

KS2

Building London: Romans, Wren and London Today

PRE AND POST VISIT ACTIVITY IDEAS

Our cross-curricular day can be linked to many different thought-provoking topics, depending on your school's curricular focus. Here are some suggestions for you when planning class work linked to this Wren300 Learning Day.

PRE-VISIT

Before your visit we recommend you briefly cover the following. This could be covered in one 30–60 minute session:

1. Identify Romans and the Fire of London on a timeline

Identify Roman London and Fire of London on a timeline. We suggest you ask pupils to identify how long ago Roman London and the Fire of London were, also identify any other periods of British history pupils have already covered on a timeline. Explain that during the visit we will focus on these two periods of London's history and compare them to London as it is today.

2. Introduce Roman gods and the Mithraeum

Pupils may get more from their visit to the London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE if they arrive with a little knowledge, which your facilitator can build on.

[A wealth of information can be found here.](#)

A good introduction would be to play the short film [The making of the Mithraeum](#).

And a fun activity called [Activity 2: Roman deities and their symbols](#).

3. Introduce Christopher Wren

Show pupil's a picture of Sir Christopher Wren and ask them when they think he lived. They might well recognise him as dressing like Samuel

Pepys or King Charles II. If so, recap on what they know about the Great Fire of London. Show pictures of St Paul's Cathedral and St Stephen Walbrook. Explain that Wren designed these churches after the Great Fire of London. You do not need to tell your pupils too much about the life of Sir Christopher Wren before your visit, as the session will include some his life story. We also have [The Life of Sir Christopher Wren](#) available for you to use with pupils after their visit.

4. Look at Google Earth

Briefly look at your school on Google Earth. Then show where the City of London is in comparison to your school. Ask *how far* they will need to travel and in *what direction* to get to the City of London. Discuss the journey and how long it will take.

5. Introduce key words

Introduce and discuss the meanings of these key words:

- Architect/ Architecture
- Archaeologist/ Archaeology.

DURING YOUR VISIT

Remember to take photos during your visit, as a source for post-visit activities.

POST-VISIT

Here are some activities you may like to set your pupils after the visit to cement learning and encourage pupils' creative responses to their Wren300 Learning Day.

1. Create a display about their visit – using a map and photos

Explain that you want them to create a display about the visit. Show photos from your visit and ask pupils to identify where each location was on a map. Look at the 'key' illustrations each group drew during the walk and choose which to use on the display. Divide into groups, each selecting some key facts and images to describe different places they visited. Put these together as a display.

2. Discuss 'Enquiry Question: How is modern London similar or different from Roman and Wren's London?'

Ask pupils to work in groups to discuss the Enquiry Question. Ask them to clarify their ideas. Ask each group to prepare one of the *similarities and differences* they have discovered and present to the whole class. Alternatively, after initial discussions set each group a different topic to consider in relation to similarities and differences, such as architecture, work, leisure, faith and beliefs, transport, trade.

3. Look at maps in more detail

We recommend www.layersoflondon.org as a great resource to explore how London has changed over time. Google Earth and other online mapping resources can also be used, to explore the City of London, and to put the location into context with your own local area.

4. Building (Design & technology)

Discuss what architecture your class saw and found most beautiful during their visit. Set them the task of creating either a City of London display or their own dream city-scape for your classroom. Pupils could work individually, in pairs or in small groups, as well as in a medium of their choice such as pre-made construction blocks, cardboard, clay or plasticine to make a building each. You will also need to discuss the street layout as they place their buildings within the cityscape.

Before starting to build discuss: *What buildings does a city need?* Then allot different pupils the task of designing the different buildings needed (shops, schools, leisure centres and playgrounds, places of worship, banks and places of trade etc.) Remind them that Wren believed in the principles, described by the Roman architect Vitruvius, that good architecture must be *useful, strong and beautiful*.

IMAGES: LONDON MAPS THROUGH TIME

A selection of images are available to share with your class in a PowerPoint presentation. [London Maps through Time](#) provides a visual recap of the geographical growth of London from Roman times through to today. [London Maps through Time](#) also gives links to useful websites and more images, such as the [Museum of London](#).

Please note that images may only be used for education purposes and no republication is allowed.



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