



Year 3

YEAR 3 – Stone Age to Iron Age

How did life in Britain change from hunter-gatherers to Iron Age communities?

Prior learning retrieved

KS1 timelines, comparison and using objects/images as sources.

Disciplinary focus

• chronology • change & continuity • sources & evidence • cause & consequence

Key vocabulary

BCE, prehistoric, hunter-gatherer, Neolithic, settlement, agriculture, Bronze Age, Iron Age, archaeology

Careers link

Archaeologist • osteoarchaeologist • museum curator • heritage conservationist. Gatsby BM4/BM6: archaeology and heritage-site careers.

SMSC / climate & sustainability

SMSC: how communities organise, cooperate and adapt. Sustainability/climate: relationship between people, land, food, resources and settlement; environmental change can be explored where evidence supports it.

Why this? Why now?

This begins KS2 by extending pupils' timelines dramatically into deep prehistory. Pupils build on KS1 sequencing, comparison and source work, but now learn how archaeologists construct accounts where written evidence is limited. The long span develops change and continuity and prepares pupils to compare prehistoric Britain with Ancient Egypt.

YEAR 3 — Stone Age to Iron Age: Substantive & Disciplinary Knowledge

Core knowledge to secure in long-term memory and the historical thinking pupils learn through this specific enquiry.

SUBSTANTIVE KNOWLEDGE — pupils will know that...

- Prehistory is the period before written records; archaeology is therefore especially important.
- The Stone Age in Britain spans a very long period, including Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic phases.
- Some communities moved from hunting and gathering towards farming and more permanent settlement.
- Bronze technology changed tools, weapons, trade and status; Iron Age communities used iron and often lived in tribal societies.
- Sites such as Skara Brae provide evidence about homes, food, work and community life.

DISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE — pupils will learn that/how...

- Chronology: use BCE and place Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages on a long timeline.
- Change & continuity: identify patterns across a long period without assuming change happened everywhere at once.
- Sources & evidence: understand how archaeologists infer from artefacts, burials, settlements and environmental evidence.
- Cause & consequence: explain why farming and settlement developed using several connected factors.
- Historical argument: select evidence to support a judgement about hunter-gatherer and farming life.

YEAR 3 — Stone Age to Iron Age: Lesson Sequence

1 What is the chronology of the Stone Age?

2 What changed across the Stone Age?

3 What did Stone Age people eat and how did they obtain food?

4 What can an archaeological case study tell us?

5 What can sources tell us about Skara Brae?

6 How did life change from the Stone Age to Bronze Age and Iron Age?

7 Why did hunter-gatherer communities become farming communities?

8 Would you choose to live as a hunter-gatherer or farmer, and what evidence supports your argument?

YEAR 3 – Ancient Egypt

What made Ancient Egypt a successful civilisation, and how do we know?

Prior learning retrieved

Stone Age–Iron Age chronology, farming and settlement.

Disciplinary focus

• chronology • cause & consequence • sources & evidence • similarity & difference • significance

Key vocabulary

BCE, civilisation, Nile, pharaoh, hieroglyph, Rosetta Stone, pyramid, society

Careers link

Egyptologist • archaeologist • conservator • museum curator • epigrapher. Gatsby BM4: connect artefacts, writing and conservation to heritage careers.

SMSC / climate & sustainability

SMSC: belief, social organisation, power and cultural difference. Sustainability: Nile, agriculture, water and the dependence of civilisation on environmental conditions.

Why this? Why now?

This follows the Stone Age to Iron Age so pupils can place an ancient civilisation alongside developments in prehistoric Britain rather than studying it in isolation. Knowledge of farming and settlement supports understanding of the Nile, social organisation and civilisation, while written and material evidence broadens source work. It prepares pupils for later comparisons of civilisation, empire and society.

YEAR 3 — Ancient Egypt: Substantive & Disciplinary Knowledge

Core knowledge to secure in long-term memory and the historical thinking pupils learn through this specific enquiry.

SUBSTANTIVE KNOWLEDGE — pupils will know that...

- The earliest civilisations included Ancient Sumer, the Indus Valley, Ancient Egypt and the Shang Dynasty; they arose in different places and times.
- Ancient Egypt developed along the River Nile, whose flooding, water and fertile land supported agriculture and settlement.
- Egyptian society was hierarchical; pharaohs held political and religious authority and people performed many specialised roles.
- Hieroglyphs were used for writing; the Rosetta Stone later helped scholars decipher Egyptian scripts.
- Pyramids, tombs, artefacts and written sources reveal beliefs, power, work and social organisation.

DISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE — pupils will learn that/how...

- Chronology: locate the first civilisations and place Ancient Egypt alongside prehistoric Britain using BCE.
- Cause & consequence: explain how the Nile supported the growth and endurance of Egyptian civilisation.
- Sources & evidence: distinguish what artefacts, monuments and writing can reveal and recognise gaps in evidence.
- Similarity & difference: compare Egyptian society with prehistoric Britain using valid criteria.
- Significance: judge the importance of features such as the Nile, writing or pharaonic power.

YEAR 3 — Ancient Egypt: Lesson Sequence

1 What were the earliest civilisations (Sumer, Indus Valley, Egypt and Shang), and where does Ancient Egypt fit chronologically alongside Stone Age Britain?

2 Why was the River Nile important to Ancient Egypt?

3 Why is the Rosetta Stone important and how was writing used?

4 What was the social order and what jobs did people do?

5 What was the role of the pharaoh and why were pyramids significant?

6 How did life in Ancient Egypt compare with Stone Age Britain?