

# Iron Age Skeleton: Tarrant Man

## KS1 Learning Pack



### Stimulus for creative inspiration and discussion

Following are sheets with stimulus for creative inspiration and discussion for different Key Stages within the National Curriculum, as well as for adults and those in Higher Education. There are four different areas in each stage/age group, **CREATE, EXPLORE, CONTEMPLATE** and **EXPERIENCE**, to encourage everyone to consider Tarrant Man from a range of different perspectives, and through a variety of mediums. The Museum of East Dorset recognises that the way that human remains have traditionally been presented by museums is changing. This Learning Pack aims to celebrate and respect the life and death of the individual 'Tarrant Man' whose remains we are the care-takers of by ensuring that his bones continue to have meaning and significance as a local Dorset ancestor, a guide into the past, and a benefactor of creative, scientific and medical exploration and discovery in the present.

Any of the groups using this Learning Pack can draw on these **INSPIRATIONAL WORDS** below to help stimulate creativity and discussion about Tarrant Man and his life and death from different perspectives. **Why not get the group to think up some more of their own?**

#### Inspiration Words:

Healing sound

Compassion

Dorset sacred landscape

Pilgrimage

Caring for the ill

Healing

Gathering herbal medicines

Inner strength

Living with a serious disease

Physical experience

Will to live

Medical investigation

Bone Pathology

Causes of disease

Touch

Respiration

Burial position

The senses

Lived experience of illness

Valuing longevity

Social inclusion/isolation

Journey

Emotions

Community

## Information for learning from Tarrant Man

It is easy to forget that Tarrant Man was a living human being, just like we are, with thoughts, feelings, family, happiness and sadness, dreams and daily tasks to do for himself and for others. When we see him now he appears as just some old bones that show signs of disease, but if we investigate a little more we can learn from him and bring this Iron Age man to life through using science or our creativity, or both together! We can also use our feeling for the sacred or spiritual to investigate and learn from Tarrant Man.



### Focus point : *Tuberculosis*



*Tuberculosis* is an infection caused by bacteria which mainly affects the lungs and breathing, but can also affect other parts of the body. It is spread by coughs and sneezes from somebody who already has the infection.

Having this *tuberculosis* for a long time without treatment, means that bones can also begin to show signs of decay from the disease.

*Tuberculosis* was quite common in Britain in the past, however it is now very rare and can be treated with antibiotics.

In daily life, we use our own skeleton all the time, without it we wouldn't be able to move about! But we don't actually see them unless we accidentally break a bone or have a serious accident, and even then we only might see a little part. X-rays show us an image of what our skeleton looks like, but we are still not encountering an actual skeleton. Of course some of us who work as doctors, pathologists or archaeologists may see more skeletons than people generally do, but usually a display in a museum may be the only time in most peoples' lives that they will come across a real human skeleton. It is always interesting, and can be a powerful experience, which can bring about many different responses, thoughts and feelings for different people.

In some cultures, and in some time periods, encountering human skeletons is or was less unusual than it is today in Britain.

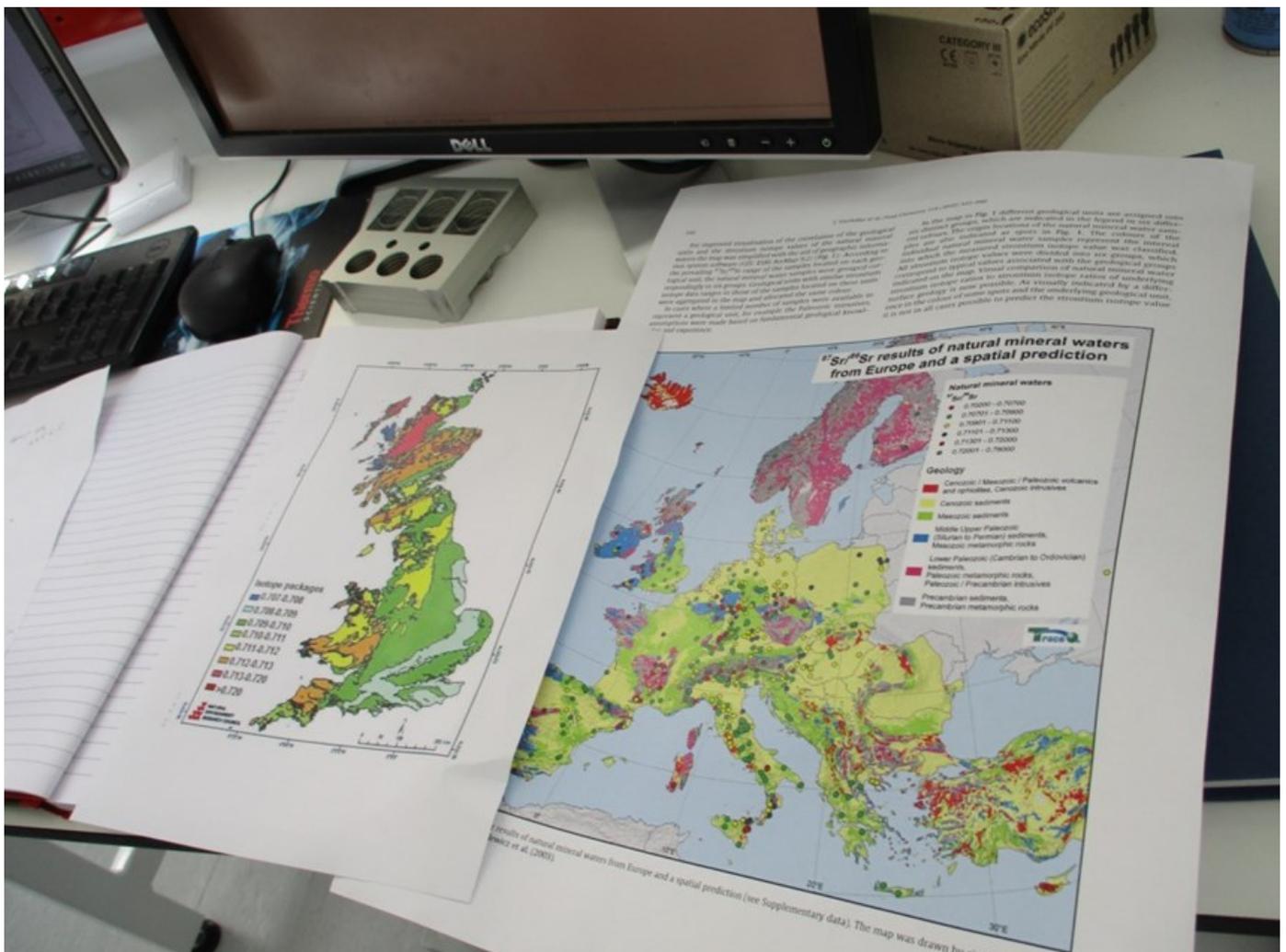
**Can you think of some examples of this?**

### **Who was Tarrant Man?**

The skeleton of Tarrant Man was excavated by archaeologists close to Tarrant Hinton, a village to the north of Wimborne. We can tell from the vertebrae (the bones which make up his spine) that he had a disease called *tuberculosis* which had then caused Pott's Disease. What makes Tarrant Man particularly interesting to archaeologists and medical historians is that he is the earliest known prehistoric case of *tuberculosis* in Britain.

In Britain, the Iron Age was between 800 B.C. – A.D. 43 and Tarrant Man lived towards the end of this period. Families were larger during the Iron Age as food resources were more available than in earlier periods so people had more to eat. This is because areas for growing and producing food increased as iron tools made clearing the land of its native woodland and forest easier. Iron is much stronger than the bronze or stone tools which were made by people in the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic (Early, Middle and Later Stone Ages) and Bronze Age.

Tarrant Man was in his 30-40s when he died, which would have been considered a reasonably long life in the Iron Age. From scientific analysis on his teeth and bones, archaeologists have been able to discover that he lived most of his life in the region, but that he was not born here. The evidence suggests that when he was a child of about 8 years old, Tarrant Man had moved to Southern England, possibly from Ireland, the SW of France or Northern Spain.





## How do we know?

Archaeologists from the University of Southampton recently did scientific analysis of the teeth from Tarrant Man which was able to show what type of diet he had eaten. His teeth show phases of:

- breastfeeding as a baby
- early childhood (up to age 8) of eating foods and drinking water rich in the minerals which are more common in Ireland and the Atlantic Coast (SW France; Northern Spain)
- later childhood (ages 8-14) of having food and water sources with mineral levels common in Southern England

His teeth also show that his diet included more cattle (cow) and sheep protein and less pig and fish protein than other Late Iron Age people known from Dorset.

## Investigate:

Consider why his diet might have been different? Thinking about healthy diets, might it have been a cause or an effect of his health problems...what do you think and why?

## Discovery:

You might like to do a short written or verbal exercise with your group to find out the different responses upon first seeing the Tarrant Man skeleton in the museum or looking at the image on the screen.

Approach the skeleton in silence and take a minute to notice what thoughts and feelings appear then write them down for later discussion or use as creative stimulus, or discuss them there and then.

These only need to be a snapshot, for example you might ask the group to just write down a couple of phrases, thoughts, questions or feelings that come to them.

It might be surprising the range of different responses to be discussed, and how these can link to a range of subjects in the curriculum, from science, religion, pastoral, arts or history.

## Creative inspiration, investigation and discussion

### KS1 (ages 5-7)

#### Create

What did Tarrant Man look like? Below are two different options for creating a picture of Tarrant Man, which one will you choose?

Tarrant man's face can't be reconstructed in a scientific way, as we sometimes see being done by archaeologists who do reconstructions of faces from skulls (this is called facial reconstruction).

- Can you draw a picture of what you think Tarrant Man might have looked like when he was alive? Look at his bones for a minute, then close your eyes...what sort of face appears? It doesn't have to be his face as an adult, as he was before he died. Perhaps you see him as a child, a bit like you? He was only 8 years old when he travelled from Europe to England and came to live in Dorset. What sort of expression will you give him? Friendly? Ugly? Nice-looking? Would his face show signs of the pain he experienced from the *tuberculosis*? Or is it peaceful in spite of it? Compare the different faces your group creates.
- Can you draw, paint or collage a picture of what Tarrant Man might have looked like when he was alive? Think about how his back might have looked because he had Pott's disease which effected his spine. What sort of clothes might he have needed to wear, would he have needed tools or weapons living in the Iron Age? People in the Iron Age in Britain lived in family groups in round-houses with a fire hearth at the centre. You might like to draw Tarrant Man outside or inside the round house he lived in.

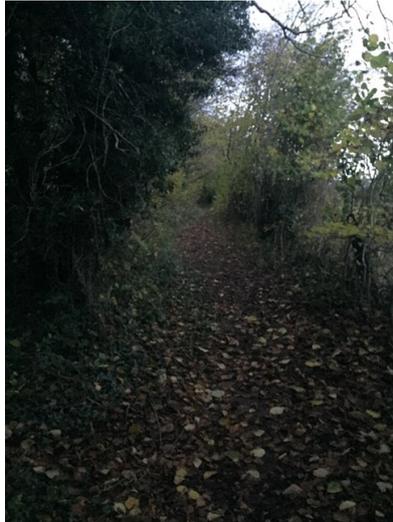
## Explore

What would the journey to England have been like for Tarrant Man when he was a little boy?

- Can you think of the kind of sounds he might have heard on his journey at different times – morning, midday, afternoon, dusk, night and dawn?

Feeling pain or very unwell can be a difficult and sometimes upsetting experience. From the evidence we have of Tarrant Man, it seems he may have experienced a lot of pain and discomfort and probably had difficulty moving about.

- What sort of sounds would Tarrant Man have made as a result of his disease; because of symptoms, pain, discomfort or to sooth himself? What kinds of sound would the people caring for him have made? You could think about how sound/music has the ability to change our mood.



Journeying on a path through woodland at Tarrant Hinton

## Contemplate

Who might have helped care for Tarrant Man and what sort of roles/activities might he have carried out in his community, even though he had *tuberculosis*? You might like to think about types of work, but also about his family, as well as more spiritual/sacred roles.

When Tarrant Man died, he was quite old for an Iron Age person, especially someone who had such a serious disease. What information does his skeleton and how he was buried tell us about how people in his community respected and cared for him?

## Experience

Lie down on the ground with your eyes closed, breathe in and out deeply three times and imagine you are an Iron Age child travelling from Europe, across the water, then through the English countryside to Dorset. What kind of feelings do you experience? What kind of animals, birds or people do you see? What sort of sounds do you hear, or make?

When you've arrived, use your imagination to sit quietly for a minute in the landscape, then return your mind to the place you are in now, and slowly open your eyes. Share your Iron Age experience with your class – were some of the things you experienced in your imagination the same as other children, or different?

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## Tarrant Man Creativity Sheet/Notes: