

Let's imagine: stocks

Each week the Museum is going to publish a 'Let's Imagine' activity sheet. This activity sheet will include a picture of an object in the Museum. It will tell you about the object and then it will be up to you to imagine a story, poem and/or picture inspired by this object. The sheet will include at least three questions or statements to help get you started and inspired.

This week's object are **stocks** that can be found in the permanent exhibition. Read the information in blue below to find out more about the stocks.



You have to describe the stocks to a friend. What do you say?

Draw a picture of you or a member of your family in the stocks.

Write a story or poem about being put in the stocks. What was your crime and how did people react to you during your time in the stocks?

These are the stocks that used to be in Newbury Market Place. They were used to punish and humiliate someone who had committed a crime such as swearing or drunkenness. The person who committed the crime would have their legs and feet trapped or restrained in two of the holes that made up the stocks.

People would be allowed to insult, tickle and throw rotten fruit and vegetable, and even stones, at them. The stocks first became popular in medieval times, but declined in use by 18th century, and are thought to be last used in the early 1870s.

There was another similar restraining device also used during this time, to punish minor crimes. It was called a pillory; a board was secured around the criminal's arms and necks, and they would be forced to stand through the punishment.