

VANBRUGH300

Presented by THE GEORGIAN GROUP

Teachers' Resource Pack and Lesson Plans - Key Stage One



VANBRUGH300

Presented by THE GEORGIAN GROUP

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PAUL MELLON CENTRE
for Studies in British Art



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Introduction

Welcome to the Teachers' Resource Pack accompanying the schools' programme for Vanbrugh 300. We are delighted that your school is joining us to celebrate the legacy of Sir John Vanbrugh (1664 - 1726).

In this pack and the accompanying resources you will find all you need to confidently work with your pupils to explore the life and work of Sir John Vanbrugh and to support your school visit to your local Vanbrugh designed heritage site. These resources have been designed to use even if you haven't booked a visit to one of the Vanbrugh 300 partner heritage sites.

About the Schools Programme

The school's programme consists of the following elements:

CPD day

The primary focus of the CPD day is high-quality professional development for teachers. The CPD day will include a tour of your local heritage site as well as an opportunity to explore some of the activities from the lesson plans available to deliver before and after your site visit.

You will come away with practical, creative strategies you can use straight away across the curriculum and your teaching practice beyond the life of this project and more broadly across the curriculum and other topics and texts. These proven approaches are designed to maximise pupil engagement, spark curiosity, strengthen written and oracy skills and make learning come alive for every student. You'll gain fresh ideas to spark curiosity and boost engagement.

Dates are as follows:

Seaton Delaval Hall - Monday 9th February 10am - 3.30pm

Blenheim Palace - Friday 27 February 10am - 3.30pm

Castle Howard - Monday 18 May 10am - 3.30pm

N.B. Unfortunately we are not able to offer a CPD day at either Grimsthorpe Castle or Kimbolton Castle. Schools visiting Kimbolton are welcome to attend the CPD day at Blenheim Palace on 27 February. Please email Vanbrugh300@georgiangroup.org.uk if you wish to do this.

Heritage Site Visits

Step into history with an unforgettable visit to your local heritage site designed by Sir John Vanbrugh - Blenheim Palace, Castle Howard, Seaton Delaval Hall, Grimsthorpe Castle or Kimbolton Castle. Pupils will explore the fascinating world of one of Britain's greatest architects through a fun, guided tour that brings his designs and stories to life. They will also participate in a hands-on creative workshop where pupils will design their own piece of wearable architecture. This workshop will inspire curiosity and imagination, giving children the chance to build, design, and create while learning about art, maths, architecture and history. For schools visiting Castle Howard, students will be invited to build their own castle with giant Play Shapes.

During their visit pupils will also complete a specially designed worksheet (included in this pack on page 27 & 28) which will link to both the workshop on the day and to the lesson plans they will complete following their visit.

Please ensure that you bring enough of these worksheets for your class on the day of your visit.

Lesson Plans and Supporting Resources

There are four lesson plans available in this pack to deliver with your class – two to deliver before your heritage site visit and two to deliver following your visit. The lesson plans do not require you to have booked for a site visit. They are freely available for all schools to use.

Deliver all four or pick and choose to suit you and your class and the time you have available for the project.

Lesson plans include clear curriculum links to the following subject areas:

History

English/Literacy

Maths

D&T

Art

PowerPoint Resources

PowerPoint resources are provided for use on the IWB to support your delivery of the lesson plans and to help prepare your class for their site visit.

Contact Us

If you have any questions about your site visit, please contact the site you are visiting directly.

For any other queries regarding the Schools Programme or Vanbrugh 300, please email: vanbrugh300@georgiangroup.org.uk

About Vanbrugh 300

Sir John Vanbrugh's (1664-1726) life and achievements will be celebrated across the UK in 2026, his tercentenary year, following a grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to The Georgian Group – the conservation organisation founded in 1937 to protect and promote Georgian heritage.

Vanbrugh300 will include a variety of events, exhibitions and family and community weekends at six partner sites: Castle Howard, Blenheim Palace, Seaton Delaval Hall, Grimsthorpe Castle, Kimbolton Castle and Stowe House. **Find out more here: vanbrugh300.co.uk**

Find out more about The Georgian Group at: georgiangroup.org.uk

About Sir John Vanbrugh



Sir John Vanbrugh (1664–1726) was a leading English architect, playwright, and cultural figure of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. He is best known today as one of the key architects of the English Baroque style and as a successful dramatist during the Restoration period.

Born in London, Vanbrugh initially pursued a varied career that included military service and political involvement as a Whig supporter. He was briefly imprisoned in France as a young man, an experience that shaped his political outlook and connections. Remarkably, he had no formal training in architecture, yet went on to design some of Britain's most famous buildings through study, collaboration, and strong artistic vision.

In architecture, Vanbrugh worked closely with Nicholas Hawksmoor and is celebrated for bold, dramatic designs emphasising grandeur and mass.

His most famous works include Castle Howard (Yorkshire), Blenheim Palace (Oxfordshire), and Seaton Delaval Hall (Northumberland).

These buildings are characterised by monumental scale, strong silhouettes, and theatrical use of space, reflecting Baroque ideals of power and movement.

While admired by some, his style was controversial in his own time for being heavy and unconventional.

Alongside architecture, Vanbrugh was also a prominent playwright. His comedies, such as *The Relapse* (1696) and *The Provoked Wife* (1697), were popular but provocative, challenging social norms around marriage, gender roles, and morality. His plays contributed to debates about behaviour and reform in Restoration theatre.

Vanbrugh's significance lies in his versatility and influence. He helped shape Britain's architectural identity at a time of political and cultural change and left a lasting legacy in both the built environment and English drama.

More information on Sir John Vanbrugh can be found on the Vanbrugh 300 website: vanbrugh300.co.uk



The Restoration



The Restoration: A Brief Overview

The Restoration in England began in 1660 when the English, Scottish and Irish monarchies were restored under Charles II after the English Civil War. The Restoration was a transformative period in British history, marked by the return of the monarchy, significant cultural shifts, and ongoing political and religious tensions. It set the stage for the development of modern Britain.

Historical Context

- **English Civil War:** The preceding civil war (1642-1651) was a conflict between the monarchy and parliament, resulting in the execution of Charles I.
- **The Interregnum:** The period between 1649 and 1660 saw England governed as a republic, first under parliament and then under Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate.
- **Great Plague and Great Fire:** The Great Plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of London in 1666 were major disasters that impacted London's population and architecture.
- **Anglo-Dutch Wars:** A series of naval conflicts between England and the Dutch Republic for control over trade routes and maritime power.
- **Religious Tensions:** Continued conflict between Anglicans, Catholics, and various Protestant sects shaped the social and political landscape.

Cultural Context

- **Reopening of Theatres:** The Restoration saw the revival of English theatre, which had been closed during the Interregnum.
- **Restoration Comedy:** A new genre of comedy emerged, characterised by wit, satire, and themes of love and social intrigue.
- **Royal Society:** Founded in 1660, the Royal Society promoted scientific inquiry and intellectual exchange.
- **Influence of the Court:** The court of Charles II set the tone for cultural life, marked by extravagance and a departure from Puritan values.
- **Architecture and Arts:** A shift towards classical and baroque styles in architecture and the arts.





English Baroque: A Brief Overview

The English Baroque was a cultural and artistic movement that flourished roughly from the 1660s to the early 1700s. It was part of the broader European Baroque, but with its own distinct characteristics shaped by English history, politics, and cultural preferences. The English Baroque was a significant period in British art and architecture, marked by grandeur, classical influences, and elaborate ornamentation. It left a lasting legacy in the form of iconic buildings and a distinctive cultural aesthetic.

Key Features of Baroque Architecture

Bold, Heavy Classical Features

- Giant columns and pilasters (often in pairs or grouped).
- Deep cornices with strong shadows.
- Massive pediments, sometimes broken or curved.
- Rusticated stonework.

Dramatic Rooflines

- Tall towers and turrets.
- Domes.
- Lanterns (small structures on top of domes or roofs).
- Balustrades running along roof edges.

Storytelling through Sculptural Decoration

- Statues of gods, heroes, and mythological figures.
- Heraldic crests and coats of arms.
- Carved swags (stone garlands of fruit, flowers, or cloth).
- Cartouches (ornamental shields or frames).

Grand Openings

- Arched windows.
- Elaborate door surrounds with columns or pilasters.
- Keystones carved with faces or motifs.

Theatrical Interior Ornamentation

- Painted ceilings with illusionistic scenes.
- Stucco decoration — swirling plasterwork.
- Marble columns and fireplaces.
- Grand staircases designed as showpieces.

Landscape Ornamentation

- Temples, pavilions, and follies.
- Triumphal arches.
- Obelisks and pyramids.
- Long, axial avenues leading the eye to a focal point.

Cultural and Artistic Impact

- **Influence on Other Arts:** The Baroque style influenced painting, sculpture, and garden design, creating a cohesive aesthetic across different art forms.
- **Decorative Arts:** Elaborate furniture, silverware, and other decorative arts reflected the opulence of the period.
- **Gardens:** Formal gardens with geometric layouts, fountains, and sculptures complemented the architecture.

Decline of English Baroque

- **Rise of Palladianism:** By the early 18th century, the Baroque style began to fall out of favour, replaced by the more restrained and classical Palladian style inspired by the buildings of ancient Greece and Rome.
- **Changing Tastes:** A shift in cultural tastes towards simplicity and elegance led to a decline in the popularity of the Baroque's elaborate ornamentation.



Lesson 1: The Story of John Vanbrugh



Duration: 60 mins

Curriculum Links

History

- Significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national achievements.
- Significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

Students will:

- Learn about significant historical people in their own locality.

English: Reading - Comprehension

- Listen to, discuss and express views about a wide range of stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which students can read independently.
- Discussing the sequence of events in books and how items of information are related.
- Drawing on what students already know or on background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher.
- Check that the text makes sense to students as they read and correcting inaccurate reading.

Students will:

- Listen to the story of Vanbrugh's life, showing understanding by responding appropriately.
- Sequence events on story cards by recalling information received by the teacher.

English: Spoken Language

- Listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers.
- Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings.
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates.

Students will:

- Listen to the story of John Vanbrugh.
- Retell the story of John Vanbrugh.

What you will need:

- Story of John Vanbrugh's life (See Supporting Resources)
- Story Cards for John Vanbrugh's life (See Supporting Resources)
- Instructions to run a Whoosh (See Supporting Resources)



Activity

Resources

Carpet Session 1 WHOOSH! (15 mins)

- Read the story of Vanbrugh's life to the class.
- Gather opinions regarding the story. Who would have found it more enjoyable with pictures?
- Explain that the Vanbrugh 300 team haven't been able to find any photos or videos from that time as cameras weren't invented.
- Tell the class that the Vanbrugh team have asked if the class can help to create them.
- Ask the class to form a circle by sitting around the edge of the class carpet.
- Explain that the class are going to use a Whoosh to create images from John Vanbrugh's life. The centre of the circle is now the stage on which the Whoosh will be carried out.
- Using the story, carry out a Whoosh (using the instructions in the Supporting Resources).

The Story of Sir John Vanbrugh (See Supporting Resources)

Whoosh instructions (See Supporting Resources)

Table Activity 1 (10 mins)

- Invite students to move to tables for a mixed ability group activity.
- Give each group a pack of Vanbrugh Story Cards.
- Working in groups, students will now sort the story cards from the first event in the story through to the last.

Story Cards for John Vanbrugh's life (See Supporting Resources)

Carpet Session 2 STORY MACHINE (15 mins)

- Call all students back to the carpet and place seven chairs in a row at the front.
- Consolidate students' knowledge of the narrative by sequencing the story cards together, placing each card on the back of one of the chairs as you do so.
- Now, inform students that they are going to become storytellers, using the cards and chairs to retell the story of John Vanbrugh's life.
- Ask for seven volunteers to sit on the chairs. Starting with the first chair and moving along in sequence, ask each child to tell the story with as much detail as they can remember using the sentence starter on the card. You can use question prompts to help them remember details.

Story Cards for John Vanbrugh's life (See Supporting Resources)

Blu Tack

Lesson 1: The Story of John Vanbrugh cont...



Table Activity 2 (10 mins)

- Now, invite students to return to their tables and to take one story card each in sequence.
- Starting with the first story card they then take turns around the table to tell the story of Vanbrugh.
- Allow time for students to practice telling each part of the story in order.
- You could suggest the other members of the group could support the storytelling by recreating some of the images they created during the Whoosh activity as each person tells their section of the story.
- Encourage students to spotlight great storytelling techniques including: volume and animation.

Small Story Cards for John Vanbrugh's life (See Supporting Resources)

Chairs

Plenary (10 mins)

- Ask the following questions to consolidate learning:
 - What new facts about John Vanbrugh have we learned today?
 - Are there any parts of his life that we would like to find out more about?
 - Can we think of any words to describe John Vanbrugh?
 - Which of the different jobs that John Vanbrugh had would you most like to try?

Whoosh!

This is a great activity for story exploration and reflection. It involves all class members and is a fast-paced and effective way of covering all main events in a narrative, be it fiction or a non-fiction, topic-based narrative arc. It can be used to explore fiction texts as well as stories from RE and History and is accessible for all.

Lesson 2: John Vanbrugh, the Architect



Duration: 60 minutes (longer if including a local walk)

Curriculum Links

History

- Significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national achievements.
- Changes within living memory.
- Significant historical events, people and places in students own locality.

Students will:

- Learn about the work of an historical figure.
- Explore significant historical places in students locality.
- Compare historical locations to modern day locations to discover changes.

Maths: Geometry

- Recognise, name and describe common 2-D and 3-D shapes, including:
 - 2-D shapes [for example, rectangles (including squares), circles and triangles].
 - 3-D shapes [for example, cuboids (including cubes), pyramids and spheres].
 - Compare and sort common 2-D and 3-D shapes and everyday objects.

Year 2

- Identify and describe the properties of 2-D shapes, including the number of sides, and line symmetry in a vertical line.
- Identify and describe the properties of 3-D shapes, including the number of edges, vertices and faces.

Students will:

- Identify and describe shapes used to create Vanbrugh's buildings.
- Identify and describe shapes used to create local buildings including modern structures.
- Compare modern day and historical structures to identify changes in how shapes are used.

Maths: Statistics

- Interpret and construct simple tally charts.
- Ask and answer simple questions by counting the number of objects in each category and sorting the categories by quantity.
- Ask-and-answer questions about totalling and comparing categorical data.

Students will:

- Construct a simple tally chart.
- Ask and answer questions regarding the data gathered in each tally chart.
- Compare both tally charts, identifying differences in data and interpreting findings.

What you will need:

- Images of your local John Vanbrugh designed heritage site (see KS1 Power Point)
- Photos of streets in your local area (you will need to take these ahead of the lesson and print off for groupwork) **OR** leave time for a short walk in the locale of the school.
- Tally Chart Template (see Supporting Resources)
- Whiteboards and marker pens

Lesson 2: John Vanbrugh, the Architect cont...



Activity

Carpet Session 1 (20 mins)

- Inform your students: "John Vanbrugh designed amazing buildings for rich people to live in. We can still see them today. One of his most famous buildings is close to your school and we are going to visit on a school trip."
- Show images of the site you will visit or another of John Vanbrugh's buildings.
- Tell students that Vanbrugh used many shapes to design his buildings.
- Hand out whiteboards and markers.
- Invite students to draw and name all 2D and 3D shapes they can see.
- Ask if they can guess which shape he used most. Explain that a tally chart can be used to find this out.
- Model using a tally chart to count the number of shapes Vanbrugh used and ask the class to use data to find out which shape he used the most.
- Tell the students that all buildings have been designed by someone. All architects used shapes to create buildings they thought were beautiful.
- Inform students they are going to look at pictures of buildings in their area and that they are going to become shape detectives, using tally charts to count the number of shapes used.

Resources

- Whiteboards and markers
- Tally chart template (for modelling)
- Images of John Vanbrugh designed heritage site (KS1 PowerPoint)

Table Activity (20 mins)

- Invite students to move to tables for partner work.
- Give each pair images of streets in their local area and a blank tally chart **or** take a short walk on the street that the school is on.
- Ask students to identify all 2D and 3D shapes they can see, writing or drawing them in the correct section of the tally chart.
- Now ask them to count each shape they can see, completing their tally charts.

Tally chart template

Images of local buildings

Lesson 2: John Vanbrugh, the Architect cont...



Plenary (20 mins)

- Call all students back to the carpet, inviting them to bring their tally charts with them. Students' tally charts
- Invite students to identify similarities and differences between the 2D and 3D shapes used in Vanbrugh's architecture and buildings from later periods.

Lesson 3: Finding the next John Vanbrugh



Duration: 70 mins

Curriculum Links

Art & Design:

- Use a range of materials creatively to design and make products.
- Use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share students ideas, experiences and imagination.
- Develop a wide range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space.
- Study the work of a range of artists, craft makers and designers. Describe the differences and similarities between different practices and disciplines, and make links to students own work.

Students will:

- Study the work of an architect, describing features of their work.
- Use works studied as stimulus for their own design.
- Sketch their designs.
- Use 3D modelling techniques to build their own iconic buildings.

Maths: Geometry

- Recognise, name and describe common 2-D and 3-D shapes, including:
 - 2-D shapes [for example, rectangles (including squares), circles and triangles].
 - 3-D shapes [for example, cuboids (including cubes), pyramids and spheres].
 - Compare and sort common 2-D and 3-D shapes and everyday objects.

Year 2

- Identify and describe the properties of 2-D shapes, including the number of sides, and line symmetry in a vertical line.
- Identify and describe the properties of 3-D shapes, including the number of edges, vertices and faces.

Students will:

- Identify and describe shapes used to create Vanbrugh's buildings.
- Select, make and use 2D and 3D shapes to create their own design.

What you will need:

- Images of your local John Vanbrugh heritage site (see KS1 PowerPoint)
- Paper and pencils
- 2D paper shapes
- Glue sticks
- Sellotape
- Sugar paper
- Cardboard
- Junk Modelling resources (all shapes and sizes)

Lesson 3: Finding the next John Vanbrugh cont...



Activity

Resources

Carpet Session 1 (20 mins)

- Recall the story of John Vanbrugh and your heritage site visit. What was he famous for? Which jobs did he have? List jobs and then highlight 'Architect'.
- What does an architect do? (Show *What is an Architect?* slide on KS1 PowerPoint)
- Recall features of the external building and gardens. What choices did Vanbrugh make?
- Explain that students are now going to become architects and will get to design their own dream building!
- Invite students to think about the features that every building must have i.e doors, windows, a roof, etc.
- Ask them to think about whether there were any special spaces or rooms at the heritage site they visited that they may want to include e.g. a grand entrance.

Images of John Vanbrugh designed heritage sites (KS1 PowerPoint)

What is an Architect? (KS1 PowerPoint)

Table Activity (30 mins)

- Invite students to move to tables.
- Using paper and pencils, students will work in small groups or pairs to discuss their dream building design.
- Students will then sketch a design of their building, creating a plan for their 3D build.
- Next, invite students to select building materials they would like to use to create a 3D model of their design, selecting resources from the range of resources you have provided.
- Support students as they create their 3D designs and affix 2D shapes for windows and doors, etc.
- Invite students to present their designs to the class, explaining their design choices and listing the features of their build.

Paper and pencils
2D paper shapes
Pritt stick/glue
Sellotape
Sugar paper
Cardboard
Junk Modelling resources (all shapes and sizes)

Plenary (20 mins)

Lesson 4: Architect Briefings



Duration: 70 mins

Curriculum Links

English: Writing - Composition

- Say out loud what they are going to write about.
- Compose a sentence orally before writing it.
- Re-read what they have written to check that it makes sense.
- Discuss what they have written with the teacher or other pupils.
- Read aloud their writing clearly enough to be heard by their peers and the teacher.

Year 2

- Writing for a different purpose.

Students will:

- Use features of an information text to create a 3D information source for 'builders'.
- Write labels to name features of their design.
- Compose captions to provide detailed descriptions of special design features.

English: Spoken Language

- Listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers.
- Use relevant strategies to build students vocabulary.
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions.
- Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings.
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates.

Students will:

- Use and apply geometrical terms and descriptive language to explain their design choices.
- Present their designs with confidence and pride.
- Listen carefully to briefings they receive and respond with appropriate questions.
- Listen to questions and provide clear and descriptive answers.

Maths: Geometry

(As previously in lesson 3)

Students will:

- Identify and describe shapes used to create Vanbrugh's buildings.
- Identify and describe shapes used to create their own designs.

What you will need:

- Images of your local John Vanbrugh heritage site (see KS1 PowerPoint)
- 3D models and sketches from lesson 3
- Post-its
- White sticky labels
- Pens/pencils
- Open ended questions list (Supporting resources)



Activity

Resources

Carpet Session 1 (15 mins)

- Recall your visit to the heritage site and learning in class with particular focus on the previous lesson when all students became architects.
- Explain that, once an architect has designed a building, they need to give clear descriptions and instructions to the building team so that builders know how to build the design.
- How would Vanbrugh have described his building to builders to make sure they built it correctly?
- Show an image of your local heritage site and work with your class to identify features of the building. Model labelling the buildings with shape names and the number needed.
- Add captions to give more detailed instructions e.g. 'Small round windows go on top of rectangle windows'.
- Explain that students are now going to label their own designs to make sure builders know the shapes that are needed.
- They are going to add captions to explain features in more detail, to help the builders further.

Images of John Vanbrugh designed heritage sites (KS1 PowerPoint)

Table Activity (15 mins)

- Invite students to move to tables and to sit with their architect partner.
- Place each design in front of the partners and provide white labels and pens and/or pencils.
- Working together, students will label the features of their design.
- Now, hand out post-its and invite students to think about the parts of their design that need a more detailed description. What are the unique features that builders must get right? What materials will things need to be made from to get the right effect?
- Allow time for students to write captions on post-its and to affix them to their building.

White sticky labels
Post-its
Pens/pencils
3D models and sketches from lesson 3



Activity

Resources

Carpet Session 2 (10 mins)

- Call all students back to the carpet.
- Explain that John Vanbrugh would have met with builders to present his design and allow them to ask questions.
- Look at the image of your local John Vanbrugh site, featuring your labels and captions.
- Explain that John Vanbrugh might have briefed his builders in the following way. Model describing the building (in the style of John Vanbrugh if you're feeling adventurous).
- Now, ask students what questions they think builders might have asked. Perhaps about the materials used, the size or windows, the length of columns. Alternatively you can use the Open Ended Question List (Supporting Resources).
- Explain that students are now going to work in groups of six. One partnership will present their design, the others will act as the builders, listening to the briefing and then asking questions to make sure they have all the information they need.

Open Ended
Question List
(Supporting
Resources)

Table Activity 2 (20 mins)

- Invite students to return to their designs
- Group partners together so that each partnership is presenting to four students (two other partnerships)
- Ask each pair to label themselves A, B or C.
- Invite A's to go first: presenting their building and then answering questions.
- Pairs B and C choose some open ended questions to ask them using the Open Ended Question List (Supporting Resources) and take notes on their answers.
- Rotate through each partnership

Open ended
question list
(Supporting
Resources)

Plenary (10 mins)

- Invite students to return to the carpet.
- Ask students to recall the designs they were briefed on and to highlight the most exciting design features.

The Story of Sir John Vanbrugh - KS1



The Amazing Life and Adventures of Sir John Vanbrugh

Once upon a time, there was a man called John Vanbrugh. John loved adventures. He tried many different jobs in his life, and each one was exciting in its own way.

John was born in London a very long time ago. John had fourteen brothers and sisters! When he was a baby, a bad sickness called a plague spread through the city. To stay safe, his family moved to another city called Chester.

John grew up living in Chester, and he decided that he wanted to see the world. At just eighteen years old, he became a merchant and sailed on a big ship across the sea all the way to India. The journey took many months.

When he arrived in India, John saw busy markets, beautiful gardens, and huge stone buildings. He never forgot how amazing they looked. But John soon realised that the job of a merchant was not for him. He wanted more excitement, so he sailed back home to England.

Not long after he returned, England started to have problems. Some people thought the king was unfair. John tried to help make things better by travelling to Europe to meet with a man who might be a better king. While travelling, he was caught and put into a dark prison in France, accused of being a spy. It was a scary place. After four years in prison at last, he was set free.

John then became a soldier to fight back against the French who had put him in prison. He was brave and worked very hard. People were proud of him and made him a captain.

After fighting against the French, John found another new talent. He started writing funny plays for the theatre. People laughed and clapped, and John became famous. But some people did not like his plays, so once again, John decided to try something new.

John decided to become an architect. He became a builder of great houses. Even though he had never done this job before, he had wonderful ideas. He loved buildings that looked strong and grand, like castles. One of his most famous buildings was Castle Howard. It had tall towers and a huge round roof called a dome. People were amazed when they saw it.

John also helped design Blenheim Palace, a very big and beautiful palace. He worked hard on it, but sadly, he had disagreements with the owner of the house who wanted it to be different. John was told to leave his job and felt very upset.

John Vanbrugh died 300 years ago, but his ideas are still alive today. People still visit his buildings and gardens and feel the magic of his imagination.

And so, John's story reminds us of something important:

It is good to try new things. You never know what you might be brilliant at.

1

John is born in London in 1664

'Once upon a time...'



2

John travels to India



'One day John went...'



3

John is put in prison



'Unfortunately...'

4

John becomes a soldier



'After that...'

5

John becomes a playwright

'The next job he chose was...'



6

John becomes an architect

'His last job was...'



John dies in 1726



'Sadly...'



Description:

This is a great activity for story exploration and reflection. It involves all class members and is a fast paced and effective way of covering all main events in a narrative, be it fiction or a non-fiction, topic-based narrative arc. It can be used to explore fiction texts as well as stories from RE and History and is accessible for all.

NB: If using a longer text, you will need to have identified all story points or key story beats prior to leading this activity in order to scaffold it effectively. You can do this with the class or without. Alternatively, if using a shorter picture text, you can use the text as your guide, adding stage directions to explain who is in the scene and where they are e.g. for the story 'I Want My Hat Back' you would need to add wording such as: "Bear finds Tortoise who is trying to climb a rock", tapping 3 students as you say "Bear", "Tortoise" and "Rock" and allowing time for them to form the scene in the centre.

Method:

- Ask the students to stand in a circle and explain that the area inside the circle is now their stage – the world of the story they are about to tell.
- Tell students that you will be inviting them to enter the space as the characters in each story point. When they enter, they will either become a part of the scenery you have named or mime the actions of a character you are referring to. When all characters have entered and frozen you will say, "Whoosh!" and all must clear the space, returning to their place in the circle.
- You will then move on to the next story point.
- Now walk around the circle, reading out the first story point e.g. "Once there was a young girl called Little Red Riding Hood". Tap a student on the shoulder as you say the character name, that student should then move into the circle to mime the character. Continue with your first story point, building the scene in the circle, e.g. "She lived in a house": tap two students who enter to form a house; "with her mother": tap another student to enter and mime motherly actions; "in the middle of a forest": tap 5 students who will enter and form aspects of a forest within the circle.
- Now say, "whoosh". All students inside the circle will return to their places on the edge of the circle.
- Continue through each story point.
- You might want to step into the circle during specific scenes and interview characters as to how they feel, what they've seen, or whisper key lines of dialogue or quotes for them to repeat as the character.
- Reflect at the end as to what they have seen or experienced. You may then want to run through the story points again to consolidate learning.

Tally Chart Template



Name or Drawing of Shape	Tally	Total
Example: Circle 		9

Open ended questions list



- What is your building used for?
- Who will live in your building?
- Can you tell us about the shape of your building?
- Is there a special part you want people to notice?
- How do you want people to feel when they see the building?
- How do you want someone to feel inside your building?
- What materials should we use and why?
- If your building could talk, what would it say?
- Why did you make it like this?
- What are these parts?
- What is this part for?
- How do people get in and out?
- What happens inside?
- What should we use to make it?
- How will it stay strong?
- Which part do you like best?
- What do you think will be the most difficult part to build?
- What do we need to be careful of?
- Is there anything that you want us to change when we build it?
- What would you add if you had more time?

SITE VISIT WORKSHEET KS1



Name: _____

Place we are visiting: _____

Welcome! As you explore the site designed by Sir John Vanbrugh, look carefully at the building, objects, and patterns around you. Can you spot these shapes? When you find them tick the box and write or draw where you saw them?

Square

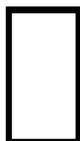
I found a square!



Write or draw where you saw it here:

Rectangle

I found a rectangle!



Write or draw where you saw it here:

Circle

I found a circle!



Write or draw where you saw it here:

Triangle

I found a triangle!



Write or draw where you saw it here:

Hexagon

I found a hexagon!



Write or draw where you saw it here:





Extra Challenge!

Can you find:

- A shape that is very big _____
- A shape that is very small _____
- A shape that you saw lots of times _____

Last Task

People enjoy John Vanbrugh's buildings using all of their senses: exploring with their eyes, ears, noses and hands. As you walk around write down words to finish these sentences.

 I can see _____

 I can hear _____

 I can smell _____

 I can feel _____

Reflection

Circle the face that shows how you felt exploring the site:



What was your favourite thing you saw?



Contact us
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