

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

MEDIEVAL FEAST ROLE PLAY

KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2 and KS3
(History, Drama, English)

Learning objectives

- Learn about feasting in medieval society; explore how people dined, ate and drank in a medieval manor house.
- Develop role-play skills by becoming a medieval character and carrying out a medieval feast in the classroom.

Time to complete

30–40 minutes



Reconstruction of a medieval feast in the hall at Stokesay. You can find a full-page version on page 47.

SUMMARY

The hall at Stokesay Castle was used by Laurence of Ludlow to host elaborate feasts. Servants prepared food in the rooms connected to the hall. The lord, his family and his guests were served first at the 'high' end of the hall, furthest from the service rooms and closest to the fire. Temporary tables stretched down the hall for Laurence's staff and servants.

Look closely at Source 2 on page 47 and lay out the classroom like a medieval hall. Assign roles to your students and seat them in order of importance to re-enact a feast.

ROLES AT A MEDIEVAL FEAST

- Lord of the manor – sitting at the high table, hosting the feast
- Lady of the manor – sitting next to the lord
- Family and guests – sitting with the lord and lady
- Steward – organising the food and directing the waiting servants
- Sewer – head waiter and official taster of the food
- Musicians – entertaining with songs
- Jester – entertaining with juggling and comedy
- Carver – carving the meat at the table
- Pot boy/girl – collecting empty glasses and, serving drinks
- Butler – in charge of the buttery and kitchen staff
- Cook – directing the assistants
- Cook's assistants – stirring sauces over the fire, chopping vegetables, mixing, turning the meat on a spit, whisking
- Scullion – scraping the food off dishes into a drain in the scullery
- Washer boy/girl – washing up (scouring with twigs and sand)

During your visit, explore the hall and connecting rooms. Go down into what was probably the buttery, where ale and wine were stored in butts. Discuss with students what they might have seen, heard and smelt during a feast.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

For an example of a real feast that took place at Stokesay in 1290, explore Source 3 (on page 48) with students.