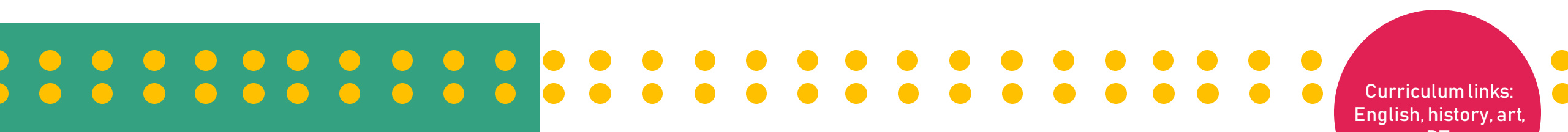


Laing Art Gallery Lindisfarne Gospels





Curriculum links:
English, history, art,
DT

Fact Finding Activity:

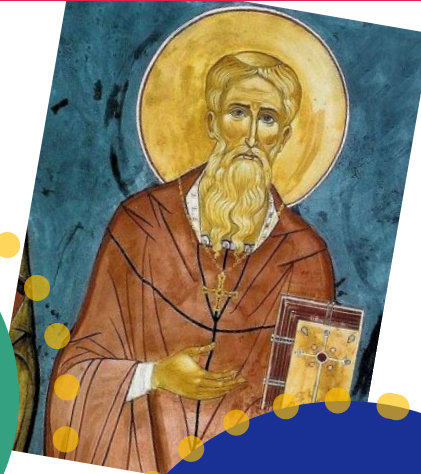
This task will encourage children to find out more about life in Anglo-Saxons times

Let's go on a fact finding mission to explore what life was like hundreds of years ago

According to an inscription added in the 10th century at the end of the original text, the Lindisfarne Gospels manuscript was made in honour of God and of St. Cuthbert by Eadfrith.

But who is Eadfrith?

Who is St. Cuthbert?



Who are the Anglo-Saxons?

Who were Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John?

What were the women doing in Anglo-Saxon times? Who is St. Hild of Whitby?



Who is Oswald, King of Northumbria and how does he fit in with the story of the Lindisfarne gospels?



What did Anglo-Saxon children do?

Question : What was life like in Anglo Saxon Lindisfarne? Let's find out



Anglo-Saxon farmers grew peas, beans, barley, and wheat as well as hay to feed their cattle, sheep, pigs, and hens.




Most Anglo-Saxon clothes were made from wool from their own sheep. Their clothes were held together with brooches. Women wore strings of glass or stone beads for decoration.




Anglo-Saxon clothes were sometimes made from animal furs to keep warm in the winter.




Question : What was life like in Anglo Saxon Lindisfarne? Let's find out



Anglo Saxon homes were made on a wooden frame and were usually only one room. They mixed clay with straw to create walls and had woollen blankets and hay as bedding materials.



Ordinary Anglo Saxons had weak beer to drink, the rich drank a type of wine made from honey and water called mead.



What colour do you think their clothes were? Anglo-Saxons used natural materials to dye their clothes such as plants, roots and tree bark.



Character research

Pheasants and farmers, Monks and Priests


Life for Lindisfarne's early medieval monks was certainly tough. Their lives were ruled by prayer bells that rang from dawn to dusk. They farmed and fished to support themselves. From their workshops they produced illuminated manuscripts to adorn churches across Europe. Their monastery was more than a destination for pilgrims, or an isolated retreat; they were also busy making history.

The monks and their tenants farmed the island and its large estates on the mainland. They grew wheat, which needed storing, threshing and grinding to make bread. They had large herds of cattle supplying milk for cheese and butter, meat and leather. In fact, the outer parts of the monastery, with its byres and barns, probably appeared more like a farm than a religious centre.

The workshops: Lindisfarne's workshops weren't just for supplying the island's daily bread; they were where the monks also produced opulent works of art to adorn the altars of Lindisfarne, and churches across early Medieval Britain and beyond. Skilled metal and leatherworkers crafted beautiful objects, such as reliquaries, croziers, and elaborate vessels. But of all the art produced, the Lindisfarne Gospels are probably the most famous.

They too would have required skilled workers and purpose-built buildings to create them. The holy text was written on parchment made from carefully prepared calf-skin. Specialists produced the inks and pigments, scribes and illustrators would have worked on the gospel pages.





Curriculum links:
English, history, art,
DT

Task:

Now we know about Anglo Saxon life let's find out about some of the amazing people who lived during that time

Let's now become detectives and build a character profile using the fact sheet to build up a picture of the people connected to the Lindisfarne Gospels.

Character research

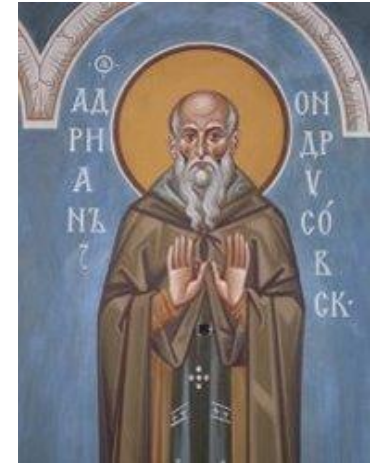
Aidan (Monk)

In 635, Oswald, king of Northumbria and a convert to Christianity, gave the tidal island of Lindisfarne (subsequently known as Holy Island) to the Irish monk, Aidan. Oswald's royal palace at Bamburgh was a short distance down the coast from Lindisfarne. Aidan became bishop of Lindisfarne and established a monastery there, as a dependency of the monastery founded by Columba on Iona, which then lay in the Irish kingdom of Dál Riata. The monastery at Lindisfarne was the centre of the Irish monastic mission to the English.



Hadrian (African Abbot)

Hadrian was the abbot of St Peter's and St Paul's in Canterbury. He spoke both Greek and Latin and introduced Anglo Saxons to ideas about astronomy, saints and riddles! Believed to be from what is now Libya Hadrian's teaching at his school at Canterbury were highly valued by the church and included notes on a beautiful bird called a *porphyrio*, 'said to be found in Libya'. He came to be regarded as a saint.



The Unknown Teenage Girl found with the Trumpington Cross

Believed to be one of the earliest converts to Christianity this unknown teenager was found in a bed burial with her treasured possessions, including gold and garnet pins, an iron knife, glass beads, a chain and her cross. Do you think she was an aristocrat or a peasant? Why?

Character research

Aethelflaed- the 'Lady of Mercia'

Born in 870s Aethelflaed (pronounced Eth-el-fled-) was the most powerful woman of the Anglo-Saxon era. Daughter of Alfred the Great, she ruled the kingdom of Mercia, an area extending from Lincolnshire in the northeast, the Wirral in the northwest and as far south as the Thames. At the time, Anglo-Saxon "England" was made up of a series of smaller kingdoms, including Wessex in the south, Mercia in the Midlands and Northumbria in the far north. All of these kingdoms had their own culture and traditions and often fought each other, but Aethelflaed knew there was a greater enemy- the threat of the Viking forces. A skilled soldier and horsewoman she was a successful military strategist uniting kingdoms, establishing burh (burghs), or fortified towns, throughout the Midland, fighting the Vikings, taking and holding land as far north as the border of Yorkshire, and bringing their leaders to pledge loyalty to her. Aethelflaed came to power at a time when England was made up of many kingdoms, each with its own culture and traditions. Mercia was one of the largest and was fiercely independent. She made Gloucester its spiritual, cultural and learning capital. Aethelflaed also made a difference nationally. Her military and political leadership laid the foundations for joining England's numerous kingdoms into the single country we know today.

King Oswald of Northumbria

In 635 the Northumbrian king, Oswald (reigned 634-42), summoned an Irish monk named Aidan from Iona - the island-monastery off the south-west coast of what is now Scotland - to be bishop of his kingdom. Oswald granted Aidan and his companions the small tidal island of Lindisfarne on which to found a monastery.

Cuthbert

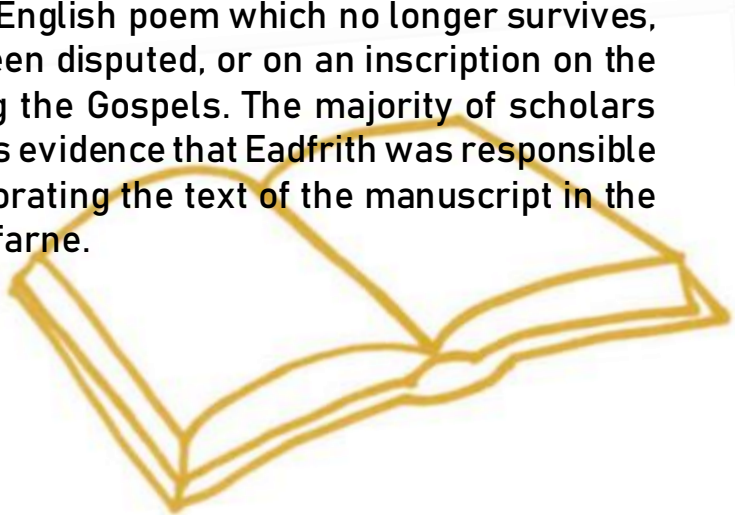
Cuthbert, who became bishop of Lindisfarne in 685, died in 687. His reportedly uncorrupted body was translated from the stone sarcophagus in which he had been buried, to a wooden coffin (now in Durham Cathedral), which was placed on the floor of the church. A popular cult soon developed around the saint's shrine.



Character research

Aldred and Eadfrith

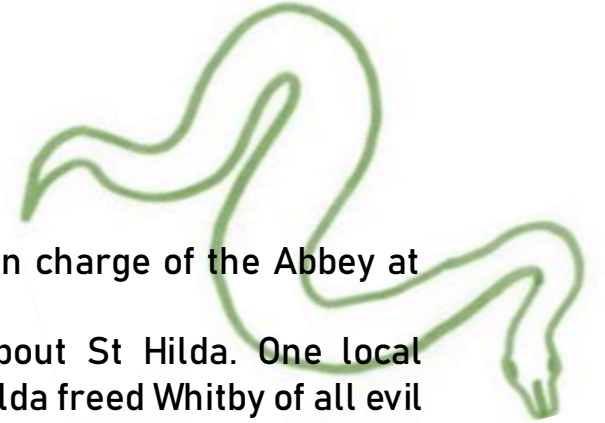
According to a colophon (a scribal note) added in the 950s or 960s at the end of John's Gospel by Aldred, a priest in the monastic community at Chester-le-Street, the manuscript was produced by Eadfrith, who was bishop of Lindisfarne from c. 698 to 721/2. The colophon says Eadfrith wrote the book for God, St Cuthbert, and all the holy men of the island. The colophon was added around 250 years after the gospel-book was made, and has been the subject of much study and challenge. It has been suggested that the colophon may draw upon an earlier Old English poem which no longer survives, although this has been disputed, or on an inscription on the metalwork encasing the Gospels. The majority of scholars currently rely on it as evidence that Eadfrith was responsible for copying and decorating the text of the manuscript in the monastery at Lindisfarne.



St Hild of Whitby

Saint Hilda was the abbess in charge of the Abbey at Whitby.

There are many legends about St Hilda. One local folklore tale claims that St Hilda freed Whitby of all evil snakes by flinging them from the Abbey cliffs. It is believed that this is a medieval explanation for all the spiralled ammonite fossils that can be found along Whitby's coastline. The snake tale was so prevalent that you can still see relics of it today. The Whitby coat of arms still proudly displays three of Hilda's snakes. Take a look next time you visit Whitby, crossing the swing bridge and you'll see them. There's also a fossil named after the abbess: ammonite hildoceras



Task: Choose a person from the character research you've read to develop a character profile.

Use the template on the next slide to get started

1

Draw a picture of them. This is called a portrait. What hairstyle do they have? What do their clothes look like? What do their clothes tell you about them?

2

External features: What do you see on the outside?

3

Internal features: What are their thoughts and feelings? Could you add that to the portrait?

4

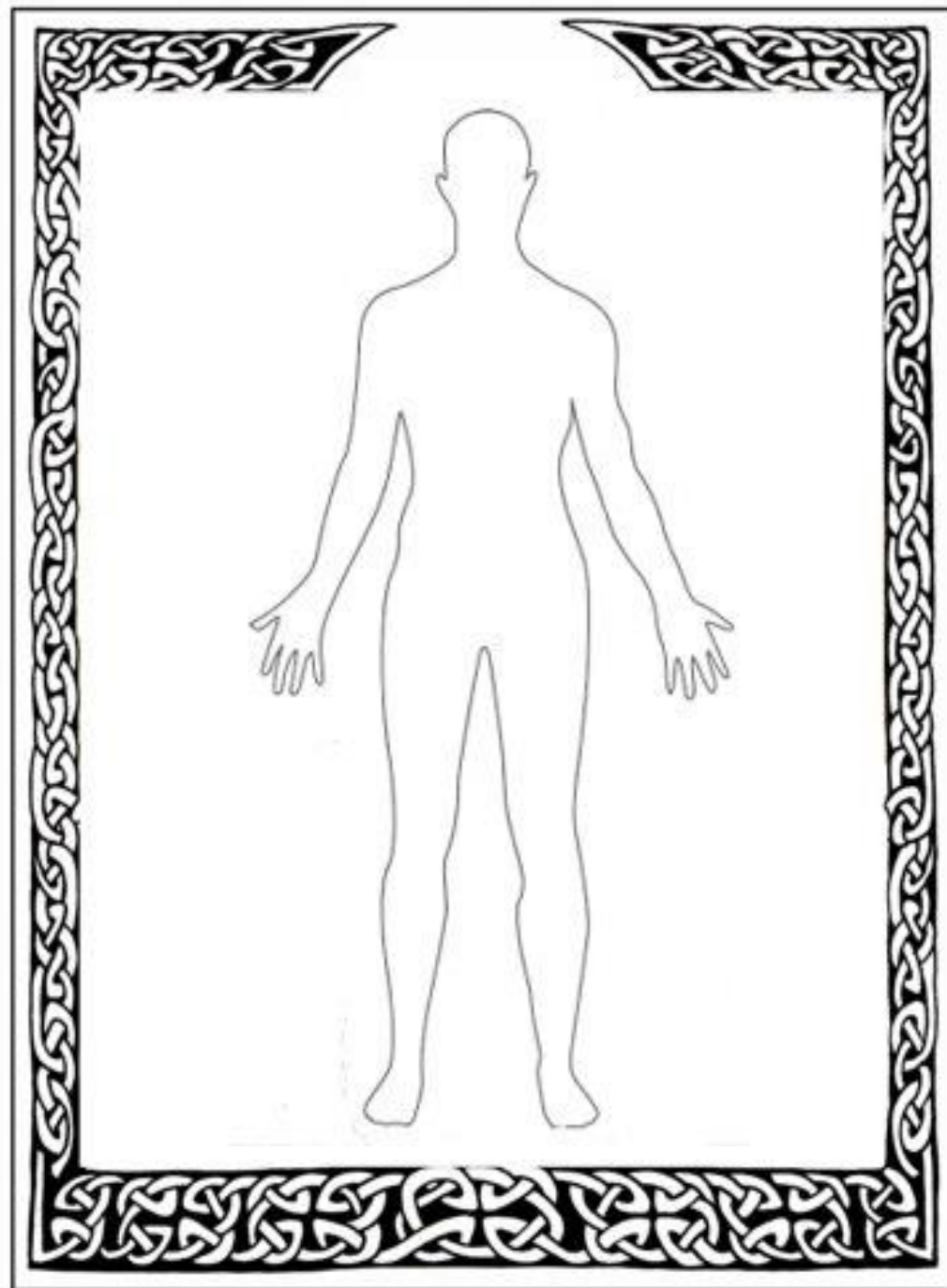
Colour: what colour are their clothes and surroundings?

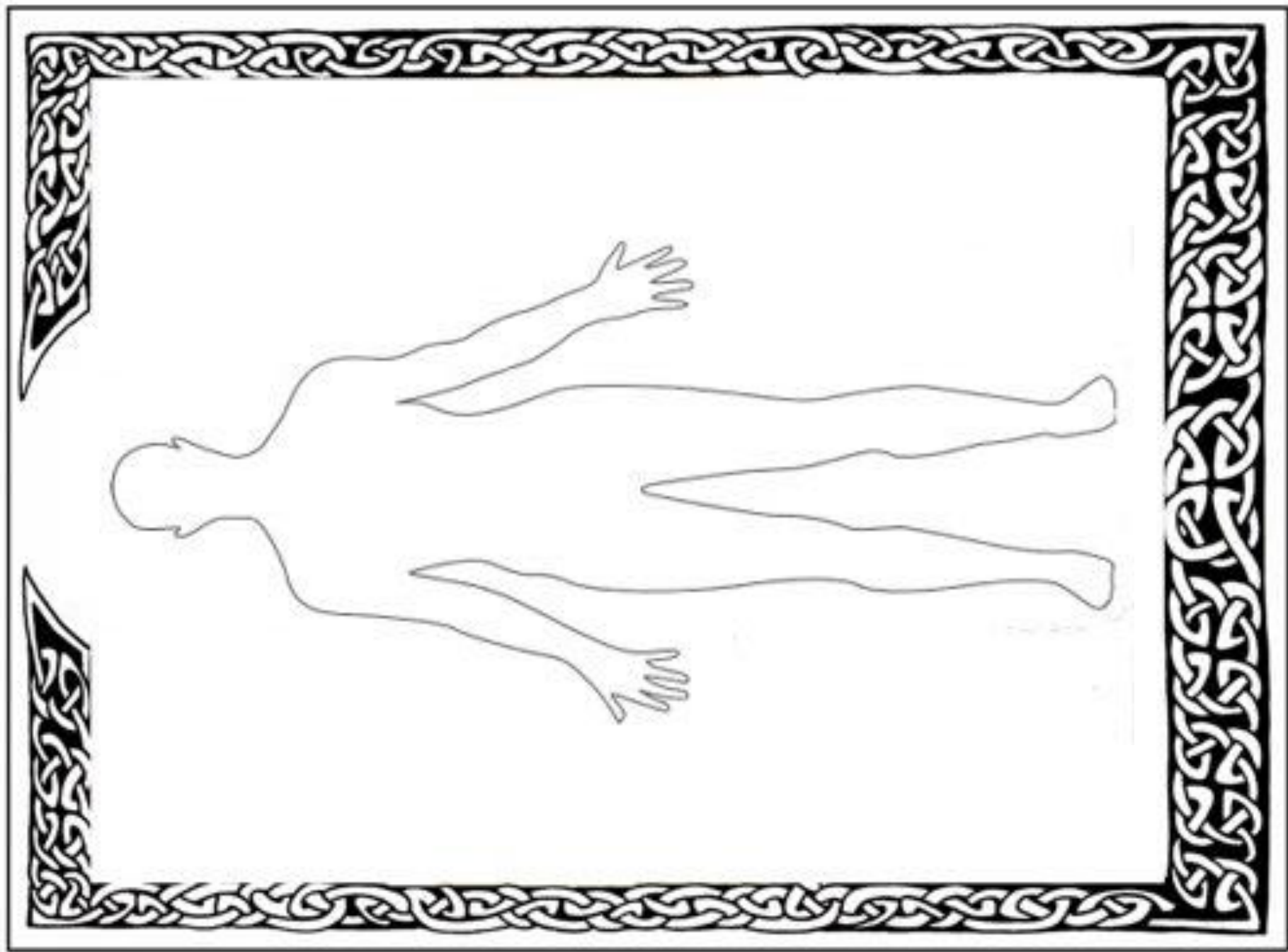
5

Landscape: Where is your character? Does it give us any clues?

6

Other clues: What are they eating? Where do they live? Can you describe these with words and drawings?





The 'Evangelist Pages'

The 'Evangelist Pages' are portraits of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

Can you work out which Evangelist this is? How do you know?



What does this page tell you about Matthew?

Look for words and symbols that give you clues about Matthew and his life

He was a writer

He has a book
and pen

His name was
Mattheus -
Matthew in
Latin

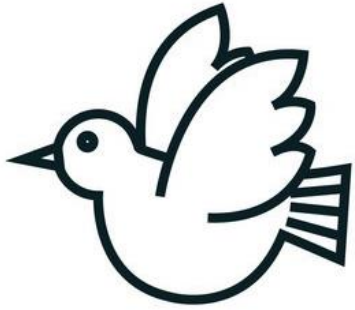
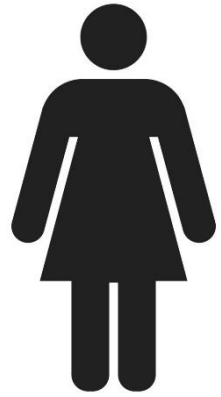
He is dressed in the
style of a
Greek/Roman wear
a Toga and sandals

He was a Saint

He has an angel
behind him and a
halo

From looking at
his appearance
we can tell he is
an older man

This page contains symbols
What is a symbol? Can you think of any modern symbols today?



Have a look at the other Evangelist portrait pages. They are also full of symbols
What do you think the other symbols mean?
The lion? The Ox? The Eagle?



TASK

Can you have a go and add your own portrait to your book?

What symbols would you use to tell people about yourself?

For example, I would put some goggles in mine, because I love swimming