

Ellie's Bronze Age Archaeology Dig

Learning objective: To understand the social and technological shifts during the British Bronze Age, specifically focusing on the transition from stone to metal, trade, and burial practices.

Ellie the elephant has discovered a site containing various artefacts. As an archaeologist, your task is to categorise these items into two groups: 'The Neolithic Past' (Stone Age) and 'The Bronze Age Innovation'. Then, use your historical reasoning to explain the impact of these changes on society.

Word bank: Copper · Tin · Bronze · Beaker folk · Hillforts · Round barrows · Stonehenge · Flint tools · Socketed axe · Trade routes

1. Sort the following into the correct era: Flint hand-axe, Bronze dagger, Polished stone axe, Socketed bronze spearhead, Beaker pottery. Explain why the development of bronze changed the way people lived. (4 marks)

2. During the Bronze Age, people began burying their dead in 'round barrows'. Compare and contrast this with Neolithic burial practices. What does this suggest about the social structure of Bronze Age communities? (3 marks)

3. Bronze is an alloy of copper and tin. If a village had access to copper but no tin, what might they have to do to acquire the materials needed for their tools? Justify your answer using the concept of trade. (3 marks)

4. Explain why the invention of the socketed axe was a significant improvement over the older flint axe designs for woodland clearance and construction. (2 marks)

5. If you were a Bronze Age chieftain, why would building a hillfort be a logical decision during this period of history? Consider the needs for protection and status. (3 marks)

6. What might happen to a Bronze Age community if the trade routes for tin suddenly collapsed? Predict the long-term impact on their technology and daily survival. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a diagram of a Bronze Age round barrow, labelling the central burial chamber and the ditch surrounding the mound. Include a small scene showing a trader arriving with a heavy sack of tin ore to exchange for finished bronze goods.



Extension challenge: Write a diary entry from the perspective of a Bronze Age metalworker. Describe the intense heat of the furnace, the process of casting a bronze sword, and the pride you feel as you trade your finished work for exotic goods from across the sea.