

Home School with Charnwood Museum

The Brilliant Bronze Age!

What do you know about the Bronze Age? Read the fact sheet below and take a look at the images of objects on display at the Museum.

Then test your knowledge with the questions!

In Britain, the Bronze Age spanned the period 2000-800 BC and sits between the Stone Age and Iron Age.

It is called the Bronze Age because tools started to be made from Bronze instead of stone. Bronze is an alloy of two metals, copper and tin. This made it strong and durable and was also used for armour and weapons.

Image: The Late Bronze Age (1,200 – 700 BC) Rothley Hoard was found by a metal detectorist near Rothley, Leicestershire in 2010. It contains two socketed axes and an earlier palstave axe made in the Middle Bronze Age (1,600 – 1,200 BC). There is also a rare bronze, two-part axe mould for casting a 'Welby' type of axe.



The knowledge of how to make Bronze was brought to Britain by people who travelled from other countries. One such group became known as the 'Beaker People', named after the type of pottery, they made.

From 1500BC, Bronze Age people tended to live settlements of roundhouses, forming communities. Previously, people tended to live on high ground in hillforts like Beacon Hill near Woodhouse Eaves.

Locally there is evidence of several Bronze Age burial grounds, in particular mounds or barrows. They would usually contain a mixture of burials and cremations.

The most interesting local burial ground is at Cossington where 3 barrows were built in the Early Bronze Age. One barrow contained the burial of a young child, along with several items they might have required in the afterlife such as bowls for food or to be used as a lamp.

In the third barrow a very rare bead necklace was found with a female burial.



Image: An Early Bronze Age (2,600 – 1,600 BC) 'pygmy cup' from Cossington, Leicestershire. 'Pygmy cups' are small pottery vessels often found in graves. They sometimes have two small holes in the side suggesting they were suspended on a cord. Archaeologists think they may have been made especially for burials, perhaps used to hold incense during a ceremony then buried with the dead.

Now have a go at answering the following questions!

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Now have a go at answering the following questions:

- 1) Which high point in Leicestershire had a hill fort?
- 2) What tools could be made from the pictured moulds?
- 3) What would these tools have been used for?
- 4) Where was the child found?
- 5) What were the Cossington Barrows?
- 6) Take a look at the picture of the pottery from the Bronze Age. What do you think they were used for?

Draw what you think your house would have looked like if you lived during the Bronze Age!

