Activity Sheet 1: Saint Patrick's Timeline and Diary

BBC NORTHERN IRELAND

What is a Timeline?

A 'Timeline' is a useful way of recording a series of events that are either:

- happening within the present time,
- have happened in the past,
- or will happen in the future.

A 'History Timeline' helps to show us the order in which things have happened. It also helps us to see how much time went by between the events that occurred.

Timelines can be displayed in a number of different ways. Sometimes historical events are plotted on a straight line from left to right; starting with the earliest event and then following on in order. If you travel to the right along a history timeline, you are going FORWARD in time: if you move to the left of the timeline, you are going BACKWARD in time.

We live in the 21st century AD. AD stands for Anno Domini – 'In the Year of our Lord' and that means counting from 0 onwards. BC stands for 'Before Christ' and that means the years before Jesus was born, counting from 0 backwards.

TOP TIP!
BC means the period 'before' Christianity' – that's before Jesus was born.
AD means after Jesus was born (Anno Domini - Year of our Lord)

Saint Patrick lived about 450 years after Jesus. This is called the 5th century – which means between the years of 400-499 AD.

Now let's get started. Why don't you have a go at researching and creating a timeline for Saint Patrick?

HINT! While you're researching look out for the word 'circa'. This word is used a lot when referring to historical dates when we're not exactly sure of the date an actual event took place. For example the book of Kells might have been written sometime between AD 790-820 so we would refer to the date as 'circa AD 790-820'.

Circa is a Latin word that literally means 'about'.

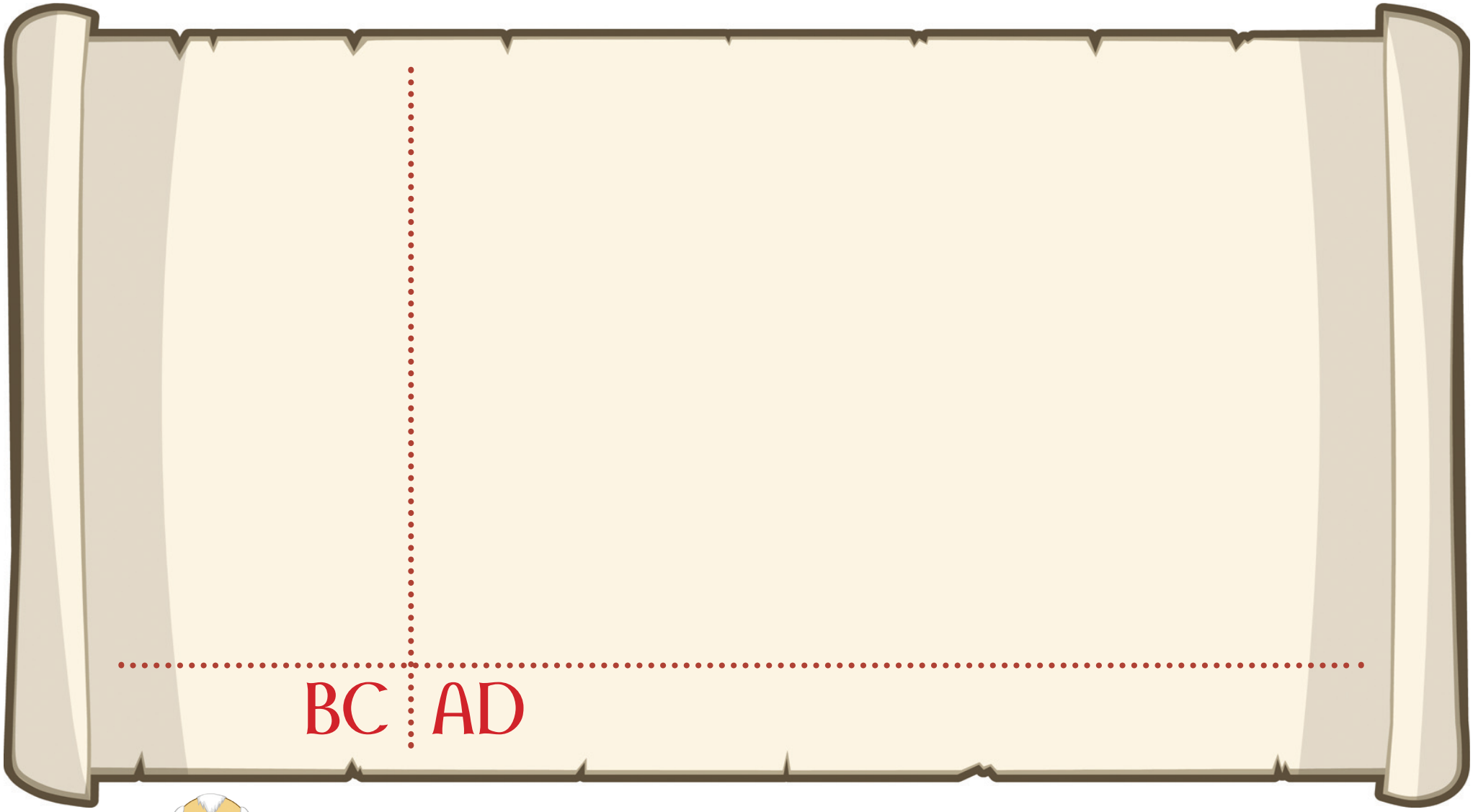
REMEMBER! It's not possible for you to find exact dates for the key events in Saint Patrick's life, however through your research you will be able to find estimated dates for these events.

Now you're ready to begin. Find the dates for these key events in Saint Patrick's life:

- Saint Patrick's birth
- Kidnapped by Irish Raiders
- Escape from Ireland
- Trained as a Bishop
- Return to Ireland
- Possible death

Visit our links page (**bbc.co.uk/northernireland/saintpatrick/en/additional/grownups/weblinks.shtml**) to begin your research.

On the timeline, plot the major events in Saint Patrick's life.



Now that you've plotted some of the major events of my life on the timeline see if you can find out what else was happening in Ireland that either occurred before I arrived, or just shortly after my death and plot these on the timeline as well.

Find out more about Saint Patrick at **bbc.co.uk/saintpatrick**

Review

1. Why do you think it's not possible for us to find exact dates about major events in Saint Patrick's life?

2. Imagine people hundreds of years from now looking back on events that happened in our lifetime. What clues do you think we're able to leave behind from our 21st century, that people couldn't leave behind from 5th century Ireland?

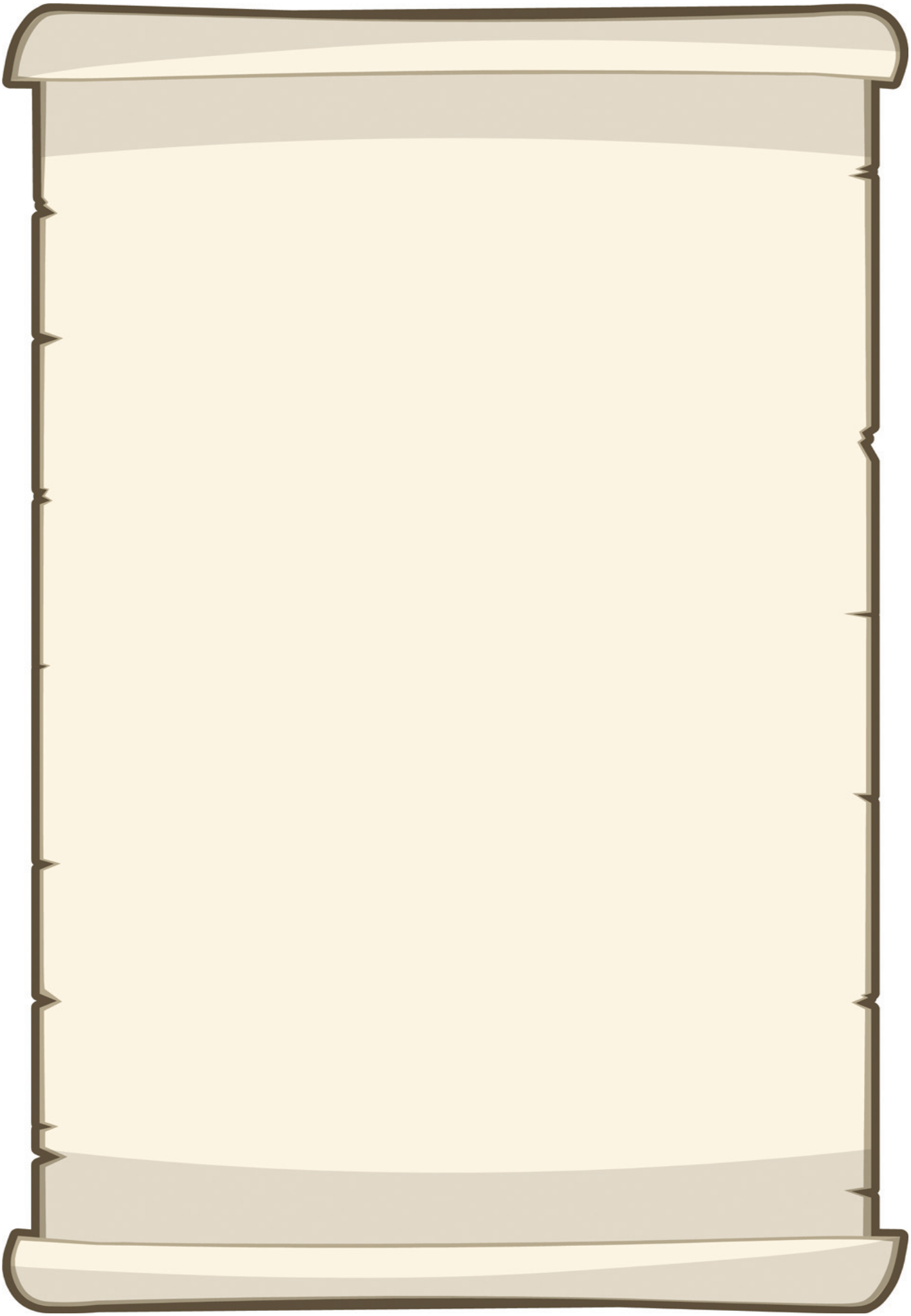
Write

Now imagine you are Saint Patrick and you are writing a diary about three major events that have happened in your life:

1. Being kidnapped by Irish raiders.
2. Escaping from Ireland.
3. Leaving your family for the second time and returning to Ireland.

Write an account of each event. Think about how you would have felt.

Write your diary on the manuscript page and illustrate your writing.



Find out more about Saint Patrick at **bbc.co.uk/saintpatrick**

Note for Parents/Teachers – Timeline Activity:

Dates associated with Saint Patrick. See our links page (**bbc.co.uk/northernireland/saintpatrick/en/additional/grownups/weblinks.shtml**) for recommended sites and further information.

circa AD 390 ..... Patrick born
circa AD 406 ..... Patrick is abducted by Irish raiders
circa AD 412 ..... He escapes from Ireland
circa AD 412-429 ..... Patrick trains as a Bishop (possibly in Gaul)
circa AD 429-431 ..... Patrick returns to Britain to see his family
circa AD 432 ..... Patrick returns to Ireland
circa AD 461-2 ..... Possible date of death (according to Prof JB Bury)
circa AD 807 ..... Book of Armagh written by Ferdomnach

Question 1:

Why is it not possible for us to find exact dates about major events in Saint Patrick's life?

Have a discussion around this:

- the fact that it was so long ago;
- no written records were available at that time;
- stories passed on from person to person that got changed in the telling;
- Point to Ferdomnach writings in the Book of Armagh circa AD 807 and the time lapse between the event happening, and the account being recorded in writing.

Opportunity here for extension activity: children research an event that has happened in the news. They read two reports from different newspapers and compare the facts. Are they the same?

Question 2:

Imagine people hundreds of years from now looking back on events that happened in our lifetime. What clues do you think we're able to leave behind from our 21st century, that people couldn't leave behind from 5th century Ireland?

Have a discussion around this:

- the written word enables us to record things for the future;
- technology allows us to record events immediately they happen, through television, radio, camera, mobile phones;
- methods of archiving material for future generations to see: libraries, computers, books, time capsules.

Opportunity for additional activity – children are divided into groups and decide to make their own time capsules for the 21st century – what would they put in them?