Life in the Bronze Age with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To understand how life changed during the Bronze Age by identifying key developments in tools and society.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Remember to look back at the text to find your evidence.

Ellie the elephant has been digging through the history books to learn about the Bronze Age, a time when people discovered how to make metal tools. Before this, people used stone, but they soon learned that mixing copper and tin created a strong, shiny metal called bronze. This discovery changed everything! With bronze, farmers could make better axes to clear forests and stronger sickles to harvest their crops. People began to live in larger, permanent settlements. They built roundhouses with thick, thatched roofs to keep warm. Because bronze was valuable, people started to trade with others from far away, swapping their metal goods for jewellery or colorful beads. Life was not just about work, though. The people of the Bronze Age were skilled craftspeople who decorated their pots and clothes with beautiful patterns. They lived in communities where everyone had a job, from the metalworker at the furnace to the shepherd in the fields. Ellie loves how this period shows how clever humans were at solving problems and working together to build a better life.

Word bank: Bronze · Alloy · Settlement · Craftsmanship · Trade · Metalworker

1. What two metals are mixed together to make bronze? (1 mark)

2. According to the text, what kind of houses did people live in during the Bronze Age? (1 mark)

3. Why was the invention of bronze tools important for farmers? (2 marks)

4. Why might people have started trading with others from far away? (2 marks)

5. Do you think life in the Bronze Age was easier than life in the Stone Age? Give one reason for your answer. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of a Bronze Age roundhouse with a thatched roof, surrounded by a garden where a farmer is using a bronze tool.

Extension challenge: Imagine you are a trader in the Bronze Age. Write a short list of three items you would like to trade with a traveller and explain why they are valuable.