

## The Stone Age to the Iron Age Year 3 (or mixed age 3/4)

**Key end points** of the 'Stone Age to the Iron Age' unit are to know that:

- the Stone Age is divided into three sections: The Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic age.
- when the British Isles were joined to Europe, Palaeolithic people sometimes came to Britain to hunt.
- during the Mesolithic/Middle Stone Age, people in Britain were hunter-gatherers and were usually nomadic.
- farming began in the New Stone Age/Neolithic.
- the Bronze Age began when people learned how to make objects from bronze.
- Stonehenge is a prehistoric monument built over 5000 years ago.
- the Iron Age began around 800 BCE when people learned how to make objects from iron.

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This unit builds on from '*Discovering History*' in Year 1 which introduces children to the idea of 'prehistory'. It is important that all children understand that 'prehistory' means a time before written records, and they know that archaeologists find out about the past from what people left behind. It is likely that some children may have prior knowledge of 'prehistory', perhaps from books or films, but may hold misconceptions (such as Stone Age people lived with Dinosaurs!)

The Stone Age to the Iron Age in Britain covers around 10,000 years- from the end of the last Age (during the Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age) to when the Romans invaded in 43 CE. Such a long period of history is difficult for children to understand so it is important that teachers use timelines throughout every lesson to help children begin to develop a sense of chronology.

Throughout the unit, children will look at the disciplinary concept of *continuity and change*; a lot of things stay the same for a very long period of time (for example, there is very little change in housing until well into the Iron Age.) However, in another sense, quite a few dramatic changes take place that completely change the lives of people of Britain, such as the introduction of farming. The children will also look at *sources and evidence* in each lesson. The children will be introduced to some important discoveries that archaeologists have made, such as Skara Brae and Must Farm, which will help them see first-hand how interpretations about the past can be constructed from the objects left behind. The children will also look at how human remains can teach us about British people in the past, such as the discovery of the 'Cheddar Man', who would have had dark hair, light eyes and dark skin, and was a Mesolithic hunter-gatherer. Teachers may wish to incorporate local sites of historical interest, and use 'real' artefacts to assist children's understanding.

Studying this unit helps children to understand the history of Britain as a coherent, chronological narrative, starting from the earliest times. Throughout the curriculum, children will build upon their knowledge of the history of Britain. This unit leads on well to the study of Ancient Egypt as children will be able to look for similarities and differences between civilisations in Britain and Europe, with the advanced civilisation in Egypt in Africa at some of the same points in time.

### Lesson Sequencing:

The sequence of lessons in this unit has been organised chronologically, learning about life in Britain during the Stone Age through to the end of the Iron Age. Lesson 1 begins by introducing the timeline that is being studied in this unit and recapping what we know about 'prehistory'. The children then learn about the Old and Middle Stone Age, with a focus on how people lived during the Mesolithic age. Lesson 2 focuses on life in the Neolithic age and how the introduction of farming significantly impacted on life in Britain at this time. Lesson 3 moves on to the bronze age and looks at how people migrating to Britain brought with them new skills. Lesson 4 looks in more depth at Stonehenge. The children learn that no one knows for sure why Stone Henge was built and look at some of the possible reasons put forward by archaeologists. Lesson 5 ends with the Iron Age in Britain. Where possible, teachers should look to add in any significant local history linked to any of these time periods. In addition, teachers may wish to replace the in-depth study of Stonehenge with another locally significant site and/or incorporate a school trip.

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**Key substantive concepts** include **society**-looking at how people lived, **migration**, **religion**, **trade** and how **conflict** between warring tribes resulted in the need for weaponry and protection (e.g. the building of Hill forts)

**Key disciplinary concepts** introduced are **sources & evidence** (looking at how we know about life in Britain during the Stone Age to the Iron Age from the things left behind), and **continuity & change** (looking at how life in Britain changed/stayed the same during this time, e.g. how the introduction of farming made a significant change to how people lived their lives).