

Stonehenge



Name

Class



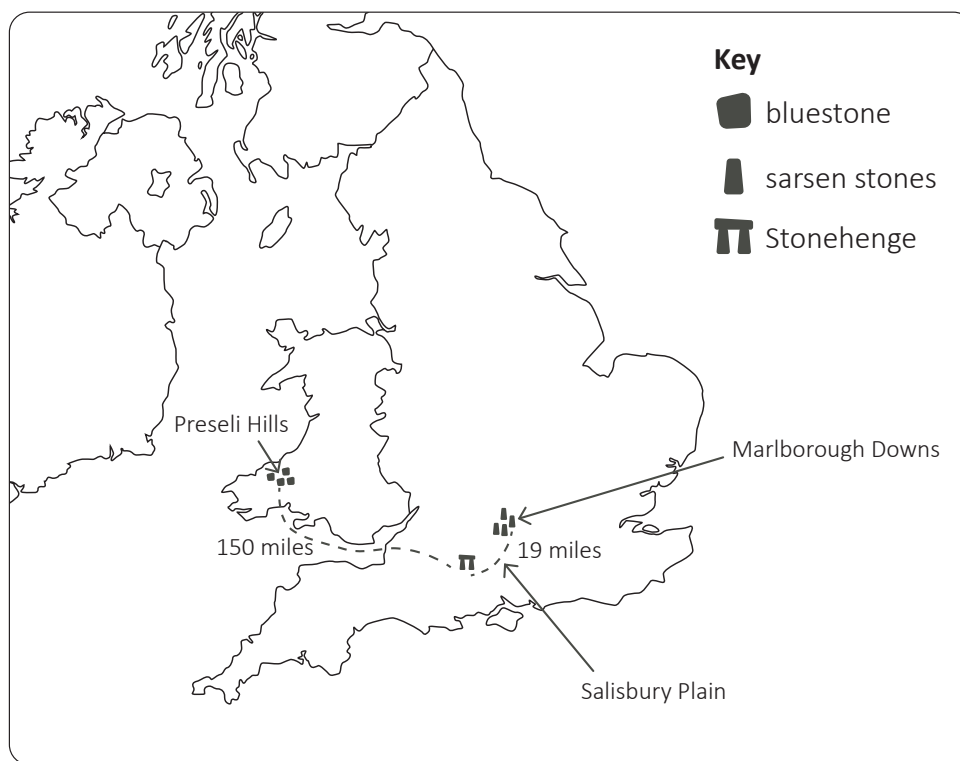
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Evidence 1

Map



Stonehenge was built on Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire, in the south of England. The largest stones are sarsen stones, which is a local sandstone. They were transported 19 miles from the Marlborough Downs to Stonehenge. The smaller stones are bluestone. They were transported 150 miles from the Preseli Hills in Wales. Historians believe that these stones were transported over water on rafts and over land by rolling them on logs.

1. Where was Stonehenge built?

2. What is surprising about where the bluestone came from?



Evidence 2

Illustration of Stonehenge landscape



There are other prehistoric monuments in the Stonehenge landscape, most of which were built before Stonehenge. There is a 1.7 mile long cursus, which dates from c3630– c3370 BC. There is also a long barrow which dates from c3500 BC

3. Look at the map. Why do you think this location was chosen to build Stonehenge?



Evidence 3

Illustrated timeline

Historians believe that Stonehenge took over a millennium to build.

Stage 1 c2950–c2900 BC Builders dig a large, circular ditch using antler picks. They pile up earth on either side of the ditch. This forms an earthwork called a henge. 	Stage 2 c2900–c2400 BC Pine posts are used to build a wooden structure inside the henge. 	Stage 3 c2550–c1600 BC Thirty sarsen stones are raised in a circle with lintels on top. An inner horseshoe of five trilithons is also raised. Eighty smaller bluestones are placed inside the stone circle in a horseshoe shape. 
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Images from: Getty Images/Heritage Images

4. How did the site change over time?

5. Why do you think the site changed over time?



Evidence 4

Information text

Stonehenge is unique because it is the only prehistoric monument in the world that was built using advanced building techniques.

Stonehenge is made of huge stones, called megaliths, that were moved long distances to reach the site and were shaped by hand using hammerstones. The builders lifted the megaliths and placed them into large holes in the ground, so they stood upright. Lintels were then placed on top to form trilithons. The lintels were fixed in place with interlocking joints, which was an amazing feat of Stone Age engineering.

Stonehenge is very significant because it helps historians to understand how advanced architecture in the Neolithic and Bronze Age had become.

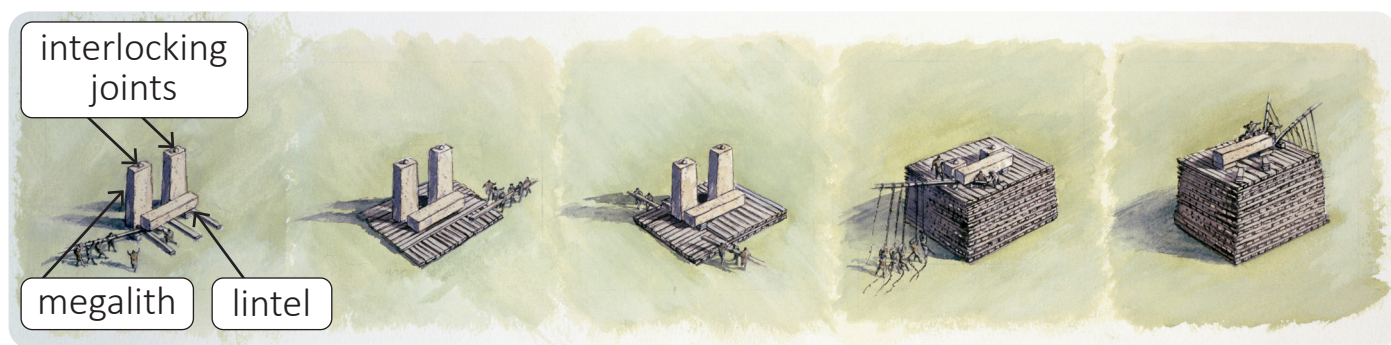


Illustration showing how a lintel might have been raised at Stonehenge

6. How was Stonehenge built?

7. Why is Stonehenge a unique and significant prehistoric site?



Evidence 5

Historians' viewpoints

Historians cannot agree what Stonehenge was used for. However, there are certain facts that give them clues.

Historian 1

'I believe that Stonehenge was a burial ground, because the cremated remains of 64 men, women and children have been found there.'

Historian 2

'I believe that Stonehenge was a giant clock, because the stones line up with the Sun during the summer solstice in June and the winter solstice in December. Farmers used Stonehenge to tell them that the seasons were changing. They planted their seeds in spring after the winter solstice and gathered their crops in autumn after the summer solstice.'

Historian 3

'I think that Stonehenge was a place of worship for the druids, who were Celtic priests. The centre of Stonehenge is very small, meaning that only a special group, such as priests, would have been able to fit. Another reason is that the stones line up with the Sun and the druids worshipped the Sun. A further reason is that the bluestones from Wales were thought to have mystical healing properties. People came to the druids for help when they were ill, so it would make sense to have healing stones at Stonehenge.'

8. What do historians believe were the three possible purposes of Stonehenge?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

9. Which purpose do you think is the most likely?

10. Why do you think this?



Evidence 6

Illustrated reconstruction of Stonehenge and an aerial photograph of Stonehenge



11. Look at the pictures and describe how Stonehenge changed over time.

12. Why do you think Stonehenge has changed over time?

