

Tribal Tales

Knowledge Organiser

Archaeology

Archaeology is the study of human history and prehistory. Over time, objects left behind by ancient people become buried. These objects are studied by carefully digging them up and using clues to find out about how people lived a long time ago.

Historical sites are often identified from above, using aerial photographs. Ruins of buildings may also be visible or shown on old maps.

Archaeologists record exactly where each object was found and how deep it was buried. Then, they try to identify what they are made from and how they would have been used.



Prehistoric

Millions of years before the first humans appeared, dinosaurs walked the Earth. Humans first arrived in Britain at least 900,000 years ago, a long time after the dinosaurs had died. Prehistoric time, or prehistory, is the time before there were written records. Human prehistory begins with humans appearing and ends when written records were first kept at the time of the Roman invasion in AD 43.

Cave art

As there were no records from before that time, people used artefacts and cave art, as well as buildings and burial sites, to discover more about how prehistoric people lived.



Key Vocabulary

Pre-history
Archaeology
Archaeologist
Artefact
Barrow
Cremate
Flint
Fortified
Harpoon
Monument
Peat
Tribe

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Prehistory is divided into 3 main periods: the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages, which are named after the main materials used at each time.

Stone Age (450,000—2300 BC)

The Palaeolithic 450,000—10,000 BC

Early humans living in the Palaeolithic time used tools made from wood and bone. They also started using flaky stones, such as flint, to make sharp tools and spear tips. They moved from place to place, hunting and gathering food. Many great mammals, such as woolly mammoths and sabre-toothed cats, walked the Earth at the time. People lived in caves or makeshift wooden huts for a short time. A lot of the land was covered in ice at this time.

The Mesolithic 10,000—4500 BC

During the Mesolithic time, the ice began to melt and the weather became warmer. Larger, flatter tools were made, such as harpoons. Fishing became easier as nets, boats and canoes were constructed. People began to live in one place for longer periods.

The Neolithic 4500—2300 BC

In the Neolithic period, farming and keeping animals became part of life, so people stayed in one place for much of the time. They began to polish and grind hard rocks to make blades for farming. They lived in small tribes or family groups in round, mud-brick houses, sleeping on animal furs or mats on the ground.

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Bronze Age (2300—700 BC)

People started to make tools and weapons from bronze because it was harder and more durable. It was used to make daggers, swords, spear heads and armour. Most people lived in villages or on farms. As farms expanded, communities began to compete for space, leading to fights. They started to build fences around their villages to keep out enemies.

Iron Age (700 BC—AD 43)

People began using iron to make weapons and tools because it was cheaper, stronger and lighter than bronze. People now lived in tribes and fought against each other for land and goods. Hill forts were built for defence. The Iron Age ended in AD 43 when the Romans invaded and settled in Britain.

