

Let's imagine: Medieval horse trapping

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 is a **Medieval horse trapping**, which can be found in the museum collection. Read the information in blue below to find out more about this trapping.



Imagine you have to describe this object to a friend. What would you say?

Design and draw a horse pendant and coat of arms to represent you and your family.

Write a story or poem about being transported back in time to Medieval Britain. You help to harness a horse. Describe your experience.

This is part of a Medieval horse trapping, dating from the late 13th to early 14th century, made from copper alloy. It shows a coat of arms, which is a design unique to a person or family, and this was sometimes enamelled and gilded. This example is quite worn so it is difficult to say for certain in this particular case.

It is likely this is a pendant that was part of the harness of the horse, and would have featured on the trappings of various classes, such as estate workers and officials, as well as the charger (horse) of a knight. These pendants would be suspended from various straps on the harness, including across the horse's chest and forehead.

Smaller pendants and mounts were probably used as decorations on the bridle and reins as there are a great variety of pendants from this period, in a variety of sizes.

The pendants are thought to serve two purposes. One was to show the coat of arms and the second was to act as decoration, but there may have been superstition attached to them as well. It is possible many believed they brought good fortune and warded off evil. What do you think?