look for and listen to the sound of the ravens.

There is a famous legend which says that six ravens must guard the tower and if they leave, the tower and the kingdom will fall. There are seven ravens at the tower today as one is a spare! The ravens are looked after by a Yeoman Warder called the Raven Master. They eat lots of meat and one egg per week!

9. You can look out for this sign for the Crown Jewels.

There are lots of signs at the tower to help you find your way around.

10. You will go inside the Jewel House to see the Crown Jewels. It is dark and busy inside.

The Jewel House is a very busy part of the Tower of London as lots of visitors want to see the Crown Jewels! Ask your students to stay close to their assisting adults when they are inside.

11. You might see this special object at the Tower of London.

There are lots of things or 'objects' inside the Tower of London. Some of them are particularly fascinating or special as they have interesting stories. This object is called the Coronation Spoon. It is 800 years old! It is used to put holy oil on the queen or king during the coronation ceremony.

12. You can look up to see this!

When you are exploring the Tower of London try and remember to look **up** as you go around. You will be able to see a lot more this way! The onion shaped domes here on top of the White Tower turrets are from Henry VIII's reign.

13. If you have time there are things you can touch.

There are lots of things you can touch and have a go on in the 'Coins and Kings' exhibition on Mint Street. A mint is a place where coins are made. During Henry VIII's reign, Henry ordered that the coins made in the mint must contain less gold as he needed the money to fight lots of wars and also he liked to spend lots of money!

14. Look out for this famous gate when you leave.

This is called Traitor's Gate now but its' original name was the Water Gate. The timber framing above the archway was built as part of the preparations for Anne's coronation.

15. If you need help or have any questions, you can ask someone in uniform.

This is a Yeoman Warder. Yeoman Warders look after the Tower of London site. They also help visitors to find their way around!

16. We hope you enjoy your visit.

We hope the Visual Story and Support Notes are useful in preparing your students for their visit to the tower. Please let us know if you require any more information before your visit.