

### Another day another excursion!

To continue the studious theme of our trips, we took our students to see the birthplace of William Shakespeare, **Stratford-Upon-Avon**. Truly a literary giant, Shakespeare looms large in our collective imagination. From lots of coined phrases (like “wild goose chase”, or to “wear one’s heart on one’s sleeve”) and stories that have made their way into our popular culture (like Lion King’s being inspired by Hamlet, or West Side Story by Romeo and Juliet) his influence is almost unparalleled. We went all around, managing to see where he was born and where he grew up. We also got to see the extremely impressive house where he lived with his wife and children and the site where he was buried (along with a very ominous inscription, *“Good friend for Jesus sake forbear, / To dig the dust enclosed here. Blessed be the man that spares these stones, / And cursed be he that moves my bones...”*).

For lunch, everyone tucked into an English staple – fish and chips! – before getting on the coach to **Warwick Castle**, extremely eager for the **Tudor** carnival celebration that awaited us. Warwick castle was originally built in 1068 by William the Conqueror and only a little earlier than the oldest Cambridge college, Peterhouse, which was built in 1284. With magnificent ceremony and flourish, we were transported to Elizabethan England – characters in vivid period costumes really made it a very immersive and fun experience. We were lucky enough to go into the **Horrible Histories Maze** and participate in lots of challenges and experience different cultures and ages: from the Measly Middle Ages to the Frightful First World War to the Vile Victorians, the maze had it all!

Afterwards we got to go inside the castle where we saw an entire room dedicated to **Henry VIII**. The wax work models of such famous figures were incredible to see as well as a delightful rendition of Greensleeves! We also climbed up to the top of the castle so we could see how expansive and beautiful the grounds were. It was then time for the much-awaited **Falconer’s Quest**, a stunning choreographed and acrobatic bird of prey show, including the Andean Condor, the Steller’s Sea Eagle, the Bearded Vulture, the Bald Eagle, and many, many more, each one bigger and more impressive than the last... Some decided to go and watch the fantastic **Wars of the Roses Jousting**, where we got to see lots of tricks, stunts and daring attacks. There were lots of amazing opportunities, from battle skills training to jester workshops and much more!

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After a long day, it was so fantastic to see how much energy the students still had and the confidence and enthusiasm everyone continues to show. To end the day, lots of students still had the energy to go once more to Downing Paddocks for rounders and volleyball as well as the really exciting **Youth Theatre!**

As usual, stay tuned for more updates on our Instagram and tiktok: @reachcambridge

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