



Our Story of St Edmund - Cross curricular thoughts

English

- 1 Discuss fact or fiction: Very little evidence of his parentage, early life and reign.
- 2 Medieval belief that when holy people died and became saints, their dead bodies had miraculous powers. Some were able to heal the sick and others to help people enter heaven when they died. All cathedrals had shrines and people made pilgrimages to them from distant places. They made gifts of money or jewels to gain the saint's favour. Kings came to visit St. Edmund's shrine believing that he would help them thwart their enemies.
- 3 However, other medieval stories show a disastrous result having come into contact with Edmund's shrine:
 - A story of thieves trying to rob the shrine of ornaments were frozen to the spot until the morning when they were arrested and sent for execution.
 - An Abbot of Bury called Leofstan looked inside the shrine to check if St. Edmund's head was really attached to his body and as a punishment the Abbot's hands immediately withered.
 - The third attack by the Danes was under King Swein Forkbeard and he demanded gold and treasures from the Abbey Church and threatened to destroy the Church and kill all the clergy if they would not comply. He was on his horse awaiting the monks' decision when he saw in the sky riding through the clouds, the dead St. Edmund on a ghostly horse, wearing a crown and aiming a silver lance at his heart. He screamed and suffered a fatal heart attack and died. His son, Canute, having witnessed this, wisely decided to call off the attack. He later became a Christian himself and rebuilt the Benedictine Abbey to be one of the four largest in England.
- 4 Retell the story through drama, story writing, poetry, newspaper articles etc.
- 5 Write about a day in the life of a monk.



History

- 1 Explain that very few accurate accounts exist about Edmund and those that we have were written years after he had died. There are still, various opinions as to where he was actually killed. He may have been killed at Hoxne in Suffolk after hiding under a bridge having escaped from the Danes who were looking for him. He was spotted by some wedding guests and so was arrested, beaten and then tied to a tree and shot with arrows, and then beheaded. Bradfield St. Clare near Bury St. Edmunds also lays claim to be where he was killed as does Hellesden in Norfolk.
- 2 Investigation into Saxons and Vikings and how living in these times was fraught with danger.
- 3 Building of the Abbey and its influence for the town and surrounding area. The Dissolution of the Monasteries changed the landscape and economic stability plus the shrine of St. Edmunds seemed to have disappeared during this time.

Geography

1. Discuss the routes taken by the Vikings to attack the English.
2. Look at maps of East Anglia and discuss names of counties and main towns.
3. Where is Bures St. Mary found near Colchester?
4. Where is Hoxne and the other areas mentioned, find them on a map.

RE

1. Explore the Christian faith using the Suffolk set syllabus, 'The Emmanuel Project'.
2. Think about the importance of St Edmund's Christianity, why was he willing to die?
3. Compare and contrast Christianity with other faiths

Art

1. Lego models
2. Drawings /collage/cross stitch/mosaics/ stained glass windows
3. Making the props to use in the drama
4. Build a version of the Abbey

Music

Singing was an important part of daily life in monasteries, listen to this style of music, what makes it special.

Useful websites:

<https://stedscathedral.org/abbey-1000-a-year-long-celebration-in-2020/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_the_Martyr

<https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofEngland/Edmund-original-Patron-Saint-of-England/>