

II

HISTORY DETECTIVES

How do we know the Romans were here?

This session aims to introduce and explore the idea of archaeology, building an understanding of the types of evidence that can survive 2000 years. The class will investigate and interpret archaeological evidence from Cumbria in the period of the Roman occupation.

CURRICULUM LINKS: HISTORY 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B, 6, 7A, 8A, 9 GEOG 2C

OVERVIEW

LEARNING ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY DETAILS	LEARNING INTENTIONS	RESOURCES
STARTER whole class	<i>Guided thinking exercise</i> Pupils sit with eyes closed and are asked to remember events from their own lives, from breakfast that morning back to their earliest memories. They then try to imagine being very old and think about whether they will be able to remember every detail of their lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To introduce the idea that memories are lost over time. To compare memories with evidence of past events and understand that most of that evidence is also lost. 	
INTRODUCTION TO ARTEFACTS whole class	<i>What is an artefact?</i> Pupils are shown an image of a Roman artefact from Cumbria and asked to guess what it is, and how it could have survived for 2000 years. They are then told what it is and what it is made from.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To show that archaeology involves good guesswork based on limited evidence. To explain that metal and ceramic objects often survive better than objects made from organic materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photo of Roman colander (CD Resource 5)
ARTEFACT CAROUSEL small groups	<i>Investigating and interpreting Roman artefacts</i> The class splits into small groups. Each group has eight photos of artefacts. Pupils first guess what they are, and are then given eight labels to match to the images. Pupils then record three things that each artefact tells them about the Romans on their worksheets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To demonstrate the sort of evidence that archaeologists use to investigate the past. To begin developing skills of interpreting evidence. To develop group working skills. To learn more about Roman lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photos of artefacts (CD Resources 6-13) Labels (CD Resource 14) Worksheets (CD Resource 15)
PLENARY whole class	<i>Why is there more evidence about the Romans than about the Brigantes (the local Cumbrian tribe)?</i> Pupils look at an image of a Brigantian village. They then compare an aerial photo of the remains of a Brigantian village with a photo of a Roman site, and discuss why the Roman site gives archaeologists clearer information about the past.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consolidate children's understanding of the type of materials and evidence that survive from the Roman period. To introduce the Brigantes and ideas about how they and the Romans built settlements. To remind pupils that much is still unknown. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photos of archaeological sites (CD Resources 16-20)

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION TO ARTEFACTS

Show the children the picture of a **Roman colander** (CD Resource 5). The colander was made of copper – we can tell this by the green colour – and found at Ambleside Roman Fort. It has survived so well because it was buried underground for 2000 years, and so protected from the elements. Also, as it is made of metal it is more durable than say wood or leather, which are organic and rot away.

ARTEFACT CAROUSEL

Divide the class into small groups and give each group pictures of eight **artefacts** to interpret (CD Resources 6-13).

At first, let the children work without any further information, and ask them to think about what each object might be.

Then provide them with **artefact labels** (CD Resource 14) and ask them to match each photo with a label. Suggest that the pupils think about what each object is made of and what it might be used for, and remind them to use the scale shown in each picture to get an idea of the size of the object.

Finally, in small groups or working alone, ask the children to write down their conclusions about four of the artefacts on a **worksheet** (CD Resource 15).

1. A Roman key (CD Resource 6)

Made of iron. We can tell this because it has corroded badly and is slightly red in colour. Found at Ambleside Roman Fort.

The key tells us:

- they knew how to make iron
- they had blacksmiths who could make complicated designs with iron
- there was a need to keep things safe, from thieves or barbarian raids.

2. The sole of a Roman shoe (CD Resource 7)

Made from leather. Found at Ambleside Roman Fort.

The shoe sole tells us:

- they knew how to make leather
- they kept cows
- they wore shoes.

3. A Roman intaglio (CD Resource 8)

An intaglio is the name given to a stone set in the middle of a ring. They were often engraved with Roman gods, and could be used to stamp wax to seal a letter. This one was made from the mineral carnelian, and shows the god Victory. It was found at Hardknott Roman Fort.

The intaglio tells us:

- they liked to wear rings
- they had access to minerals to use in jewellery
- they believed in a number of gods.

4. A Roman faience bead (CD Resource 9)

Faience is finely glazed ceramic. This type of bead is called a 'melon bead'. It was found at Ravenglass Fort.

This tells us:

- they wore jewellery
- appearance was important to them
- they had the skills to make beads out of clay.

5. A Roman lamp (CD Resource 10)

The left-hand picture shows a side view of the lamp, the right-hand picture the base. The lamp was made of ceramic and would have been filled with olive oil, which burned at the spout. The stamp on the bottom "CAPITO F." means "Capito made this." The lamp was found at Ravenglass Fort.

The lamp tells us:

- the Romans needed light when it got dark at night
- they were skilled at making things with clay
- specific people had the job of making lamps.

6. A Roman figurine (CD Resource 11)

This figurine would have been worn in the same way that we might wear a crucifix, or have a statue of the god we believe in, or carry a lucky charm to keep something bad from happening. This one was made from ceramic and found at Drigg on the west coast of Cumbria. The head is missing and the figure is holding a bunch of flowers.

The figurine tells us:

- the Romans were religious or superstitious
- they were skilled at using clay.

7. A Roman gold coin (CD Resource 12)

One side of the coin shows a picture of the emperor Theodosius (AD 379-395), the other shows two emperors holding a globe with the god Victory behind them.

The coin tells us:

- the Romans used money
- they were ruled by an emperor
- they made things out of gold
- they believed in gods.

8. A Roman spindle whorl (CD Resource 13)

Spindle whorls were placed on wooden sticks and used to 'drop-spin'. This was the Roman method of spinning sheep's wool into fine lengths so that they could make clothes with them. This one was found at Ambleside Fort.

The spindle tells us:

- they could spin wool
- they wore woollen clothes
- they kept sheep.

PLENARY

The Brigantian Celtic houses were roundhouses, constructed with low stone walls and straw for the roofs. Over time the roofs would have collapsed and rotted away, and the low stone walls tumbled down. They leave traces of their existence in the form of rings of stones in the landscape, like the house remains found at **Threlkeld** (CD Resource 16 & 17, with and without notes). These small rings of stones can be hard to spot, so archaeologists have used aerial photography to tell us more. In the aerial photograph of **Aughertree Fell** (CD Resource 18 & 19, with and without notes) you can see the remains of two villages. The picture shows two enclosures with a beck running between the two. The enclosure boundaries consist of an earth bank and ditch, which defined the village and provided some defence. The enclosures would have contained many of the stone-built roundhouses. Each enclosure is about 90m across and would have been home to 20-50 people.

By contrast, Roman forts were built on a square plan, using building techniques and durable materials similar to those used today. Roman building work has survived much better than the remains of Celtic buildings. In the photo of **Hardknott Fort** (CD Resource 20) you can see some of the individual room shapes. The whole fort was about 100m² and would have housed around 500 soldiers.