

Hands On History



Farming & Countryside Education
Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG
www.face-online.org.uk

Hands On History



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Introduction

This booklet is based on ideas presented at a seminar delivered in the beautiful surroundings of Manor Farm, Dethick, Derbyshire on a very wet April day!

Teachers and farmers came together to find out how to incorporate history into activities both on the farm and in the classroom.

You do not need to be a history expert to use these ideas—we worked with the experts and have their permission to reproduce the activities they used with us.

Neither should you worry that you do not have a Tudor farmhouse! History is all around us — just use what you have!



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Is your name from history?

A good way to engage children is to start with a topic that matters to them, such as their names! See if they can find their own first name or surname or those of someone they know in the following lists.

First names:

CARLA: Japanese female name means Farmer
CAROL: Biblical female name means Farmer
CHARLEE: American female name means Farmer
CHARLEIGH: American female name means Manly, Farmer
CHARO: Spanish female name means Farmer
FABIANA: Italian female name means Bean Farmer
GEORGETTE: French female name means Farmer
GEORGIA: Greek female name means Farmer
GEORGIANNA: English female name means Gracious Farmer
GEORGIANNE: English female name means Gracious Farmer
CARL: German male name means Farmer
CHARLES: German male name means Farmer
CHAS: English male name means Manly, Farmer
FABIANO: Italian male name means Bean Farmer
FABIO: Latin male name means Bean Farmer
GEORGE: Greek male name means Farmer
WILLOUGHBY: English male name means Farm of Willows

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English surnames relating to farms and food

Many surnames are taken from jobs e.g. Carpenter

See <http://www.localhistories.org/surnames.html>

BAKER: does baking!

BARKER: a man who dealt with tree bark for tanning leather

BAXTER: old English word for (usually) female baker

BREWER OR BREWSTER: makes beer

CARTER: worked on carts

CARTWRIGHT: built carts

CHAPMAN: sold goods at markets

CHEESEMAN: made cheese

COOK: cooked food!

COOPER: made barrels

COWARD: from cowherd who looked after cows

FARMER: in the Middle Ages a fermier collected taxes and the word farmer took on its modern meaning much later

FAULKNER: from falconer

FISHER: fished for a living

FULLER: In the Middle Ages wool was cleaned by pounding it in a mixture of clay and water and this process was called fulling

FOSTER: comes from forester who worked the woods

FOWLER: a person who caught birds for food

FRANKLIN: a well to do farmer who owned his land

GARDENER (also GARDNER, GARDINER): worked in the gardens

GRANGER: a man who looked after a grange or farm

HAWKER: sold goods at market

HOGWARD or HOFFART: looked after the pigs

HOOPER: made hoops to hold barrels together

HORNER: a man who used cow horn to make inkpots, spoons etc

HURD or HIRD: from a man who looked after a herd of cattle

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KNATCHBULL: a man who hit bulls on the head to stun them before they were slaughtered!

LISTER: another word for a wool dyer

LORRIMER: a man who made equipment for horses

MALTHUS: from the words malt house

MASON: worked with masonry

MILLER: ground corn to make flour

POTTER: made pots

ROPER: made ropes

SAWYER: a man who sawed logs

SHEPHERD: looked after sheep

SHOESMITH: made horseshoes

SMITH: from blacksmith

STODDARD: a man who looked after a herd of oxen (a young ox was called a stot)

THATCHER: thatched roofs

TURNER: turned wood on a lathe to make bowls, wooden tools etc

WAINWRIGHT: a man who made carts

WARRINER or WARNER: looked after rabbit warrens (for rabbits as food)

WATERMAN: a man who rowed a boat or barge

WHEELER and WHEELWRIGHT: a man who made wheels for carts

Find more at <http://www.babynamespedia.com/search/m/farm>



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Surnames from parts of the landscape

BECK: stream

BOTHAM: valleys were often called bottoms and Botham comes from there.

BRADSHAW: a broad wood

BROOK

BYWATERS: next to water

HOLLIS: living by a holly tree

HOLT: a small wood

HEATH

HURST: an old word for a wooded hill

Longbottom: a long valley (bottom is a name for a valley)

MIDDLETON or MILTON: middle farm or settlement

SHAW: a northern word for a wood

WICK, WICKE or WICKES: from an old word meaning a specialized farm

WHICKER: someone who lives at the wick (see above)

WOOD or WOODS

WARBOYS: from bois, French word for wood



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Be an archaeologist!

Introduce the idea of an 'artefact':

Definition: An object produced or shaped by human craft, especially a tool, weapon, or ornament of archaeological or historical interest. This could be a document, book, item of clothing, possession etc. Could be real or a replica or a photograph of an original. Do you have any old farm machinery on site?



How are artefacts useful?

They help us to understand a little more about what it might have been like to live at a particular time, understand aspects of the lives of the people at that time. Understand more about the skills or resources they had access to. The materials they were able to use or their role, jobs or status in society. In essence they 'bring' history to life.

Always look to answer two key questions:

What is it?

What does it tell us?

Don't forget to mention archaeologists!

This links in with the idea of 'real jobs' and many young people enjoy this aspect – (and are probably aware of television programmes such as 'Time team' and it can encourage enthusiasm and develop thinking, questioning, speaking and listening skills).

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Fragments activity

(Developing archaeological skills)

Use a sandpit, sand box or similar set up outside (this can be on as large or as small a scale as you like).

Bury in the sand 'fragments' of artefacts, pottery or 'parts', toys, game pieces, coins (ideally enough for one for each pupil). Or if you have them, bury parts of objects, pieces of clothing, parts of a larger item, replica artefact pieces etc. Try to bury them at different depths.

Issue them with small trowels, spoons, paint brushes. They are going to be archaeologists. Explain that this has to be done carefully so as not to damage the things they find.

When each pupils has discovered and unearthed an artefact get them to look carefully and ask questions:

- o What might it have been?
- o What do you think it is?
- o What is it made of?
- o What would it be used for?

Look for clues – shape, pattern, material, special features, what might it have been used for? Every day use or special occasion, decorative or functional, location it was discovered in etc.

Draw around the fragment onto a piece of paper.



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Interrogate your artefact!

Main things to think about	Some extra questions to ask yourself	Things found out through looking	Things to be researched
PHYSICAL FEATURES (What does it look and feel like)	What colour is it? What does it smell like? What does it sound like? What is it made of? Is it a natural or manufactured substance? Is the object complete? Has it been altered, adapted, mended? Is it worn?		
CONSTRUCTION (How was it made?)	Is it handmade or machine made? Was it made in a mould or in pieces? How has it been fixed together?		
FUNCTION (What was it made for?)	How has the object been used? Has the use changed?		
DESIGN (It is well designed?)	Does it do the job it was intended to do well? Were the best materials used? Is it decorated? Do you like the way it looks? Would other people like it?		
VALUE (What is it worth?)	To the people who made it? To the people who used it? To the people who keep it? To you? To a bank? To a museum?		

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Historical drama workshops

The ideas below use the 'history' topic area of Victorian children and Victorian children's jobs as a basis for ideas but the techniques can be adapted to any theme in history as you require.

Warm up activities:

The 'Walk about'

Whole group to walk around, don't leave any empty spaces. Each time someone moves they must move to 'fill the gap'. Freeze periodically to check. Encourages observation and co-operation and makes sure everyone is 'involved' from the outset in a simple exercise.

Letters and Numbers

Whilst they are 'walking about' call out a letter or number. Without talking, pupils must all be involved in using their bodies to make that shape. This encourages co-operation and observation. Can be used to spell out your school name, a place name, object name, famous person's name or similar. They can shout out when they've worked out what the word is.

'Yes Let's'

One person shouts "Let's all....." and then everyone replies "Yes, let's all....." and then 'does it'. For example "Let's all hop on one leg" – everyone else shouts "Yes let's all hop on one leg" and then does it. This can develop into very simple 'acting' or 'mime' – "Let's all brush our teeth", "Let's all wash the dishes" on common activities and gradually develop to use more imagination and take contributions from the students themselves as they build in confidence. This can also have more relevance to the chosen topic if some prior classroom work has been undertaken. For example for Victorian farm workers: "Let's all thresh the wheat"; "Let's all walk home from the fields"; "Let's all feed the hens"; "Let's all milk the cows" etc.

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Historical drama activities:

Group machines:

In small groups pupils are given 10-20 seconds to 'become' a machine. Start with some simple familiar items: 'a tap', 'a washing machine', 'a bath', 'a pond' – depending on what they have been studying at school or have seen on the farm this can become more relevant. It's a fun way to set a scene.



'Freeze Framing'

This entails setting up a group as if for a photograph. The children can discuss roles, situation, expression, action etc. and at the required point are asked to hold their Freeze Frame for 5 seconds. Suggested 'frames'

- A family waking up to go to work on the farm
- Working with the machines on the farm



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Victorian Playground Games

There are many games you can incorporate into the day either as part of the activities or as an alternative playtime for the children!

Hopscotch

Can you remember how to play hopscotch? If not, a Victorian explanation is available at http://www.judgeslodging.org.uk/resources/playground_games/

The Potato Race

The potato race is very amusing and can be played with balls if no potatoes are to hand. Two people compete at a time in this race to pick up potatoes. Two rows of potatoes, with a dozen in each row, are placed on the ground, about three feet apart and a basket is placed between the rows at one end. The race is to be the first to pick up the potatoes in your row with a teaspoon and deposit them in the basket without touching them with your fingers. It is difficult to get the potatoes onto the spoons and then rather a feat to run with them to the basket without dropping them on the way. If they fall off the spoon, they must be picked up again by it, without touching them with your hand as before.



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Hunt the Ring

The players form a circle, leaving one at the centre of it. A long piece of string, with a hoop (such as a curtain ring) threaded on it, is tied in a circle around the inside of the players. The players take hold of the string circle and pass the ring about from one to another. The player in the centre must guess who has the ring. His task is made as difficult as possible by all sorts of hand movements on the part of those who are hiding it in their hands. When the centre player guesses correctly in which hand the ring is concealed, he joins the circle and the player who has been caught holding it will take his place.



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The Human Alphabet

Cut out squares of card and attach a cord, long enough to go over a child's head, to the top corners (it should hang down like a breastplate). In the centre of each card, write a different letter of the alphabet. If there are fewer than 26 children, then some will need 2 letters on their board.

Get the children warmed up by marching them around in the order of the alphabet. This may help them to relax and when ready line them up.

Words are then called out to them and those with the appropriate letters must step forward and make the word (remember not to use words that have a letter or player more than once). Simple words can be used with younger children, or to warm up older ones, such as cat, dog, fish, bird, progressing to harder such as flower, bridge, cabinet. The possibilities are, of course, endless and it can be made to suit all levels of learning and all topics!



These and many more outdoor games are described at http://www.judgeslodging.org.uk/resources/victorian_outdoor_games/

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Farm buildings detective

What were farms like long ago?

Plan a walking tour of the farm. Let the children sketch buildings looking at common features (walls, doors, windows, floors etc.) Take photos of different buildings on the farm and see if they can pick out which are 'old' and 'new'. Can they see how the features are different on the different buildings – the materials used, shape and type of windows, differences in the doors, decorative features?



Help them to understand how the use of buildings has changed because of mechanisation, fewer people on the farm etc.








Do you have any old photos of the farm so that you can do a 'then and now' session?



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Farm Building Detectives

As you tour the farm see if you can spot buildings and features. When you see them record them in the table below and take a photograph if you can.			
Building	Use of building today	Clues that tell you its use in the past	Date stones 
			Barn doors 
			Cobbled floors 
			Flemish Bond brickwork 
			Patterned or coloured brickwork 
			Slate roof 
			Mounting blocks (for getting onto your horse) 
			Another feature of your choice

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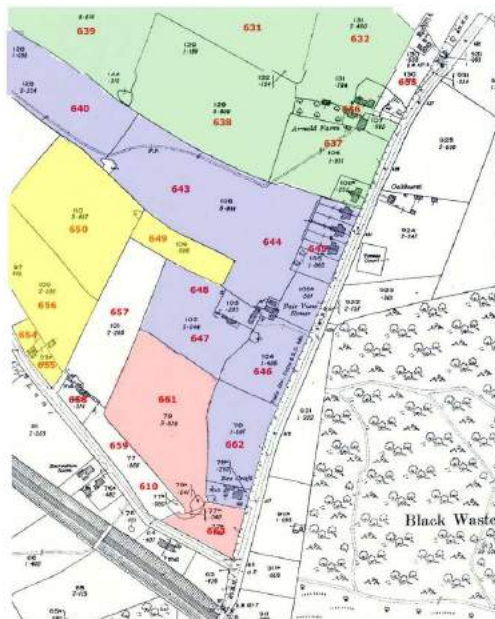
Maps and field names

Do you have any old maps of your farm location?

Do you know anything about the field names?

A visit to your local records office would help to uncover some of these fascinating details.

You might be able to get a copy of an old map and superimpose an acetate sheet of a current map. If visiting children are local they will be love to find where they live on the map. Do any local road names have historical links to agriculture? Meadow Close; Orchard Lane?



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Tudor Farming Project

If you are really ambitious, you might follow the example of the Peak District National Park Authority. The Park Rangers and volunteer helpers have developed a Tudor farming project which is offered to schools (currently, once a year with plans to extend this.)

The children discover what life was like for Tudor farmers at the Dove Valley Educational Centre, near Sheen. Dressed in Tudor clothes, the children collect vegetables from a Tudor garden and water from a well; they cook medieval potage and oatcakes over an open fire then have a go at spinning and weaving. They also form an oxen team to learn how medieval ridge and furrows were formed, before trying their hand at dead hedging.



In the afternoon children study Tudor documents relating to the land at Dove Valley and write their own wills with a quill pen.

Obviously, this project has involved a great deal of time, commitment and enthusiasm but if you have a historic landscape or artefacts you could start on a smaller scale. Seek help from local experts, involve the local records office or heritage education team, local teachers and volunteers.

For further details contact: rose.clarke@peakdistrict.gov.uk

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Historical Medicines

Diana Brown provided a session as a brief introduction to the historical use of plants as medicine.

70% of the medicines in the world are plant based and most of the others use chemical “copies” of plant material. Knowledge of the medicinal uses of plants was passed down verbally and some are still commonly known, such as the use of dock leaves to alleviate nettle stings.

Here are some plants and their uses in medicine:

Cleavers/goosegrass	lymphatic problems
Comfrey	helps with scar tissue
Ivy	burns
Greater celandine	warts
Yarrow	blood clotting
Sorrel	intestinal worms
Violet	tumours

Children might like to find the plants you have on your land, to identify them with your help (or a picture sheet you have prepared) and to draw them. Follow health and safety rules.



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Historical Medicines

Diana led a hands-on session looking at samples of plants typically found in the Derbyshire countryside; describing and identifying them; and naming some of the potions, lotions and remedies made from them.

We then had a go at making comfrey, yarrow or ivy poultices.

You need to be familiar with the plants and herbs you can find on your farm before tackling these activities.

You also need to follow the health and safety rules provided by Diana



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Making a comfrey poultice

The benefits of comfrey are widely known. In medieval times it was called “knitbone” which indicates its use in healing broken bones! It is also good for sprains and bruises.

Gather fresh comfrey leaves.

Chop them until very small and then use a mortar and pestle to grind them before placing the paste on the affected area and fastening in place with a bandage!



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Contacts

1. The seminar for which this information was provided was organised by FACE and particular thanks go to Georgina Cass, Environmental Studies Service Manager, Derbyshire County Council. Almost all of the ideas up until page 18 in this booklet were compiled by her and she was an inspirational presenter!

Georgina.cass@derbyshire.gov.uk

2. The enthusiastic team which presented the Tudor Farming Project was led by **Rose Clarke**, Peak District National Park Ranger Service.

For further details contact: rose.clarke@peakdistrict.gov.uk

3. Historical Medicines were presented by **Diane Brown**, Herbalist.
diane@potionsclub.com

4. The FACE seminar was held at Dethick Farm which also hosts bed and breakfast facilities.

Contact: **Gilly Groom**, Manor Farm, Dethick, www.manorfarmdethick.co.uk



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Website links

Here are some website links to history resources but there will be many more available—search for your own local area:

www.picturethepast.org.uk

The libraries and museums of Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have digitised their huge collection of images here recalling the history of the local communities over the last hundred years and more.

<http://www.staffspasttrack.org.uk/>

Staffordshire Past Track has been developed with the aim of enhancing access to collections of material that represent the cultural identity and community history of Staffordshire.