

# Year 6 History Transition Work: The Story of the Tollund Man

Welcome Year 6's to History at Lealands High School.

Today you are going to try to solve the mystery of the Tollund Man. Your job is to analyse the evidence that you see, answer the questions along the way and write up your theory of what happened to the Tollund Man.

We look forward to welcoming you in September.

**A body was found in a peat bog on Tollund Fen in Denmark in May 1950. Two men were digging peat for burning. As they worked they suddenly saw in the peat layer a face so fresh they thought they had come across a recent murder. They phoned the police, however, the crime scene investigation revealed this person was not recently killed.**

You are the detective in charge of this History Mystery. Your job is to analyse the evidence and come to a conclusion on what you think happened to the Tollund man. The trouble is, the case has been closed for THOUSANDS of years. Look out for the evidence in the coming days.



*Peat – A very rich soil which can be burnt as fuel.*

*Fen – An area of boggy land*

## EVIDENCE A

1) What can you see?

1) What do you think happened to this person?

1) What other questions would you need to ask to find out more?



***Questions to think about:***

***1) How old do you think this person was?***

***1) How long ago do you think he died?***

***1) At what time of year do you think he died?***

**Evidence B – The Scientific Report on the body of the Tollund man – This just gives the scientific facts**

**Age:** The heart and other organs were healthy. The wisdom teeth had grown. These kinds of teeth appear in people around 20 years old.

**Stomach:** The man had eaten soup at least 12 hours before he died. The soup was made out of seeds that only grew in the Spring.

**Date of Death:** When the body was dug up, some plants had been trapped under the body. The plants were about 2500-3000 years old.

***Questions to think about:***

- 1) What does this make you think happened to the man?***
- 1) Do you believe this man's account?***
- 1) Why? Why not?***

**Evidence C: A statement taken from one of the men who discovered the bodies. He was giving it to a newspaper for money.**

It was one of the most amazing things that anyone had ever discovered.

The scene was incredible. The man was there and he had a face of pure horror as though he was about to meet a fate worse than death. His eyes were bulging out of his eye sockets and his body was twisted like he'd been tortured. His legs were hanging off and his guts were hanging out. It was like he had only just died. Incredible!

***Questions to think about:***

- 1) What was this man found wearing?***
- 1) Why might he be dressed like this?***
- 1) What else was found with his body?***
- 1) Does this tell you how he may have died?***

**Evidence D – Taken from a museum plaque – Museums are meant to give trustworthy but interesting information**

The body was found in a peat bog at Tollund Fen in Denmark in May 1950. Two men were digging when they suddenly saw a face so fresh, they thought they had come across a recent murder. They called the police. The men carefully removed the dirt from the body. The man lay on his left side as if he was asleep. He wore no clothes, except for a pointed skin cap and a smooth belt. His hair was cut short. Around his neck was a rope noose and an iron neck ring. The neck ring was pulled tight around his neck and throat.

## Evidence E

A statue of the Goddess of Spring found in a peat bog in Tollund Fen near where the Tollund man was found.

### *Questions to think about:*

- 1) Why might this statue have been buried near the man?*
- 1) How does it link to the time of year in which we think the man died?*



Evidence F – Information from a book written about the Iron age by a real historian.

People from the Iron Age (around 3000 years ago) buried neck rings with their dead as an offering to the Spring Goddess.

***Questions to think about:***

- 1) What was the neck ring for?***
- 1) Why might Iron Age people have offered their dead to the Spring Goddess?***
- 1) Does this help you to work out what happened to the Tollund man?***





**Source G - Taken from a school history book – School history books are written to educate young people so should be trustworthy**

Germanic tribes from the Iron Age worshipped the Goddess of Spring. Every Spring a cart carried a statue of the Spring Goddess in a procession. Afterwards the cart and statue were washed by slaves, and then the slaves were sacrificed.

**Questions to think about:**

- 1) What was the ceremony to the spring Goddess like in Iron Age times?**
- 1) Why might Germanic Tribes complete a ceremony like this?**
- 1) Does this tell you what happened to the man?**



*Tribe – A group of people*

*Procession – a large ceremony*

*Sacrificed – killed for a purpose*

**Okay detectives, time to tell us your theories.**

**Using all of the evidence that you have gathered, write up a theory to tell us what you think happened to the Tollund Man. A good Historian always explains their point of view using the evidence provided.**

**We are looking forward to reading your theories!**

