

Skaill Knife

This is a copy of an artefact known as the Skaill knife. It was made from flaked stone and the sharp edge was used for cutting and shaping other smaller items made from bone.

The decoration suggests that the owner of the stone was proud of it and wanted other people to know it belonged to him or her.

The stone knife is evidence that:

- In prehistoric Orkney, people used stone tools to shape other tools.
- People in prehistoric times decorated objects which they used.



Where are the sharpest parts of the stone? Do you think they are very sharp?

How would the stone have been held when it was used as a knife?

Do you think this type of stone makes a good knife?

Do you think it would have been easy to use?

Look closely at the decoration on the stone. How has it been carved?

What evidence does an object like this tell us about life in prehistoric times?

Hook

This object has been formed from bone and several examples were found at Skara Brae. It is very smooth and the end is quite sharp.

Archaeologists do not know for certain how this object was used. Some believe it may have been used for fishing. Do you have other ideas?



How would you describe this object to someone who could not see it?

What is the object made from?

What do you think this object would have been used for?

Do you think it would have done the job well?

What does an object like this tell us about people who lived in prehistoric times?

Necklace

This necklace is a copy of an artefact found at Skara Brae. In this example, the tusks are made of ox bone, the beads are made of deer bone and the cord is made from flax fibre. It would have taken quite a long time to form each part of the necklace and it may well have been someone's prize possession.

Some archaeologists have suggested that the necklace shows that people who lived here did not have to spend all their time keeping warm and looking for food. They had time to make objects for decoration and thought it was important to look good.



How would you describe this object to someone who could not see it?

What does it feel like?

What do you think the necklace is made from?

How many different pieces make up the necklace?

How do you think it was made?

What does an artefact like this tell us about the people who lived at Skara Brae?