

# Prehistory

## artefacts class timeline

Cut out and use these labels to create a class timeline of prehistoric artefacts. All the images in this resource are of artefacts found in and around London. Ask your pupils to use a map of London to find the places where these artefacts were found.

**Note on dates:** You might be more familiar with dates being written as 10,000 BC and 43 AD. This means Before Christ and Anno Domini (Year of the Lord). Today, archaeologists and historians don't use this system any more, but say BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era) instead.

The Palaeolithic period is also known as the Old Stone Age. During this time people made tools from materials such as stone, bone and wood. This handaxe was made by one of the earliest humans living in the London area.

It is made from flint. It was found near St. Paul's Cathedral in the City of London.



## 300,000 BCE

Can you guess which animal these belonged to?

This tusk and jaw bone belonged to a woolly mammoth around 200,000 years ago.

They were found near Ilford in east London.



## 200,000 BCE

The Mesolithic period is also known as the Middle Stone Age. During this time, people moved seasonally to hunt animals, catch fish and gather food such as berries and nuts.

This harpoon is made from antler. It has a spikey, barbed edge and was used to spear large fish or birds. It probably had a wooden handle when it was first made.

What do you think happened to the handle?

It was found in the River Thames at Battersea in west London.

## 8,800 BCE



✂

There were lots of different tools in a hunter-gatherer's toolkit.

Flint was used to make axes, arrowheads and scrapers. This scraper was found on the Old Kent Road in south London. Scrapers had lots of uses such as scraping clean animal skins to make leather and furs.

What do you think the skins and furs were used for?

## 8,500 BCE



✂

This finely polished axe is made from jadeite. It is in perfect condition which shows that it was never used. It was found in the River Thames at Mortlake.

Jadeite is found in the western Alps, so this axe must have been brought across to Britain by boat. The beauty of the axe, and the long distance it travelled, would have made it a very important item to the local people.

## 4,000 BCE



## The first farmers

In the Neolithic period or New Stone Age, people migrated to Britain from Europe. They introduced farming to Britain.

This axe would have been used for cutting down trees to create fields for keeping animals and growing crops.



## 4,000 BCE

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The first pottery in Britain was made in the Neolithic period. It was a new technology introduced by the farmers who migrated here.

Clay pots were used for storing and cooking food. Scientific tests on the pots show they held food containing meat and dairy such as cheese or butter.

This pot was found in Heathrow.



## 3,500 BCE

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In the Bronze Age, more people moved to Britain from Europe. They introduced the first metal objects, made from copper, to Britain.

Adding tin to copper makes bronze. It took a lot of skill to make bronze objects like this sword. In Bronze Age societies there were specialists who learnt this skill from a young age.

This sword was found in the River Thames in Richmond.

## 900 BCE



In the Bronze Age, farming became the main way of producing food. People lived in roundhouses, near to their fields and animals. Some people in the communities were farmers but others were warriors. Warriors fought with swords, spears and daggers like this one.

This dagger was found in the River Thames in Bermondsey.

## 1,700 BCE



This beautiful object probably sat at the end of a whip, just below the handle. The whip was used to direct and guide horses as they pulled a chariot.

It is decorated with swirling Iron Age patterns. Horses were very important to Iron Age people.

This object was found in the River Thames in Brentford.

## 100 BCE



The design on this gold coin shows a horse. Its head is to the right and its tail on the left. This is one of the first coins to be used in Britain. Iron Age communities traded with the Romans. Iron Age people sold goods to the Romans who paid for them in coins.

It was found on an allotment in Mitcham, south London.

## 150 BCE

