Design

A Coat of Arms

What is a Coat of Arms?

A Coat of Arms is a unique design painted on a shield. In the Twelfth Century (Over 900 years ago!) helmets and other armour were making it hard to tell friends from enemies. To help stop this each knight and solider would paint something personal on their shield. These designs were very important in battle, but they also acted like team uniforms when knights met in tournaments.

Can you think of any teams that wear uniforms with a unique design?

Soon, coats of arms weren't just for soldiers! This was a time when not many people could read or write, so having a coat of arms made it easier to recognise others. Towns and cities began to have their own coat of arms and individuals began to have their own designed too.

Do you have a coat of arms on your school uniform?

It became fashionable to have a Coat of Arms. People hired artists to design them and the designs were put on a lot of items. William Beckford was obsessed with coats of arms and put elements of his arms everywhere! Here are some examples below…
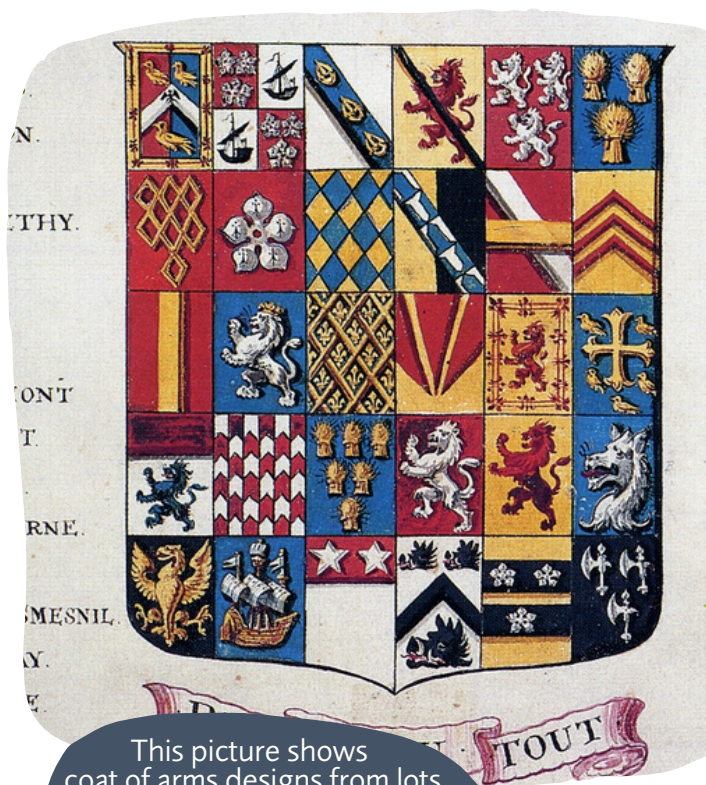
Draw it!

Write it!

Sculpt it!

Sugar spoons

William Beckford's tomb

WILLIAM BECKFORD Esq.
LATE of FONTHILL WILTS.
DIED 2nd MAY 1844.
AGED 84.

Books

Architecture

This picture shows coat of arms designs from lots of different families (inclluding the Beckford family). **Can you match any of these designs to the objects on this page?**

Follow the instructions on the next page to make your own!

Share your results with us on social media or email tower@bptrust.org.uk

Beckfords tower
@BeckfordsTower
beckfordstower

Design
A Coat of Arms

You will need:

- Modelling clay in different colours
- Clay tools and pastry cutters if you have them (or you could use pen lids, cocktail sticks, bottle tops etc - whatever you can find!)

Instructions:

1. First, decide which shape you would like to use and design your own Coat of Arms using the templates on the following pages.
2. This is meant to represent you or your family so think about you favourite hobbies or interests.
3. You could also use the traditional meaning table below to decide what colour to use depending on your personality.
4. Now make your design out of modelling clay.
5. First make the base shape, moulding the clay with your hands and any tools that you can find.
6. Then, roll a thin sausage of clay to line each section.
7. Now make the objects to fill each section.
8. Finally make a rectangle of clay and carve your family name into it using a cocktail stick or a pen lid.

COLOUR	MEANING
Yellow or gold	Generosity
White or silver	Peace and Sincerity
Purple	Royal Majesty, Justice
Black	Constancy (loyal)
Blue	Loyalty and truthfulness
Red	Warrior, Strong
Green	Hope and Joy

Top tip!
If you haven't got many colours, try mixing two different colours together to create a new one!
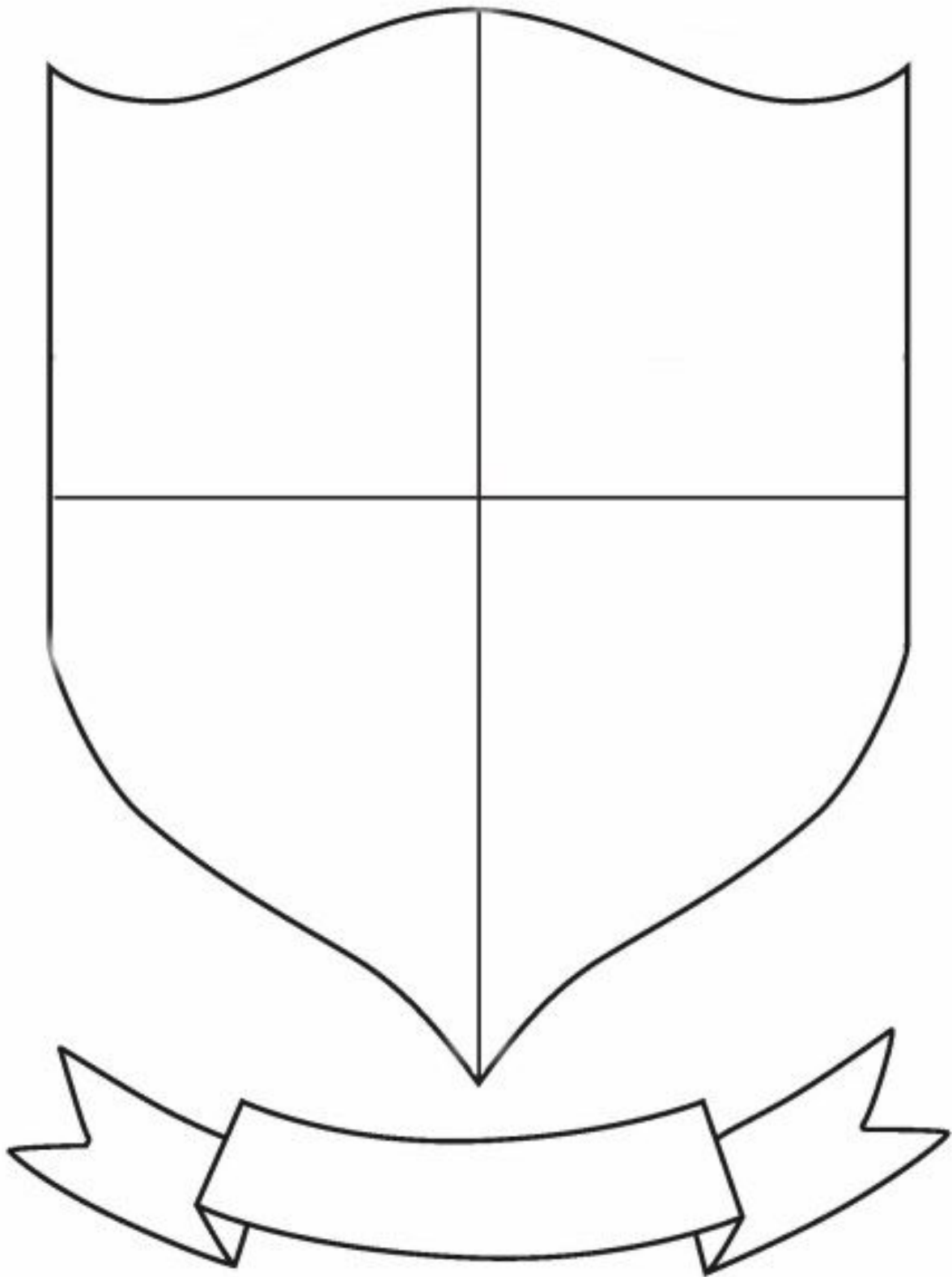
The final product! Where will you display yours?

Share your results with us on social media or email tower@bptrust.org.uk

My Coat of Arms

Design your own on this template. It could represent you or your family. Use pictures words or symbols to fill each section then finish it with your family name.

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