

# Crime and Punishment

What was crime and punishment like in the Stuart period?



# How has crime and punishment changed over time in Britain?



## Key questions we will answer:

What was crime and punishment like in the **Medieval and Tudor periods**?

Key historical skills we will use: **Change** and **Continuity**.

## Key questions we will answer:

What was crime and punishment like in the **Stuart period**?

Key historical skills we will use: **Evidence** and **Interpretation**.

## Key questions we will answer:

What was crime and punishment like in the **Victorian period**?

Key historical skills we will use: **Evidence** and **Interpretation**.



# Key vocabulary for this lesson:

**custody** – being held in prison before going to court

**incriminate** – to show involvement in a crime

**pact** – to make an oath/promise





# Recap activity

Decide what a court would give as a punishment for the crimes below with your learning partner.  
Be ready to share your feedback with the class before the answers are revealed.

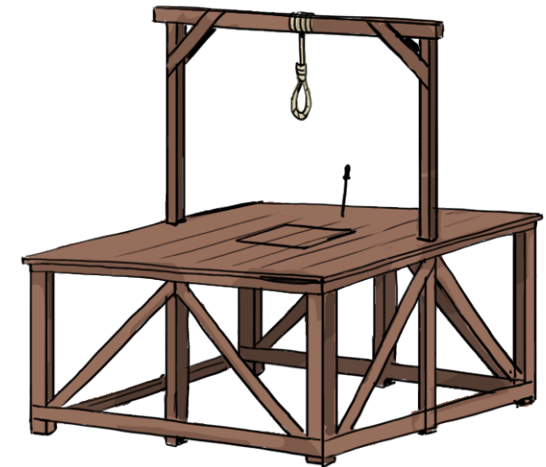
**treason**



**being drunk**



**gossiping**

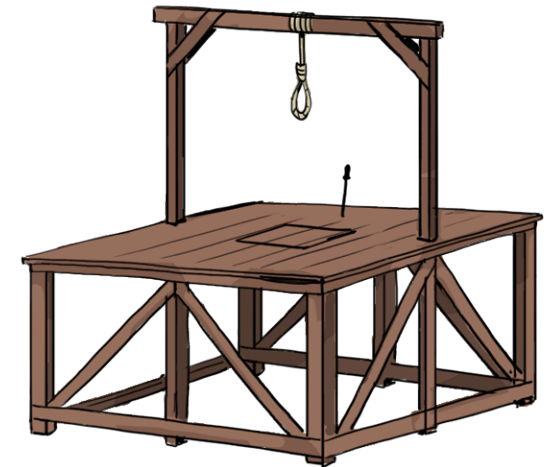


# Recap activity

treason

being drunk

gossiping



# King James I

James I was a king who **considered himself an intellect** and an expert on something rather unusual: **witchcraft**! He was so scared of treason and being overthrown that he blamed many things on witchcraft. Whilst sailing back from Denmark, King **James's boat had to sail through a storm**. One of his ships sank because of this. **He blamed this on witchcraft** and thought it was witches from England and Denmark trying to kill him.

Witchcraft was made illegal, which led to **3 centuries of trials** of women and men who were hung, burned at the stake or drowned because of accusations against them of performing witchcraft and curses.

James I even wrote a book called "**Daemonologie**", which was all about **how to spot and punish a witch**. It also had passages about ghosts and ghouls!



# Stop and jot 1

Let's see how much you have learned! Answer the questions on your stop and jot 1 activity worksheet. Be ready to share your feedback with the class before the answers are revealed.

On what topic did James I consider himself to be an intellectual?

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What did King James I think the storm he sailed through was?

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What did King James write a book about?

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# Stop and jot 1

On what topic did James I consider himself to be an intellectual?

Witchcraft.

What did King James I think the storm he sailed through was?

Witches who he believed were trying to kill him from England and Denmark.

What did King James write a book about?

Witches, witchcraft, ghosts and ghouls.





# Why was witchcraft seen as a crime?

The idea of witches can be traced back to the Roman times. However, a new Christian theory emerged during the Stuart period that believed **witches made a pact with the devil himself**. They also believed that witches did not act alone, so if one was found, there had to be more!

This led to a shift in the persecution of witches and women. It meant that **if one person was found to be practicing witchcraft, more must be found** and brought to justice and in most cases, put to death.

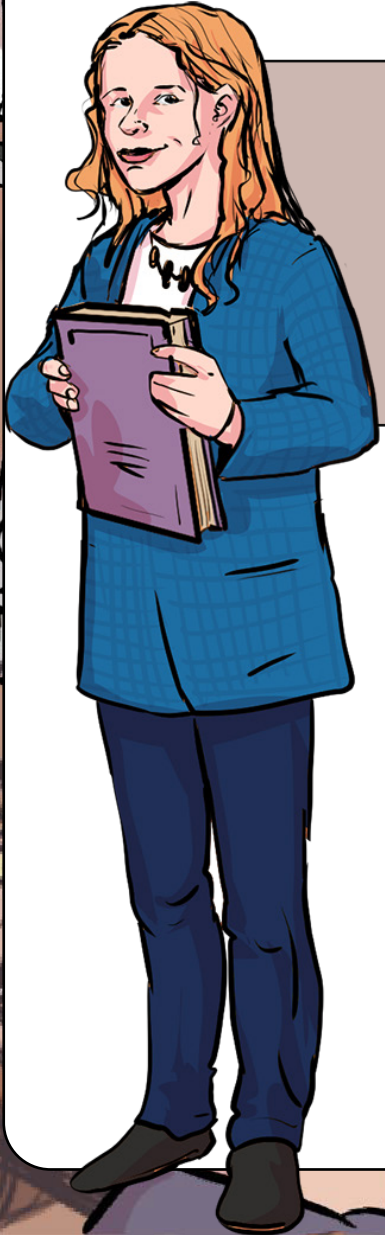
There was such a fear of witches that even if somebody was known for using early medicine (**herbology**), **this was still seen as witchcraft** and the devil interceding rather than helping somebody who was ill.



# True or false activity

**Read the statements** below with your learning partner and decide whether they are **true** or **false**.

Be ready to **share your feedback** with the class before the answers are revealed.



True

False

The idea of witches can be traced back to the Neolithic.

☐☐

People believed witches made pacts with the devil.

☐☐

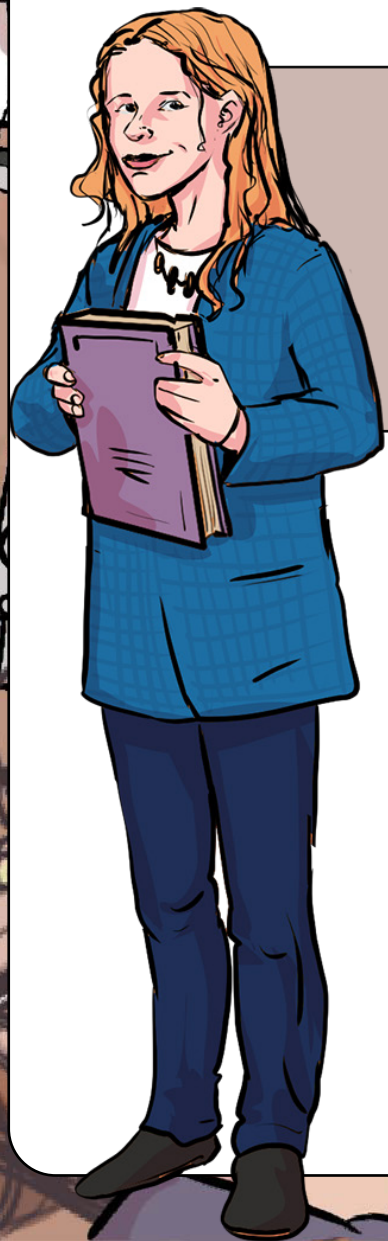
People believed that witches acted alone.

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**True****False**

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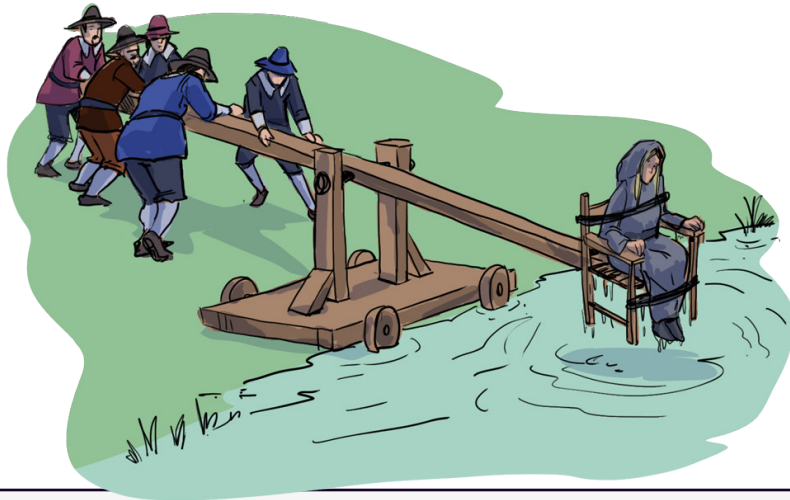
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# The punishment for witchcraft



Innocent women were subject to **terrible punishments and tests** to determine whether they were witches or not. **The cucking stool** was when a woman was tied to a chair and dunked in the water. She was accused of being a witch **if she floated** (which is natural for a person to do in water). If she drowned, then she was classed as innocent.



Most women and men who were accused of witchcraft were subject to execution. **Execution mainly included being hung or burned at the stake.** In some cases, women were subject to life imprisonment, where they would become ill, catch infections and eventually die due to the terrible conditions of the prison.



# The witch trials

Many witch trials happened all over Britain. One of the most famous was the **Pendle witch trials**.

**Twelve people were accused of witchcraft.** One of them died in custody, while the other eleven went to trial, and **nine were hung** at the gallows and accused of witchcraft.

What is fascinating about this particular trial was that the court took **most of the evidence from a nine-year-old child** called **Jennet Device**. In her accusation, Jennet said she saw **her mother's spirit appear as a brown dog**, and she **planned to kill various community members**. She also spoke of a witchcraft gathering held at their house, Malkin Tower, naming six people she saw there – including their mother and brother. All people went to trial and were put to death on the gallows.

We know all about the Pendle Witch Trials because we have a primary source that recorded all the courts preceding at the time, written by **Thomas Potts** in his book **“The Wonderfull Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster.”**



# Evidence and Interpretation

- **The evidence** of the Pendle witch trial **points to everybody being innocent** of witchcraft.
- **Jennet was a 9-year-old-child** who should not have been used as evidence. The **things she said were fantasy and merely made up**. This led to the death of her mother, brother and her neighbours.
- **Jennet's family didn't get on with their neighbours**, so we can interpret that Jennet bought them into the trial as revenge.
- **People could lie and accuse out of revenge**, as there weren't the scientific methods of evidence and trial that we use today.



# True or false activity

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**True****False**

The court could sentence people to death for witchcraft.

☐☐

Children were used as evidence in witchcraft trials.

☐☐

If a woman drowned, it meant she was a witch.

☐☐

People were kept comfortable in custody.

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# Activity 1

Our key historical skill today is **evidence** and **interpretation**.

Look at the evidence against the people of the Pendle Witch Trials. **What do they tell us about the trials? Can we trust Jennet Device? Why/why not?** Answer these questions on your activity 1 worksheet.



## What was crime and punishment like in the Stuart period?

Historical skills: Evidence and Interpretation



Evidence	Interpretation
Jennet was a 9-year-old child.	What does this tell us about the trial? _____ _____ _____
"I saw my mum's spirit turn into a brown dog, and she planned to kill various community members."	What does this tell us about Jennet? _____ _____ _____
The neighbours and Jennet's family were enemies who had argued for years over different things.	What does this tell us about Jennet's story? _____ _____ _____
Jennet's sister, Alizon Device, was begging on the streets and asked a pedlar, John Law, for some pins. He refused, so she cursed him. That evening, John Law suffered a stroke and blamed Alizon for cursing him.	Did Alizon curse John Law? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

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Historical skills: Evidence and Interpretation



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Historical skills: Evidence and Interpretation



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# Challenge

Why do you think people died when they were kept in custody or went to prison for a long time during the Stuart period?  
Answer this question on your challenge worksheet.

