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MOVING FORWARD FROM THE STONE AGE

We saw in our last letter that the chief difference between man and the other animals was the intelligence of man. This intelligence made him clever and stronger than enormous wild animals who would otherwise have destroyed him... The primitive humans had no special weapons to fight

his enemies. He could only throw stones at them. Then he began to make out of stone: axes, spears and many other things, including fine stone needles. We saw many of these stone weapons in the South Kensington (London) Museum and also in the museum in Geneva.

This excerpt is taken from Jawaharlal Nehru's 'Letters from a Father to his Daughter.' This letter refers to the life of primitive humans.

What does he say about the kind of tools that were used by humans to protect themselves from wild animals?

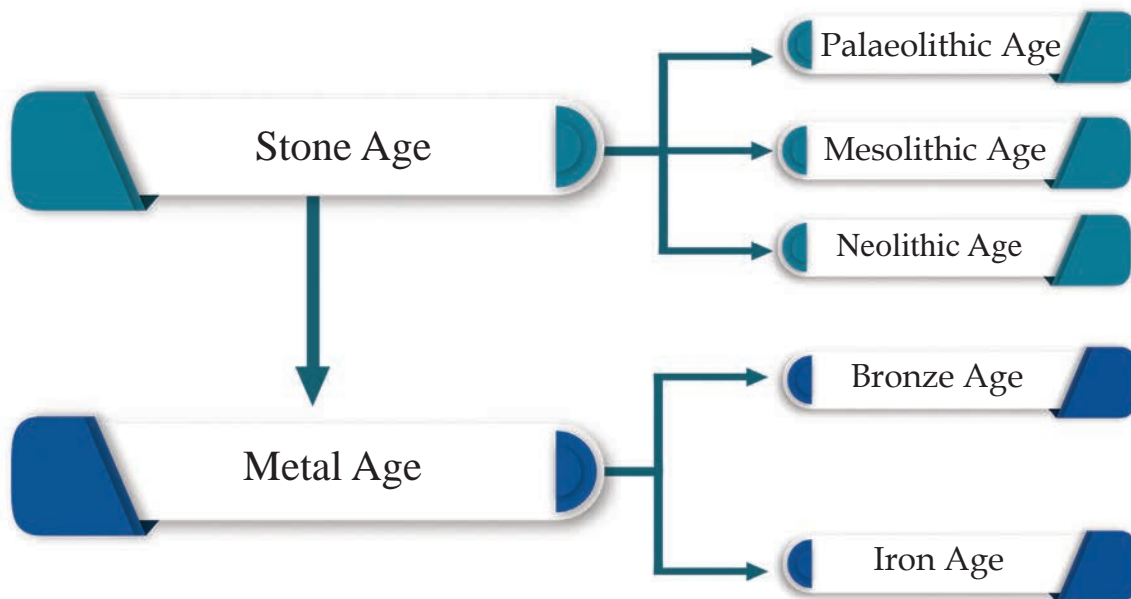
- Stone axe
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What could be the purposes for which humans in that period used such tools?

- For protecting themselves from animals
- For hunting
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The tools developed for the above mentioned purposes were made of stone in the beginning. Later, stone was replaced by metal.

Archaeologists divide human history into different stages on the basis of the materials used for making tools.



Stone Age

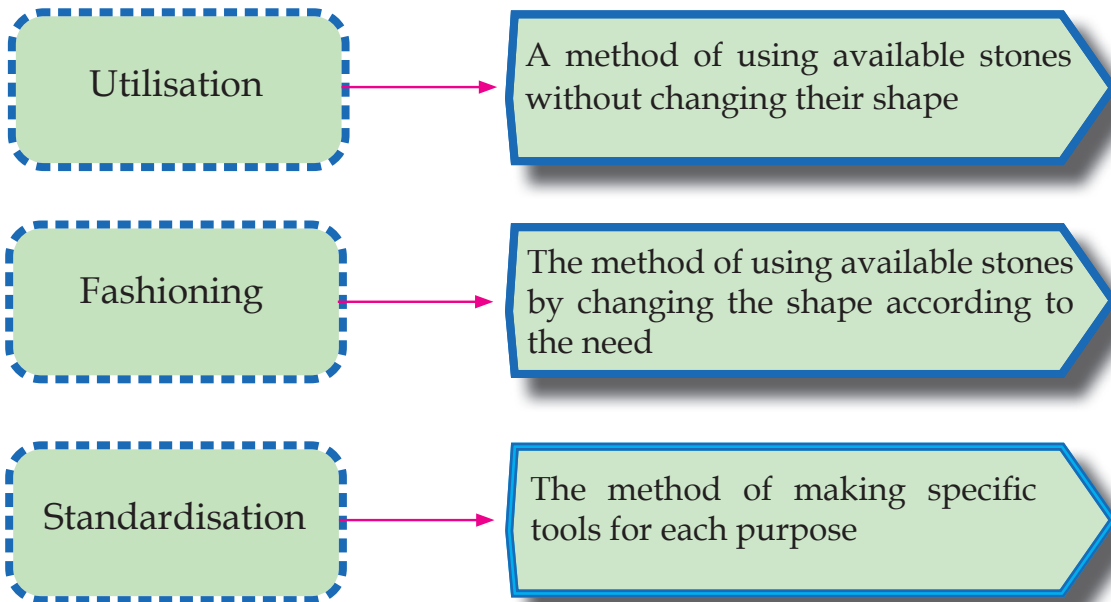
Have you ever thought why the first phase of human history was called the Stone Age? Humans used stones to make tools and weapons during that period. So, historians describe this phase as Stone Age. Based on the method used to make stone tools, the stone age is divided into three: Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic.

Let's look at the features of each of these.

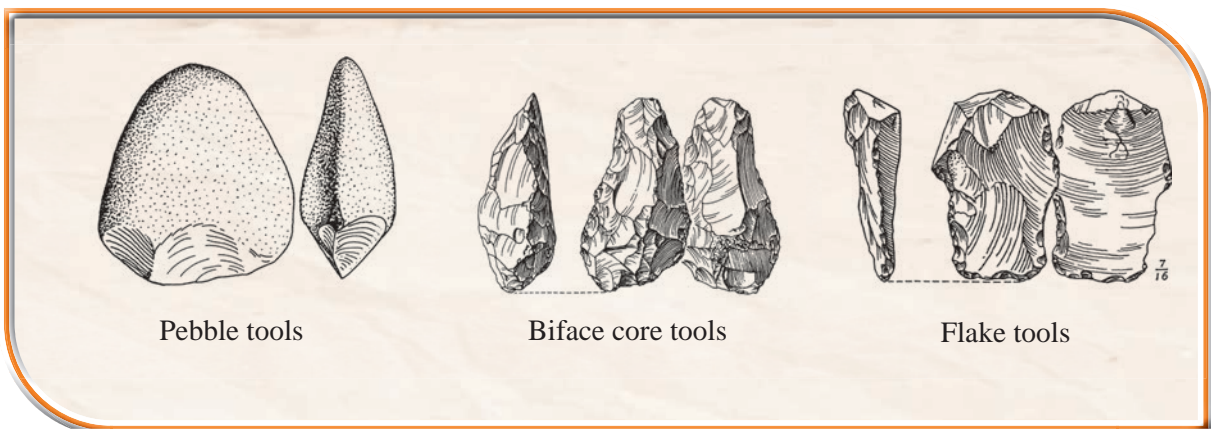
Palaeolithic Age

The characteristic feature of the Palaeolithic age is the use of rough (unpolished) stone tools. The term 'Palaeolithic' is derived from two Greek words 'palaeos' (old) and 'lithos' (stone).

The making of tools is related to the means of subsistence of primitive humans. Archaeologists point out that there were three main stages in the use of tools. They are given below.

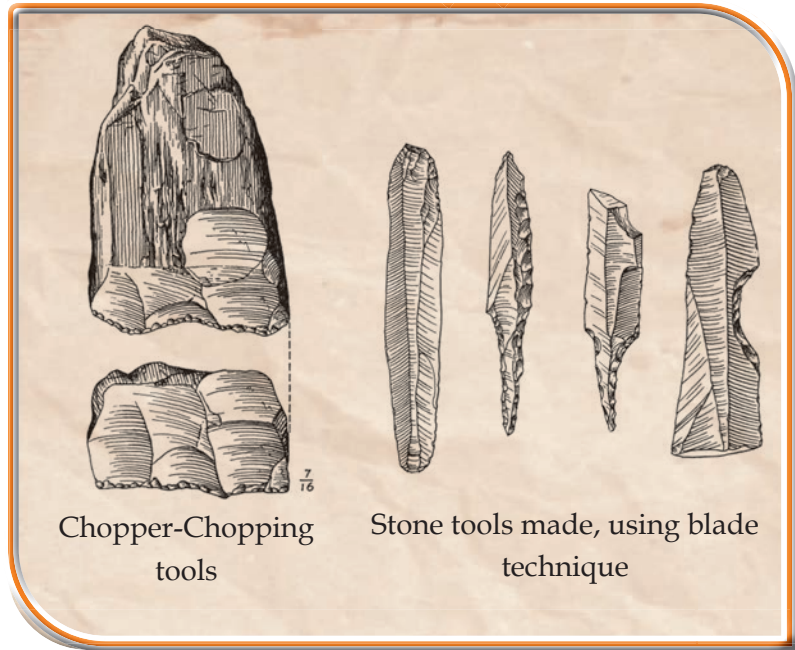
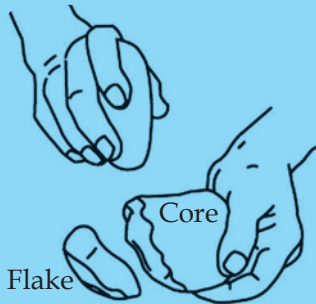


The pictures given below are the different tools used by primitive humans during different phases of Palaeolithic Age. Observe them and list out the features of these tools.

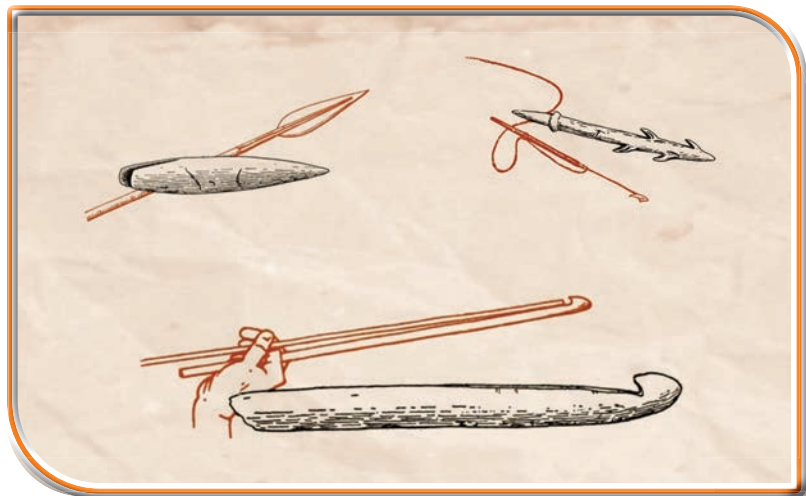


Core and Flakes

When a piece of stone is broken into two or more pieces, the largest piece is called the core and the smaller pieces are called flakes. Those made of core stones are called core tools and those made of stone flakes are called flake tools.



Towards the end of the Palaeolithic period, humans used tools made of bones in addition to stone tools. Observe the pictures given below.



Do the tools in the picture resemble any tool that you are familiar with? If yes, which are they?

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-
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Conduct a discussion on the topic 'Tool making and Technological Development during the Palaeolithic Period.'



Chauvet, France



Lascaux, France



Ivory Sculpture,
Zaraysk, Russia



Carved figures in Cussac (France) Cave

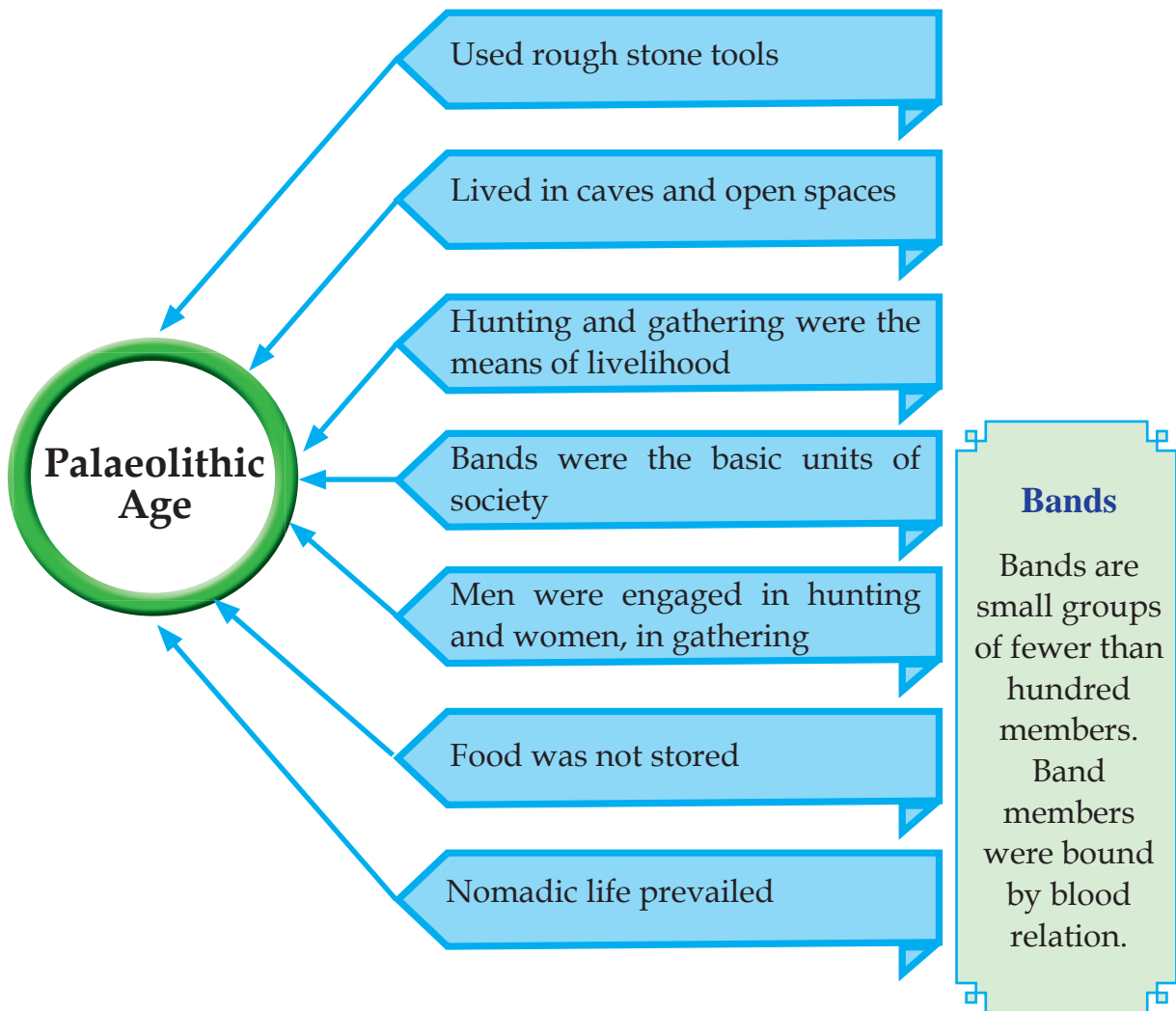


Carvings on bones found in
La Garma Cave, Spain

The pictures given above are the artistic creations of primitive humans. What do you understand from these pictures? It is clear from the pictures that various communication techniques such as simple flowing lines, carved images and sculptures were employed during the late Palaeolithic period. Archaeologists are of the opinion that the depiction of animals (Chauvet and Lascaux Caves), the carved figure of an animal and a woman (Cussac Cave) and the Venus figurine (Zaraysk, Russia) are related to rituals or beliefs. The carvings on bone found in La Garma Cave in Spain are evidences of human artistic skills of that time.

Various colours were used to draw the cave paintings. These colours were made by grinding plants, tree bark and fruits, and mixing with red stone powder. Such pictures were drawn on the inner walls of the caves where sunlight could not reach. These stone carvings were made using stone needles and sharp-edged weapons. Paintings can also be seen on the ceilings of the caves. Such pictures and sculptures are considered to be the evidence of the intellectual and technical skill attained by primitive humans.

Let's see what information could be gathered on human life from the tools and art of the Palaeolithic Age.





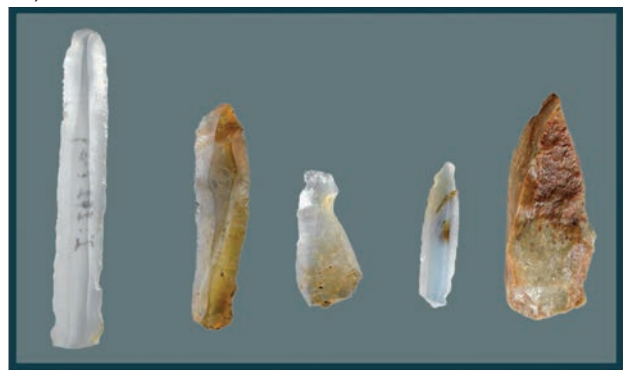
Note down the features of the Palaeolithic centres mentioned on the world map.

Mesolithic Age

The Mesolithic is the stage of transition from the Palaeolithic to the Neolithic. The word 'Mesolithic' is derived from two Greek words 'mesos' (middle) and 'lithos' (stone).

Look at the given picture. Examine the difference between Palaeolithic tools and Mesolithic tools.

- These are smaller tools than the ones used in the Palaeolithic Age.
- This is the period when microliths (very small tools) were used.



Mesolithic tools

It has already been mentioned that the development of human communication began towards the end of the Palaeolithic period. But, in India, this development is

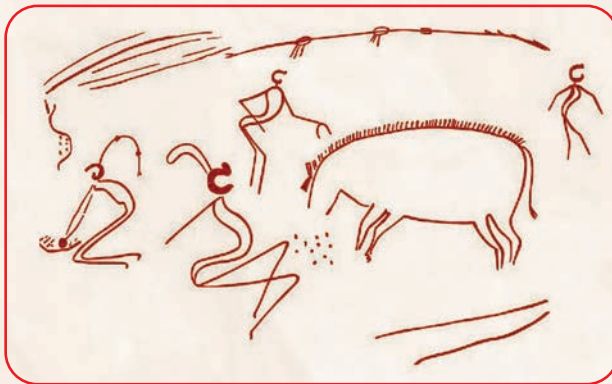
mainly seen during the Mesolithic Age. The works of art in the cave centres of Bhimbetka, Lakhajoar and Kathotia in Madhya Pradesh help us understand the ways of life of humans during that period.



Bhimbetka



Lakhajoar



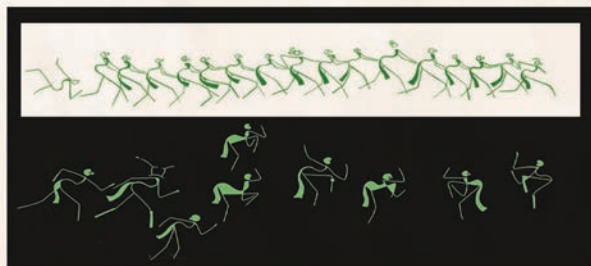
Kathotia



Lakhajoar



Lakhajoar



Lakhajoar

Look at the pictures given above and list down the activities depicted in them.

- Hunting
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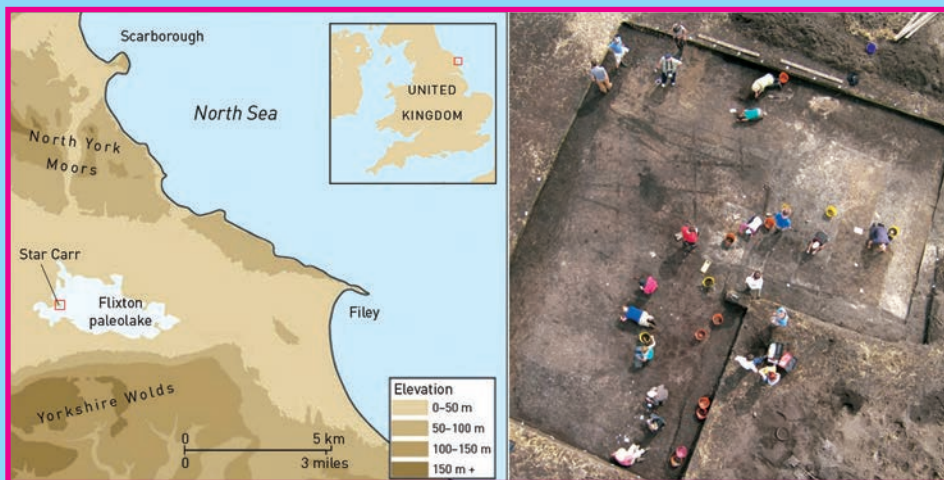
The ways of life of Mesolithic humans can be understood from these pictures. The characteristics of this period are given below.

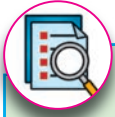
- Use of microliths or very small stone tools
- Apart from hunting and gathering, fishing also became a means of livelihood
- Indications of domestication of animals
- Amusements
- Division of labour based on gender

Mesolithic centres	
Star Carr	England
Fahien Cave	Sri Lanka
Sarai Nahar Rai	India (Uttar Pradesh)

Star Carr - the Mesolithic Site in Europe

It is a Mesolithic open-air settlement in northeast England. The main attraction of this site is the presence of organic remains. Tools made of stone and bone were found here. Evidences of early carpentry have also been found here. It is believed that early humans used this area as a temporary settlement.





Sarai Nahar Rai: A Mesolithic Site in India

Sarai Nahar Rai is located on the banks of the Oxbow Lake in the Pratap Nagar district in Uttar Pradesh. Microliths, a major feature of the Mesolithic culture period, have been found here. The tall human bones found here are significant archaeological evidences. The height of men is 180 cm and that of women is 170 cm. It is believed that bows and arrows were used for hunting. There is evidence to show that seeds were collected and stored, and animal hide was used as clothing.



List the differences between Palaeolithic and Mesolithic human life.

Neolithic Age

This is the period of radical change in human life; The word 'Neolithic' is derived from the words 'neos' (new) and 'lithos' (stone). The book *Man Makes Himself* by Gordon Childe refers to two important changes in the Neolithic Age that transformed human life.

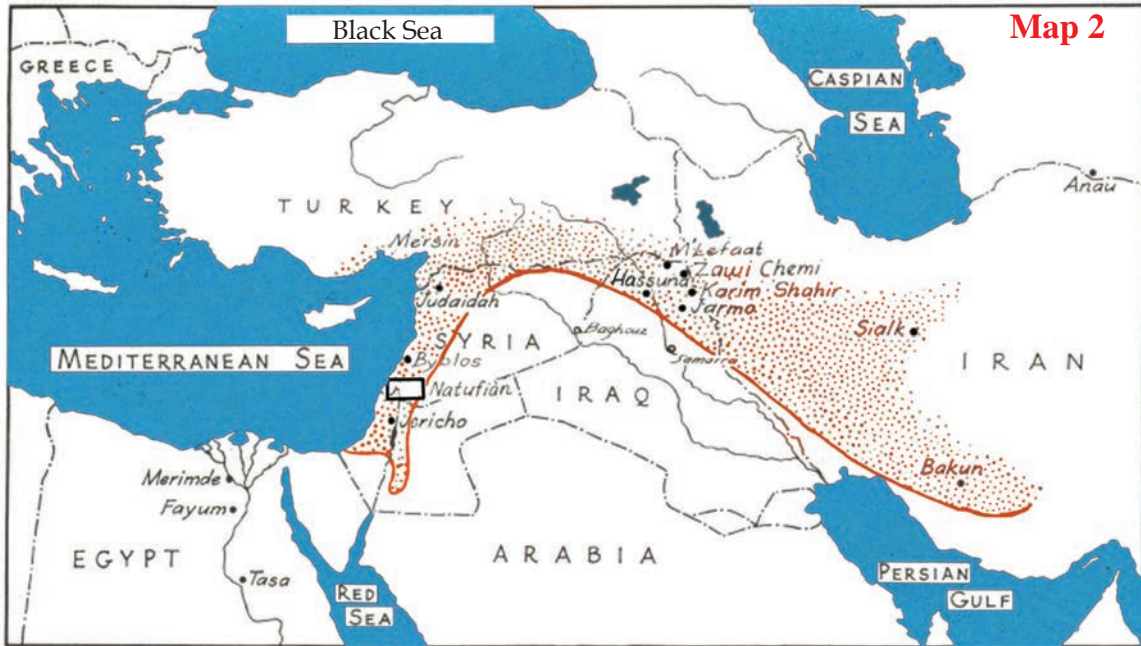
The first revolution that transformed human economy gave man control over his own food supply. Man began to plant, cultivate, and improve by selection, edible grasses, roots, and trees. And he succeeded in taming and firmly attaching to his person certain species of animal in return for the fodder he was able to offer, the protection he could afford, and the forethought he could exercise. The two steps are closely related.

What are the changes in the Neolithic Age mentioned in this description?

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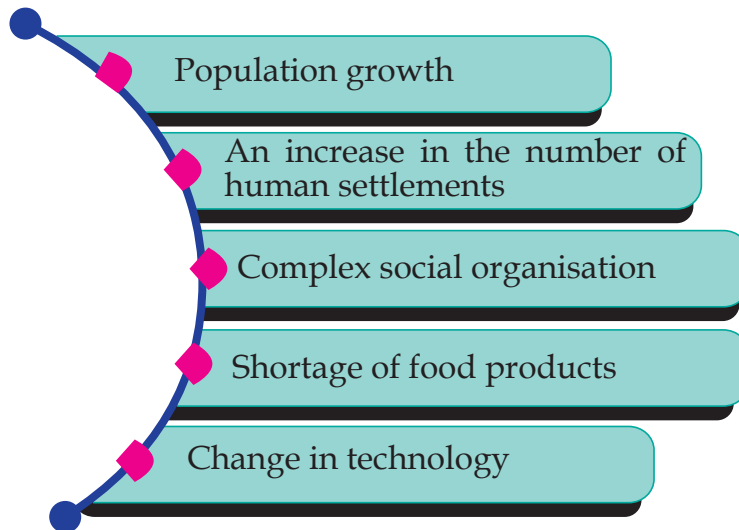
The change in human interaction with his surroundings is the reason for these changes. Humans started new ways of living during the Neolithic period. They are:

- Domestication of animals
- Beginning of agriculture



Observe the map. You can see the area marked in the shape of a crescent. Based on available evidence, archaeologists say that agriculture began in this area. This region is known as the 'Fertile Crescent.' Can you identify the countries in this region?

Let us see the factors that led humans to begin agriculture and domestication of animals.





Pictures of Neolithic tools are given here. Observe them and find out their features.

- Polished tools
-
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These tools helped humans to cultivate the land. They helped them in tilling the soil and cutting down trees. This marked the beginning of great changes in human life.

Agriculture and domestication of animals ensured the steady availability of food products. As a result, permanent settlements and agrarian villages came into existence. The storage of grains became possible with the introduction of pottery and the use of bricks made of clay. When the surplus production in agriculture became possible, a section of society became free from agrarian activities. They began to engage in other occupations such as pottery making, weaving, etc. Thus, the society came to include different occupational groups. This resulted in significant changes in the social formation. The basis of the progress humans have achieved today can be seen in the changes during the Neolithic age. With reference to these changes, Gordon Childe, a renowned archaeologist, named this period 'Neolithic Revolution.'



Present the information given above on Neolithic changes in the form of a flowchart.

• Domestication of animals

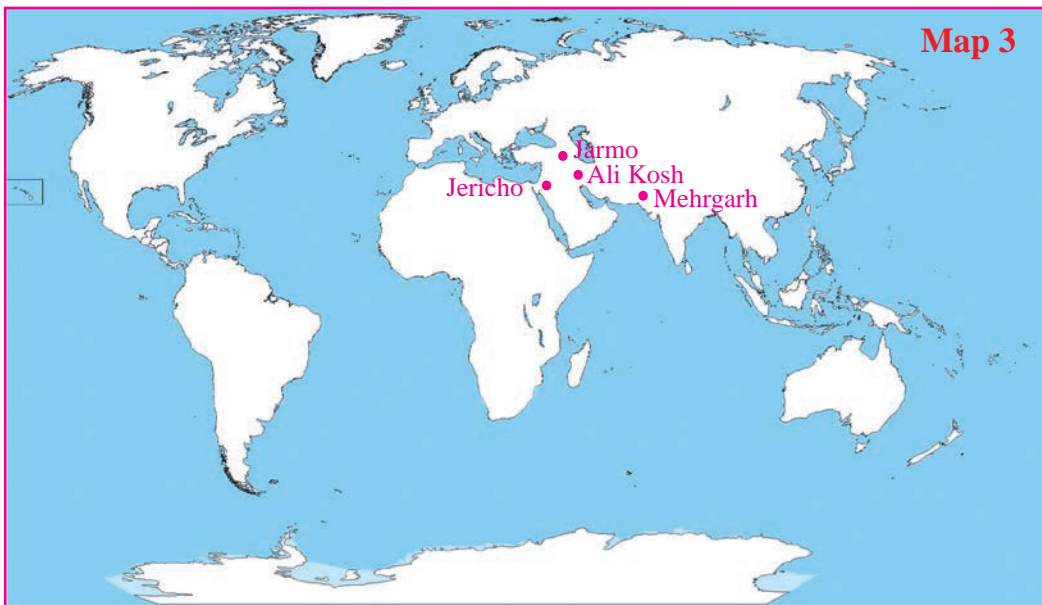
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Complete the table below by observing the world map and find out the countries in which Neolithic sites are located.



Neolithic centre	Country
Jericho
Jarmo
Ali Kosh
Mehrgarh

Jarmo in the Kurdish Hills of Iraq

Robert J. Bridewood led the archaeological excavations in Jarmo in the Kurdish Hills (modern Iraq). The people of Jarmo cultivated barley and two varieties of wheat. There were clear indications that they domesticated goat and some other animals. Their dwellings were small huts. They made figures of animals and humans with clay. Among the human figures they made, the most prominent was that of a pregnant woman.



Mehrgarh: The Neolithic Site in the Indian Subcontinent

Archaeologists consider that Mehrgarh (now in Pakistan) was a site in ancient India, where the important features of Neolithic Age, like domestication of animals and plants began first. This region is called 'the bread basket of Baluchistan.'



Analyse the different Stone Age periods on the basis of the hints given below, prepare a digital magazine and present it in the Social Science Club.

- Tools
- Ways of living
- Communication

Metal Age

The Metal Age began when humans started using metals instead of stone. This age clearly reflects the human progress in technology. Copper was the first metal used by humans.

During this period humans learned the technique of turning raw copper into weapons and tools. The presence of copper was found in the early agrarian villages of Catal Huyuk (Turkey), Cayonu (northern Syria) and Ali Kosh (Iran). It is believed to have existed around 7000 BCE.

What are the advantages of copper tools over stone tools?

- Can be changed into suitable shape and form
- Durability
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Chalcolithic Age

We have already discussed the Stone Age. Even in the age of copper tools, humans did not give up stone. This period, when copper tools were used along with stone tools, is called the Chalcolithic Age. In India, many remains of the Chalcolithic Age are found in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.



Urn burials recovered from Daimabad
(Maharashtra)



Artistic creations in clay and stone
from Nevasa (Maharashtra).

Bronze Age

Between 6000 and 3000 BCE humans learned to harness the force of oxen and of winds. Plough, wheelcart and boat began to be used. Metallurgy also developed further. As a result, agriculture became widespread and surplus production became possible. Non-agricultural production became stronger and thereby humans equipped themselves for urban life.

Gordon Childe, *Man Makes Himself*



Bronze

Bronze is an alloy made by mixing copper and tin. Bronze is a metal stronger than copper.

This is a description of human's entry into urban life. Urbanisation begins, when a region comes to be densely populated, where the majority earned their means of living through non-agrarian activities, such as crafts, trade, etc. Wide streets, public buildings, better facilities, busy life and entertainment are the hallmarks of such an urban life. You have already learned that 'urban' life began in the Bronze Age.

List out the Bronze Age civilisations.

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The Harappan civilization in India belongs to the Bronze Age. Cities like Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Lothal, etc., the well planned public buildings, Great Bath, houses, streets, drainage system, granaries and the presence of various types of crafts and trade are clear evidences of urbanisation. That is why the Harappan civilization is called the 'first urbanisation' in Indian history.



Sapta Sindhu Region

The Sapta Sindhu region is the region that includes the Indus River and its tributaries.



Indo-European Languages

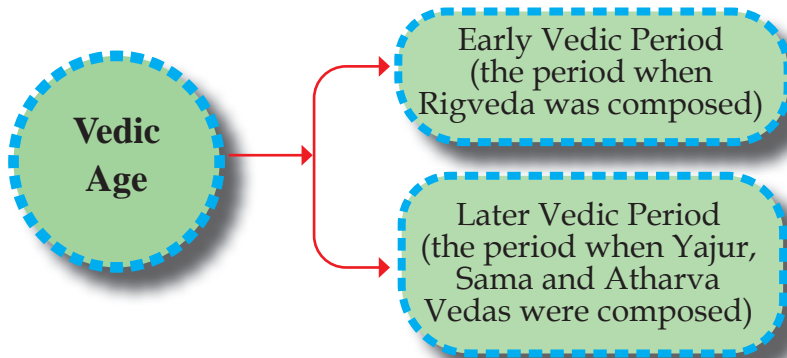
Indo-European languages include Sanskrit, Latin, Greek, German, English, Swedish, Russian, Polish, Italian, Spanish, French and Romanian.

Vedic Age

After the decline of the Harappan civilization, the Aryans entered the Sapta Sindhu (north-west India) region. They spoke a language that belonged to the Indo-European family of languages. Based on linguistic evidence, Aryans are believed to be the natives of Central Asia.

We get to know about this age from the Vedas. Therefore, this period is called Vedic Age, which falls between 1500 BCE and 600 BCE.

The Vedic period is divided into two.



Let us compare the life of the people in the early Vedic and the later Vedic periods.

Early Vedic Period	Later Vedic Period
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sapta Sindhu region ● Pastoral economy ● Semi nomads ● Comparatively higher social status for women ● The forest was cleared and burned for cultivation ● The society consisted of many tribes ● The <i>Yagas</i> (sacrifices) were simple and could be done by the head of the family ● Natural forces were worshipped 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extended up to the Gangetic plain ● Agriculture was given importance ● Settled life ● The social status of women declined ● Use of iron ● The Varna system became stronger ● The <i>Yagas</i> (sacrifices) became complicated and expensive. The <i>Yagas</i> (sacrifices) became the privilege of a particular section ● New deities came to be worshipped ● Beginning of various crafts



Vedic literature

‘Veda’ means knowledge (vid). There are four Vedas. They are Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. The earliest of these is the Rigveda. Apart from the four Vedas, the Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads are also part of Vedic literature. Vedic literature is the most important source of information about the Vedic period.



Varna System

There were four Varnas. Brahmins were those who engaged in priestly rites, Kshatriyas were those who governed and guarded the kingdom, Vaishyas were those who engaged in agriculture and trade, and Sudras served all these three sections.



Organise a seminar on the changes from Stone Age to Metal Age.

In this lesson, we saw the beginning of human history and the various stages of human progress over a long period of time. Living in forests, caves and tree holes, braving nature and animals, humans discovered and invented what they needed, using their reasoning capacity and intelligence.

As they advanced, social, political and economic structures were formulated by civilised humans. Standing in the 21st century, turning back to the many periods of human history, we are able to know and understand the extent of human progress.



Extended Activities

- Make a digital album/album with pictures of weapons and tools used by primitive humans.
- Make models of weapons and tools used by humans in different stages of Stone Age and display them in the Social Science class.
- Make a digital presentation about the major changes in the progress of human history.
- Prepare an atlas and mark the places related to the life of early humans.