Features of a Castle

• The main **castle gate** was hard to break through. It was usually made from thick, iron-studded wood.

• The **portcullis** was the spiked metal or wood barrier, which protected the doors.

• **Moats** filled with water surrounded the castle to make it harder for enemies to enter.

• **Drawbridges** could be pulled up to stop enemies getting across the moat, or let down to allow people out of the castle easily.

• **Battlements** were the tooth-shaped top of the castle walls, where the defenders could hide behind and fire missiles through the gaps.

• Narrow windows called **arrowslits** allowed arrows to be shot out of the castle at enemies without letting anything in.

Quick Questions

1. Which feature of the castle protected the doors?

2. What do you think the word ‘defenders’ might mean?

3. How do you think a moat made it harder for enemies to enter the castle?

4. Which feature of a castle do you think was the most important and why?
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Answers

1. Which feature of the castle protected the doors? the portcullis
2. What do you think the word ‘defenders’ might mean? The people defending/protecting/inside the castle.
3. How do you think a moat made it harder for enemies to enter the castle? Accept any inferential answer, e.g. because enemies would need a boat to get across/because enemies could be seen easily if they swam across.
4. Which feature of a castle do you think was the most important and why? Accept any sensible answer as long as a reason is given, e.g. I think the moat was the most important feature because it protected the whole castle.