

## Site Spies!



### STUDENT INTRODUCTION

Lymington (above left) and Yarmouth (above right) are small settlements on the South coast of England and the Isle of Wight respectively. A **settlement** is a place where people live. Both can also be called **urban** areas. An **urban area** is a built-up area.

In this study, you are going to be learning about the *physical* and *human* geography of these two places, and what made the location an ideal site for the **development** of a settlement and a port, in each case. You are going to be 'site spies'!

Firstly, though, let's find out a little bit more about the background/history of the two places, and the area, and also make sure that you understand what the *key geographical terms* you need to know mean.

### PRE-VISIT TASKS

#### Task 1: Internet investigators

Using the Wikipedia Web pages for each settlement, given below, you should find out and write a short introduction to each of them in the frame provided.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lymington>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yarmouth,\\_Isle\\_of\\_Wight](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yarmouth,_Isle_of_Wight)

*Lymington*

*Yarmouth*

## PRE-VISIT TASKS

### Task 1: In site...

Settlements originally developed in certain sites. A settlement site is the place where it first started/ was built. Settlements grow and develop around this original site over time. They originally developed in certain places, because there were certain features / characteristics that made the site ideal.

Your teacher will now go through with you some of the factors/characteristics that influenced the choice of a good site for early settlements. Listen and look carefully, and then write some notes into the table below to summarise what you have learned:

Characteristic/ factor	What makes a good site	What makes a bad site
Relief (height and gradient of the land)		
Water supply		
Building materials		
Defence		
Own choice:		

Well done - you should now be happy with the key term **site**.

### Task 2: Lyminster's and Yarmouth's site

Look at the map on page 3, which shows the area of these two settlements and their immediate surroundings. From what you have learned about what does, and what doesn't, make a good site for the settlement, can you label the map to indicate what made BOTH of these a good site for a settlement to develop? Perhaps use different colours for each settlement.

**Extension:** Try to develop some of your labels into annotations to describe in more detail and also to *explain* them as well. For example, why is something a good thing, that would have made it a good site. Can you also see anything that might have made it not such a good site? Why do you think that these were not a 'deal-breaker'... why did they still decide that it was a good site, despite this?



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Choose EITHER Lymington OR Yarmouth. Imagine that you are one of the first settlers to decide that this site would be a good place to settle down and build your dwellings and farm your animals and grow your crops. Write a story about your 'journey of discovery' as you searched for a suitable site, and found this one, making sure that you fully describe what was so good (and maybe also what wasn't!) about your final choice.

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## The Physical Geography of the Solent area

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PRE-VISIT  
TASKS

Let's learn a little bit more about the physical Geography of the area. **Physical geography** is about the natural world around us.

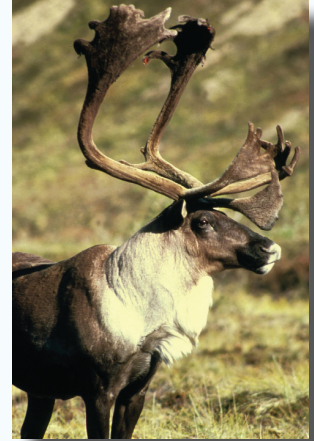
It looks at how natural processes cause natural landscapes to develop and change over time. So, what is the physical Geography of the area like, and how did it become like this?

### Once a dry valley, now the Solent...

Yep, that's right... the area now under the sea and known as the Solent was once a dry **valley** with trees, rivers and animals like Elk and Woolly Mammoths roaming around! The Solent River ran through this valley, with many smaller **tributaries** joining it along its course.

Our early ancestors even lived here; evidence of stone age settlements, and the lives of their dwellers, have been found under the sea here! About 9000 years ago, this all changed though. Vast amounts of water, that had been 'locked up' as ice and snow on the land, melted and basically 'drowned' this valley, cut through the chalk ridge that once joined the Isle of Wight to the mainland; the Needles at the western end of the Isle of Wight are thought to have once been joined to Dorset!

The rise in sea level flooded the whole area to form what we now know today as the Solent – the area of sea that separates the Isle of Wight from the South Coast of England!



### Task 4: Before and after...

On the below left is a picture of what the Solent looks like today. The picture was taken looking west towards the Needles, at the end of the Isle of Wight. In the frame on the right, draw a picture of what this area might have looked like before the ice and snow melted and flooded it. You could add labels if you like, to pick out key features.



When sea levels rose and the Solent valley was flooded, the sea also extended inland up the estuaries and valleys of rivers and streams along the south coast. The stream that once flowed into the Solent at Lymington was flooded and became wider and deeper.

**Question:** How do you think that these events helped to create a good location for the development of a harbour and port in Lymington?

PRE-VISIT  
TASKS**Task 4: In the shelter of a spit**

Lymington lies in the shelter of Hurst **Spit**, shown in the picture. It is a narrow 'finger' of deposited shingle that extends 2 km out from the coast to the south-west. It formed here due to physical geographical processes operating along this stretch of coast over hundreds of years.

The process of **longshore drift** is constantly moving sediment along the coastline. Where there is an abrupt change in the direction of the coast, the waves lose some of their energy and material may start to be deposited.

This material will gradually build up to above sea level to form a bank of deposited material; this is the start of a spit. Over time, the feature grows out from the coast, as more and more sediment is transported along it through long-shore drift.

**Questions:** Bearing in mind that the most common, and the most powerful, winds in the UK come from the south west, how does Hurst Spit help to shelter Lymington?

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How did this help to make it a good site for a settlement, and a harbour/port to develop?



When you are on the ferry, look out for the features and characteristics of the physical Geography of this part of the Solent that you have learned about above.

**Human Geography** is all about people; what we do, where we live, and how we live our lives. See if you can find some features of the human geography of the area on the OS map on page 3.

### Task 6: Using the land

Human beings use the natural landscape in many ways. These land uses can be categorised. Can you think of any?

Your teacher will now show you a website. Write down a list of land uses in the left-hand column of the table below, and then use the map to write down examples of different types of land use in and around Lymington and Yarmouth, from the OS map. If you can, name specific features and even grid references for them!

Land use category	Specific examples from map

Well done – you will be using everything that you have learnt when you complete the activities on the ferry!



## ON-SITE TASKS

You are now going to carry out some activities on board the Wightlink Ferry as you make the crossing across the Solent to/from the Isle of Wight. Read and follow all instructions carefully!



### Task 1: An artist's impression...

In the space below, draw a simple sketch of the Harbour at either Lymington or Yarmouth. Then, try to label as many different types of land use as you can.

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**ON-SITE TASKS**

**Task 2: Name the features**

Look at the images on the next 2 pages, all taken in the harbours at both Lymington and Yarmouth. See how many of these human features you can identify – write which harbour they are from into the table on page 11, and then write a description of what each thing is!

1



2



3



4



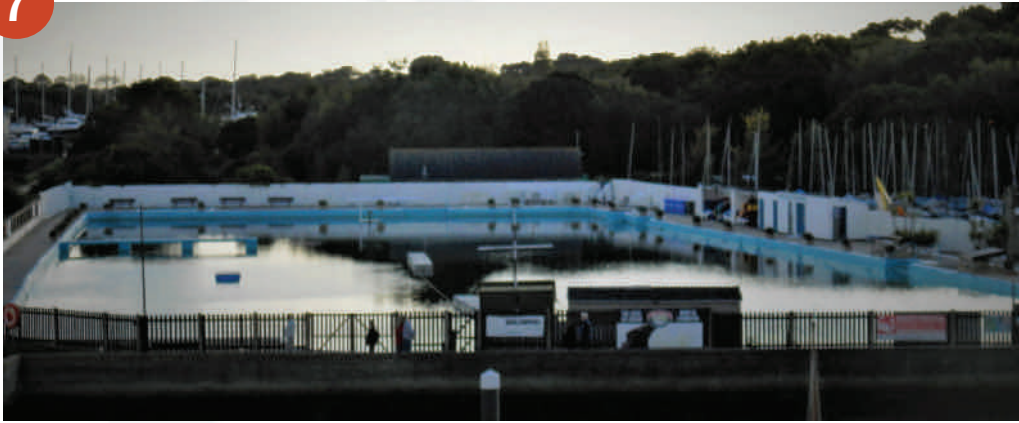
5



6



7



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8



9



10



11



Picture number	Where is it?	Description of features
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		

### Extension tasks:

1. Can you also write down what type(s) of land use can be seen in each image. Is there any type of land use NOT shown in these images? Why do you think that this type of land use is not evident here?
2. Can you describe some of the a) similarities and, b), differences between Lymington and Yarmouth?

## Task 3: Securing the Solent

The Solent, and the coast of the Isle of Wight and south coast of England, are heavily defended. If you were here during the Tudor period (1485 – 1603), The Solent would have been full of wooden warships, tasked with protecting the coastline from invasion and attack. Henry VIII's divorce and break up of wealthy Abbeys in England made him an enemy of catholic Europe. To defend the southern shores, he built 8 forts in 6 years. Hurst Castle (pictured) lies at the end of Hurst Spit, and was built in 1544; a year before the French invasion fleet arrived! You will see it as you cross the Solent, in the distance, looking towards the Needles rocks. The Castle has been used during the Victorian era and World War II. However, it has never actually fired a gun! It's strategic position at the western end of the Solent is so off-putting that any attacking enemy only approached from the East!



Opposite Hurst Castle on the Isle of Wight, looking West towards the Needles, you will also see Fort Albert. It was one of many **Palmerston Forts** built in the area in the 19th Century to protect the coast from the threat of a French attack from Napoleon III. Fort Victoria, slightly closer to Yarmouth, was another Palmerston Fort and it can also be seen if you look carefully.

Further along the coast, Calshot Castle protects the entrance to Southampton Water, where the city and port are located, at the top end. Portsmouth is home to a Naval base which contains almost two-thirds of the Royal Navy's surface ships, including the new formidable Type 45 destroyers, and HMS Queen Elizabeth. The latter is the first of a new class of aircraft carriers which are the largest and most powerful ever built. At a cost of £3.1 billion to build, it can carry up to 40 aircraft. Currently undergoing sea trials, it will be commissioned at the end of 2017. The entrance to Portsmouth Harbour, and the bases within it, has been protected from both the land and sea with defence lines constructed from 1665 and fortified over centuries since.

*continued overleaf...*



In addition to the Naval Base at Portsmouth, four **Solent Forts** were built between 1865 and 1880, with the aim of protecting the coast and the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour from attack by the French. These are called Spitbank Fort, St Helen's Fort, No Man's Land Fort and Horse Sand Fort. However, none of them ever got used for their original intended purpose and were sold after the second World War. They have now become part of a chain of luxury hotels and a museum.

### Questions

1. Why do you think that this part of the coast was vulnerable to attack?
  
2. Why do you think that the Isle of Wight coast and the south coast of England made a good location for the building of defences to protect the area?
  
3. How does the physical geography of the coastline here make it suitable/good for the development of:
  - a) Ports/harbours?
  
  - b) The Naval Base at Portsmouth?
  
  - c) Defences in general?

**ON-SITE  
TASKS**

**Task 4: French attack!**



Imagine that you are trying to attack the south coast of England.

Write a letter/postcard home, to describe your attempts... what were you aiming to achieve?

Have you been successful? Why/Why not?

POSTCARD

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## Summary presentations

*Why was either Lymington or Yarmouth a good site to build a settlement and port/harbour?*

You are going to work in small groups to develop a presentation with the above title. You will first decide whether to focus on Lymington OR Yarmouth.

How, exactly, you decide to put together your presentation is up to you, but it should cover the following:

- ✓ An introduction to the settlement you have chosen – where it is (including maps) and what it is like (pictures!)
- ✓ What the physical Geography of the site is like
- ✓ What the human Geography is like today – the human features and characteristics of the settlement and harbour
- ✓ How the physical Geography (past and present) has made it a good site for the development of the settlement, the port/harbour
- ✓ How the area was defenced in the past, including why these defences were needed, and why it was a good place to build them!

Think about how you are going to divide the work between your group members, so that you each have a 'job' to do. Also, think about the design of your presentation – it needs to be attractive, clear and informative!

This is a summary task so try to use all that you have learned during the pre-visit and on-site tasks, including all those good geographical terms!

Good luck!