

The Anna Dispute

An exploration of the Anna Dispute papers for school groups P4-P7 visiting the Hawick Heritage Hub.

Outline of activities

Introductory session

An introductory session can be presented via GLOW or in-school, to introduce the concepts and terms around archives and the work of an Archivist.

Activity 1 Back In Time

5 mins

Resources: series of dated maps of Jedburgh

A short activity to suggest a journey back in time to the early 19th Century. For example using a series of maps of Jedburgh, walking a route through the building marked with different dates, images of that time and statements about elements of modern society that we are leaving behind (computers, cars, plastics, flight, etc), or entering a separate space described as a time machine and listening to a description of the journey back through time.

Finish by describing the Anna and setting the context 150 years ago in Jedburgh. Display the map showing the Anna in relation to the town. Identify the river, main street, housing, marketplace, Tell the students we have detailed records of the community's activities taking place on the Anna, and we are going to use these to recreate what it might have been like there.

Activity 2 Still Images

11 mins

Resources: information and stimulus material about the activities listed below

Invite groups of three or five students to create three still images of activities described on printed labels and supported by print and picture resources. Provide each group with their resource set to help create their tableaux.

Each group receives one of:

- Playing games
- Drying cloth
- Dressing timber
- Dumping town rubbish
- Gypsies camping
- Yeomen exercising horses
- Breaking stones for road building

The purpose of this activity is to bring alive an activity from 150 years ago and show the other groups what it might have looked like. Each group should try to show as much as they can about the activity in their body shape, interaction and facial expression. In still images we focus on hands, feet and face, and the rest of the body will fit in.

Model the technique with a group, starting by explaining the activity they are creating then directing them into a tableau. Ask the children who they are and what they are doing in the tableau. Focus on the position of the hands and feet, and on a focussed facial expression that shows how the individual is feeling. Emphasise muscle tension to keep the picture very still. The group holds the tableau for 3 seconds then relaxes. On a count-down and signal they re-create the tableau and hold it again. This is called 'switching' on and off. Ask the rest of the students what they see in the tableau and how it shows the activity described on the card.

Send the students to their areas of the room to create their own tableaux. Move between groups ensuring they are on task and asking questions to focus the activity. Students have 2-3 minutes to create their images.

After creating their three images each group should choose the one image they feel best shows the activity. They will show this to the rest of the class. Students have 1 minute to choose and practise switching on and off.

Activity 3 Tour Of The Gallery **8-10 mins**

Take the students on a tour of their gallery of images. Each group creates its image while the rest of the class observes and comments about what they can deduce from the image about what is happening, who the characters are, how they are feeling, why and where they might be doing this. Ask the students to explain their deductions by pointing out the facial expressions, body shapes and interactions that provide the clues. Ask the students what they think the people might be saying.

During this tour the group creating the still image should avoid commenting or contradicting any of the comments made by the observing students. Make the distinction between what the group intends to portray and what the audience thinks it sees.

After the audience comments give the tableau group an opportunity to explain what the activity was in more detail. It's important to reiterate that the audience comments are not 'wrong' if they differ from what the group intended to portray. School students will tend to fall into this way of thinking naturally and it is useful to challenge it, pointing out that the group intended to portray a particular activity but that they cannot control what someone else might see.

Activity 4 Review **3-4 mins**

Gather the students together and invite them to reflect on what they have seen and what it was like to create the images.

How successfully did they convey their activity to the class ?

How did creating the images help their understanding of the people involved ?

What aspects of their group's activity didn't come across in the tableau ?

Encourage students to expand on what they saw and speculate about what the Anna was like on a typical day.

Which of these activities would have been daily, weekly, occasional ?

What would be the consequences of the activities ? (for example piles of sawdust, churned up ground, debris, smells, noise)

In role as the townspeople how do they feel about the other activities happening on the Anna, and the people who are doing them ?

Activity 5 Setting the scene

4 mins

Explain that these activities were all real events described by people who gave evidence in a court case that happened over 150 years ago in Jedburgh. We know this because we still have the written records of what people said in the hearings, written out by court officials at the time.

If there is time briefly outline some of the other activities that come from the record.

BREAK

10 mins

Activity 6 Tour Of The Archive

15 mins

Tour of the Archive (part 1) finishing in the strong rooms and collecting documents related to the Anna case. These are the newspaper articles, original Wood map, book.

Activity 7 Wood Map

5 mins

Resources: Wood map of Jedburgh, copies of map

Display the Wood map of Jedburgh, identifying the Anna and the various relevant landmarks such as the river, the main streets, Deans' nursery and other places referred to or alluded to in the record.

Identify routes that different individuals or groups might have used to access the Anna, such as travellers, tradesmen, bleachers and dyers, riders etc. The purpose of this is to establish a sense of familiarity and busy-ness around the town and the Anna.

Activity 8 A Terrible Smell

7 mins

Direct the students to gather in their groups. In role as an unspecified authority figure outline the matter of the Anna land being an unsightly and smelly place, with rubbish being dumped, the ground churned up, a rotten smell hanging over it and general running down of the land.

Invite the groups to quickly discuss what their own activity might have contributed to this, then report back in turn.

How do the townspeople feel about this problem ? Why ?

What are the townspeople going to do about it ?

Ask each group to suggest something they could do to fix the problem.

Establish that the Anna was important enough to the townspeople that they made efforts to clear it up, build washing poles etc to maintain it.

Invite each group to create a still images of the townspeople fixing up the Anna. They should do this quickly, then add a simple repeating movement such as hammering a nail, or lifting rubbish, or setting up a pole, to bring the picture to life.

On a count of three switch on all these images at once to create the day the Anna was restored by the townspeople.

Activity 9 Selling the Anna

8 mins

Resources: copies of map showing Anna, sets of extracts from newspaper articles, pencils, piece of costume to denote town magistrate

Gather the students together but remaining in their groups.

Briefly outline the events leading to the sale of lands by the Magistrates. The town was nearly bankrupt and needed to raise some money. The town magistrates sold some pieces of town land in different places. Mr Deans, the nurseryman, is one of the people who buys some land called the Anna at the foot of the town.

What do they think was the public reaction ?

Give each group a set of the newspaper articles. In groups students study the different newspaper articles and – in their roles as townspeople – give their reactions to the news of the sale. Invite the students to devise questions they want to ask about the land sale.

Explain that you will take the role of one of the magistrates who has agreed to meet with the townspeople so they can ask their questions.

After answering some of the questions express frustration about the townspeople's attitude and declare that the matter should be heard in court if they want to take it further. Refuse to answer any more questions until then.

Stepping out of role ask the students how the questioning went.
What do the newspaper articles tell us happened next ?

Activity 10 See You In Court

5 mins

Resources: pencils, paper and clipboards

Explain to the students that the townspeople will have to give evidence about the Anna being used as a public space in order to establish a lawful dispute against the sale, and any right to continue using it.

Provide the groups with pencils and paper. Give the groups three minutes to recall what they witnessed taking place on the Anna. They should note why the activity is important and why it can't take place somewhere else in the town. They cannot report on their own activities but only those they witnessed others doing. The groups should also make quick notes and rehearse what they will say in the court if they are called to testify.

Activity 11 Courtroom Drama

14 mins

Resources: props to denote court setting, piece of costume to denote role of Sheriff

Call a halt to the group discussions and note-taking when you sense that the focus has shifted (or 3 mins, whichever happens sooner), giving the students another 30 seconds to decide who will speak for the group if they are called in the court.

Invite the students to create the courtroom setting, using one or two props and pieces of costume to change the space and denote when the court is in session.

Explain that you will take the role of the Sheriff, with a piece of costume or a prop to show when you are in role. Invite the students to smarten themselves up, get into position behind the courtroom desks and stand to attention when the Sheriff comes in.

Wait at the side of the room until the energy level and 'busy' activity has risen and fallen, then step forward in role as the Sheriff. Give a short summary of the case, the sale of the land to Mr Deans and explain that the witnesses are there to give evidence about the Anna's use as a public work and recreation area.

Invite two witnesses to give evidence, cross questioning them to establish detail. After two witnesses declare a short recess while the groups gather and review their evidence in the light of what they've seen.

After 2 mins reconvene the Court and hear evidence from more witnesses (one or two per group, depending on time).

Conclude the court hearing by summarising a submission from Mr Deans based on the letter from him in the case notes. The students could have access to a simplified version of the letter as well as a facsimile of the letter itself. Adjourn the court hearing saying that the evidence will be considered and a verdict will be handed down some time in the future.

Activity 12 Plenary

8 mins

Resources: court document, copies of extracts as appropriate

Out of role gather the students together and discuss how the hearing went.

How did their evidence-giving go ?

Did they have an opportunity to say what they wanted ?

What do they think the sheriff should decide ? Why ?

At this stage the actual document and copied extracts can be examined by the students, to compare their experience with what actually happened.

Activity 14 (optional)

Resources: highlighter pens

As a research activity students might use highlighters to mark extracts which describe activities they created as still images, and those they witnessed others doing, as a way of linking their experience to the actual case.

Activity 15 Finishing Up

Tour of the rest of the building, perhaps including putting away the Anna case papers and map.

Follow-up activities

These might include in-school or GLOW sessions on:

- Social history
- Science of archiving
- Citizenship
- Sources of evidence
- Social, political and historical relevance of archiving documents