

Salisbury Museum's Wessex Gallery showcases over 2,500 rare objects which tell the story of early Britain from the mathematical genius of the ancient Britons and Beaker people through to the Roman invasion and the Norman Conquest.

Famous and treasured exhibits include the Beaker grave of the Amesbury Archer, a circa 2300BC Bronze Age man who was uncovered in 2002 with his possessions including Britain's oldest gold objects.

A standard class visit of up to 35 children will include led activities and exploration in the gallery.

The session is designed to be compact and with a pace to keep a class motivated and engaged. Additional student numbers and additional activities can be discussed with the Learning Officer before your visit.

What will we achieve?

To handle artefacts from the Neolithic, Mesolithic, Palaeolithic ages and Bronze Age.

To discuss how archaeology can provide us with information about prehistory

To find out about the life and death of the Amesbury Archer and why he is so important to us today.

To learn how to record archaeological finds, and how important this is for research. This will include writing, measuring and sketching.

To gain an insight into life and technology during the time of the Amesbury Archer

To compare everyday life today and 4000 years ago.

The late Stone Age. What do you know?

Very brief recap of existing knowledge.

Activities:

1 Discussion and introduction

Rot or Not? Discussion on what has survived the grave and why. How does this help archaeologists? A brief run through of Amesbury Archer facts. How was the Archer discovered and what amazing facts can science tell us about his life.

2 Recording archaeology

Stone Age/early Bronze Age handling. Finds are then recorded on individual Archaeology Record Sheets. Includes some sketching and measuring.

3 Grave Goods

What do grave goods tell us? What objects represent you and your interests/hobbies? Pairs activity to decide for the other person. Recorded as a sketch with annotation.

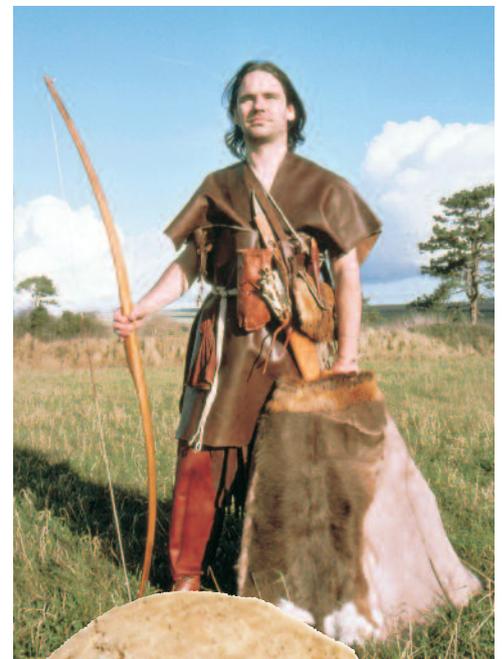
Amesbury Archer

4 Amesbury Archer replica kit handling

Go through the replica costume discussing form and function.

5 Costumes

Each child given Neolithic costume to try. This is a photo opportunity, and possible Neolithic role play/discussion.



Amesbury Archer

Pre and Post visit activities

Pre Visit

Your visit to the museum features a step by step introduction to the story of the discovery of the Amesbury Archer and how scientists discovered all the amazing facts about him.

Post Visit

Follow on activities and research to build on what your class have learnt about the Amesbury Archer.

Timeline

Looking at how far back the end of the Neolithic was, and where objects, characters and moments from time sit in that time line.

Book

A Street Through Time:

A 12,000-year Journey Along the Same Street by Dorling Kindersley

BBC British History TimeLine

www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/launch_tl_british.shtml

BBC Ancient Britain Pages

Short films, colouring sheets etc.

www.bbc.co.uk/history/handsonhistory/ancient-britain.shtml

Look at the Portable Antiquities Scheme

and see how finds are recorded and what has been found near you

<http://finds.org.uk/>

Activities online and off at the Young Archaeologist's Website

www.yac-uk.org/funandgames

'Rot or Not'

Make a selection of objects ranging in material and bury in various situations in the school. Try different soil types and moisture and maybe somewhere that is walked over and somewhere that is undisturbed. Record the objects before and after they are buried.

See the Amesbury Archer archaeologist's reports and photos on the Wessex Archaeology website

www.wessexarch.co.uk/projects/amesbury/press/archer_feb_03_v1.html

Tribal life Drama

Construct a list of every day jobs that would need to be done to live in the Neolithic. Then delegate these roles to class members and provide ideas for miming so the whole class acts out a tribal scene.

Sewing

Using a large sheet of paper, make a 'butterfly' style cut out in sock shape, fold together and 'stitch' using single hole punches and strips of paper to make your own Archer style paper shoes.