Guess the Tudor Object Descriptions

Read the following descriptions after the children discuss (in groups) their questions and ideas about what the different objects might be.



Source 1 - A Brank or Scold's Bridle

Description: The brank or scold's bridle was used to punish women who gossiped or told tales. It was a metal cage that fitted over the head and was extremely uncomfortable to wear, and would let everyone know that the wearer was a gossip.



Source 2 - The Stocks

Description: The stocks were a wooden structure used as a method of punishment for smaller crimes. The culprit would sit on a wooden bench with their ankles through the holes. Punishment in the stocks would last for several hours. During this time, people would pass by and throw foul smelling or rotten food at them.



Source 3 - The Ducking Stool

Description: The ducking stool was used mainly as a torture method for women. The device was a chair that was hung from the end of a long piece of wood. The woman was strapped into the chair, which was positioned at the side of a river. The chair would then be swung over the river and the woman would be ducked into the freezing cold water. The method was often used to decide whether the woman was practising witchcraft. If the 'witch' floated, she was guilty. If she drowned, she was innocent. Either way, the outcome would be death.



Source 4 - The Rack

Description: The rack in the Tower of London was used throughout the Tudor period in England. It was reserved for those identified as having committed the most serious of crimes against the state. On the rack, a victim's legs and arms were tied to bars at either end of the device; rollers were then used to stretch the body. This stretching was also used to gain a confession from a victim.



Source 5 - The Drunkard's Cloak and the Scold's Bridle

Description: This was a wooden barrel that a person was forced to wear for causing a nuisance due to having too much to drink! The man had to walk up and down the streets wearing this for several hours, in order to cause them public humiliations - in the same way as the stocks would. It would be very difficult and uncomfortable to walk in. The children may recognise the scold's bridle that the woman is wearing in this picture, from source 1.

