

Crib Sheet

BC and AD

Today, we use the Gregorian calendar, which takes the birth of Christ as year 1. Dates after this are known as *anno domini* (abbreviated as 'AD'), which means 'in the year of our Lord'. 'BC' is used to denote dates before Christ.

To work out how long ago a BC date is, you need to add the current year and the years BC. For example: 4000 BC is roughly 6,020 years ago (4000 + 2020).

Whitewash

Whitewash is made by quarrying limestone and then burning it to create quick lime. This is mixed with water and painted onto buildings to help protect them.

Sheet 1 Prehistoric Hunter Gatherers

1. The image is based on the Mesolithic period, which in Britain broadly spans 10,000 BC–4,000 BC.
2. Items include wood for houses, shrubs and reeds for the thatch and stones for the firepit. Tools people used would have been made of stone, either handheld or attached to wooden shafts (not illustrated).
3. Effects – mainly clearing woods by chopping down trees but hunting and fishing also created an impact.
4. Food – fish, berries, nuts, animals, gathered fruits and vegetables.

Sheet 2 Prehistoric Farmers

1. This image shows the Iron Age period, which in Britain broadly spans 800 BC–AD 43.
2. Items include wood for houses, grass for the thatch, clay for the ovens, thinner trees for the fences, wood for the fires, grain for the bread, animal skins and wool from sheep for the clothes. Tools were made from bronze and iron, using wood or bone handles.
3. Effects – clearing woods by chopping trees for building and burning, digging for clay to make pots, ploughing fields and growing grain for bread, butchering animals for skins and meat.
4. Food – meat and dairy from livestock, bread, wild fruits and nuts, vegetables and grain.

Sheet 3 Roman Villa

1. The Roman Period in Britain broadly spans AD 43 to around AD 410.
2. Items include wood for building and making carts, stone for building walls, clay to make tiles for the roof and sometimes glass for windows. Tools were made from iron.
3. Effects – clearing woods by chopping trees, quarrying stone, creating roads for transportation, burning wood to make charcoal, creating whitewash for the walls.
4. Food – grain for bread, vegetables from the gardens, fruit from the orchard, meat and dairy from livestock, eggs, fish from rivers/sea.

Sheet 4 Medieval Castle and Village

1. The medieval period in Britain broadly covers AD 1066 – AD 1540.
2. Items include wood for building, stone for building walls, clay or stone to make tiles for the roof stone for walls and sometimes glass for windows. Tools were made from iron.
3. Effects – clearing woods by chopping trees, quarrying stone, creating roads, creating white-wash for the walls, managing plants to make hedges, wood for burning and building.
4. Food – grain for bread, vegetables from the gardens, fruits from the orchard, meat and dairy from livestock, eggs, fish from the lake.

Sheet 5 Industrial Town

1. The industrial period in Britain broadly covers AD 1760 - AD 1830. This picture was painted from real life in 1870, during the later industrial period.
2. Items include stone and bricks for buildings and roof tiles, glass for windows.
3. Effects – clearing woods by chopping trees, quarrying stone, mining coal, creating roads and railways, digging out clay for bricks and roof tiles, wood for burning and building, larger scale metal extraction for railways and machines, pollution as a by-product of industrial processes (for example smoke from chimneys).
4. Food – farmed animals, vegetables and grain from farming, food was increasingly bought from shops rather than grown at home.

Sheet 6 County Durham Today

1. Today 2020!
2. Items include brick and wood for house, tiles for roofs, glass for windows, tarmac for roads, metal and plastic for cars and trucks.
3. Effects –quarrying stone, mining coal, creating roads and railways, clearing forests, digging out clay for bricks and roof tiles, large scale metal extraction for railways, cars, machines, pollution as a by-product of industrial processes (for example: smoke from chimneys, impact of chemicals used to make plastic, drilling for oil to fuel cars and trains).
4. Food – farmed animals, vegetables and grain from farming, all bought from shops and supermarkets. Very little food is grown at home.

Sheet 7 County Durham in the Future

Planting more trees can:

1. Prevent flooding
2. Reduce temperatures in built-up areas
3. Reduce pollution
4. Keep soil nutrient rich to ensure good crop growth

Activities

Work through the sheets in order and discuss the images using the question as prompts for things to think about. Describe what the pictures are showing.

Refer to the previous image if needed and think about how things have changed, and why.

Write a short story about what each picture is showing and what the people who lived at that time would do on a normal day.

When you reach the picture of County Durham today, look around where you live and think about what the things in your house are made from and where those materials came from. What do you think are the impacts on the environment of getting that material?

Think about the future. Draw a picture or write a story about how people will live 100 years from now. What will their houses be made from? How will they travel? What will they eat? What will they have in their homes? What will things be made of?

If you are asked any questions you can't answer about the past, email archaeology@durham.gov.uk and we will do our best to help!