Westminster Abbey
Learning

Look carefully at the image:

- Who are the people?
- What is happening in this scene?
- Where could this be taking place?



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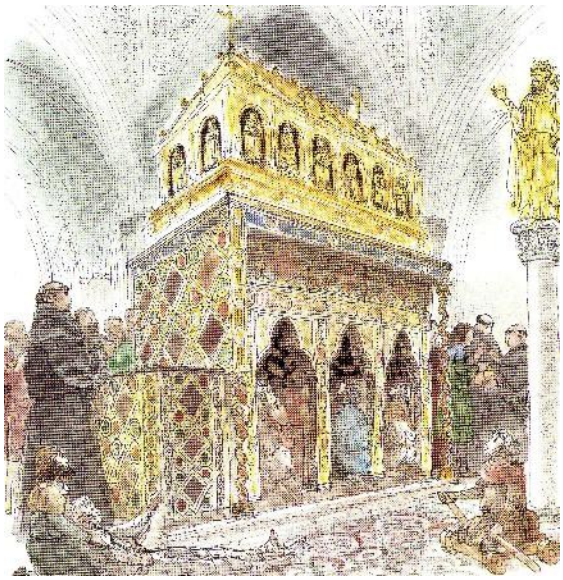
Westminster Abbey
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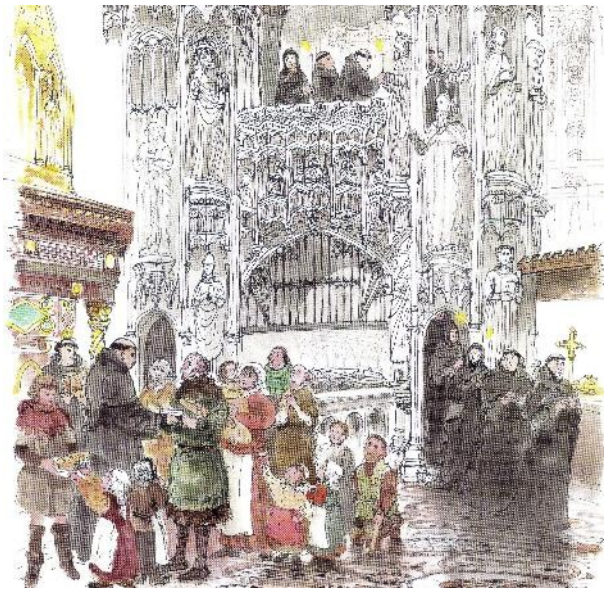
What did the monks of Westminster Abbey do?

- What jobs are the monks doing in each image?
- Why are these jobs important?









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How important was Westminster Abbey?

- The Palace of Westminster was a very important royal palace, located next to the river. Can you find it on the image below?
- Can you find Westminster Abbey on the image below?
- How close are these two buildings?



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How important was Westminster Abbey?

The Abbot was in charge of all the monks at Westminster Abbey. Abbots of Westminster had special permission to wear tall hats called mitres, like the Pope in Rome.

By the 1500's, Westminster Abbey was one of the richest monasteries in England.

Important royal visitors often stayed at the Abbot's house.

Abbot Islip was a close friend and advisor of King Henry VII - the two men often had dinner together. Both Abbot Islip and King Henry VII spent a lot of money on building new parts the Abbey.







- What might the king and the Abbot have talked about?
- Why might Abbots of Westminster get to wear the special hat (the mitre)?
- Why do you think statues of both the king and the Abbot were made for the Abbey?

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How important was Westminster Abbey?

- This book was made for Westminster Abbey in 1382. What do you think it was about?
- Who might have written and illustrated books like this one?
- Could most people read and write at this time?



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What did the monks of Westminster Abbey believe?





*'I Brother Hugh promise **stability** and obedience according to the **rule of St Benedict** before God in this monastery'*

Stability - monks promised to stay in their monastery for the rest of their life. Novice monks (beginner monks) could be as young as seven years old.

Rule of St Benedict - monks promised to follow the teachings of St Benedict, a monk who lived in Italy almost 1,500 years ago. He said that **prayer, work and helping the community** were the most important things for monks to practice daily.

- If you had to pick three rules for living a good life today, what would they be?
- The monks did have some time to rest and play. A favourite game involved moving small round stones around a board with holes in it. Can you think of any games that people play today that don't need any special kit?

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What happened to the monks of Westminster Abbey?

In 1540, something very shocking happened at Westminster Abbey. Look carefully at the stained-glass window.

Can you find images of:

- Monks
- Abbot (in his tall hat called a mitre)
- Men who worked for King Henry VIII



King Henry VIII decided to close all the monasteries in England.

This was one of the changes he was making to the Church.

King Henry sent his men to all the monasteries and forced the monks to sign a document called the Deed of Surrender. Once they had signed, the monks had to leave the monastery and the monastery was closed. Henry took the money, land and treasures from the monasteries. He kept a lot and gave some to his friends.

- What do you think might have happened to any monks who refused to sign the Deed of Surrender?

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What happened after the monks left Westminster Abbey?





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