



History

Who first lived in Britain? (Bronze and Iron age)

Year 4

Autumn 2

Background understanding for teachers and parents

The *Bronze Age* is a time period when **bronze replaced stone as the preferred material for making tools and weapons**. This led to improvements in agriculture and brought with it changes in the way people live. Some groups of Bronze Age people developed **early writing** and other important advances included **irrigation, the wheel** and the **potter's wheel**. Different societies entered the Bronze Age at differing times.

'The Iron Age' is the name given to the time period (from approximately 500 BC to 43 AD in Britain) where iron became the preferred choice of metal for making tools. In Europe, The Iron Age marks the end of prehistory after the Stone Age and the Bronze Age. In Britain, the end of the Iron Age is linked to the spread of Roman culture following the Roman invasion of 43 AD.



Key Vocabulary

BCE	BC is a way of dating years before the birth of Jesus. The bigger the number BC, the longer ago in history it was.
CE	AD is used to show dates after the birth of Jesus. This year is AD 2020.
Bronze	A metal alloy made from a mixture of copper and tin. It is a much harder and more long-lasting material than stone or copper alone.
Celts	A modern term for the people living in Europe during the Iron Age. The 'Celts' were made up of many different tribes. The word 'Celt' comes from a Greek word.
Druids	Druids were the priests of the tribes we call 'Celts'
Tribe	A group of people, often related through family, culture and language, usually with one leader
Iron	A metal that is stronger and harder than bronze.

Key Changes and Events

3000 BC	The village of Skara Brae is built in Orkney. The people who live there are beginning to farm their own food and build homes instead of travelling from place to place.
	Construction starts on Stonehenge in Wiltshire. It will take around 1000 years for it to be finished.
2500 BC	'Bell Beaker' culture arrives in Britain. These people are named for their distinctive decorative pottery.
2100 BC	Bronze begins to be used in Britain to make weapons and tools.
1800 BC	The first large copper mines are dug.
1200 BC	'Celtic' culture begins to arrive in Britain and tribal kingdoms develop.
800 BC	Iron begins to be used in Britain to make tools and weapons, instead of bronze .
	The first hillforts are constructed.
AD 43	The Romans invade Britain.

Hillforts

People in the **Bronze Age** and **Iron Age** lived in roundhouses. These could be very large and would have housed many people. One household might have had two houses, one for living and one for cooking and making things. In the **Iron Age**, these houses were sometimes rectangular and were often gathered in farming communities on hills. These were known as 'hillforts'.

Between 500 and 100 BC, many parts of Britain were dominated by hillforts. These settlements provided a home for hundreds, and later thousands, of people.



Roundhouses

- a. thick thatch
- b. door
- c. wattle
- d. daud
- e. timber frame
- f. upright loom
- g. hearth (fire)
- h. beds
- i. logs for sitting on

