

Key Knowledge:

Overview

The Stone Age is the oldest period in history and it is thought that it was during this period that humans first evolved. The Stone Age is thought to have begun about 3.4 million years ago and ended in around 3,300 BC. The Stone Age is split into three key periods – the **Paleolithic** period (30,000 – 10,000 BC), the **Mesolithic** period (10,000 – 8,000 BC) and the **Neolithic** period (8,000 – 3,000 BC). It is called the Stone Age because early humans used tools and weapons made out of stone.

Location of Hillforts

Hillforts were built on hilltops and were surrounded by huge banks of mud and soil. They are a type of Stone Age **settlement** and were made them like small towns. They were easily defended by large wooden walls to keep enemies out because war was common in this time. The earliest hillforts were built during the **Neolithic** period and but most hillforts were built during the **Iron Age**. Hillforts were built all across Europe but the most common areas for hill forts in the UK is in Wessex, the South-East and the Welsh marches. Hillforts were mainly built for protection but also because of the ores around that could be used to make metals.

Skara Brae

Skara Brae is a Stone Age **settlement** built during the **Neolithic** period. It is located in the Orkney Islands in Scotland. The remains of Skara Brae still exist and give us a good idea of the human living conditions of the **Neolithic** period of time. The people of Skara Brae lived in Stone round huts consisting of one single room. All beds, fireplaces and shelves were made of stone too. Crop remains and bones from Skara Brae show that the people that lived there were keen farmers, hunters and grew crops such as wheat and barley. They kept lots of sheep cattle and pigs. Skara Brae was discovered in around 1850 when a large storm hit the Orkney Islands blowing away the sand, earth and plants that covered the area.

Stone Henge

Stone Henge is located on the Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire in the South of England. It is a very large man made circle of huge stones. It begun to be built around 3,000BC but isn't thought to have been finished until 1,500BC. The raised stones are called sarsens and smaller stones are called bluestones. It is a mystery as to why the Stone Age people built **Stone Henge**, however it has been noticed that the sun rises over the Heel Stone on the longest day and sets over Heel Stone on the Shortest day of the year so it is thought that it was built as a form of calendar. **Stone Henge** is built on the Salisbury Plain because it is on very flat land and gave the Stone Age people good views in all directions although there are many other theories for why **Stone Henge** was built. **Stone Henge** is near the **River Avon** and it is thought that the Stone was transported to the Salisbury Plain down the **river** and they were then raised by digging a hole and lifting the stones with a huge wooden A-frame and rope. The **river** also provided the Stone Age people with good transport links.

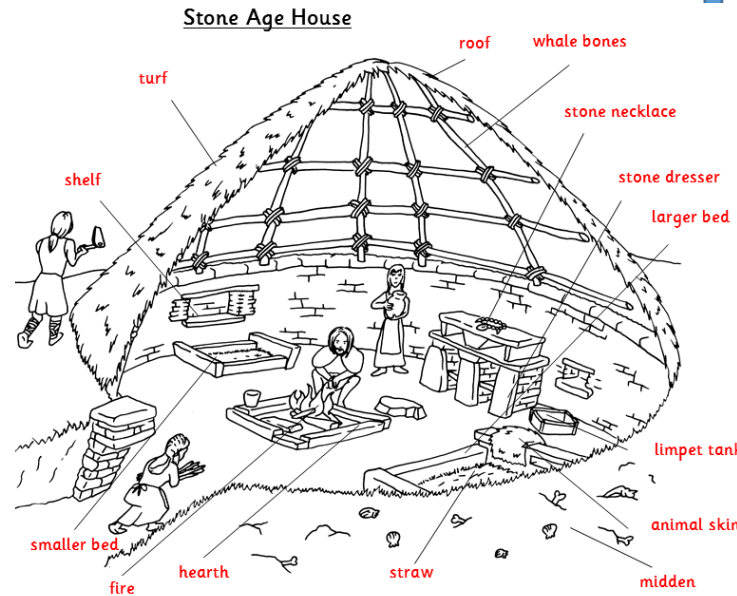
Human features for survival

Stone Age people had two main things to do – protect themselves and to gather food. This meant that they developed survival instincts and built lots of tools and weapons to attack enemies and hunt for food. They also had no heating so to survive in cold weather, the people had to make hides and were very hairy to keep warmer. Stone Age people lived in different areas during the different time periods of the Stone Age, for example, during the **Bronze Age**, the people lived near Bronze Ore and during the **Iron Age** the Stone Age people chose to live near Iron Ore. As the Stone Age people were keen farmers and hunters people often opted to live on fertile land and near animals.

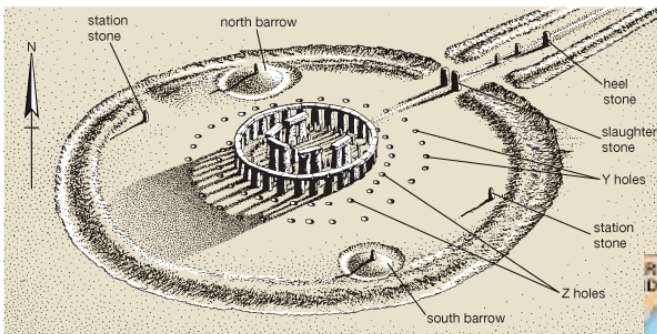
Key Vocabulary:

Alpine	A term used to describe tall mountains or a mountain range.
Agriculture	Agriculture is the art and science of nurturing soil, growing crops and raising livestock
Bronze Age	The Bronze Age is a time period when bronze replaced stone as the preferred material for making tools and weapons 3,000BC – 1200 BC.
Climate	Climate is the average measurements of temperature, wind, humidity, snow, and rain in a place over the course of years.
Environment	All the physical surroundings on Earth are called the environment. The environment includes everything living and everything non-living.
Hemisphere	A hemisphere is half of a sphere, or ball. People use the word to describe one half of Earth.
Iron Age	'The Iron Age ' is the name given to the time period (500BC – 43AD) where iron became the preferred choice of metal for making tools.
Industry	The term industry covers all the businesses and factories that convert raw materials into goods. The Stone Age's main industry as agriculture .
Mesolithic	The Mesolithic was a period in the between the paleolithic and Neolithic periods. The Stone Age tools got more advanced during this time. 10,000BC – 8,000BC.
Neolithic	The later period in the Stone Age (8,000BC – 3,000BC). During this time farming became more popular and hunting became less popular.
Paleolithic	The earliest period in human history lasting 2.5 million years, ending in 10,000BC. It was during this time that humans first evolved and made tools out of stone.
Population	The amount of people that live in a particular area or region.
River	A flow of fresh water across land flowing into a lake sea or ocean.
Settlement	Settlements are the places people live such as villages and towns, or in the stone age times, hillforts.
Skara Brae	A Stone Age settlement built and occupied in the Neolithic era found in the Orkney Islands off Scotland.
Stone Henge	A huge man-made circle of stones built over hundreds of years during the Stone Age on the Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire.
Temperate	This word means moderate or middle and often relates to climate meaning there is not an extreme heat or cold. The UK has a moderate climate .
Topography	The physical features of an area of land. These features include natural formations such as mountains ivers , lakes and valleys.

Diagrams or Maps:



Skara Brae



Stone Henge



Geographical Skills and Fieldwork:

Children can use atlases or maps to locate hillforts in Britain.

Children can use atlases or maps to locate Skara Brae and Stone Henge