

# EARLY HUMANS AND THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION



**ESSENTIAL QUESTION** *How do people adapt to their environment?*

These archaeologists study remains from the past. Richard Leakey is an important anthropologist. He has spent his life studying how human life developed and adapted during pre-historic times. He made this statement in a book he wrote in 1977.

“ For three million years we were **hunter-gatherers**, and it was through the evolutionary pressures of that **way of life** that a brain so adaptable and so creative eventually emerged. ”

RICHARD LEAKEY

**hunter-gatherers**

What do you think a hunter-gatherer might be?

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**way of life**

What pressures might hunter-gatherers face as a way of life?

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## DBQ BREAKING IT DOWN

Why do you think it might be important for individual people or entire communities to adapt to new situations?

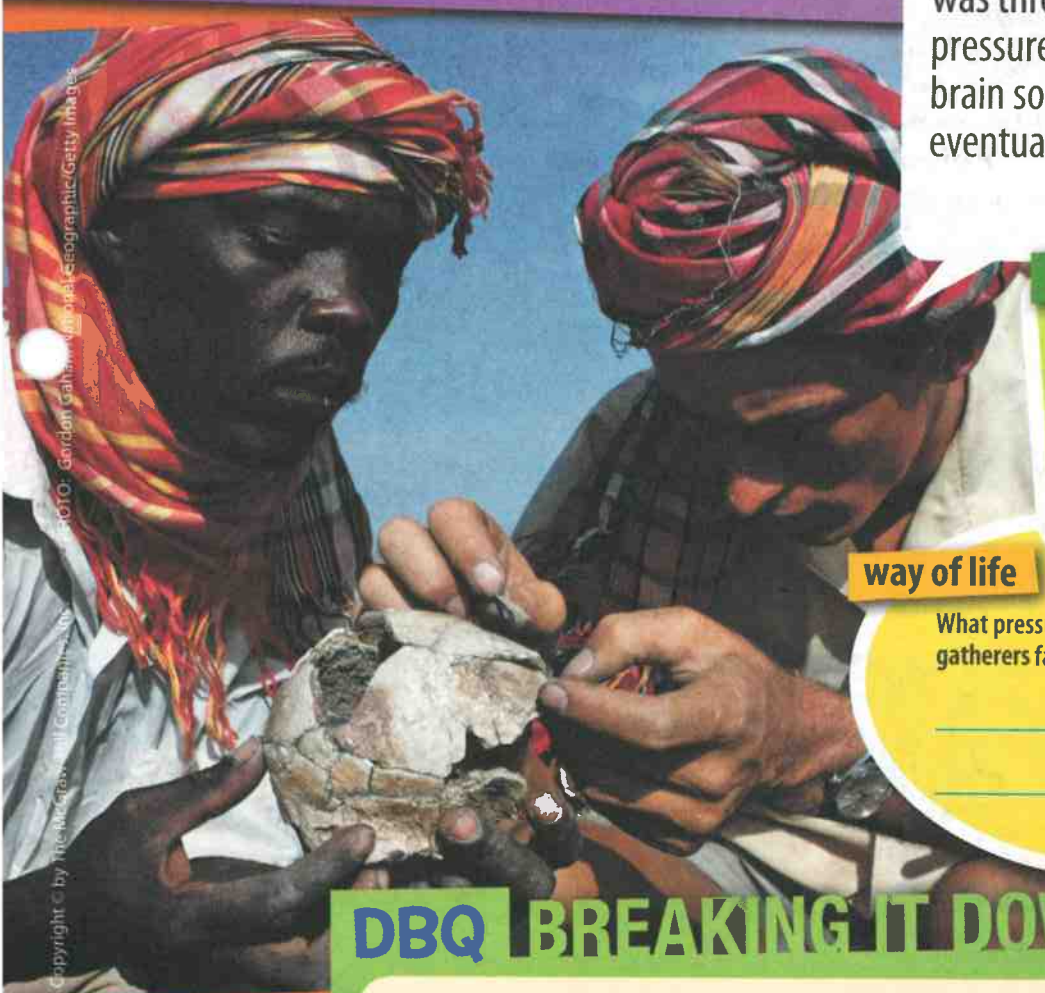
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# HUNTER-GATHERERS



NGSSS

SS.6.G.4.3 Locate sites in Africa and Asia where archaeologists have found evidence of early human societies, and trace their migration patterns to other parts of the world.

SS.6.W.2.1 Compare the lifestyles of hunter-gatherers with those of settlers of early agricultural communities.

SS.6.W.2.2 Describe how the developments of agriculture and metallurgy related to settlement, population growth, and the emergence of civilization.

## Essential Question

How do people adapt to their environment?

## Guiding Questions

1. What was life like during the Paleolithic Age?
2. How did people adapt to survive during the ice ages?

## Terms to Know

**Paleolithic**  
the early part of human history, also known as the Old Stone Age

**nomads**  
people who move from place to place to survive

**technology**  
the use of new ideas and tools to do work

**ice ages**  
long periods of extreme cold on Earth

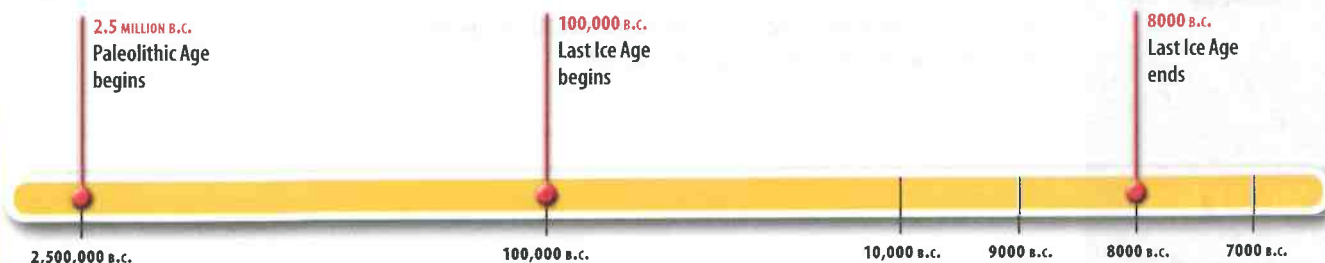
## Where in the World?

### Paleolithic Europe and the Near East



Historians have found evidence of human activity dating from Paleolithic times at each of these sites.

## When Did It Happen?



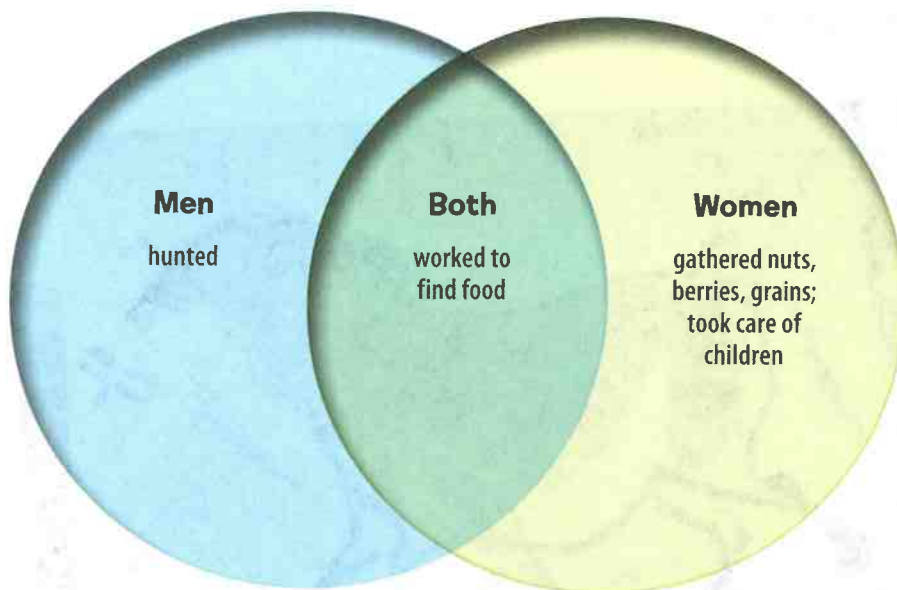
## The Paleolithic Age

The early period of human history is called the Stone Age. That's when people made tools and weapons from stone. The early part of the Stone Age is the **Paleolithic** Age. The Paleolithic Age began about 2.5 million years ago. It lasted until about 8000 B.C.

The first humans spent most of their time looking for food. They hunted animals and gathered, or collected, plants, nuts, and berries. For this reason, early people are known as "hunter-gatherers." Early people moved from place to place looking for food. People who move from place to place in order to survive are called **nomads**.

In the Paleolithic Age, men hunted large animals. They learned how animals behaved. They learned the best way to hunt them. At first, men used clubs to kill the animals. They also drove animals over the edge of cliffs. Over time, Paleolithic people created better tools and weapons. These new traps and spears made hunting easier.

Paleolithic women spent most of their time looking for food. They gathered berries, nuts, and grains from woods and meadows. They also took care of the children.



**Technology** is the use of new ideas and tools to do work. Technology was first used by Paleolithic people. They made tools and weapons from flint. Flint is a hard stone with sharp edges. Paleolithic people made sharp knives and ax heads from flint.

### Think Critically

**1. Predict** The Stone Age gets its name from the type of tools people used. What do you think people in the future will call our time period? Why?

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### Mark the Text

**2. Circle** the foods that early people ate.



### Mark the Text

3. Underline two ways that Paleolithic people adapted.

### Show Your Skill

4. **Explain** Why was fire important for Paleolithic people?

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### Mark the Text

5. Underline the sentence that tells why the development of spoken language was so important.

### Take the Challenge

6. Research to learn more about cave paintings around the world. In how many countries have cave paintings been discovered? How often are people represented in cave paintings? Create and illustrate a world map that shows what you learned through your research.

Paleolithic people were able to adapt, or change, in order to survive. They lived in caves that protected them from bad weather and from wild animals. In places where it was cold, they made clothes from animal skins.

During the Paleolithic Age, people learned how to make fire. Can you imagine how hard life was before that? Once people had fire, they could eat cooked food. They had light at night. Fire also provided warmth and scared away wild animals.

Early people probably produced fire by friction. They rubbed two pieces of wood together until the wood became so hot it caught on fire. They also started fires by hitting one stone against another. This would create a spark that could set dry grass or leaves on fire.

Other advancements took place during the Paleolithic Age. During this time, people developed spoken language. Before this, humans communicated through sounds and gestures. Spoken language made it easier for people to work together. Just like language today, the language of early people was constantly growing and changing. Just like today, new ideas and new technology gave rise to new words.

Early people expressed their ideas through language. They also expressed themselves through art. Early artists painted the walls of their caves with paints made from crushed rock mixed with animal fat. Early cave paintings show animals in bright colors.



This Paleolithic cave painting of a horse, and many others, were discovered in Lascaux, France. These cave paintings could be as many as 17,000 years old.

## Migration to America



### Show Your Skill

**7. Make a Connection** The ice ages are an example of climate change. Where else have you heard about climate change?

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### Think Critically

**8. Analyze** Why were the first people nomads?

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### Take the Challenge

**9. Draw an illustration or illustrations on a separate piece of paper to show how land bridges were created during the ice ages.**

## The Ice Ages

About 100,000 B.C. Earth began to get very cold. Thick sheets of ice moved across much of the land. Early people had to adapt, or change, if they were to survive. This was the beginning of Earth's most recent Ice Age. **Ice ages** are long periods of extreme cold on Earth.

During the ice ages, more and more ice formed on the Earth. The levels of the oceans dropped because so much water was taken from the oceans to form the ice. Land that was once covered by water was now visible above it. One place this happened was between Asia and North America. During the ice ages, a land bridge connected the two land masses. A land bridge is a strip of dry land that was once covered by water. People could now walk from Asia into the Americas.



**NGSSS Check** List two advancements of the Paleolithic Age, and tell how each one made life easier for early humans. **SS.6.W.2.2**

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# THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION



NGSSS

- SS.6.G.3.1 Explain how the physical landscape has affected the development of agriculture and industry in the ancient world.
- SS.6.G.4.1 Explain how family and ethnic relationships influenced ancient cultures.
- SS.6.W.2.1 Compare the lifestyles of hunter-gatherers with those of settlers of early agricultural communities.
- SS.6.W.2.2 Describe how the developments of agriculture and metallurgy related to settlement, population growth, and the emergence of civilization.

## Essential Question

How do people adapt to their environment?

## Guiding Questions

1. How did farming change people's lives?
2. What was life like during the Neolithic Age?
3. What characteristics did early civilizations share?

## Terms to Know

**domesticate**  
tame

**systematic agriculture**  
the growing of food on a regular basis

**Neolithic Age**  
the period of time from 8000 to 4000 B.C.

**shrine**  
a place where people worship

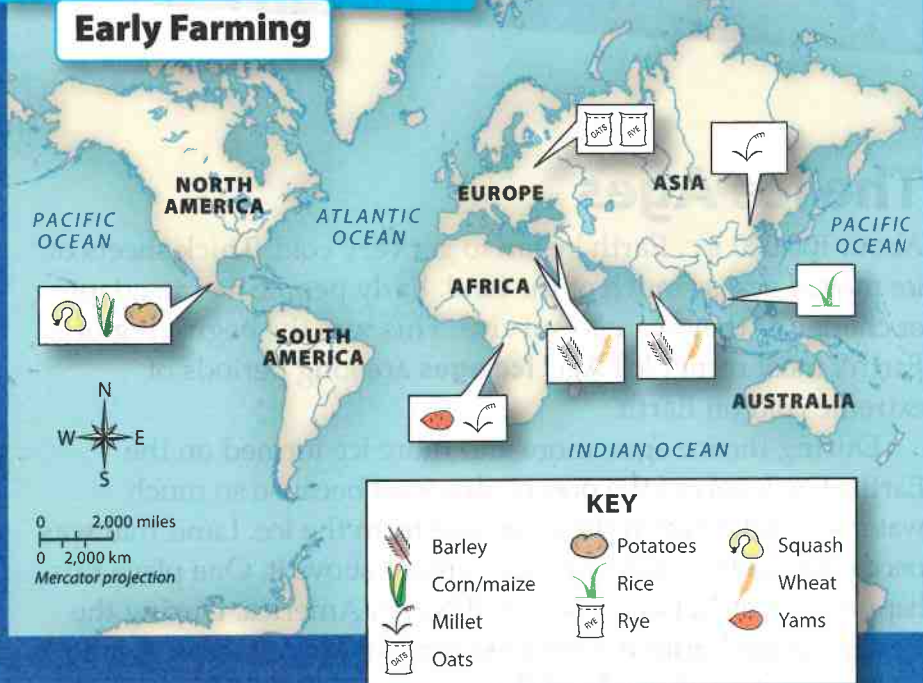
**Bronze Age**  
the period of time from 3000 to 1200 B.C.

**monarchy**  
a government led by a king or a queen

**specialization**  
performing jobs people are good at

## Where in the World?

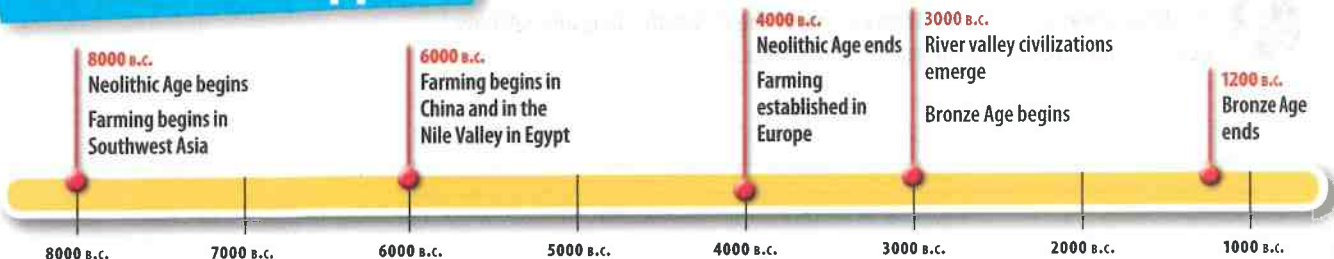
### Early Farming



### KEY

- Barley
- Corn/maize
- Millet
- Oats
- Potatoes
- Rice
- Rye
- Squash
- Wheat
- Yams

## When Did It Happen?

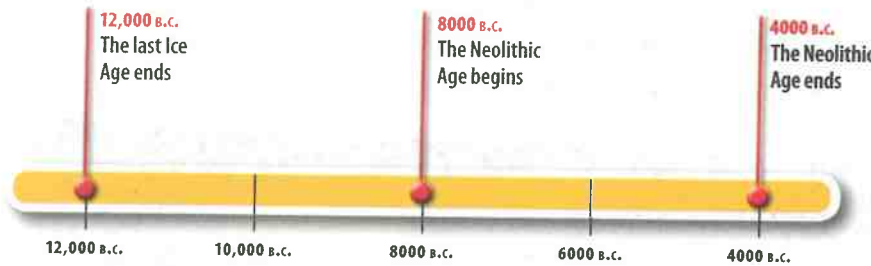


# Neolithic Times

The last Ice Age ended about 10,000 years ago. The climate on Earth became warmer and the ice melted. People began to stay in one place. They started to grow grains and vegetables. This was **systematic agriculture**, or the growing of food on a regular basis. Farming slowly replaced hunting and gathering as the main source of food for people. People also began to **domesticate**, or tame, animals.

This change in the way people lived marked the start of the **Neolithic Age**. The Neolithic Age began about 8000 B.C. and ended about 4,000 years later. Agriculture was the biggest change that took place during the Neolithic Age. This change happened very slowly.

## The Neolithic Age



The switch from hunting and gathering to farming is called the Agricultural Revolution. Once humans learned how to grow crops and tame animals, their lives became very different. There was a better supply of food. People stopped moving around to look for food. They began to live in settled communities. People built houses in which to live. They also built **shrines**, or holy places, where they worshiped their gods and goddesses. These changes took place around the world.

## Life in the Neolithic Age

Neolithic farmers grew fruits, nuts, and different grains. Some farmers also raised sheep, goats, and cattle. People ate fish and eggs. Some men continued to hunt. People in early communities often had more and better food than nomads.

Better food led to healthier people. Healthier people lived longer and had more children. The population grew. Eventually, farmers grew more food than they could eat. They began to trade food for things they could not produce themselves.

### Mark the Text

1. Circle the word that means the same as *tame*. Circle the term that means *farming on a regular basis*.

### Show Your Skill

2. **Define** What was the Agricultural Revolution?

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### Think Critically

3. **Explain** How did the spread of farming change the life of nomads?

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### Show Your Skill

4. **Identify Cause and Effect** What effect did healthier food have on people?

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## Mark the Text

5. Underline the work done by men.  
Circle the work done by women.

6. Circle the areas on the map where civilizations emerged.

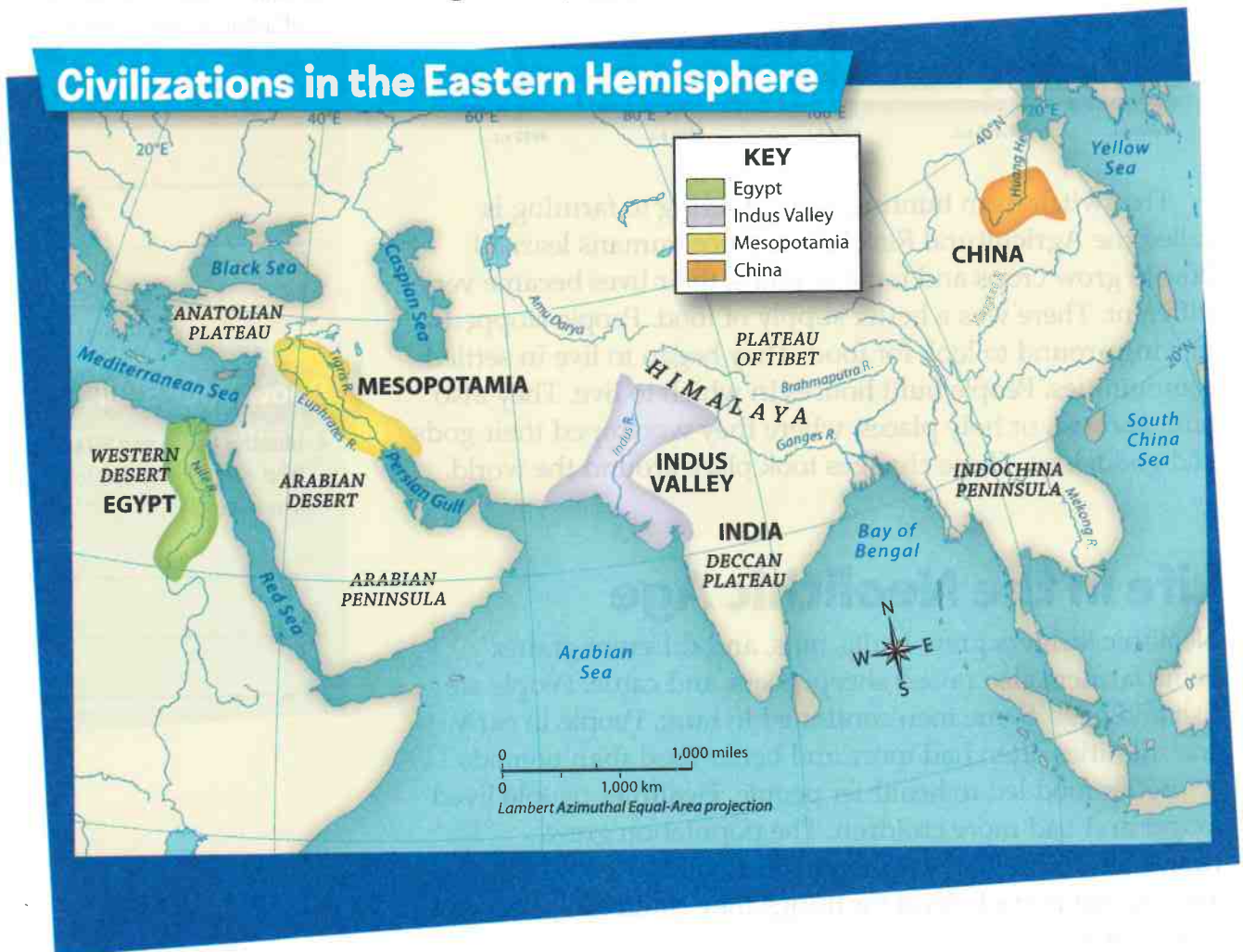
People began to do work other than farming. **Specialization** occurred. People took up jobs that they were good at. Some people made jewelry or weapons. Others made pottery or wove cloth. These people also traded their products for goods they did not have.

In Neolithic communities, most men were farmers. They grew the crops and protected the village. Women took care of the children and wove cloth for clothing.

People continued to make advancements. In western Asia, people discovered that mixing tin and copper created bronze. Bronze was stronger than copper. Bronze tools and weapons were better than those made of stone. Bronze became widely used between 3000 and 1200 B.C. This period is known as the **Bronze Age**.

## Civilizations Emerge

By the beginning of the Bronze Age, four great civilizations had appeared in river valleys. These civilizations were Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China.





These civilizations were far apart. But they had things in common.

- They developed in river valleys. The rich soil in river valleys made it easier to grow crops. Rivers provided fish. Rivers also encouraged trade.
- Increased trade led to the development of cities. Cities became the centers of civilization.
- People formed governments. Governments protected their people and food supplies. The first governments were monarchies. A **monarchy** is a government led by a king or a queen.
- Religion became more complex. Priests performed ceremonies to win the approval of the gods and goddesses.
- People were organized into social classes. The classes were based on the type of work people did and the amount of wealth they had. Rulers and priests belonged to the highest class. Farmers and craftspeople were another class. Enslaved people formed the lowest class.

During this time, written language developed. Early writing was different from writing today. It used shapes and symbols. People in early civilizations also produced art. They created paintings and sculptures. They built huge buildings, such as the pyramids.



**NGSSS Check** Put these events in order. Write the letters in the order that the events happened. **SS.6.W.2.2**

- A River valley civilizations emerge
- B Farming begins in Southwest Asia
- C Bronze Age begins
- D Neolithic Age ends

### Think Critically

**7. Analyze** Why did early people form governments?

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### Take the Challenge

**8.** Create your own written language using art, shapes, or symbols that shows characteristics shared by early river valley civilizations. Be creative!

Using the chart, underline one advance that is similar in both Ages and circle one improvement from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic Age. **SS.6.W.2.1**

| Comparing the Neolithic and Paleolithic Ages |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | Paleolithic Age   | Neolithic Age   |
| <b>How humans obtained food</b>              | People hunted animals, gathered nuts, berries, and grains                           | People began to farm in permanent villages. They continued to raise and herd animals.   |
| <b>How humans adapted</b>                    | People learned to make fire, created a language, and made simple tools and shelter. | People built mud-brick houses and places of worship. They specialized in certain jobs and used copper and bronze to create more useful tools. |
| <b>Work of men and women</b>                 | Women gathered food and cared for children. Men hunted.                             | Women cared for children and performed household tasks. Men herded, farmed, and protected the village.  |

# MY REFLECTIONS

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION** *How do people adapt to their environment?*

## Reflect on What It Means . . .

Adaptation is a part of life for all of us today. It **sure looks** different for us than it did for people living in pre-historic times. One example of a change that requires adaptation is transportation. In the distant **past**, people walked everywhere. Later, people used animals to help them get around. **Today** people use a variety of methods to get from one place to another. These changes **have** affected where people live and how cities are built.

Use the space below to illustrate a page from your own short graphic novel called "How Cars and Planes Changed Everything!" Be sure to show how your **community**, **people around the world**, and even **you** are adapting to changes in transportation.

## TAKE THE CHALLENGE

Make a prediction about the future: How do you think transportation may be different for kids in the future? Draw an illustration on another piece of paper to show your ideas.