BLENHEIM PALACE
EDUCATION

This is an introduction to Blenheim's Local History

"The longer you can look back, the farther you can look forward."

Winston Churchill, March 1944

Blenheim Palace today

Q: Where are we? What is this place called?

A: Blenheim Palace (Pronounce blen-em).

Q: Who do you think lives here?

A: A Duke.

A: Not a King, not a Queen, not a Prince, not a Princess.



Q: Can you spot the standard?

A: It's on top of the gates.

Q: Where does the King live when in London?

A: Buckingham Palace. His Royal Standard is also raised when he is there.

The Duke of Marlborough lives here. (Pronounce djook of mal-bo-ro).

When the Duke is here, we raise his flag up.

When he is not here, we raise another flag. We don't call it a flag; we call it a standard.

The Duke of Marlborough keeps animals on the estate. He has horses, dogs, sheep, and cows.

Q: What animal can you see on these gates?

A: Lions.



Can you roar?

Q: What noise do lions make?

A: Lions roar.

Q: How many lions can you see?

A: 13.

A: There are four lion heads on each side. (4 + 4)

A: There is one at the top of the left-hand side gate, in the Churchill Crest. (1)

A: There are a total of four in each Coat of Arms. (2 + 2)

Blenheim is a palace, not a castle

Let's pretend the King lives here.

Q: How would you greet the **King** if you bumped into him?

A: Good morning/afternoon **Your Majesty**.

But the Duke of Marlborough lives here.

Q: How would you greet the **Duke** if you bumped in him?

A: Good morning/afternoon **Your Grace**.

Q: How old is the Palace?

A: It's over 300 years old.

This is an opportunity for children to say numbers, and for adults to say 'more' or 'less.'

Q: How old are you? Are you younger or older than the Palace?

This is an opportunity for children to explain old and new with children's vocabulary.

Q: What makes you think the Palace is old?

A: A: The **stone**. For example, dirty vs clean, rough vs smooth.

This is an opportunity for adults to show old and new stone by using adult's vocabulary.



Q: What **colour** is the Palace?

A: Not yellow, not gold, not beige, etc.

A: It's **HONEY yellow.**

This is an opportunity to explain that sometimes it's hard to describe a colour.

Sometimes we use another set of words to describe a colour.
For example, we use food-related words. We might say OLIVE green, SALMON pink, MUSTARD yellow, CHERRY red, etc.

Q: Why is this a Palace and not a Castle?

A: A typical **castle** is built on a mound **(motte)** with an enclosure **(bailey)** and is surrounded by water **(moat)**.

A: A castle is a **defensive** building. Sometimes there is a **drawbridge** and a **portcullis.**

A: A castle usually has **turrets** and **arrow slits**, not windows.

Q: Do you know a song about a Duke?

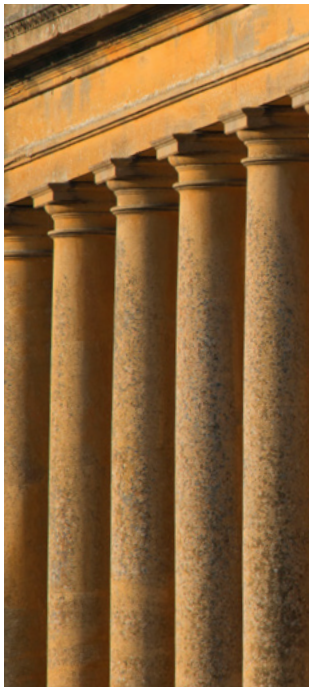
A: The Grand Old Duke of York.

March towards the Great Court while singing The Grand Old Duke of York.

Great court

There are lots of shapes around the Palace.







Q: What **shapes** can you see?

A: Square, circle, semi-circle (windows).

A: Rectangle (doors and windows).

A: Triangle (roof pediment).

Q: Can you spot 3-D shapes?

A: Cuboid and cylinder (columns).

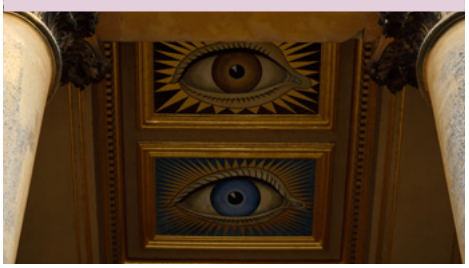
A: Sphere (stone balls in the courtyard, gold balls on the roof).

Q: How many **steps** lead to the Palace Doors?

A: 20.

This is an opportunity to count from 1 to 20, or to count in two instances and make a simple addition.

Look up, there are eyes painted under the Portico.



Q: What colour are they?

A: Blue and brown.

Q: How many blue eyes can you see? How many brown eyes can you see?

A: 3 brown eyes and 3 blue eyes. 6 eyes in total.

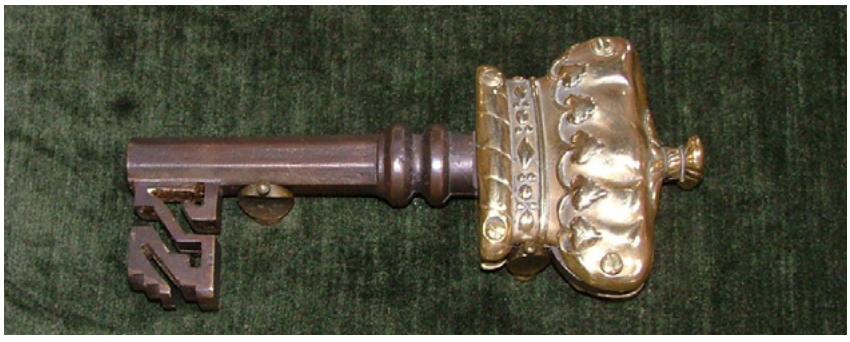
This is an opportunity for children to count and to make a simple addition.

Great Hall

Look at the Palace Doors with the big lock and key in the display cabinet. It's the Coronet Key.

Q: What is a coronet?

A: It's a small crown. A **king** will wear a **crown**, but a **duke** will wear a **coronet**.



Look at the painting on the ceiling.

Q: Can you spot animals?

A: Lamb in the bottom left corner.
Horse in the top right corner.

What noise does a lamb make?

What noise does a horse make?



Look at the swords, pistols and armours.

These accessories tell us that the 1st Duke of Marlborough was a soldier in the 18th century.

Closterman painting

This is a painting of the 1st Duke of Marlborough's family.

Q: Do you have family photos at home?

Whatever the answer is, let the children discuss photos at home.

The 3 East State Rooms

Look up at the gilded ceilings.

Q: What shapes can you see?

A: Square, pentagon, octagon, hexagon, triangle, rectangle, oval



Look at the paintings.

Q: Why are there so many paintings of people?

A: Photography was not yet invented. Paintings were the only way to record someone's image.



Saloon

Look at the painting on the ceiling.

Q: Do you have a painting on the ceiling at home? Would you be allowed to paint on the ceiling at home?

A: Whatever the answer is, let the children express their thoughts.

The 3 West State Rooms

Look at the tapestries.

Q: What do you think they are made of?

A: Wool and silk threads.

The word tapestry comes from the French word *tapisserie*, which means a "carpet on the wall."

Long Library

This is the Duke's private library.

Q: How many books do you think there are in here?

A: Over 10,000 books.

This is a statue of Queen Anne.



Q: What is she wearing on her head?

A: Yes, a crown.

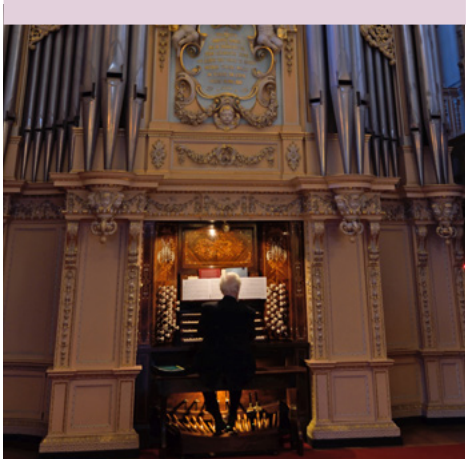
Q: What colour is the Long Library?

A: It's PEACH pink.

Q: What is she holding in her hands?

A: A sceptre in her right hand and an orb in her left hand.

Look around the room.



Q: Can you see a musical instrument?

A: Organ. It is the largest pipe organ in a private home in Europe.

Q: Where does the sound come out from?

A: The sound comes out from the big cylinder-shaped pipes. The pipes are like whistles. What do you do with a whistle? Yes, you blow in a whistle. There is a machine behind the organ that blows air in all these pipes. Then we play the keys, push, and pull the stops and press on the pedals with our feet.

West archway

Q: What are we standing on?
(Just before passing through the archway)

A: Gravel.

It's noisy walking on the gravel!

March towards the archway



Q: What are we standing on? (In the archway)

A: Wood.



It's less noisy on the wooden blocks

March towards the West Courtyard

Q: Why do you think there's wood under the archway, and not gravel?

A: It was to make it less noisy when horses and carriages passed under the archway.

Stables Exhibition

300 years ago, people did not have vehicles with an engine.

Q: What was the main mode of transport?

A: Horses and carriages.

A: The ground under archways were laid with wooden blocks to deaden the noise of horses' hooves.

Fire Engine Exhibition

300 years ago, fire engines did not exist. It was carts that carried water and pulled by horses. At Blenheim, there was a private fire brigade.

You will learn more about the Blenheim Brigade in the exhibition.

Churchill Exhibition

Winston Churchill was the British Prime Minister during the Second World War. He was born at Blenheim. His grandparents lived at Blenheim. He visited very often.

You will learn more about Winston Churchill in the exhibition.

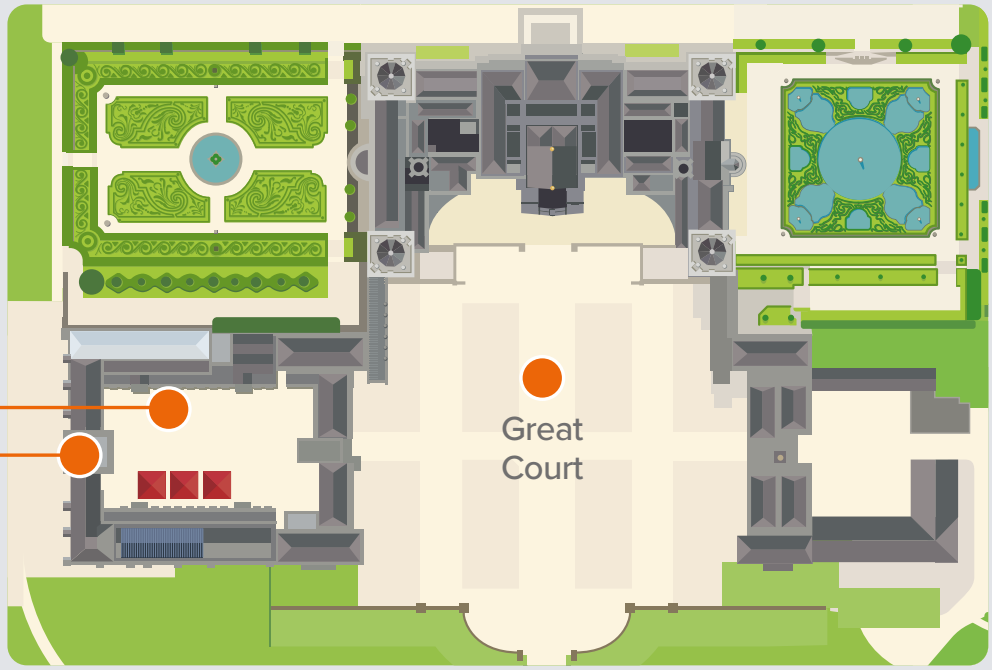
If you have any questions or comments about this self-led resource, please contact our Education Team at **education@blenheimpalace.com**

"Understanding the Past is instrumental to better appreciate the Present and to better prepare for the Future."

Blenheim Education Statement

Points of interest:

Outside the Palace:



Inside the Palace:

