

# Year 4 Autumn term

## The Stone Age



### Summary:

The Stone Age lasted a very, very long time. The oldest period of the Stone Age, the Palaeolithic period, began approximately 2.5 million years ago. The Middle Stone Age is called the Mesolithic period. The Neolithic period, often called the New Stone Age, dates back approximately 8–10,000 years. During the Stone Age, our ancestors started to use tools and weapons made out of stone to help them hunt and eat food. As a consequence of changes in global climate, crops became more readily available, and Stone Age humans began to farm the land. The Stone Age ended when humans began to use metal to make tools and weapons.

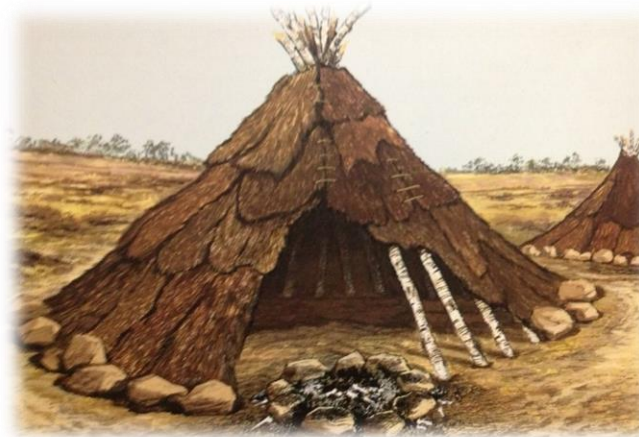


### Food and farming:

In early Stone Age times, humans lived in small groups, using stone tools as they hunted for large mammals and gathered plants, fruit and berries. These hunter-gatherers were almost always moving (nomadic) to find food. About 10,000 years ago, as the climate warmed, certain crops like wheat and barley became more plentiful. Humans no longer needed to move around as much to find food and started building permanent homes to live in near land that they could farm.

### Settlements:

Our ancestors were always searching for good sources of food, avoiding predators and trying to cope with the weather conditions of different seasons. As a consequence, they were constantly on the move. In the early Stone Age, humans would have slept in basic temporary shelters, often in the open air, or in caves. There is evidence that by c. 50,000 BCE more permanent huts were being built from wood and rock. By the Neolithic period, stable settlements like those at Skara Brae were being made.



### Artefacts:

The Oldowan toolkit is the name given to the oldest known stone tools used by early humans. It includes hammerstones, stone cores and sharp stone flakes. Its name comes from the area in Northern Tanzania where the archaeologist Louis Leakey identified stone tools that were almost 2 million years old.