

The First People 5 million-5,000 years ago



Picture source:
humanorigins.si.edu

Terms to Know

- Prehistory
- Hominid
- Ancestor
- Tool
- Paleolithic Era
- Society
- Hunter-gatherers

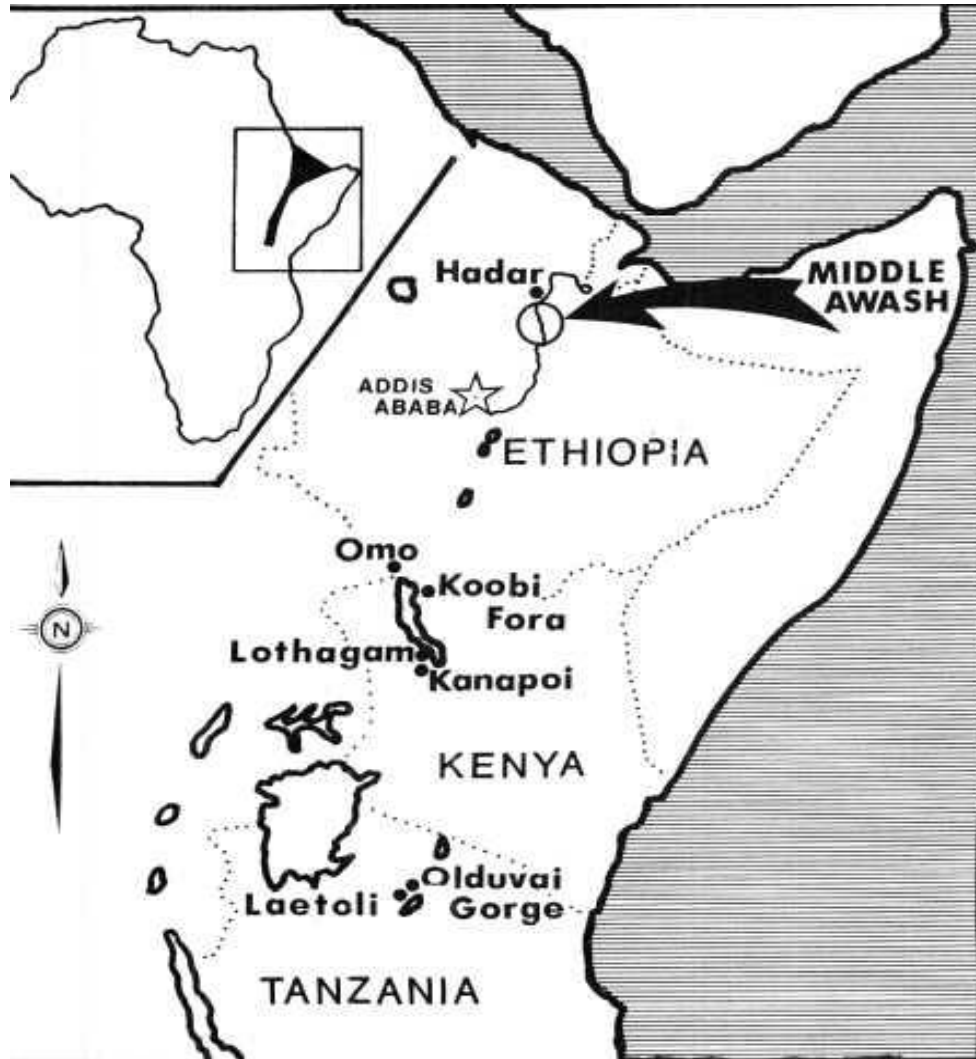
**GROUP 1 & 4
STARTS HERE**

What you will learn:

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

- Although humans have lived on the earth for more than a million years, 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 and anthropologists..

- In 1959 a very important discovery was made. In East Africa, an archaeologist found bones that were 1.5 million years old. These bones belonged to a **hominid**, early ancestors of humans. An **ancestor** is a relative who lived in the past. In 1974, the bones of another early ancestor were discovered. Tests showed that the bones were from a female that lived more than 3 million years ago. Scientists named her Lucy.



In 1959, hominid bones were found at Olduvai Gorge

In 1974, the bones of Lucy were discovered near Hadar

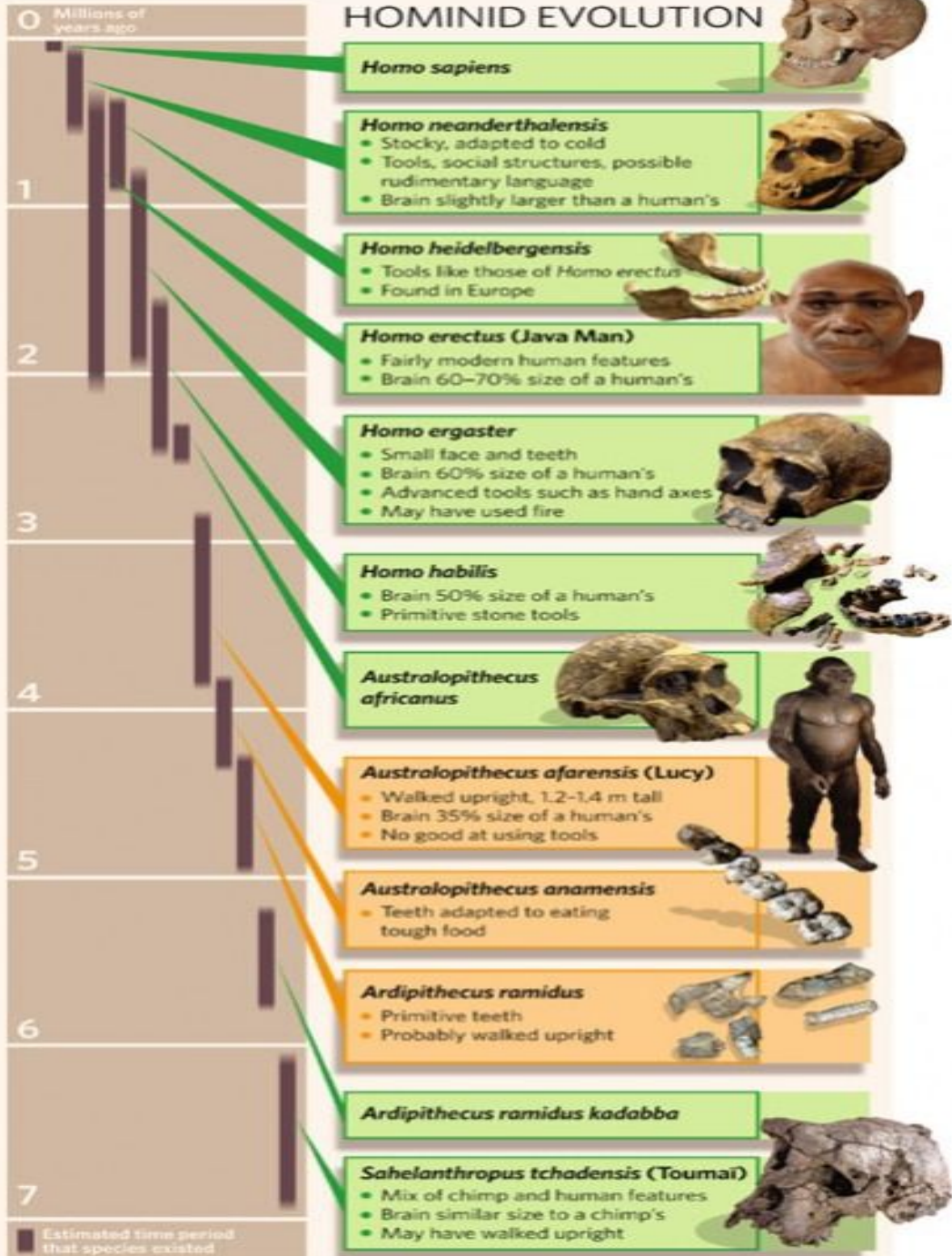
- From her bones scientists could tell that [Lucy](#) [walked on two legs](#). This ability was a key step to human development. Discoveries of ancient bones give us information about early humans and their ancestors, but not all scientists agree on the meaning of these discoveries.

[Lucy facts](#)

- Later groups of hominids appeared about 3 million years ago. As time passed they became more like modern humans.
- Scientists believe that another group of hominids appeared in Africa about 1.5 million years ago. This group is called *Homo erectus*, or “upright man,” because scientists believed they walked upright like modern humans. Scientists also believe “upright man” could control fire (once it was started by natural causes, like lightning.)

- Eventually hominids developed the characteristics of modern humans. Most scientists believe they first appeared about 200,000 years ago in Africa. Scientists call these people *Homo sapiens*, or “wise man.” Every person alive today belongs to this group.

HOMINID EVOLUTION



- The first humans lived during a time called the Stone Age. Scientists divide the Stone Age into three periods based on the kinds of tools used at the time. A **tool** is any handheld object that has been modified (changed) to help a person accomplish a task. The first part of the Stone age is called the **Paleolithic Era**, or Old Stone Age. It lasted about 10,000 years.

How Stone Age Humans Made Hand Axes

1. The process started with a large piece of rock.



2. The humans shaped the rock with a stone hammer.



3. Using a hammer made of wood, stone, or antler they sharpened the edge.



4. They trimmed the edge by prying off tiny flakes with a pointed stick.



Finished hand ax



front view



side view

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Picture source:

<http://kids.britannica.com/elementary/art-88824>

- As early humans developed tools and new hunting techniques, they formed societies. A **society** is a community of people who share a common culture. These societies developed cultures with languages, religions, and art.



Picture source:

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/non_fictionreviews/9756597/The-World-Until-Yesterday-by-Jared-Diamond-review.html

- Scientists believe that early humans lived in small groups. When food or water became hard to find, groups of people would have to move to new areas. The early humans of the Stone Age were **hunter-gatherers**—people who hunt animals and gather wild plants, seeds, fruits, and nuts to survive.

- The most important development of Early Stone Age culture was language. Early humans also created art, like cave paintings



Picture source: www.sciencedaily.com

Review

1. Why do historians need archeologists and anthropologists to study **prehistory**?
2. What is the scientific name for modern humans?
3. What kinds of **tools** were used during the Paleolithic Era?
4. What is a **hunter-gatherer**?
5. What do you think was the most important development for early humans during the Stone Age? Justify your answer.

**GROUP 2 & 5
STARTS HERE**

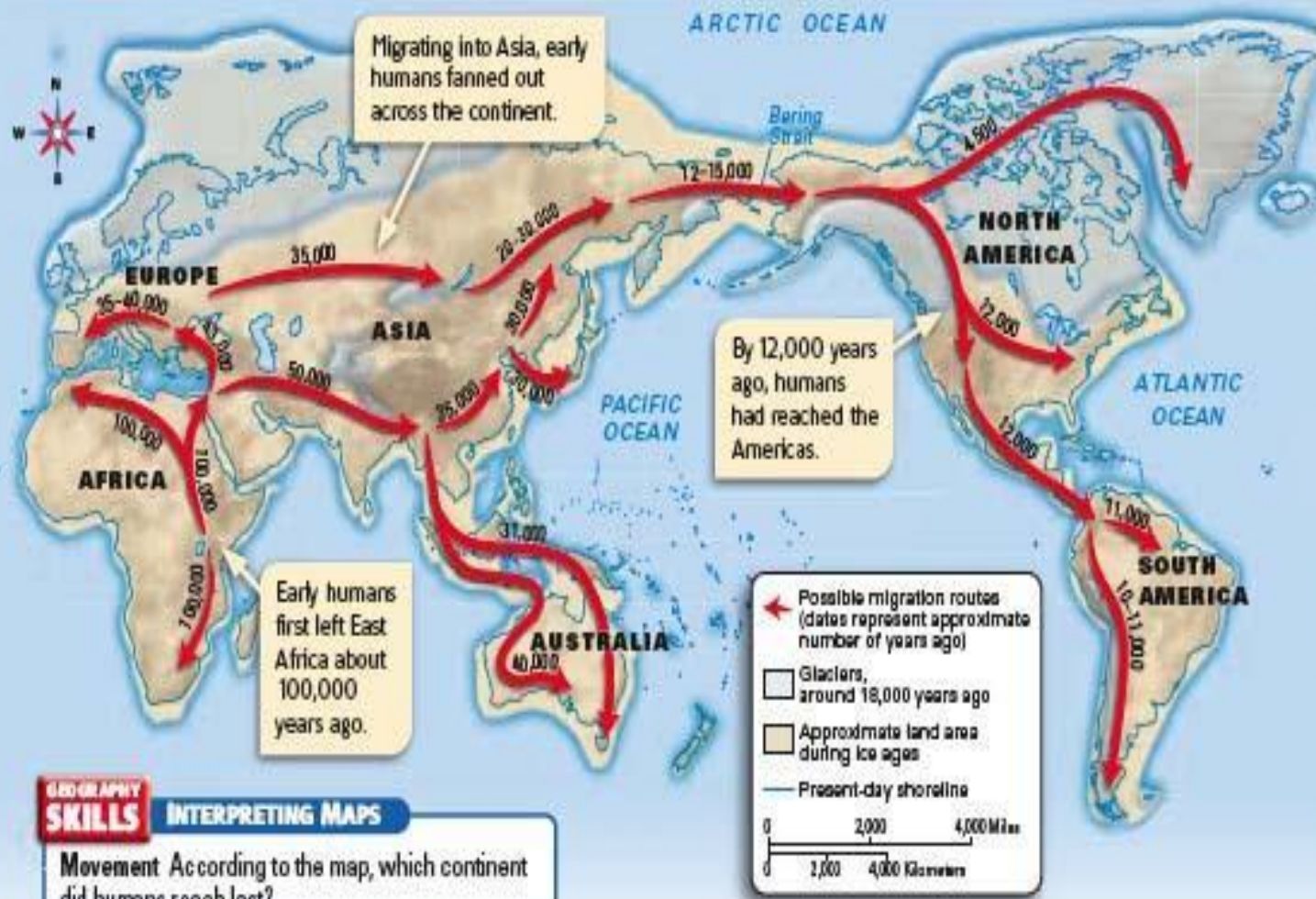
Early Human Migration

- Terms to know: migrate, ice ages, land bridge, Mesolithic Era
- What you will learn:
 1. People moved out of Africa as the earth's climate changed.
 2. People adapted to new environments by making clothing and new types of tools

- During the Old Stone Age, climate patterns around the world changed, transforming the earth's geography. In response to these changes, people began to **migrate**, or move, to [new places](#).
- **Most scientists believe that** about 1.6 million years ago, many places around the world began to experience long periods of freezing weather. These freezing times are called the **ice ages**. **The ice ages ended about 10,000 years ago.**

- During the ice ages huge sheets of ice covered much of the earth's lands. Many areas that are now under water were dry then because ocean levels were lower. For example, a narrow body of water now separates Asia from North America (near Alaska). But scientists think that during the ice ages, the land was exposed creating a **land bridge**, a strip of land connecting two continents.

Early Human Migration



GEOGRAPHY SKILLS INTERPRETING MAPS

Movement According to the map, which continent did humans reach last?

- As early people moved to new lands, they found environments that differed greatly from those in East Africa. Many places were colder and had strange plants and animals. Early people had to learn to adapt to their new environments. They learned to sew animal skins together for clothing and to build shelters.

- People also adapted to new environments with new types of tools. These tools were smaller and more complex than tools from the Old Stone Age. These new tools mark the **Mesolithic Era**, or Middle Stone Age. This period began more than 10,000 years ago and lasted to about 5,000 years ago in some places.

Review

1. What is a **land bridge**?
2. Why did people have to learn to make clothes and build shelters?
3. What can tell us if we are looking at the Mesolithic Era as compared to the Paleolithic Era?

**GROUP 3 & 6
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Beginnings of Agriculture

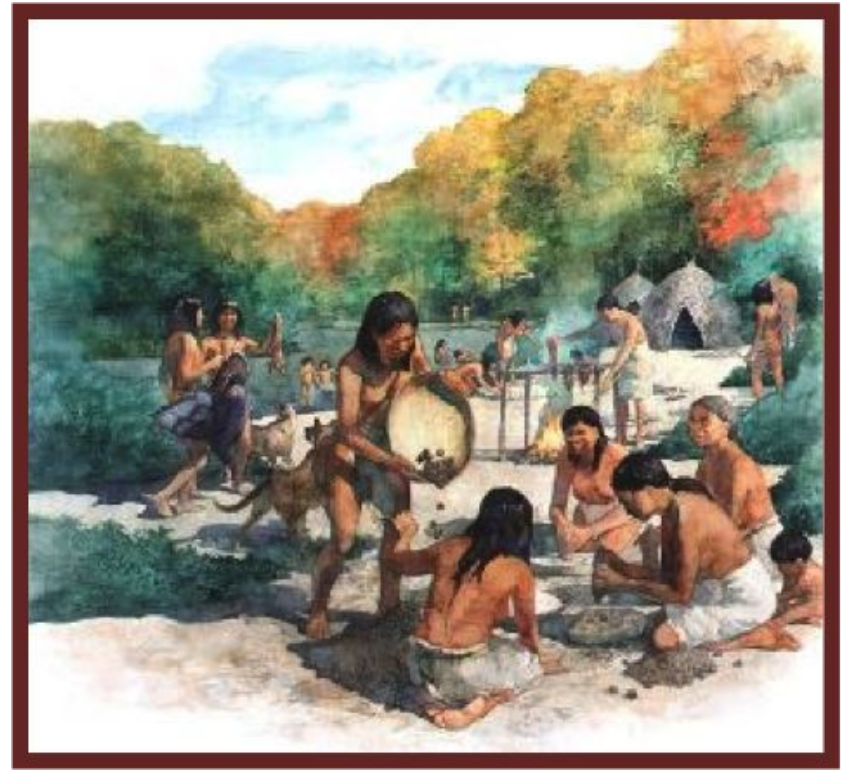
- Key terms: Neolithic Era, domestication, agriculture, megaliths
- What you will learn:
 1. The first farmers learned to grow plants and raise animals in the Stone Age
 2. Farming changed societies and the way people lived

- After the Middle Stone Age came a period of time that scientists call the **Neolithic Era**, or New Stone Age. It began as early as 10,000 years ago in Southwest Asia. In other places, this era came much later and lasted longer than it did there.

- During this time people learned to polish stones to make tools like saws and drills. People also learned to make fire. **Before, they could only use fire that had been created by natural causes, such as lightning.**
- The New Stone Age ended in Egypt and Southwest Asia about 5,000 years ago, when toolmakers began to make tools out of metal.

- The changes in tools weren't the biggest changes. The biggest changes came in how people produced food.
- After a warming trend brought an end to the ice ages, new plants began to grow in some places. For example, wild barley and wheat plants started to spread in Southwest Asia. People settled where these plants grew.
- People learned they could plant seeds themselves and grow their own crops.

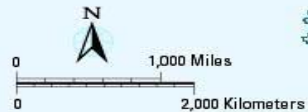
- Eventually, people learned to change plants to make them more useful. They planted only the largest grains or sweetest fruits. The process of changing plants or animals to make them more useful to humans is called **domestication**.





Agriculture Emerges 5,000–500 B.C.

INTERACTIVE



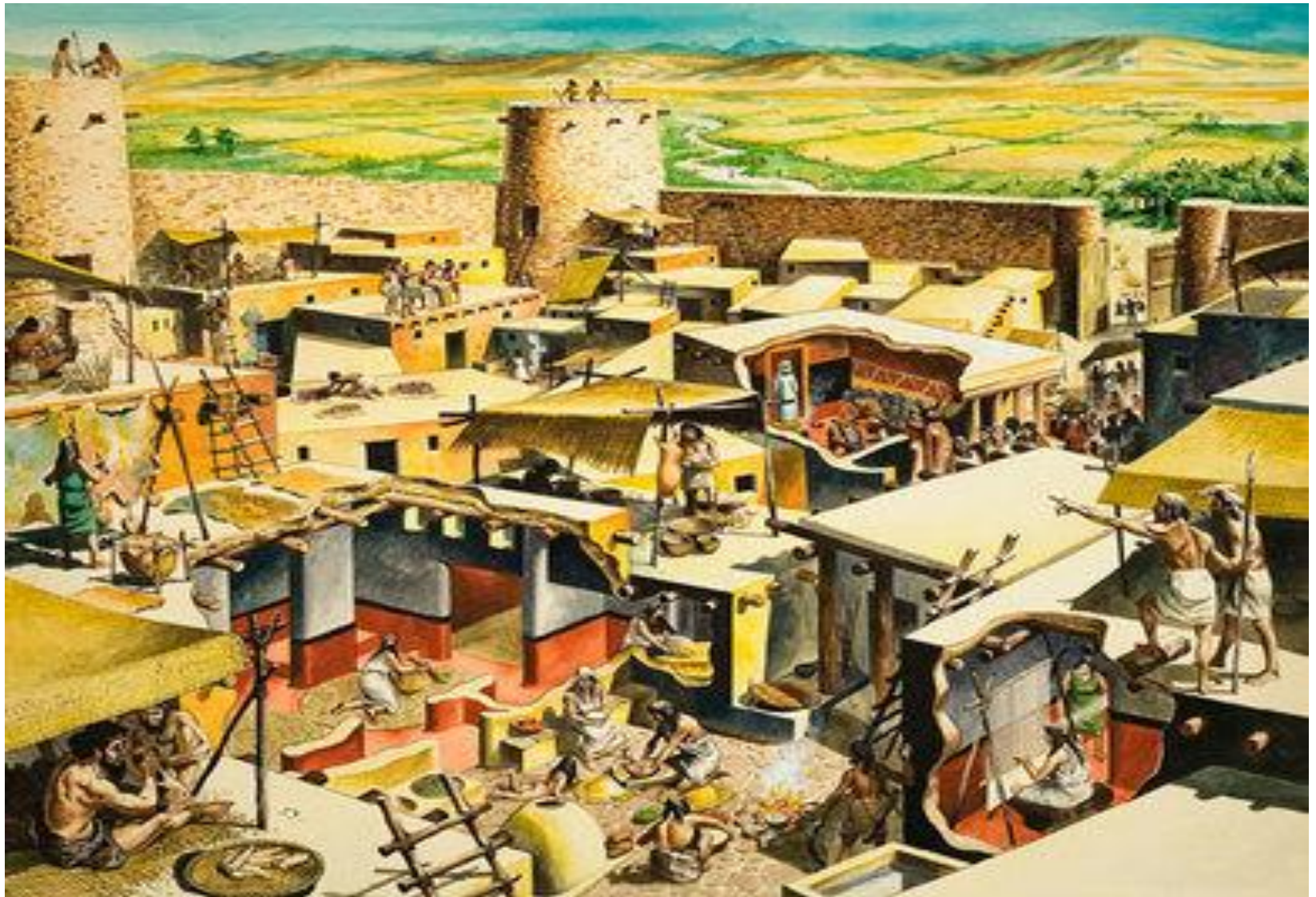
Major crops			
	Bananas		Grapes
	Sorghum		Wheat
	Barley		Soybeans
	Olives		Potato
	Corn		Rice
	Cotton		Agriculture by 5,000 v.c.
			Agriculture by 3,000 v.c.
			Agriculture by 2,000 v.c.
			Agriculture by 500 v.c.

- The domestication of plants led to the development of **agriculture**, or farming.
- For the first time, people could produce their own food. This development changed human society forever.
- **Animals, too were domesticated (dogs were first!) This helped provide food, milk, and clothing. Large animals could be used to help with work.**

Crash Course History on agricultural
revolution

Insert Maturity Lecture Here

- The Neolithic Revolution brought huge changes to people's lives. With survival more certain, people could focus on activities other than finding food.
- People began to build permanent settlements. In some areas farming communities developed into towns.



Picture source: <http://www.worldhistoryclass.info/history-outlined.html>

- As populations grew, people gathered to perform religious ceremonies. Some put up megaliths. **Megaliths** are huge stones used as monuments or as the site for religious gatherings. These early people probably believed in gods and goddesses associated with the four elements—air, water, fire, and earth.

Stonehenge is an example of megaliths



Review

1. What is **domestication** of a plant or animal?
2. How did early people use domesticated animals?
3. What were gods and goddesses probably associated with in prehistoric religion?
4. How did domestication of plants and animals lead to the development of towns?