**Early Humans Web Quest**

**Task Objective:** Gain a fascinating insight into the lives of early people using the website: <http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/>

Go to *Introduction & Geography* link: [**http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/introduction.html**](http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/introduction.html)

**Then, fill in the blanks by reading.**

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, people** ) that have been turned into stone or have left an impression in the stone.  Anything that man has made is **not** a fossil.
* **Artifacts** are remains of things that were **made**, not remains of living things.
* **Hunter/gatherer** refers to how a group of people gets their food.  They find it growing wild or hunt and fish for it.  They **do not grow** any food.

[**http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/huntergatherer.html**](http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/huntergatherer.html)

* What is a hunter/gatherer?  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. Another name for a hunter/gatherer is a **nomad**.
* As early humans left **Africa** and spread throughout the globe, they found fruits and nuts that were edible. They **gathered** seeds and roots. They became adept at catching **fish**. Fishing was done using spears, bow and arrow, nets, and even fish hooks. As time went on, some early humans built **canoes** and rafts to go out into deeper water to catch larger fish.
* Hunters mostly went after herd beasts such as deer, wooly mammoth, and saber-toothed tigers! They had bows and **stone** tipped arrows, **stone** spears, **stone** knives and axes, and they built snares and pits to catch animals.  Over time, early man learned how to 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.
* It took a long time for man to settle down and learn how to plant and harvest crops. For **millions** of years, man was a **hunter** and **gatherer**.

**Next, click on Homo Habilis "Handy Man" link:** [**http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/tools.html**](http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/tools.html)

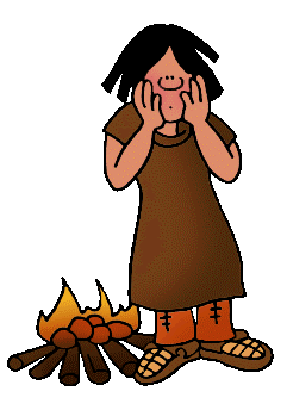
This early man lived in **Africa**.

* So how did early man survive? He had to use the things that **animals** did not have,

**reason** and **invention**. Early man invented and created stone and **bone**  weapons and tools. With these tools, early man could kill and trap those animals he needed for food. With stone axes and spears, he could defend against those animals that thought he might be food. Since many of the tools he created were made out of **stone** this is called the Stone Age.

* The Stone Age is considered to have begun about **2**  million years ago, and ended sometime after the end of the last ice age about **10** thousand years ago.
* During the Stone Age, Homo Habilis appeared. These early people were mostly vegetarian, eating fruits, nuts, berries and occasionally fish and animals they hunted. They were not great hunters due to the crude construction of their spears and axes, but they did get the job done. Early man used the tools he created to hunt in groups for large animals such as wooly mammoths and wooly rhinoceros.

* Homo Habilis did use **fire** and made campfires, but these were probably started by finding something that was already burning from a **lightning strike**.



# Learn about Homo Erectus "Upright Man" by clicking on the link: <http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/fire.html>

# 1,600,000 BCE to about 300,000 BCE

With the sea level lowered, early humans were able to cross **land**

**bridges** between continents.  They crossed into these new lands, probably following herds of animals or in search of food.

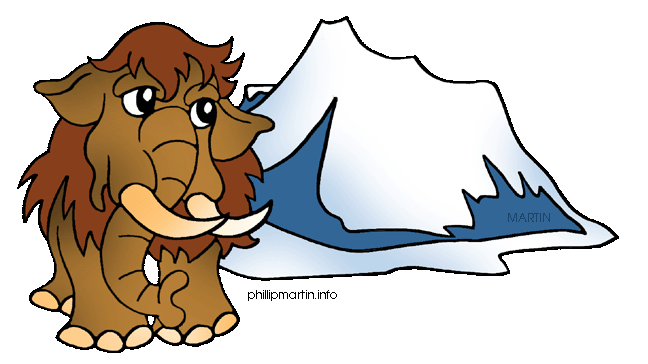
They were **tool** users.  They had stone axes and knives and were probably the first hunters as well as gatherers.

The discovery and use of fire was very important to early man for many reasons.

* First, they discovered most animals are **afraid** of fire.  So a campfire gave some protection to the group or tribe.
* Second, they could camp in better locations.  They no longer had to look for trees to climb into or rocks and cliffs to **shelter** under.
* Third, it kept them **warm**.  This goes with the second reason.  They could move into **colder** climates and hunt the animals that lived there.  They could then return to their campfire to warm up.
* Fourth, it was a **healthier** way of life.  Cooked food is less likely to carry **disease**. These people began to cook their food consistently. As a result, it would have been easier for the young and the old to survive.
* Fifth, it was a more social grouping.  They could now gather in larger groups, feeling safer and more secure.  This allowed them to exchange **stories**.
* There were other reasons that having a fire was an improvement in their lives.  Can you think of any?

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How do we know so much about Homo Erectus? There have been discoveries of the **skeletons** of Homo Erectus, most notably the one found near Peking (Beijing) China, which is called the Peking Man. **Archaeologists** have also found tools and weapons from this time period in other places, which gives a better understanding of how they lived and where they lived.

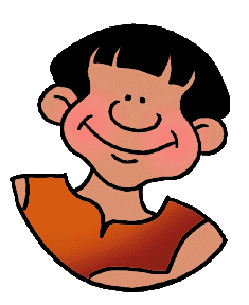


# Learn more about the Ice Age by following the link:

<http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/iceage.html>

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.

 **Homo Sapiens"Wise Man" & Neanderthals  
500,000 BCE to 30,000 BCE**

[**http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/neanderthals.html**](http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/neanderthals.html)

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 Neandertal man or Homo Neandertalensis.  You might also see it spelled as Neanderthal.  Either spelling is **correct** and each is used in noted archeology.  The skeleton discovered was of a male.  Archeologists 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 then 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 Neandertal is that they **buried** their dead.  They also had some sort of ceremony because they painted the bodies of the dead.

Neandertals 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.

# Want to find out more about Early Man’s Clothing? Click the link: <http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/clothing.html>

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 **jewelry** made from shells, bone, and animal teeth.

**What were Early Man’s Homes like? Find out here:**

[**http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/homes.html**](http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/homes.html)

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 affect 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

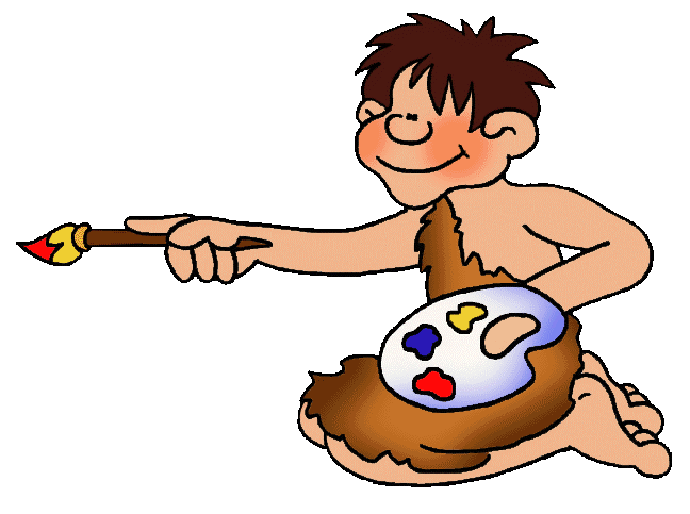
between two **trees**, or by covering some sticks tied together with the tanned **hides** of

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**.



# Learn more about Cave Paintings & Rock Art by following the link: <http://earlyhumans.mrdonn.org/caveart.html>

* Why did [**Cro-Magnon man**](http://ancienthistory.mrdonn.org/EarlyMan.html) cover the walls and ceilings of hidden caves with paintings by many different people?  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.  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

archeaologists.  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.

Watch this YouTube video about the Lascaux Cave: <https://youtu.be/nYhmq3vo7aY>

Describe what you see here: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_