

Welcome to the last term of Social Sciences in English. This term we are going to work a history item. Well to be honest we are going to work an item before the history. As you know we are going to work about prehistory.

Prehistory is something you have already studied this school year, but we are going to try and approach it in a different way. The main goal of our project is to review the contents of the prehistory and learn it in English.

This dossier will orient your during the course, you will have to ask some activities and complete some charts. Also you will have to do a mind map and chronological line through the prehistory.

The dossier plus the attitude you show in the class will count the 30% of the global mark, another 30% will come from the presentation you are going to do at the end of term, and finally the last 40% will come from the mind map and the chronological line.



So we hope you'll enjoy the last of the Social Science projects.

Hurry up the end it is close!



1 Human evolution

Do gorillas and humans have a common ancestor?

BIG THINKER

Richard Leakey was born in 1944. His parents, Louis and Mary, were famous palaeoanthropologists. His mother Mary was a member of the team that discovered Lucy. He left school at 16 after doing badly in his exams, but he went on to become a world famous fossil hunter and conservationist. Do you remember what type of hominid Lucy was?

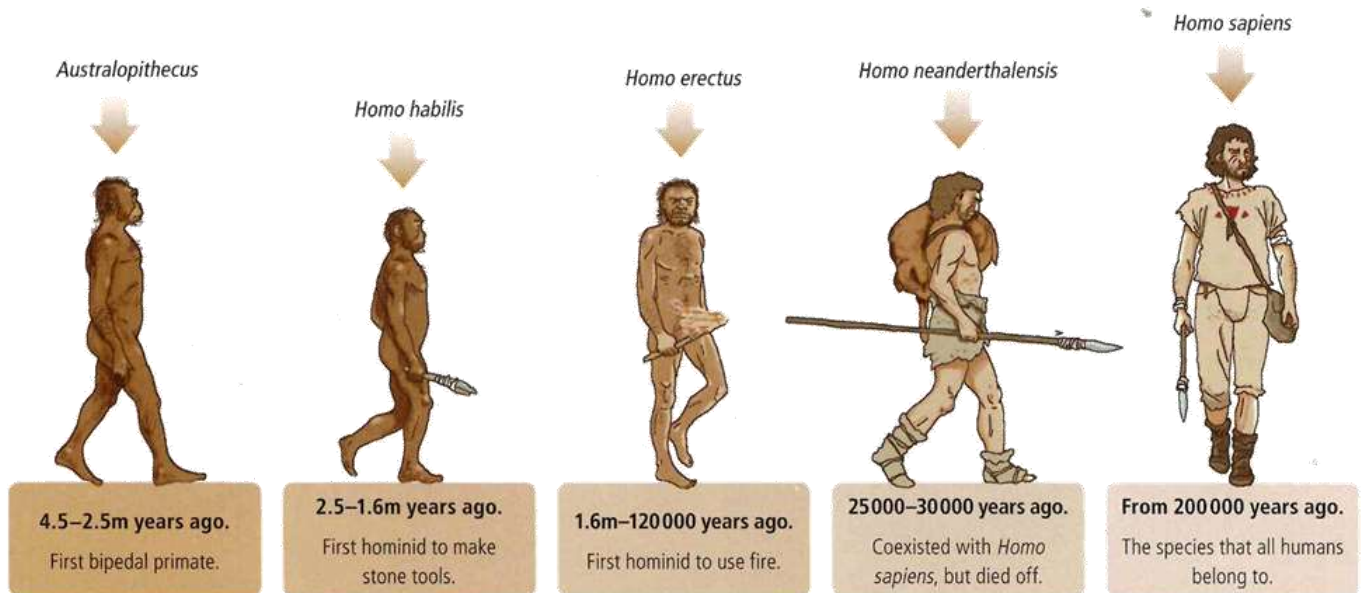


Modern-day humans are the result of a **long evolutionary process** through which the human species adapted to its environment. Humans belong to the **order** Primates, which also includes gorillas and chimpanzees, and to the **genus** *Homo*. Over time, some primates **changed physically** and became different from the other primates:

- **Bipedalism:** They began to stand upright and walk on two feet. This meant that they could use their front extremities to make tools. They could also hold their head above their backs, so they became taller and could see further.
- **Opposable thumbs:** Hominids developed thumbs that could face and touch the other digits on the same hand. This meant that their hands were flexible enough to make tools.
- **Increased brain size and capacity:** Increased brain size made them more intelligent and enabled them to develop language and art.

The process by which these primates changed physically is called **human evolution**. It was a very slow process, during which some species coexisted. The only **species** that survived was *Homo sapiens*, to which modern-day humans belong.

These are the main species that underwent this process:



ACTIVITIES

1. Make a list of the physical changes that primates underwent during human evolution.
2. Make a short presentation to your class about the advantages and disadvantages of being a biped rather than a quadruped.
3. Richard Leakey's parents, Mary and Louis, were also famous palaeoanthropologists. Research one of them and write a short biography about him or her.



1 Human evolution

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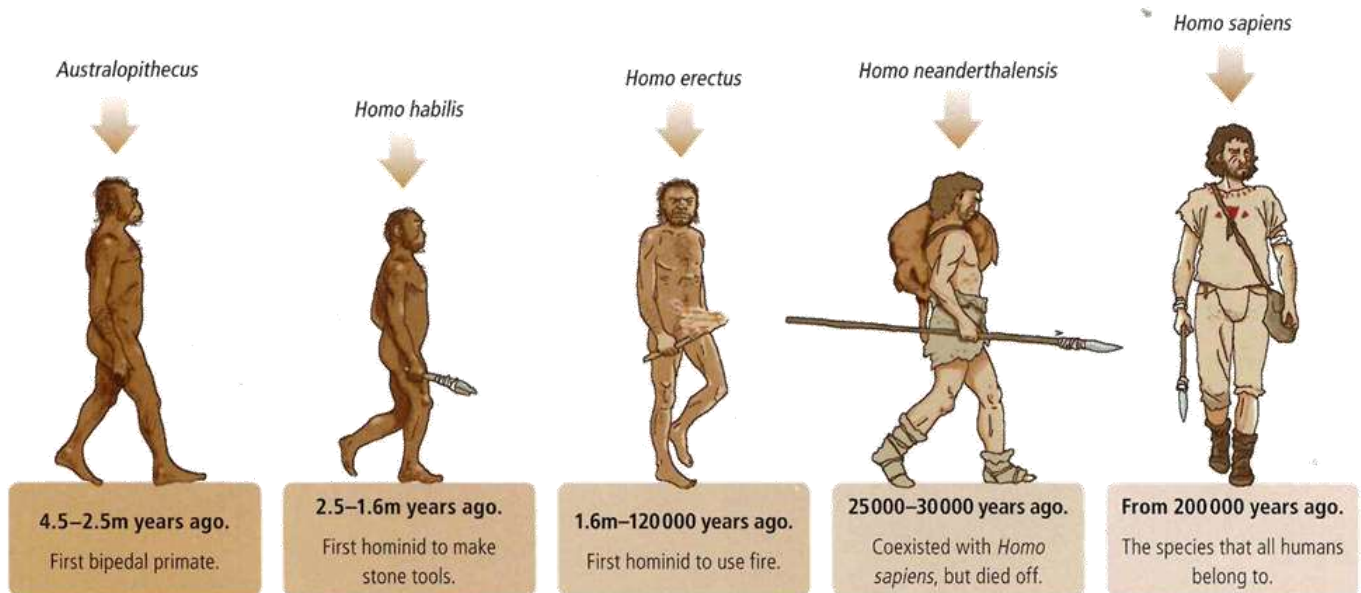


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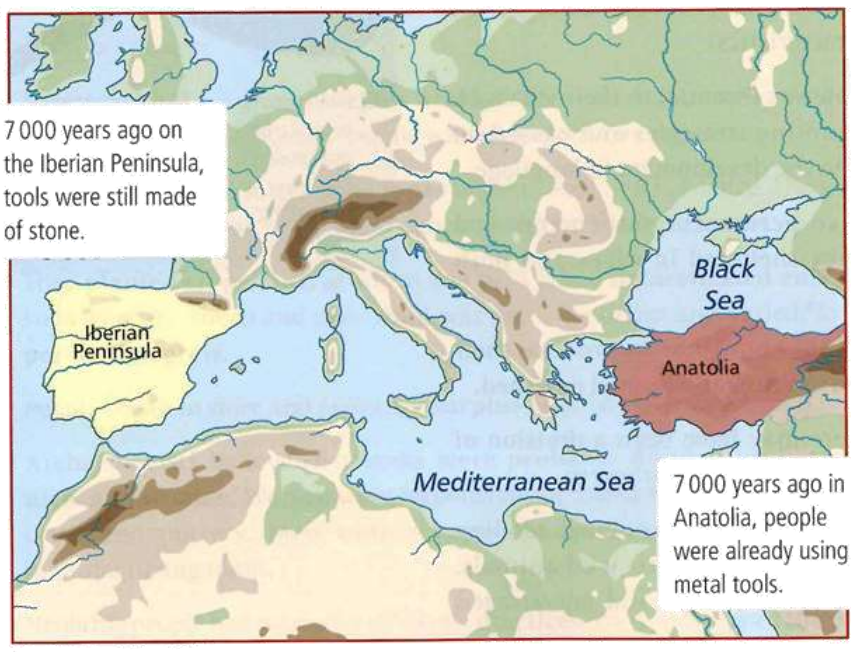


2 Prehistory

➤ Did Prehistory take place at the same time everywhere in the world?

Prehistory is an extremely long period of time: it **begins with the appearance of the first humans**, over 2.5 million years ago in Africa, and **ends when humans began to write and make a record of their lives**, about 5 500 years ago.

Prehistory is divided into **periods of unequal lengths** which are determined by **advances in technology**. For example, when people started making tools from metal instead of stone, we move from the Stone Age to the Metal Ages. Also, these periods began at different times in different places, as you can see on this map:



➤ INVESTIGATING THE PAST

Prehistory is studied through archaeology. Archaeology is the study of material remains from the past. Thanks to finds such as fossils, tools and other objects, we are able to reconstruct the lives of our ancestors.



Ⓜ An archaeological dig

2.1 Periods of Prehistory

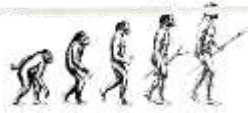
This table shows how Prehistory is divided up into ages, periods and sub-periods. The years shown are when each period began, not how long they lasted.

Age	Period	Sub-period	Beginning of period or sub-period
Stone Age	Palaeolithic period	Lower Palaeolithic	2 500 000 to 150 000 years ago
		Middle Palaeolithic	150 000 to 50 000 years ago
		Upper Palaeolithic	50 000 to 10 000 years ago
	Mesolithic period		10 000 to 9 000 years ago
	Neolithic period		9 000 to 7 000 years ago
Metal Ages	Copper Age*		7 000 to 5 000 years ago
	Bronze Age*		5 000 to 3 500 years ago
	Iron Age*		3 500 years ago

* Periods during which people had already begun to write and record their lives in some parts of the world (from 5 500 years ago)

➤ ACTIVITIES

4. What event marks the transition from Prehistory to History?
5. What determines how we divide up periods of Prehistory?
6. Find out what you need to study at university to become an archaeologist. Do you think it would be a fun job? Discuss with the rest of your class.



Historians call the early period of human history the Stone Age. They do this because it was the time when people used stone to make tools and weapons. The earliest part of this period was the Palaeolithic Age. In Greek, *paleolithic* means "old stone." Therefore, the Palaeolithic Age is also called the Old Stone Age.

Fast Question: What means *Palaeolithic* in Greek?

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3 The Palaeolithic period

The physical changes our ancestors **underwent** during human evolution enabled them to manufacture tools and weapons. These tools were made from stone, wood and bone. People began **carving stone** during the Palaeolithic period. In fact, the term *Palaeolithic* means 'old stone'. Stone tools became increasingly more effective and made it possible to hunt and cut up meat.

3.1 How people lived

During the Palaeolithic period, the way people lived varied greatly depending on the geographical area or climate in which they lived. However, we can identify a number of common characteristics:

- People **lived in small tribes**. Cooperation was essential to their survival. They protected each other, developed hunting strategies and passed on knowledge. These activities contributed to the development of language.
- They were **nomads**. They did not have permanent settlements and travelled around in search of food. They sheltered in caves and built temporary huts.
- They were **hunter-gatherers**. They did not know how to produce their own food. They gathered fruit, consumed **carrion** and hunted or fished.
- They **performed tasks as a group**. There may have been a division of labour between men and women. There was no private property.
- They **mastered fire**. They used it for heat and light, cooking, sending smoke signals, hunting and defending themselves against wild animals. **Gathering around a fire** helped build relationships and encouraged communication.



Surviving in the Palaeolithic Age

Try to imagine what life was like during the Palaeolithic Age. Think about living in a time long before any roads, farms, or villages existed. Palaeolithic people often moved around in search of food. They were **nomads**, or people who regularly move from place to place to survive. They travelled in groups, or bands, of about 20 or 30 members.

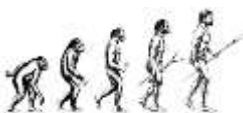
Palaeolithic people survived by hunting and gathering. The search for food was their main activity, and it was often difficult. They had to learn which animals to hunt and which plants to eat. Palaeolithic people hunted buffalo, bison, wild goats, reindeer, and other animals, depending on where they lived. Along coastal areas, they fished. These early people also gathered wild nuts, berries, fruits, wild grains, and green plants.

Fast question: Use your words to explain what means *nomads*?

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Finding food.

Palaeolithic men and women performed different tasks within the group. Men—not women—hunted large animals. They often had to search far from their camp. Men had to learn how animals behaved and how to hunt them. They had to develop tracking methods. At first, men used clubs or drove the animals off cliffs to kill them. Over time, however, Palaeolithic people developed tools and weapons to help them hunt. The traps and spears they made increased their chances of killing their prey.





Women stayed close to the camp, which was often located near a stream or other body of water. They looked after the children and searched nearby woods and meadows for berries, nuts, and grains. Everyone worked to find food, because it was the key to the group's survival.

Fast question: How they get food?

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Some scientists believe that an equal relationship existed between Palaeolithic men and women. It is likely that both made decisions that affected the band or group. Some evidence suggests that some men and women may have hunted in monogamous pairs. This means that a man and a woman worked together to find food for themselves and their children. Such groupings became the first families.



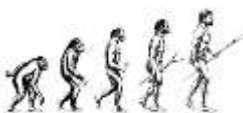
The Invention of Tools

Culture is the way of life for a group of people who share similar beliefs and customs. The methods Palaeolithic people used to hunt and gather their food were part of their culture, as were the tools they used.

Technology tools and methods to perform tasks-was first used by Palaeolithic people. Before this time, sticks, stones, and tree branches served as tools. Later, people made devices from a hard stone called flint. Have you ever imagined how difficult it would be to prepare or eat food without a cutting tool? Paleolithic people learned that by hitting flint with another hard stone, the flint would flake into pieces. These pieces had very sharp edges that could be used for cutting. Hand axes, for example, were large pieces of flint tied to wooden poles. Flint technology was a major breakthrough for early peoples.

Over time, early people made better, more complex tools. Spears and bows and arrows made killing large animals easier. Harpoons, or spears with sharp points, and fishhooks increased the number of fish caught. Early humans used sharp-edged tools to cut up plants and dig roots. They used scraping tools to clean animal hides, which they used for clothing and shelter.

By the end of the Palaeolithic Age, people were making smaller and sharper tools. They crafted needles from animal bones to make nets and baskets and to sew hides together for clothing. This technology had a far-reaching effect. It drove the development of more advanced farming tools and influenced where people settled.



PALEOLITHIC TOOLS

LOWER PALEOLITHIC



Chopper: pebble, roughly worked on one side. Used for digging and skinning.



Biface: hand axe knapped on both sides. Used for cutting.



Knife: utensil knapped on one side. Used for cutting or as a weapon.



Scraper: used for cleaning animal hides⁵ and sharpening knives.

UPPER PALEOLITHIC

Blade: finely knapped. Used as spear heads.



Harpoon: used for fishing.



Spear thrower: used to throw javelins.



Javelin: weapon for throwing. Similar to a small spear.



Needle: made of bone and used for sewing.



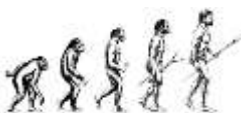
Perforator: used for making holes in hides.

Fast question: Why they made tools?

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Changing to Survive

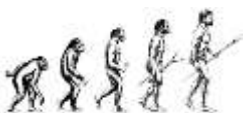
Climate affected how Paleolithic people lived. Some early people lived in cold climates and made clothing from animal skins to stay warm. They sought protection in **available** natural shelters, such as caves and rock overhangs. Remember, there were no houses or apartment buildings as we know them in the Paleolithic Age. Gradually, humans learned to make their own shelters. People **constructed** tents and huts of animal skins, brush, and wood. In very cold climates, some people made shelters from ice and snow. In regions where wood was scarce, Paleolithic people used the large bones from dead woolly mammoths, or hairy elephant-like animals, to build frames for shelters. They then covered the bones with animal hides.

People living in warmer climates, on the other hand, needed little clothing or shelter. For the purposes of safety and comfort, however, many lived in caves and huts. These shelters provided protection against attacks by large animals.

Fire Sparks Changes

Life became less difficult for Paleolithic people once they discovered how to make fire. People learned that fire provided warmth in cold caves. It provided light when it was dark and could be used to scare away wild animals. Armed with spears, hunters could also use fire to chase animals from bushes to be killed. Eventually, people gathered around fires to share stories and to cook. Cooked food, they discovered, tasted better and was easier to chew and digest. In addition, meat that was smoked by fire did not have to be eaten right away and could be stored.

How did people learn to use fire? Archaeologists believe early humans produced fire by friction. They learned that by rubbing two pieces of wood together, the wood became heated and charred. When the wood became hot enough, it caught fire. Paleolithic people continued rubbing wood together, eventually developing drill-like wooden tools to start fires. They also discovered that a certain stone, iron pyrite, gave off sparks when struck against another



rock. The sparks could then ignite dry grass or leaves-another way to start a fire.

The Ice Ages

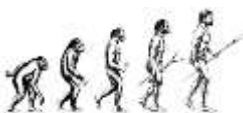
Tools and fire were two important technological developments of Palaeolithic people. Throughout history, people have used new technology to help them survive when the environment changes. The ice ages were major environmental disturbances. The changes they brought about threatened the very survival of humans.

What Changes Came With the Ice Ages?

The ice ages were long periods of extreme cold that affected all of Earth. The most recent Ice Age began about 100,000 years ago. Thick sheets of ice moved across large parts of Europe, Asia, and North America. As the ice sheets, or glaciers, grew larger, the water level of the oceans was lowered. The low sea levels exposed a strip of dry land connecting the continents of Asia and North America. This strip of land was known as a land bridge. The land bridge acted as a natural highway that allowed people to travel from Asia into North America. From there, Palaeolithic peoples moved southward to settle in different regions.

How Did the Ice Ages Affect Humans?

Ice age conditions posed a grave threat to human life. To survive in the cold temperatures, humans had to adapt, or change, many areas of their lives. One way they adapted their diets was by enriching meals with fat. To protect themselves from the harsh environment, they learned to build sturdier shelters. They also learned to make warm clothing using animal furs. Palaeolithic people used fire to help them stay warm in this icy environment. The last Ice Age lasted about 90,000 years, ending between about 9000 and 8000 b.c.



Fast question: Tell some characteristics about the ice age. Then try to explain how did the ices ages affect?

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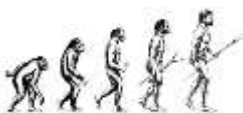
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4 The Neolithic period

➤ What does the word *Neolithic* mean?

The Neolithic period **began about 9000 years ago**, following a short **transition** period called the Mesolithic period. During the Neolithic period, humans went from being nomadic hunter-gatherers to **sedentary producers**. This change is also known as the **Neolithic Revolution**.

4.1 How life changed

During the Neolithic period, humans learned to produce their own food by farming the land and domesticating animals. **Agriculture** allowed humans to settle in one place and to abandon nomadic life. The result was the appearance of the first **villages**. These settlements were usually composed of huts and were located near rivers.

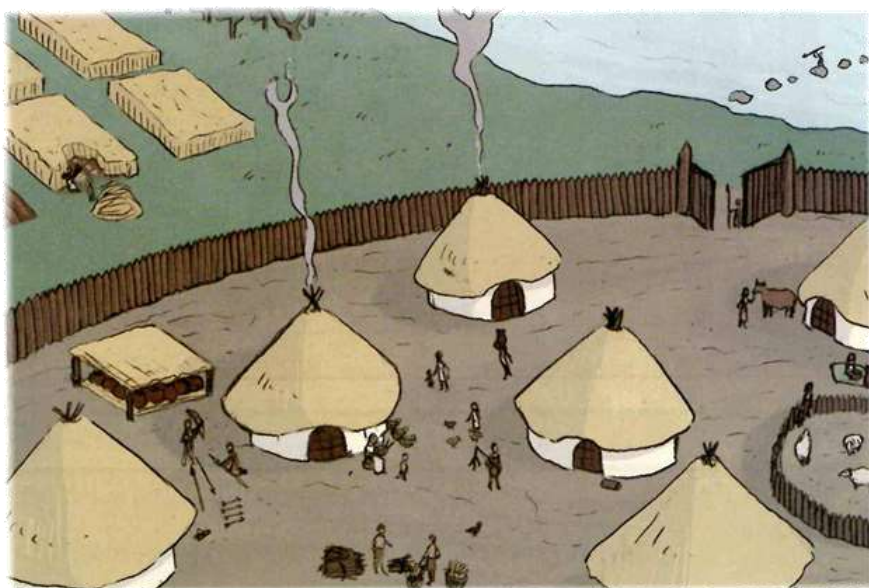
- **Societies became more complex and hierarchical.** Some settlements had leaders and other important people who managed resources.
- **New types of tools meant new types of jobs** came into existence. There was a **division of labour**, as different people performed different tasks.
- They **planted crops**, such as wheat and barley, and **domesticated animals**, such as goats, sheep and pigs. Food was more abundant and varied, so the **population grew**.
- People began to store and exchange **surplus food**, so **trade developed**.
- Archaeologists believe that **tasks were probably divided up between men and women**. Women were responsible for arable farming and making cloth and pottery. Men were responsible for livestock farming and manufacturing tools.
- Neolithic people had two main **religious practices**. They worshipped **the dead** and buried them with their possessions. They also worshipped **the forces of nature** in order to improve their harvests.

➤ NEW STONE AXES

During the Neolithic period, stone was not only carved, but also polished. Stone tools were made smooth by rubbing them with another softer stone, such as sandstone.



ⓐ A polished hand axe from the Neolithic period



➤ ACTIVITIES

10. If *Palaeolithic* means 'old stone', what do you think *Neolithic* means?
11. List at least three differences between life during the Palaeolithic period and the Neolithic period.
12. Which period would you have preferred to live in: the Palaeolithic or the Neolithic? Discuss with your classmates.



Life in the Neolithic Age

During the Neolithic Age, people settled in villages where they built permanent homes. They **located** villages near fields so people could plant, grow, and harvest their crops more easily. People also settled near water sources, especially rivers.

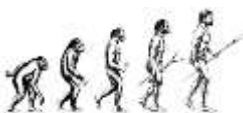
Neolithic Communities

Neolithic farming villages developed throughout Europe, India, Egypt, China, and Mexico. The biggest and earliest known communities have been found in Southwest Asia. One of the oldest communities was Jericho (JAIR • ih • koh). This farming village grew in an area between present-day Israel and Jordan called the West Bank. The village of Jericho was well established by about 8000 b.c. It extended across several acres. The area of sun-dried-brick houses was surrounded by walls that were several feet thick.

What Were the Benefits of a Settled Life?

Neolithic people needed protection from the weather and wild animals. A settled life provided greater security. Steady food supplies created healthier, growing populations. As the population increased, more workers became available. Those individuals could grow more crops. Villagers produced more than they could eat, so they began to trade their food for supplies they could not produce themselves.

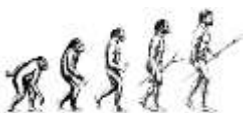
Because an abundant amount of food was produced, fewer people were needed in the fields. Neolithic people began to take part in economic activities other than farming. **Specialization** (speh • shuh • leh • ZAY • shun) occurred for the first time. People took up specific jobs as their talents allowed. Some people became artisans, or skilled workers. They made weapons and jewelry that they traded with neighboring communities. People made pottery from clay to store grain and food. They made baskets from plant fibers. They also used plant fibers to weave cloth. Ötzi, the Neolithic Iceman, wore a cape made from woven



grass fibers. These craftspeople, like farmers, also exchanged the goods they produced for other things they did not have.

The roles of men and women changed when people moved into settlements. Men worked in the fields to farm and herd animals. They gradually became more responsible for growing food and protecting the village. Men emerged as family and community leaders. Women bore the children and stayed in the villages. They wove cloth, using the wool from their sheep. They also used bone needles to make clothing from cloth and animal skins. In addition, women managed food supplies and performed other tasks.

The growth of communities did not always bring benefits. In some places, such as settlements in present-day Jordan, rapid population growth caused resources such as wood supplies to be used up quickly. On occasion, this loss of forestation caused desert-like conditions to spread. Where this type of ecological damage occurred, many settlements were abandoned.

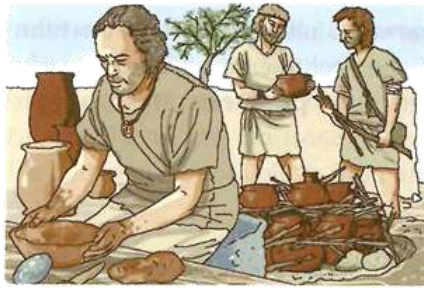


4.2 Technological advances

New tools and objects were also developed during the Neolithic period:



▲ In farming, **sickles** were used to cut crops and **hoes** were used to turn the earth.



▲ **Pots were made by hand** and used to transport food and liquids.



▲ **Baskets** were made of plant fibres to transport and store objects.



▲ Later, people began to spin fibres and weave them with a **loom** to make cloth.

DID YOU KNOW?

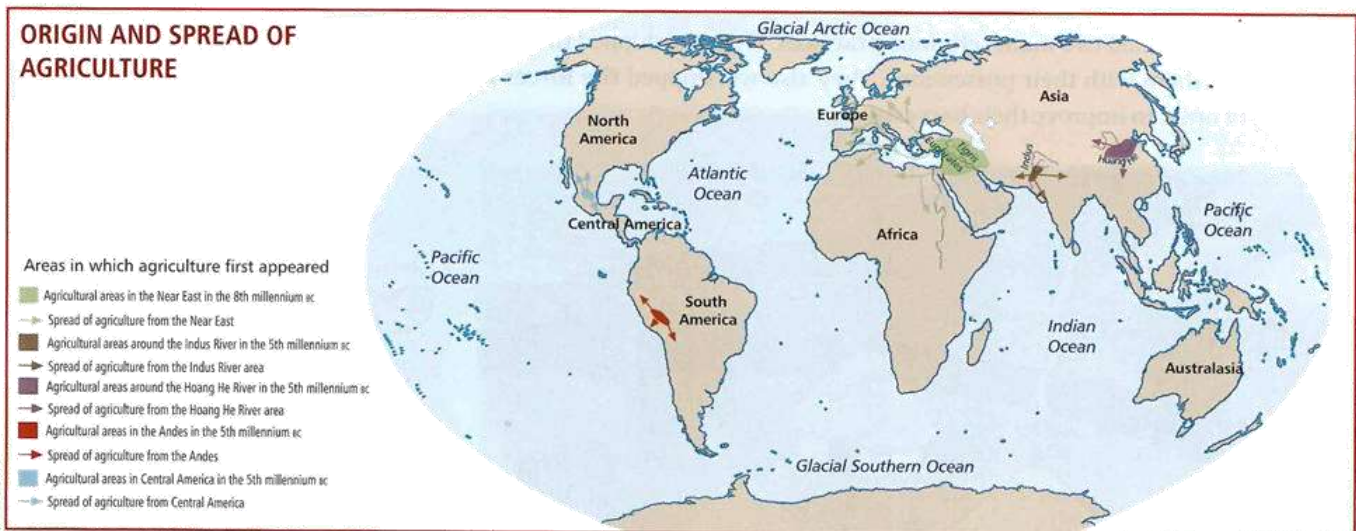
Skulls from the Neolithic period have been discovered with holes drilled into them, suggesting that prehistoric people carried out surgical procedures on people's heads. Many of these holes had begun to heal before the person died, indicating that the patient survived the surgery.

Why do you think Neolithic people carried out this procedure?



4.3 Origin and spread of the Neolithic Revolution

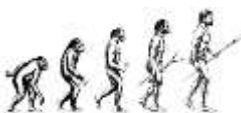
The Neolithic Revolution did not take place at the same time all over the world, although it did occur simultaneously in some areas. It began first in the Near East around 9000 BC, but only began in South America around 5500 BC.



ACTIVITIES

13. Explain why people went from being nomadic to sedentary during the Neolithic period.

14. List some new tools developed during the Neolithic period and their functions.



5 The Metal Ages

➤ What was the first metal used to make tools?

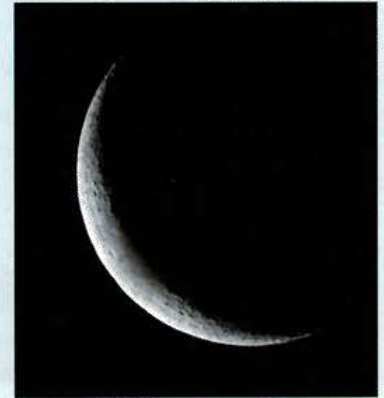
The Metal Ages is the name we give to the periods during which people began to **make objects and tools from metal**.

This brought about many **technological advances** which, in turn, brought about many **social and economic changes**. Copper was the first metal to be **mined**. It was used to make objects in the Fertile Crescent, in the modern-day Caucasus region.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Fertile Crescent region got its name for two reasons: in prehistoric times, the land there was fertile and good for growing crops, and when you see it on a map, it has the shape of a crescent moon. Where is the Fertile Crescent located?



5.1 Stages of the Metal Ages

The Metal Ages are divided into **three stages**:

THE COPPER AGE

- It began around 5000 BC in the Fertile Crescent area.
- Copper is a soft metal, which is easy to work into shape.



THE BRONZE AGE

- It began around 3000 BC in the Near East.
- Bronze is an **alloy** of copper and tin. This alloy is harder than copper. It was used to make stronger weapons and tools.



THE IRON AGE

- It began around 1200 BC in Anatolia.
- Iron is a harder metal than copper and bronze. It was used to make stronger and longer-lasting weapons and tools.



DID YOU KNOW?



In 1950, the mummified corpse of an Iron-Age man was discovered, preserved in a **peat bog**, in northern Denmark. The body was so well preserved that the people who discovered him thought that he had been killed recently! The mummy is known as the Tollund Man. Can you name an ancient civilisation that mummified its dead?

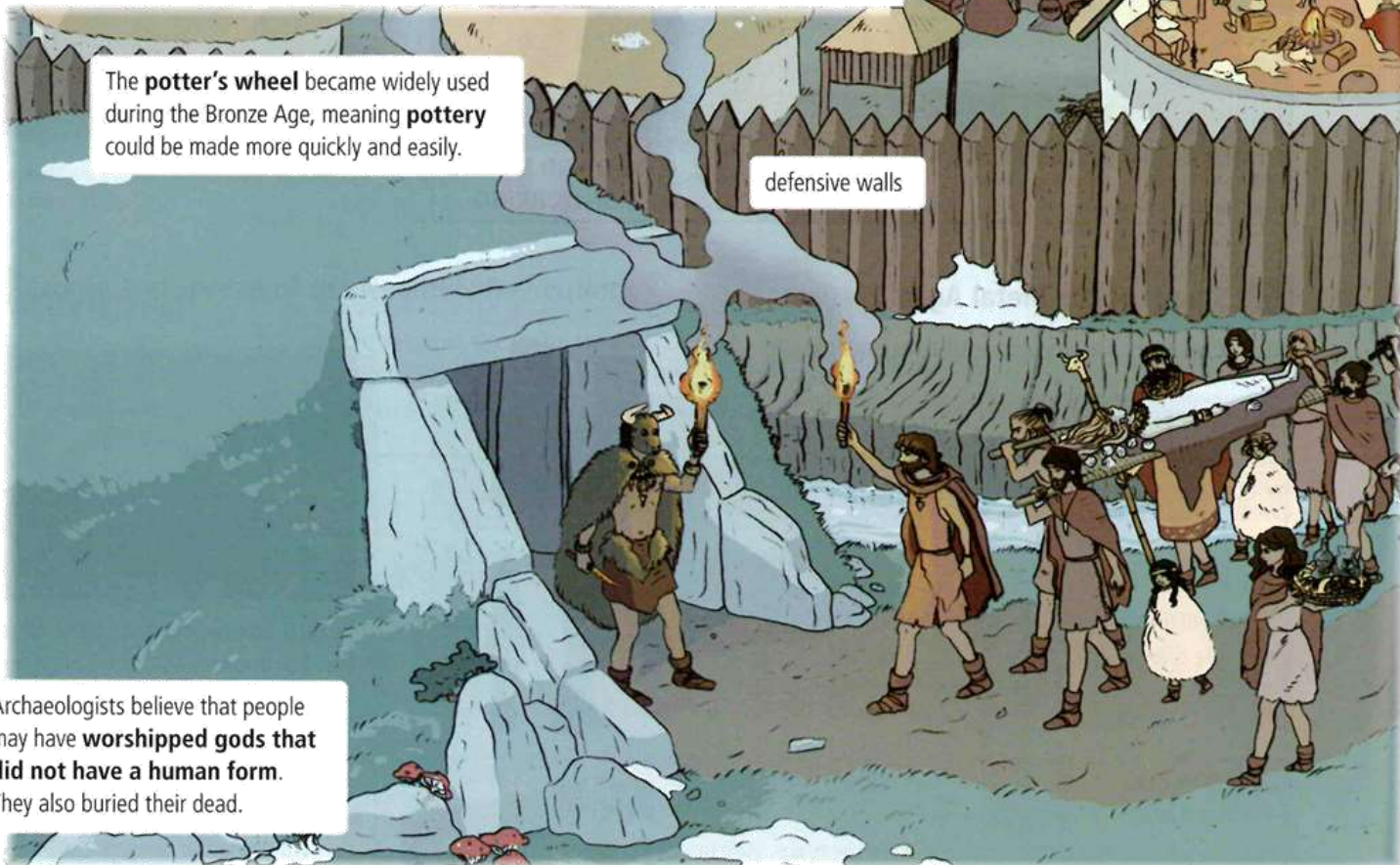
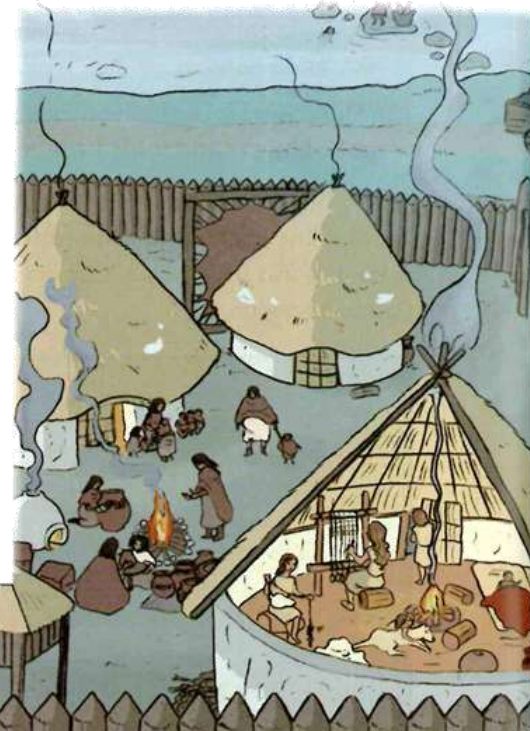
ACTIVITIES

15. Where was copper first used to make objects?
16. How do you think bronze was discovered? Compare your answer with your partner's.
17. What and where is the Near East? Find out which modern-day countries are in this region. Share your answers with your classmates.



5.2 Economic and social changes

- **New trade routes** were created as people travelled to find new sources of metal to make tools. This travelling helped spread different cultures.
- Trade produced **wealth** and **villages grew** significantly, giving rise to the first **cities**, which were often protected by defensive walls.
- There was a **specialisation of labour**. This meant that new types of professions, such as merchants and warriors, began to appear.
- Metal became a **symbol of wealth**, as people who owned metal weapons and tools were more powerful than those who had stone weapons. **War** became a means of expanding and controlling territory.
- **Private property** and **economic inequality** between people became more common. This meant that the structure of society became even more **hierarchical**.



The **potter's wheel** became widely used during the Bronze Age, meaning **pottery** could be made more quickly and easily.

defensive walls

Archaeologists believe that people may have **worshipped gods that did not have a human form**. They also buried their dead.

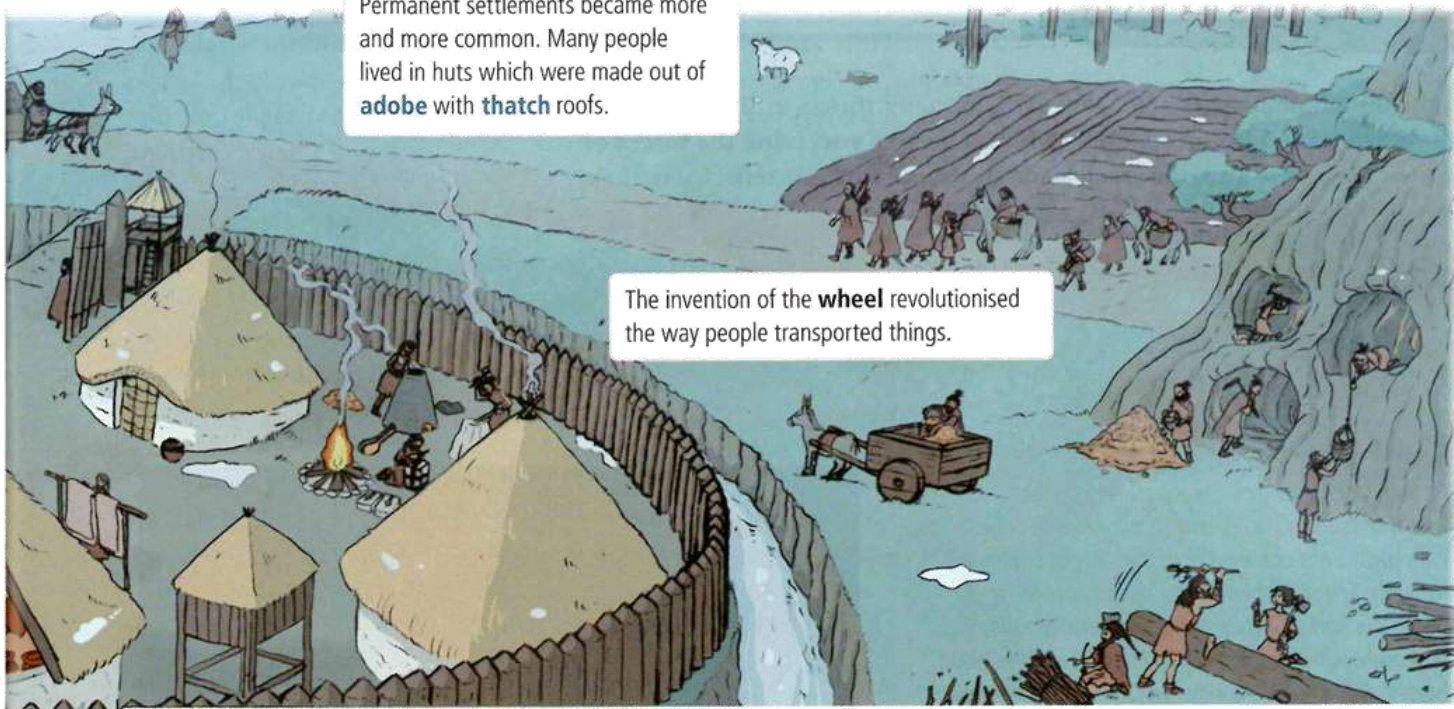
ACTIVITIES

18. Which materials were used to make huts during the Metal Ages?
19. Explain why metal was a symbol of wealth during the Metal Ages.
20. What was the main reason that society became more hierarchical during the Metal Ages?
21. Name two professions that appeared during the Metal Ages.



Permanent settlements became more and more common. Many people lived in huts which were made out of **adobe** with **thatch** roofs.

The invention of the **wheel** revolutionised the way people transported things.



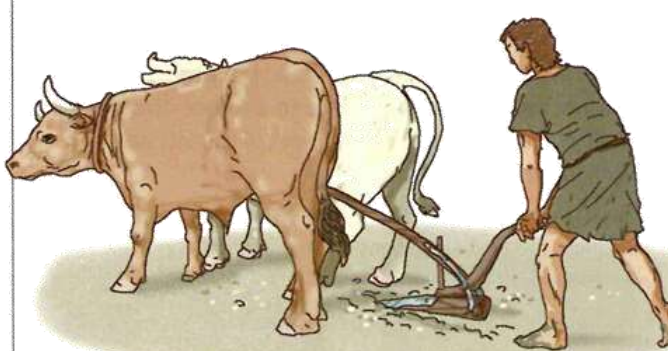
5.3 Technological advances

METALWORK



Most metals are extracted from an **ore**. People from the Metal Ages began to heat ore to separate the metal from it. This was called **smelting**. While the metal was still hot, it was put into a **mould**, then hammered into shape and finally polished.

NEW AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY



In agriculture, wooden **ploughs** were replaced by metal ones, making it easier to turn and break up soil. The **sickle** was also improved, with metal blades replacing the stone ones which had previously been used.

22. Apart from making it easier to turn and break up soil, what other advantages would metal tools have over stone tools?
23. How do you think the invention of the wheel changed people's daily lives during the Metal Ages?



6 Prehistoric art

➤ Why did prehistoric people paint animals in caves?

Prehistoric humans were concerned about many things in life: they were concerned about **obtaining food**, **reproducing** and **surviving the forces of nature**. They were also concerned about **death**. All of this is reflected in their art, religious practices and the way they buried their dead.

6.1 Palaeolithic art

We have found the remains of two types of artistic expression from this period: **cave paintings** and **portable art**.

CAVE PAINTINGS

Cave paintings were pictures produced on the **interior walls** of caves. The paintings were done with **pigments** obtained from a variety of different minerals. These pigments were mainly applied by hand. The figures were painted in several colours, especially ochre, red and black. Animals, such as bison, horses, deer and mammoths, were the most common **subjects** in these paintings. Many prehistorians believe the paintings had a religious meaning for the artists. For example, by painting the animals, the artists may have believed they would be easier to hunt.



▲ The Altamira cave paintings (Cantabria, Spain)

PORTABLE ART

- Portable art consisted of **carvings** and **sculptures** that could be **moved from one place to another**. They were made of stone, bone or clay. Two types of figurines have been found:
 - **Animal figurines**, such as horses and bison. These figurines were carved in bone or ivory and were primarily used as **amulets**.
 - **Female figurines** which depicted the attributes of women. These figurines were carved in stone and are known as Venus figurines. They symbolised fertility.



▲ The Venus of Willendorf (Austria)



▲ A carved bison made of reindeer antler (La Madeleine, France)

ACTIVITIES

- Are the following statements true or false? Correct the false statements.
 - Prehistoric art depicted subjects which were of great importance to people.
 - Only one colour was used in cave paintings.
 - Venus figurines were portable pieces of art.
- Explain the differences between portable art and cave paintings.
- Find out more information about Venus figurines. Write a brief report about them. You can use the internet to help you.



6.2 Neolithic and Mesolithic art

There is not much evidence of portable art during the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. Prehistorians believe that this was the result of people settling down and no longer requiring art that could be transported from one place to another.

Mesolithic and Neolithic art had the following characteristics:

- Paintings were done on stone surfaces in **shelters** or in shallow caves, but not inside deep caves. This is known as **rock painting**.
- The most common subjects of rock paintings were **hunting, gathering food** and **ceremonial dancing**.
- The figures were painted in a **schematic style**. They depicted essential features.
- The largest concentration of Mesolithic and Neolithic rock paintings in the world are found in the **east of the Iberian Peninsula**. They were usually painted in only one colour – normally black.



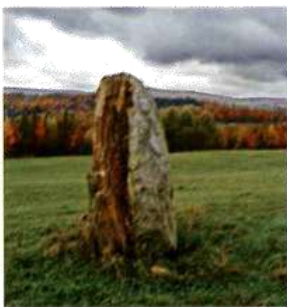
▲ A hunting scene from La Valltorta caves in Castellón

6.3 Megalithic art

Megaliths are **monuments built using large stones**. They are the first known examples of architecture. They were created during the **Neolithic period** and the **Metal Ages**. Building these monuments required a lot of workers and a high level of organisation. Megalithic monuments can be classified as:

MENHIRS

- Large vertical stones **embedded** in the ground.
- They could stand alone or in a line with others.
- They were used for ceremonies.



DOLMENS

- A large, flat, horizontal stone laid on vertical stones.
- They were used as burial places.



STONE CIRCLES

- Several menhirs placed in a circle.
- They were used for ceremonies.



PASSAGE TOMBS

- Similar to a dolmen, but with one or more chambers and a passage at the entrance.
- They were used for burials.



ACTIVITIES

27. What were the most common subjects in rock paintings? How were these subjects depicted?
28. Find out information about the megalithic site at Stonehenge, England. What type of monument was built there? During which period was it built?

29. Work in groups. Discuss how you think megalithic monuments were built.

- How were the workers organised?
- Where did they get the stone from?
- What tools did they use to put the stones in place?



7 Prehistory on the Iberian Peninsula

➤ Where did the prehistoric inhabitants of the Islas Baleares bury their dead?

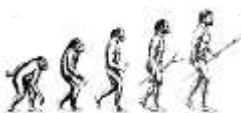
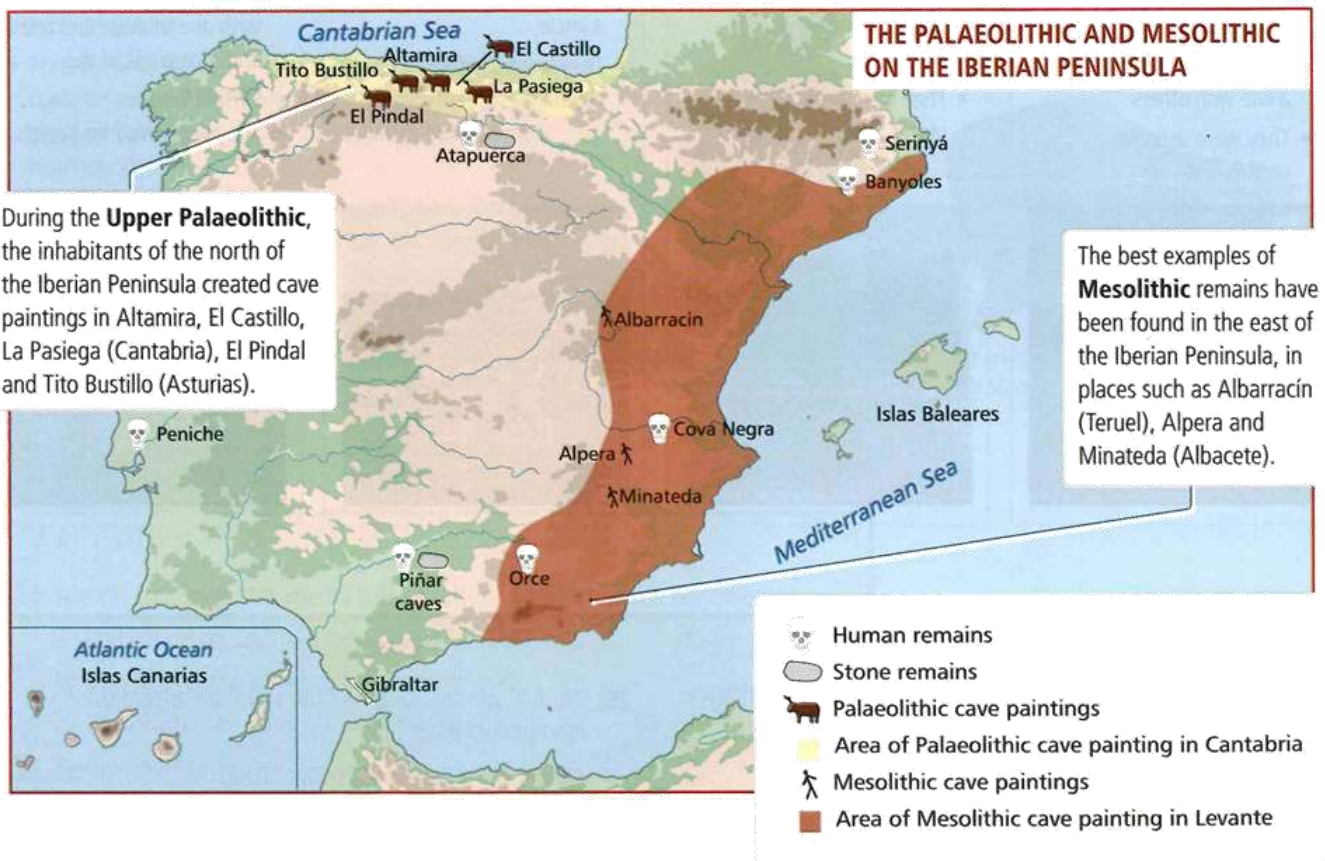
7.1 The first inhabitants

Much of what we know about the first inhabitants on the Iberian Peninsula comes from remains and artefacts found in the Sierra de **Atapuerca**, Burgos. The finds from Gran Dolina site at Atapuerca (see page 20) include human fossils and stone tools. These fossils have certain characteristics which are different from what we previously knew about the first inhabitants on the Iberian Peninsula. They belong to an 800 000-year-old hominid known as *Homo antecessor*.

Homo antecessor is believed by many scientists to be an ancestor of both Neanderthals and modern-day humans (although this is still being debated). Its height and proportions were similar to ours, although it was more heavily built and had a smaller brain.

7.2 The Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods

Archaeologists have discovered many human and stone remains in different areas of the Iberian Peninsula, mostly in the north and east of the Peninsula. Some of the most well preserved prehistoric cave paintings in Europe are found on the Iberian Peninsula. These cave paintings are so well preserved because the caves are very deep and sheltered from climatic influences.



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