

All about
Iron Age Brighton




Iron Age

Why iron? Can you think of anything you know of that is made of iron?



Iron Age?




Why 'the iron age'?

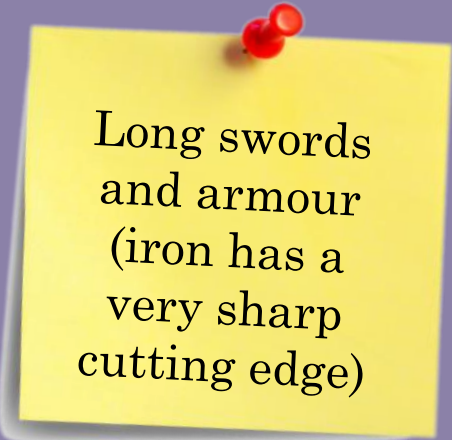
Because people started making things out of iron and steel for the first time of course!

This was a huge advance in technology, as you had to heat up iron ore (rock with little pieces of iron in it) to very high temperatures to extract usable iron from it. You then had to shape it by repeatedly heating and hammering (known as smithing).

So what kind of things did people make from the iron?



Farming tools
like sickles and
cart harnesses
for horses



Long swords
and armour
(iron has a
very sharp
cutting edge)



Jewellery



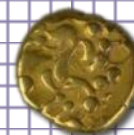
Palaeolithic

Black Rock
250,000 years BP



Neolithic

Whitehawk
5,700 years BP



Iron Age

Hollingbury
2,600 years BP

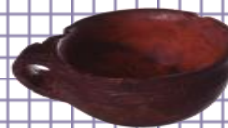
Mesolithic

Falmer
10,000 years BP



Bronze Age

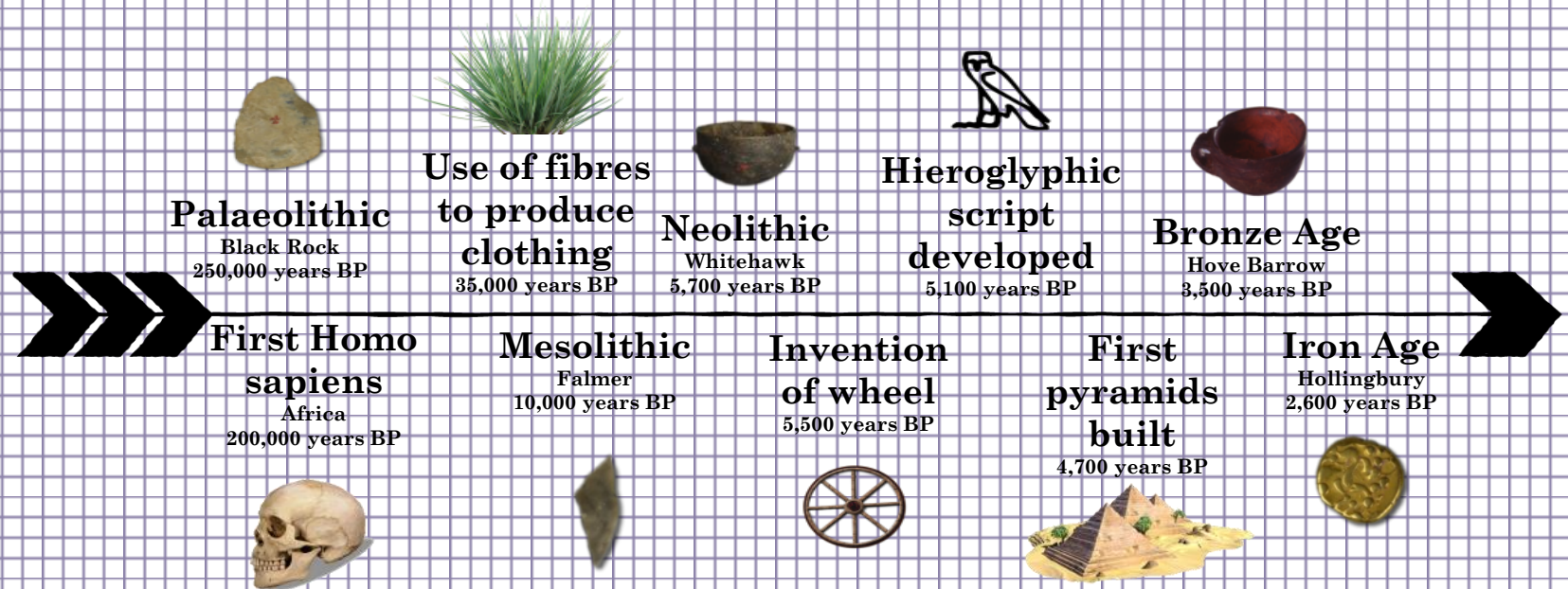
Hove Barrow
3,500 years BP



The iron age is the very last period of prehistory we will be looking at. The people living at this time were much more technologically advanced than earlier people, as we shall see...



How does this period fit into worldwide prehistory?



Find out about the Iron Age

It's time to use your investigation and IT skills to go on a fact-finding mission about life in Iron Age Britain...




1. Why was iron seen as better than bronze?
2. What is the difference between a Briton, a Gaul and a Gael?
3. How did Iron Age people make and dye their clothes?
4. What is an Iron Age Hoard? Has one ever been found in Sussex? If so where?
5. What is a 'bog body'?



The Iron Age also saw the production of the first ever coins in this country. These are some from the collection at Brighton Museum and were found locally.



Four ancient coins are arranged in a circle. The top-left coin is reddish-brown with a circular design. The top-right coin is reddish-brown with a circular design. The bottom-left coin is golden-yellow with a circular design. The bottom-right coin is golden-yellow with a circular design.

How do you think they were made?

What do these coins tell us about the lives of people living in Iron Age Brighton?

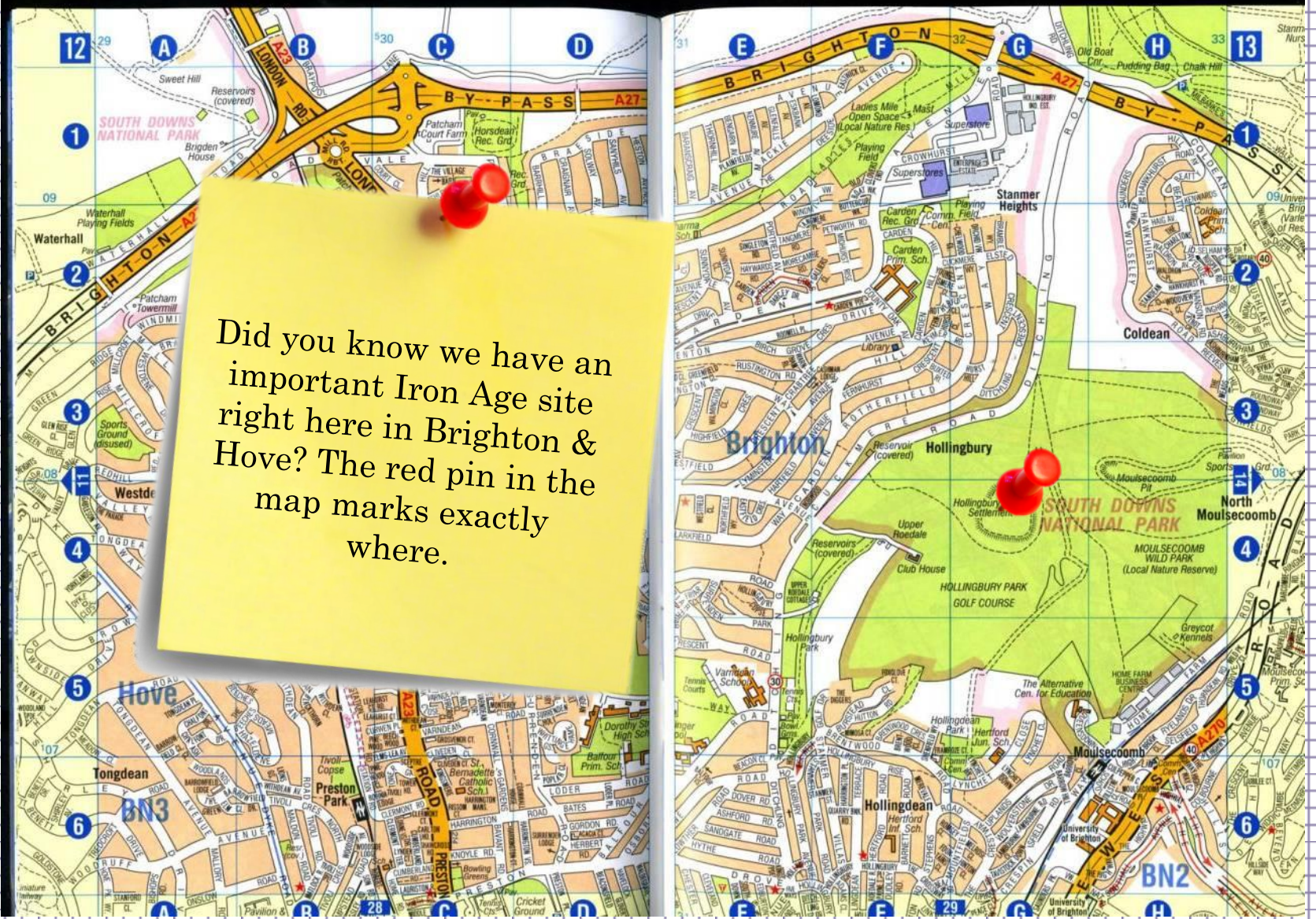
What kind of patterns and pictures can you see on the coins?

Which is your favourite coin? Why?

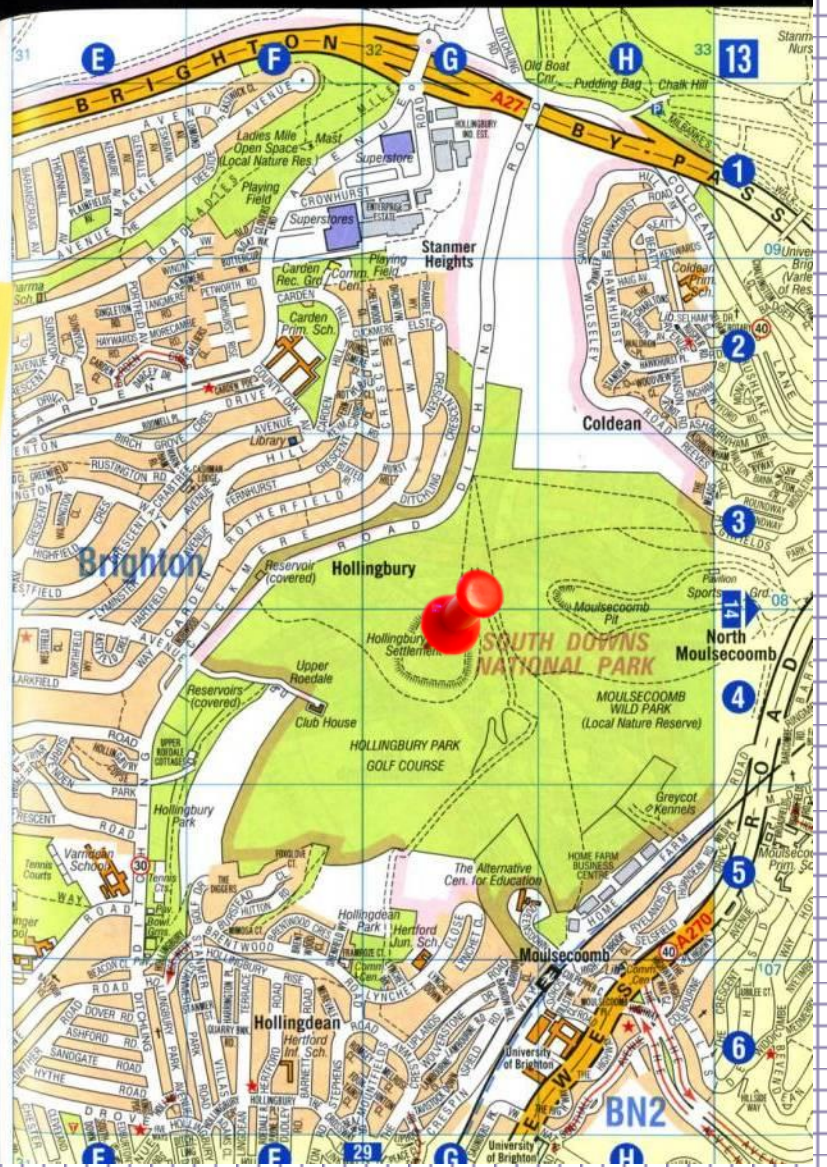
Why do you think they are different colours?

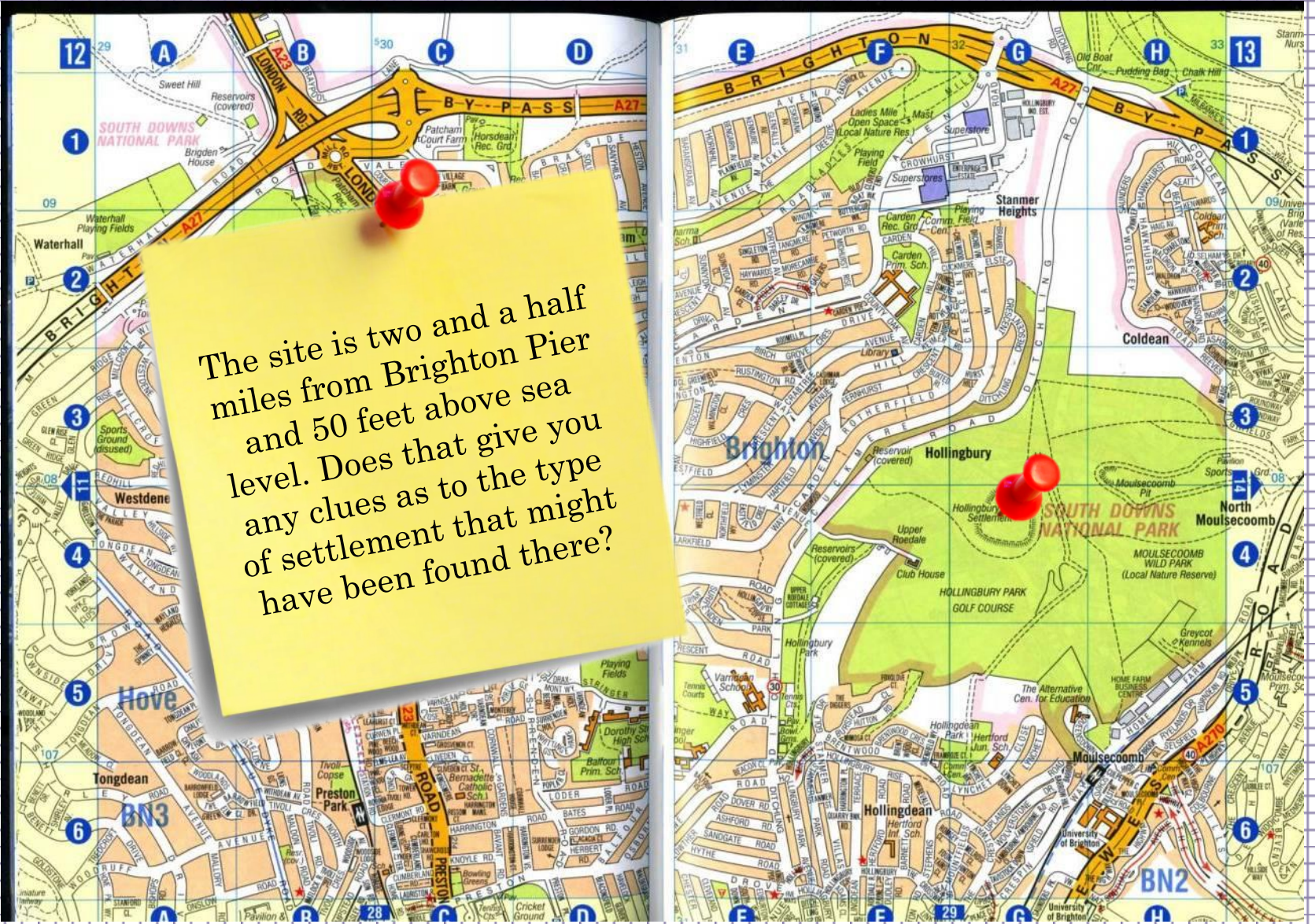
What kind of things would they have been used to buy?

How do you think the world would work today if we had never invented money?



Did you know we have an important Iron Age site right here in Brighton & Hove? The red pin in the map marks exactly where.





The site is two and a half miles from Brighton Pier and 50 feet above sea level. Does that give you any clues as to the type of settlement that might have been found there?

In 1908, workmen
building the golf course
at Hollingbury
stumbled across
something they weren't
expecting...



What did they find?

- A hidden four-foot pit, six feet wide
- Broken pottery pieces
- Bits of grain rubbers (used to grind corn)
- A small stone pebble (probably used to sharpen tools and weapons)

Does this extra information back up your theory about the type of site that was discovered? Or make you change your mind?

Herbert Toms,
Curator at
Brighton
Museum & Art
Gallery, in
1908

Cecil Curwen
& Brighton &
Hove
Archaeological
Society in 1931

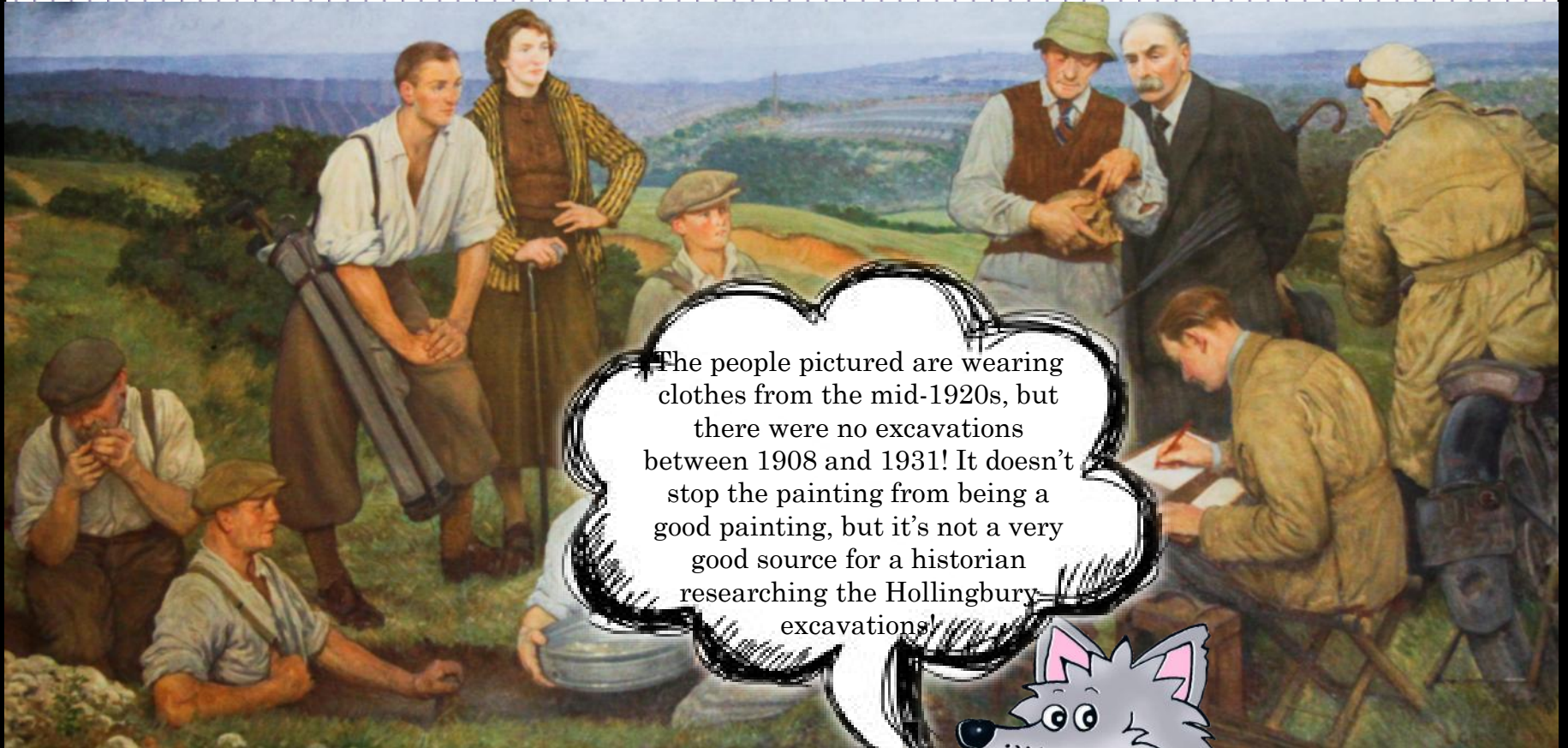
John Holmes in
1967

You're not the only
person who wanted
to find out more!
The discovery
prompted a series
of excavations by
three different
archaeologists.



Everybody was very interested in the excavations. On the next slide is a picture by a famous Brighton painter, Louis Ginnett, painted in the first half of last century. Ginnett decided to paint a huge mural of this picture on one on the walls of his former school, now BHASVIC sixth form college of Dyke Road, where it can still be seen today. People who study history for a living can sometimes spot the mistake in the picture that makes it obvious it is a work of imagination, rather than fact. Can anybody guess what might be wrong with it?





The people pictured are wearing clothes from the mid-1920s, but there were no excavations between 1908 and 1931! It doesn't stop the painting from being a good painting, but it's not a very good source for a historian researching the Hollingbury excavations!




What did the archeologists find?



They discovered something very exciting indeed – evidence of an Early Iron Age Hill Fort. Did you guess right? Looking at this aerial photograph from 1954, it's surprising nobody thought to look for one sooner! Can you spot where the old ramparts once were?





What would
the hill fort
have looked
like during
the Iron Age?

**Between them the
archaeologists have
found evidence of:**

- A two to three metre deep single-ring ditch enclosing the fort
- Ramparts (huge defensive walls) made of chalk rubble, topped with a large timbered gateway to the east
- At least five round-houses built within the ramparts

What were hill forts for?



The obvious answer is that they were to defend communities, although some people have argued against this as they were not always built in the most suitable defensive positions. Could they instead be for storage? Or for social gatherings? Perhaps they were about showing power and marking territory? What do you think?



Iron Age ARTGUS

Saturday 14 August 2600 BP

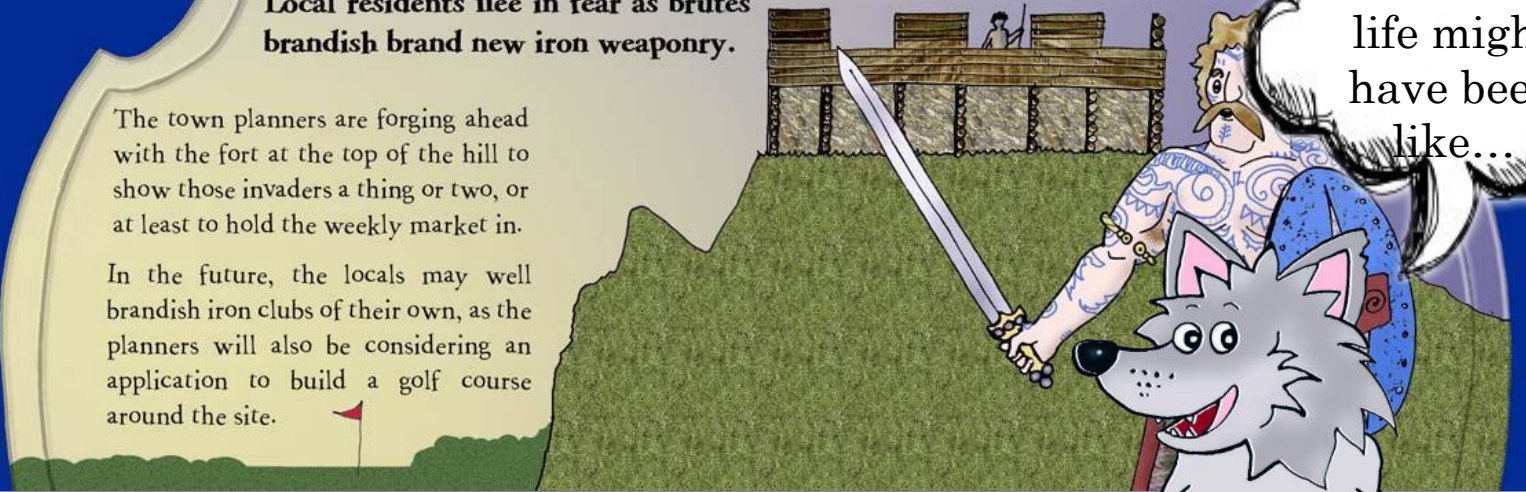
Hollingbury attacked!

New hill fort to be built: plans being drawn up in chalk.

Local residents flee in fear as brutes brandish brand new iron weaponry.

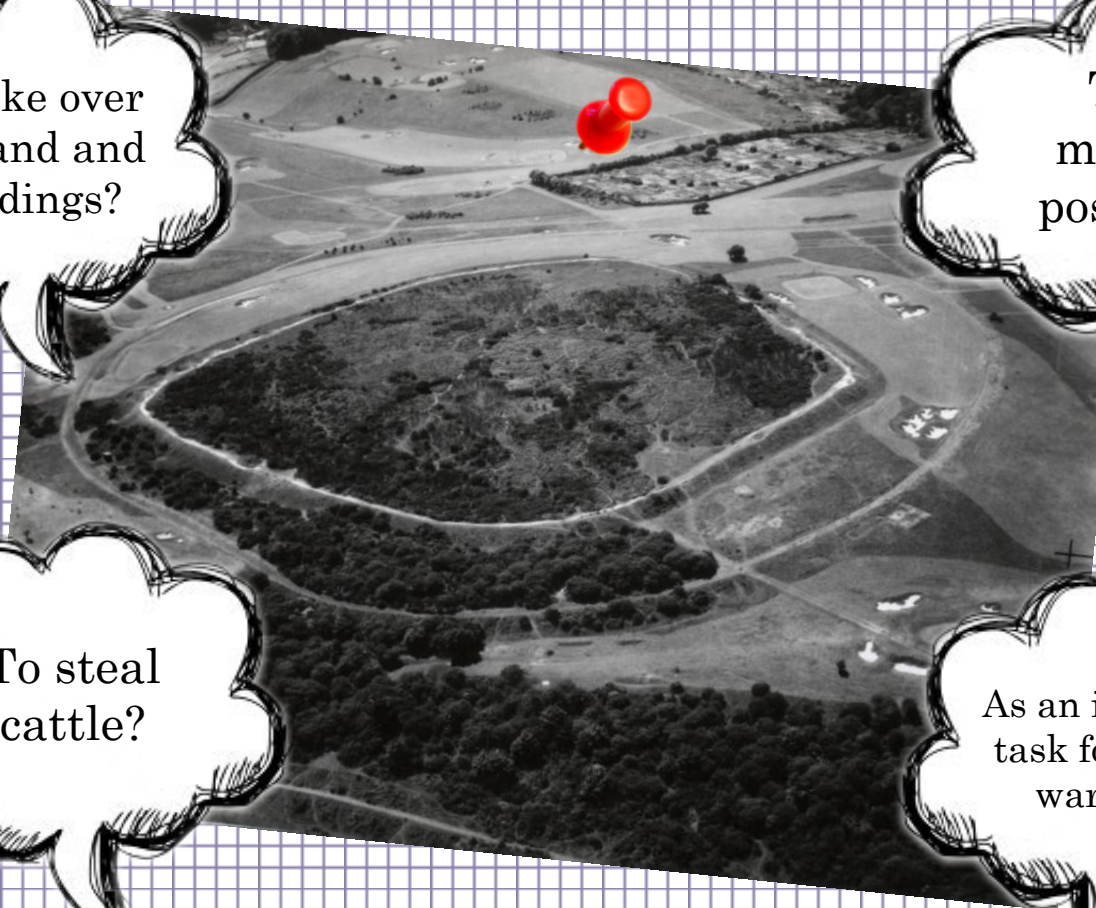
The town planners are forging ahead with the fort at the top of the hill to show those invaders a thing or two, or at least to hold the weekly market in.

In the future, the locals may well brandish iron clubs of their own, as the planners will also be considering an application to build a golf course around the site.



Here's one idea of what life might have been like...

Why would you want to attack Hollingbury hill fort?


An aerial photograph of Hollingbury Hill Fort, a large circular stone enclosure on a hill. A red pushpin is stuck into the top of the hill, marking the location of the fort. The surrounding area includes fields, trees, and some buildings.

To take over
the land and
buildings?

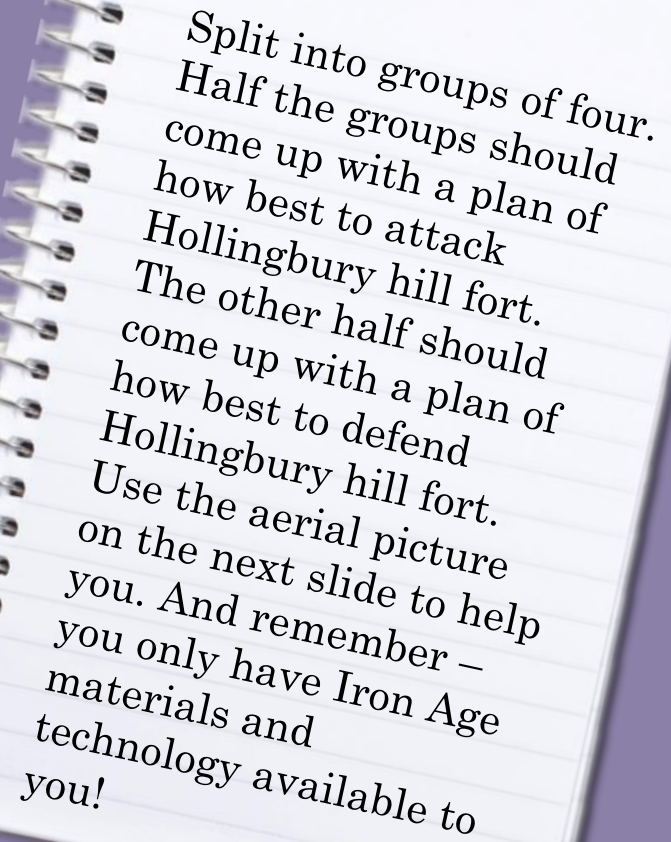
To steal
money and
possessions?

To steal
cattle?

As an initiation
task for young
warriors?



Hollingbury
vs. The
World!



Split into groups of four.
Half the groups should
come up with a plan of
how best to attack
Hollingbury hill fort.
The other half should
come up with a plan of
how best to defend
Hollingbury hill fort.
Use the aerial picture
on the next slide to help
you. And remember –
you only have Iron Age
materials and
technology available to
you!



Take it in turns to present your battle plan to the rest of the class. You might like to include:

- Diagrams of the hill fort with your battle strategy clearly marked
- Pictures of any iron-age weapons you will use
- A poster persuading your fellow Britons to fight on your side
- A battle song (or rap!)

Battle of the Bloodthirsty Britons!



Thanks for
downloading.
See you soon!



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