

## Unit 2 Daily life in a Monastery SOC 1-04a, 2-04a

### Talking point

What do you do every day? What do you like doing most? What do you least like doing?

### Activity 1

Study this timetable for a summer's day in the life of a Cistercian monk. What things are different from your own day?

Time	Where	What's happening
1.30	Dormitory	Wake-up bell
2.00	Church	First service. Singing. Two monks make sure no one falls asleep. Older monks can support themselves on a misericord, a kind of ledge on the choir seats.
2.45	Cloisters	Reading
3.00	Church	Service to celebrate daybreak
3.15	Cloisters	Reading out loud to other monks.
4.00	Church	Short service to mark the first hour of the day.
4.15	Chapter House	Reading by the Abbot from the rule book. Faults confessed and punishments given. Announcements. Tasks for the day given out.
4.45		Monks leave to start their tasks.
7.30	Cloisters	More reading
8.00	Church	Service, which once a week includes Mass.
9.00	Cloisters	Reading, washing, shaving, limited conversation.

11.00	Church	Service
11.30	Refectory	Dinner
12.00		Nap time and reading
14.00	Church	Service. More singing
14.30		Back to work.
18.00	Church	Last Service
18.30	Refectory	Supper
19.15	Cloisters	One monk each week reads to the others
20.00	Dormitory	Bed time

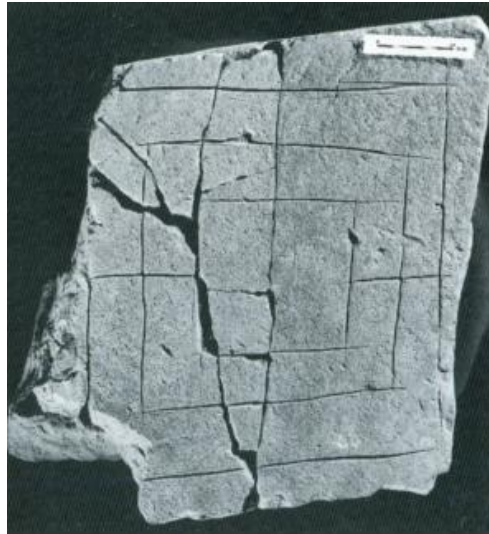
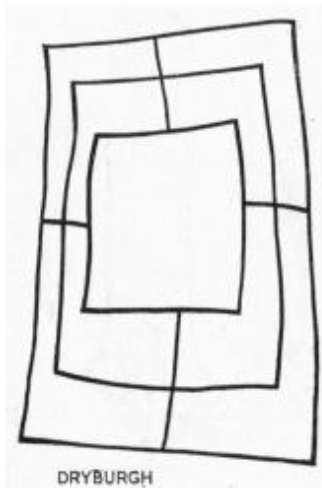
## Activity 2 Numeracy activities

Answer in hours and minutes.

- 1 How long is a Cistercian monk's day?
- 2 How much time do the monks spend sleeping, in church, working, in the cloisters?

### Activity 3

Not everything in a monastery was work and prayer. In some monasteries there was time for board games such as chess, draughts and one called fox and geese. A popular game was called merels or nine men's morris. These pictures show a merels board scratched on stone at Dryburgh Abbey and another found by archaeologists at Jedburgh Abbey. Merels is a little like Noughts and Crosses (OXO).



Work in pairs. Make a merels board by copying the diagram below. To make the men, draw circles about the size of a 2p piece on cardboard. Draw 9 each and cut them out. Colour one set or mark them so that each player has their own set. What do you think the monks used for men? Play the game.



## **Activity 4 Literacy activities**

Write your own timetable for a school day/summer day. Or work in pairs and interview each other to make a timetable for your partner.

### **Plenary**

What do you think is the most difficult thing about living like a monk or nun?

## KEY

### Activity 2

- 1 18 hours 30 minutes
- 2 Sleeping: 5 hours 30 minutes, in church: 3 hours 45 minutes, working: 6 hours 15 minutes, cloisters: 4 hours 15 minutes

### Online resources

Meet a Medieval Monk (Heritage England) – 4 mins 14 secs (for children)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewbjWSAVDLI>

Nuns: powerful women of the middle ages (German with English subtitles) – 4 mins 30 secs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewbjWSAVDLI>

A day in the life of a medieval Cistercian monk – 4 mins 30 secs (presented by young people in Yorkshire)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPvUQwW-Y9w>

How to play Nine Mens' Morris - 4 mins 20 secs (silent, graphic presentation)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvBIKOHikRE>