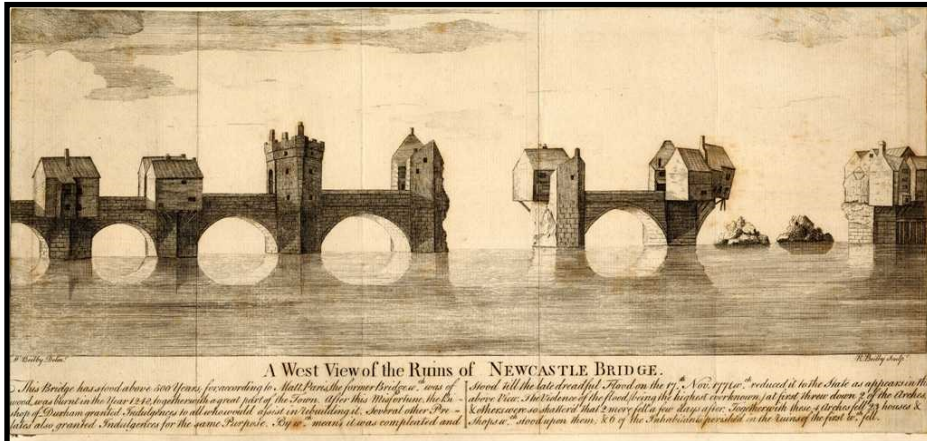


Bridges over the Tyne Session Plan

There are seven bridges over the Tyne between central Newcastle and Gateshead but there have been a number of bridges in the past that do not exist anymore. However the oldest current bridge, still standing and crossing the Tyne is actually at Corbridge, built in 1674.



Pon Aelius is the earliest known bridge. It dates from the Roman times and was built in the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian at the same time as Hadrian's Wall around AD122. It was located where the Swing Bridge is now and would have been made of wood possibly with stone piers. It lasted until the Roman withdrawal from Britain in the 5th century. Two altars can be seen in the Great North Museum to Neptune and Oceanus. They are thought to have been placed next to the bridge at the point where the river under the protection of Neptune met the tidal waters of the sea under the protection of Oceanus.

The next known bridge was the **Medieval Bridge**. Built in the late 12th century, it was a stone arched bridge with huge piers. The bridge had shops, houses, a chapel and a prison on it. It had towers with gates a drawbridge and portcullis reflecting its military importance. The bridge collapsed during the great flood of 1771, after three days of heavy rain, with a loss of six lives. You can still see the remains of the bridge in the stone archways on both the Newcastle and Gateshead sides of the river where The Swing Bridge is today.

Main bridges on the Tyne (newest to oldest)

Gateshead Millennium Bridge – 2001

Lemington Bridge – 2001

Blaydon Bridge - 1990

Redheugh Bridge - 1983

Metro Bridge - 1981

Scotswood Bridge - 1967

New Tyne Bridge – 1928

King Edward Bridge - 1906

Newburn Bridge – 1893

Swing Bridge - 1876

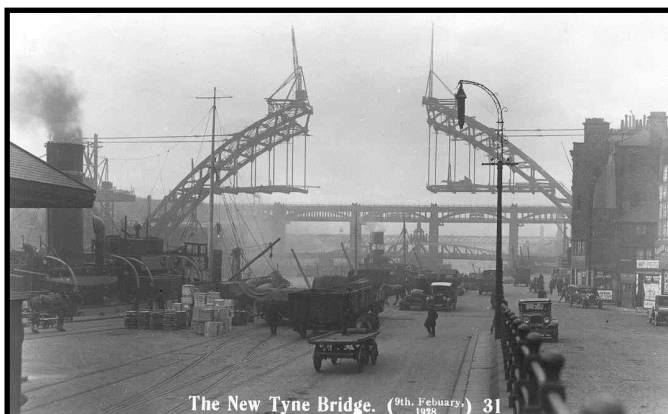
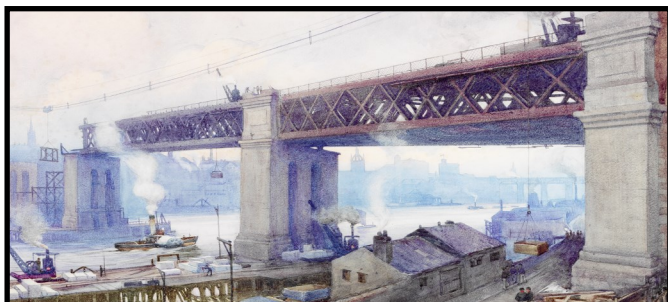
Scotswood Railway Bridge -1871

High Level Bridge - 1849/50

Corbridge Bridge – 1674



Over the years the Georgian Bridge has been joined by six others. First the High Level Bridge, giving the river its first railway crossing, then the Swing Bridge (replacing the Georgian Bridge). The first Redheugh Bridge was next, replaced twice, and followed by the King Edward Bridge and the most famous of them all, the New Tyne Bridge. After many decades came the Queen Elizabeth Metro Bridge and finally, in 2001, the Gateshead Millennium Bridge opened to provide a pedestrian and cycle link between the redeveloped quaysides on either side of the river. In the space of less than a mile seven bridges link Newcastle with Gateshead.



The Tyne Bridge: The New Tyne Bridge was started in 1925 and officially opened by King George V on 10th October 1928. Its full name is the New Tyne Bridge as it is seen as the fourth 'Tyne Bridge' after the Roman, Medieval and Georgian Bridge. Contrary to popular belief the Tyne Bridge is copied from the design of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, but was completed four years before.

Hints and Tips: Session should last around 1 hour.

email address:



Create your own Tyne River using blue paper and ask your group to guess the oldest bridge of the main seven and place an image of each bridge on the paper as you go along in place of where it is. Lots of information about each bridge can be found online to start conversations.