

# Minster Detectives

## Signs & Symbols



Self-guided tour of York Minster



### 9 South Transept



Can you find this shield with St Peter's keys on your right as you face the big doors? Above the shield is another cross. Did you know that if the cross shows Jesus being crucified it is called a crucifix. Is this one a cross or a crucifix?


**Design Challenge**  
For your final challenge, design a York Minster floor tile using the symbols you have collected. Think about repeating patterns, colours and select the symbols that you think represent York Minster.

My tile represents York Minster because \_\_\_\_\_

### Word Bank

- Bible** The holy book for Christians.
- Evangelist** Someone who spreads the Good News of Jesus to other people.
- Holy Trinity** The Christian belief that there is only one God, made up of three beings, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
- Medieval** The period in history from around 476 – 1450 AD. It is sometimes called the Middle Ages.
- Nave** The large open part of a church or cathedral. Nave is a Latin word meaning ship. Some services take place here.
- Pilgrim** Someone who makes a special journey to a spiritual place for example where a saint is remembered.
- Quire** A place in the cathedral at the east end where the choir sings and some services take place. Sometimes it is spelt with a 'ch'.
- Relics** Small items important to medieval Christians such as a piece of wood from the cross of Christ or bones or hair from a saint.
- Saint** A person who has lived a holy life, dedicated to God.
- Transept** The crossing in the middle of a church or cathedral.

### 7 The Quire



Make your way up into the Quire. This is where the choir often sing and where services take place. Can you remember what the eagle stand is called?

The table at the top with candles and a cross is called the altar. This represents the most holy part of the church.

Have a look all around you. Can you see some shields on the wall? These represent important people in the history of the Minster.



Find a symbol  
Choose your favourite shield and draw it here.



### 8 Great East Window



Sit down towards the back of the Lady Chapel and look up. This amazing window was created in 1405 and shows images from the first and last books of the Bible.

See if you can find some images of Jesus, angels or animals in the window.

Can you also spot the red dragon and the 7 headed beast? Is this dragon evil or a guardian do you think? If you look carefully you might also find some shields in the bottom row of the window.

### 5 Chapter House



As you walk through the corridor leading to the Chapter House, can you find some faces staring down at you from the stone walls? Some people call these creatures 'Green Men'. They are thought to represent nature and new life.

Walk to the centre of the Chapter House. Can you spot this tile with St Peter's keys? You might also see some more keys on the ceiling!

There are many stone carvings of people and animals around the edge of the room. What is the strangest or funniest one you can find?

Find a symbol  
Draw some of St Peter's keys here.



### 6 Quire Screen



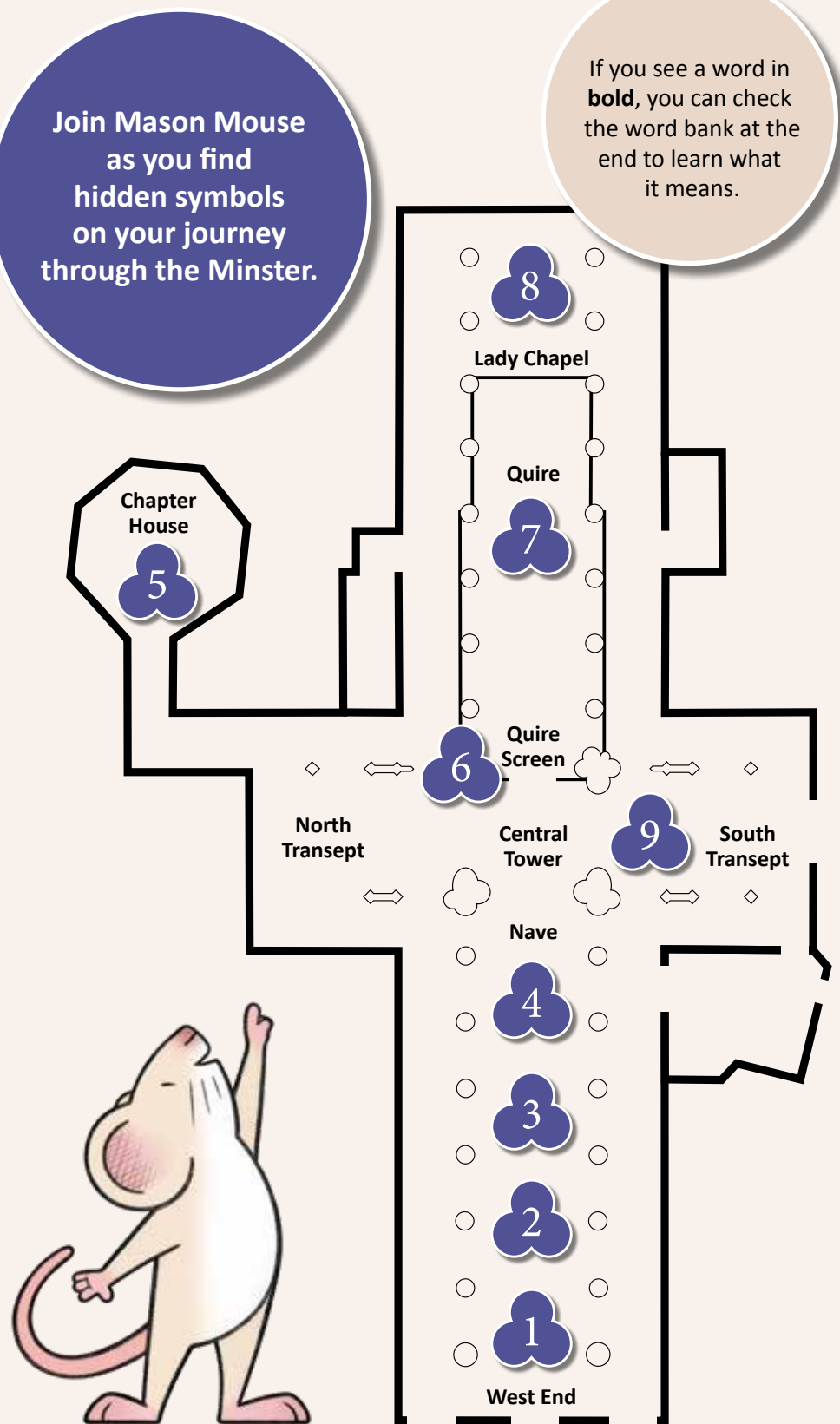
The Quire Screen is decorated with kings who were on the throne when the Minster was being built. Can you find this cat before it sneaks up on Mason Mouse? Clue: look at the gold border under the feet of the third king from the right.

Find a symbol  
Have a look above you. Can you find the angels above the kings with their musical instruments as they worship God? Choose an angel to draw in your box.






Welcome to York Minster, one of the most beautiful Christian buildings in the country with a history stretching back to the Anglo-Saxons, Vikings and Normans. York Minster continues to be an awesome place of worship where people come to pray, learn and experience the presence of God.




## 1 St Peter's Statue

Turn and look at the statue of St Peter between the massive doors behind you. The Minster is dedicated to St Peter. He was a fisherman who became the first follower of Jesus.



Notice the key St Peter is holding. It represents the key to Heaven. You will find keys throughout the Minster on floor tiles, in the stained glass, on the walls and even on the ceiling!

**Find a symbol**  
Look carefully at St Peter's robe. Can you see a creature that is a symbol of Christianity? It also links to Peter's first job. Draw this symbol in the box.



## 2 The Dragon

Now turn around, walk forward and look up. Can you see our red and gold dragon? What do you think it might be for?



Dragons sometimes represent evil and **medieval** knights were thought to fight dragons. Can you see a stone knight high up on the right opposite the dragon? We think this might be St George who was said to have fought a dragon.

Dragons were also thought to guard treasure. This dragon can move up and down and might have been used to pull up the lid of a special box called a reliquary containing **relics of Saints**.

**On your journey through the Minster, see how many dragons you can spot and think about whether they are evil or guarding something.**

## 3 Pilgrim Window

Turn left and walk to face the **Pilgrim** Window (the fifth large window on the left). Can you see **pilgrims** with their horses?

Who is standing in the middle of the window holding a church? The key is the clue!

Can you find these little creatures in the borders of this window? What other animals can you spot?



Look down at the stonework below the window. Can you see a pattern with three circles? This is called a trefoil and you will find these stone shapes all over the Minster. The number 3 is very important in Christianity and often represents the **Holy Trinity**.

How many trefoils can you see around you in 30 seconds?

Get a friend to time you then swap over.

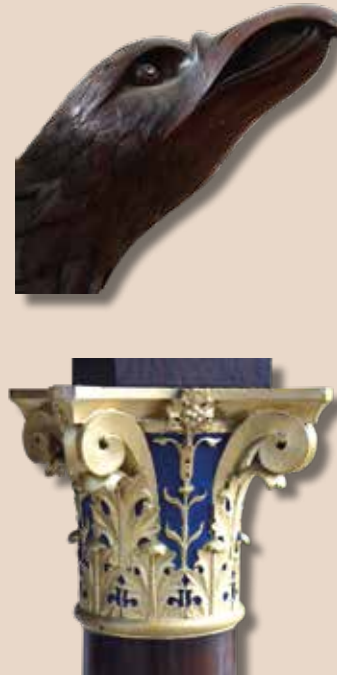
**Find a symbol**  
Draw your favourite trefoil here.



## 4 The Nave

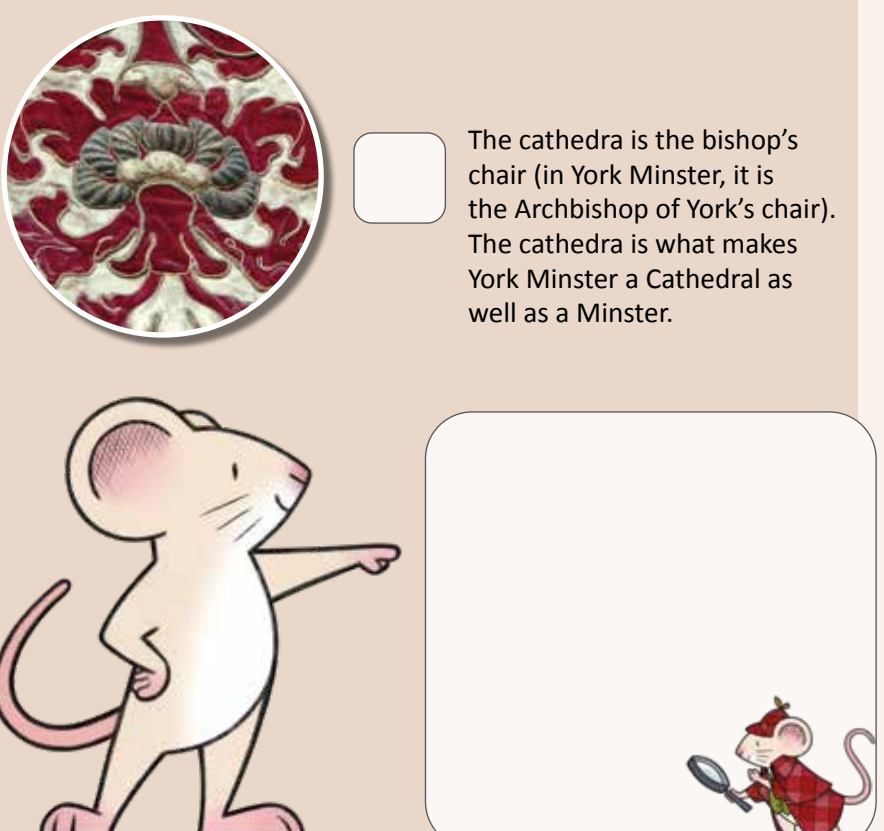
The biggest area of the Minster is called the **Nave** and services take place here. Read the clues to help Mason Mouse learn about these items of church furniture. Tick the boxes when you find them.

The lectern holds the **Bible**. The eagle represents sending the words of God throughout the world and it is also a symbol of St John the **Evangelist**.



The pulpit is a raised platform where the priest speaks to people about Christian beliefs and explains stories and teachings from the Bible.

The cathedra is the bishop's chair (in York Minster, it is the Archbishop of York's chair). The cathedra is what makes York Minster a Cathedral as well as a Minster.



**Find a symbol**  
What can you see on top of the cathedra? This is the most important symbol in Christianity and represents the death and resurrection of Jesus. Draw your symbol in this box.