Cadw

History Explorers

Castell Conwy

Quest: Fit for a Queen



Cadw MINECRAFT EDUCATION Hwb®

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Table of Contents

Learning Activity Support Guide: Quest Four – Fit for a Queen 2

Learning Objectives: 2

Areas of Learning and Experience: 2

Extension Areas of Learning and Experience: 2

Cross-curricular skills: 2

Integral Skills: 3

Guiding Ideas / Possible questions to ask: 3

Learning Activity Overview: 4

Learning Activity Introduction: 5

Research: 6

Note-taking 6

Research: Queen Eleanor 6

Research: Why are gardens important? 6

Research: Benefits of herbs and plants. 6

Garden Design: 7

Garden Build: 8

Extension (optional): 9

Design your own plant 9

Create: Medieval remedies book 9

Explore: Grow your own 9

Plenary / Reflection: 10

Key Vocabulary: 10

Resources / Supporting Files: 10

Learning Activity Support Guide: Quest Four – Fit for a Queen

Learning Objectives:

- Explore the historical significance of medieval gardens.
- Construct their own representation of a medieval garden.

Areas of Learning and Experience:

- **Humanities:**
  - Enquiry, exploration and investigation inspire curiosity about the world, its past, present and future.
  - Human societies are complex and diverse, and shaped by human actions and beliefs.
  - Informed, self-aware citizens engage with the challenges and opportunities that face humanity and are able to take considered and ethical action.
  - Our natural world is diverse and dynamic, influenced by processes and human actions.
- **Languages, Literacy and Communication**
  - Understanding languages is key to understanding the world around us.
- **Health and Wellbeing**
  - How we process and respond to our experiences affects our mental health and emotional well-being.
- **Science and Technology**
  - Being curious and searching for answers is essential to understanding and predicting phenomena.
  - The world around us is full of living things which depend on each other for survival.

Extension Areas of Learning and Experience:

- **Expressive Arts**
  -Exploring the expressive arts is essential to developing artistic skills and knowledge and it enables learners to become curious and creative individuals.
  - Creating combines skills and knowledge, drawing on the senses, inspiration and imagination.
- **Language Literacy and Communication**
  - Understanding languages is key to understanding the world around us
- **Science and Technology**
  -The world around us is full of living things which depend on each other for survival.

Cross-curricular skills:

- **DCF**
  -Interacting and collaborating: Communication, collaboration and storing and sharing.
  -Producing: Sourcing, searching and planning digital content, creating digital content.
- **Literacy Framework**
  -Reading: Understanding, response and analysis
  -Writing: Planning and organising for different purposes, audiences and context
  -Speaking: Clarity and vocabulary, purpose and collaborative talk
- **Numeracy Framework**

- Learning about geometry helps us understand shape, space and position, and learning about measurement helps us quantify in the real world.

Integral Skills:

- Planning and organising
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Creativity and innovation
- Personal effectiveness

Guiding Ideas / Possible questions to ask:

In the medieval period, what was the purpose of a garden?
What were Queen Elanor's hobbies and interests?
Which types of plants were commonly cultivated during this era?
What do you think these plants are believed to be good for?
Can you find other plants that are used in medicines?
What should a garden for Queen Eleanor include?
How does your garden reflect the life and values of medieval society?

Learning Activity Overview:

In this learning activity, learners will explore the historical significance of medieval gardens while utilising Minecraft Education to design and construct their own representations. The activity combines creativity with research and teamwork.

Learners will develop an understanding of the multifaceted role of gardens in the medieval period, including their function in providing food, medicinal herbs, and aesthetic value.

Learners will research common plants of the era, focusing on herbs (like rosemary and thyme), vegetables (such as carrots and peas), and ornamental flowers (including roses and violets). This knowledge will aid in creating authentic garden designs.

Learners will consider different styles of medieval gardens, emphasising symmetry, pathways, and diverse planting areas. They'll choose between structured layouts (e.g., monastery gardens) or informal spaces (e.g., peasant gardens) and think about enhancing their designs with features like benches and fountains.

Emphasis will be placed on working collaboratively with peers to brainstorm ideas, sketch designs, and integrate various garden elements. Discussions will revolve around how these gardens reflect medieval life and values.

Once designs are finalised, learners will use Minecraft Education to bring their gardens to life, using the platform's blocks and tools to accurately replicate the textures and colours of medieval gardens.

Throughout the activity, learners will discuss their design choices and the historical concepts they're learning about, fostering a deeper understanding of the cultural significance of these gardens.

This immersive learning experience combines history, creativity, and teamwork, allowing learners to engage deeply with the subject matter while developing their design skills in a fun and interactive environment. The activity invites them to express their understanding of medieval gardens through innovative block-building in Minecraft.

Learning Activity Introduction:



Fit for a Queen Quest NPC is located in the East Barbican and the Chest is located in the gate passage.

"Did you hear Queen Eleanor is coming to stay at Conwy Castle soon? We need to make sure everything is perfect for her visit!

Use the buttons below to find out what needs to be prepared."

You have now met the Quest NPC, who has informed you of the immanent visit of Queen Eleanor, and Cedric, the Steward at Conwy Castle, shared with you the letter Queen Eleanor sent, along with the handy fact file that he placed in the chest inside the 'gate passage.' It's time for you to take up this quest to help Cedric make Conwy Castle Garden 'Fit for a Queen'!

Link to video of The Letter, which is embedded in the Cadw Cymru Minecraft World

Link to video of Plan a Garden, which is embedded in the Cadw Cymru Minecraft World

This quest is an exciting journey back in time to explore the rich world of medieval gardens. This hands-on activity will allow you to use Minecraft Education to design and construct your medieval garden, combining creativity with historical research.

During the medieval period, gardens served multiple purposes; they provided food, medicinal herbs, and beauty to the surrounding environment. As you get started, your first task will be to delve into the types of plants that were commonly cultivated during this era. Consider researching herbs like rosemary and thyme, vegetables such as carrots and peas, and ornamental flowers like roses and violets. Understanding these elements will help you create an authentic and functional garden.

Research:

Note-taking

Explain to the learners that they will use different research methods throughout this work. Before they start, they should choose a suitable method to record the information they find through this project. Try to find a method that allows for collaborative work and sharing research.

They could use an exercise book, write on sticky notes that can then be organised by theme on large pieces of paper, or take notes digitally, for example, using OneNote, Teams, Google Classroom, or a site like Padlet. Consider the pros and cons of different methods to make an informed decision.

Research: Queen Eleanor

Queen Elanor's Chamberlain sent some information, a fact file, but it isn't very well organised. Ask the learners to review and sort the information in the fact file to create a list of jobs the staff will need to prepare for her visit to Conwy Castle. They can also use the information they learnt from the video. The castle will need decorators and gardeners, but what other staff might be needed? Encourage the learners to save any facts that are not useful now; they might come in handy later.

Encourage the learners to explore Queen Eleanor's letter. Then, using the information in the letter and information in the fact file, they should create a list of what the garden at Conwy Castle must have ready before she arrives.

Instruct the learners to use the Queen Eleanor fact file to learn about her hobbies and interests at the time. The facts include art, reading, and games.

Encourage learners to conduct further research using books or websites appropriate to their age. The Cadw website has resources to learn more about reading, writing, clothing, and food during Queen Eleanor's time.

Research: Why are gardens important?

Encourage learners to research why medieval castles had gardens. They should consider the needs of people and animals for food, medicines, and drinks. Ask them to find out what they can about some specific gardens in the past, the people who used them, and why.

Research: Benefits of herbs and plants.

Plants were often used as medicine during Queen Eleanor's reign. The table on the '**Benefits of herbs and plants**' resource has a list of plants some people still use today. This resource provides an activity to initiate discussions and further research into the benefits of herbs and plants. You could ask questions like:

- What do you think these plants are believed to be good for?
- Have a guess, then research the correct answers.
- Can you find other plants that are used in medicines?

Garden Design:

Now, the learners should have some ideas of what the garden for Queen Eleanor should include and be ready to design one.

Encourage learners to think about the layout and design of their garden. Medieval gardens often featured symmetrical patterns, pathways, and designated areas for different types of plants.

Ask them if they will create a structured monastery garden with neatly organised beds or perhaps a more informal peasant's garden with a mix of plants growing closely together. They should consider including elements like benches, fountains, or trellises to enhance your design.

Collaboration will be key in this activity! Encourage learners to work closely with their classmates to brainstorm ideas, sketch their initial designs, and determine how all the elements will fit together. Ask them not to forget to consider how their garden can reflect the life and values of medieval society, its aesthetic, utility, and even the stories behind certain plants.

Provide learners with the **'Garden design template'** resource or squared paper. Encourage learners to include a key to help explain the features of their garden and a scale to show its size.

Once their plans are solidified, ask them to bring their vision to life in Minecraft Education.

Garden Build:

Instruct learners to launch Minecraft Education and create a new world in which to build their gardens.

Encourage learners to utilise the various blocks and tools available to replicate the textures and colours of a medieval garden as accurately as possible.

As the learners engage in this creative process, take time to discuss their choices with them. Also, encourage discussions with your peers and reflect on what they are learning about, such as the historical significance of gardens in medieval times.

Learners will combine history, design, and teamwork in this immersive learning experience!

Extension (optional):

As an extension of the primary activity, the following activities could be considered:

Design your own plant

Learners could design and build their own plant in Minecraft Education!

As they will have discovered, Queen Eleanor strongly appreciated plants. Gardeners are continually creating new varieties of plants to suit our needs by combining existing varieties.

Encourage learners to brainstorm and sketch their plants on paper. They should think about:

- What makes their plant unique?
- What environment does it thrive in?
- How it might interact with animals or other plants.
- Discuss the colours, shapes, sizes, and any special features.

Have learners work in pairs or small groups to build their new plant in Minecraft. Encourage them to be creative with the available blocks to make their plant visually appealing.

Remind learners to reflect on the adaptations and characteristics they previously discussed during the research phase.

Once all groups have completed their plants, have each group present their creation to the class. They should explain:

- The plant's name and the environment it lives in.
- The adaptations and features they incorporated and why.
- Optionally, have other learners ask questions or provide feedback.

This activity not only fosters creativity but also helps learners make connections between digital creations and real-world biology.

Create: Medieval remedies book

Ask learners to use their new knowledge of medicinal plants to create a handbook of cures for illnesses for the castle staff.

Encourage learners to include a detailed drawing or a leaf rubbing of each plant to help identify it in the garden.

These handbooks could be combined to create a decorated class resource in the style of a medieval manuscript document to present the information discovered during work on this topic.

Explore: Grow your own

Learners could try growing a selection of herbs. They could plant them in clean tin cans filled with soil. Or they could use a selection of fresh herbs and smell their leaves. Ask them, "Can you identify the herbs just

from their smell?"

Or try making a recipe using herbs, such as pesto, flavoured butter, or olive oil, for dipping or spreading on bread.

Resources: fresh herbs, seeds or cuttings, clean jars, tins or plant pots

Plenary / Reflection:

Throughout the activity, learners should be encouraged to discuss their design choices and the historical concepts they're learning about, fostering a deeper understanding of the cultural significance of these gardens.

Conclude the activity with a class discussion on what they learned about plants and garden design.

Ask learners how to apply this knowledge in real life or other projects.

Key Vocabulary:

Medieval garden
Queen Eleanor
Plants
Herbs
Ornamental flowers
Vegetables
Medicinal
Symmetry
Pathways
Layout
Design
Collaboration
Teamwork
Aesthetic
Utility
Tools
Blocks
Textures
Colours

Resources / Supporting Files:

- Minecraft Education app installed on devices.
- Cadw Cymru Minecraft World.
- Queen Elanor's Letter.pdf
- My garden design.pdf
- Benefits of herbs and plants.pdf

Additional optional resources:

- Squared paper and coloured pencils.
- Fresh herbs, seeds or cuttings, clean jars, tins or plant pots