

Teachers' notes for Lesson 4

Lesson 4 includes a PowerPoint presentation, which aims to encourage pupils to develop an understanding of why the Bowl Hole skeletons were reburied in St Aidan's Church.

The PowerPoint presentation will guide you, and your pupils, through the lesson (there is also a Keynote version for Mac).

From the website you will need to:

- Download the PowerPoint for Lesson 4 (or the Keynote for Mac version)

You will need to provide:

- An interactive whiteboard, or a computer to show the PowerPoint

The resource:

1. The PowerPoint

The PowerPoint introduces the concept of the last resting place of the people buried at the Bowl Hole. Unlike previous lessons, this PowerPoint encourages pupils to watch, listen and consider, rather than engage them in hands-on activities. It contains several video clips to help develop pupil understanding.

It introduces pupils to the final resting place for the skeletons through the following 14 slides:

- Slide 2: introduction to the concept of reburying the skeletons.
- Slides 3 & 4: the choice of where to bury the skeletons and why. Pupils will learn more about St Aidan in Lesson 5, but it might help for them to have some basic knowledge of the story of the saint to help them appreciate why the church was chosen as the final resting place for the skeletons.
- Slide 5: a short video clip (1:20 mins) showing the access to the crypt and Jessica Turner explaining what an ossuary is.
- Slide 6: recap on what we learned about the crypt from the video. Explain to pupils that the original church St Aidan built no longer survives so the church they see on the video was built later, but is still very old. The crypt is also very old, but had not been used as an ossuary, or charnel house, before. There are some grave markers in the floor of the crypt from an earlier burial.
- Slide 7: a short video clip (0:41 mins) where Jessica tells us more about the ossuary and where the ossuary boxes came from.



- Slide 8: recap on what we learned from Jessica in the video. Pupils might find the concept of digging up skeletons and placing their bones in ossuary boxes a strange one as it doesn't really happen in this country. It is common in other countries and is especially used where burial space is tight as removing skeletons frees up space for new burials. It should be noted that bodies are not moved; the wait of c30 years that Jessica mentions is to allow decomposition to occur. It should also be noted that moving skeletons is all done according to the laws of each country and with a huge amount of respect (Jessica talks about the licence from the Home Office for reburial of our skeletons later in this lesson)
- Slide 9: images of the ossuary boxes in the crypt. These photos were taken when the boxes were first put in place. The gate is locked and no one is given general access to the ossuary, because it is a special burial place.
- Slide 10: a short video clip (0:39 mins) where Jessica uses a real ossuary box and a replica skeleton to illustrate how a skeleton fits in the box and why it is the size it is. The femur is the longest bone on a skeleton so the box needs to be the length of an average femur and the width of the widest bone on a skeleton; the skull.
- Slide 11: images of the box and replica skeleton for pupils to see more clearly.
- Slide 12: introduction to how the Bowl Hole skeletons were laid to rest in the crypt, with an image of some of the boxes being carried into the church. The service in church would be similar to a memorial service for the dead and St Aidan would have recognised some of the readings and psalms (from the Bible) because they were in Old English, the Anglo-Saxon language. You could discuss with pupils the idea of memorial services for the dead - these often happen in the Christian tradition on All Souls, which occurs near Halloween and is a time when Christians remember all those they have loved who have died. You could also explore what traditions occur in other faiths for remembering the dead.
- Slide 13: a final video clip (1:02 mins), where Jessica explains the importance of the ossuary.
- Slide 14: rather than a hands-on activity this lesson finishes with the opportunity to reflect on the reburial of the skeletons. We have provided a few discussion points but teachers are encouraged to choose how they reflect on learning with pupils.