

# Introducing Celtic times

## Objectives

- To learn about the properties of the materials used by the Celts.

## Cross-curricular links

### History

- 1a Place people in their correct period of time.
- 1b Use dates and vocabulary relating to the passing of time, including ancient, modern, BC, century and decade.

### Science

#### Sc3

- 1b To compare everyday materials and objects on the basis of their material properties.
- 2d To learn about reversible changes including dissolving and evaporating.

## Resources

Each child or group will need a black plastic tray such as the one used to package slices of meat in a supermarket, salt, water, a spoon.

You will need different kinds of stone and wood, wool, yarn and cloth, string and netting, pottery, leather objects, baskets, gold, silver, copper, bronze and wrought iron objects.

## Starter

Ask the children the year and relate this to the word decade as in it is nearly the end or after the end of the first decade of the twenty first century. Review the term century as 100 years and say that for convenience a life time is going to be measured as 50 years. Although this is still a relatively young age today many people in the not so distant past failed to reach it.

Tell the children that they are going to measure back in life times to the end of Celtic times. Get each child to line up around the classroom and represent a life time and count back to the 410 AD when the Celtic way of life in England came to an end. You will need 32 children so some may have to be used a second time or children from another class drafted in.

Tell the children that they are going to study a time in England which began at the beginning of the Bronze Age which was 2200 BC. Count back

again another 52 lives drafting in more children or going round the ring again. Emphasise that the period of time they are studying is 2,600 years long.

## Main activities

- Tell the children that before the Bronze Age people used stone, wood, wool, yarn and cloth, string and netting, leather objects, pottery and baskets. Let the children handle the objects and describe the properties of the material. Look for terms such as hard, soft, rough, smooth, rigid, flexible, strong and weak.
- Introduce the gold, silver and copper items and tell the children that these metals were found in the ground and beaten to make ornaments. Let the children feel the metals and describe their properties.
- Introduce the bronze items and tell the children that when another metal called tin was discovered and melted with copper a metal mixture, called an alloy, was made that we call bronze. Let the children handle the bronze items and bring them to conclude that it was a stronger metal than copper.
- Tell the children that 1,400 years after bronze was used in Britain iron came into use. You may wish to measure this in 28 life times to show that the Bronze Age lasted a long time. Let the children examine the wrought iron objects and compare wrought iron with bronze.
- Tell the children that many of the objects used in Bronze and Iron Age times were made in particular places and were traded for other goods such as grain. There was a good movement of people and goods around the country. One unlikely commodity was salt. It was used to preserve meat and was obtained from certain areas of the coast from Lincolnshire round to Dorset. Seawater contains salt and was run into pans where it was evaporated.
- Let the children make some artificial sea water by stirring some salt into warm water and then pouring it into the plastic trays. The trays could be placed in a sunny window and tipped a little to one end so there is a varying depth of water in the pan. Let the children look at their salt pan every day for the next few days. They should soon see crystals forming at the shallow end then larger crystals in the deeper water as the water evaporates.
- The large salt crystals look a little like precious stones and you may use this to say that there was a trade in jewels.

# Introducing Celtic times (cont...)

## Plenary

Review the work with the children and establish that the Bronze and Iron Ages were busy times with materials being processed, made and traded. Remind them of how long ago both these ages were.

## Outcomes

The children can:

- Appreciate the time span of the Bronze and Iron Ages and their distance in the past.
- Compare the properties of materials that were present in the Bronze and Iron Ages.
- Dissolve salt and understand how it can be recovered from sea water by evaporation.