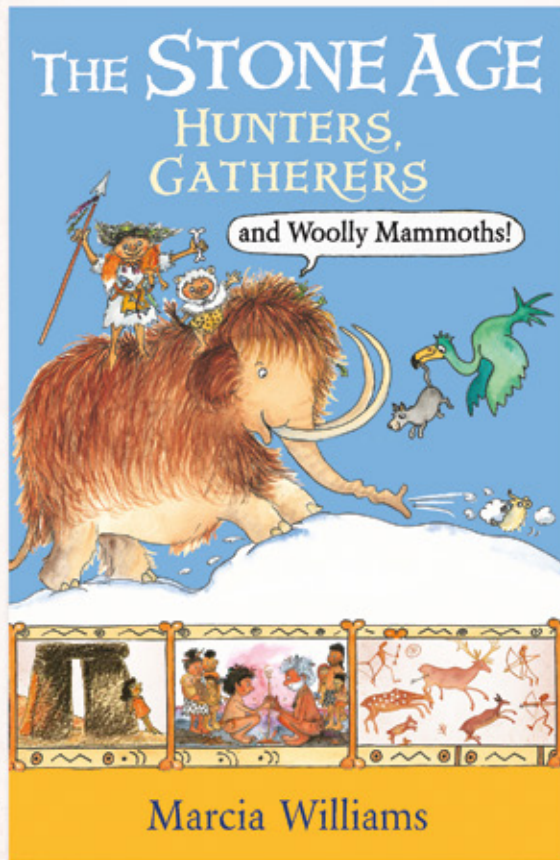


TEACHERS' NOTES

# THE STONE AGE

HUNTERS, GATHERERS  
AND WOOLLY MAMMOTHS



Written and illustrated by  
**MARCIA WILLIAMS**

9781406384017 • \$14.99 • Paperback • 7 years+



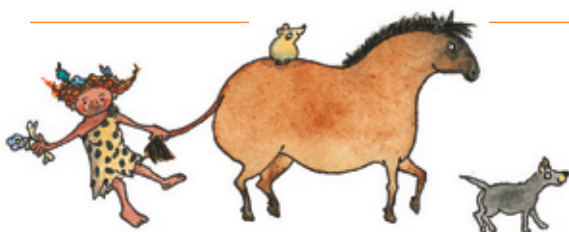
with links to *Stone Age Boy* by Satoshi Kitamura  
9781406312195 • \$16.99 • Paperback • 5 years+



*These notes have been written by the teachers at the CLPE to provide schools with ideas to develop comprehension and cross-curricular activities around this text. They build on our work supporting teachers to use quality texts throughout the reading curriculum. They encourage a deep reading of and reflection on the text, which may happen over a series of reading sessions, rather than in just one sitting. We hope you find them useful.*

## Reading aloud and key talking points:

- Share the front covers of both books with the children and ask them what they understand by the term Stone Age. Have you heard this term before? If so, what do you already know or think you know about the Stone Age? Collect the children's initial thoughts and ideas around a copy of the front covers of the texts to come back to as you read and learn more.
- Look carefully at the covers of the books and read the titles. What do you expect from these books? What kind of books do you think they are? Do you think these are fiction titles, non-fiction, or a combination? What makes you think this? You can also ask if there is anything they would like to know about the Stone Age that these books might support them to find out. Take a note of these points and come back to them if they come up in your reading or look at where else you could look for this information if these are not covered.
- Look at the title of ***The Stone Age: Hunters, Gatherers and Woolly Mammoths***. Discuss key words with the children. Do they know what hunters, gatherers and woolly mammoths are? What is the difference between hunting something and gathering something? Share the final endpapers of ***Stone Age Boy*** and allow the children to find and look at the mammoths. Why do you think these were called "woolly mammoths"? What do they look like? Are these animals in existence today? Do they remind you of any animals alive today? You could also spend time looking at the other animals in the front and final endpapers, exploring which are extinct, which are still in existence and any other animals that the extinct animals remind the children of.
- Read aloud the letter on pages 6-9 of ***The Stone Age: Hunters, Gatherers and Woolly Mammoths***. Think about the language used in the letter. Do the children know what a clan is? Re-read what Sparrow says about the clans in the letter, and ask the children to predict what this word might mean from the context. Then share the glossary at the back of the book. Ask the children if they have seen a glossary before and if they know what a glossary is for. Then share the definition of clan given here and compare this with the children's ideas. Ask the children what they think a clan could be compared with now. Is it just a family? Or would it be extended to family and friends as well? Ask the children to think about who could be in their clan if they had one. Think about the things the clan has in common, shared stories and experiences. Who do you share stories and experiences with in your own life? Would everyone in the class be a part of a clan, for example? Allow some time for the children in the class to think and talk about shared stories and experiences they have had together. These might include actual books or stories they have heard or read together or recounts of shared memories or experiences.
- Scan the text again and look back at some of the language Sparrow uses that is different from our own, such as ***the time of the sun or the moon, fill your tummy when hunting is lean*** and ***newlings***. How might we say these things now? Why do you think she says these things in this way? Use this as a springboard to explore how language has changed over time when concepts and actions evolve, such as using clocks to measure time, or farming and buying food instead of hunting for it.
- Look at the letter as a whole again. Why do you think the author has chosen to include this at the start of the book? What is the purpose of the letter? What does it lead you to expect from the rest of the book?
- Now read aloud the first part of ***Stone Age Boy***, up to page 12, ***Then I must have fallen asleep***. Consider the similarities between the two books. Why do you think both authors have chosen to share information about the Stone Age through the eyes of families living through it? How does this help to engage us as readers? Now think about the differences between the openings. One is a person from the end of the period looking back at their family history throughout that time period, the other is a person from current times, travelling back to a time in that period. Talk about the different effect of both of these openings; does one appeal to you more than the other? If so, why do you think this is?



### *The Stone Age: Hunters, Gatherers and Woolly Mammoths Teachers' Notes*

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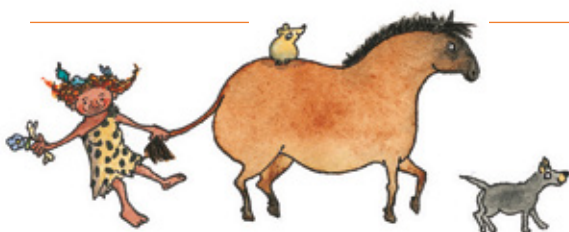
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## Chapter 1: The Last Neanderthal

- Look at the chapter title together. Have the children heard the word **Neanderthal** before? What do they think it means? Now look at the description given in the glossary. Does this give them a clearer idea of what this means?
- Read the chapter aloud and give the children time to consider what they have heard. What kind of book do they think this is now? Talk to the children about the differences between fact and fiction, and re-consider this chapter in this light. Which parts do they think are facts and which have elements of facts that have been presented as historical fiction? Do they think these exact families existed or do you think the author has created them to present information about this time in an engaging way?
- Come back together to explore the concepts that have been introduced. What have you found out about the evolution of man from reading this chapter? Support the children in structuring their ideas by modelling an explanation diagram, showing the steps of evolution covered in the chapter, from apes to modern humans or Homo sapiens.
- Now, come back to the chapter and add any specific information you have found out about Neanderthals to this part of the diagram. Share with the children how to effectively scan for, summarise and record this information in note form, e.g. descended from apes, lived in small groups, slow, and stocky bodies.
- Reflect back on the title of the chapter **The Last Neanderthal**. Why do you think this chapter name was chosen? Now pose the question "How did the Neanderthals become extinct?" What ideas do the children have about this from what they read in the text? Re-read the chapter as a whole, highlighting specific pieces of information that could help to answer this question.
- You could go on to research more information about this subject to begin to decide which of these hypotheses might be the most likely and the historical evidence for these that Marcia Williams, the author, might have drawn on. The Natural History Museum website has a specific section on Neanderthals, which would be really useful for this: <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/who-were-the-neanderthals.html>. You could also look at the origins of Early Man and how some Neanderthals migrated to other parts of the world. You could link this to the continued practice of migration, looking at how and why families choose to move from one place to another.
- Now think about the differences between the early Homo sapiens and the Neanderthals. What enabled them to survive when the Neanderthals did not?
- Now introduce the timeline from the index page of **Stone Age Boy** to focus on the time period both books are focussed on, and to put this in the context of other important historical civilizations, such as the Egyptians and the Romans. Use the timeline to define how long ago this was, how long this period of history lasted for and the important events that occurred during this time. Where on the timeline do the children think this first chapter might sit? Why do they think this? Look back over the chapter to skim and scan for and to highlight details in the text and illustrations that allow them to make their decision, such as **the Stone Age began**, noting that there are no paintings in the cave that Mouse visits, and evidence of the existence of the Woolly Mammoths from the text and illustrations.
- Begin to create a class timeline to chart the information the children are finding out from these texts. What is the key information about this very early period of the Stone Age that they think should be recorded? Share with the children how to effectively and efficiently turn their ideas into note form for easy recording on the timeline.

## Chapter 2: Hunter Gatherers

- Look at the chapter title together. Ask the children what they expect to find out about from a chapter with this title. Why do they think people in this part of the Stone Age may have been described as **Hunter Gatherers**? What purpose might these activities have had?



*The Stone Age: Hunters, Gatherers and Woolly Mammoths Teachers' Notes*

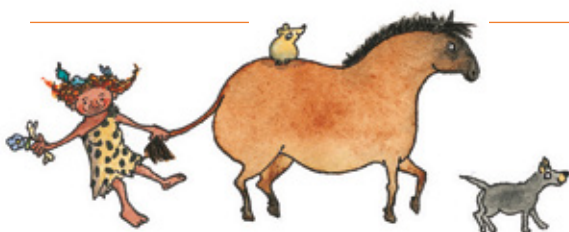
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- Read the chapter aloud and give the children time to consider what they have heard. Do they have any initial questions? Were there any words, phrases or concepts that they didn't understand? Take a moment to clarify the children's understanding together, working as a group to reach shared understandings.
- Discuss the chapter in relation to the timeline in *Stone Age Boy*. Have we moved forward on the timeline? What is the key detail that tells us this? They may reference the introduction of the character of Fern, ***the Woollies' young cave painter*** and the paintings she decorated her walls with.
- Come back together to explore the concepts that have been introduced. What have you found out about how families in the early Stone Age lived? What were their basic needs? Note these down, on a chart under broad titles such as Food, Warmth, Shelter, Staying safe from harm, Entertainment. Now look back over the chapter, skimming and scanning to find out more about how the people ensured these needs were met. Model this for the children and how to highlight relevant information that helps you to see and organize this efficiently, for example by highlighting information related to different needs in different colours.
- Now summarize what you have found out about each theme and add this under each heading in the chart in note form. Think about how you might further summarize all this information to provide a brief description of this part of the period for the class timeline.
- Come back to the introduction of Fern and her cave paintings. What did she use to make the paintings? Why do you think people in the Stone Age created these? Why do we create art? What does it show or allow us to do?
- Use this as an opportunity to find out more about Stone Age cave paintings. DK Find Out! website has some excellent resources for this: <https://www.dkfindout.com/uk/history/stone-age/cave-painting/>
- Give the children time to think about a concept or event that they have learned about from *The Stone Age* so far, that they could record in the form of a cave painting. Look carefully at the style, materials, lines and colours that would have been used by artists at the time and think how they could use this style to create their own version of a cave painting. Allow them to sketch and try out ideas for this in a sketchbook and then, when they have a design they like, give them grey sugar paper and appropriate art materials to create their own cave paintings. You could use paints and oil pastels or, you may want to be more adventurous and work with the children to create their own natural paints. The Fun Kids website has ideas and instructions for how to do this: <https://www.funkidslive.com/summer-challenge/make-paints-plants-berries-powders/#>
- Display the children's artwork prominently and give time for the children to reflect on their own work and that of others, comparing and contrasting their different ideas for the scenes.

### Chapter 3: The Miracle of Fire!

- Look at the chapter title together. Why do you think the author has chosen to describe the fire as a ***miracle***? What do we know about the people's knowledge and use of fire up to now? What do they think might happen in a chapter with this title? How might the knowledge, skills and lives of the people move forward during this chapter?
- Read the chapter aloud and give the children time to consider what they have heard. Were any of their predictions correct? Once again, take the time to clarify any language, vocabulary or concepts where necessary. Think about where this might be on the ***Stone Age Boy*** timeline – this is slightly more difficult as the event of man's ability to create fire isn't specifically mentioned, but they may remember details such as ***they camped near water***, which may support them in coming to a decision.
- Think about the skills that the people were honing during this time in relation to making tools and weapons, as well as making fire using flint. How did they learn these skills? Allow the children to gain a deeper understanding of this concept,



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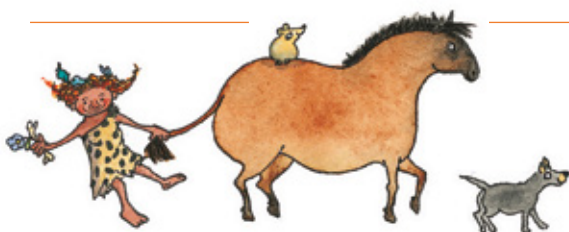
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by relating it back to their own lives. What skills do you have? How did you learn these skills? Who taught you? How did you get better at them? What could you teach to someone else? This may be an artistic, physical or musical skill or anything else that the children are proud to be able to do and able to share with someone else. You could pair children up and give them time away from the reading to teach each other a new skill and come back to reflect on this after a given time.

- Now read the next part of *Stone Age Boy*, up to page 25, **Wow!** You can re-read from the beginning to re-orientate the children with this second book. What more do they learn from this book about the things that Stone Age people did and why they did them? How were the series of drawings and explanations on the double page spread on pages 16-17 helpful for sharing information clearly and succinctly?
- Think about how to effectively summarize the key points about this part of the era for the class timeline.
- Now, work together to create a table called Stone Age Skills and decide with the children which they think the most important skills were, reflecting on what they have read in both books. How did these skills improve their lives and make sure their basic needs continued to be met in a more effective way? Think of how skills and technology continue to evolve now. What do we have in our lives now, which both enhances our lives and ensures our basic needs are met more efficiently? Come back to the basic needs headings from the previous chapter to help focus the children's thinking.
- You may wish to broaden the discussions around this to look at whether the progress of technology is always a good thing and whether some people have the means to have their needs met over and above these basic needs, whilst others are still struggling to have their basic needs met. You could look at what a fair society looks like and whether, either as a local or as a whole human civilization, our society is fair.

## Chapter 4: Man's Best Friend

- Look at the chapter title together. Have you heard this phrase before? What does it refer to? Do you know who or what the phrase **Man's Best Friend** is describing? Allow the children the chance to share their prior knowledge, confirming or clarifying where necessary. Why do you think domestic (or pet) dogs are described as Man's Best Friend? Do any of the children have a dog? If so, do they agree with this comparison? What qualities do pet dogs have that might earn them this title? Why do you think there might be a chapter with this title in a book about the Stone Age?
- Read the chapter aloud and give the children time to consider what they have heard. Were any of their predictions correct? Once again, take the time to clarify any language, vocabulary or concepts where necessary.
- Think about what happened in the chapter more deeply. What did the Stone Age People used to think of wolves? What did they do to wolves? Why do you think Leaf got so upset after the clan killed the mother wolf? How did she empathize with the wolves in a way her family did not? Why do you think this was? What do you think might have changed Leaf's father's perception of the wolves by the end of the chapter?
- Come back together to think about why the clan's perceptions of the wolves changed. What do you think made the clan decide the wolves were better as pets than food? What more were they able to offer? Now talk about the historical facts that can be gleaned from this chapter. Do they think there was a real **Clan Woolly** and a real girl called **Leaf**? Why do they think the author, Marcia Williams, has chosen to present historical information from this era in the context of this clan and their lives?
- Think about how to summarize the events of the chapter for the class timeline, ensuring that what is put into the table is rooted in historical fact and not the fictional characters of the book.
- Come back to thinking about pets now. Why do we keep pets? What do they offer to enrich our lives? Allow children to talk about their own pets or the pets of family members or friends. Why do people choose to keep pets? What do they bring to the lives of the owners? You could broaden this out to look at whether taming and keeping animals in this way is fair or beneficial to the animals themselves, discussing and debating reasons for and against this.



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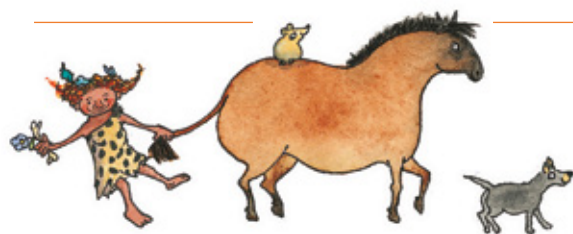
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## Chapter 5: From Nomads to Farmers

- Look at the chapter title together. Have the children heard the word **Nomad** before? What do they think it means? Now, look at the description given in the glossary. Does this give them a clearer idea of what this means? What do you think the lives of a **wandering clan** might be like? Now think about the word **Farmers**. What do we know about farmers? What do they do? What are their lives like? Do you think a wanderer could be a farmer? Why or why not? Think about how the title **From Nomads to Farmers**. What does the use of the words **from** and **to** suggest? What changes do you think might occur in this chapter?
- Come back to the timeline at the back of **Stone Age Boy**. Can the children place where this chapter might take place on the timeline? What are the reasons for their decision?
- Read the chapter aloud and give the children time to consider what they have heard. Were any of their predictions correct? Once again, take the time to clarify any language, vocabulary or concepts where necessary.
- Come back together to think about the major changes that took place in the lives of the clan during this chapter. What were the major reasons that caused the move into farming? Were they surprised to hear climate change mentioned in the context of the Stone Age? We talk about climate change a lot in current times, but our climate has continually changed over the history of the Earth. You could look here at the major Ice Ages and how these sit within Stone Age history to broaden children's knowledge about the environmental history of our planet. The book talks about the advantage of the change in climate for farming – you could also look at the adverse impact of modern climate change on farming, for example the impact of increased drought and flooding on farmers in different parts of the world.
- Why do you think **most clans became farmers**? What did this lifestyle offer them? What advantages were there to settling down, growing their own crops and keeping animals? Come back to the class timeline and add this new information. Think about how long farming has been part of the history of the human civilization. Why are farms and farmers still important today? You may want to go on and look more widely at the current threats to farming and quality of food production and its impact on the environment because of mass production and companies driving down prices; exploring the impact on the farmers themselves, the people buying the food and the planet as a whole. You could investigate different ideas for supporting farmers and their income, raising the quality of food production, including animal welfare and meeting demand so that everyone's basic need for food can be met, without negatively impacting on the farmers, animals or the environment.
- You might also come back to the continued practice of migration and settling in different areas and continue to explore this practice in current times. Children may have their own experiences of familial migration, for a range of different reasons, some may be by choice, others may be forced. This is a rich opportunity to explore family history in the context of world history.

## Chapter 6: The End of the Stone Age

- Look at the chapter title together. What do the children think happens at the end of a historical time period? Does the world stop completely? What do they think happened after the Stone Age? Some might have looked ahead on the timeline in **Stone Age Boy** and talk about the Egyptians and the Romans or others may have knowledge of other eras and offer this information. Keep a note of the children's suggestions to come back to after reading.
- Read the chapter aloud and give the children time to consider what they have heard. Were any of their predictions correct? Once again, take the time to clarify any language, vocabulary or concepts where necessary.
- Come together to discuss: What signalled the end of the Stone Age? Again, you will need to tune the children in to how to distinguish historical fact from historical fiction. Do they think there really was a girl called Sparrow who was responsible for this? Which parts of the story are grounded in fact?



*The Stone Age: Hunters, Gatherers and Woolly Mammoths Teachers' Notes*

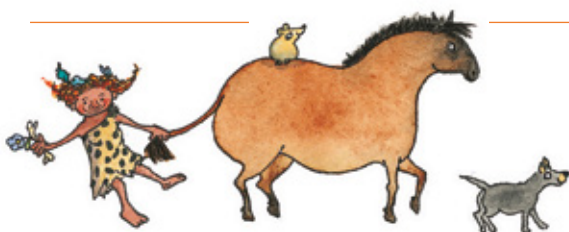
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- Add to the timeline to show where the Stone Age ended and the Bronze Age began, as well as the other ancient civilizations that were emerging at this time e.g., Sumer, Babylonia, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, the Indus Valley and Ancient China. You could go on to hypothesize about the migratory patterns of Early Man, how these civilizations may have begun, and how they might have evolved in these different environments. Do they think people will have evolved in the same way – or will different civilizations be influenced by their environment?
- Begin to draw the children’s learning together by thinking about how civilization progressed from the start of the Stone Age to its end. What advances happened during this time? How did they come about? What benefits did they have for the people of this era? Summarize this information at the end of the timeline.
- Now, begin to consider what further advances might come ahead as people discovered bronze and the Bronze Age began. What might people be able to do with this metal that they haven’t been able to do before?

### Drawing the learning together:

- Re-read **Stone Age Boy** and think about what the two books had in common and what was different about them. How did both author/illustrators go about communicating information about the Stone Age? What does the end of **Stone Age Boy** teach us about how we discover facts about the past? Why do you think the boy grew up to have such a strong connection and fascination with the past? Now think about how the two books were created. Where do you think the authors would have got their information about the Stone Age from? What do you think both of these authors would have had to have done before writing these books?
- Use this to start a discussion about how important historical research is to ensure that any information presented to others is reliable. Where could we go to find out more factual information about this era? How do we know which sources are reliable? How might we recognize if something is inaccurate or biased before we report it ourselves?
- Now, allow the children to begin to explore their responses to the texts shared through booktalk with the help of what Aidan Chambers calls “the four basic questions”. These questions give children accessible starting points for discussion:
  - Tell me... What did you like about the each text?
  - Was there anything that you particularly disliked?
  - Was there anything that puzzled you?
  - Were there any patterns ... any connections that you noticed...? Did it remind you of anything else you’ve read or seen?
- The openness of these questions unlike the more interrogative “Why?” question encourages every child to feel that they have something to say. It allows everyone to take part in arriving at a shared view without the fear of the “wrong” answer.
- Asking these questions will lead children inevitably into a fuller discussion than using more general questions. You may, for example, ask the children if they had favourite parts of the story, and why this was.
- Extend the children’s thinking through more evaluative questions, such as – What do you think about the idea of following a family throughout the book to learn about the history of the period? Think about how these books compare with a more traditional information text. Do you like the way that both authors have chosen to present facts in a fictional narrative? Why or why not?
- Leave multiple copies of the books in the book corner for the children to revisit and re-read in independent reading time, by themselves or socially in a group.



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## After reading, you could also:

- Think about different ways to share your knowledge of this period in history. This could include turning your classroom into a class museum at the end of the work and using different activities to share information, such as:
  - Making replica Stone Age tools, weapons or other artefacts for a class museum, with gallery cards sharing knowledge of how these were made and why these were used.
  - Building a scale model of a Stone Age farming settlement for the class museum and sharing information about the beginnings of the tradition of farming on information cards or posters.
  - Sharing more important Stone Age moments in the form of cave paintings for an installation in the class museum, with gallery cards to describe what the paintings show.
  - Talks or presentations on different aspects of Stone Age history to give at an open day for your class museum, where parents/carers or other classes in the school are invited to attend.
  - Articles on different aspects of the Stone Age for a class magazine to give out at the open day.
  - Information about different aspects of the Stone Age for a class blog or webpage to share information beyond the class museum.
  - Other stories or poems about a Stone Age boy, girl or clan, drawing on factual information about the period, as Marcia Williams and Satoshi Kitamura have. These can form part of the display in the class museum.

## Other links to support the widening of historical knowledge explored in the texts:

- Museum of London – Prehistoric collection: <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/collections/about-our-collections/what-we-collect/prehistoric>
- The Natural History Museum – Prehistoric collection: <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/prehistoric.html>
- Dorling Kindersley Find Out! – The Stone Age: <https://www.dkfindout.com/uk/history/stone-age/>
- The History Channel – The Stone Age: <https://www.history.com/topics/pre-history/stone-age>
- BBC Bitesize – Prehistoric: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z82hsbk>



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