

# the Edinburgh Dungeon

## Your visit to the Edinburgh Dungeon



The Edinburgh Dungeon is a visitor attraction in the heart of Edinburgh. Blending historical fact with outstanding special effects, our team of live actors will take your class on an exciting and unforgettable journey into Scotland's past. Thrills, chills and two rides combine to offer an educational encounter that is also fun.

### This resource aims to:

- ✔ Prepare you for your visit.
- ✔ Provide suggestions for classroom activities to prepare for and follow up your visit, in line with Curriculum for Excellence.
- ✔ Build on the 'fun' aspect of the visit by encouraging pupils to consider wider issues, themes and evidence for the stories encountered at the Dungeon.
- ✔ Make links with other aspects of Edinburgh's history and surviving built heritage.

### Practical details

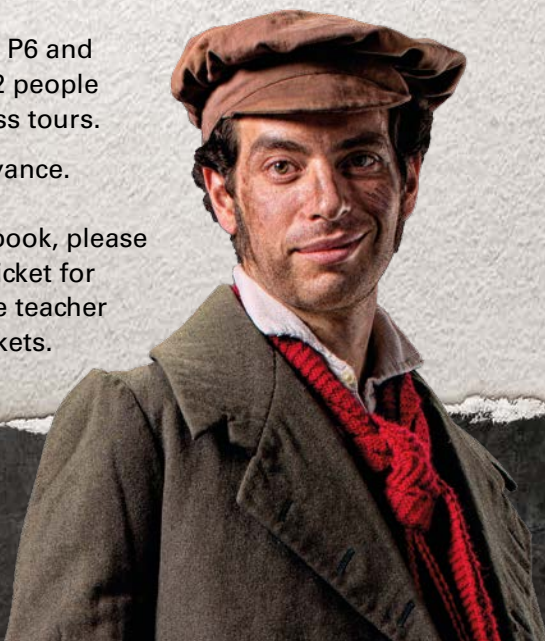
- ✔ Your visit will last around 75 minutes.
- ✔ The visit is most suitable for pupils in P6 and above. We can accommodate up to 32 people per tour and groups can be split across tours.
- ✔ Visits should ideally be booked in advance. For information, please visit: [thedungeons.com/edinburgh](http://thedungeons.com/edinburgh) and to book, please call 0871 663 1672. One free teacher ticket for every 5 primary pupil tickets. One free teacher ticket for every 10 secondary pupil tickets.

- ✔ We recommend that teachers also book a free planning visit in order to carry out risk assessment, and to assess the attraction's suitability for the pupils in your class.
- ✔ Most of the experience is accessible to wheelchair users. Lifts are available instead of stairs. The boat ride and the Drop Dead ride are not accessible for wheelchair users. Due to fire safety regulations, only one wheelchair user is permitted in the building at any one time.

### What happens on your visit

Your visit is carefully managed by an experienced team of actors, who will lead your group through the attraction. They may jump out at and surprise pupils, but they will never touch them. On their journey, the group will encounter eleven different 'scenes', each presenting an interactive slice of history from Scotland's past, many with links to Edinburgh.

More information about your visit can be found at: [thedungeons.com/Edinburgh](http://thedungeons.com/Edinburgh)



## TEACHER NOTES



[thedungeons.com](http://thedungeons.com)

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An overview of the experience is shown below.

## 1. Judgement of sinners

What happens?	Pupils enter a 17th century court room. Various members of the audience are selected by the judge and arbitrarily sentenced for a range of crimes.
Historical background	In the past those accused of crimes could not be sure of a fair trial and, if found guilty the punishment could seem harsh to us today. In 1815 there were over 200 crimes for which hanging was the punishment. Public hangings in Edinburgh often took place in the Grassmarket or on the High St. The last public hanging took place in 1868.
Good to know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Three volunteers are selected to be tried, judged and sentenced for spurious 'crimes'.</li> <li>✔ Crimes could feature witchcraft and cross-dressing.</li> </ul>

## 2. Torture

What happens?	Pupils enter the 'Royal Mile Jail' where an expert torturer demonstrates a selection of torture instruments.
Historical background	Scotland officially abolished torture in 1708. Before then torture was sometimes used to extract confessions and information from suspects, particularly in witchcraft trials. The torture instruments on display are replicas of real instruments of torture.
Good to know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ A volunteer is selected on which the torturer 'demonstrates' his equipment.</li> </ul>

## 3. Sawney Bean

What happens?	Pupils board a boat and float through a dark tunnel in search of the cannibal tribe of Sawney Bean. Pupils eventually find themselves in the lair of Sawney Bean, where, through a shadow play they witness the gruesome end of one of the Beans' victims.
Historical background	Sawney Bean and his large extended family were said to live in a sea cave on the coast of Galloway in the 15th century. According to the legend, they survived by robbing travellers and then eating them. Eventually they were captured and executed without a trial. Although this is a widely told story, there is no evidence for the tale, which was first told many years after it was supposed to have taken place.
Good to know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ The boat ride is very dark, and more timid children (and adults) may find this scary.</li> <li>✔ The ride briefly features strobe lighting effects.</li> <li>✔ The shadow play is pretty gory, even in shadow form! Loud bangs too.</li> <li>✔ The boat is not accessible for wheelchair users.</li> </ul>



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## 4. Burke and Hare

What happens?	Pupils enter the anatomy room as medical students of Dr Robert Knox, and witness the dissection of a corpse. Then, in the graveyard, they experience how Dr Knox came by his supply of corpses – from the murderers Burke and Hare.
Historical background	Burke and Hare were serial killers in the early 19th century who murdered at least 16 people in order to sell their bodies to Dr Knox for medical dissection. They were caught in 1828. Hare gave evidence against Burke, who was hanged. Hare and Knox escaped unpunished.
Good to know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Those in the front row may find themselves squirted with ‘bodily fluids’ as the dissection progresses. Burke and Hare’s preferred murder method is ‘demonstrated’ on a volunteer.</li> <li>♥ All visitors will find themselves ‘tipped back’ in a graveyard at the end of this scene.</li> </ul>

## 5. Street of Sorrows

What happens?	As the plague sweeps Edinburgh in 1645, pupils meet the Foul Clenger and Dr Rae as they try to cleanse the streets and closes of the foul pestilence.
Historical background	The plague was rife in Edinburgh in 1645. Local government effectively shut down and the streets were deserted. Foul Clengers were hired by the city council to enter the homes of plague victims and clear the property. They washed and smoked out the building in an attempt to drive out the pestilence. 1645 also saw another innovation – the plague doctors. The city hired physicians specifically to treat the infected.
Good to know	♥ Smoke is used in this area and the final effect features falling archways.

## 6. The Green Lady

What happens?	Pupils are welcomed and seated in a room, where a servant recounts the tale of Elisabeth Pittendale (‘The Green Lady’) who married Sir Thomas Elphinstone and was later murdered by and buried beside him. As lights go out and objects rattle and drop around them, pupils will witness the Green Lady’s ghost as she returns to haunt the mansion where she was killed.
Historical background	In 1712 Sir Thomas Elphinstone’s eye was caught by a young woman some 40 years younger named Elisabeth Pittendale. Elisabeth’s heart belonged to a young soldier she had briefly met in London, but believing she’d never see the soldier again, Elisabeth was left to marry temperate Sir Thomas. One evening Sir Thomas’ son arrived back from war and was discovered to be Elisabeth’s true love, the soldier. Their relationship was discovered by Sir Thomas, who murdered Elisabeth in a fit of rage. He then killed himself and the pair were buried together in the family crypt. Later a new family living in the house sensed the presence of the anguished Elisabeth, ‘The Green Lady’, who appeared and asked them to be buried elsewhere.
Good to know	♥ The lights black out in this show and objects move, curtains billow out in the wind and seats drop. Flash lighting is also used as the Green Lady appears.



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## 7. Drop Dead: drop ride to doom!

What happens?	Pupils hear from Maggie Dickson who was hanged for murdering her illegitimate child. Then they enter the 'Drop Dead' drop ride. Pupils are judged, found guilty, raised up to face their doom and then plummet in a final drop.
Historical background	<p>Maggie Dickson was hanged in 1728 for bearing an illegitimate child. After being declared dead, her body was taken to the graveyard. But on the way, she sat up – and lived another 30 years. You can read a newspaper account of this event here (published much later) <a href="http://bit.ly/16WwCfv">http://bit.ly/16WwCfv</a></p> <p>Public hangings in Edinburgh often took place in the Grassmarket or on the High St. In 1815 there were over 200 crimes for which hanging was the punishment. The last public hanging took place in 1868.</p>
Good to know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Pupils must be 1.4m or more to experience this ride.</li> <li>♥ More nervous pupils are given the option to bypass this ride.</li> <li>♥ This ride is not accessible for wheelchair users.</li> </ul>

## 8. Labyrinth of Lost Souls

What happens?	The group enters a mirrored maze, and try to find their way out. They emerge into the photo purchase area before moving to the gift shop.
Good to know	♥ Very disorientating, but not really scary.

