Neolithic Activities at La Hougue Bie

1. Visit the Passage Grave

Suggested curriculum links:

LITERACY - Go inside and make observations to inform creative writing
HISTORY - Chronology of the area and era
ART AND DESIGN - Draw the entrance
STEM - Estimation of weight and volume of stones, measuring, how were they moved?
GEOGRAPHY - Where did the stones come from, why was it built in this place?

2. Visit the Archaeology Museum

Suggested curriculum links:

LITERACY - who used the objects, imagine sitting around a fire in a family group
HISTORY - Chronology of era - where the artefacts sits within the Palaeolithic to Bronze Age, what are they used for
ART AND DESIGN - Draw the artefacts
STEM - estimation of force used by artefacts, discussion on flint knapping - making tools, materials used for making tools
GEOGRAPHY - where did the artefacts come from in the museum?

3. Handling Objects

Suggested curriculum links:

LITERACY - who used the objects, imagine sitting around a fire in a family group
HISTORY - Chronology of era - where the artefacts sits within the Palaeolithic to Bronze Age, what are they used for
ART AND DESIGN - Draw the artefacts
STEM - estimation of force used by artefacts, discussion on flint knapping - making tools, materials used for making tools
GEOGRAPHY - where did the artefacts come from in the museum?

4. Hands-on Activities

Using the area around the Neolithic hut:

a) Make a shell necklace
b) Polish an axe
c) Grind corn
d) Wattle fence
e) Tool making
There is some evidence that from the early Palaeolithic times, there was a desire to adorn the body and to make jewellery from bones, animal teeth and sea-shells. During the Neolithic Period, there is widespread use of jewellery of various forms used for personal adornment and also demonstrating social status.

They were made from stone, sea-shells, animal bones and more rarely from clay.

In the early phases of the Neolithic, jewellery was made by individuals with special skills. From the Late Neolithic, jewellery got more intricate with beads, buttons, bracelets and pendants being made.

Sea-shells, which were used as jewellery in their natural form and with no special working, included cockle, limpet, cone shell and sea-shells.

### Making a Shell necklace

- Using a small rock, tap the top of the shell. The sharper end of a rock works best.
- Work on top of a large stone
- Start gently to tap and then gradually increase pressure
- Once you have a small hole in the shell, decrease pressure so that it doesn't crack
- 5 shells work particularly well on a necklace
- Measure the raffia or leather cord to fit either around a wrist or a neck, then double the length
- Thread the shells through the raffia and tie the shell and then continue until all shells are on the necklace or bracelet and then tie the two ends together
The earliest pottery in Britain comes from the Neolithic period.

The development of pottery is a major technological landmark. It involved learning not just to shape objects, as with stone tool making, but to change the raw material, in this case clay, by baking it. This gave people vessels to store and cook things in.

Pottery also reveals something of the development of ‘artistic culture’ as the ranges of shape and decoration used vary. This early pottery was made by coil and slab building, and the pots were fired in bonfires. This produced relatively low firing temperatures, and this type of pottery is extremely fragile.

### 4. Hands-on Activities

#### Neolithic Coil Pots

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### How to make a coil pot

- Get a ball of clay (just larger than a tennis ball)
- With a small amount of clay, make a thin circle of clay for the base of the pot (about 5-7cm diameter and no more than 2 cm in width)
- With the remaining clay, roll out around 6-8 long ‘sausages’ of clay
- Coil one around the edge of the clay base and then put the remaining ‘sausages’ of clay on top of each other
- Squeeze and pinch with fingertips the clay coils together and smooth the outside of them together to make a smooth surface
- You can decorate the outside surface using sticks or small stones to make patterns

**PLEASE NOTE** You must bring your own air drying clay with you**
Neolithic people were the first farmers. They sowed grain and corn and grew crops. These crops needed to be harvested and used to make bread and other food items.

There were eight crops that were domesticated by Neolithic people - these were:

- Emmer wheat
- Einkorn wheat
- Barley
- Flax
- Lentil
- Pea
- Chickpea
- Bitter Vetch

Before they could plant their crops, the farmers first had to deforest areas of land, using the stone tools that they had made. On the cleared areas they started to grow cereals and breed cows and sheep; but they also still hunted and fished.

In order to use the crops for food (including making bread and biscuits), the grains would have to be made into flour by using a quern stone.

A quern stone is basically one large stone on the bottom with an indent into which the grain is put and then a smaller rounder stone is placed on top of the grain and with a pushing and pulling motion grinds the crop into flour.

4. Hands-on Activities

Grinding corn

How to grind corn at La Hougue Bie

- There are quern stones available for use in the area by the Neolithic Longhouse
- Take one handful of the grain and put it in the centre of the quern stone
- Take a round stone and grind the grain
- A pushing and pulling motion whilst exerting force downward is all you need to do to grind the corn into flour
- Collect the flour in a pot