

The most frequently asked visitor questions

Under coordination of the Pfahlbaumuseum and financed by the EU Culture 2000 programme “Delphi, house of questions” took place in the years 2005 – 2009. For this purpose, a website on the most frequently asked visitor questions was active (Schöbel 2006). In the first year, in three museums (Pfahlbaumuseum, Arais and Archeon, the Netherlands), questions were collected from the visitors and with others presented on a website, together with specialist answers. Within two years, the website was expanded into 13 languages and contained 280 questions and answers. While on line, the website received 88.439 visits, with 219.959 times viewing of a question. The top ten questions were watched 201.848 times in total (91,8% of all views). Most visitors of the website were made aware of its existence through the exhibition as well as through the website of at the Pfahlbaumuseum.

Question	Origin
Did people already have locks on their doors in prehistory?	Pfahlbaumuseum
How old did the lake-dwellers get?	Pfahlbaumuseum
Which kind of wood is used for the stilts, footbridges and houses of the lake dwellings?	Pfahlbaumuseum
How were the piles of the lake dwellings rammed into the earth?	Pfahlbaumuseum
Did the animals of the lake dwellings live inside of the houses?	Pfahlbaumuseum
Was there a division of roles in the early Middle Ages?	Archeon
What did people eat and drink in the early Middle Ages?	Archeon
Were the houses of the lake dwellings really so high, and why?	Pfahlbaumuseum
How old did people in the early Middle Ages become?	Archeon
What language did people speak in the Early Middle Ages?	Archeon
What did the dwellings in the lake fortress look like?	Arais
Why did the lake dwellers build into the water?	Pfahlbaumuseum
Did people have soap in the early Middle Ages?	Archeon
Why did people build on pilings?	Pfahlbaumuseum
Where did the lake dwelling people come from, and why?	Pfahlbaumuseum

Table 1: The top 15 most viewed questions at the website of the Delphi project, 2005-2009.

When analysing what questions were viewed most [See Table 1] an almost equal number of questions is about construction of the dwellings and about the daily life of the people. There are hardly any questions asked to specific artefacts or utensils, politics or wars. The table itself is a nice comparison to the twenty most common questions about prehistory (Stone 1994) [See Table 2].

1	*	Where did they go to the toilet? – How did they get rid of it?
2	*	What clothes did they wear? – What were they made of? – How did they make them? – Were they really tatty? – What did they wear on their feet? – Did they have jewelry?
3	*	How did they die? – How old were they when they died? – Where did they go when they died (means both how were they buried and did they go to 'heaven')?
4	*	What were their houses like? – Did they have an upstairs? – What were houses made from? – Where did they sleep? – Separate rooms or all together?
5		What did they use for light?
6	*	What did they wash with? – Did they wash? – Did they have brushes and combs? – Did they have make-up? – Did they cut their hair? – Did they shave?
7		What language did they speak?
8		Did they have wives? – How many?
9		What did they eat? – What animals did they hunt?
10	*	Did children have to go to school?
11		How did they get around? – Did they have any kind of transport, especially when they were old and could not walk?
12		Were there any old people? – Were they looked after well?
13		Did they have Christmas / birthdays? – Did they have parties?
14		Did they draw / do art? – What did they draw?
15		Did they have shops? – Did they have any nice things?
16	*	What toys / games did they have?
17		What did they think about the world?
18	*	What were their weapons like? – What were they made of?
19	*	What animals did they have? – What animals didn't they have that we have now?
20		Were there any physical differences between them and us?

Table 2: The twenty most common questions about prehistory (in no particular order but * = probably the most common asked)(Stone 1994, 205).