



# Westminster Abbey



**Top tip!** If you have any questions, feel free to ask an Abbey Marshal or Abbey Guide in a red or blue gown.

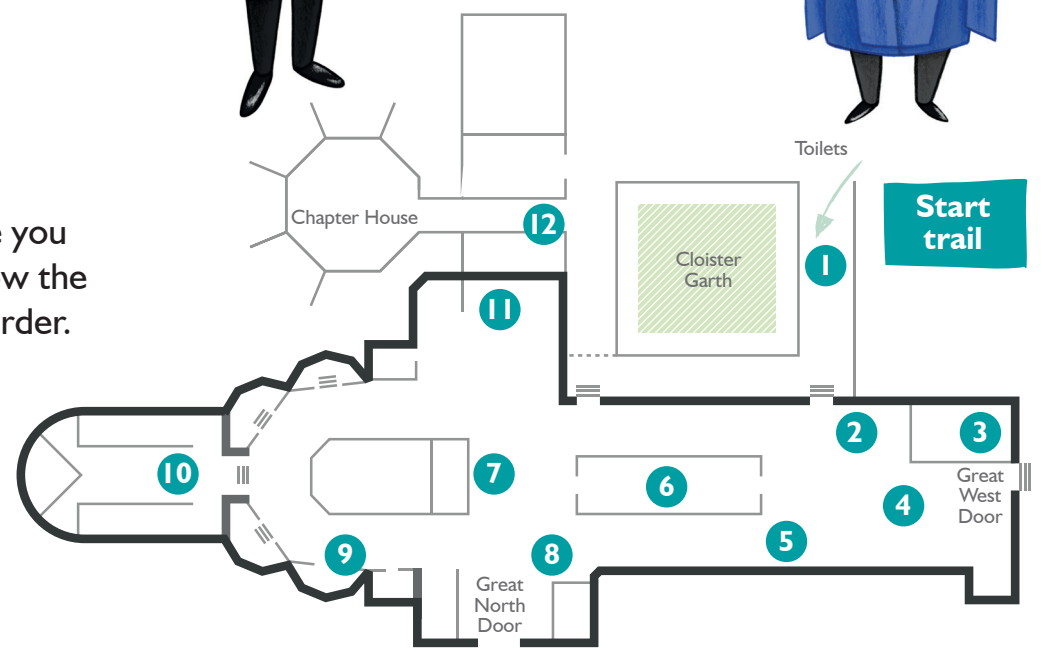
**There has been a place of worship here for over 1,000 years, and today the Abbey is still a living church.** It is the setting for coronations and over 3,000 people are buried or remembered here.

Keep your eyes open for some famous names.



## Site Map

This map will help guide you around the Abbey. Follow the blue dots in numerical order.





### 1 The cloisters

Westminster Abbey used to be a monastery, a place where monks lived. They followed a strict set of rules.

Monks: A group of religious men who promised to live in poverty and obedience.



In the refectory (the dining hall), the monks were not allowed to speak and created their own sign language to communicate instead.

What sign language might they have used for the following food items?  
Make up your own movements.

Salt

Fish

Apple

Although monks no longer live here, the Abbey is still a working church.

**Enter the Abbey.** As you move around the Abbey, remember to look up as well as down and take in your surroundings.

### 2 Candles

Light is an important symbol in many religions. In the Bible, Jesus says, 'I am the Light of the World.' Candles are often lit in churches by people to mark special events (happy or sad) or as a symbol of prayer.

Westminster Abbey is a place of Christian worship.



Everyone is welcome here, no matter what they believe.

You are welcome to light a candle, with your adult's permission. You might want to have a quiet moment to pray or think about someone special to you.

### 3 The Coronation Chair

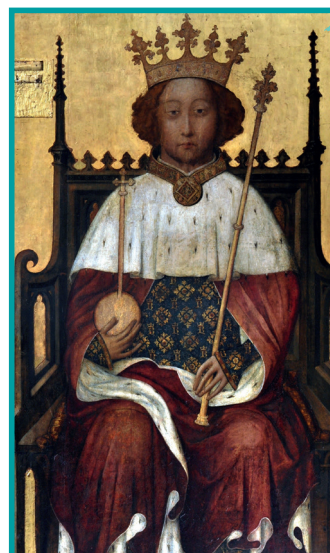
Look closely at the chair.  
How would you describe it?

This chair is over 700 years old. What do you think it is used for?

Clue: look at the large painting hanging to the left.



This chair has been used at nearly every coronation since Edward II (1308).



Richard II was only ten years old when he was crowned.







Ask to be let through the barrier by one of the Abbey Marshals.

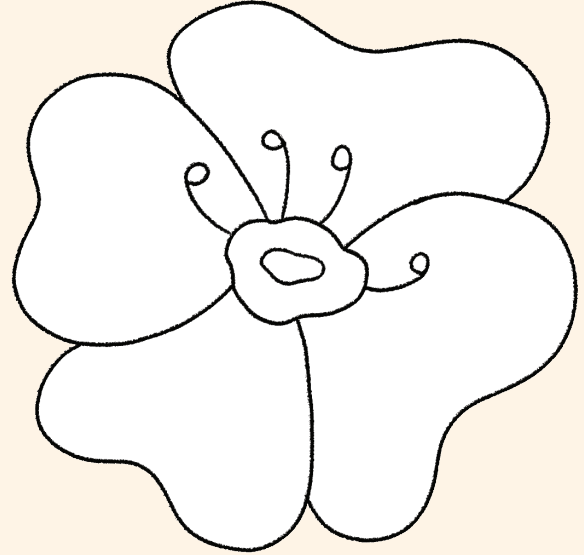
**4 Unknown Warrior**

Do you recognise the red flowers that surround this grave? What clues tell you that this person is a soldier?



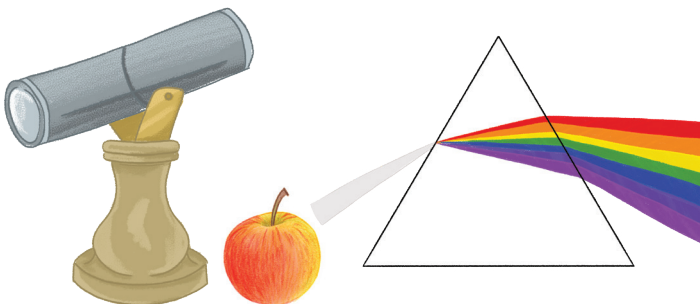
No one walks on this grave, out of respect. This person fought and died for Britain in the First World War. No one knows his identity. Many countries fought for Britain including India, Canada and Jamaica.

Choose words from the gravestone to write in each petal. You could look them up when you get back to school.



**5 Scientists' Corner**

Look out for the grave of Isaac Newton (to the left of the archway). Newton was a famous inventor, scientist and mathematician.



Use these pictures as clues to talk about what he discovered.

Look around you. Can you spot any other famous scientists nearby?

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There are hardly any women scientists buried in the Abbey. Memorials are still added from time to time.

**Discuss as a group:** Which female scientists should be remembered here?

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As you walk through the golden quire screen, look up. In the past, all of Westminster Abbey would have been covered in bright colours like this.



### 6 The quire

Westminster Abbey has its own choir, made up of children aged 8-13 years. They live at Westminster Abbey. Singing is a very important part of worship here. Can you spot the large organ that sometimes accompanies them? *Clue: Look up for the grey pipes!*



Name the four countries you can see on the backs of the seats in the quire.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

These countries are the founding members of the Commonwealth. They are a group of countries who try to support each other.

### 7 The High Altar

A coronation is a special ceremony where a new king or queen is crowned. This ceremony has taken place at Westminster Abbey since 1066.



Coronations take place here, in the centre of this beautiful mosaic floor. The coronation is a religious service, which is why it happens in a church. During a coronation, the king or queen is given Holy Communion (bread and wine) in remembrance of Jesus.



#### Can you find the:

Altar

A special table used during Holy Communion

Lectern

The Bible is read from here

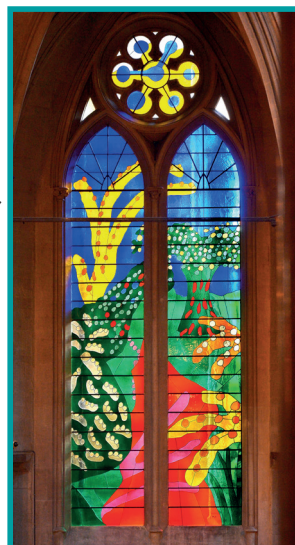
Pulpit

The priest speaks from here

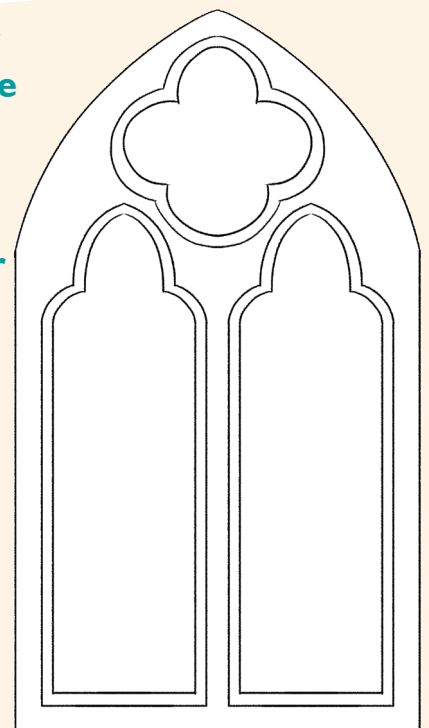
### 8 The Queen's Window

The artist David Hockney designed this window to celebrate the reign of Queen Elizabeth II and her love of the countryside. It was placed here in 2018.

**Discuss:** Do you like the design?



David Hockney chose to include blossom trees. What images would you choose for your own special window? Draw them here.





### 9 St Edward's Shrine

The wooden staircase leads to St Edward the Confessor's tomb, a place for prayer and pilgrimage. As king, he built Westminster Abbey and after his death, he was made a saint. Pilgrims have been visiting his tomb ever since. Many kings and queens are buried around the shrine. Why could this be?



A pilgrimage is a special journey to a place of religious importance.

**Discuss:** Have you ever been on a pilgrimage or made a special journey to somewhere important to you?

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### 10 The Lady Chapel

If you have time, do visit the side chapel to view the tomb of Queen Elizabeth I.

**Look around you.** Don't forget to look up! This chapel was built by King Henry VII as a special place for his Tudor family to be buried. His son, King Henry VIII, chose to be buried elsewhere, but his grandchildren King Edward VI, Queen Mary I and Queen Elizabeth I are all buried here.



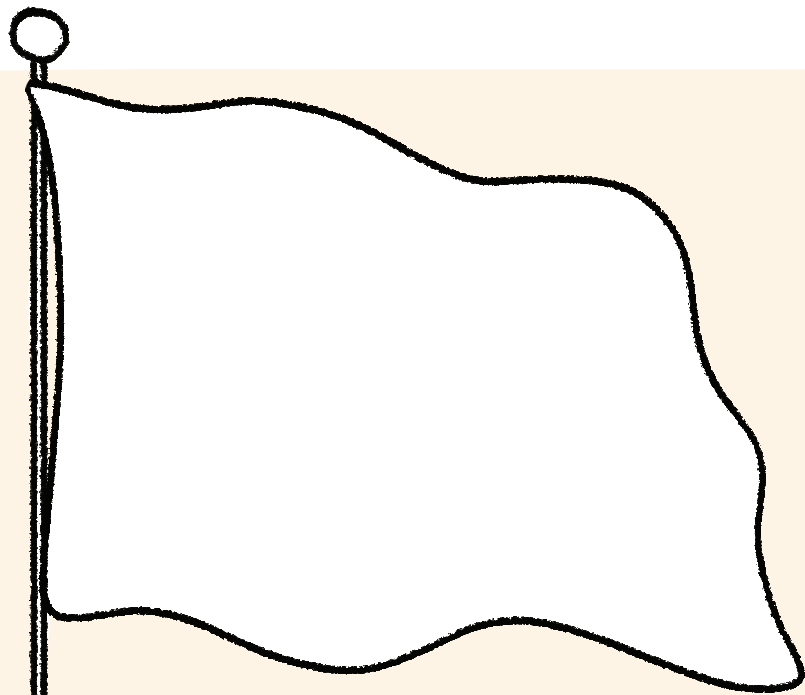
This image shows the Black Tudor musician John Blanke. He played at the funeral of Henry VII and the coronation of Henry VIII. What musical instrument did he play?



College of Arms MS Westminster Tournament Roll, AD 1511, membrane 28. Reproduced by permission of the Kings, Heralds and Pursuivants of Arms

The flags belong to a group of knights called the Order of the Bath. They get to design their own flags.

**Draw or write the things you would have on a flag representing you.**





## 11 Poets' Corner

Spend a few minutes looking at the floor stones, the windows and the monuments. Do you recognise any famous names?

Over 100 writers have been buried or remembered here. Some you might know, others you might not, but all have used their words to make our imaginations run wild. Today, their work is famous around the world.

Do you have a favourite author or book?

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The author Mary Ann Evans wrote books under the 'pen name' George Eliot. Can you find her memorial stone on the floor?



**Discuss as a group:** Why do you think Mary Anne Evans wrote books under a 'pen name'?

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## 12 The cloisters

**Return to the cloisters. Look out for the Chapter House (the monks' meeting room), the Pyx Chamber (used as a treasury) and Britain's oldest door.**

If you have time at the end of your visit, why not sit for a while on one of the old stone benches and do some sketching? The cloisters are full of interesting memorials and beautiful architectural shapes.

Think about why these shapes were chosen. Think about the monks long ago who sat here working as you are today.



Use this space to make notes and reflect.