

GO AULD
REEKIE

WHAT'S IN THE BOX



1.



2.



3.

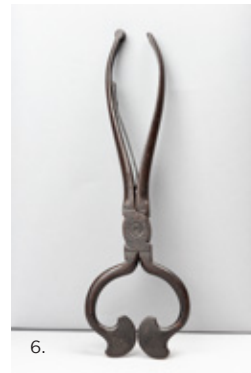


4.



5.

1. Women's shoes
2. Men's shoes
3. Leather shoes (Turn shoes)
4. Coffee Pot
5. Tea box (Caddy)
6. Sugar cutters (Nips)
7. Oyster shells
8. Flint and steel
9. Belt hook, with needle case, scissors and key (Chatelaine)
10. Chamber pot
11. Ointment pot
12. Hand cuffs (Shackles)



6.



7.



8.



11.



10.



9.



12.

LET'S INVESTIGATE!



GO AULD REEKIE

1

Look carefully at the objects and discuss them in your group. Use the object cards to help you with each one.

2

Make sure that you make a list of what you can SEE, what you THINK and what you WONDER about each object.

3

Practice using, or even wearing, the object in the style that you think it would have been used 300 years ago.

4

If possible, get a picture taken with the object as a record.

5

Finally, sketch one of the objects for your own records.

GO AULD
REEKIE

WOMEN'S SHOES

INFORMATION



These shoes are straight - there isn't a left and right shoe. They could be very uncomfortable until you broke them in.



You can remove the buckles. This meant that you could wear them on other shoes as well.

Before the 1700s, women wore flatter shoes as longer dresses didn't show off your feet.



By the 1700s ladies wore dresses that were just short enough to show off their shoes. This is when shoes got fancier in their designs.



It was men who first wore high heeled shoes but by 1700 women wore higher heels to show off their wealth.



Higher heels helped to protect shoes and dresses from the muck and filth in the Edinburgh streets.

OLD EDINBURGH THEMED
TEACHING PACK AND HANDLING BOX



GO AULD
REEKIE

WOMEN'S SHOES

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look closely at the shoes
- Look at their size and shape and colour
- Look at the materials they are made from
- Think about how they feel

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- Who do you think might have worn these shoes?
- Do you think they were valuable?
- Do you think they would have kept your feet dry?
- Compare them with your own shoes

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down

NOTES



GO AULD
REEKIE

MEN'S LEATHER SHOES INFORMATION



Wealthy gentlemen might wear quite fancy shoes, much like the women.



This would include shoes with high heels and have precious stones on them to show off how rich they were.



These weren't always practical for the jobs many people had, so shoes like this might be worn instead.



These shoes are straight - there isn't a left and right shoe. They could be very uncomfortable until you broke them in.

Buckles were often designed to show off how important you were. They would be highly polished and well looked after.



You can remove the buckles so that you can wear them on other shoes.

OLD EDINBURGH THEMED
TEACHING PACK AND HANDLING BOX



GO AULD
REEKIE

MEN'S LEATHER SHOES

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look closely at the shoes
- Look at their size and shape and colour
- Look at the materials they are made from
- Think about how they feel

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- Who do you think might have worn these shoes?
- Do you think they were valuable?
- Do you think they would have kept your feet dry?
- Compare them with your own shoes

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down

NOTES

GO AULD
REEKIE

LEATHER SHOES

INFORMATION



Poorer people in old Edinburgh would often walk around with bare feet, or they might wear simple shoes like these.



These were the most common types of shoe in medieval times. They are called turn shoes.

The simplest turn shoes were made from a single piece of leather which were then turned inside out to protect the stitching and make them more waterproof. That is why they are called 'turn shoes'.



They were comfortable to wear, because the leather would be soft and flexible.

However, this meant that they perhaps wouldn't last long as they don't have proper soles. They also don't give much support or protection to your feet.



Eventually shoemakers discovered how best to attach stronger soles to the shoe and the simple turn shoe became less common.

These shoes are a later type of turn shoe worn in old Edinburgh known as a latchet shoe. They have a sole and fasten onto the foot with a narrow leather strap, or thong known as a latchet.

GO AULD
REEKIE

LEATHER SHOES

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look closely at the shoes
- Look at their size and shape and colour
- Look at the materials they are made from
- Think about how they feel

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- Who do you think might have worn these shoes?
- Do you think they were valuable?
- Do you think they would have kept your feet dry?
- Compare them with your own shoes

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down

NOTES



GO AULD
REEKIE

COFFEE POT INFORMATION



Coffee had been drunk in Britain since the 1500s, but by the 1700s it had become more popular.



Coffee houses and taverns were popular places to meet and discuss the important news of the day.

You would put the ground up coffee beans in the pot with water and heat it on a stove.



This coffee pot is made of pewter, which is a metal that is easy to mould into different shapes.

Coffee beans were grown on plantations in the Caribbean where enslaved people were forced to work.



The odd handle design was common in the 1700s. It makes it easier to lift the pot from the stove and to pour safely.

OLD EDINBURGH THEMED
TEACHING PACK AND HANDLING BOX



GO AULD
REEKIE

COFFEE POT

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look carefully at the size and shape of the pot
- Look at the materials that it is made from
- Think about the differences from how coffee is grown and made today compared to the past.

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- How do you think this works?
- Who do you think might have used one of these?
- Where do you think it might be used?
- Do you think this was valuable?

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down

NOTES



GO AULD
REEKIE

TEA BOX INFORMATION



A box like this was called a 'tea caddy'



You will see this caddy has two boxes - one is for green tea leaves, the other for black tea.



These little, safe boxes were made by skilled furniture makers in all sorts of fancy designs and different materials. This one is made from wood.



Tea was very expensive in the 1700s. It didn't come in tea bags, but you bought dried tea leaves.



Tea leaves were kept fresh and safe in locked boxes like this one. Only trusted staff were allowed to look after the key.



Growing trade brought new products and people to Europe from different countries. Most tea came from China.

OLD EDINBURGH THEMED
TEACHING PACK AND HANDLING BOX



GO AULD
REEKIE

TEA BOX

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look carefully at the size and shape of the tea box
- Look at the materials that it is made from
- Think about what it feels like
- Think about how it differs from how tea is stored today

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- Why do you think it has a lock and key?
- Who do you think might have used one of these?
- Where do you think it might be used?
- Do you think this was valuable?

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down



NOTES

GO AULD
REEKIE

SUGAR CUTTERS

INFORMATION



These sugar cutters are called 'sugar nips'.



Sugar was cheap in the 18th century. The cost of producing it was low because it was made by enslaved people.



Sugar was bought in a 'loaf' - a big, hard cone of sugar - rather than in bags of granules like today.



They came in cone shapes because of the moulds that were used when making the sugar.

You had to cut the sugar cone into smaller pieces for use in baking or for putting in your tea or coffee.



These sugar nips act like big scissors to break off lumps of sugar from the loaf to the right size.

OLD EDINBURGH THEMED
TEACHING PACK AND HANDLING BOX



GO AULD
REEKIE

SUGAR CUTTERS

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look closely at the shape of the sugar cutters
- Look at the material that it is made from
- Think about what it feels like and what it reminds you of

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- How was this object used?
- Who do you think might have used one of these?
- Where do you think it might be used (HINT: it was found in the kitchen)?
- Do you think this was a luxury item?

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down



NOTES

GO AULD
REEKIE

FOOD AND COOKERY INFORMATION



Susanna MacIver's book 'Cookery and Pastry' had one of the first printed recipes for haggis ever published.



Haggis has always been popular in Scotland. It was a cheap and filling meal and uses many of the leftovers of a sheep that might get thrown out.

Shortbread is another traditional Scottish food. It is made from sugar, butter and flour.



Shortbread would have been a treat in old Edinburgh and not for poorer people.

Oysters were eaten by both rich and poor people. They were really common because the Firth of Forth had huge oyster beds.



Edinburgh became famous for its 'oyster cellars'. And the shells were even used to help build houses - look out for them in the walls of old buildings.

OLD EDINBURGH THEMED
TEACHING PACK AND HANDLING BOX



GO AULD
REEKIE

FOOD AND COOKERY

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look closely at the recipes
- Can you see any familiar ingredients or any unusual ingredients
- Look closely at the oyster shells
- Think about what they feel like and where you might have seen them before

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- Who do you think might have used a recipe book?
- Who do you think would have eaten oysters?
- Who do you think would have eaten haggis?
- Who do you think would have eaten shortbread?

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down

COOKERY and PASTRY.

piece of butter in the bottom of a jug; season it with salt and mixed spices; then pack in as many of the best oysters of the hare as the jug will hold; tie up in a faggot of sweet herbs, and two or three onions amongst them; take a pint of the water you washed the hare with, and strain it through a sarsee; fill up the jug with it, and tie the mouth of it close with several folds of paper; put the jug into a pot of cold water; the water must not come up farther than the neck of the jug, else it will boil into it; when the water boils in, you must put in a pint of water to keep it of an equal quantity. If you use an old hare, it will take three hours of doing; the butter will rise to the top; pour it clean off; take out the oysters and onions when you dish it, and pour the sauce over it; be sure to tie the handles of the pot.

A Good Scotch Haggies.

Clean the haggies-bag perfectly clean; wash the little fat trippes and the rodicks; take a pair of scissars, and wash them clean; parboil them, and wash them before

before the fire; take a pretty large piece of beef, and grate about half of the liver; mix all these materials very well together, with a handful or two of the dried meal: spread them on the table, and season them properly with salt and mixed spices; take any of the scraps of beef that is left from mincing, and some of the water that boiled the draught, and make about a choppen of good stock of it; then put all the haggies-meat into the bag, and that broath in it: then sew up the bag; but be sure to put out all the wind before you sew it quite close. If you think the bag is thin, you may put it in a cloth. If it is a large haggies, it will take at least two hours boiling.

A Lamb's Haggies.

Clean the bag very well; slit the little fat trippes and the rodicks; take a pair of scissars, and wash them clean; parboil them, and wash them before

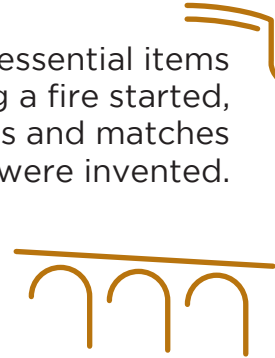
NOTES

GO AULD
REEKIE

FLINT AND STEEL INFORMATION



These were essential items for getting a fire started, before lighters and matches were invented.



The 'steel' fits neatly onto your knuckles. You will see sparks fly if you strike the flint against it.



You could slowly build up a fire from this. If you let the fire go out, you would have to start all over again!



First you prepared some 'tinder' from anything that might catch fire easily. This might be dry pieces of material, dry leaves, old paper.



You had to get the sparks to land in the tinder. If you blow carefully on it the tinder will start to burn.



Do NOT try this at home!

OLD EDINBURGH THEMED
TEACHING PACK AND HANDLING BOX



GO AULD
REEKIE

FLINT AND STEEL

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look closely at the flint and steel
- What is important about the materials they are made of?
- Think about the shape of the steel
- Think about what they feel like

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- How would you make the flint and steel work?
- Who would have used these?
- Where would these have been used?
- Why would these have been important?

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down

NOTES



GO AULD
REEKIE

BELT CLASP INFORMATION



This was called a 'chatelaine' - a belt hook or clasp with little chains hanging from it.



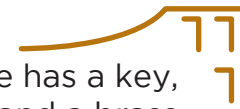
They could be quite decorative and were worn by housekeepers in a wealthy house.

It was a bit like having a key ring for your keys.



You could attach useful household items to these chains, like a watch, a thimble, a seal, scissors, or keys.

This one has a key, scissors and a brass needle case attached.



Early sewing needles were precious items that could be lost easily. Needle cases were important for storing these fragile objects.

OLD EDINBURGH THEMED
TEACHING PACK AND HANDLING BOX



GO AULD
REEKIE

BELT CLASP

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look closely at the belt clasp
- Look at the materials it is made from
- Look at the differences between the objects attached to the clasp
- Think about how it feels

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- Who would have used these?
- Where would these have been used?
- Why would these have been important?
- What else would you attach to the belt clasp?
- Would you have anything similar to this today?

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down



NOTES

GO AULD
REEKIE

CHAMBER POT

INFORMATION



Before flush toilets and proper plumbing were introduced, your daily toilet 'waste' was simply collected in a 'potty' like this one.



If you lived in a richer household, the staff would get rid of the contents for you.

In the high tenement buildings of the Old Town, they were often simply emptied onto the street below.



If someone was emptying a pot onto the street they were supposed to shout a warning to passers-by.

They would shout 'Gardyloo!' which comes from the French 'Watch out for the water!'



It was bad luck if you didn't get out of the way in time - it wasn't water that was being thrown!

GO AULD
REEKIE

CHAMBER POT

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look closely at the chamber pot
- Think about its size and shape
- Look at the material that has been used to make it
- Think about how it feels on the inside and the outside

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- Who would have used these?
- Would this have been a valuable thing to own?
- How would you have used the chamber pot?
- Do you think it would have been easy to empty it (HINT: there were no flushing toilets in those days!)?

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down



NOTES

GO AULD
REEKIE

OINTMENT POT INFORMATION



If you went to the chemists for a cure you might get a pot like this, covered with cloth and tied with string instead of having a lid.



These pots contained treatments for all sorts of different problems, though they might not have worked very well.

Many of them would contain ingredients that were more likely to do you harm.



As well as cutting your hair, these 'surgeon barbers' could also carry out operations and dental work.



Important medical discoveries and improvements were being made in Edinburgh, but treatment could be basic – you would often go to the barber's shop for medical treatments.



Next time you pass a barber shop, notice the red and white pole. The red stood for blood and the white for bandages. Think about that next time you get your hair cut!

OLD EDINBURGH THEMED
TEACHING PACK AND HANDLING BOX



GO AULD
REEKIE

OINTMENT POT

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look closely at the ointment pot
- Think about what might be useful about its size and shape
- What does it feel like in your hand?
- Is it the same on the inside and the outside?

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- Who would have used these?
- What would you have kept inside this pot?
- Do you think there would have been a lid?
- Can you think of a similar object from today?

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down

NOTES



GO AULD
REEKIE

HAND CUFFS

INFORMATION



These are called shackles and were just like hand cuffs, but could also be attached around your ankles. They could be attached to a wall by a chain to ensure you didn't escape.



Many punishments in old Edinburgh were carried out in public. People found guilty of certain crimes were often chained to the walls in these shackles or placed in 'pillories' or 'stocks' instead.

Punishments for children were the same as for adults - the law didn't treat them differently.



The main prison in old Edinburgh was the Toll-booth, which was right outside St Giles Cathedral on the High Street. You can see markers in the ground and a heart shape marking where it once stood.



Prisoners would have had to put up with people teasing them and even throwing rotten fruit and vegetables at them.



Unfortunately, this could even mean children being executed for crimes as small as stealing or burglary.

OLD EDINBURGH THEMED
TEACHING PACK AND HANDLING BOX



GO AULD
REEKIE

HAND CUFFS

1. WHAT CAN YOU **SEE/FEEL**?

- Look closely at the hand cuffs
- Look at their size and shape
- Think about how they feel like in your hand
- Think about the importance of what they are made of

2. WHAT DO YOU **THINK**?

- Who do you think would have had to use these?
- How do you think they would have been used?
- Where do you think they would have been used?
- Why do you think someone would have to wear these?

3. WHAT DO YOU **WONDER**?

- Think about any questions that you still have about the object
- Discuss these in your group and write them down

NOTES



OBJECT INFORMATION

Susanna
McIver



1. REPLICA **WOMEN'S** CLOTH SHOES WITH DETACHABLE BUCKLES.

These are typical of the shoes worn by high status women in Edinburgh in the late 1700s. You will notice that these shoes are straight - there isn't a left and right shoe. As a result, they could take a while to 'break-in' and become comfortable.

It was men who first wore high heel shoes, as women wore long dresses that didn't show off their feet. By the 18th century, though, women's shoes were in vogue, with increasingly intricate patterns and materials - like these ones.

A higher heel showed off your higher status, but also helped to protect the shoes and hems of their dresses from the muck and filth that they could expect to encounter in the Edinburgh streets.

The buckles would be intricate and showy. These are removable so that you could wear them on other shoes as well.

3. REPLICA LEATHER SHOES (TURN SHOES)

Shoes like these were worn by the residents of old Edinburgh in medieval times. Many poorer people would simply walk barefoot, but turn shoes were the most common type of shoe that you would see worn in the Old Town.

They were originally made simply from a single piece of leather. It is called a turn shoe because they were constructed inside out, then 'turned'. This meant the stitching was now hidden on the inside, making them more durable and waterproof. They were comfortable to wear, but not necessarily long lasting, if the sole wears through, you cannot re-sole them. Also, they did not provide a lot of support or protection to your feet.

Eventually shoemakers discovered how best to attach more robust soles to the basic shoe and the simple turn shoe became less common. These shoes are a late medieval type of turn shoe called a latchet shoe. They have a sole and fasten onto the foot with a narrow leather strap, or thong known as a latchet.

2. REPLICA **MEN'S** LEATHER SHOES WITH DETACHABLE BUCKLES

Wealthy gentlemen might wear elaborate shoes, much like the women. This would include shoes with high heels and be adorned with precious stones to show off your status.

High shoes weren't always practical for many professions, however, and simpler leather shoes like these might be more commonly worn.

Note there is no left and right shoe and that they also have detachable buckles. Buckles were often designed to show off your status as well. They would be highly polished and well looked after.

4. ORIGINAL COFFEE POT, WITH SIDE HANDLE.

Coffee had been drunk in Britain since the 1500s, but by the 18th century it had become increasingly popular. This was at a cost as beans were grown on plantations in the Caribbean where enslaved people were forced to work. Coffee houses became fashionable places to meet and discuss the issues of the day during the Enlightenment period in the late 18th century.

Coffee pots like this were made from pewter. Pewter is a metal which is easy to mould to different shapes. The handle is typical of this design of pot, making it easier to lift from the stove and to pour safely. Just such a coffee pot is described in an inventory of the Assembly Rooms at this time.

5. ORIGINAL TEA BOX (CADDY)

Growing trade across the British Empire brought new products and people to Europe from countries across the globe, with most tea arriving from China.

Although it was coming down in price, tea was still an expensive product in the 18th century. As a result, the precious tea leaves needed to be kept fresh and safe. They were kept in little safe boxes like this one – called a tea ‘caddy’ – where only trusted household staff were given the responsibility for looking after the key. The word caddy itself originally comes from the unit of weight by which tea was measured in the far east.

Skilled furniture makers turned their hands to making these and they were constructed in all manner of designs and from different materials. Notice how it has two compartments. One was for green tea, the other for black tea. People could then mix these however they wished.

7. FOOD AND COOKING

Recipes for haggis and shortbread from Susanna MacIver’s book ‘Cookery and Pastry’ and oyster shells

This was one of the first printed recipes for haggis ever published in Scotland. Haggis had long been eaten in Scotland. It was a cheap and filling meal. It also had the advantage of using many of the leftovers of a sheep (liver, lungs, heart) that might otherwise be discarded. It probably became recognised as Scotland’s ‘national dish’ during this period after Robert Burns’ famous poem ‘Address to a Haggis’.

Shortbread is another traditional Scottish food. Normally made from sugar, butter and flour, Mrs MacIver has also added a spot of yeast to her recipe. Shortbread would certainly have been a treat in 18th century Edinburgh and was not for the ‘lower’ classes. It gets its name from an old meaning of the word ‘short’ meaning easy to crumble.

8. REPLICAS FLINT AND STEEL

These were essential items for getting a fire started, before matches and then lighters were invented. The ‘steel’ fits neatly onto the knuckles and striking the flint against it made sparks to light the fire.

The idea was to get the sparks to catch on pre-prepared ‘tinder’ such as dry cotton or linen, dry leaves, pieces of paper etc. With careful management the sparks will catch light and a fire can be slowly built up.

It could be a painstaking process and you had to take care not to let the fire go out, or you would have to start all over again.

6. ORIGINAL SUGAR CUTTERS (NIPS)

Sugar was cheap in the 18th century, as the cost of production was low because it was made by enslaved people on plantations. Sugar was sold, not in granulated form as it is today, but in cone shaped sugar ‘loaves’. The shape came as a result of the production process, which involved the use of cone shaped moulds during the refining process.

As a result, your sugar needed to be ‘cut’ to the right amount, and sugar cutters, or sugar nips as they were called, were used for this purpose. As you can see, they are like a big pair of scissors.

Some sugar nips would be fixed to a kitchen table to allow staff to get greater purchase on the sugar and cut it more efficiently.

In the box you will also find oyster shells. Oysters were a really popular food in old Edinburgh – for rich and poor alike. Far from being a ‘treat’ to be afforded by only the wealthy, the Firth of Forth at this time was rich in its supply of oysters and they became part of the staple diet in the town. Oyster shells regularly turn up in archaeological excavations and oyster cellars were a common place of entertainment and social gatherings in the Old Town. Mrs MacIver’s cookbook also refers to oysters, as you will see.

If you look very carefully at old buildings in Edinburgh, you may even see oyster shells embedded in the walls. If you are going to visit the Museum of Edinburgh, oyster shells are visible next door in the walls of Acheson House (the office of Edinburgh World Heritage Trust). Shells were used by stone masons at the time, to pack and strengthen joints.

9. REPLICAS BELT HOOK (CHATELAINE)

A belt hook or clasp, like this one, was used to hang a series of small chains from which you could attach useful household items. It was called a chatelaine. Chatelaines could be quite decorative and were a bit like a domestic key ring for housekeepers in a wealthy house. They could be used to attach useful items such as watches, seals, scissors, keys or thimbles.

This one has a brass needle case attached, as well as a key and a pair of scissors. Early sewing needles were precious items that could be lost easily. Needle cases were a necessity for storing these fragile objects.

10. REPLICA CHAMBER POT

Chamber pots like this were typically used in old Edinburgh. They were simply potties that were used in the days before flush toilets and internal plumbing systems.

This particular chamber pot is a replica based on real pottery recovered during excavations of an old street, called Marlin's Wynd, that had been demolished to make way for the Tron Church in the 1630s.

In wealthier homes the waste that these contained would need to be disposed of by the household staff. In the high tenement buildings of the Old Town, they were often simply emptied onto the street below with the infamous warning cry of 'Gardyloo!' This is a corruption of the French 'Regardez l'eau' or 'Watch out for the water'. However, it wasn't water that was being thrown out and could result in many unfortunate incidents involving unsuspecting pedestrians below.

12. REPLICA HAND CUFFS (SHACKLES)

These are typical of the types of shackles that would be used to imprison criminals in 18th century Edinburgh. They were leg irons and could be attached to a wall to ensure that you weren't going to escape. Pupils can try them out for size.

The main prison in old Edinburgh was the Tolbooth, which used to stand right outside St Giles Cathedral on the High Street. If you look carefully you will see brass markers in the ground that mark the outline of the Tolbooth and the 'Heart of Midlothian', which marked the site of the door to the prison. Shackles like these were certainly used in the Tolbooth - you can see an example of them in the collections at the National Museum of Scotland.



Royal Exchange

11. REPLICA OINTMENT POT

Pots like this were typical of the type of containers that you would get at the pharmacists in 18th century Edinburgh. They didn't have lids but were covered with cloth and tied with string instead.

These ceramic pots could contain treatments for all sorts of different ailments, though how effective these cures were is debatable. Many of them would contain products, like lead powder, that, if anything, were more likely to do you harm.

Edinburgh had long been regarded as a centre of excellence for medical discoveries, but it often came at a brutal cost. For example, a lot of basic surgery and dental work was actually still carried out by 'barber surgeons', who could cut your hair and then carry out a minor operation on you! The red and white barber's pole symbolised this practice - the red was for blood, the white for bandages.

Of course, Edinburgh also became famous for the practice of 'body snatching' in order to supply the medical school with fresh corpses to dissect and explore.

Many punishments in old Edinburgh were carried out in public - often at the nearby Mercat Cross. People who had committed certain crimes were often chained to the walls in shackles.

Or they might be placed in a 'pillory' or 'stocks', which was a wooden framework attached to a post, with holes for securing the head and hands. This would be a public humiliation for the individual, who would have to endure all sorts of verbal and physical abuse from passers-by.

Punishments would often have to fit the crime. People who were seen as nags or gossips might often be chained up and fitted with the 'branks' or 'scolds' bridle', a particularly nasty device made from iron that fitted over your head and into your mouth. A thief might actually be nailed to the Cross by the ear - the only means of escape being to physically rip yourself away.

The law back then didn't recognise a difference between children and adults, so young children would often receive the same punishments. This could even include executions for crimes as petty as theft or burglary.