



PEREGRINI Lindisfarne  
Landscape Partnership



IRON AGE  
ARTEFACT BOX



Landscapes  
for life  
.org.uk





IRON AGE ARTEFACT BOX- COMPLETE BOX



<b>1</b>	Goddess Mask	<b>9</b>	Arrow
<b>2</b>	Bone Hair Pin	<b>10</b>	Spindle Whorl
<b>3</b>	Bone Craft Tool	<b>11</b>	Small Knife
<b>4</b>	Bone Weaving Comb	<b>12</b>	Votive Head
<b>5</b>	Leather Armlet	<b>13</b>	Iron Age Game & 13 blue & 13 white counters in Canvas Bag
<b>6</b>	Iron Cosmetic Implement	<b>14</b>	Leather Shoes [x2]
<b>7</b>	Scalpel	<b>15</b>	Hare Brooch
<b>8</b>	Votive Shield	<b>16</b>	<b>Iron Age Loan Box- Risk Assessment</b>
		<b>17</b>	<b>Artefact Box Booklet-Iron Age</b>

## Acknowledgements

The artefacts were made by Emma Berry and Andrew Bates of Phenix Studios Ltd of Hexham, Northumberland. <http://www.phenixstudios.com/>



Landscapes  
for life  
.org.uk



**Item: 1**

**Brief Description: Goddess Mask**



**Further Information:**

- This mask is taken from the face of the goddess represented on the Gundestrup Cauldron.
- The mask is made from leather which has been gilded.
- The Gundestrup Cauldron is a silver cauldron that was found in a bog in Denmark.
- The vessel had been placed in the bog as an extremely valuable sacrifice.
- The cauldron is a very important find because it reveals links between communities thousands of miles apart.
- The style and decoration of the vessel suggests it was made in Bulgaria or Romania. But some of the animals in the design suggest there was influence from even further afield as far as Asia.

**Explore:**

Images of the cauldron and further information can be found at :  
<https://britishmuseum.tumblr.com/post/132087416007/the-gundestrup-cauldron>



ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE

**Item: 2**



**Brief Description: Bone Hair Pin**



**Further Information:**

- Made from animal bone.
- The original item is in the British Museum in London.

 Explore:

-  How many other items in this box used bone in their construction?
-  Why do you think this was?



ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE

**Item: 3**

**Brief Description: Bone Craft Tool**



**Further Information:**

- This tool would have been used for general purposes for instance decorating pottery. It is a copy of an item from the British Museum.
- Everyday items, like this tool and pottery objects are the most common artefacts found during excavations of Iron Age sites in Britain.
- One of the most important types of pottery is Beaker pottery.
- This is the earliest type of pottery and it first appeared in the Late Neolithic period. It is usually highly decorated.
- During the Bronze Age, local styles of pottery developed.
- Iron Age vessels in north-east England were characteristically plain and utilitarian. The most common form was large **barrel-shaped** vessel.
- Look at this photograph of a reconstructed pot found near the Hetha Burn on the College Valley, Northumberland.



[http://collectionsprojects.org.uk/archaeology/Prehistoric%20Pottery%20Project/dating-prehistoric\\_pottery\\_in\\_NE-IA.html](http://collectionsprojects.org.uk/archaeology/Prehistoric%20Pottery%20Project/dating-prehistoric_pottery_in_NE-IA.html)

**Explore:**

- What would pottery vessels have been used for? Find three uses.
- Although ceramic vessels were an important part of Iron Age life, archaeologists rarely find complete pots. Why?
- This type of pottery is found across much of Western Europe. What does this suggest to you?
- Notice the dark marks on the Hetha Burn pot. What does this indicate?





ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE

<b>Item: 4</b>	<b>Brief Description: Weaving Comb</b>
	

**Further Information:**

- This weaving comb is made from bone.
- Weaving combs are found across Iron Age Britain. They were probably used to make woollen straps and decorative clothing accessories.
- The comb would have been used to separate the weft and warp when weaving materials.
- In weaving, the **weft** is the term for the thread or yarn that goes across the cloth.
- It is woven over-and-under, the lengthwise **warp** yarns that are held in tension on a frame or loom to create cloth.
- Archaeologists excavating an Iron Age site at Meare in Somerset found evidence for weaving woollen cloth
- A large number of bone and antler weaving combs were found there.
- Some of them had been decorated with intricate designs.
- They also found evidence that a very wide range of crafts and industrial activities were being carried out at the site.

 Explore:

-  What does the fact that a broad range of crafts and industrial activities was being carried out at Meare tell us about the development of Iron Age society?
-  Why would Iron Age Britons have decorated their tools and clothes?



ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE

**Item: 5**


**Brief Description: Armlet**



**Further Information:**

- This is made from bronze and leather and would have been worn on the upper arm.
- This item come from a bog burial at Old Croghan, in Ireland, where the body of a naturally mummified man was found.
- When the mummy was found, he was wearing an armlet like the one here.
- He became known as Old Croghan man and his remains can now be seen on the National Museum of Ireland.
- These remains are important because of their fantastic state of preservation.
- This is typical of bog bodies in general. It is mainly due to the cold, acidic, oxygen-free conditions in peat bogs. This prevents decay and mummifies human flesh.

 **Explore:**

 More information and pictures of the mummy and the armlet can be seen in the links below.

<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/7b/3e/32/7b3e323bc39c9c90b760431a8997d08d.jpg>

<https://sites.google.com/site/deviantsandthebog/ireland/individual-2>

<https://irisharchaeology.ie/2011/08/irish-bog-bodies-recent-discoveries/>



ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE

**Item: 6**




**Brief Description: Iron Cosmetic Implement**



**Further Information:**

- This tool was found in an Iron Age [Celtic] burial.
- It would have been used for various tasks eg tidying cuticles, smudging soot around the eyes.
- Iron Age people did not leave any written records. This makes it difficult to discover information about how they lived and what they believed.
- But, just like today, people then expressed their identities through their clothes, jewellery and belongings.
- By examining and interpreting items found in graves and settlements, archaeologists are able to build up a picture of how people saw themselves, and what was important to them.

 **Explore:**

-  Who would have used cosmetics-men or women?
-  How many items in this box are linked to people expressing their identity rather than simply being functional objects?
-  What might these items say about the wearer's status?





ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE






<b>Item: 7</b>	<b>Brief Description: Scalpel</b>
----------------	-----------------------------------



**Further Information:**

- This tool comes from the site of a Druid burial in Colchester.
- It would have been used for medical purposes.
- A full set of surgical instruments, was excavated from a grave in Stanway, Essex.
- It contained 13 instruments including scalpels, forceps and a surgical saw.
- The grave dates to the time of the Roman conquest in AD 43 and the objects are similar to Roman ones.
- This probably means that the person buried would have known about Roman medical practices as well as local healing traditions.
- Prehistoric people also used many plants and fungi for medicine, for tinder (fire-starting) and for magic (ritual food or drink).

 Explore:

-  What was the life expectancy of Iron Age people?
-  How did their diet keep them healthy?
-  What sort of surgery was done at this time?
-  Which plants might they have used for medicinal purposes?
-  To help you find the answers, look at:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/british\\_prehistory/neolithic\\_medicine.shtml#four](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/british_prehistory/neolithic_medicine.shtml#four)



ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE

**Item: 8**

**Brief Description: Votive Shield**



**Further Information:**

- This Iron Age votive would have been thrown in a river as an offering to the gods eg asking for protection or a good harvest.
- The original of this item is in the British Museum.
- Iron Age religious beliefs and rituals were complex. They are likely to have been part of everyday activities like farming, cooking and metalworking.
- Offerings were deposited in homes, fields, hilltops and rivers and bogs.
- As agriculture played such an important part of Celtic life, the religious festivals of *Imbolc*, *Beltane*, *Lugnassad* and *Samhain* followed this seasonal farming pattern.

 Explore:

 Find out more about these four Celtic religious festivals and when they were held. **Make a chart comparing Celtic religious festival with our own festival days.**

 Read the guide here to help you:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z8bkwmn#zpb7xnb>



ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE

**Item: 9**      **Brief Description: Arrow**



**Further Information:**


- This arrow is made from a hazel shaft bound with rawhide.
- Rawhide is untanned animal hide.
- Iron Age Britons had a range of weapons from arrows like the one above to swords, spears and shields.
- Many of them were highly decorated with enamelling [glass] and made from precious metals.
- Many weapons were preserved because they were thrown into water as an offerings or placed in graves with the dead.
- For instance, the Battersea shield which dates from the second or first century BCE [BC] was found in the River Thames.
- It is made from a sheet of bronze covering a wooden shield.
- Because of the very thin metal and its fine red enamel (glass) decoration it was probably not designed to be used in battle.

 **Explore:**

 Look at the Battersea shield here:

<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/asset/the-battersea-shield/ZQH6ngDL5EutWg>

 If the Battersea shield was not made for battle, what was its purpose?

 Compare and contrast the weapons that might have been used by people of high and low status in Iron Age Britain.



ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE

**Item:10**


**Brief Description: Spindle Whorl**




**Further Information:**

- Made from clay and hazel with some spun wool on it.
- The textiles used to make clothing and other useful objects were woven on looms.
- Spinning and weaving would have been a very time-consuming household task.
- Whorls like the one above were used to weight the end of sticks called spindles, which hand-spinners used to twist wool into yarn for weaving.
- Some whorls were made from sandstone, although spindle whorls can also be made from other types of stone, bone or clay like the one above.


 **Explore:**

 Find out how a spindle whorl is used to spin wool? Describe the process in a flow chart.

 What would they have used to dye the wool different colours?

 Watch this video clip of someone showing you how a spindle whorl was used:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocbRbd54Hiw>

 Watch this video clip of an archaeologist explaining more about spindle whorls:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6TGuypgXms>



ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE


**Item:11**   **Brief Description: Small Knife**



**Further Information:**

- This example comes from Scandinavia.
- It would have been used for many different purposes and would have been carried around in a pouch on your belt.
- If you look at the shape of it, it resembles a fish and it fits into your hand well making it easy to use.
- Iron ore requires extra work to make pure metal and it also needs a higher temperature than is needed to make bronze.
- Iron tools are sometimes less sharp than bronze ones.
- Iron ore is more common than copper and tin.

 Explore:

-  If making iron tools was more time consuming and required more fuel than bronze, why do you think iron tools became more common?



ARTEFACT BOX IRON AGE

**Item: 12**


**Brief Description: Votive Head**




**Further Information:**

- This votive head shows a Celtic warrior.
- Votive offerings were gifts made to god/gods in the hope of having your prayers answered or to give thanks. Today people might go to church to light a candle and pray in the same way.
- It would have been thrown in a river as an offering to the local gods eg for success in battle.

 **Explore:**

 Design your own votive offering. It could be the face of someone like a god/goddess, an animal or some item you find important.

 What was the religious significance of water in Iron Age Britain?

 Find out more about Iron Age beliefs here:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z8bkwmn#zpb7xnb>



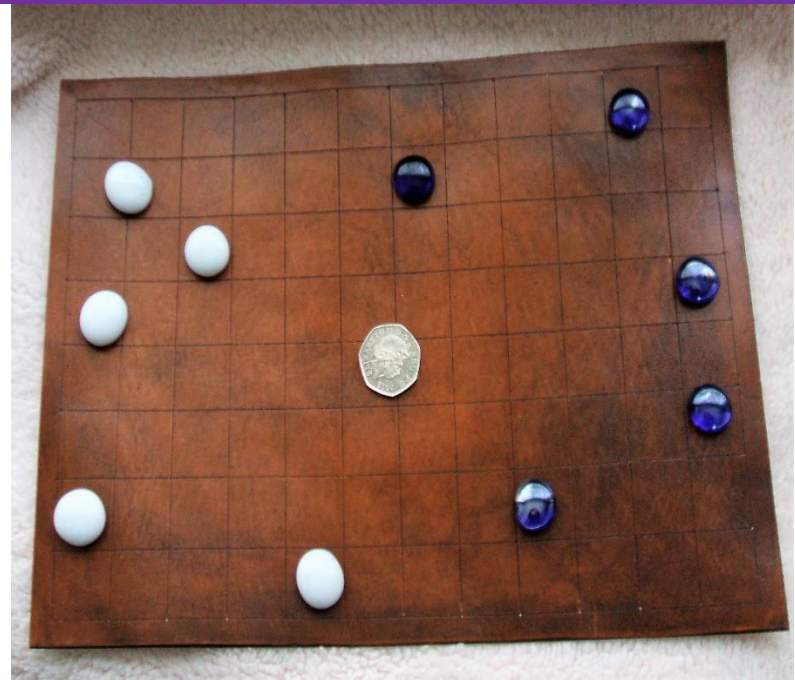
Landscapes  
for life  
.org.uk





ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE



**Item:13** **Brief Description: Game and 13x blue & 13 x white Counters**



**Further Information:**

- Living in Iron Age Britain was not all hard work—they played games too!
- This reconstruction is based on a game found in a grave in Stanway, Essex, and it consisted of 26 blue and white glass counters and a chequered board. The absence of dice means that it was probably a game of strategy.

 Explore:

-  Make up some quiz questions about the items in this box and use them instead of a dice to play a game on the board.
  -  You could also turn it into a team game rather than for just two players
- P.S.** You will need to make up your own set of rules too!

 ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE

**Item:14**   **Brief Description: Shoes**



**Further Information:**

- These shoes were made from goatskin
- The original item was from the UK.
- In 2005 the remains of an Iron Age shoe was discovered at a quarry in Somerset. You can read more about it here:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1489752/Iron-Age-shoe-is-found-in-quarry.htm>

 Explore:

 What did Iron Age Britons wear?

 How did they style their hair?

 Take a look at:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/british\\_prehistory/ironage\\_intro\\_01.shtml#six](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/british_prehistory/ironage_intro_01.shtml#six)

and

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z8bkwmn#zsrmtfr>





ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE

**Item:15**      **Brief Description: Hare Brooch**



**Further Information:**

- From a Celtic site in the UK
- The original would have had a similar type of fastening to modern brooches made from twisted wire.
- Brooches like this one were both functional and decorative.
- They were used to pin clothes together.
- But they also expressed the wearer's identity and status.
- Iron Age brooches come in many different shapes and styles, sometimes with regional variations.

 Explore:

 What materials might be used for high status jewellery?

 Why was the hare important in Celtic mythology?

 Take a look at other items of Iron age jewellery here:

<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/asset/the-winchester-hoard/WQHqaN6DOP5g3w>

 ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE



**Item:16**    **Brief Description: Lead Curse**



**Further Information:**

- This is another example of a votive offering.
- Just like people threw offerings into water hoping the local gods would grant them a good harvest or success in battle, in the same way, they would make offerings of these curses hoping to bring bad fortune of some kind to their enemies or to send a message of revenge.

 Explore:


-  Remind yourself what 'votive' means. See Item 12 for an explanation.
-  What was the significance of making these from lead? [Clue: think about the characteristics of lead]

<https://hampshirearchaeology.wordpress.com/2015/03/16/buried-in-time-a-roman-curse-tablet-from-badnam-creek/>



ARTEFACT BOX: IRON AGE




## GENERAL QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

-  Prehistoric people also used many plants and fungi for medicine, for tinder (fire-starting) and for magic (ritual food or drink).
- ~ Identify two types of plant material that would have been useful as tinder?
  - ~ Identify two types of plant material that would have been useful for medicine
  - ~ Identify two types of plant material that would have been useful for ritual purposes or magic.

## BE AN ARCHAEOLOGIST

- When an archaeologist excavates an object, they must carefully record their find.
- To do this they complete a written report of the object and illustrate it with a scale drawing of the item.
- When recording archaeological finds, it is very important to look closely at all of the features visible on the objects.
- It is also essential to note colours, textures and materials the object is made from.
- Then, they try to interpret the evidence they have recorded and decide what the function of the artefact was.

## **TASK**

-  Choose an object from the Artefact box.
-  Observe it closely and carefully.
-  Complete the Archaeological Finds Report below.



FINDS REPORT

Name of Archaeologist:

Date Of Recording:

About the Artefact -Write your answers to each of the questions below.

1.What is your artefact made from?

2. Is your artefact complete or a fragment? (Circle your answer)

**COMPLETE**

**FRAGMENT**

3.What colour(s) is your artefact

4. What sort of texture does your artefact have? What does it feel like eg rough, smooth?

5. Describe any patterns or decorations on your artefact.

6. What is your artefact for? What do you think it is for?



**Next complete the Illustration Sheet Below**



**PEREGRINI ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICES**



Add your drawing of your artefact here. Be as accurate as you can. Remember the details of an object are important information for archaeologists-so include as much detail as you can. Try to include a scale below.

**Scale:**

