Life in the Iron Age with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To understand the key features of Iron Age life, including hillforts, farming, and the introduction of iron tools.

Read each question carefully and use your historical knowledge to answer. Remember to use full sentences where possible.

Ellie the Elephant is visiting an Iron Age settlement to learn about how people lived over 2,000 years ago. The people of this time were skilled at crafting tools from strong iron, which changed how they farmed and protected their homes. They lived in round, thatched houses and often built large, fortified settlements on high ground to stay safe.

Word bank: Hillfort · Roundhouse · Iron · Celts · Trade · Bronze · Agriculture · Defences

1. Why do you think Iron Age people chose to build their homes, known as 'hillforts', on the tops of hills? (2 marks)

2. Explain one way in which iron tools were an improvement over the bronze tools used in the previous era. (2 marks)

3. Describe the typical shape and materials used to build an Iron Age home. (2 marks)

4. If you were living in the Iron Age, what items might your village trade with other nearby settlements? Give two examples. (2 marks)

5. How did the invention of the iron-tipped plough change the way people farmed the land? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene of an Iron Age hillfort. Include a roundhouse with a thatched roof, a wooden palisade fence around the edge of the hill, and a small area where crops are being grown.

Extension challenge: Ellie the Elephant wants to know what you would choose to bring with you if you lived in an Iron Age village. Write a short paragraph explaining your choice and how it would help your family survive.