



### Column Capital from St Edward the Confessor's Cloister, about 1100

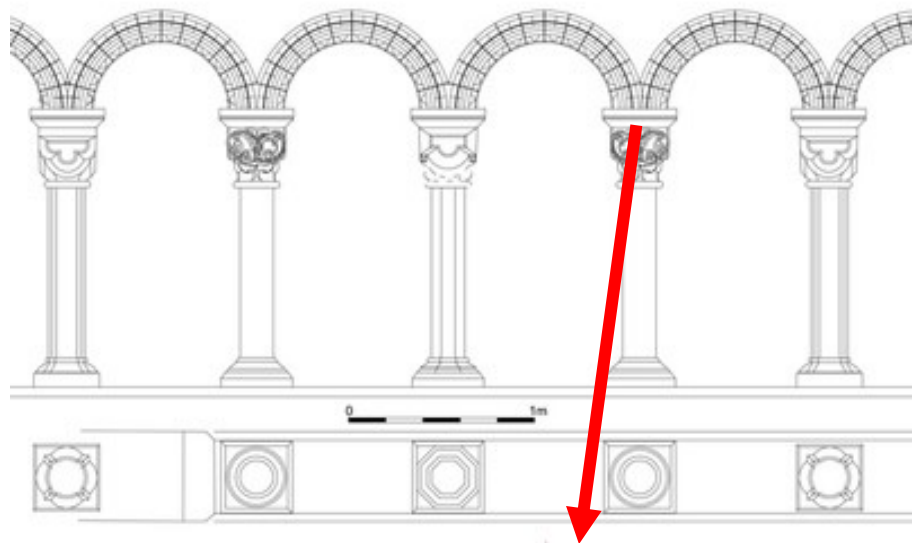
11-18 activity – Christianity in 10 objects

**Find:** Look at the object and find what captures your attention. Choose one word to describe it.

**Capture:** Take some time to look carefully at this drawing. Pretend you are an architect and use a pencil and paper to slowly copy the lines. First vertically, and then horizontally. Look out for different angles or perspectives. Don't worry about creating a 'good' or realistic drawing or picture.

**Explain:** Write a few bullet points or tell someone about this object, without showing them the original picture.

**Wonder:** What do you think the architect has to think about when creating a design? What new ideas and questions do you have about this object?





The column capital was used to decorate a section of the cloister arcade at Westminster Abbey, as you can see in this reconstruction. It is an example of Norman architecture and dates from 1100. The Norman style of building was common in England during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, particularly for castle and church building. Features of Norman architecture include:

- Round arches for windows and doors
- Symmetry
- Plain with little decoration
- Thick walls
- Not many windows
- Massive round columns to hold up the roof
- Norman churches were usually built in the shape of a cross

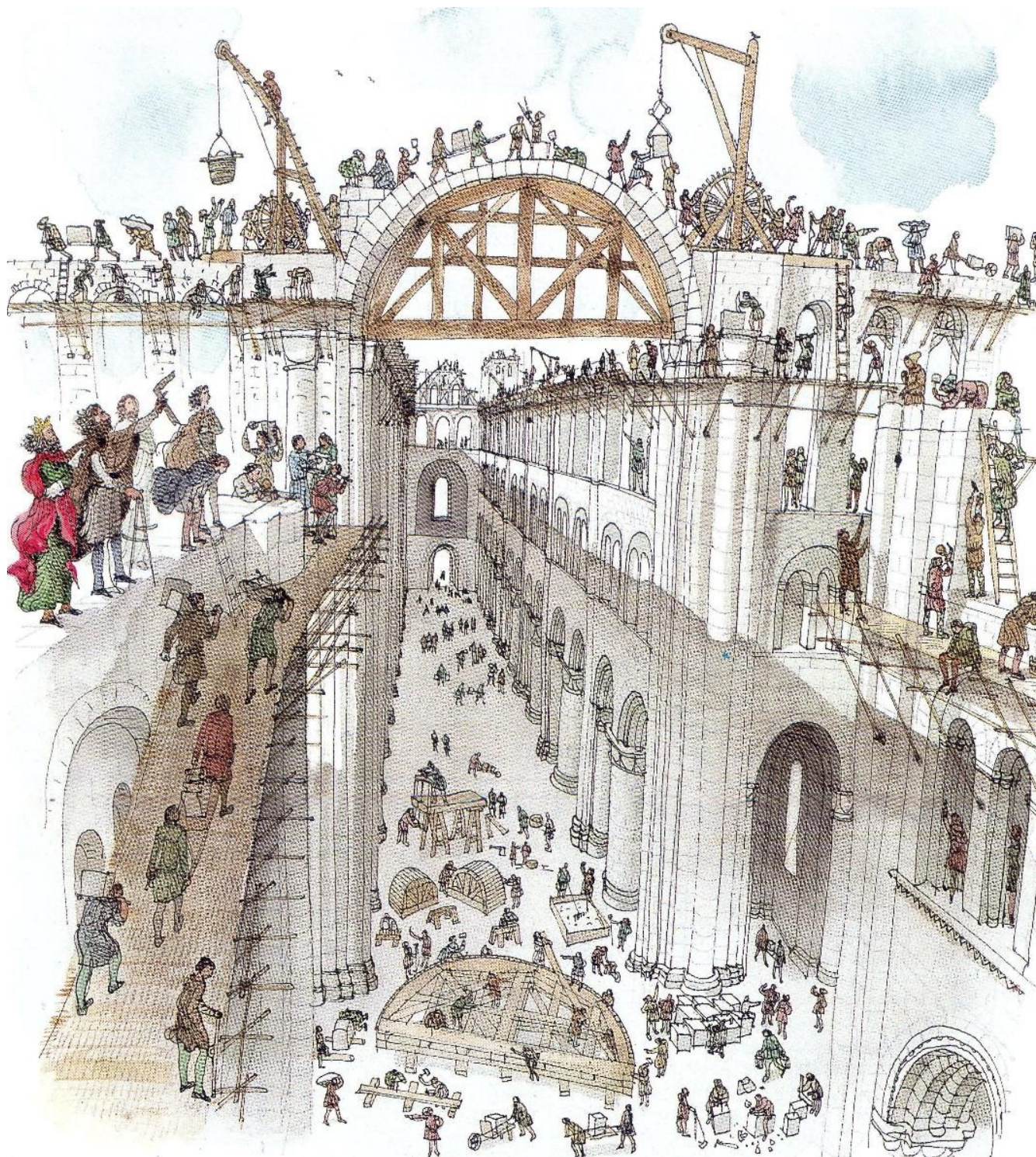
**Activity: Design (and make) a Norman-style Westminster Abbey**

You'll need some paper and a pencil for sketching or some cardboard, scissors and glue if you decide to make a model.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Century Norman style Westminster Abbey no longer exists. It was demolished in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century to make way for the Gothic style church you would see if visiting the Abbey today. But what might the original Norman church have looked like? We can only guess.



Have a go at designing the 11<sup>th</sup> century Norman style Westminster Abbey. Use the features of Norman architecture list above to help you, starting with the idea of a building in the shape of the cross. Try to make the building symmetrical and make sure your windows and doors have rounded arches. Once you've sketched your design or made your model, take a look at the artist's impression below. How does it compare to your design?





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We know that Norman churches were built out of stone. Sometimes the stone was brought over to England from Normandy in France. Look at the artist's impression of Westminster Abbey. Why do you think this site might have been chosen for the building project?



Stonemasons had a difficult and dangerous job, often working at great height and without adequate safety equipment. There were often several hundred people working on a great church building project at any one time. The illustration shows the building of the Norman Abbey in progress.

What might have attracted a medieval stonemason to work on a big church building project like the one at Westminster Abbey? How did medieval church builders try to bring glory to God?

### **Extension**

The Westminster Abbey you see today was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It was built in the new Gothic style. Look at the photographs of Westminster Abbey on the next page. Why not try creating your own “Gothic architecture” guide using these images?

Share your experience on Facebook or Twitter using #WAbbeyFun



