



# THE STONE AGES AND EARLY CULTURES

# BIG IDEA

- Prehistoric people learned to adapt to their environment, to make simple tools, to use fire, and to use language.

# MAIN IDEAS

- Scientists study the remains of early humans to learn about prehistory.
- Hominids and early humans first appeared in East Africa millions of years ago.
- Stone Age tools grew more complex as time passed.
- Hunter-gatherer societies developed language, art, and religion.

# ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- How did humans' ways of living change as they interacted with others and adapted to their environment?



# WHAT WILL YOU LEARN...

- You will learn about the earliest people. You will see how they learned to make tools, hunt, gather food, and even create art.



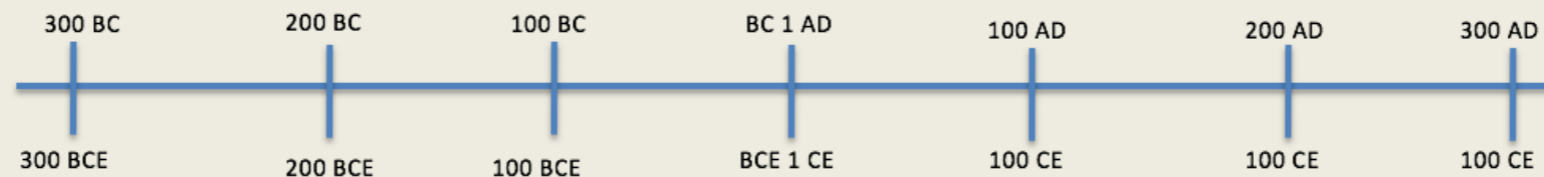
# SPECIALIZED VOCABULARY OF HISTORY

## Terms that identify periods of time

<b>decade</b>	a period of 10 years
<b>century</b>	a period of 100 years
<b>age</b>	a long period of time marked by a single cultural feature
<b>era</b>	a long period of time marked by great events, developments, or figures (often people)
<b>ancient</b>	very old, or from a long time ago

## Terms used with dates

<b>circa or c.</b>	a word used to show that historians are not sure of an exact date; it means "about."
<b>BC</b>	a term used to identify dates that occurred long ago, before the birth of Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity; it means "before Christ." As you can see on the timeline below, BC dates get smaller as time passes, so the larger the number the earlier the date.
<b>AD</b>	a term used to identify dates that occurred after Jesus's birth; it comes from a Latin phrase that means "in the year of our Lord." Unlike BC dates, AD dates get larger as time passes, so the larger the number the later the date (closer to today).
<b>BCE</b>	another way to refer to BC dates; it stands for "before the common era."
<b>CE</b>	another way to refer to AD dates; it stands for "common era."



# KEY TERMS IN THIS LESSON

prehistory (p. 28)	The time before there was writing.
hominid (p. 28) (hah-muh-nuhd)	An early ancestor of humans.
ancestor (p. 28)	A relative who lived in the past.
tool (p. 30)	Any handheld object that has been modified to help a person accomplish a task.
Paleolithic Era (p. 31) (pay-lee-uh-li-thik)	The first part of the stone age or Old Stone Age. It lasted until about 10,000 years ago.
society (p. 33)	A community of people who share a common culture.
hunter-gatherers (p. 33)	People who hunt animals and gather wild plants, seeds, fruits, and nuts to survive.

# BUILDING BACKGROUND

- Over millions of years early ancestors learned many new things. Making stone tools was one of the earliest and most valuable skills that they developed. Scientists who study early ancestors learn a lot about them from the tools and other objects that they made.





# SCIENTISTS STUDY REMAINS

- Although scientists believe the first humans have lived on the earth for about 200,000, writing was not invented until about 5,000 years ago. Historians call the time before there was writing **prehistory**.
- To study prehistory, historians rely on the work of archaeologists (people who study the past based on what people left behind), anthropologists (people who study human societies and cultures), and geographers (people who study the physical and human features of the Earth).

# EARLY ANCESTORS

- Hominid (hah-muh-nuhd) is a species thought to be an early ancestor of humans.
- Within the hominid species is the Australopithecus (aw-stray-loh-pi-thuh-kuhs) thought to be the earliest ancestors of humans.

# IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

- In 1959, Mary Leakey found bones in East Africa that are believed to be more than 1.5 million years old.
- She and her husband, Louis Leakey, believed the bones belonged to an early hominid.
- The bones are believed to belong to an *Australopithecus*.

# LUCY

- In 1974, anthropologist Donald Johanson found bones from another early ancestor. He named his find "Lucy."



# LUCY

- Tests showed that Lucy lived more than 3 million years ago.
- Johanson could tell from her bones that she was small and had walked on two legs.
- Discoveries of ancient bones give us information about early humans and their ancestors, but not all scientists agree on the age and meaning of these discoveries.

# HOMINIDS

- Later groups of hominids appeared about 3 million years ago.
- In the early 1960s Louis Leakey found hominid remains that he called ***Homo habilis***, or “handy man.”
- The *Homo habilis* used early stone tools for chopping and scraping.



- The brain was about half the size of modern humans.

# HOMINIDS

- About 1.5 million years ago, another group of hominids are believed to have appeared in Africa. This group is called ***Homo erectus***, or "upright man."
- They walked completely upright, used early stone tools like the hand ax, and learned to control fire.



- *Homo erectus* migrated out of Africa to Asia and Europe.

# HUMANS

- Scientists are not sure exactly where or when the first humans lived, but many believe they first appeared in Africa about 200,000 years ago.
- Scientists called these people ***Homo sapiens***, or “wise men.” Every person alive today belongs to this group.
- *Homo sapiens* migrated around the world, they learned to create fire and use a wide variety of tools, and developed language.



# STONE AGE TOOLS

- The early humans lived during a long period of time called the **Stone Age**.
- To help scientists, the Stone Age was divided into three periods based on the kinds of tools used at the time (paleolithic, mesolithic, and neolithic).
- Tools are any handheld objects that have been modified to help a person accomplish a task.

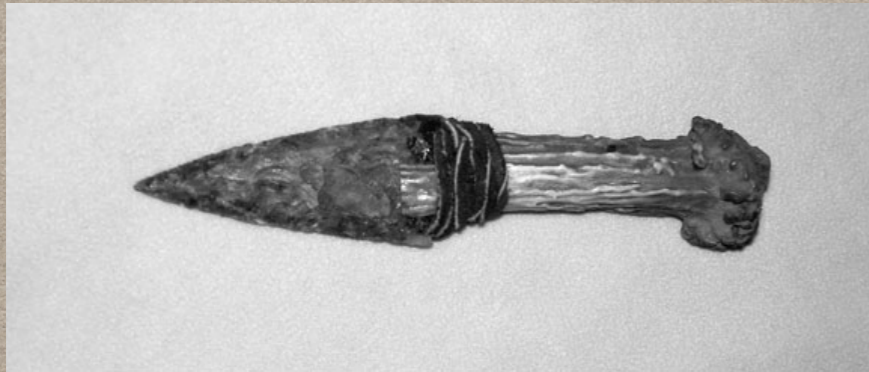
# THE FIRST TOOLS

- The Paleolithic Era (or Old Stone Age) lasted until about 10,000 years ago. During this time, people used stone tools.
- The oldest tools were found in Tanzania, E. Africa. These sharpened tools are about the size of an adult's fist.
- These tools were made by striking a stone with another to make a sharp edge that could be used to cut, chop or scrape roots, bones, or meat.



# LATER TOOLS

- Over time people learned to make better tools.



*Hand Ax*

*Made of flint and used to break tree limbs, to dig, and to cut animal hides.*



*Flint*

# LATER TOOLS

- People also learned to attach wooden handles to tools. This is how the spear was invented.



- Because a spear could be thrown, hunters no longer had to stand close to animals they were hunting. This allowed them to hunt larger animals like deer, horses, bison, and mammoths.

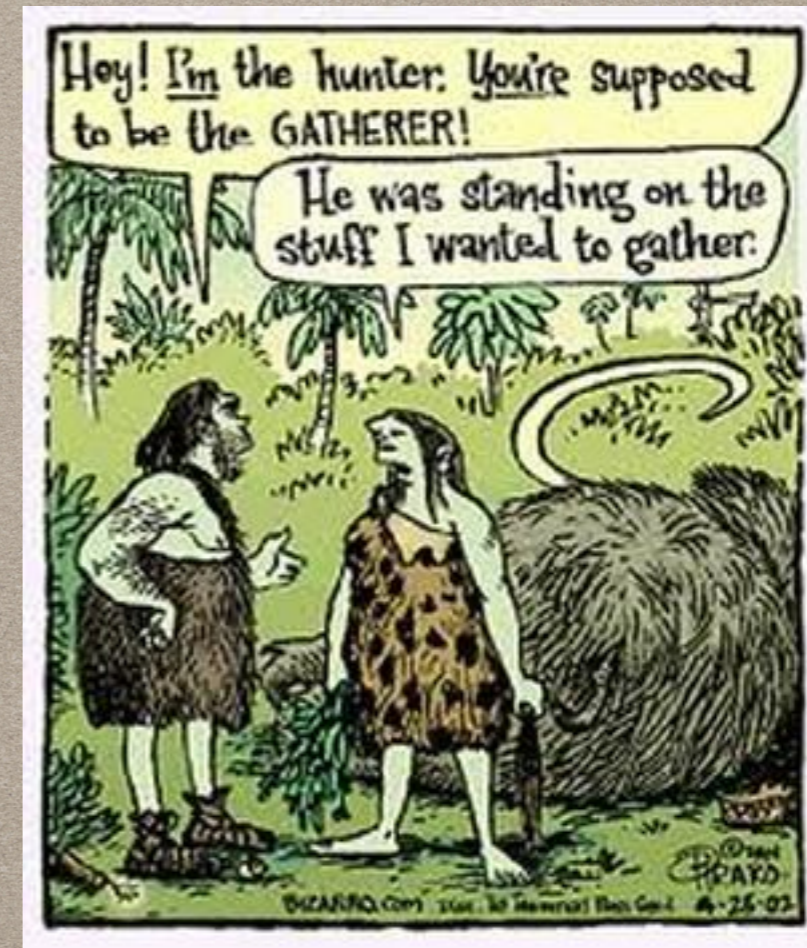
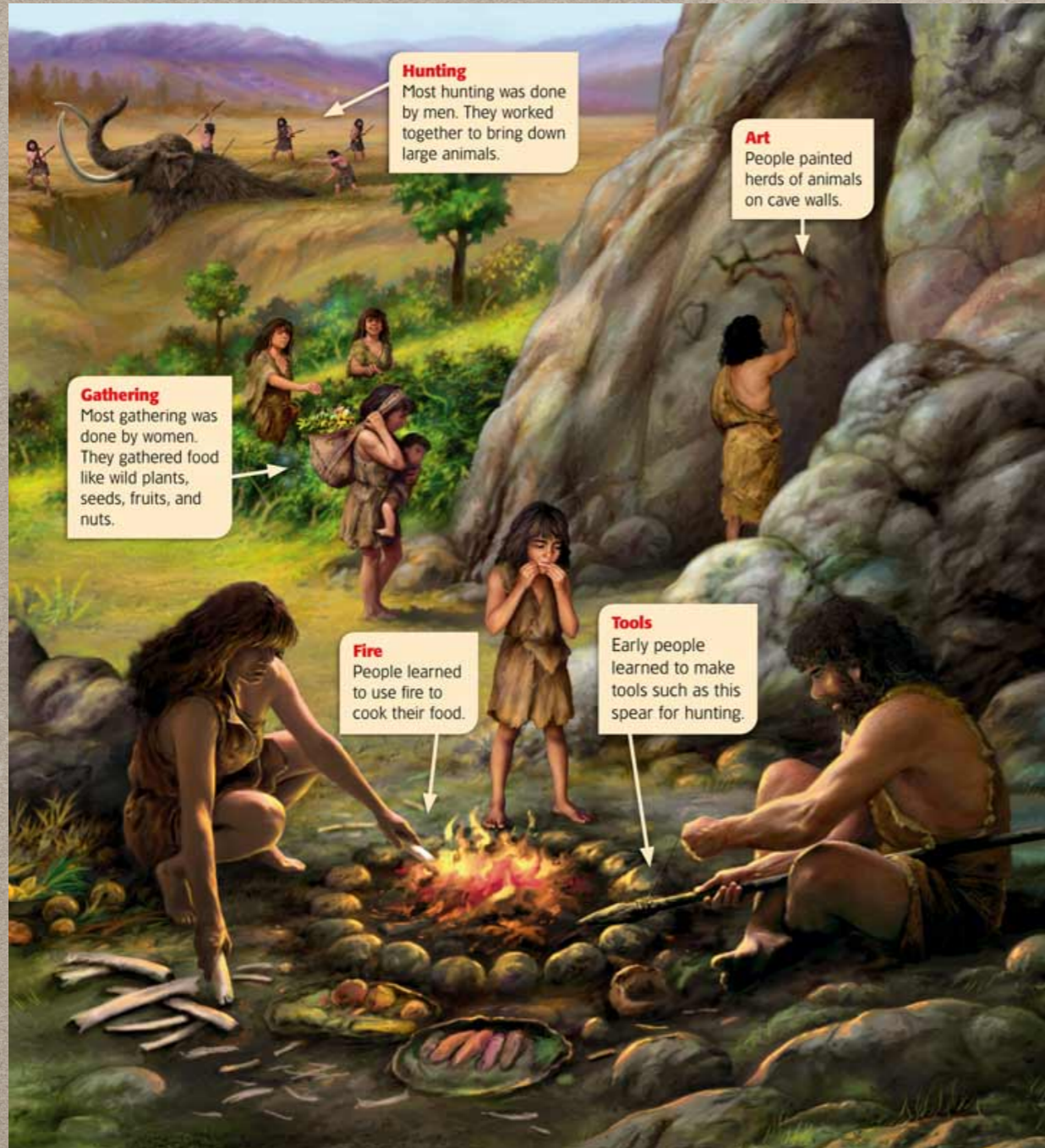


*WOW! What a dinner we'll have tonight!!!*

# HUNTER-GATHERER SOCIETIES

- As early humans developed tools and new hunting techniques, they began to form **societies**.
- A society is a community of people who share a common culture that includes languages, religions, and art.

# HUNTER-GATHERER SOCIETIES

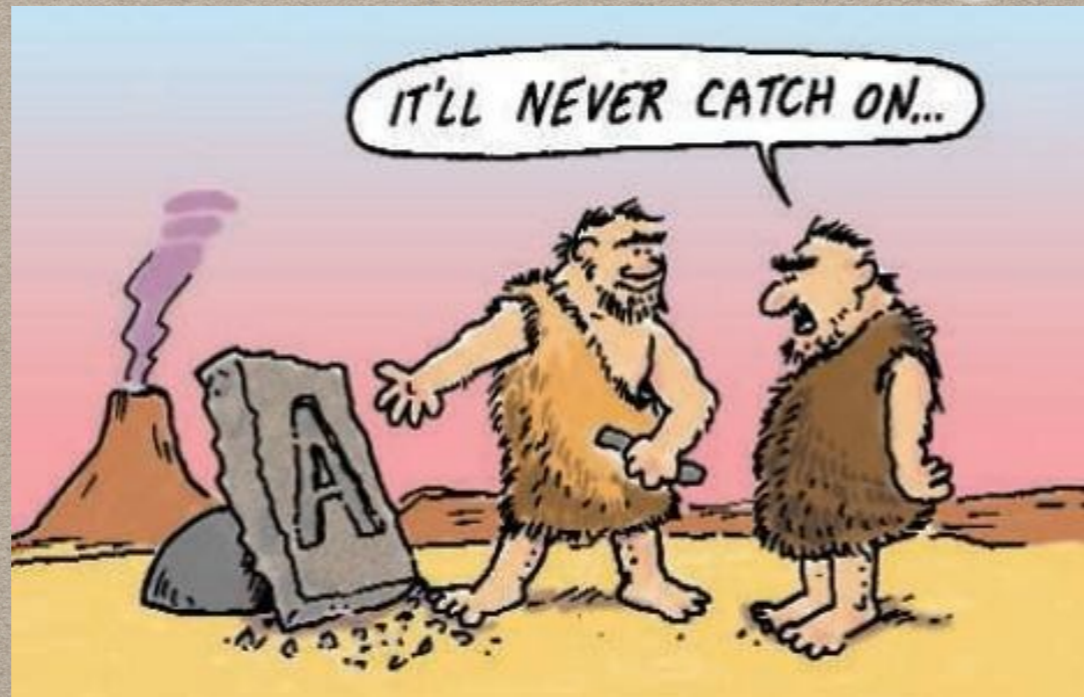


# HUNTER-GATHERER SOCIETIES

- People of the Stone Age were hunter-gatherers - people who hunt animals and gather wild plants, seeds, fruits, and nuts to survive.
- Anthropologists believe that most men did the hunting. They hunted in groups. This was more productive and safer than hunting alone.
- Women probably collected wild plants, seeds, fruits and nuts to eat and stayed near camps so that they could also care for the children.

# LANGUAGE, ART, AND RELIGION

- The most important development during the Stone Age was **culture** and **language**.



- Some scientists believe language developed to help make hunting in groups easier. Others believe it was a way for people to form relationships. Others believe it was a way to help resolve issues, such as how to distribute food fairly.



# LANGUAGE, ART, AND RELIGION

- Early people also expressed themselves through art.
- People carved figures out of stone, ivory, and bone.
- They painted and carved images of people and animals on cave walls.
- Scientists don't know why early people made art, but think perhaps they painted on walls to teach people how to hunt or maybe the paintings had religious meanings.

# LANGUAGE, ART, AND RELIGION

- Scholars know little about the religious beliefs of early people.
- Archaeologists have found graves that included food and artifacts.
- Many scientists believe these discoveries are proof that the first human religions developed during the Stone Age.

