

Iron Age Investigators: The Challenge of the Hillfort

Learning objective: To consolidate understanding of Iron Age life, including hillforts, farming, and societal changes compared to the Bronze Age.

Join Ellie the Elephant as she explores the legacy of the Iron Age. Read the questions carefully and use your historical knowledge to uncover the secrets of the past. Answer each question clearly.

Answer Key: 1. B (Iron), 2. True, 3. Hillfort, 4. C (Roundhouse), 5. False, 6. Smelting, 7. True, 8. A (To protect the tribe and their resources), 9. Tribes, 10. False. (Note: Iron replaced bronze for tools and weapons as it was stronger and more abundant).

Word bank: Hillfort · Roundhouse · Souterrain · Celts · Smelting · Tribes · Iron · Currency

1. Which metal became widely used during the Iron Age, making tools and weapons stronger than those from the Bronze Age? A) Gold, B) Iron*, C) Copper, D) Silver (1 mark)

2. True or False: Iron Age people lived in small, scattered groups and had no form of social organisation. (1 mark)

3. What is the name of the large, fortified settlements built on high ground to defend the community? (1 mark)

4. What type of home did most Iron Age families live in? A) Stone castle, B) Wooden tent, C) Roundhouse*, D) Cave (1 mark)

5. True or False: Iron Age people did not farm animals; they only survived by hunting wild creatures. (1 mark)

6. What is the process of extracting metal from ore using high temperatures called? (1 mark)

7. True or False: Iron Age society was organised into groups called tribes, often led by a chieftain. (1 mark)

8. Why were hillforts constructed on high ground? A) To protect the tribe and their resources*, B) To be closer to the sun, C) To store extra grain for trading with Rome, D) To practice sky-gazing. (1 mark)

9. In the absence of a national currency, what did Iron Age tribes often use to trade goods, such as grain or livestock? (Hint: Think of bartering). (1 mark)

10. True or False: The Iron Age began exactly at the same time across the entire world. (1 mark)

Draw: Draw a cross-section of an Iron Age roundhouse. Label the central hearth, the wattle and daub walls, and the thatched roof.



Extension challenge: Greater Depth Questions: 1) Explain why the discovery of iron-working technology led to significant changes in agriculture. 2) Compare and contrast the living conditions of a small farming village with those of a large hillfort. 3) Justify why a chieftain might choose to build a hillfort rather than a settlement in a valley. 4) What might happen if a rival tribe successfully breached the defences of a hillfort? 5) How did the move from bronze to iron tools affect the daily lives of craftspeople? 6) Investigate and describe how Iron Age people preserved food for the winter months; why was this essential for their survival?