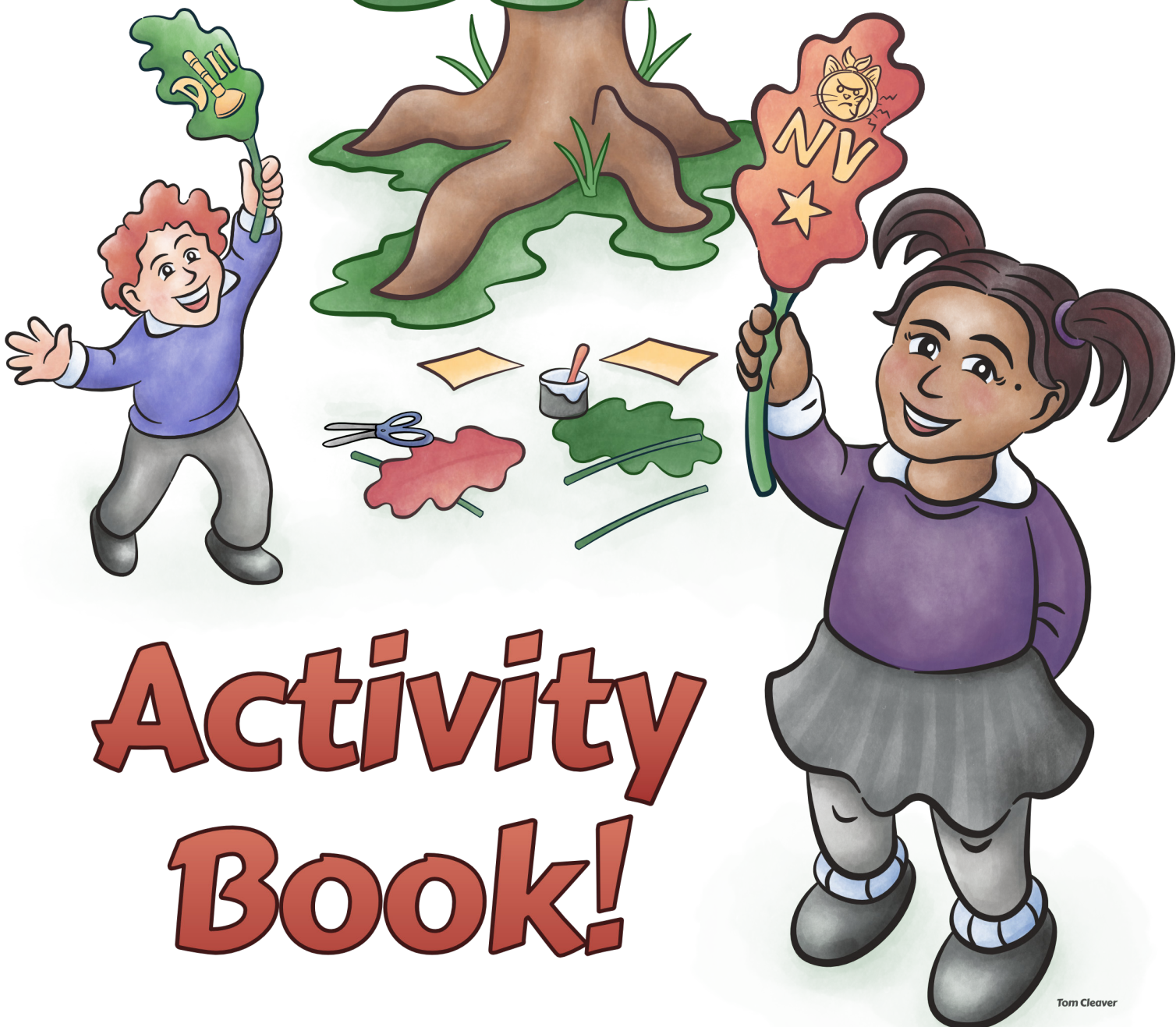
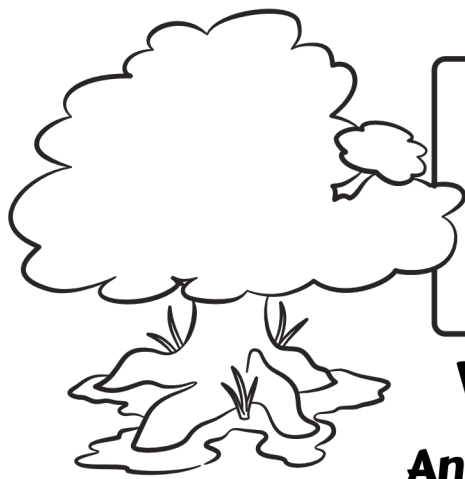


The Roots Of Our Tree!





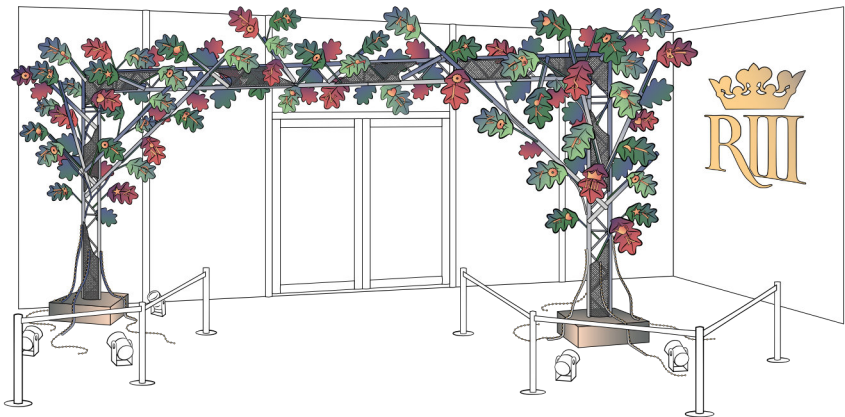
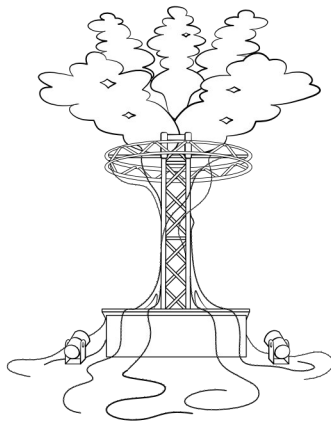
The Roots of Our Tree

**Who, how, what, why,
when and where...
And a King in a carpark?!!!**



What would you say if we asked you about medieval kings? You might say they were kind and wise rulers. You might say they were evil and cruel rulers. You might say they were a little sprinkle of both but how big those sprinkles might be depends on who's telling the story.

King Richard III (the third) was a whole mix of sprinkles and few people agree on the recipe. What we can agree on is that his body was found by some awesome archaeologists in the city of Leicester after years of planning and many hundreds of years of questioning and wondering. And he was found... in a carpark?! Well, it's important to say that it wasn't a carpark at the time he was buried. Because cars hadn't been invented yet. But how does all this link up with an Art project called 'The Roots Of Our Tree'? Hang on... we're getting to it!

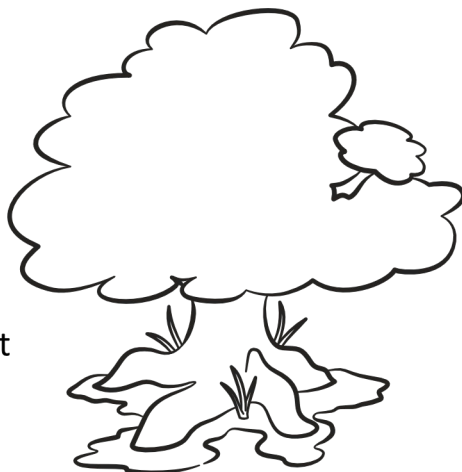


Design concepts for the art installation.

'The Roots Of Our Tree' was invented by the Inspirate organisation and artist Tom Cleaver of Mr Cleaver's Monsters. They wanted to find out what Richard's discovery meant to the young people of Leicester. Would it inspire them to research their own ancestry and heritage? Spoiler alert: It did!

Children from the Mellor, Sparkenhoe and Spinney Hill Primary schools and the Queensmead Academy joined Tom in giant leaf-making sessions. Each leaf was decorated with a symbol that represented something meaningful to them: a hobby perhaps? Or something about their heritage and history? Maybe something from their past or possible future?

On the 12th of March, 2025, all the young people (plus a few teachers here and there) met at Leicester Cathedral, all waving their leaves. They weaved their way through the city streets in a huge parade, with drums booming and people cheering. And why were they cheering? For the children, perhaps? Well, of course! But also because it happened to be 10 years since Richard's reburial and that was definitely something to celebrate.



The Roots Of Our Tree installation at the Richard III Centre

When the parade finished, Tom took the leaves and combined them into a sculpture: a tree rooted in history but reaching upward towards the future, with each leaf representing the life of someone calling Leicester home. It stood outside the world-famous Richard III Centre during the city's Light Up Leicester festival and then moved to the Cathedral for a brief stay, standing silent guard over Richard's tomb.

With festival goers and Cathedral visitors combined, the children's creativity has been seen by hundreds of thousands of people. These wonderful youngsters have added another chapter to Richard's life story and we think they should be very proud of themselves!

**Well done,
everybody!**



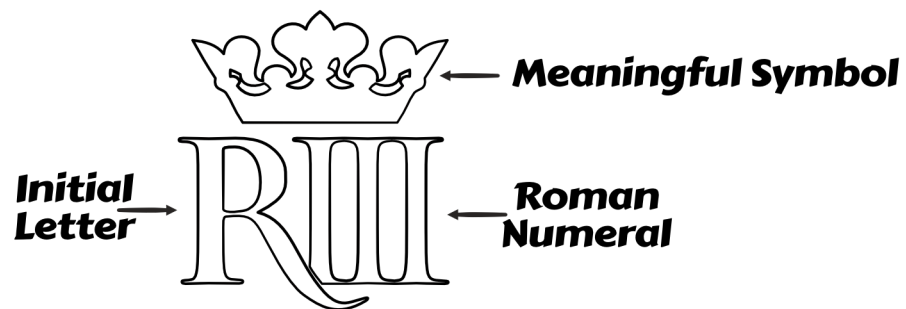


Make Your Own Leaf

Using symbols and ciphers!



We'd like you to create your own leaf with your own design but, first, let's explain where our inspiration came from: Richard's 'RIII' Royal Cipher!

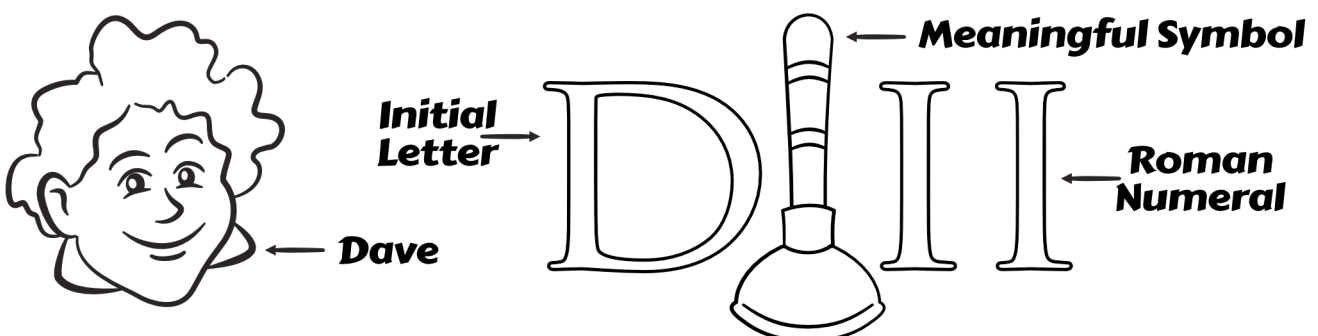


A Royal Cipher is a special type of code representing an individual king or queen. It combines their initial letter with a number in Roman numerals. Why does it need a number? Because rulers often share names and we need to distinguish between them. So Richard gets an 'R' and a 'III'.

To make things more deliciously complicated, some male rulers have an extra 'R'. This stands for 'Rex', which is the Latin word for king. For female rulers, the 'R' stands for 'Regina', Latin for Queen.

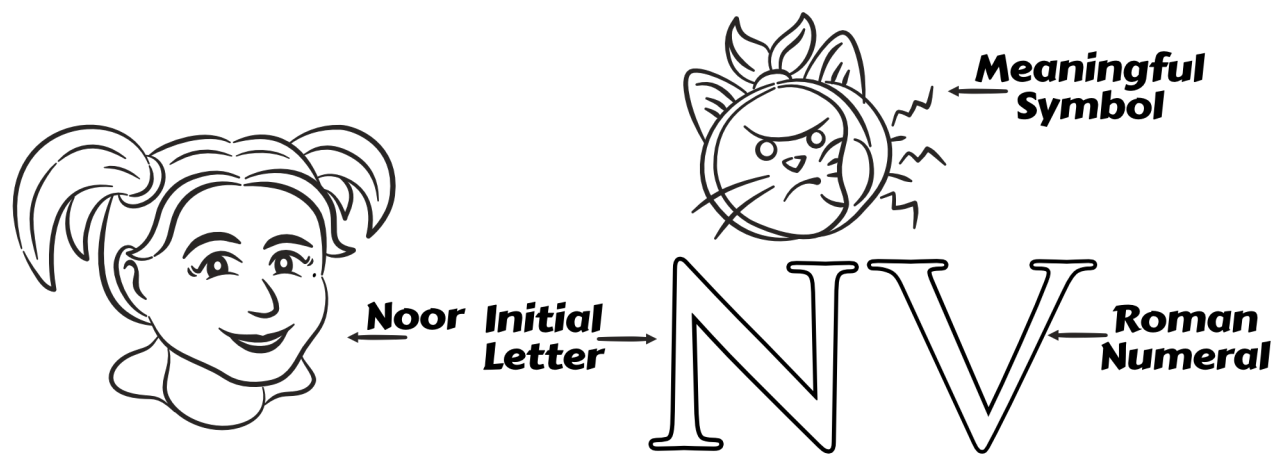
Richard's cipher has just one 'R'. This is good because saying 'R' twice makes you sound like a pirate. Say it three times and people will think you're a small dog yapping at the postman.

You can use the same system to make your own cypher. For example...



You've just seen Dave. Dave's Dad is also called Dave. So Daddy Dave is Dave The First (Dave I) and our original Dave is Dave The Second (Dave II). He doesn't have to worry about 'Regina' or 'Rex' as he hasn't been crowned ruler of any European countries recently. He doesn't get a picture of a crown for the same reason.

But Dave does come from a proud line of excellent plumbers and hopes to become a plumber himself. And so Dave's cipher features a heavy-duty toilet plunger.



And here's Noor. There have been 4 other Noors in her family history, making her Noor The Fifth. She loves animals more than anything and wants to be a vet when she grows up. And so her cipher features an 'N' for Noor, a 'V' for five, and a kitten with toothache.

Dave and Noor's ciphers have been designed for giggles but you can be serious if you want to. You could use things that remind you of your heritage, your home, your family, your ancestors and the adventures they might have had. Or perhaps you'd prefer to look ahead and use symbols that represent your hopes and dreams and who you might become in the future. It's all up to you!



Draw your cipher inside one of the leaves on the following pages. You can trace the leaf outline on to another sheet if you want to make more than one. And, if you want a quick reminder on numerals, look out for the Rude Roman!

Rodney The Rude Roman's Guide To Numerals

1 = I	6 = VI
2 = II	7 = VII
3 = III	8 = VIII
4 = IV	9 = IX
5 = V	10 = X

Oi!
Know your
numerals!



Oak Leaf

The oak leaf is a symbol of England that Richard would have been familiar with. It was often used in heraldry and coats of arms. Oak timbers were made into the beams that held up the roofs of churches and sawn into planks for the floors, doors and drawbridges of castles. Oak was also used to make great wooden ships that sailed across the oceans.

Oaks were respected by the ancient Greeks, the Romans and the Celts. The Celts were an ancient British tribe who thought the oak represented wisdom. They had a word 'Druit' meaning 'Oak Knowledge', which is where we get the word 'Druid' from. They believed oak trees were gateways to the spirit world and if you snuggled beneath their branches in the moonlight, you would soon see the pixies and fairy folk dancing hand in hand around you. We'll leave you to decide whether that's true!



Draw on me!



Maple Leaf

**Draw on
me!**



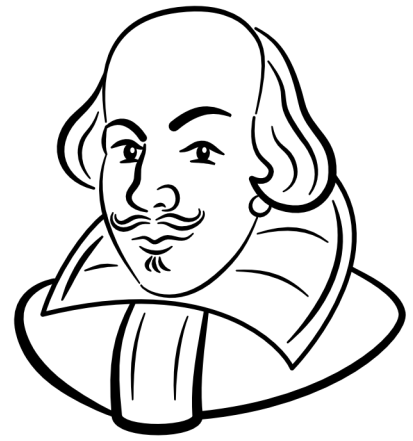
The maple leaf is best known as a symbol of Canada, a country capped with glistening glaciers that experiences some of the coldest snowy winters in the world.

The maple tree has special winged seeds called 'samaras' that twist and turn as they fall to the ground, like miniature helicopters. Maple sap (the sticky liquid inside the trunk) can be used to make delicious maple syrup!

The maple tree has absolutely no relevance to Richard, whatsoever. So why is it here? Because it's an absolutely brilliant shape! We think that's a good enough reason.



Tricky Ricky or Wicked Willy?



**Tall tales for a
Tudor audience?**

You can think of History as a long list of big events and the dates they happened. Some of these events were good. A lot of them *really* weren't. So it's important to understand why they happened in the hope we can keep the bad bits from happening again. You'd think this would be simple. It isn't!

You see, bad people do bad things. We all know and understand this. But sometimes good people do bad things for good reasons. Or what they think are good reasons. Because it turns out the good people were actually bad people, but didn't realise until someone else pointed it out.

Who gets to decide who's bad or good? Well, in wartime, it's the survivors. Because the dead don't get a vote!

Richard The Third died at Bosworth Battlefield. Henry Tudor didn't. And so it's Henry's version of History that's been passed down. And it's Henry's version that William Shakespeare so brilliantly reworked into his plays. These plays were funded by Fernando Stanley (a descendent of Thomas Stanley, who's soldiers helped kill Richard) and written during the reign of Queen Elizabeth The First (Henry Tudor's granddaughter). It wasn't in Shakespeare's interest to madden the man who paid his mortgage. Winding up the queen, a woman with her own professional head-removal team, would've been equally silly. And so his version of Richard is understandably unpleasant.

So was Richard really a repulsive rascal? Or is everything Shakespeare wrote about him wrong? We'll compare the play and (what we believe) are the facts on the following pages. You can tell us what you think at the end!





Man, Monster Or Something In The Middle?



Myth-busting Shakespeare's Richard.

As we've just seen, Shakespeare was writing to entertain audiences and please his queen. Absolute historical accuracy wasn't top of his to do list. So let's look at his rather rotten Richard and see how it relates to reality!

Shakespeare's Play

Historical Accounts

Appearance

Shakespeare's Richard struggles to walk and has a weak, under-developed arm. Other characters refer to him using slurs about the shape of his spine, implying he is severely misshapen and handicapped. He describes himself as 'deformed' and 'unfinished' and suggests that his own appearance scares dogs.

Richard's skeleton shows he had scoliosis (a curving of the spine). His right shoulder would have been slightly higher than the left but his hips and legs were level. There is no evidence of a 'withered' arm and reports say he was a skilled and physically capable fighter. Paintings of Richard depict a thoughtful but unremarkable face.

Character

Manipulative and hungry for power. He is paranoid, controlling and willing to betray those he claims to love. In battle, he is vicious and spiteful. In peacetime, he delights in his own evil actions.

Very loyal to his brother, King Edward IV. He was a capable, level-headed governor of the North of England and, as king, made the law fairer for the poor. He lived when war and violence were part of everyday life. This must have been frightening but he fought bravely in battle. Historians accept he was controlling, which may have angered other nobles, who deserted him when he needed them most.

Romance

After killing Henry VI and his son, Richard uses his sly charm on the son's widow, Anne Neville. He marries her to strengthen his claim to the throne and gain respectability. He views Anne as disposable and orders her murder when a better option comes along.

Richard grew up knowing Anne. He gave away land and property for the right to marry her and they seem to have got along well. She most likely died of tuberculosis and Richard is said to have been genuinely upset by her loss.



Man, Monster Or Something In The Middle?



Shakespeare's Play

Historical Accounts

Treachery

Richard spreads false rumours to King Edward IV that their brother, the Duke Of Clarence, is plotting treason. When the duke is imprisoned in the Tower Of London, Richard has him murdered.

The Duke Of Clarence took part in a rebellion against the king in 1470 and continued to cause problems for him throughout their lives. The king ordered his execution, and some claim he was drowned in a barrel of wine. Richard's role in these events is unknown.

Bad Babysitting

Richard has his nephews declared illegitimate (born out of wedlock) ensuring that they can't inherit the throne. He has them locked in the Tower Of London.

Er... Yes, unfortunately. Richard *really* did both these things.

Even Worse Babysitting!

Richard has his nephews killed and feels no guilt for their murder.

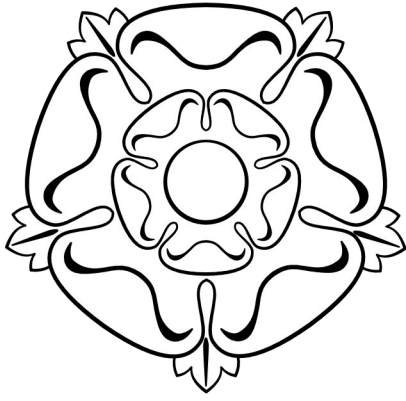
No one knows what happened to the two boys. They were never seen again!

Well, friends, it's a pickle, isn't it? The real Richard sounds like a reasonable guy 'til we reach the treatment of his nephews. Then all those good vibes go out of the window.

We do need to remind ourselves that no one knows what happened to the two boys. We only have suspicions and rumours. Are those enough to prove Richard was a wrong-un? We'll let you decide. Let us know what you think of him on the dotted lines below.

I think Richard was
because

.....
.....



A New Rose!

The logo that united a nation!



We looked at leaves and cipher logos earlier. Let's dig deeper with some more Richard-related plantlife!

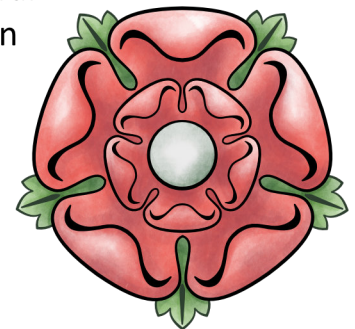
You'll have heard of the War Of The Roses, named after the white rose symbol of Richard's Yorkist supporters and the red roses of Henry Tudor's Lancastrians. And you'll probably know that, after winning the Battle Of Bosworth, Henry merged the two into the 'Tudor Rose'?



The York Rose

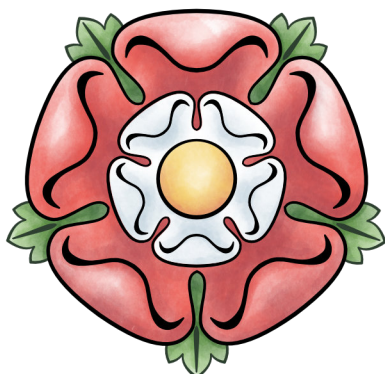
Well, as you'll find with many elements of Richard and Henry's story, that's not entirely true. 'The War Of The Roses' is a beautiful name for their brutal rivalry but it wasn't used in their lifetime. In fact, it was invented in 1829 by the writer and poet, Sir Walter Scott. That's 344 years later!

And some historians claim Henry never used the Lancastrian rose before Bosworth, and only revived it to combine it with the white rose and show his former enemies all was forgiven. He took the concept even further by marrying Elizabeth of York, combining their families as well as their logos, and helping the country move forward in peace.



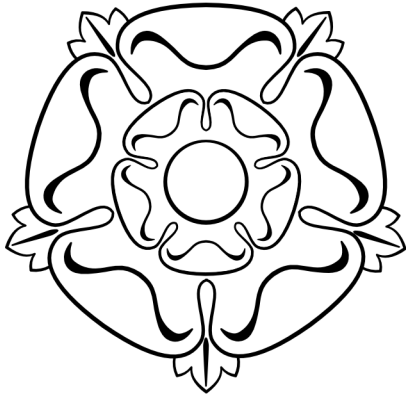
The Rose of Lancaster

So the Tudor Rose may have been a cynical piece of propaganda but it helped bring stability to a land ravaged by endless violence. Pretty good for a picture of a flower!



The Tudor Rose





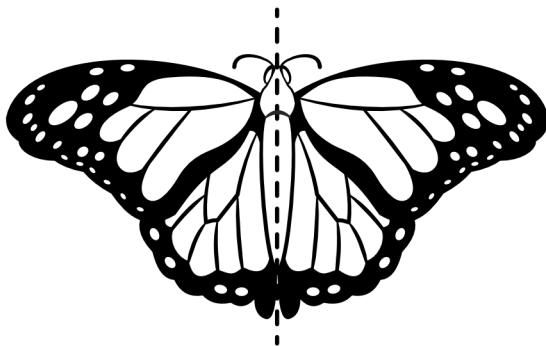
Rose-tational What?!

Make a rose-inspired image using rotational symmetry!



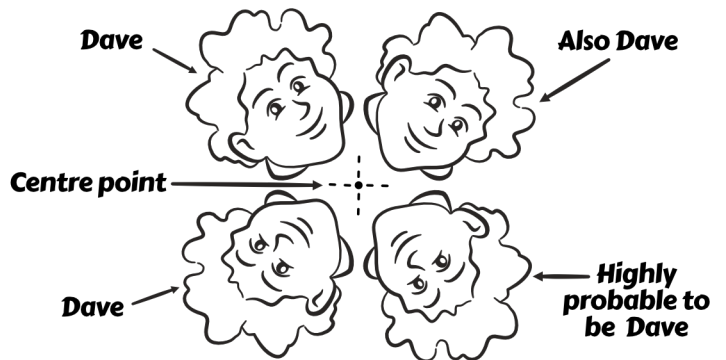
The easiest way to think of symmetry is a reflected image in a mirror or the matching wings of a butterfly. Rotational symmetry takes that concept and turns it on its head. Sometimes literally!

Standard Symmetry



Both sides of the image look the same.

Rotational Symmetry



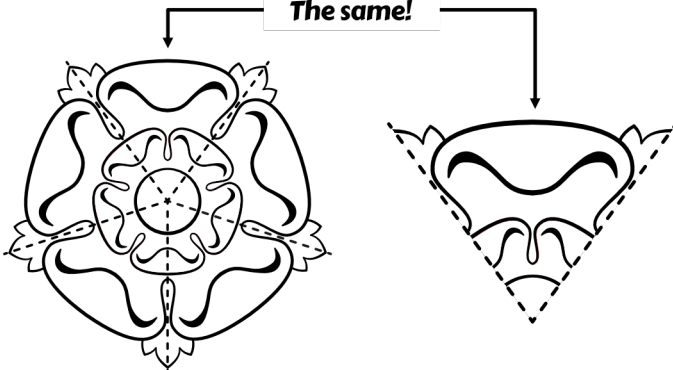
The main image is made from copies of smaller images, rotated from a centre point.

And, yes, that's an awful lot of Daves!

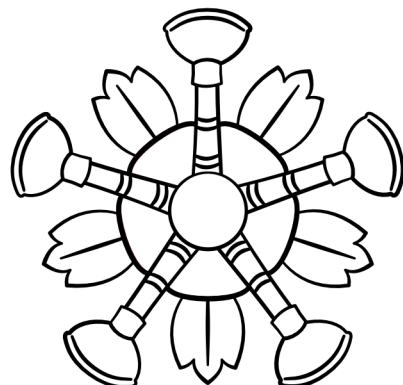
Now let's take a peek at the Tudor Rose. It looks complicated at first but if we slice it up as if we're cutting a pizza, you'll see the whole design is just the same 5 identical sections repeated.

The Tudor Rose

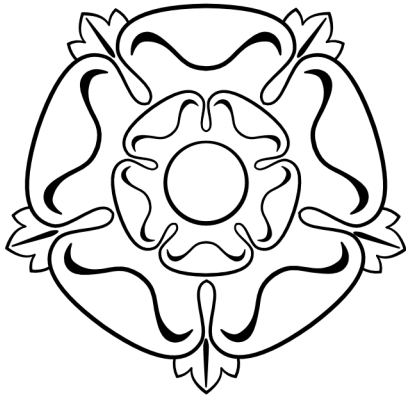
The same!



Dave's Toilet Plunger Flower



Dave has used his cipher and the rotational symmetry concept to create a toilet plunger flower. He calls it a 'Ploppy Poppy'. Noor has seen what happens when you rotate large quantities of cats with toothache and won't be joining in with this one, thank you very much.

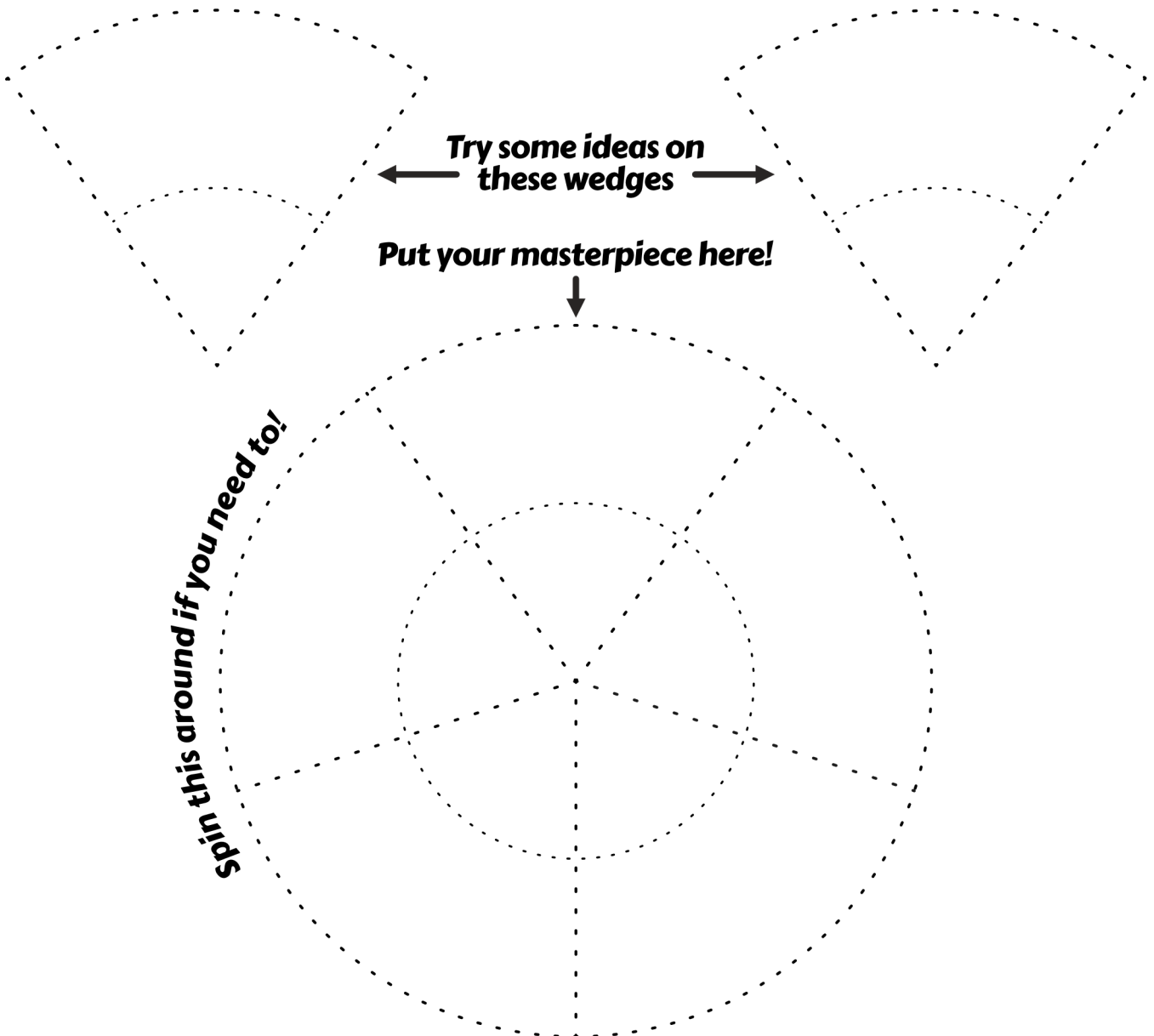


It's Your Turn!*

***See what we did there?!**



We've looked at the Tudor Rose and you've seen (and probably wish you could un-see) Dave's toilet plunger flower. Now it's your turn to make a design using rotational symmetry. Don't feel limited to your cipher. You can use whatever imagery springs to mind, but the more Medieval you can make it the better. And don't forget, you can copy or trace this page and give yourself as many goes as you want. Tracing isn't cheating here. It's the smart way to copy the same design into all the spaces!



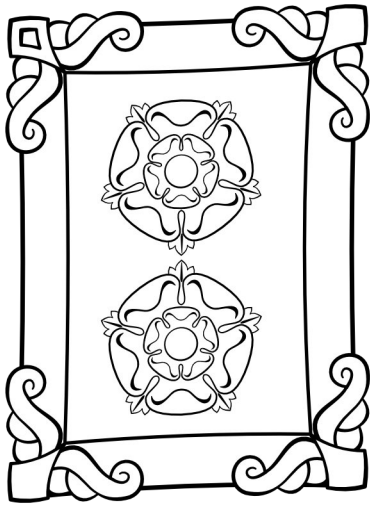


Photo Gallery!

**Parade pictures
and
exhibition images!**



Parade Day!

Photos: Tom P. Morley



The Roots Of Our Tree at the King Richard III Visitor Centre

Photo: Tom P. Morley



**The Roots Of Our Tree
at Leicester Cathedral**

Photo: Tom Cleaver



The Roots Of Our Tree

Written and illustrated by Tom Cleaver, Mr Cleaver's Monsters.

Tom and Inspirate would like to thank the Mellor, Sparkenhoe and Spinney Hill Primary schools, the Queensmead Academy, the Highfields Centre and the Belgrave Library Knitting Group for their participation, and to the King Richard III Visitor Centre and Leicester Cathedral for hosting us. Thanks also to Leicester City Council.

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ENGLAND**