

Tracing Leadership through the Ages Magna Carta Hall

Educators Guide and Lesson Plan created by Julie Mize,
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Grade Level

3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade

Time Required

30 minutes – 1 hour

Supplies/Materials Needed

- Black cardstock
- Tracing templates
- Gold and silver metallic colored pencils
- #2 pencils and erasers
- Printed examples of medieval armor, gowns, headdresses and Gothic architectural arches

Standards

TEKS – 3rd Grade Art
1(B), 2(A), 2(B), 2(C)

TEKS – 4th Grade Art
3(A)

TEKS – 5th Grade Art
3(A)

Key Vocabulary

Pattern – A shape (or design) that repeats in a specific order.

Essential Question(s)

- How do people and cultures show themselves as important?
- What ways do we create monuments for remembering important people?
- What objects do people use to symbolize character?

Lesson Objectives

History tells stories. Art records them!

Draw a human figure in the style of a medieval brass rubbing from a tomb monument. Think of someone important it can represent. Incorporate personal symbolic imagery.

Pre-Visit

Teacher Led Discussion

1. Why is it important to remember people who are special to us?
2. How do we remember people who aren't here now?
3. What methods do we use to learn about the past? (i.e., writing and stories from past eras, art that shows what people looked like, where and how they lived, oral tradition in stories told across generations)
4. In artworks from the past, what can clothing tell us about people?
5. If we understand symbolism in artworks from older times, what lessons do you think we can learn?

Museum Visit

Magna Carta – Museum docent will give a tour and point out the significant things of Magna Carta Hall. Next, the students will be brought to the brass rubbing at the entry and given the following history:

Proportion – How parts of an artwork or object relate to each other in size; how small or large something looks compared to surrounding objects.

Stylized – Made in a way that looks simplified or changed from realism into designs and shapes with a characteristic look or style.

Symmetrical – One side looks like a mirror image of the other side.

During this era (400s – 1500s), particularly in England, people could be buried in vaults beneath the stone floors of churches and chapels. In our time, cemeteries have bronze, granite or marble headstones with engravings of a person's name, dates of birth and death. In the medieval era, people used engraved brass sheets to cover the stone floor over their tombs. During the Victorian era (1837 – 1901) it was popular to visit churches with these brass monuments and make wax rubbings on paper, as a travel souvenir or a keepsake like a photograph of an ancient ancestor.

Before their death, people might commission artists to prepare the brass sheet, or the family would commission one after their loved one's death. The figures have stylized, symmetrical bodies and faces. There are no distinguishing facial features. Body proportions sometimes look unusual because engravings were designed to fit the brass sheet and they also include other design items (shields or arches) and inscriptions with the people's names. Patterned decoration of costumes was more important than facial characteristics, which is one of the defining styles of monumental brasses.

Many brass monuments show a knight in armor and helmet or a lady in a fancy gown and headdress. Some monuments show merchants, lawyers or clergymen. All these are identifiable by their costumes. Historians have been able to identify time periods based on the armor styles and fashions of gowns and robes.

An animal is often shown under a figure's feet. Animals represented a personal characteristic or career. A dog under a lady's feet symbolizes faithfulness. A lion under a knight's feet represents courage. Other animals were used for different characteristics. Symbols could be secular (eagle, dragon, sheep) or religious (rose, lily and unicorn). A merchant might not have an animal at his feet but might have a shield displaying symbols of his trade. Knights and lords and their wives usually have their heraldic shields to identify their ancestry. The way a shield is divided and images within the sections all tell a story of that family's heritage.

Architectural Gothic arches were sometimes used to frame a figure.

An arch might be single, double or more, depending on the size and maybe how much someone could afford to pay the artist for the extra decorations.

Activity

Draw a figure in the style of a medieval brass monument. Think of a person this might represent to you. What symbols would you use to represent them?

1. Trace a body figure in #2 pencil on black cardstock.
2. Draw costume details, including things like a hat/cap and veil/helmet/headdress.
3. Draw the hands – are they clasped in prayer like the medieval figures? Are they holding an object symbolizing their character or job?
4. At the feet, perhaps draw an animal that symbolizes this person.

Use silver or gold metallic pencil to trace all pencil lines. Then use the metallic pencil to add patterns like decorative embroidery on a gown or robe, chain mail on armor, or a design you think is appropriate to the figure. Empty spaces can be filled in with the same color.

Post-Visit

Compare today's activity to ways we choose to remember loved ones and important people in our community.

Make a list:

- Current: popular media - photos, videos, shows & movies, books, songs, museums.
- Past: photos, books, movies, music, museums.
- Across history: sculpture, painting, writing, music.

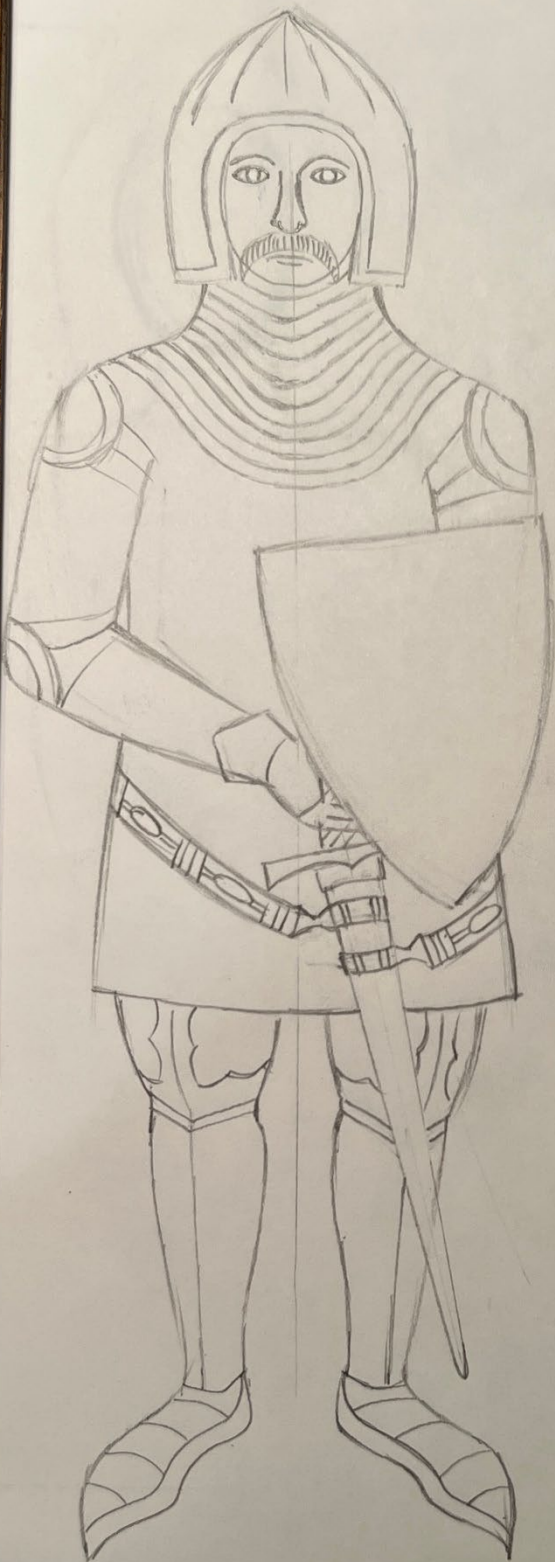
Museum Visit Variations/Extensions

4th grade: Add a heraldic shield to a space beside the figure's head. This is an opportunity to add more symbolism to the drawing, since medieval heraldry identified families. Students can use their own images for symbolism and divide the shield into spaces needed to visualize this heritage.

5th grade: Add a shield, then add a symmetrical architectural arch around the edges of the paper. It could be based on Gothic styles or could be designed for the style pertaining to a



specific person. Hide images or symbols into the arch design. For example, if the figure represents a grandparent who gardens, the frame can be drawn with shovels and rakes. If the figure is of a person known for knitting, the frame can be designed with the needles and intertwined lengths of yarn. **Note: Time for this extension may need to be after the return to the classroom.*



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