

This is a one-day investigation into life in this area in pre-roman and Roman times. It could be extended or deepened by visiting the Powysland Museum in Welshpool.

Summary of the Day

Introduction

Drive Gibbett Hill (0451650)

Road to Llanfair, turn right at Bryn Penarth
 turn right onto road to Monafan
 turn left onto lane — follow path

Investigate

Lunch

Return to mini-bus. Drive to Cefn Coch

Walk from Post Office to Cefn Coch via the footpath to the Roman Road (042033)

Investigate

Walk back to the Centre, following footpaths

This investigation covers history, English and mathematics

RED RIDGE

Introduction

The aim of this study is to give pupils an insight into the Roman occupation of Wales.

Overview

Until the Romans invaded Wales, the Iron Age period had been taking place since 500 BC. These Celtic people were farmers who reared cattle, they believed in life after death and worshipped the earth. The stone circles that they built are thought to be astronomical clocks, to note the position of the sun, moon and stars. They used the local iron-ore to make agricultural implements and invented the plough. They were fierce warriors.

The Druids were a priestly caste of Celts who were the political and religious leaders at this time. They taught religion, astronomy, history and philosophy. The teaching was oral and not written down.

In 50 AD the Romans entered Wales and were turned back and opposed by the Celts, led by the Druids. In 61 AD the Romans returned, led by Siretonius Paulinus who destroyed the Druids. He then had to return to England to fight Queen Boudicca.

By 64 AD the Romans had completely conquered Wales properly and built two main fortresses at Chester and Caerleon. They also built many smaller forts, like the one on Gibbett Hill near Llanfair Caerinion.

This would not have been a good posting, as it was an uncomfortable, simple auxiliary fort built to house 1000 men. Its purpose was to keep peace in the area, guard the rivers Banwy and Rhiw and the Roman road, running north to south, just west of the fort.

It would have consisted of wooden buildings, protected by a 5' rampart and a wooden palisade. It would then have been surrounded by a pair of ditches.

There would not have been a bath, just rough sleeping and eating quarters.

The Romans withdrew from Wales in 204 AD. Many Welsh names come from Latin. The Romans also brought Christianity to Wales.

Organisation

This is a full days activity. Transport is required.

Resources Maps of the area
 Reference books on Romans
 Clipboards, writing utensils

Time All day

Method

1 Introduction to activity in classroom.

Discussion plus question and answer session.

2 Depart for Gibbett Hill (Roman Fort)

3 Examine earth mounds and try to agree where:

? the main buildings would have been;

? where the ditches are;

? why it was built here.

Discuss what it would have been like for the Romans. (Most of the men posted here would have been local men who were auxiliaries led by a Roman legionnaire. If they stayed in the army for 25 years, they were paid, provided with uniform, shield and sword and could become Roman citizens at the end of their service — if they lived). There was no hospital or local health services.

4 Sketch and make notes.

5 Return to transport and drive to Cefn Coch.

6 Leave the transport and follow the footpath to the Roman Road.

7 Lunch

8 Discuss why the Romans built this road and trace its path on the maps. Look for signs of the road.

9 Follow the footpaths to return to the Centre.

10 On returning to the Centre, the children should work in groups of four to draw up a map of the evidence of Roman occupation in the area i.e. route of Roman road,
location of fort.

If it is possible, this should be done on squared paper to scale.

11 Each group is to then present their view of the following:

? Imagine that you are a local Celt in Roman times and you are invited to join the Roman army.

Reasons for joining

wages
uniform
possible Roman citizenship
local housing
belonging to a successful group

Reasons for not joining

do not like the occupation of Wales
do not like being garrisoned here
away from your family
danger of being injured or killed

Each group to decide whether they would have joined the Roman army and the reasons for this. They should make notes and present their views to the group.

National Curriculum References**History**

1a, b
2a, b, c
4a, b

Study unit 1: Romans

1a
2a, b, c