

Reading Passage

The islands of Britain have been inhabited by various cultures during the course of the last 500,000 years, and archaeologists have been able to study this rich history through the careful analysis of artifacts which have been reclaimed from archaeological digs and excavations. The inhabitation of Britain by hominids during the last one-half million years is unquestionable, but because all of the pre-Roman inhabitants of current-day Britain had no written language, any insights and speculations are purely conjectural and are open to debate.

The time period spanning from approximately 600,000 years ago to about 10,000 years ago is deemed the Paleolithic period, and during this time permanent settlements were sporadic, at best, due to the constantly changing environment and brutal living conditions. Initial analysis of excavations indicate that *Homo erectus*, a predecessor to *Homo Sapiens*, was present in Britain starting at approximately 600,000 years ago, and that *Homo heidelbergensis* was present at about 500,000 years ago. The bone and remain records of *Homo erectus* and *Homo heidelbergensis* are sparse and largely incomplete, both for the reason that these people inhabited Britain so long ago and because there were very few of such inhabitants. During the early Paleolithic period, weather fluctuations, as can be presently measured by the analysis of polar ice core samples, were severe, and recurring ice ages most likely repeatedly drove settlers south. The ensuing movement of glaciers during repeated ice ages wreaked havoc on delicate evidence. There was, however, a rather lengthy warmer period that lasted from 400,000 to 180,000 years ago, during which settlements flourished and during which a large flint industry seems to have thrived. The ice age that followed, however, from approximately 180,000 to 60,000 years ago, again drove out the settlers, and there is little proof of any occupation at this time.

The latter stages of the Paleolithic period, from approximately 30,000 to 10,000 years ago, saw the emergence of modern humans, *Homo sapiens*. During this time tools made of flint, bone, antler,

Questions

1. According to the passage, which of the following is not true?
 - a. During the Mesolithic period, average temperatures in Britain rose several degrees
 - b. Glaciers tend to destroy archaeological evidence
 - c. Bronze led to the use of better and better tools
 - d. Britain has been settled continuously for the last 200,000 years
 - e. Pre-Roman inhabitants of current-day Britain had no written language

2. Which of the following statements would the author agree with?
 - a. During cold weather, the ancient inhabitants of Britain would partake in rituals.
 - b. The development of the tools in use by the nomadic people of Britain can be documented by analyzing archaeological specimens.
 - c. The British Islands have a dull history.
 - d. The ice ages that plagued the British Isles were a detriment to the development of a written language.
 - e. The Bronze age is the most fascinating.

and mammoth ivory were in large supply as evidence by archaeological reclaims. At approximately 10,500 years ago, the weather again began to turn cooler, but this time, the inhabitants did not to leave, but rather weathered the impending minor ice age. Therefore, it is approximately from about 15,000 years ago that Britain has been settled without any interruptions.

The Mesolithic, and eventually the Neolithic periods, which began at approximately 10,000 years ago, saw the return of warmer weather, and it is during these times that the British Isles saw their greatest increase in population up to that time. Recovered evidence of woodworking tools, as well as proof of the domestication of the dog, indicate the emergence of a more stationary lifestyle, which also may be attributed to the rich source of local fish and wildlife that flourished as a result of the melting of the the most recent ice age and subsequent forestation of the region.

Modern-day Britons, as some archaeologists like to call them, are characterized by the use of bronze and iron, both of which became prevalent around 2,700 BC and 700 BC, respectively. It is believed that the discovery of bronze was made at approximately 2,100BC, and that at approximately 700 BC, iron working skills were developed which further allowed for the expansion of the now cities and towns. Bronze lead to the use of better and better tools which could withstand repeated pounding and usage, and iron, which is even stronger than bronze, was leveraged by cities and leaders to build even more dynamic structures and cities.

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