

Teachers Notes

Thanks for watching our short video about the Headland Archaeology excavations in Norfolk on behalf of Vattenfall. This document is to give you a little more information and a few ideas on activities you could do in your class about the topics we discussed in the video.

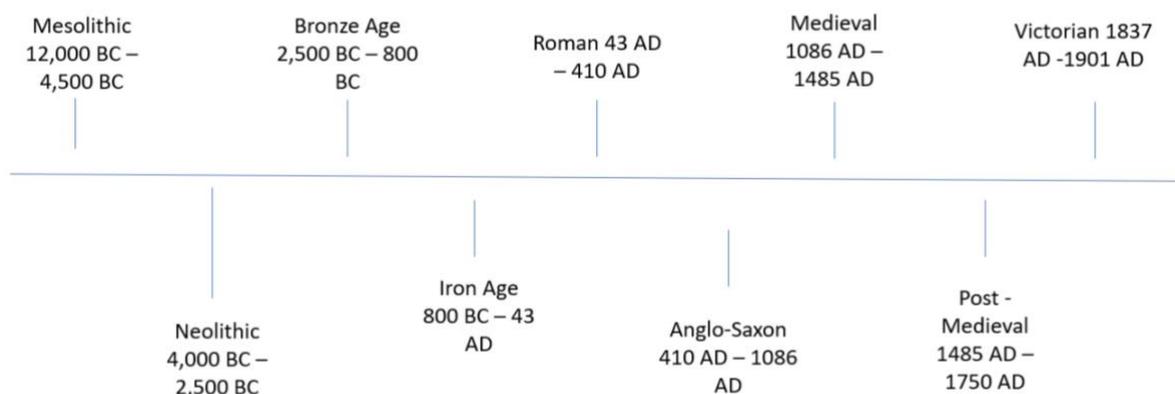
Medieval and Post-Medieval time periods

The Medieval period does not really have a definite beginning date – it depends on who you ask. Some insist that the Medieval period begins when the Romans leave Britain, some say it starts around 700 AD, and some believe that the medieval period starts with the Norman Conquest and the introduction of Castles, which dramatically changed the landscape in Britain. However, it is generally agreed that the Medieval period comes to an end in 1485 with the Battle of Bosworth and the Tudor accession to the throne. After this, periods are usually broken up into smaller chunks and referred to by their ruler/s, ie. Tudor, Stuart, Elizabethan. However, it is hard to tell smaller periods apart in archaeological terms so archaeologists refer to a longer time period called the 'Post-Medieval' which begins in 1485 and ends around 1750.

Activity Idea - timeline

After watching the video and learning that the site and artefacts are from the Medieval and Post Medieval periods, perhaps discuss with your class when they think these time periods were. Medieval might be easier, the period with Castles and Kings – Post Medieval may need the explanation above if any students mention 'Tudor' or 'Elizabethan'. You could then create a timeline by asking if anyone knows of any other time periods and how long ago they may be. A rough guide is below (we have used the Norman Conquest as the start date for our Medieval period to allow for the Anglo-Saxon Period as well). These periods are a guide and don't include big events or important people. If your students suggest these too you can just fit them in ie. Viking attack at Lindisfarne 793 AD, World Wars, battles or even the birth of Christ – adding the birth of Christ is a good catalyst for talking about the terms BC (before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini – which means in the year of our lord, in Latin)

You might even want to space the students out in a line, travelling back in time from now! Pick one student to be themselves and stand right at the right side of the room and then each student that offers a suggestion on the timeline could get up and join the line – fostering discussion about how far away they might need to stand.



Medieval Whimpwell

You might have noticed in the video that we mentioned that the Medieval Settlement of Whimpwell was written about in a document written almost a thousand years ago. This document is the Domesday Book and we didn't quite have enough time to explain about it in the video.

Activity Idea

As an activity with older learners with individual access to the internet you might want to tell them the name and when it was written and see if they can do some solo research on the topic to find out why it was made and why it is so important to archaeologists and historians. If you would like to explore it with your class as a group why not have a look at the link below where you can find out everything there is to know about the Domesday Book. There is even an interactive map on the site that will show you all the places mentioned – why not see if you can find Whimpwell on the map and see what the book says about it. Perhaps you could use the information about Whimpwell from the Domesday book and the information about Medieval backyards ('plots' or 'tofts') and have your students do a creative map showing what they think Medieval Whimpwell might have looked like. This can be a great opener into talking about maps and their uses etc.

<https://opendomesday.org/>

Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts

The images we used in the video to illustrate the Medieval backyards are authentic Medieval drawings from books called 'Illuminated Manuscripts'. These were highly decorative, handmade books used during the Medieval period and get their name from the beautiful pictures or 'illuminations'. They were most often religious texts and not everyone, not even every wealthy person, would have had them.

The border illustrations from the video of people with crops and the men with barrels are from a book called 'The Breviary of Queen Isabella of Castille' that was given to her as a present. A Breviary or a 'Liturgy of Hours' as it is also known was a type of illuminated manuscript used by Monks, Priests and Bishops which contained all the hymns, prayers and Psalms they would need to recite during the day to mark the hours with prayer. These were heavy, costly and fragile so smaller versions of these were also made later in the medieval period, meaning that wealthy medieval people could have their own portable version, called a 'Book of Hours'.

Although these books were predominately religious texts and therefore mostly have illuminations about stories from the bible, illustrations from pages which detail days of the month often have contemporary drawings illustrating what happens in each season. These images are useful for archaeologists and historians as they can tell us a little about the activities people did and the clothes they wore as well as the tools they used.

Activity Idea

The British Library website has many digitised images of the pages from illuminated manuscripts. Why not use the above information for your class and then explore some of the images on the website. After you've explored the images, The British Library also has a page of videos that show how illuminated manuscripts were made. You could watch a few relevant ones as a class and then have a go at writing your own illuminated manuscript passage? Draw the first letter really large, taking up several lines, just like they do in the medieval texts and then fill the shape with pictures that explain what's in your passage of writing. For example, you might write a short paragraph about a Monkey. If you start with the word 'Monkeys' and draw the M really big you could draw monkeys swinging from the angles on the letter 'M'. Younger students or non-confident writers may be able to do a version of this activity as well – there is a template available which has capital letters that are

hollow – why not just use these to fill with images? You could even then use special pens or paint to highlight bits in gold.

Illuminated manuscripts on The British Library website

<https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/welcome.htm>

*this is the catalogue of illuminated manuscripts – there is a quick search at the right you can use to enter keywords like ‘animals’ or ‘gardens’ which will show up several images.

Videos about the making of illuminated manuscripts

<https://www.bl.uk/medieval-english-french-manuscripts/articles/how-to-make-a-medieval-manuscript>

Further Useful Links:

The Young Archaeologists’ Club (YAC) is a UK-wide club where 8-16 year olds can participate in real archaeology and discover why it matters. If you want to become a professional archaeologist in the future or just feel like taking up an amazing new hobby, YAC could be a great place to start.

<https://www.yac-uk.org/>

The teachers resource section of the Norfolk Heritage Explorer website contains some useful resource packs on different time periods. The wider website also offers an abridged version of the Norfolk Historic Environment Register, where you can access information about historic sites across Norfolk.

<https://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/teaching-resources>