Uncovering the Stone Age with Ellie

Learning objective: To understand the lifestyle, tools, and survival techniques of early humans during the Stone Age.

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions below in full sentences. Use your knowledge of history to support your answers.

Ellie the elephant loves exploring the history of our ancestors. The Stone Age, a vast period lasting for thousands of years, is divided into three main stages: the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic. During the early Stone Age, humans were nomadic, meaning they travelled in small groups to follow herds of animals and find seasonal plants. They lived in simple shelters or caves and relied on tools crafted from flint, stone, and bone to hunt and prepare food.

As time progressed into the Neolithic period, a massive transformation occurred. Humans began to settle in one place, constructing permanent homes and domesticating animals. They discovered that they could grow their own crops, such as wheat and barley, which meant they no longer needed to move constantly to find food. This shift to farming allowed communities to grow larger and develop new crafts, such as pottery and weaving. Ellie finds it fascinating that these early inventions were the building blocks for the civilisation we live in today. By studying these ancient sites, historians and archaeologists continue to piece together how our ancestors survived and thrived in a challenging, wild landscape.

Word bank: Palaeolithic · Neolithic · nomadic · flint · settlement · archaeology

1. Identify two materials that early Stone Age humans used to make their tools. (2 marks)

2. What does the term 'nomadic' mean in the context of the early Stone Age? (2 marks)

3. Why did the discovery of farming lead to the development of larger communities? (2 marks)

4. How did the daily lives of humans change when they moved from the Palaeolithic to the Neolithic period? (2 marks)

5. Ellie thinks that the invention of farming was the most important development of the Stone Age. Do you agree? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a split-screen illustration showing a nomadic group hunting in the Palaeolithic period on the left, and a settled Neolithic farming village on the right.

Extension challenge: Research a Neolithic monument, such as Stonehenge or Skara Brae. Write three facts about how it was built and what it tells us about the people who lived there.