

HIAS Primary History post-1066 resources.

Enquiry 2: What does the story of Licoricia of Winchester reveal about the medieval world?

Step 1

The history of England's medieval kings and queens has been written by many historians BUT one important story from medieval history had been lost until now.

Why might
Licoricia be in
the Great Hall?

Henry III
(1207-72)

This is Licoricia of Winchester.

She lived as part of a small Jewish community in Medieval England. There were about 3000 Jewish people who lived in English towns and cities. About 200 Jewish people lived in Winchester where Licoricia lived with her family.

Historian Suzanne Bartlet recently discovered her in medieval sources and pieced together her forgotten history from the evidence.

A story has been written about her life for children. It is called, *The Lost Story of Licoricia*.



Our enquiry question

What does the story of Licoricia of Winchester reveal about the Medieval world?

A historian tries to understand the world in which people lived. They ask questions like:

- What mattered to people?
- What problems did they face?
- How do we know?

We are going to read the story of Licoricia to find out the answers to these questions about the Medieval period.

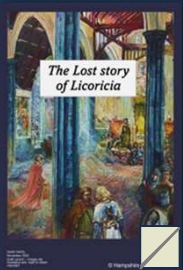
Step 1

Underline any parts of the story that tell us:

- what people cared about.
- what people believed
- what fears people had
- examples of prejudice against others

Prejudice is to think **badly** of people with no good reason

Let's read p3-4 of the Licoricia story booklet to find out **what mattered to people in Licoricia's family.**



Bugnets are doughnuts

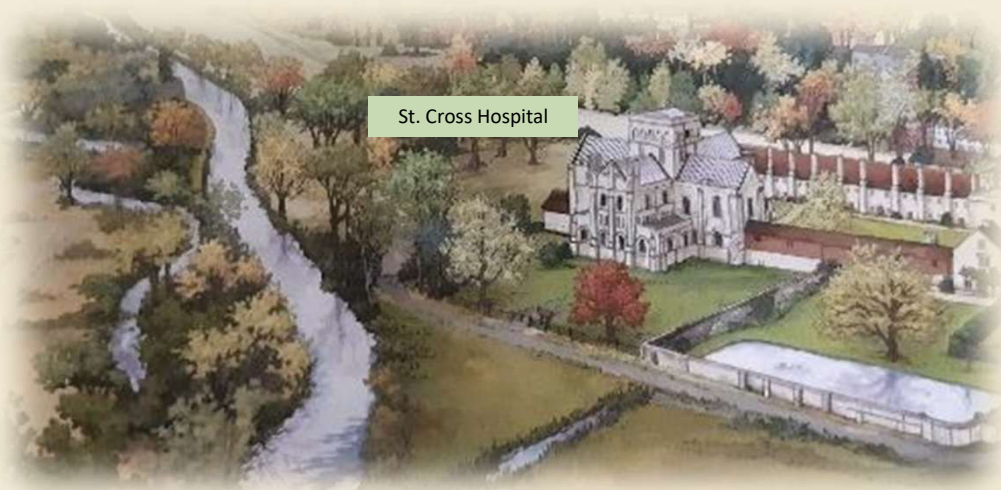
The festival of lights.

December 1246

Licoricia of
Winchester's house,
Winchester, England.



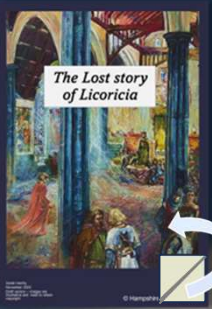
- 1 There is much excitement as Licoricia arrives home to her stone house in
- 2 the busy city centre of **Winchester**. The extra festive candles glowing through the windows make a
- 3 warm welcome on this cold winter's day. A wonderful smell greets Licoricia as she creaks open the
- 4 large wooden door. All day, visitors have been bringing food for the feast. Fried fritters, French and
- 5 English cheeses, sweet meats, fresh bread, cakes, pancakes and pots and pots of honey fill the
- 6 table. Heavy casks of wine and barrels of cider are being lugged up the steep stone steps from the
- 7 cellar. Licoricia laughs as she finds her youngest children Belia and Asher covered in flour. They are
- 8 making merry kneading dough in the kitchen with the servants. They are making delicious
- 9 **Hannukah** bugnets, their favourite! The dough is being deep-fried in olive oil from Italy
- 10 then drizzled with sweet honey. Licoricia had bought the honey from nearby St. Cross Hospital
- 11 and **Almshouse** for the poor while riding past along the beautiful river Itchen on business with
- 12 her bodyguard. She smiled as she saw her older son, Lumbard busily counting out raisins. She knew
- 13 he and his friends loved to play the Hannukah game spin the **dreidel** to win or lose sweet treats.
- 14 After the terrible events of the last years, she was glad to be back in Winchester with her family.



15 **People are generous at Hannukah.** They want to make sure everyone, even their
16 poorest neighbours, will be able to eat well at the party. Life was getting harder and there was less
17 to share. Licoricia's house is large, welcoming guests with a warm fire. Its light flickers in the silver
18 candlesticks that had been given an extra polish for the special occasion. 'This holiday is a chance
19 to *Love your neighbour*', Licoricia tells her children, 'This is what God wants. It is written in the
20 first books of the Bible that both Jewish and Christian people use. There are many poor Jewish
21 families to look after now, since the King's greedy **tallage** took so much from them', she explains.
22 This enormous **tax** demand had taken a third of everything Jewish families owned as King Henry
23 had wanted to raise his own spending money. This was making life very hard for families. No-one
24 had been spared. Those who can, pay more of tallages to help the poor. Licoricia is keen to help
25 her **community**.

26 **Soon it will be time to tell the Hannukah story to the guests.** Over
27 2000 years ago, Jewish people had been **persecuted** by a cruel Greek king Antiochus IV. He had
28 banned Jewish people from practicing their beliefs. They were heartbroken when he put Greek
29 gods in their holy **temple** making it **unholy and the Greeks tried to force them to convert**. But their
30 faith was the most precious thing they had. The story told of how God had helped them to
31 survive and fight to take back the temple. The oil lighting the temple lamp amazingly lasted an
32 extra 7 days, while new oil was made. At Hannukah, the 8 candles in the special menorah candle
33 holder are a reminder of the 8-day miracle. Lumbard remembers the story, he has heard it many
34 times. Our King's almost as bad, he thinks. Lumbard has not forgotten what happened to his
35 mother when she was taken. He knew his king wanted to convert Jews to become Christians. But
36 2000 years was so long ago and that story was so far away. Surely our king wouldn't stop us
37 visiting the **synagogue** here...would he?





Let's get inside the story and think!

1. What is happening in the story?

2. Why are extra candles glowing? What are people celebrating?

3. What mattered to Licoricia's family?

4. What mattered to the king?

5. Whose perspective is the story told from?

What did you find out about me?

Interesting fact!

St Cross cared for 13 men and fed **100 people every** day at the gate!

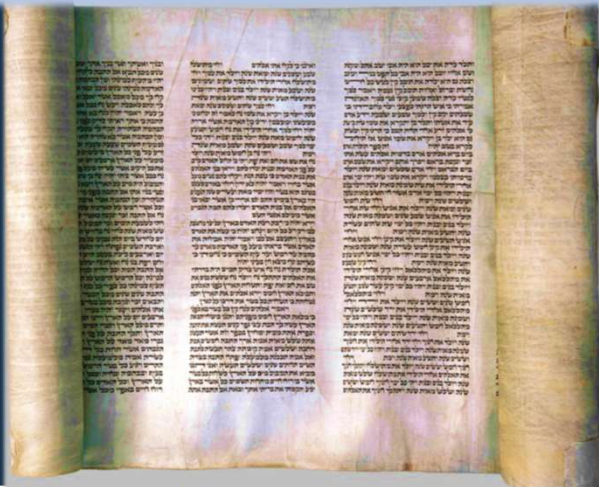
You can still visit beautiful St. Cross Almshouse at Winchester today.

Did you know?

Most Jewish families still celebrate Hannukah today. Children often help to light the candle each day. They still eat Hannukah doughnuts which in medieval French were called Bugnets.

Interesting fact!

The first 5 books of the bible are used by Jews and Christians. This is a picture of the 5 books written in Hebrew in the Jewish Torah



Did you know?

A **synagogue** is a special building where people with a Jewish faith can meet together for special services and ceremonies like weddings, praying together and learning more about the Torah.



Let's go inside!

Interesting fact!

You can still visit this 'Old New' medieval Synagogue in Prague, the capital city of the Czech Republic. The Jewish community here faced the same kinds of challenges as the Jews in England, although they were not forced to leave until the 1940s.



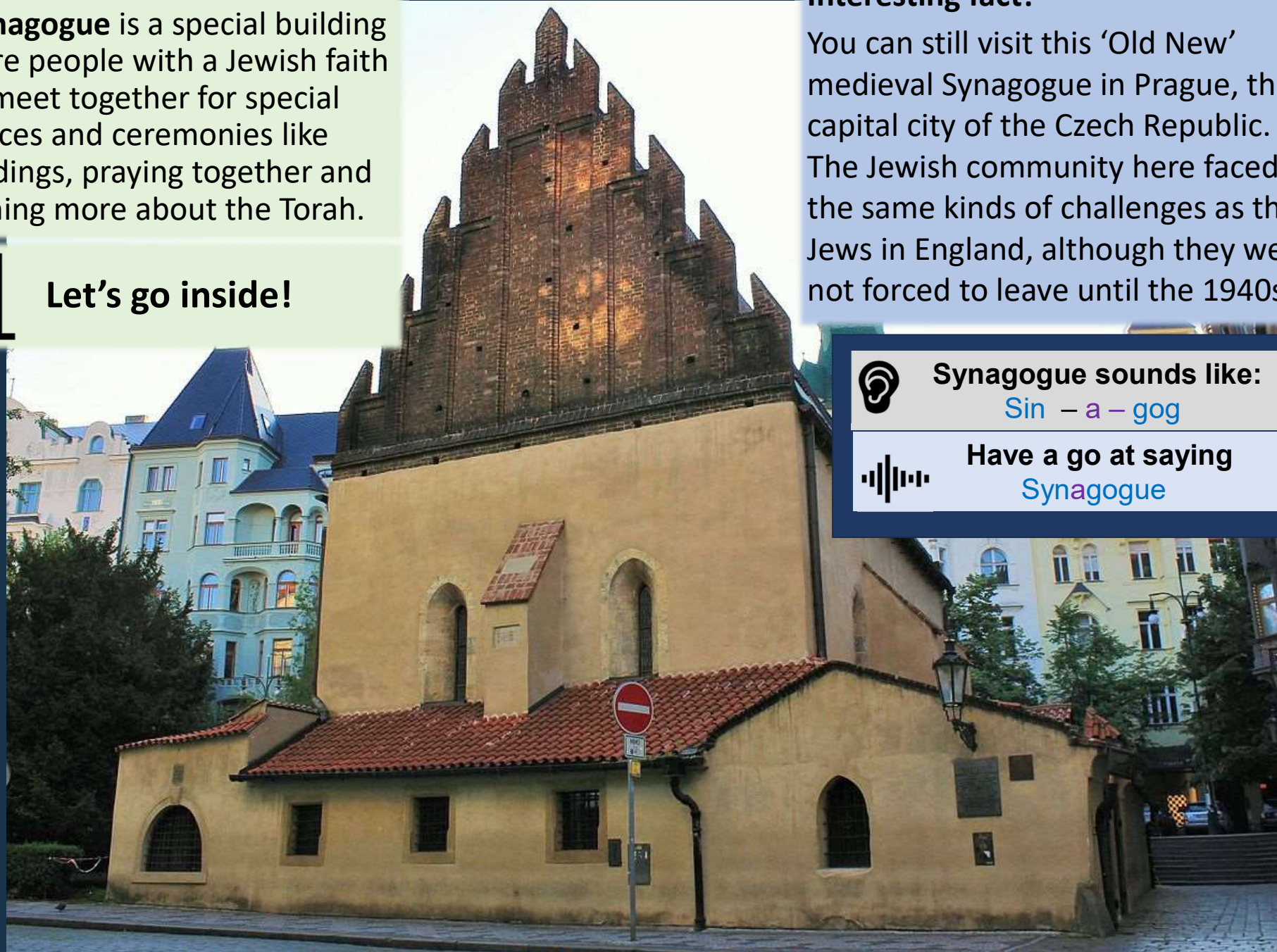
Synagogue sounds like:

Sin – a – gog



Have a go at saying

Synagogue



A



Can you spot?

1. The high **vaulted ceilings** similar to medieval church buildings
2. The **charity box** where people gave money to help the poor
3. The **ark** where the **Torah** was kept
4. The **bimah** with a **special table** on which to read the Torah

B




C




D



Let's look around the medieval synagogue!



The busy city of Winchester is overlooked by the large cathedral and castle built by the Norman kings. This is where Licoricia lived and worked.



Winchester city
in Hampshire

Our story takes us outside onto the streets of Winchester
Let's read p5-6 to find out what mattered to the people we meet and what happens to Licoricia when special visitors arrive.



Let's read p5-6 of the Licoricia story booklet to find out **what mattered to people** in medieval Winchester.

Step 1

Underline any parts of the story that tell us:

- what people cared about.
- What people believed
- What fears people had
- Examples of prejudice against others

Trade and travel

December 1246
Winchester



1 **Winchester came alive at Christmas.** Outside Licoricia's house, Shoemaker Street
2 is bustling with shoppers and **market traders**. Licoricia's oldest sons Isaac and Benedict are drinking
3 with Christian friends. They notice people staring and muttering that Jews should not be out mixing
4 with Christians against the teaching of the Church. Others were talking about the crowds that had
5 lined the streets to welcome the royal visitors to Winchester Castle for Christmas. Benedict has just
6 made a good spice sale to supply the castle kitchens. Winter spices like ginger, pepper, cinnamon,
7 cloves and nutmeg were needed to flavour the feasts of King Henry III and thousands of guests. He
8 explained to his friends that this spice had travelled over land and sea along secret **spice routes**.
9 **Camel caravans** carried them from as far away as China and India, through great Eastern cities like
10 **Baghdad** and **Constantinople**, places he longed to visit. The Jewish traders he knew had connections
11 with other Jewish traders across the world. They brought luxury goods like fine silk, almonds, French
12 wine, beautifully decorated jewellery boxes, brightly coloured gems and exotic citrus fruits to English
13 markets. They told exciting stories about the people they had met with different religions and new
14 ideas. They had warned that at times even wars and disease travelled with people who used them.

15 **Travel is dangerous.** King Henry III has travelled 3 days from London to Winchester castle,
16 his favourite place to spend Christmas. He is proud to have been born there. It had been a centre of
17 **royal power** for hundreds of years. But this meant passing through Alton woods, known for
18 **highway robbers** who often attacked travellers. The king was taking no chances. **Men-at-arms** and
19 skillful knights are travelling with him and his **court** of close advisors to protect them. Henry knew
20 that these **bishops**, **barons** and their families are expecting a luxurious Christmas at the castle and
21 Bishop's Palace nearby. He knows he needs to be generous to keep their loyalty. Henry looks at the
22 barons and their knights riding ahead and wonders if his forces will be enough to rule what is left
23 of his **Angevin Empire**. Despite losing lands in France, he still has French lands in Gascony and lands
24 in Wales and Scotland. Some of these lands are gifts to loyal barons who will need to defend them.

The Angevin Empire in 1190



Angevin sounds like:

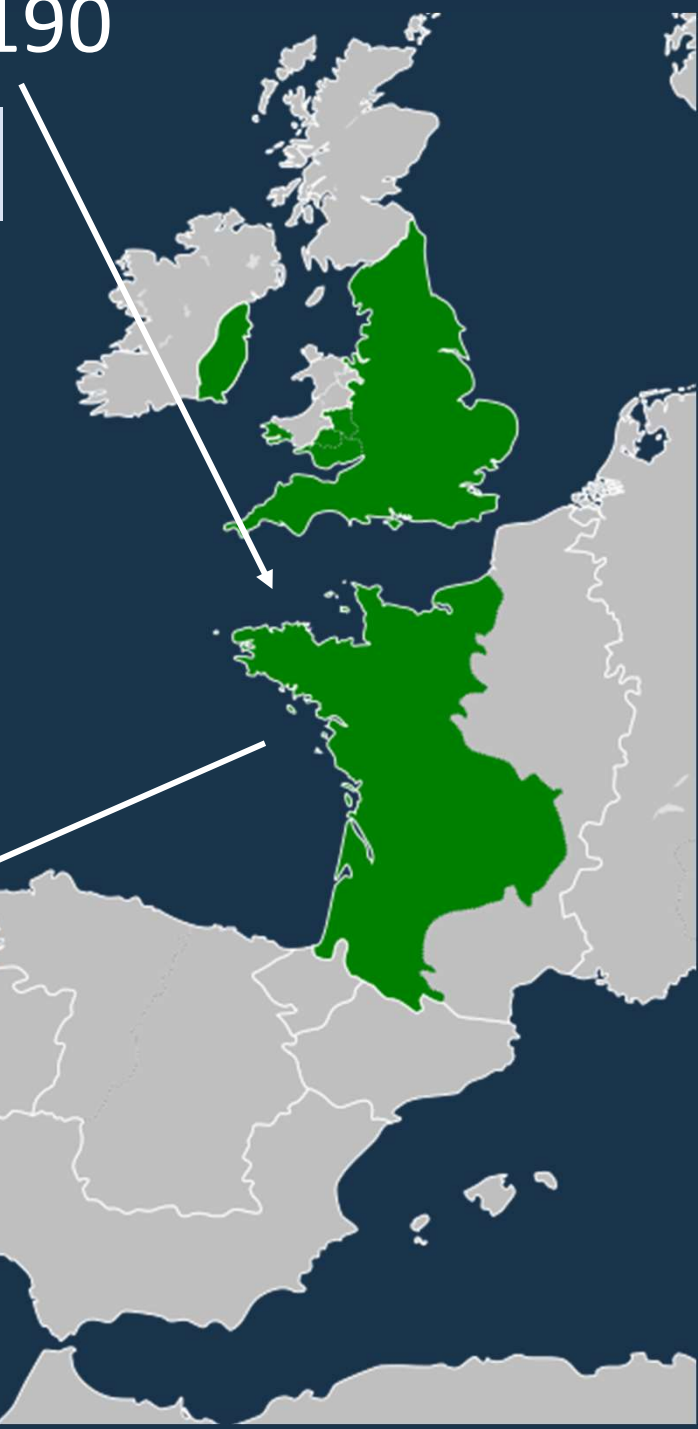
An – ju – vin



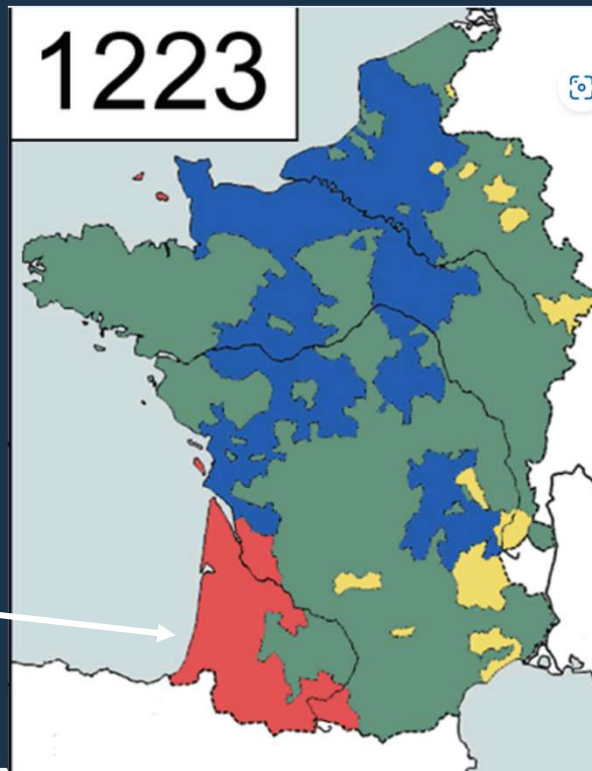
Have a go at saying

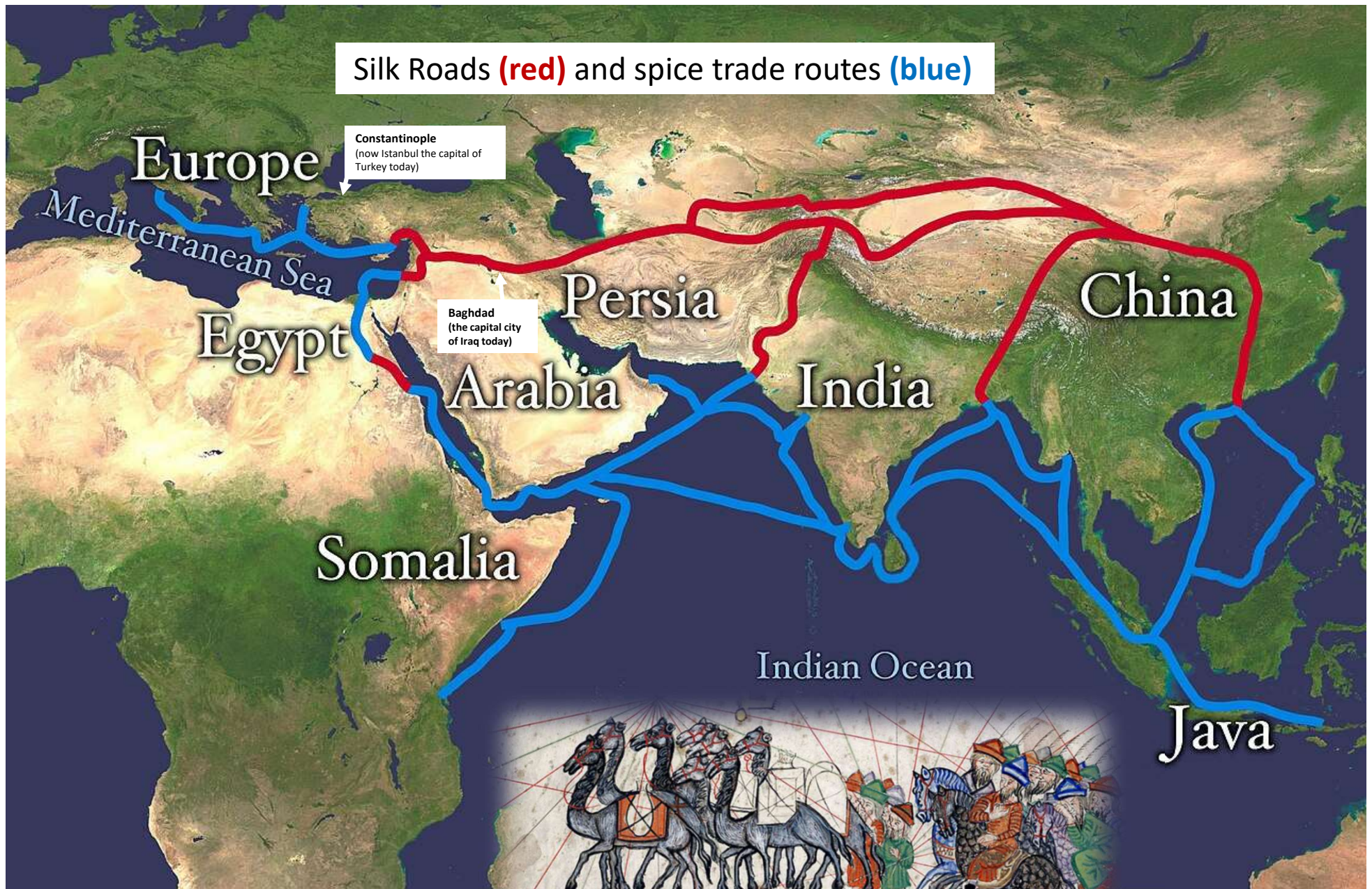
Angevin

English kings inherited Norman lands in France. William's grandson King Henry II had married a powerful ruler of French lands, Eleanor of Aquitaine. Their French and English lands, including lands in Ireland, Scotland and Wales became known as the **Angevin Empire**.

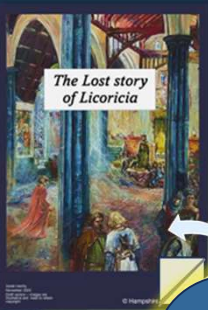


By the time of Henry III the French king had taken control of most of the English lands in France. By 1223 only Gascony (in red) was left!





A camel caravan



Let's get inside the story and think!

1. What is happening in the story?

2. Why might people care about trade?

3. What might people care what the Church said about Jewish people?

4. Why is Winchester a special place to Henry III?

5. What is Henry worried about?

Interesting fact!

Henry III had the robbers at Alton woods investigated and punished after they robbed traders on the way to Winchester castle. It turned out the locals, were helping them even people at Winchester castle!

Interesting fact!

Licoricia had to travel with men-at-arms as bodyguards when she travelled from city to city on business.

Remember

The Church mattered to people. Most people were Christian and believed what the Church told them.



Let's read p5-6 of the Licoricia story booklet to find out **what else mattered to people in Winchester.**

Step 1

Underline any parts of the story that tell us:

- what people cared about.
- What people believed
- What fears people had
- Examples of prejudice against others

Trade and travel

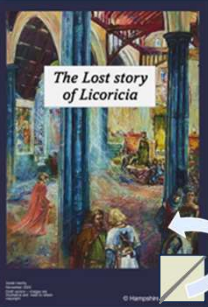
December 1246
Winchester



25 **Up at the castle** Henry III is worried. He knows he must raise more money to try to win back
26 lands in France and it would be shameful to lose control of Gascony! But the barons in parliament
27 are demanding more power from the king before they raise taxes. 'Lucky I can charge Jewish people
28 any taxes I want', thinks Henry, 'locking them up as hostages to force them to pay works well. I must
29 make sure the castle's new toilets and bedrooms are more luxurious than at the Bishop's palace.'

30 **Meanwhile, the festivities continue at Licoricia's home.** The children
31 giggle as they spin the dreidel. Licoricia enjoys catching up with her Jewish guests. She is glad the
32 doctor and his wife, a talented midwife, have found a new life in Winchester. They were forced out of
33 Southampton after the Archbishop of Canterbury had brought back terrible news from the
34 Fourth Lateran Council in Italy. He and 800 bishops from countries across Europe had travelled great
35 distances to take part in the largest ever meeting with the Pope in Rome. **The bishops were** told to
36 separate Jewish and Christian people in their kingdoms so Christians couldn't be influenced by
37 Jewish beliefs. Towns like Southampton had decided to remove all Jewish people. The lawyer who is
38 with them says he will pay the fine as long as he can rather than wear the badge the pope ordered all
39 Jews to wear. They are sad to see people wearing the badge being treated badly. Over by the fire a
40 group of wine traders, scribes, ladder makers and metal workers bring Licoricia news from the city.
41 They are upset that they are being shut out of more trades by the Christian clubs or guilds that run
42 them. Laws already stop Jews working in many jobs like farming. They didn't want to resort to trading
43 in loans, even if it is one of the few jobs open to Jews. People might be happy to borrow from a Jew
44 because the Church teaches it is a sin for Christians to lend money to other Christians for profit. But
45 lending to people could be dangerous, people didn't like owing you money or paying it back.
46 Licoricia thought of her husband David. Very few Jewish people could lend money to rich noblemen
47 but like David, those that did had become well known. Together David and Licoricia had helped many
48 people to get the money they needed. She missed David so much.

49 **Suddenly, there is a loud banging on the door!** All the guests fall silent in fear.
50 An official from the castle is at the door with an armed guard. Licoricia is being summoned to the
51 castle the next morning! Licoricia's children run to her and hold her tightly.
52 What new dangers will she face tomorrow?



Let's get inside the story and think!

1. What is happening in the story?

2. What is Henry III worried about?

3. What matters to Henry III?

4. What examples of prejudice have Jewish people faced that has made their life difficult?

5. What are Licoricia's family scared about?



Did you know?

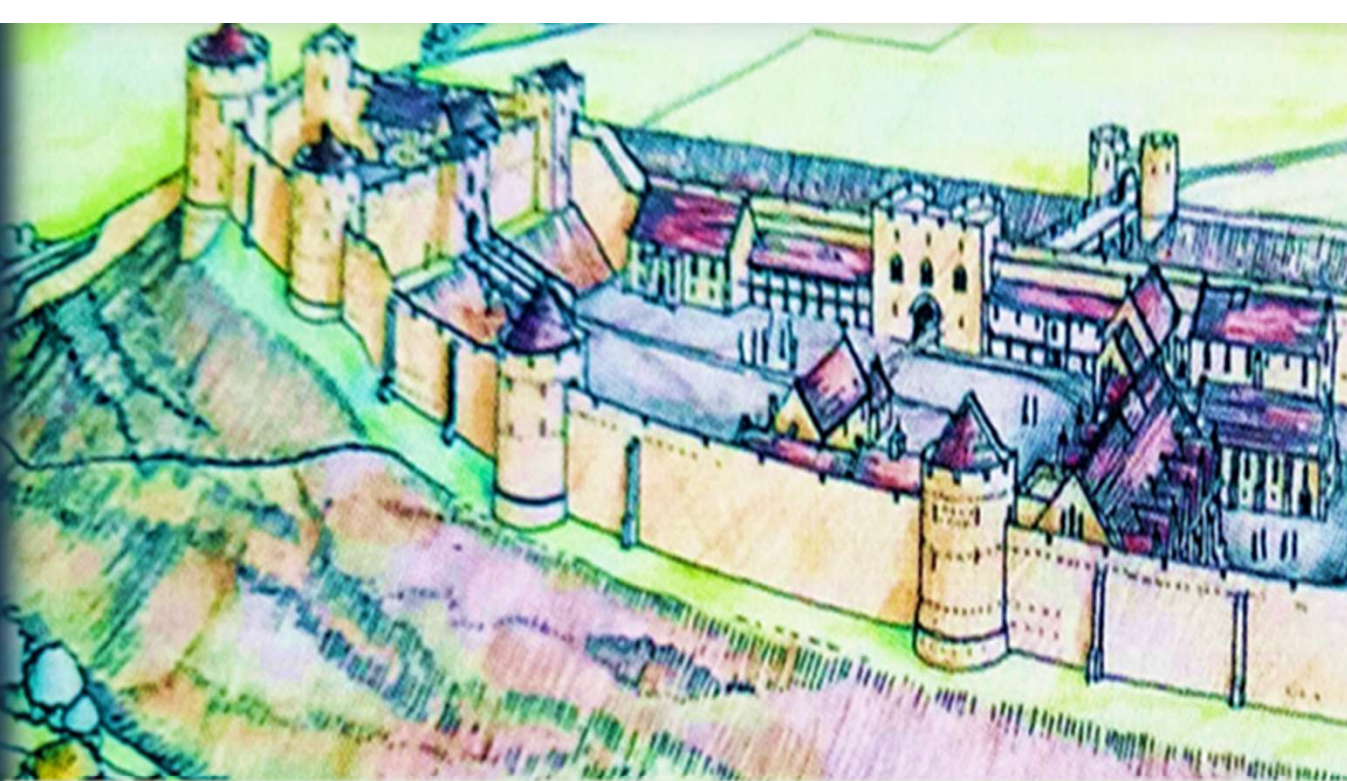
Not all Christians followed the rules to separate Jews and Christians; some became friends.

A Christian family in Chichester tried to protect their Jewish neighbours from attack. They were forced to give them up when their own house was threatened with fire.

One bishop tried stop people in his church going to a Jewish wedding. He threatened to stop people going to heaven by excommunicating them.

They went anyway!





Financier sounds like:

F – eye – nan – ss – ee – er



Have a go at saying

Financier



What does it mean?

Financier is someone who organises money to borrow in a loan.

Going deeper.

Jews were seen as the **king's servants** and his property along with everything they owned. This meant the king could demand sums of money and large **taxes** called **tallages** whenever he liked.

The Church had declared that borrowing money from other Christians was a sin against God so the king expected the Jewish community to lend him money but he preferred to take it!

Only about **1%** of Jewish people were **financiers**, major money lenders like Licoricia and David, but they were noticeable.

There were also Christian money lenders in England and Italian money lenders.

Lots of people borrowed money from Jewish and Christian financiers. Before banks existed, they were needed to lend money to buy land, build property, set up a business or fight wars.



What mattered to people in medieval England?

If the people in these pictures could talk what would they tell you about what mattered to them? Fill in the thought bubbles to show you know what these different people cared about, feared, and believed.

The king

Traders

Church bishops and priests

Licoricia, a Jewish woman

Noblemen and knights

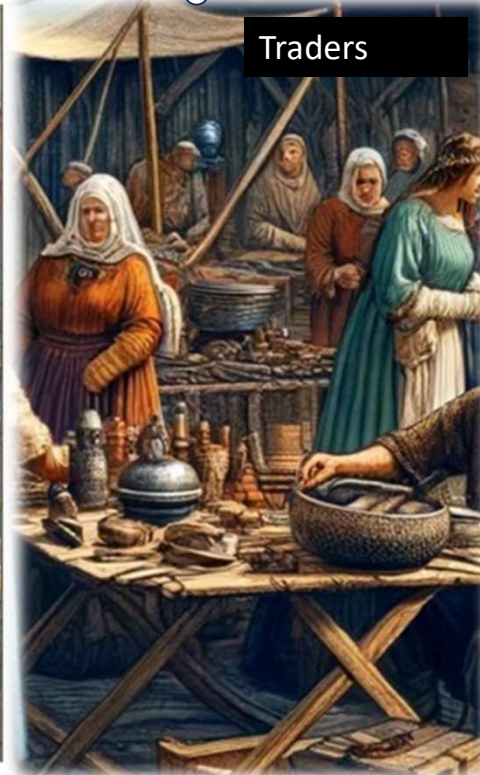
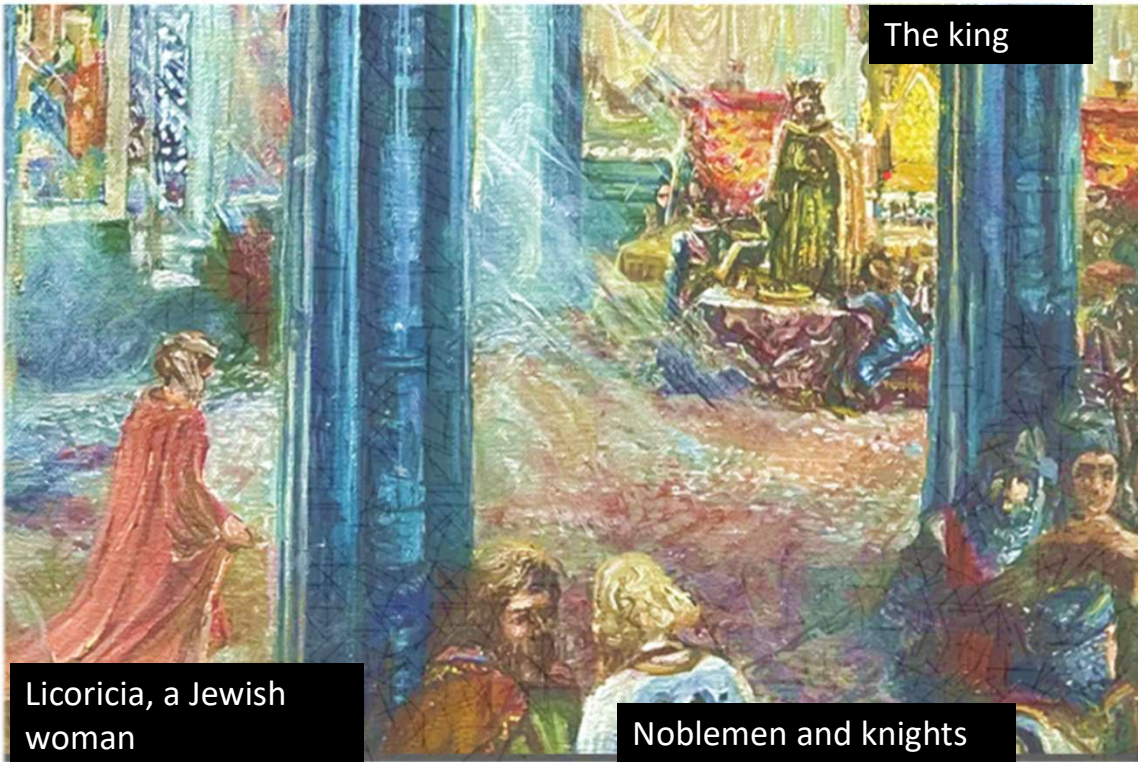
Imagine the pictures could talk

Choose a person in one of the pictures.
In character tell the class what matters to you.

What do you:

- care about
- believe
- fear?

I am
What matters to
me is.....



Let's write and draw
what we know.



What does the story of Licoricia tell us about the medieval world in the 13th century?

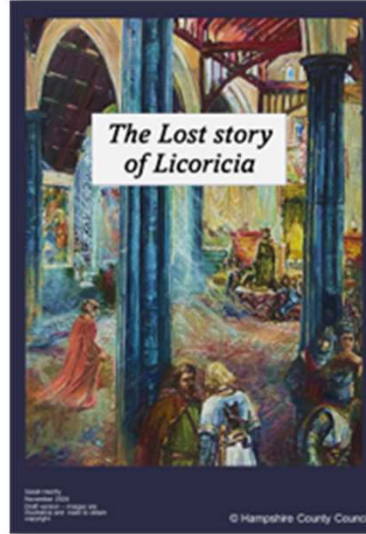
Kingdoms and empires



Towns and cities



Invasions and migration



Power and influence



Hardships and dangers people faced.



Jewish and
Christian beliefs



The Church

Trade and travel



Page 1-4 & 18-20 Painting of Licoricia and Henry III in the Great Hall by Lucille Dweck with kind permission of Licoricia of Winchester Appeal charity, Licoricia.org.

Page 4 Illustration of Licoricia's house adapted from the original illustration of **David of Oxford's house** with kind permission of the artist, Wendy Bramall. Lesson author Sarah Herrity has added colour at the windows and doors and the image of Licoricia cropped from the painting by of Licoricia in the Great Hall by Lucille Dweck with kind permission of Licoricia of Winchester Appeal charity, Licoricia.org.

Page 4 & 6 Hospital of St Cross Illustration by Jonathan Chapman (www.illustrationbyjonathan.com) with kind permission to use within these educational materials only, © Jonathan Chapman

Page 7 An opened Torah scroll (Book of Genesis part) by Unknown author - http://artbelarus.by/cms/pictures_viewer/big/422_photo_1394704064.jpg , Public Domain <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=31796388>

Page 5 A replica of the menorah by the [Temple Institute](#) by ariely - The Temple Institute, Jewish Quarter, Jerusalem, [Public Domain](#), <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3078706>

Page 7 photograph of a young boy lighting a menorah with parental permission.

Page 8 Prague Praha 2014 Holmstad The old-new synagogue by Øyvind Holmstad - Own work, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=33016366> CC BY-SA 3.0

Page 9 Photos of inside the old-new Synagogue with kind permission of the photographers at The Licoricia of Winchester Appeal charity, Licoricia.org.

Page 10-11, 14-15 18, 19 & 21 Reconstructions of medieval Winchester Images created and adapted from Chat GPT using DALL.E by S.Herrity

Page 12 The Angevin Empire in 1190 by Blank map of Europe.svg: maix derivative work: Alphathon - This file was derived from: Blank map of Europe.svg:Primary data source:Europe mediterranean 1190.jpg, [CC BY-SA 4.0](#), <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=49093344>

Page 13 Map of trade routes by Whole_world_-_land_and_oceans_12000.jpg: NASA/Goddard Space Flight Centerderivative work: Splette (talk) - Whole_world_-_land_and_oceans_12000.jpg, [Public Domain](#) <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=10449197>

Page 13 Marco Polo's caravan on the Silk Road, 1380 by Cresques Abraham - This file comes from Gallica Digital Library and is available under the digital ID btv1b55002481n, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1011181> [Public Domain](#)

Page 15-17 Reconstruction of Winchester Castle and Westgate c.1283 after Henry III's renovations with kind permission of Hampshire Architects Department.