**Church fact:** Christians have been worshipping in this spot for more than a thousand years.  
**State fact:** Since 1066 our kings and queens have come to Westminster Abbey to be crowned.

Today in Britain we live in a democracy in which people of different faiths, or none, can choose who governs us. Exploring Westminster Abbey will help you to understand how this country has come about and how the Abbey shows us faith at the heart of the nation today.

This map will help guide you around the Abbey. The trail starts at number 1 in the cloisters. Follow the blue dots in numerical order.

The martlet appears on the Westminster Abbey shield. It is a stylised bird with short tufts of feathers instead of legs. The inability of the martlet to land may symbolise the constant quest for knowledge and learning.
In the 11th century, Edward the Confessor built a new palace by the river at Westminster, where the Houses of Parliament are now, and a new Abbey church here. From here he would rule his country with God’s help.

For 500 years, until Henry VIII closed the monastery in 1540, the monks spent most of their time here in the cloisters, studying and teaching in the monastery school. Education in England started in monasteries like this, then in church schools.

Put a cross by the things that might be difficult for you if you could not read or write when you are voting in a General Election for a new government and afterwards.

In the Coronation Service, the monarch holds certain objects or regalia.

**Draw lines to match up the objects with what you think they symbolise.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SWORD OF STATE</th>
<th>KINGSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORB (a jewelled ball with a cross on top)</td>
<td>THE MONARCH’S RULE OVER THE COUNTRY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWO SCEPTRES (jewelled rods)</td>
<td>JESUS’ RULE OVER THE WORLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST. EDWARD’S CROWN</td>
<td>THE ‘MARRIAGE’ BETWEEN THE MONARCH AND THE STATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A RING</td>
<td>JUSTICE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the Coronation the king or queen swears an oath to uphold both the law and the Church.
Ask a Marshal in a red gown for entry through the rope into the Nave.

Stand by the Grave of the Unknown Warrior.

Choose a few words on the grave that show how important this ordinary man's life and death was. Write them below.

How old do both men and women have to be before they can vote today?

......................

Stand looking at the painting of the Virgin Mary with Jesus in her lap, by the candles. Look up to the windows and find the man with the golden hair wearing a crown.

He is Henry III.

What is he holding in his left hand?

............................................................

Who is the king in the window to the left of him who is holding a ring?

Hint: he built the first Abbey church here

............................................................

During World War I, thousands of soldiers died. It was sometimes impossible to tell who they were, so their bodies were buried near the battlefield and marked with a white cross. On November 11th 1920, one of these soldiers was brought back and buried in the Abbey. The King went to the funeral.

It is quite likely that the unknown warrior could not vote in elections to choose a Member of Parliament. This changed in 1918 when it was felt that the many men who had risked their lives for their country deserved to choose its government.

In 1918 the Representation of the People Act gave the vote to all men over the age of 21 and women over the age of 30.

Henry III admired Edward the Confessor and, from 1245, built much of the present Abbey and the Shrine to contain Edward's bones. Henry III made the Palace of Westminster his main home, where the Houses of Parliament now stand. Henry wanted people to think of himself and God as ruling together.
Find this wooden case in the aisle.

On the case is a crowned portcullis, the symbol of the Queen’s Westminster Rifles Regiment. It is also the symbol of the Houses of Parliament.

Now look up at the stained glass window above. Just below it is a sculpture showing a man called Spencer Perceval being shot!

Spencer Perceval was Prime Minister and was assassinated in the House of Commons.

When was Spencer Perceval shot?

Walk on through the gates until you reach this statue of William Wilberforce on your right.

What law did Wilberforce, with the help of others, persuade Parliament to pass in 1807?

What is the name of one of the people who helped him?
Hint: look on the floor to the left of the statue
Walk back the way you have come and into the centre of the Nave. Walk up through the Quire Screen, just as the king or queen would do on their way to be crowned at the High Altar.

Every day the choir sits in the Quire to worship God through singing. Some of them are boys aged 8-13. They sit facing each other in the stalls on each side. We find rows of seats facing each other like this in the House of Commons.

Who sits on each side?

Look back at the seat to the left of the arch you came through. That is where the Queen sits when she visits the Abbey.

How can we tell?

Put a circle round the right answer:

The Queen has her own special seat in the House of Lords/House of Commons. The Queen is represented by the mace in the House of Lords/House of Commons.

Bishops are leaders of the Church of England. They are not elected but sit in the House of Lords where they can influence the passing of new laws.

Do you agree or disagree with the speech bubbles?

Bishops should not sit in Parliament because they are not elected. Bishops should sit in the House of Lords because bishops have advised the ruler since 1066. There should be no religious leaders in Parliament because there are many different religions in Britain today and many people are not religious. Having bishops in Parliament means that when new laws are passed religious views are considered.

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

1. 2.

3. 4.

These countries and 50 others make up the Commonwealth. They work together to make their countries more democratic and free. On Commonwealth Day each year, and in other services during the year, people of all different faiths come to the Abbey to share prayers.

Which religions do you think we might find in those 54 Commonwealth countries?

The Queen is Head of State in our country; she is Supreme Governor of the Church of England and she is also Head of the Commonwealth.
The space between the Quire and the steps is called the Lantern. Stand underneath the painted patterned roof in the centre. This is where the king or queen is shown to the people before and after they are crowned.

For the coronation, the Coronation Chair is placed on this beautiful, 750 year old Cosmati Pavement. The monarch sits on the chair, facing the High Altar and away from the people, to be anointed and crowned.

Why do you think the chair faces the High Altar?

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High Altar: The most sacred part of a church where Holy Communion is celebrated.

Holy Communion: Christians share bread and wine to remember Jesus’ death on the cross. The bread symbolises Jesus’ body and the wine his blood.

To anoint: To put oil on someone to show that they are blessed by God.

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Leave the Lantern area and turn right to follow the Ambulatory around behind the High Altar.

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On the right, up a small flight of wooden steps, is the Chapel of St. Edward the Confessor. This is the most holy part of the Abbey as it contains the Shrine of St Edward. Prayers are still said in the Shrine on most days. Around it are buried medieval kings, including Henry III.

Can you find Henry III’s tomb past the steps?  
Hint: it has Cosmati-style decoration.
Continue around the Ambulatory. Climb the steps and enter the Lady Chapel, built by Henry VII who is buried here. Look at the beautiful ceiling.

How many angels can you see over the gate that you have just walked through?

Between the angels Henry VII has placed symbols of his family, the Tudors. Talk about why you think he has done this.

This chapel is full of Tudor symbols and those of the Knights of the Order of the Bath. Draw your favourite.

Sir Charles Barry, a Victorian architect, borrowed the portcullis symbol from this Henry VII Chapel as his logo when he sent in his plans for the re-building of the House of Parliament after the fire in 1834. His design won and the portcullis, with a crown, has been the symbol of the Houses of Parliament ever since.

Go down the steps and continue around the Ambulatory. Continue into the South Transept, Poets’ Corner. Many of the people buried and remembered here are famous poets and writers. Look on the floor for the grave of Charles Dickens. He is near the door leading to St Faith’s Chapel. There are toilets in Poets’ Corner.

Before writing his stories, Charles Dickens spent 5 years as a reporter in the Houses of Parliament. He wanted to change society and could have become an MP but thought he could help the poor better as a writer than an MP.

How well do you remember Dickens’ stories? Complete the following famous titles of stories by Charles Dickens.

“A …………………… Carol”  “Oliver …………………………”  “………………….. Expectations”

Great  Christmas  Twist
Leave Poets’ Corner and enter the Cloisters. Go straight ahead and turn left to visit the Chapter House.

The Chapter House is where the monks held meetings each day.
Read the text at the bottom of the windows opposite the entrance.

Which two other groups of people used to meet here in the 13th and 14th centuries?

How many sides does this room have?

Which room in the Houses of Parliament has the same number of sides? Circle the right answer.
Hint: it is the main meeting place for MPs and members of the public.

House of Commons Chamber
Lords’ Chamber
St Stephen’s Hall
Central Lobby
Royal Gallery
Westminster Hall

Leave the Chapter House, turning left then right at the corner of the Cloister.
We hope you enjoyed your visit!
To leave, follow the signs for the exit via the Great West Door.