

UKS2 Topic: Stone Age to Iron Age Britain

Session 2 What makes a human	
NC link	<p>History: Address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance.</p> <p>English: Become more familiar with and confident in using language in a greater variety of situations, for a variety of audiences and purposes, including through drama, formal presentations and debate.</p> <p>Science: Identify how animals and plants are adapted in different ways and that adaptation may lead to evolution.</p>
LOs	<p>Children will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have opinions on what makes a hominin a human • Take part in a discussion • Make a plaster cast of their footprint
Key vocabulary	Bipedal (pronounced Buy-pea-dull – means walking on two feet)
<p>Resources</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Image bank - Hominin footprints 2. How to take a plaster cast of footprints 3. Timeline template of human evolution 4. Fundamental fact-sheet: hominin species <p>What you'll need Trays, sand, water, plaster of Paris/alginate</p>	<p>Links</p> <p>http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/research_projects/all_current_projects/featured_project_happisburgh/happisburgh_footprints.aspx Link to British Museum website discussing the Happisburgh footprints.</p>
Prep	<p>Set up a tray for yourself or leave footprints in the flower-bed close to where you 'dug up' the bones in the last session (preferably barefoot!)</p> <p>Print one copy of resource 4. Set up some trays full of wet sand.</p>
Mini-wow starter	<p>Take children out to see the other 'evidence' you have uncovered about these people you dug up in the last session. They left some fossilised footprints behind. Ask children what they can tell about the person from their footprint (e.g. they walked on two legs, they were walking slowly or quickly or even running, they had big/little feet etc...)</p> <p>Show children how to record these footprints (use resource 2 to help you).</p> <p>Take children inside to make their own footprints and casts in the trays of wet sand.</p>
Main activity	<p>While the casts are setting, show children resource 1 on the whiteboard which explains some of the oldest footprints that have ever been found. It explains that the oldest footprints in Britain, at Happisburgh (pronounced Haze-borough), are surprising because it was very cold in Britain at the time and it was thought no humans could live here. Does that mean these humans (<i>Homo antecessor</i>) had clothes and/or fire?</p> <p>Point out to children that the earliest footprints at Laetoli in Tanzania show that our ancestors were bipedal (walked on two legs) 3.6 million years ago (like Lucy, <i>Australopithecus afarensis</i>).</p> <p>Make a list on a flipchart of things that make humans unique: bipedalism, big brains, language, made tools, use of clothes, use of fire, cooking food, having culture/art/music.</p> <p>Give out a section of resource 4 per table and assign each table a species. Ask them to give their species a point for every one of the traits it had on your list.</p>
Extension	<p>Older or more able children could be asked to do some research into <i>Australopithecus afarensis</i>, <i>Australopithecus africanus</i> and <i>Homo habilis</i> to work out their scores using the internet links to the Smithsonian museum website: http://humanorigins.si.edu/evidence/human-fossils</p>
Assessment	<p>Explain that none of these traits that hominins evolved were inevitable. There had to be some reason why they evolved to walk instead of climb trees. Can children think of a reason? (E.g. the loss of forests due to climate change meant early hominins had to adapt to living on plains instead of in trees). The evolution of bigger brains led to tool use/language/culture – but what started the evolution to big brains? (E.g. humans not as fast or strong as other predators – had to be smarter instead). Praise children for the ideas they come up with.</p>