

Life in the Iron Age with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To understand how people lived in Britain during the Iron Age.

Read the story about Ellie the Elephant's journey to the past. Use the word bank to help you answer the questions below.

Ellie the Elephant travelled back in time to visit the Iron Age. She arrived in Britain about 2,500 years ago. People lived in small groups in roundhouses. These houses were made of wood and had roofs made of thick straw thatch. To stay safe, the people built large hillforts on top of hills. They dug deep ditches and built tall fences around their homes to protect their families.

Life was very busy. Families spent their days farming. They grew wheat and barley to make bread. They also looked after cows, sheep, and pigs. The people were very clever at using a new metal called iron. They used it to make strong tools for digging the soil and sharp swords for protection. Ellie noticed that everyone had a job to do. Some people were builders, some were farmers, and others were blacksmiths. They traded goods with each other using coins made of gold or silver, though they mostly swapped things like wool for grain. It was a time of hard work, but the people lived closely together in their strong communities.

Word bank: Iron Age · hillforts · roundhouses · farming · iron

1. What materials were roundhouses made from? (2 marks)

2. Why did people build their homes on top of hills? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think people in the Iron Age needed strong tools? (2 marks)

4. What does the text suggest about how Iron Age people got the items they needed? (2 marks)

5. Would you have liked to live in an Iron Age hillfort? Give one reason for your answer. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of a roundhouse with a straw roof sitting on top of a grassy hill.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are an Iron Age farmer. List three things you might find in your kitchen or on your farm.