

Stonehenge

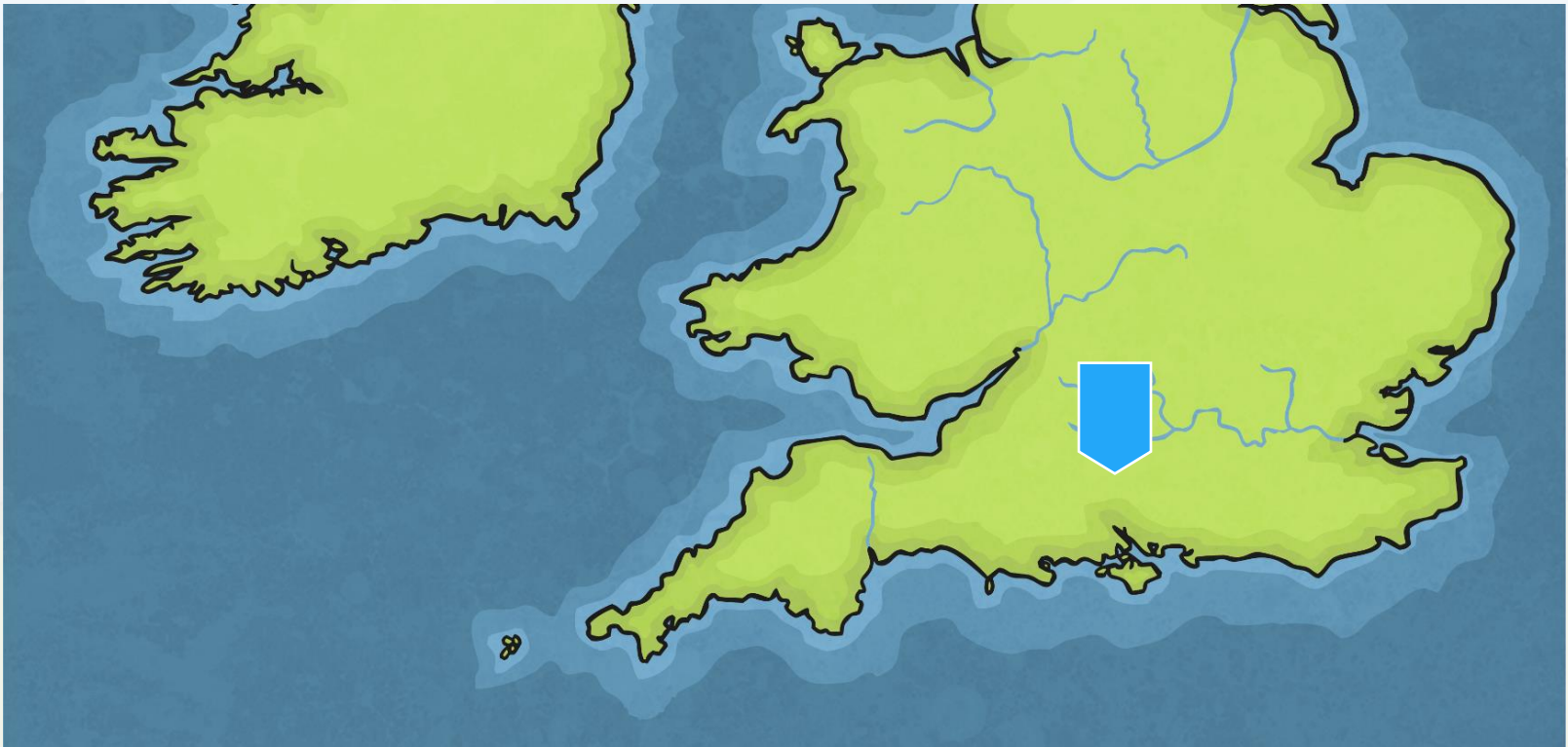


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Where Is It?

Stonehenge is on Salisbury Plain in a place called Amesbury in Wiltshire in the south of England.

Find it on a map or using Google Earth.

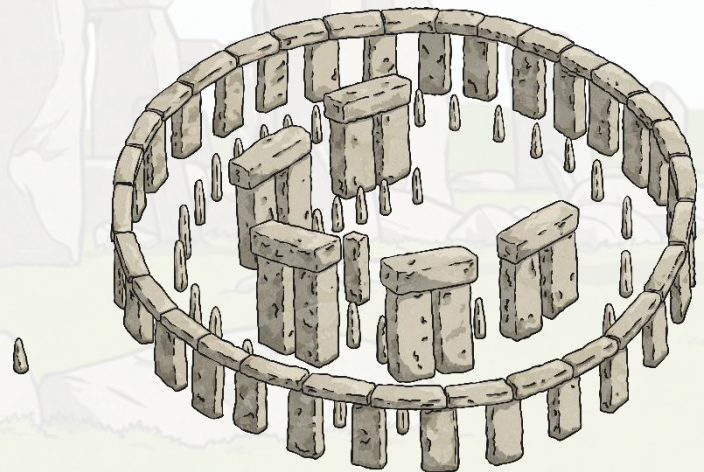


What Was It For?

There is still some discussion about this. It may have been used for different things.



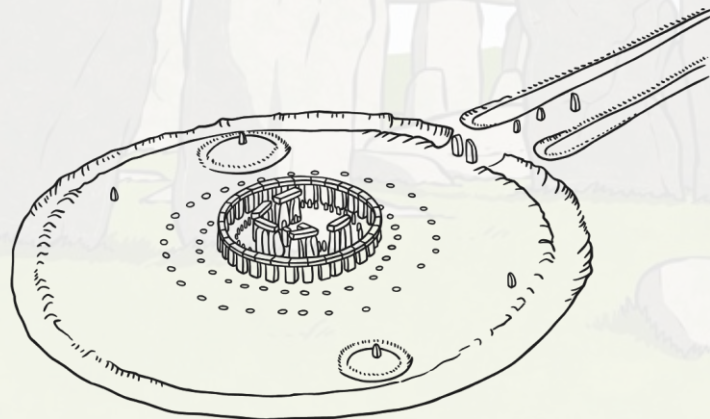
However, we do know that it lines up with the sun on the summer and winter solstices. There are also clues that it was used for worship, healing or burials.



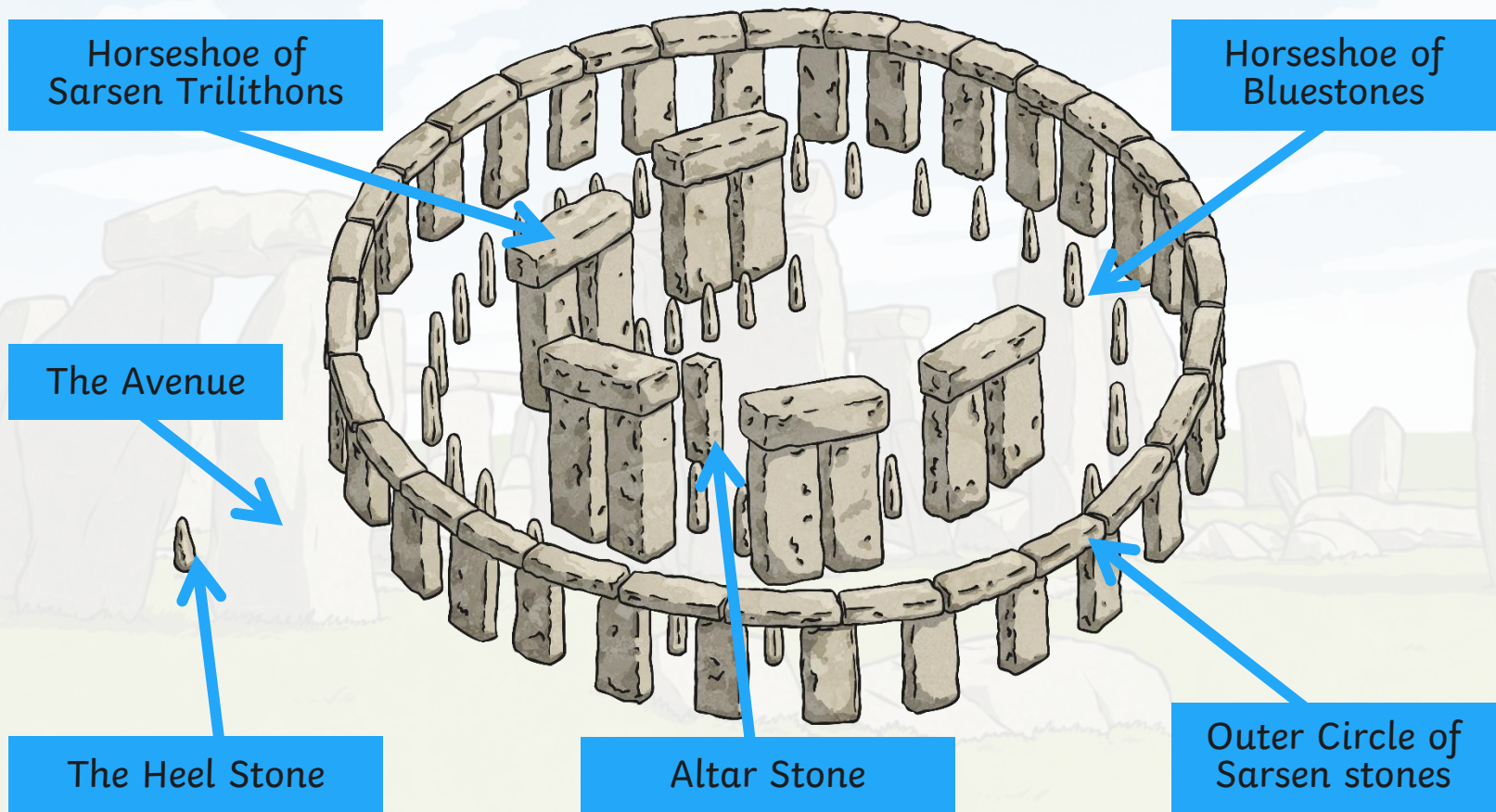
When Was It Built?

Work started on Stonehenge in 3000BC, but that wasn't the end of it. Over the next thousand years, there were changes made to it, finishing around 1500BC.

In about 2000BC, it had a full outer circle of stones with lintels (top pieces) with a smaller circle of 'bluestones' inside and the horseshoe of the biggest 'Sarsen' stones in the middle.



What Did It Look like When It Was Finished?



How Does It Work with the Sun?



On the summer solstice, the longest day in the year on the 21st June, the sun rises from behind the heel stone and shines directly into the heart of Stonehenge. The same happens from the opposite direction for the winter solstice on the shortest day, the 21st December. Many other monuments line up in a similar fashion.

How Was It Built?

When it was built, there was no such thing as a crane or a lorry, so how on earth did people do it?



Firstly, all the shaping and cutting of the stones would have been done by hand with hammers and chisels. However, to get them to where they are now, they would have had to float them along rivers and then drag them with ropes, men and oxen. It would have taken a long, long time. Amazingly, the bluestones came all the way from Wales!

How Significant Is It?

Stonehenge is a world heritage site because it is such an outstanding prehistoric monument. It is the most complicated and significant stone circle in the world!

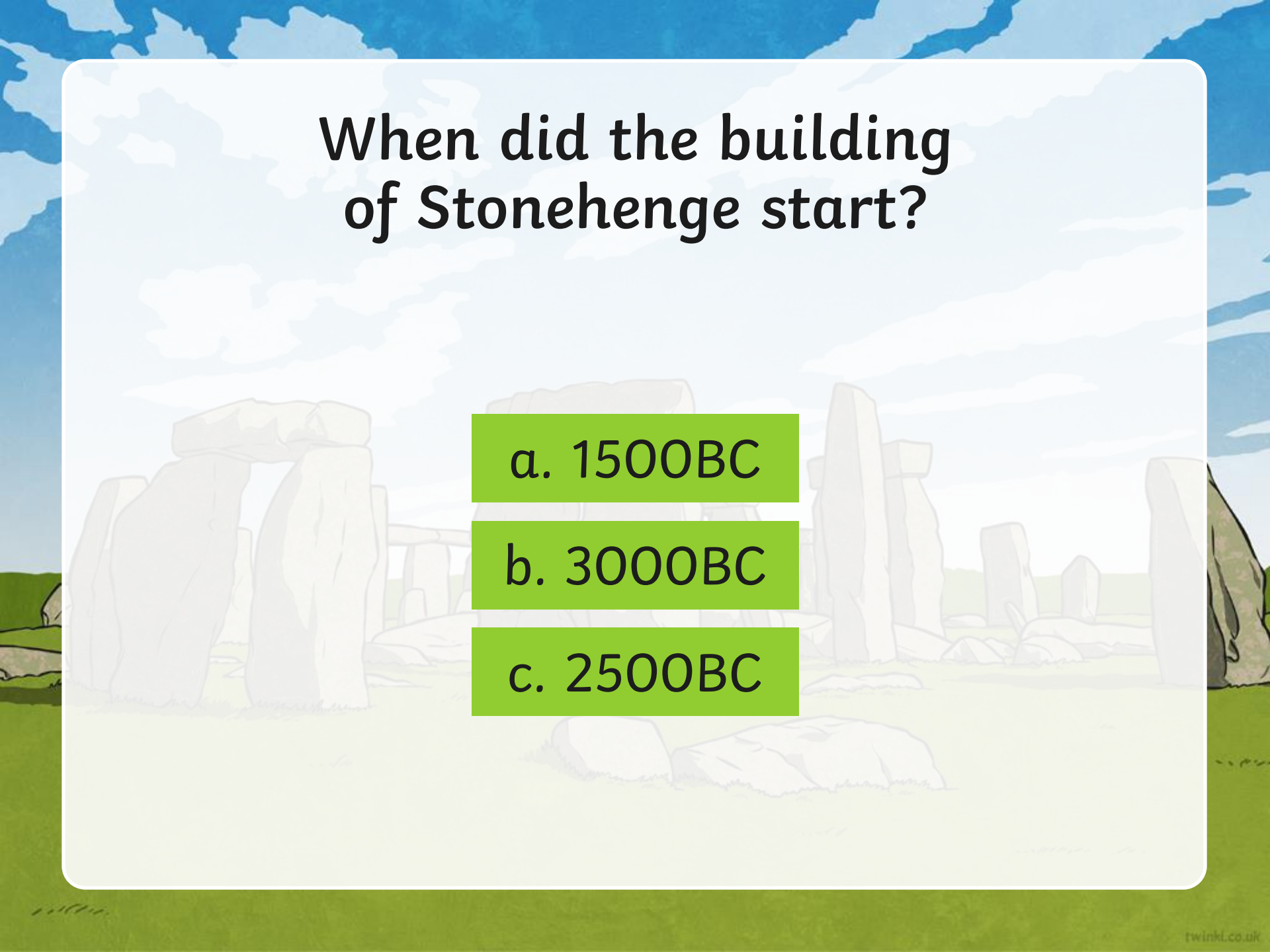
Thousands of people visit it every year and it is still used as a special and a significant place for worship, fantasy, inspiration, history and contemplation.





It's Quiz Time!

See how much you can remember...

A stylized illustration of the Stonehenge monument in a grassy field under a blue sky with white clouds. The stones are depicted in a light grey color with some shading to show their three-dimensional form.

When did the building of Stonehenge start?

a. 1500BC

b. 3000BC

c. 2500BC

How did they shape the stones?

- a. Large machines
- b. Oxen and ropes
- c. Hammers and chisels

How did they transport the stones?

a. Rivers, men and oxen

b. Large wheeled vehicles

c. Horse and carts

Where did the Bluestone come from?

a. Avebury

b. Scotland

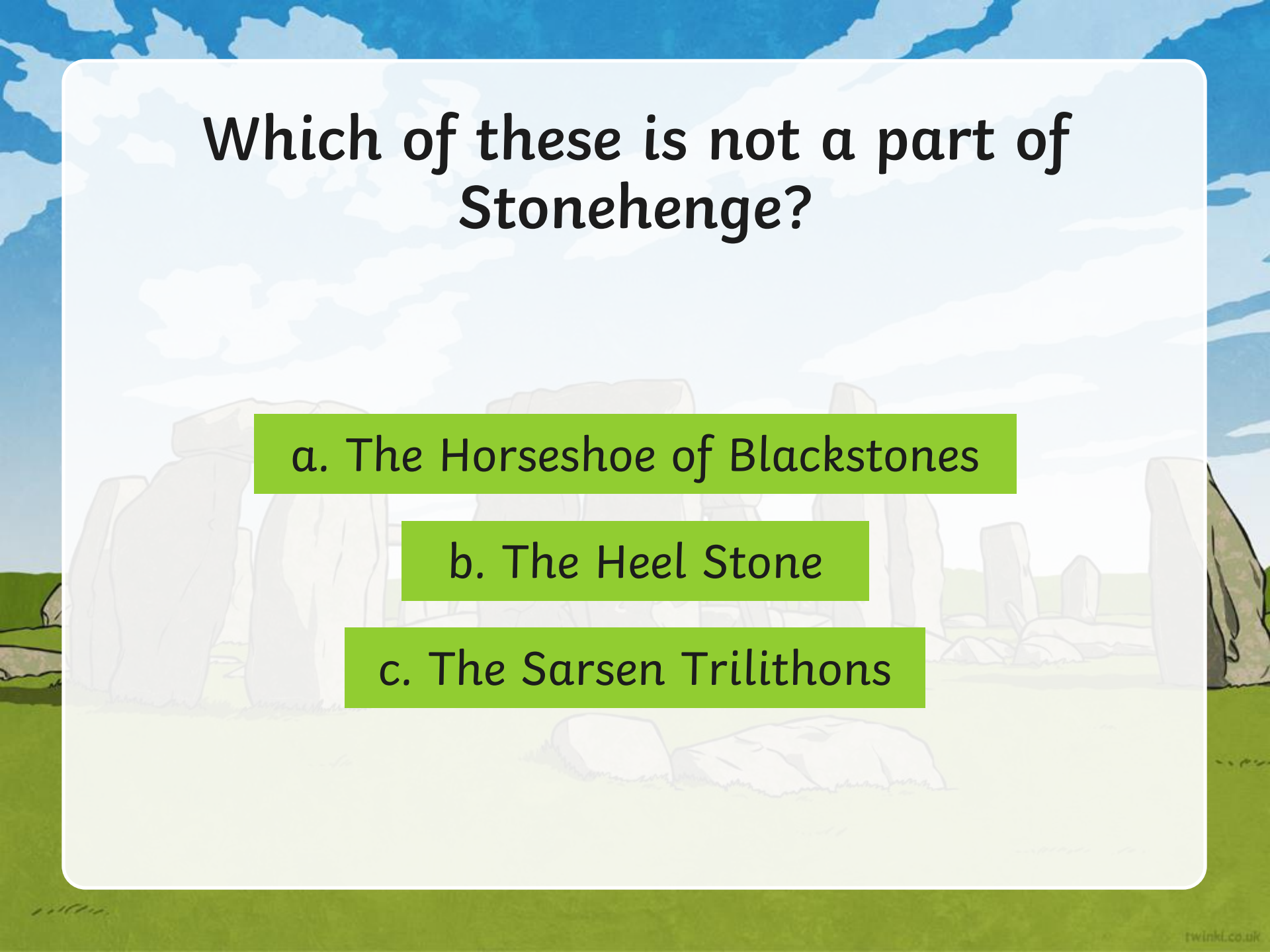
c. Wales

Stonehenge is ...?

a. One of the seven wonders of the world

b. A world heritage site

c. A National Trust icon

A stylized illustration of the Stonehenge monument in a grassy field under a blue sky with white clouds. The stones are depicted in various shades of grey and brown, with some standing upright and others lying flat on the ground.

Which of these is not a part of Stonehenge?

a. The Horseshoe of Blackstones

b. The Heel Stone

c. The Sarsen Trilithons

What is a megalith?

a. The big brother of a microlith

b. One of the X-Men

c. A large standing stone



On what days does the sun line up exactly with the stones?

a. The summer and winter solstices

b. The longest and shortest days

c. 21st June and 21st December

What could it have been used for?

a. Healing

b. Burials

c. Worship

Now discuss:

What's the most interesting thing you've found out?

What do you think Stonehenge was for?

What else could you research and find out about it?



