

## Castles and Fortifications.

### Stone Keep Castles.

After completing these activities you should be able to:

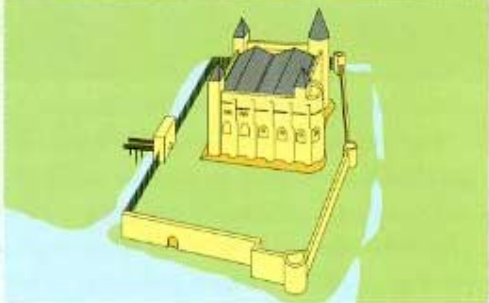
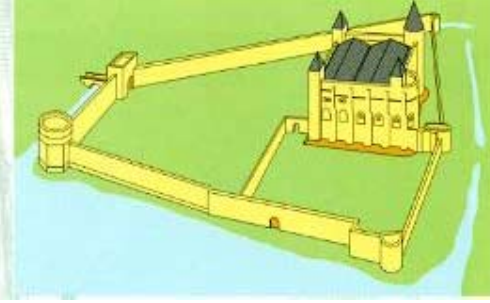
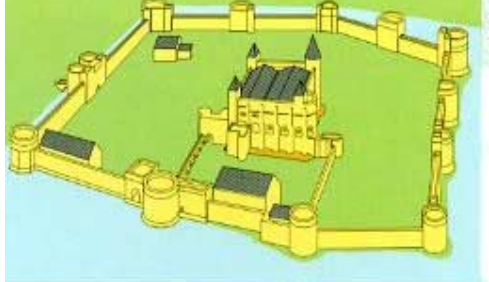
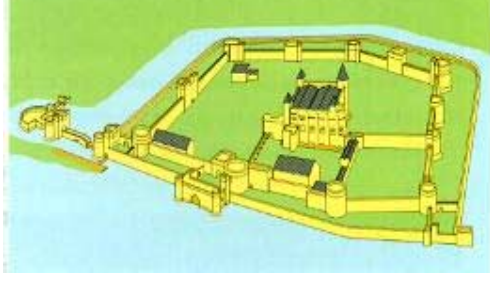

- ✓ Describe a Stone keep Castle.
- ✓ Give reasons for the construction of this type of Castle.
- ✓ Describe the strengths and weaknesses of this type of castle.

The Stone Keep Castle is one of the most commonly recognised forms of Castle. A famous example of a Stone keep is the White Tower in London (Tower of London). The Stone keep had a number of advantages over the mote and bailey Castle. It was larger and made of stone. Therefore it would be more intimidating to an attacker. The Stone keep was also much taller than a Motte and Bailey Castle and so the defenders could enjoy a view for miles around, ensuring that surprise attacks were not an option for a would be attacker. However there still remained a number of weaknesses within the design of these castles. Stone keeps are square and an attacker could, if they were fortunate enough to get close enough, mine underneath a corner and wait for the weight of the castle to bring the walls caving in. Likewise the defenders would need to have a large supply of food: there was nothing to stop a besieging force simply surrounding the Castle and waiting for them to starve! The Stone Keep was best used in towns that had other defensives. London for example had a large network of defensive structures and the walls close to the tower ensured that it was a formidable defensive structure. Other, more isolated Stone Keeps were much more likely to succumb to an attack.



Medieval Image of a Stone Keep Castle.  
(Taken from <http://www.schoolhistory.org.uk>)

The weaknesses of Stone keep Castles were clearly apparent to the builders of Castles. This can be illustrated through looking at diagrams showing the development of the tower of London.

	
The Tower circa 1100	The Tower circa 1200
	
The Tower circa 1270	The Tower circa 1300
	<p>These images are taken from the excellent Castles of the World website.</p> <p><a href="http://www.castles.org">http://www.castles.org</a></p>
The Tower circa 1547	

### Activities

- (1) Describe the major advantages of Stone keep Castles over Motte and bailey Castles.
- (2) Explain what the main weaknesses of a Stone keep Castle were.
- (3) Explain why the builders of the Tower London made so many alterations to its design in such a short period of time.
- (4) Make a timeline of the period 1066-1200 showing the major developments in Castle construction. Add detail to the timeline to explain why the changes took place. Examples of Castles of each design may prove useful later on.