

Mary Arden's Farm

Pupil's Booklet

Questions



Let your pupils be detectives and learn what life would have been like for the people who lived in this house.

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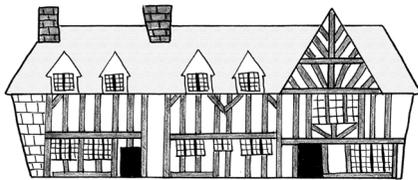
Be a detective!

Mary Arden's Farm

You are visiting one of the 5 houses in Stratford-upon-Avon that have a connection to Shakespeare. As you go around the site you will visit the Arden's Farm and Palmer's Farm (Adam Palmer was their neighbour). You will see furniture and artefacts that tell a story about how these houses might have looked and of how people lived over time. Some of the things you will see were made in the time that Shakespeare was alive, some were made later and others are copies of things that were used in the 16th and 17th centuries. This means that some of the things you will see today are very old.

Here are some questions to think about and discuss as you go around the houses. See if you can find the answers or come up with some ideas and suggestions.

Good luck!



Palmer's Farmhouse

Can you find any evidence to suggest what Mary's house had on its walls?

There are two circa 1500 oak coffers or chests in the room. What do you think they were used for?

Look at the exposed Wattle and Daub. If you have already seen an exposed panel of wattle and daub in Palmer's Farm, you can check your answers about the materials you can see mixed with the daub. If you have not seen an exposed wattle and daub panel before, try to see what materials are mixed in the daub. Make a list of the materials.

Landing

Find, and look through the spy hole to the chimney. Why are the roof beams so black?

Upper Room off the Landing

Study the model of Mary Arden's house in 1514. This will help you understand how it originally looked. Can you work out exactly where you are standing?

Here is another low door like the one in Palmer's Farm. Can you think why it is so low? Check your answer by reading the information provided.

Could you live in Tudor times? Slide the doors and decide for yourself.

Upper Room next to the Granary

Amazing Fact! – rush lights were used to light houses. They were made by dipping a dried, peeled strip of rush plant in animal fat. They burnt quickly and did not give off much light.

Candles were often used for lighting. They could be made from tallow (melted animal fat). Can you think of any problems this may cause?

What do you think the best candles were made from?

How would you light your candle?

Mary Arden's House

The Hall

Amazing Fact! – By using the growth pattern on tree trunks (tree rings) we have been able to date the original house to 1514.

On the wall is Robert Arden's Family tree. How many children grew up with Mary?

Draw a plan of the house to show how it probably looked in 1556.

When Mary lived in the house there was not a chimney for the fire. Instead it had an open hearth (Fireplace) and the smoke escaped through a hole in the roof. Can you think of any problems this may have caused?

The Chamber/ Parlour (Probably where Robert and his wife slept)

Amazing Fact! – Babies were swaddled which meant they were wrapped tightly in cloths like bandages supposedly to help their arms and legs grow straight because it kept their legs together and their arms close to the body.

Where did Tudor babies usually sleep?

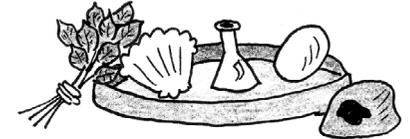
First Floor Upper Chamber

Today we put paint or paste wallpaper on the walls in our homes.

William would have written his plays using a quill.



Palmer's Farmhouse



The Kitchen

Amazing Fact! – People in Tudor times were very superstitious. The fairy plate in the kitchen would have had food and drink on it as well as flowers. The family would have put the plate in front of the fire when they went to bed!

On the table just inside the door is a spice chest. This was an important possession and would have been kept locked when not being used. Why do you think this was?

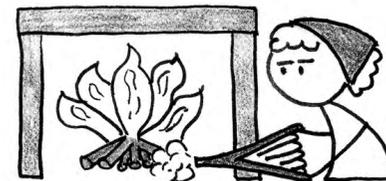
Can you find a semi-circular metal cover in the fireplace? This is called a curfew and it was used to cover the embers of the fire at night. Families had to cover the embers at night by law. Why was doing this so important?

On the left hand wall of the fireplace is a hanging wooden salt box. Why do you think the Tudors would have placed the salt box here?

Several of the pans in the kitchen have long handles. What do you think might be the reasons for this?

Find two places in the kitchen where firewood is stored.

Why do you think the Palmers might have kept some firewood inside?



The Hall

Amazing Fact! – Forks used for eating were very rare in Tudor times. The most common utensil was a spoon (made of wood, horn, pewter, silver or gold – depending on how wealthy you were) and people would carry their spoon and knife around with them!

Some of the window frames in here are original and some were added later. Which frames are the original windows and what is the evidence to support this?

Crouch down in front of the fireplace and look up just above the height of the beam. Why are the walls of the chimney black inside? Please take care not to bump your head.

Look at the wattle and daub panel (on the side of the wall near the Parlour). Which materials can you see mixed up in the daub?

There are a number of candlesticks in the room. Why do you think that candles were so commonly used in Tudor times?

Find the ‘gossip stool’. Why would the two people sit facing in opposite directions?



Amazing Fact! – Beds were very expensive pieces of furniture (a teacher’s salary was about £20 per year and a bed would cost £8-10). If you could afford one, you put your ‘best bed’ (that would be used for guests) in the Parlour of your home. This would show all of your friends and neighbours that you were wealthy enough to afford a bed for your guests as well as for your family. Beds were often passed down in families in the will.

The Dairy / Buttery

Find some containers with poles sticking out of the top. What do you think they might have been used for? (Remember – this is the dairy.)

The Parlour

Why do you think that this ‘best bed’ had a canopy and curtains?

The Parents’ Bedroom

Can you see some holes drilled into the top of the bed frame? What do you think these were used for?

Hmmm... the doorway into the steward’s bedroom isn’t very high. Why is this?

The Stewards’ Bedroom

Look on the table for a small pot with some sand in it near the quills and paper. What do you think Tudors might have used the sand for?

