

## Unit 4      Why did people join a monastery?      SOC 2-04a

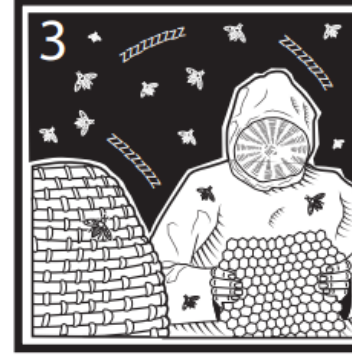
### Talking Point

Do you know why did people became a monk or a nun? What sort of people became monks or nuns? Were they rich or poor? Did people have a choice? Sometimes you had no choice, e.g. children gifted by their parents.

### Activity 1

Study this list of things medieval monks and nuns did. Find a picture to match each of these activities.

- A      Praying
- B      Singing or chanting to praise God.
- C      Teaching, mainly Latin to young people training to join the monastery or to become priests.
- D      Giving help to the very poor – food and sometimes money.
- E      Providing medical care.
- F      Making copies of books and manuscripts, mainly religious but also books from other cultures about medicine and astronomy.
- G      Doing tasks around the monastery such as growing herbs to make medicine and bee-keeping for honey and wax for candles.
- H      Catching fish for the kitchen.



## Activity 2

Why might these people join a monastery as a novice (trainee), monk, nun or lay brother? Match each of these people to the reason they joined. More than one reason is possible.

### *People*

- 1 A king's daughter, aged 11, whose mother has died.
- 2 A woman who was lame and could not sing, aged 30.
- 3 A poor priest, aged 60.
- 4 A noble woman, aged 41, whose husband was killed at the Battle of Flodden.
- 5 A boy from a very religious family, aged 10.
- 6 A poor farmer's fourth son, aged 8.
- 7 A former royal servant, aged 55.

### *Reasons*

- A. To be trained as a priest.
- B. For food, shelter and care in old age and a proper burial.
- C. To work on the monastery's farm as a lay brother
- D. To be educated and safely looked after.
- E. To escape marriage.
- F. To enjoy a comfortable retirement.
- G. To serve God.
- H. To be with others in the same situation.

## Plenary

Do you think you would have liked to have been a monk or a nun? What would you have enjoyed? What would you not have enjoyed so much?

## KEY

### Activity 1

A 7, B 9, C 2, D 4, E 1, F 6, G 3, H 5

### Activity 2

Other answers are possible.

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| 1 | D    |
| 2 | E, G |
| 3 | B    |
| 4 | H    |
| 5 | A, G |
| 6 | C    |
| 7 | F    |

## Online resources

How to make a quill pen (from a plastic straw) - 5 mins 34 secs (Messy)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYQ1VQ2iPsk>