

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## The Life and Times of Early Man

Very early humans probably ate mostly plants, fruit, nuts and roots that they found. Any meat they got was by scavenging after other animals. Early humans did not have strong claws to help them fight. They could not outrun sabre-toothed tigers or cave lions. Early humans had to get smart to survive. They had to use reason and invention.



## Early Humans for Kids

### Introduction & Geography

In your study of early man there are going to be many new terms and words for you to learn. Here are four very important vocabulary words to start you out.

- **Hominids** is a kind of slang term among scientists. It means mankind and anything that looks and acts like mankind.
- **Fossils** are remains of living things (plants, animals, and people) that have been turned into stone or have left an impression in the stone. Anything that man has made is not a fossil.
- **Artefacts** are remains of things that were made, not remains of living things.
- **Hunter/gatherer** refers to how a group of people get their food. They find it growing wild or hunt and fish for it. They do not grow any food.



## Early Humans the Stone Age

The Stone Age, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age are three periods of history identified by the way people made tools and weapons. Different ancient civilizations developed at different

speeds. So you might have one group of early people using bronze tools, while another group was still using stone tools. Those with better tools had a much easier time conquering other groups of people. The material used to make tool and weapons most definitely had an influence on daily life in ancient times.



### Early Humans for Kids Clothing

The use of clothing helped man survive the ice age. In the winter months and in areas with a colder climate, early man to keep warm by making clothing from the skins of animals. In summer months and warmer climates, clothing consisted of woven grass or bark.

Neanderthal man was probably the first to make clothing. They tanned animal skins to make clothing and boots.

Cro-Magnon invented needles. They used needles for many purposes including sewing. They made boots, tunics, and other garments out of furs, woven plants, and bark. They strung together jewellery made from shells, bone, and animal teeth. Sometimes Cro-Magnon would dye their bodies or even tattoo themselves.

### Early Humans for Kids Homes

**TREES & SHELTERS:** Very early humans learned to stay away from caves as shelters. Caves were often already occupied by dangerous animals. Instead, they looked for trees to climb into, or rocks and cliffs to shelter under. The discovery of fire had a huge effect on early humans. A fire allowed them to pick where they camped. Animals were afraid of fire. And fire could be used to drive animals out of caves.

**CAVES:** From remains found, scientists have discovered that Neanderthals lived in caves and had fires in which they cooked their food. Neanderthals preferred caves as sleeping places and temporary homes. They were good hunters. They removed any dangerous animals, and then moved in. Neanderthals, like other early people, were hunters and gatherers. They did not plant crops. They gathered food and followed the herds.

**HUTS:** Some early humans, like Cro-Magnon Man, had two homes, one they brought with them, and one they left behind them in a more permanent location. These early people were hunters and gatherers. In the summer months, while following the herds, these early people lived in easy to pack and set up tents or tee-pees. The summer tents were set up by either stringing them between two trees, or by covering some sticks tied together with the tanned hides of animals. During the winter months, they lived in larger more permanent type huts. The winter huts were usually in a permanent location and were built much sturdier. They would be roomy enough for a family to stay in. They were also made from tanned hides that had been sewn together and wrapped around logs which had been placed into holes that they

dug. They had an opening in the top to let out smoke, and were weighted at the bottom with rocks or dirt to keep them anchored during storms.



### Early Humans for Kids Ice Age

What is an ice age? An ice age is a period of time when much of earth's water is frozen in glaciers. Throughout time, the earth has experienced several ice ages. Things become cold, and then the weather warms up again. Each ice age takes many thousands of years to cycle. During an ice age, oceans become smaller and lower, as the water freezes into glaciers. This uncovers land. Giant walkways of frozen ice also appeared during the last ice age over what would become vast rivers and seas.

During the last ice age, land bridges appeared between Africa and Europe and Asia. Using these land bridges, early humans migrated out of Africa, probably following herds of animals.

**Very Early Humans lived in the Stone Age.** To survive, early humans invented and created stone and bone weapons and tools. With these tools, early humans could kill and trap those animals they needed for food. With stone axes and spears, they could defend against those animals that thought *they* were food. Tools made of bones, shells, and stones all fall under Stone Age tools because they are not made of metal. The Stone Age is considered to have begun about two million years ago, and ended sometime after the end of the last ice age, about ten thousand years ago.



### Early Humans for Kids Homo sapiens "Wise Man" & Neanderthals 500,000 BCE to 30,000 BCE

Homo sapiens is different from Homo erectus. The skull of Homo sapiens is larger with a more pronounced forehead allowing the brain to be much larger.

Like Homo erectus, Homo sapiens was a hunter/gatherer, meaning that they gathered up much of their food from available vegetation and they did some hunting and fishing to eke out their diet. To do this they created stone and bone tools, needles and fish hooks. They tanned animal skins to make clothing and boots.

One of the earliest discoveries of early man was found under the ground of a Tal, or small hill, near the village of Neander. Thus we get the Neanderthal man or Homo Neandertalensis. You might also see it spelled as Neanderthal. Either spelling is correct or each is used in noted archaeology. The skeleton discovered was of a male. Archaeologists first thought that Neanderthal was the link between ape and man since the skeleton showed a being that walked with bent knees, a thick neck and head stuck out forward much like an ape.

As scientific techniques improved, it was found that Neanderthal was actually an old man who had disfiguring arthritis, which caused him to be bent into the shape he was.

Later discoveries showed that Neanderthal man was actually taller than modern humans with a larger skull (and larger brain), and very strong (thick bones). From remains found, scientists have discovered that they lived in caves and had fires in which they cooked their food. They were good hunters.

Another interesting fact about Neanderthal is that they buried their dead. They also had some sort of ceremony because they painted the bodies of the dead.

Neanderthals disappeared around 30,000 BCE. We don't know if they were killed off by another branch of Homo sapiens or if they intermingled with other groups and gradually merged with them. But disappear they did.

### **Homo sapiens Sapiens Cro-Magnon and "Moderns" 30,000 BCE to 10,000 BCE**

Early man left Africa and spread throughout the globe. They developed into good hunters, and quickly found those fruits and nuts and other plants that were edible. Cro-Magnon had plenty of food and shelter, and from what we can tell many of them lived long lives.

Their diet was pretty varied. They ate the fruits, berries, nuts, seeds, and roots that they could gather, as well as the animals they could hunt. They also became adept at catching fish.

Fishing was done using spears, bow and arrow, nets, and even fish hooks. Some built canoes and rafts to go out into deeper water to catch larger fish.

Hunters mostly went after herd beasts such as deer. However Cro-Magnon was a good hunter and would take any animal they could get including mammoths and sober tooth tigers. They had bows and stone tipped arrows, stone spears, stone knives and axes, and they built snares and pits to catch animals. They learned how to smoke and preserve meat to help feed themselves during the long cold winters. During the summer months, they would follow the herds and hunt. During the winter they returned to their winter camps.

Cro-Magnon built two different types of houses. During the summer month, while following the herds, they lived in easy to pack and set up tents or tee-pees. During the winter months, they lived in larger more permanent type huts.

The summer tents were easily set up by either stringing them between two trees, or by covering some sticks tied to together tepee style with the tanned hides of animals.

The winter huts were usually in a permanent location and were built much sturdier. They would be roomy enough for a family to stay in. They were also made from tanned hides that had been sewn together and wrapped around logs which had been placed into holes that they dug. They had an opening in the top to let out smoke, and were weighted at the bottom with rocks or dirt to keep them anchored during storms.

In the winter months and in areas with a colder climate, Cro-Magnon man learned to make clothing from the skins of animals. In summer months and warmer climates, clothing consisted of woven grass or bark. Cro-Magnon wore jewellery made from shells, bone, and animal teeth. Sometimes Cro-Magnon would dye their bodies or even tattoo themselves.



### Early Humans for Kids Cave Paintings & Rock Art

Why did **Cro-Magnon man** cover the walls and ceilings of hidden caves with paintings by many different people? Was it bragging; was it to appease the gods? Was it to aid in hunting or teaching? We just don't know.

How did they find these caves? They painted in the same caves, so they must have known where they were. The land around these caves was hard to reach. Yet, Cro-Magnon painters sought out these caves. The entrances to the stone caves were narrow, cramped, and tight. The painters had to crawl or squirm through them to get to the large natural chambers in the cave where they painted their pictures. The painters had to bring their light (a torch or spoon lamp) and their paints, while crawling. But nothing seemed to stop them. It must have been very important to these early people to add their art to the art already in the cave.

The painting done by early man was not done in charcoal, but in naturally occurring pigments such as red (iron oxide) or black (manganese). The animals were drawn with attention to detail, but the people were usually stick figures. Many of these early man artists also drew outlines of their hands. Was this a way of signing their art?

Interestingly enough, these caves and their paintings were not found by archaeologists. The first caves with cave paintings were found in France. Some children, playing in the woods, discovered the entrance to a cave, long forgotten. The entrance was hidden by a tree. Once the first cave had been found, and its importance realized, people started looking for more caves and found them. It is very likely that more caves with more cave paintings are still waiting to be found.



## Early Humans for Kids Theories of Charles Darwin Evolution

One of the great controversies of our time has been the theory of evolution. What is a theory? A theory is a guess based on some facts. Remember a theory is not proven. Still today, scientists cannot yet tell us how exactly life began on planet Earth, but they can tell us a great deal about what happened after life began. Scientists call this progression of life the Theory of Evolution.

Scientists believe early humans first appeared on which continent?

What is a hominid?

What are two major differences between apes and man?

How did the invention of tools affect early man?

What is the Stone Age?

How did early humans spend their days?

What is a hunter/gatherer?

What did early humans eat?

What large animals did early humans hunt?

What were early human homes like?

What were early human clothes like?

Why was the ability to make fire so important?

What is an ice age?

How did the ice age affect early humans?