

**READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 1-1 (continued)****Early Humans** (page 9)

**Main Idea** Paleolithic people adapted to their environment and invented many tools to help them survive.

History is the story of our human past. **Historians** study and write about what people did long ago. Historians tell us that history began when people first began to write—about 5,500 years ago. The time before this is called *prehistory*. This is when the human story really begins.

**Tools of Discovery** We study the earliest people and the things they left behind. Scientists called **archaeologists** hunt for clues to the past by digging underground. They choose sites where humans might once have settled. Archaeologists discover **artifacts**, such as tools, weapons, bowls, and other things humans made. They also hunt for traces of plants or animals in rock called **fossils**.

Another type of historian is an **anthropologist**. These people study how different kinds of societies developed. They look for clues to how people related to one another.

Historians call the early period of human history the Stone Age. It is named for the fact that people during this time used stone to make tools and weapons. The earliest part of the Stone Age is the Paleolithic or Old Stone Age. This time began about 2.5 million years ago and lasted until around 8000 B.C.

**Who Were the Hunter-Gatherers?** We know that early humans spent most of their time searching for food. They hunted animals, caught fish, ate insects, and gathered nuts, berries, fruits, grains, and plants.

Because they lived off what the land provided, Paleolithic people were always on the move. They were **nomads**, or people who move regularly. They looked for good, rich land. They moved in bands of about 30. The group kept members safer.

At each new place, people camped near a stream or other water source. Women stayed close to the campsite.

**READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 1-1 (continued)**

They cared for the children and searched nearby woods for berries, nuts, and grains.

Men hunted animals. This sometimes took them far from camp. Men had to learn the habits of different animals. They also needed to make tools for the kill. The earliest tools, such as clubs, were used for such a purpose. Men also killed animals by driving them off cliffs. Later, people invented spears, traps, and bows and arrows.

**Adapting to the Environment** The *way* Paleolithic people lived depended on *where* they lived. Those in warm climates needed little clothing or shelter. People in cold climates needed more. Many lived in caves. Over time, people created new kinds of shelters, such as animal hides held up by wooden poles.

Paleolithic people also learned to tame fire. Fire was important for many reasons. It provided warmth and light. It scared away wild animals. Food cooked over a fire tasted better, was easier to digest, and would keep longer. People also could now save meat by having it smoked over fire.

Archaeologists believe that fires were first started by rubbing two pieces of wood together and later with drill-like tools.

**What Were the Ice Ages?** Fire helped people survive the Ice Ages. From 100,000 B.C. to about 8000 B.C., thick ice sheets covered parts of Europe, Asia, and North America.

During the Ice Ages, people were at constant risk from cold and hunger. To survive, early humans had to adapt. People had to build sturdier shelters, make warmer clothing, and change their diets. Fire helped them live in this harsh environment.

**Language, Art, and Religion** Paleolithic people developed language. This made it easier for people to work together and pass on knowledge. Early people used both words and art. They made paint from crushed rocks. They painted animals on cave walls.

Some historians believe the early art could have had religious meaning or was meant to bring hunters good luck.

## READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 1-1 (continued)

**The Invention of Tools** Paleolithic people were the first to use tools and methods to help them perform tasks. This is called **technology**. Tools were made of a hard stone called flint. Flint would flake into sharp pieces when hit with a rock. By tying wooden poles to different shapes of flint, people made axes and spears.

Over time, early people made smaller and sharper tools—like fishhooks and needles—from animal bones. People used needles to make nets and baskets and to sew hides together for clothing.

5. How did the development of spoken language help Paleolithic people?
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## Neolithic Times (page 13)

**Main Idea** In the Neolithic Age, people started farming, building communities, producing goods, and trading.

After the last Ice Age ended, people began to change the way they lived. They learned how to **domesticate**, or tame animals. More control over animals meant more meat, milk, and wool. People also learned how to grow plants. People no longer had to roam from place to place in search of food. They could grow crops themselves. Gradually, farming replaced hunting and gathering.

These changes marked the beginning of the Neolithic Age. Also called the New Stone Age, this period lasted from about 8000 B.C. to 4000 B.C.

**Why Was Farming Important?** Historians call the Neolithic Age the farming revolution. The word *revolution* describes changes that affect many areas of life.

Farming first developed everywhere. People scattered across the globe discovered how to grow crops at about the same time. What they grew depended on where they lived.