

KS2: Year A: Autumn Term 2026: Stone Age to Iron Age ([History](#) | [Geography](#))

History

Focus area in Nat Curriculum	Changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age		
Enquiry question(s)	What was 'new' about the New Stone Age (Neolithic)? Which was better, bronze or iron? To what extent did life change from the Palaeolithic to the Iron Age?		
Chronology	Developing children's chronological understanding underpins every history unit. Children should have opportunities to sequence the key eras, understand the differing durations and start to grasp the huge timeframes involved.		
Key disciplinary concepts	<i>Continuity and change</i> - compare and contrast the extent to which aspects of life such as homes, religious beliefs, societal structures have changed or stayed the same over these periods <i>Cause and consequence</i> - causes for the adoption of agriculture during the Neolithic period of the Stone Age in Britain and the consequences of this key change <i>Significance</i> - discuss the significance of the Must Farm Bronze Age site <i>Interpretation of evidence</i> - changing views of the Mesolithic, e.g. reinterpretations of the heritage of Cheddar Man and of nature of settlements like Howick House. (Evidence is a concept in every enquiry)		
Key substantive concepts	<i>Agriculture</i> - the Neolithic is the crucial turning point when agriculture began <i>Civilisation</i> - discussion around what makes a civilisation and whether these periods of prehistory in Britain can be classed as civilisations. Enables comparisons with Ancient Civilisations like Ancient Egypt. <i>Trade</i> - by the Neolithic, there is evidence of long-distance trade. The Beaker people enabled the spread of new ideas / technology in the Bronze Age.		
Relevant prior learning		<i>Prior learning</i>	<i>Teaching points/notes</i>
	Y3	Timelines used in Heroes and Once upon a Time topics in Y2. Have learnt that chronological means in time order, and discussed sequencing of events, within/beyond living memory, everyday chronological language. Children will have come across ideas of continuity / change over time e.g. through KS1 topics on toys, houses.	<i>Introduce idea of scaled timelines.</i> <i>Archaeological evidence is a new focus.</i> <i>Embed idea of EQs</i>
	Y4 (as above plus)	Scaled timelines used in Romans topic last year. These periods of prehistory immediately precede Roman invasion.	<i>Much bigger timescales to grasp.</i> <i>Further embed key vocab around chronology (duration, period, scale, interval)</i> <i>Compare Iron Age to Roman period that followed</i>

	Y5 (as above plus)	Have already studied Ancient Greece and local study (giving overview of different time periods) when in Y3	<i>What was happening elsewhere at the same time? Develop the idea of concurrence / interaction.</i>
	Y6 (as above plus)	Have already studied overview of ancient civilisations / depth study of Ancient Egypt when in Y3 (as well as Vikings in Y3).	<i>Comparison between periods - was the prehistoric period in Britain a civilisation? Place all periods studied within an overall framework</i>
Key knowledge to cover in this unit	- For most of the period, there is no written evidence so the archaeological record is very important. New archaeological discoveries can change our interpretations. - Prehistory includes Stone Age (broken into Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic), Bronze Age and Iron Age - Hard to give exact dates as happened so long ago. Changes took many years to happen and the transition from Stone Age to Bronze Age to Iron Age happened at different times in different places around the world - People returned to Britain around 9300BC at the end of the last Ice Age - Palaeolithic: people were nomadic hunter-gatherers and found food by roaming from place to place in different seasons; stone tools, bows and arrows - Mesolithic: sea levels rose and Britain became an island around 6150BC (before this time Britain was joined to the mainland of Europe); tools become smaller and finer - Neolithic: people began to settle into farming villages instead of moving from place to place from 4400BC; people started to look after animals and grow their own crops; evidence of long-distance trade - Bronze Age: people discovered how to get metals out of rocks; bronze replaced stone (flint) as best material for making tools from 2200BC; people made better farming equipment and bronze weapons - Iron Age: iron started to replace bronze as main material for making tools and weapons from 700BC; people lived in tribes and were often at war with each other; Iron Age people began to protect themselves by settling in hillforts; sometimes people from the Iron Age are called 'Celts'. - Explore changes in housing, societal structure and religious beliefs over time - Iron Age ended with the successful Roman invasion in 43AD		
Enrichment opportunities	KS2 visit to Flag Fen - Bronze Age site https://flagfen.org.uk/learning . Workshop on Exploring Prehistoric Life (can choose if want to focus more on stone age, bronze age or iron age) Virtual workshop with British Museum: Peek into Prehistory		
Outdoor Learning	Outdoor learning - tool making / shelters / role play at Forest School Opportunities to link writing with inspiration from the Woods		
Assessment of learning	Pre- and post-topic assessment of understanding of key vocabulary Regular opportunities for retrieval of prior learning / key knowledge at start of lessons Discussion - highlight misconceptions and clarify Towards end of each EQ - opportunities for assessing children's understanding e.g. extended writing to answer how life changed and how it stayed the same between the Palaeolithic and the Iron Age.		
Equalities, Diversity and	Hunter-gatherer communities were highly cooperative		

Inclusion	Investigate how women were involved in tribal leadership in the Iron Age eg Boudicca, Cartimandua - archaeological evidence from burials (weapons, high-status jewellery) suggests some women may have been warriors and decision-makers Look at migration eg genetic background of Cheddar Man (early Mesolithic Britain); transition into the Bronze Age in Britain was driven by the migration of the Beaker people from Europe Could compare British sites like Skara Brae with other global Neolithic communities
Vocabulary	Vocabulary document

Geography

Focus of study (from National Curriculum)	- Describe and understand key aspects of human geography: types of settlement and land use. Also patterns of human migration and trade. - Use maps, atlases, globes and digital computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied. - Use 8 points of compass, 4 and 6 figure grid references, symbols and keys to build knowledge of UK and wider world [links to OAA work in PE] - Use range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital teChildrenologies - no direct fieldwork but could do bird's eye views of hillforts / Stonehenge.		
Big ideas / Key substantive concepts	<i>Settlement</i> - People haven't always lived in villages, towns, cities as today. Palaeolithic / Mesolithic = nomadic hunter-gatherers; Neolithic = more permanent settlements with the start of farming. <i>Trade</i> - by the Neolithic, there is evidence of long-distance trade. The Beaker people enabled the spread of new ideas / technology in the Bronze Age. <i>Place, space and scale</i> - understanding where settlements / burial sites are located, what they are like and how they relate to each other.		
Relevant prior learning		<i>Prior learning</i>	<i>Teaching points/notes</i>
	Y3	Maps used to locate places in KS1 - Capital cities of countries of the UK, oceans of the world, names and locations of continents of the world, 4 point compass points used, identification of coastal settlements and purpose, different types of settlements, how various settlements change and why.	<i>Introduce skills with map symbols, recap compass directions, introduce grid references</i>
	Y4 (as above plus)	Settlements, cities & migration topic in Y3 - why people choose to settle in particular areas; push / pull factors for migration. Romans Y3 - location of settlements across Britain; importance of roads to connect.	<i>Make links back to prior learning as discuss prehistoric settlements and migration.</i>
	Y5 (as	Rivers and oceans topic in Y3 - importance	<i>Make links back to prior learning.</i>

	above plus)	of water / rivers for settlements. Ancient Greece in Y3 - how geography affects settlement locations. 4 figure grid references introduced.	
	Y6 (as above plus)	Ancient Egypt in Y3 - importance of River Nile for settlement / agriculture. Wonderful World in Y3 - using maps, atlases, globes to locate cities, countries, continents; digital mapping skills 6 figure grid references taught briefly in Y4/5.	<i>Understand that modern-day countries did not always exist</i>
Key knowledge to cover in this unit	• Britain used to be connected to mainland Europe, enabling migration by foot from Africa via Europe. Britain's shape changed with the retreat of ice sheets. • In the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic, people were nomadic hunter-gatherers. From the Neolithic, more permanent settlements developed as agriculture became established. • Settlements take different forms depending on location - eg Skara Brae built from stone (limited wood on Orkney) with unusual connecting passageways between houses • Trade - Salcombe Shipwreck 1000BC shows prehistoric Britain had international trade links • In the Iron Age, hillforts were often built on higher ground - both for protection from other warring tribes and as trading centres. • Significant burial / religious sites are often found on higher ground e.g. Stonehenge.		
Outdoor Learning	Links with OAA unit in PE - develop skills with compasses and interpreting symbols on maps.		
Assessment of learning	Regular discussion, recap and formative assessment of key vocabulary Regular opportunities for retrieval of prior learning / key knowledge at start of lessons Discussion - highlight misconceptions and clarify		
Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion	Look at migration eg genetic background of Cheddar Man (early Mesolithic Britain); transition into the Bronze Age in Britain was driven by the migration of the Beaker people from Europe		
Vocabulary	Vocabulary document		