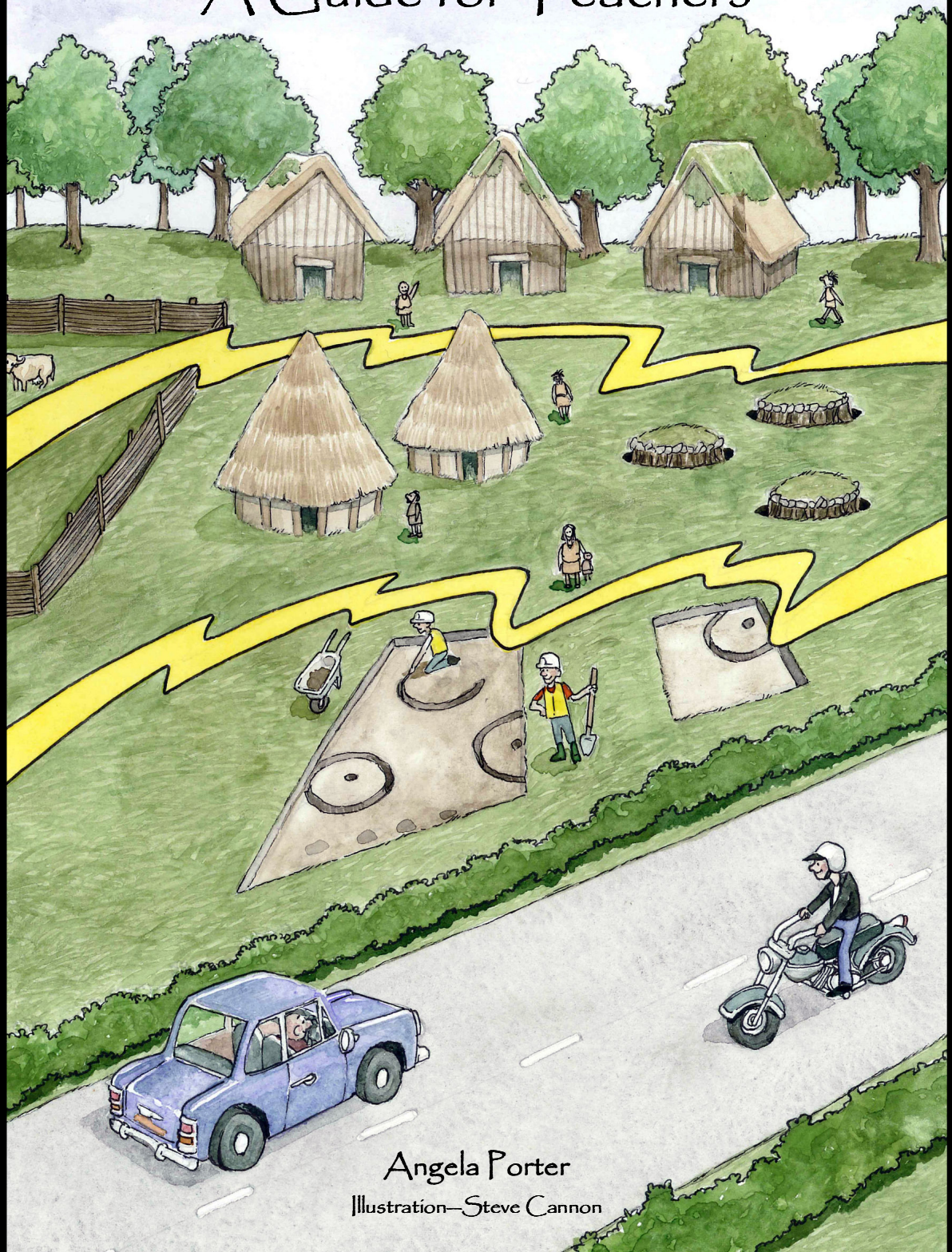


# Digging Down

## A Guide for Teachers



Angela Porter

Illustration—Steve Cannon

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# Introduction

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**Digging Down** is about some rather remarkable Neolithic and Bronze Age archaeology found near Lough Brickland and Derrycraw in Co. Down during works to widen the A1 road. The traces in the ground and the artefacts left behind are all the evidence we have of the people who lived and used the land between 6000 and 2780 years ago; these people didn't write so there's no written evidence to tell us about them. However, the evidence tells us plenty about these people, it all has a story to tell, and that is what Digging Down is all about!

One of the original aims of Digging Down was to bring archaeology alive by fostering a sense of wonder and amazement of what these people created and left for use to find and curiosity about what it all means and in the story that the evidence has for us.

The Neolithic houses discovered near Lough Brickland are among the earliest discovered in Ireland to date, and may even be the homes of the very first people to settle and farm in Ireland at the start of the Neolithic. These people arrived here around 6000 years ago, most probably from across the Irish Sea, and brought with them the new 'technology' of farming. They travelled a very long way, over a dangerous sea to look for new land to build homes and farm. The location of the 'inch' (isthmus) of land near Lough Brickland would have provided them with nearly all they needed. They left evidence of their lives in the form of traces of the foundations of their houses, hollows that held standing stones, ritual pits containing artefacts placed there, a midden and lots of other artefacts including axe heads, arrowheads and pot sherds. Flint and porcellanite artefacts provide us with evidence of long distance trade or travel to obtain the raw materials needed to make the items.

A temporary Bronze Age campsite was found on the same piece of land as the Neolithic houses. This was in use around 4000 years ago. Evidence for such campsites is incredibly rare, and gives us an insight into how life had changed from the Early Neolithic to the start of the Bronze Age. The campsite may have been used to collect resources from the 'inch' of land, or it may have been somewhere where people stayed while they were building the first barrow in the cemetery.

A Bronze Age barrow cemetery was found at the same site, this time giving us a glimpse into the funerary practices of the Bronze Age people, showing how the land use changed. Another Bronze Age barrow cemetery was found 4 miles south of Lough Brickland at Derrycraw. Both cemeteries had very unusual features in them. Beautiful urns were found in some of the barrows. The cremated remains of the people interred in the barrows give us information about illnesses and ages of a very select few of the population that lived during the 800 or so years the cemeteries were in use.

The location of the site was also important to the Bronze Age people. The boundary between land and water seems to be significant to them. Archaeologists call it a 'liminal' site, and think the people believed it was a place where the land of the living and the afterlife were closer together and the spirits of the dead could make the journey to the afterlife more easily.

At Derrycrow, a jet spacer bead suggested long distance trade and travel and communication between Northern Ireland and Whitby, England. Tin and copper ores, needed to make bronze, also travelled long distances. Tin ores most probably came from Cornwall, England. All of these needed a journey over the Irish sea, which is no easy thing to do even in modern times.

Often, more questions are raised than are answered by archaeological discoveries, and the text of the book encourages the reader to come up with possible answers for themselves. We will probably never know the answers to many of the questions the evidence raises, but it's fun to try to come up with reasonable theories and ideas, using imagination and what we know of people today.

## A Word About Ritual

The word 'ritual' is one that can cause some worry amongst people as it seems a word laden with sinister connotations, that are totally unfounded..

A ritual is just a ceremonial act, or a method/procedure that is regularly or faithfully followed. Our modern lives are filled with things we do that we don't consider 'ritual' but are, e.g. birthday presents, never missing a certain television programme, brushing your teeth before you go to bed, weddings, funerals, family Sunday lunches, school assembly, morning registration, even homework!

## A Note About Time

In Digging Down, all times are given as 'years ago' (y.a.) as a way of better understanding the timescales involved, especially for younger pupils. The back of Digging Down has an illustrated archaeological timeline for reference.

## Glossary

At the back is a glossary for all the words in **bold** letters.

## Useful Stuff

Where to go for more information, help, advice, and to see artefacts and reconstructions.

A free book entitled 'A Road to the Past—Archaeological Excavations along the A1 at Loughbrickland', also written by Angela Porter, is also available from DRD Road Services NI (<http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/>) if you're interested in Digging Deeper!



# The Northern Ireland Curriculum Primary and Digging Down

The following tables show how the text of Digging Down fits in with the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

The World Around Us Across The Curriculum is addressed throughout the book.

| Key Stage 1                   | Interdependence                                                 | Place                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Movement and Energy                                                                                                                              | Time                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Geography</b>              |                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Different types of transport associated with journeys we make.                                                                                   | Aspects of change that have occurred over time in the local area.                                                         |
| <b>History</b>                | My self at different ages. My family, parents and grandparents. | <p>Differences between my life now and lives of people in the past.</p> <p>Historical sites and old buildings in the locality.</p> <p>People and places from the past in the local and wider community.</p> <p>Different buildings and their features now and in the past.</p> <p>Stories about people from the past.</p> | <p>Different types of transport now and in the past.</p> <p>How goods and services have changed over time.</p> <p>Journeys made in the past.</p> | <p>How the area and community have changed over time.</p> <p>Reasons for changes in the locality now and in the past.</p> |
| <b>Science and Technology</b> |                                                                 | The range of materials used in my area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>The importance of light in our everyday lives.</p> <p>Different sources of light.</p>                                                         |                                                                                                                           |

| <b>Key Stage 2</b>            | <b>Interdependence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Place</b>                                                                                                                    | <b>Movement and Energy</b>                                                                                 | <b>Time</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Geography</b>              | Local habitats.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | The effects of a lack of basic resources on a place and on people's lives.                                                      | The range of transport used to move people, animals and other objects from one place to another.           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>History</b>                | <p>Ways in which the use of natural resources through time has affected the local and global environment.</p> <p>Technological change and the impact of inventors and inventions over time.</p> <p>Reasons and effects of historical events.</p> | Places then and now and how our identity, way of life and culture has been shaped by influences from the local and wider world. | <p>Movement of people in the past.</p> <p>The impact of raiders and settlers in Ireland and elsewhere.</p> | <p>Comparing an aspect of the community over a long period of time.</p> <p>Some of the characteristics of past societies and distinctive features of life in the past.</p> <p>How the world has changed over time.</p> <p>An aspect of the local or wider community over a short period of time.</p> |
| <b>Science and Technology</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Why materials are chosen for their use.                                                                                         |                                                                                                            | How some materials can change or decay while others do not.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

# The Northern Ireland Curriculum Key Stage 3 and Digging Down

| <b>Key Stage 3</b>              | <b>Developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Objective 1<br/>Developing pupils as individuals</b>                         | <b>Objective 2<br/>Developing pupils as contributors to society.</b>                 | <b>Objective 3<br/>Developing pupils as contributors to the economy and the environment</b>                           |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Mathematics and Numeracy</b> | <p>Knowledge and understanding of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>number</i></li> <li>• <i>shape, space and measures</i></li> <li>• <i>Handling data</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Analyse and interpret information patterns relating to local and global trends. | Analyse and interpret information patterns relating to local and global trends.      |                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Language and Literacy</b>    | <p>Expressing viewpoints</p> <p>Talking</p> <p>Listening actively and reporting back.</p> <p>Reading for key ideas, enjoyment, engagement.</p> <p>Writing and presenting in different media and for different audiences and purposes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                 |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                       |
| <b>The Arts—Art and Design</b>  | <p>Investigate and respond to works of art that inspire and relate to their lives and experiences.</p> <p>Researching, gathering and interpreting information from direct experiences, observations, memory, imagination and a range of traditional and digital sources.</p> <p>Developing an appreciation of the work of artist, designers and craft workers from their own and other cultures, past and present.</p> |                                                                                 | Explore the diversity of various cultures that are expressed through Art and Design. | Identify how skill developed through art will be useful to a wide range of careers .e.g. archaeological illustration. |

| <b>Key Stage 3</b>                       | <b>Developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills</b>                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Objective 1<br/><br/>Developing pupils as individuals</b>                                                                         | <b>Objective 2<br/><br/>Developing pupils as contributors to society.</b> | <b>Objective 3<br/><br/>Developing pupils as contributors to the economy and the environment</b>                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Environment and Society : History</b> | <p>Investigate the past and its impact on our world today.</p> <p>Developing the enquiry , critical thinking and creative thinking skills, and chronological awareness through studying a broad and balanced range of historical periods.</p> | <p>Explore issues related to personal health.</p> <p>Investigate and evaluate the spiritual beliefs and legacy of civilisations.</p> |                                                                           | <p>Investigate the need to preserve history in the local and global environment.</p> <p>Explores issues related to economic awareness.</p> <p>Identify how skill developed through history will be useful to a wide range of careers .e.g. archaeology.</p> |
| <b>Science and Technology : Science</b>  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                      |                                                                           | <p>Identify how skill developed through science will be useful to a wide range of careers .e.g. archaeology.</p>                                                                                                                                            |

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## Front Cover

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The front cover of the book attempts some time travel from the present road and the archaeological excavations to the Bronze Age barrow cemetery and temporary campsite and then to the Neolithic houses and farm and to the wooded land before humans cleared it to make way for homes and farms.

### Suggested Activities

The cover of the book is a good starting point to discuss what the children can see in it, what they think it is showing, and in doing so to generate curiosity.

Visits to museums, inviting archaeologists/curators to come to speak to the children with artefacts to handle and experience, living history exponents are essential, and if this is done before reading the book, then the front cover could be used as a check on how much the pupils know, understand, and remember.

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## Time Travellers—Get ready to depart!

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This is the introduction to what was found in the modern age and what archaeology is. The photos show the evidence left in the earth of man-made structures. Archaeology does let us travel back in time, and this may be a good point to look at the timeline on the back cover to help the children get an appreciation of the scales of time involved.

### Suggested Activity—Just how long ago was it?

To help children understand how long ago the Bronze Age and Neolithic, time can be modelled by distance. Use a scale of 1 cm for a year to measure and cut paper strips for each significant event and then decorate/label them and mount them as a poster. The table on the next page could be used to help with this process. Additional local/national/international events of significance that have been or will be studied could be added/substituted in the table.

You'll need to go outside for the longer time periods with a measuring tape! The shorter times could be used to make a chart which could be decorated and taken outside for comparison to the long time periods back to the Neolithic. It could be fun to use children as markers, and get them dressed up in the style of the period, or holding a big drawing of someone or something from that time.

It could also be used to make a good display to go around the walls of a large room or hall, if you change the scale slightly. It would then lend itself to posters/displays about each archaeological period.



Name

Just how long ago was it?

| Event                                                    | How many years ago? | Length of line |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| I was born in                                            |                     |                |
| My brother/sister was born in                            |                     |                |
| My mother/father was born in                             |                     |                |
| My grandmother/grandfather was born in                   |                     |                |
| Man landed on the Moon in 1969                           |                     |                |
| Sputnik, the first space satellite, was launched in 1957 |                     |                |
|                                                          |                     |                |
|                                                          |                     |                |
|                                                          |                     |                |
|                                                          |                     |                |
| Post-Medieval Period started                             |                     |                |
| Medieval Period started                                  |                     |                |
| Early Christian Period started                           |                     |                |
| Iron age started                                         |                     |                |
| Bronze Age started 4500 years ago                        | 4500                | 4500cm = 45m   |
| Neolithic started 6000 years ago                         | 6000                | 6000cm = 60m   |

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# Welcome to the Neolithic

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The Neolithic arrived with the first farmers in Ireland. The knowledge of farming would have travelled with these settlers from mainland Britain, and it had arrived in Britain from Europe and the Middle East where farming was first developed. The Neolithic settlers built the first homes so that they were close to their crops and domesticated animals. However, they still needed to hunt and gather food.

The people would have needed to carefully choose somewhere to live so that all the resources they needed were nearby. The geographical location was important—protection from the prevailing weather, south-facing for light and warmth, defensible against wild animals and other humans, possibly even close to a trade-route. The valley through which the present A1 runs has long been a major route for travel between the North and South of Ireland.

The reasons why people choose places to build homes are very similar even today where shelter and security are top of the list. Accessibility to food and other resources is also a priority, though how we get those items is very different unless we work in one of the industries that supply them. The activities of the Neolithic people and people today aren't that much different. People still fish, gather apples and other goods from the environment and make pots from clay. Some homes are still thatched. The biggest difference is the amount of time people spend doing this unless it is their job.

The Neolithic people changed the environment in Ireland; they cleared the uplands of forest for land for farming and also for wood to build their homes and for fuel. The uplands never recovered, and deforestation was completed in the Bronze Age.

## Suggested Activities

This is a good opportunity to look at why towns/villages are located in certain places, and to compare them with the reasons for the location of the Neolithic village.

It is also a good opportunity to look at what is similar and different about what we need in our locality compared to what the Neolithic people needed.

Design an estate agents advertisement to sell the inch of land to a Neolithic family.

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# Home, sweet home!

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Building a home in the Neolithic wasn't an easy job; you had to do it yourself as you couldn't call the local builders in nor visit the builders' merchant. The text describes how a Neolithic house was built, and then gives (some of) the archaeological evidence for this.

'Ritual deposits' are mentioned here, and the possible reasons for them, but the children are encouraged to come up with more reasons themselves.

The land cleared of trees would have been used to grow crops on.

The floor area of the houses was between 30m<sup>2</sup> and 36m<sup>2</sup>. A modern house in Ireland has an average floor area of 86m<sup>2</sup>. A substantially built Neolithic house would have lasted between 15 and 25 years, which is roughly the length of one Prehistoric generation. One less substantially built may have only lasted 5 years. There's evidence of repairs being made to at least one of the Neolithic houses, and plenty of evidence suggesting they were used as homes.

## Suggested Activities

Build a model Neolithic house using :

- *Modelling clay for the ground*
- *Sturdy twigs for the corner posts*
- *Lolly-sticks for the walls*
- *Gravel to hold the sticks in place*
- *Reeds or straw for the roof*
- *String to tie things together*
- *More clay to smear over the wall 'planks'*

The more able, or older children could make a scale model. Here are the dimensions of the three houses :

- *House 1—7.2m x 5.7m*
- *House 2—9.2m x 6.4m*
- *House 3—8.5m x 5.9m*

A field trip to collect reeds, branches from hazel, willow and oak could be a worthwhile activity, with work to compare/contrast their properties., as well as making pupils more aware of the world around them and the natural resources still available today.

What materials do we use to build homes today? What are the advantages/disadvantages of materials used in the Neolithic and modern times?

What kind of "lucky charms" do we use today? What kinds of celebrations do we have when people move into a new home?

Images of reconstructed Neolithic houses can be found :

- [http://www.pretanicworld.com/Neolithic\\_Ireland.html](http://www.pretanicworld.com/Neolithic_Ireland.html)
- [http://www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland/past/pre\\_norman\\_history/neolithic\\_age.html](http://www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland/past/pre_norman_history/neolithic_age.html).
- <http://www.shree-eire.com/Arts&Crafts/Neolithic/mesoneolith.htm>

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## In a Neolithic Garden

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This is the first time we get to see what the settlement looked like, including the stone row. Not many trees on the hill—they've all been used for land clearance, building and fires for light, heat and cooking.

The midden was full of rubbish, but rubbish that tells us a lot about the people. There were pieces (sherds) of a lot of pots there, evidence for diet, and stone tools.

The stone row and ritual pits are evidence for the spiritual life of these people; their beliefs don't seem to be separate from their daily lives. Exactly what they were for, we just don't know, so more guesses or ideas are needed!

### Suggested Activities

Compare front/back gardens to the Neolithic and how we deal with our rubbish. How is the rubbish from the Neolithic the same and different to the rubbish we generate today?

What kind of monuments are in their community? How are they the same or different to the stone row and ritual pits?

What activities do we do today that can be considered 'ritual' activities? Birthday celebrations. Weddings. Watching certain television programmes. Sitting down to dinner as a family. Holidays. Homework time.

Visit the Three Sisters at Greenan or the standing stone at Drumnahare. There is also a standing stone in a meadow near Lough Brickland.

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# Going Potty

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This section explains, step by step, how clay pots were made in the Neolithic. The pot sherds found at Lough Brickland were made from clay that is found locally. Pots were made in the same way in the Bronze Age, but the shapes and patterns were different. A visit to a museum or a trawl around websites will show the variety of shapes and patterns of prehistoric pottery.

## Suggested Activities

Children can make their own Neolithic pots using modelling clay or air drying clay. If you have access to a kiln then they could make the pots and fire them.

Early Neolithic pots were round bottomed and relatively plain. In the later Neolithic, the pots became flat bottomed and quite ornately decorated with patterns on them. Twigs, bones, pieces of flint, twine and fingers were all used to make the patterns. Neolithic rock art, such as that at Newgrange, could also be used to decorate clay panels.

<http://www.oubliette.org.uk/Sixc.html>

<http://www.shee-eire.com/Arts&Crafts/Celtic/Pottery/Neolithic/courtmbs/various001.jpg>

<http://pottedhistory.blogspot.com/>

[http://pottedhistory.co.uk/Replica\\_Ancient\\_Pottery.html](http://pottedhistory.co.uk/Replica_Ancient_Pottery.html)

<http://www.riverrunarts.com/allsales/prehistoric/prehistoric.html>

Looking at Neolithic patterns could lead to other artwork in different media—painting, drawing, design of cards or advertising posters, textile work, beads for jewellery, for example.

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## Food for thought ...

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What did the Neolithic people eat? Direct evidence for wheat, oats, apples, hazel nuts, sloe berries and pig were found at Lough Brickland. Many more wild plants would have been available to them. All would have been grown, hunted or gathered by the people themselves, and that would have taken up quite some time in the day.

### Suggested Activities

Research what foods are available in the wild to eat today (Ray Mears' books are an excellent source of information for this—<http://www.raymears.com/>). Plan a meal/menu for a Neolithic dinner. How would you cook the food?

A field trip to a woodland in autumn to collect/photograph/draw hazels, beech nuts, sloes, blackberries, and mushrooms (best not collected). Northern Ireland Forest Service could be of help here.

<http://www.forestserviceni.gov.uk/index/education.htm>

What foods would you miss if you travelled back in time to the Neolithic?

Look at how food storage has changed over the millennia. In the Neolithic meat would have to be eaten quickly before it went off, or it had to be dried to make jerky. Grains and nuts could be stored in pots or in holes in the ground. Apples and root vegetables could be stored in straw in holes in the ground or in containers. In the recent past, rich people had ice houses filled with ice collected in the winter to last them through the summer. They also salted, smoked, dried and pickled their food. Canned food is a fairly recent invention (1810—Auguste de Heine and Peter Durand).

A good website with information about preserving food is <http://www.scienceclarified.com/Ex-Ga/Food-Preservation.html> . It explains how food preservation works.

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## Fantastic flint ... and other stones!

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Stone tools were important in Neolithic times, and continued to be important through the Bronze Age. Flint was used to make arrowheads, knives, scrapers and other tools. Quartz was also used to make knives and other tools. Flint is easily shaped by knapping, as is quartz though it takes quite some practice to become a proficient knapper.

Flint can be knapped so it has an incredibly sharp edge—sharper than modern surgical steels. Obsidian (black volcanic 'glass') is sharper still. Both are used in surgery today as they don't tear tissue in the way that steel scalpels do. (<http://www.main.nc.us/sams/obsidian.html> )

Axes were made from flint, but a rock called porcellanite was also used for axes. Porcellanite is a special kind of rock—it's quite rare, and it's only found on Rathlin Island in east Antrim. Axes made from Rathlin Island porcellanite have been found as far away as southern France! Evidence for long distance trade/travel, and also for status symbols and a desire for the unusual, such as porcellanite axes.

Travel in the Neolithic would be on foot, It would take at least a week's journey to go from Ballintaggart to Rathlin Island or to the sources of flint around the Antrim coast. A boat trip was necessary to get to Rathlin Island. Either members of the community travelled to these sources, or there was a system of trade, either from community to community, or via itinerant traders, and not just within Ireland, but long distance too, stretching out to the wider UK and Europe beyond.

### Suggested Activities

A flint knapping demonstration with a look at flint and other tools. Perhaps a chance to use a bow and arrow as well.

What are the properties of flint, quartz and porcellanite, and why are they used in different ways? What materials do we use today to do the same jobs? Where do modern day tools come from? What is their 'style'. How do they get to us?

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## Later Neolithic Life

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The Neolithic houses were eventually abandoned and burned down. This may have been a symbolic burning as the people moved on once the farmland had become infertile. It may have been as the result of an accident with fire. Or they may have been burned down to destroy an infestation of lice. The burning of the houses may have been a result of warfare between rival communities. Or for some other reason we don't know or understand with our modern mindset.

Then, after around 1000 years, the land was used by people living in the Late Neolithic, and they left traces of themselves for us to find—pot sherds, flint tools, and a curious slate disc. The activity of these people didn't disturb the stone row, so we can assume it was still standing at this time.



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# Welcome to the Bronze Age!

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The Bronze Age started when the first bronze tools were widely used. Flint and other stone tools and weapons were still widely used. Bronze wasn't the only change—society seemed to change too. There was a new class of people, a warrior elite, and people moved around a lot more, living in temporary campsites. A rare example of a temporary Early Bronze Age campsite were found near Lough Brickland. Very few campsites of this age have been found anywhere in the world! This is the very first found in Northern Ireland.

The campsite was probably used by people while they were gathering the natural resources available around the Lough, the same reasons why people chose to live here in the Neolithic! The campsite 'respected' the stone row—it was built away from the stone row so it wasn't damaged—evidence that the stone row was still standing.

A tiny little pot was found near the campsite. Pots like these are usually found in graves, however this was found in a pit that didn't have anything to do with a grave. There are fingernail marks on the outside of the pot. Sometimes, but not in this case, you can even see the fingerprints of the person who made the pot in the fired clay. There are examples of prehistoric pots that have deep dips in them and when a cast is made of them, you get a copy of the potter's fingertip! Things like this really link us back to the people who made these items—fingerprints are very personal, individual things.

The little pot is very curious—we have no idea what it was made for. The text has lots of ideas, but there's room for many more!

## Suggested Activities

Build a model Bronze Age campsite. The walls were made of wattle (woven twigs) covered with daub (a mixture of clay and straw). The roof was thatched. The walls extending from the entrance were made from wicker.

Making fingerprints and fingernail marks in clay. The children could use hand-lenses to look at their own and others' fingerprints to look for shapes, patterns, similarities and differences.

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## Build Your Barrows

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This section explains the funerary process in the Bronze Age. It attempts to do so in a factual manner with some humour.

## Suggested Activities

Model barrows could be built. A larger one could be used for an 'I Can't Funeral' - see <http://www.jokesnjokes.net/funny.jokes.amusing.humor.laugh/newsletters/inspire1112.htm>.

Compare/contrast modern funerary practices with those of the Bronze Age.

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## Ballintaggart Barrows

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This section describes what Ballintaggart looked like in the Bronze Age—the land use has changed from one where people lived to one where they buried some of their dead. The land was special in some way, perhaps because of the stone row which marked out that the ancestors were there. The barrows respected the stone row, indeed, some of them form a line that is parallel to the stone row.

Brickland Barrow can be seen on the top of the hill in the illustration on page 18. along with the edge of Lough Brickland, and some of the barrows lined up and pointed towards it.

We have no idea what the people of this time believed, but we can make guesses, and those are mentioned in the text. Again, the children are asked to come up with other reasons.

### Suggested Activities

Examine examples of materials that the cremated remains could have been put into before burial e.g. leather bag, wicker container, pot, wooden box, bare earth. Make a list of the advantages/disadvantages of each e.g. easily made, strong, long lasting, rots away quickly, pretty.

Research other barrows. Compare and contrast the funerary practices of the Bronze Age (ring barrows) to the Neolithic (large tombs and enclosures e.g. Newgrange, Slieve Guillon passage tomb).

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## Something Unusual Is Going On ...

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This section is all about the unusual and special stuff going on at the site in terms of alignments and also the curious 'four-poster' structures discovered. Again, the possibilities are dealt with in a matter of fact way, and the children are asked to come up with suggestions of their own.

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## More Barrows at Derrycraw

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Even more barrows, but these are unusual as well. The cemetery is situated in a similar location to that at Ballintaggart—wet, boggy land around it. The section describes some of the unusual features at Derrycraw. A jet spacer bead from a necklace was also found here, and is dealt with later in the book. Again, lots of questions are raised for the children to think about and to suggest other reasons/solutions.

### Suggested Activities

Compare/contrast the two barrow cemeteries.

Design/make marker posts for the burial and for the penannular ditch. You could look at totem poles and patterns from Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery for inspiration for designs. This could be a class collaborative effort, each child contributing one section to cover a large post, such as the cardboard 'inner-tube' from a roll of carpet.

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## So, who got buried?

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Lots of data about a small number of people buried in the barrows at Ballintaggart and Derrycraw. The cemeteries were in use for between 500 and 8000 years—35 to 40 generations. A lot more people lived during this time than those accorded a barrow burial. It didn't seem to matter what age or gender you were to be given such a burial. What's more, no gold or silver grave goods were found, so we can't say that they were rich or noble in some way, unless items made of wood, fabric or leather that marked them as special were buried with them and they have long since rotted away. What happened to the other people? Well we don't know, but some possible answers are given in the text.

The average life expectancy of the people buried in the barrows is 33 years, though this is unlikely to be representative of the population as a whole where the figure is more likely to be closer to 20 years of age.

Again, lots more questions are raised by this information than are answered. That's part of the fun of archaeology!

### Suggested Activities

Display the data as graphs/charts.

Chose one of the possible reasons why someone was buried in a barrow and write the story of their life and funeral.

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## Jewels and Trade

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The jet bead found at Derrycraw, and the sources of copper and tin used to make bronze are used to illustrate how far goods travelled during the Bronze Age and how long these journeys would take. Certainly the journey across the Irish Sea would have been a very hazardous one!

### Suggested Activities

Compare the travel times in the Bronze Age with modern travel times and methods of travel.

Research Bronze Age boats and make a model!

- [http://www.doverdc.co.uk/museum/bronze\\_age\\_boat.aspx](http://www.doverdc.co.uk/museum/bronze_age_boat.aspx)
- <http://www.ferribyboats.co.uk/>
- [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/tayside\\_and\\_central/8193994.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/tayside_and_central/8193994.stm)

Design and make a bronze age necklace. Examples of other bronze age necklaces include ::

- <http://www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/rhagor/article/1926/>
- [http://www.ambaile.org.uk/en/item/item\\_illustration.jsp?item\\_id=9580](http://www.ambaile.org.uk/en/item/item_illustration.jsp?item_id=9580)

Research how bronze was made in the Bronze Age, and look at the tools and weapons made from this metal.

Consider the properties of copper and tin and the change in properties when they are alloyed to make bronze. What advantages and disadvantages does bronze have over flint and porcellanite?

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## Bronze Age Ills

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Even cremated remains have stories to tell about the lifestyle and illnesses of the person they were.

### Suggested Activities

A day in a life of a bronze age person, describing the aches and pains and the work they had to do to grow and hunt food, make pots, build homes, dig barrows. How is this different to our lives today? How is health-care different?

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## Back to the present...

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A summary of the book, with questions asking the reader to review what they have learned, enjoyed and been amazed at about the Neolithic, Bronze Age and archaeology.

### Suggested Activities

Write a book review.

# Archaeological Timeline



## The End of last Ice Age

(10,000BC or 12,000y.a.)

Ice covered the sea and land. People could walk over it. Britain and Ireland formed when it melted.



## The Mesolithic

(8000BC–4000BC or 10,000 to 6000y.a.)

The first people arrive from over the sea to Ireland. They lived in tents and moved around a lot to hunt and gather food.



## The Neolithic

(4000BC–2500BC or 6000 to 4500y.a.)

People started to stay in one place and build houses. They started to learn how to farm - growing crops and animals for milk, food and clothing.



## The Bronze Age

(2500BC–500BC or 4500 to 2500y.a.)

People lived in round houses. Some moved around stealing sheep and cattle and living in temporary campsites.



## The Iron Age

(500BC–400AD or 2500 to 1600y.a.)

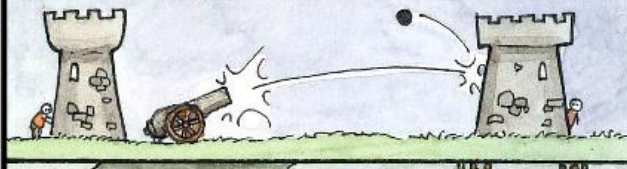
People lived in clans and tribes, each with their own king. Iron weapons and tools made. Lots of wars. The time of the Ulster Cycle and Irish myths and legends.



## The Early Christian Period

(400AD–1200AD or 1600 to 800y.a.)

Christianity arrived in Ireland. Some people began to read and write books. The church was powerful and owned land. Viking raids took place early in this period.



## Medieval Period

(1200AD–1550AD or 1600 to 800y.a.)

Lots of fighting over land. Castles and churches built out of stone so they don't burn down. Towns are built for people to be safe. The Normans arrive.



## Post-Medieval Period

(1550AD–1900AD or 450 to 100y.a.)

After the Jacobite war things are more peaceful. Healthcare and drainage are better, people live longer.



## The Space Age

(started 1957 or 52y.a.)

Rockets and satellites go into space, man lands on the Moon, robots are sent to Mars.



## The Modern Period

Now!

You, sitting down and learning about archaeology in County Down.

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