

## Prehistoric Art

One of the strongest connections we have with our prehistoric ancestors is that they created art. Some art has been found on cave walls but lots of art was etched on bones or antlers. The search for food was the most important activity for hunter gatherers so it's not surprising that a lot of art is about animals and hunting. Not everything was about food though! One of the earliest techniques that prehistoric artists used was to create a hand print. They probably would have made some paint, sucked it up into their mouths and blown it onto their outstretched hand, covering the rock. This left us a precious and rare view of a real Palaeolithic person's hand and their artistic thoughts. Imagine what they would have thought, knowing their paintings would be viewed thousands of years in the future!



### Make your Mark

Why don't you try to make a prehistoric spatter hand print? Find a rock or just use some paper. Use a straw to blow paint over your hand to leave a print for future archaeologists to find!

## Cave Art in Britain <sup>1</sup>

The oldest cave art in Britain can be found in a series of caves in a limestone gorge in Nottinghamshire called **Creswell Crags**. Archaeologists have found lots of evidence that it was inhabited during the late Palaeolithic period, 50,000 years ago. As well as pictures of animals such as ibex and bears (which are now extinct in Britain), there are pictures that appear to show rows of figures dancing. What does this evidence tell us about late Palaeolithic humans?



HUNTER GATHERER TRIBES WOULD HAVE AND HUNTED ELK, WOOLLY MAMMOTHS, BISON EVEN WOOLLY RHINOCEROS! THE PICTURES THEY PAINTED ARE THE BEST EVIDENCE OF WHAT PREHISTORIC HUMANS WERE THINKING ABOUT.

## Prehistoric Paint Pot

Prehistoric artists used a mineral called iron oxide to create yellow and red paints. These are called 'ochres'. They would have ground these up using larger rocks and mixed them with water to paint on to the cave wall. How surprised they would have been that these paints wouldn't fade away and would leave their mark across time.

