

Assembly-style presentation ideas & script

inspired by

Linlithgow Palace

Group Leader notes

This outline is designed for use in live group or assembly-style presentations or to record or to present live virtually to groups.

Larger groups can be divided up, with each group focussing on one scene. The end scene can be shared.

The suggested script is divided into sections and includes spaces for the group leader to write which person should say the lines.

If the group have created freeze-frames and/or role plays from the Explore Linlithgow Palace Drama and Dance Activities sheet, these can be incorporated within the presentation.

Images to support this presentation outline are available as a PowerPoint.

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

(presenter's name)

Primary X/Group X have been learning about the Stewart Kings and Queens/Mary Queen of Scots/Life in a Palace/Linlithgow Palace (delete as appropriate)

We watched a film made by the Junior Tour Guides at Linlithgow Palace. It inspired us to present to you some of the things we learned.

Here is a picture of Linlithgow Palace. **[image 1]**

It's one of the most awesome palaces in Scotland and has been a place for Scottish Kings and Queens for over 600 years!

Different royals from a line of King and Queens called the Stewarts came along and added to it over the centuries and pretty much all of them were called James...

There was James I, James II, James III, James IV, James V, Mary Queen of Scots, who only avoided being called James because she was a girl, and James VI. All of them loved coming to Linlithgow Palace, it is a beautiful spot!

The Royal court would move around different parts of Scotland, they didn't just stay in one place. But when they were in Linlithgow they were mostly having fun. They all added bits over the years to make it bigger and better.

This is a picture of one of the oldest parts of the palace, built by James I. **[image 2]**

The group could perform this poem as a rap (maybe using a beat [like this one](#)) and add an introduction line e.g:

Most of the Stewart Kings and Queens who had links to Linlithgow Palace met gruesome ends. Some people think they were cursed...

The Stewart Rap

James the First was the poet king
He banned football and stole your bling
Not the best plan if you wanna be adored
His nobles rose up and left him floored

James the Second had a fiery face
Kept his guns in pride of place
Loved his canons, and he loved his guns
Met his end with a backfiring one

James the Third had three sons
His second was the favourite one
His eldest didn't like that threat
Led an army to his dad's death.

James number four was quite a draw
Handsome, charming, he had it all
Met his end at the Battle of Flodden
Leaving his country feeling downtrodden

James number five would go out in disguise
Loved things French including his wives
This one got to die in his bed
But he was only thirty with lots of life ahead

Next comes Mary, Queen of the Scots
Her nobles they argued and fought
Things went bad and she ran to cousin Liz
Who put her head in more than a tiz!

James number six is also number one
Got to rule England when cousin Liz was gone
Witches on the brain and liked a bit of gold
He's the only one who made it to be old



The group could perform in a freeze-frame of Kings and Queens. They could use their knowledge to improvise or write a couple of lines/bits of information about each King/Queen or use the script/parts of script below:

Meet the Stewart Kings and Queens who built and used Linlithgow Palace! They are each going to tell you a bit about themselves. Most of the Stewart Kings and Queens with links to Linlithgow Palace met gruesome ends. In fact some people think they were cursed...

James I: I am King James I. I was the King of Scotland in the early 1400s, 600 years ago. I spent the first 18 years of my life as a prisoner of the English King. When I was finally free, I started the building of Linlithgow Palace as a beautiful place, not just a defensive castle. I made many changes to Scotland which not everyone liked.

My cursed Stewart death was that some of my nobles rose up against me and attacked me. I was murdered, leaving my son to be King at the age of 6.

James II: I am King James II. I had a lifelong interest in canons and artillery which isn't surprising given how I, like most Stewart monarchs, spent most of my life trying to keep control of all the warring families in Scotland. My canon backfired on me and killed me leaving my son to be king at the age of 9. Guess what his name was....

James III: You guessed it.... James. James III. My cursed Stewart death was that I died on the battlefield against an army that included my own son.

James IV: That's me, James IV and I felt bad about that for the rest of my life. So bad I wore a metal chain around my waist for my lifetime as a punishment to myself. I worked hard to keep peace with our neighbours but eventually I too died on the battlefield...

James V: Leaving me, James V, to be King at the age of 1! There were many battles during my life both in Scotland and with our neighbours and I died at the age of 30 in poor health and broken hearted six days after my daughter was born...

Mary Queen of Scots: That's me. Mary. You'll know me as Mary, Queen of Scots. My French mother, Marie de Guise, sent me to France for my safety when I was a child while she tried to stop the Scottish nobles from fighting with one another about who should be the most powerful. I returned to reign as Queen but many of the Scottish nobles turned against me. I turned to my cousin, Queen Elizabeth of England, to help but she believed I had plotted against her and imprisoned and finally executed me.

James VI: Which left me, James VI in charge. I am also known as James I. James I of England. When Queen Elizabeth of England died with no children, I was heir to the throne. I was the first to be King of England and of Scotland. No cursed Stewart death for me - I died in my bed at a fine old age for my time.

SECTION 3. SECURITY & CODED LETTERS

What with all this backstabbing and threats security had to be tight.

The head of security at a palace or castle is called the constable. He would oversee the guards who patrolled the Palace.

The guards would raise and lower a drawbridge to let people in and out of the Palace. Here is a picture of the oldest entry to Linlithgow Palace and a recent drawing showing how the drawbridge might have looked in the 1400s. **[image 3]**

The guards would check anyone coming in for hidden weapons or things that could harm the King and Queen. If they were happy then they could raise a portcullis to let them pass. A portcullis is a strong heavy metal gate with points at the end. You can see one on the back of a penny.

If you have used the drama activities to create a freeze-frame or scene you could insert this here.

We learned how the Kings' and Queens' servants would send and receive messages written in codes. That made it harder for their enemies to find out what their plans were.

For example, we learned the Caesar Cipher. That's where you move each letter along an agreed number of places. If you agree 3 then A becomes D, B becomes E and so on.

We wrote a message in Caesar Cipher. It looks like this. **[Hold up message]**

Can anyone work out what it says?

It says
DO NOT MEET KING HENRY AT YORK

Learning to write in code was fun and there are lots of different ones. See if you can try some for yourself.

If the group made any of their own coded letters, coding wheel etc these can be shown and explained here.



SECTION 4. THE COURT KITCHEN

Court Kitchen freeze-frame



This is a freeze-frame showing a busy day in the kitchen at Linlithgow Palace.



This kitchen is called the Court Kitchen. It is beside the magnificent Great Hall where banquets – that’s a big feast – were held for up to 300 people!



There were lots of different jobs in the Court Kitchen to make sure that everything ran smoothly.

The characters in the freeze-frame are going to come to life and describe to us what they’re doing.

Actors take it in turn to unfreeze and describe what they’re doing and how they’re feeling.

You could cut out and use the job role descriptions from the dance and drama activities resource OR you can put role play in here if this has worked well.



SECTION 5. MEETING THE KING/QUEEN & A BANQUET



_____ This is a picture of the Great Hall in Linlithgow Palace today.
[image 4]

_____ And this is an artist's impression of how it might have looked 500 years ago. **[image 5]**

_____ The Great Hall is where banquets were held and there would also be music, dancing, and entertainment.

_____ We learned that there were strict rules about how to behave if you were chosen to meet the King/Queen or eat in the Great Hall.

_____ This is how you approach the King/Queen if you are chosen to meet them.

One actor can put on a crown and sit in a throne/chair, another steps forward to meet their King/Queen and follows the instructions below as they are said.

_____ They are walking towards the King/Queen with hands by his sides to show they have no weapons. They now bow three times.

_____ You must not speak to the King or Queen until they speak to you, you must call them "Your Grace" and you never touch them.

_____ **[King/Queen]** My Lord/Lady, how is your fine son? Is he grown old enough to serve me in my Court yet?

_____ **[Lord/Lady, bowing again]** Your Grace, my family would be deeply honoured.

_____ **[King/Queen]** Send him tomorrow. You may go.

_____ Watch! They will bow again but they must not turn their back on the King/Queen so have to walk away backwards! **[Lord/Lady does this]**

If you created a freeze-frame or role play you can insert here with an introduction line e.g. "There were also very strict rules about eating in the Great Hall when the King and Queen were present as you can see in this scene."

If the group did the activity to draw and plan their banquet food, these can be shown and explained here.

If the group learned the Basse dance, they/a small group of them could perform it with an intro line e.g. "One of the dances the King and Queen liked to dance in the Great Hall was the Basse dance. It is slow and graceful and showed off their beautiful clothes and how well they could dance. We would like to show it to you now."

SECTION 6 - THE END

_____ We really enjoyed learning about life in Linlithgow Palace and we hope you did too.

_____ Thank you for listening.
[whole group can bow and curtsey]