

The Prehistoric Period

The prehistoric period is usually divided by historians into the **Old Stone Age** and the **New Stone Age**, with a transition period in between the two.



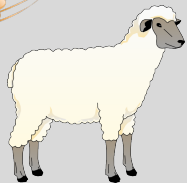
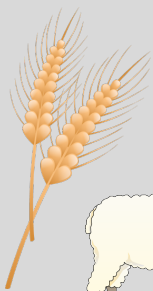
The **Old Stone Age** (sometimes referred to as the **Palaeolithic Age**) is much longer than the **New Stone Age**. The beginning of the Old Stone Age is considered to be at least 2 million years ago, when humans began to make tools. For hundreds of thousands of years, all human species survived by hunting wild animals and gathering wild plant foods. These people were nomadic: they travelled on foot from place to place, following the migrating herds of wild animals and moving on from each area once they had exhausted the available plant food sources. This lifestyle dominated human existence until around 12,000 to 10,000 years ago.



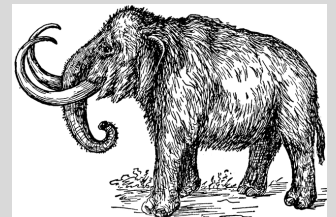
The **New Stone Age** (sometimes referred to as the **Neolithic Revolution**) lasted only a few thousand years, between roughly 10,000 years and 6,000 years ago. In this period, some people, especially in the Middle East but later in Europe and Asia, began to settle in one place and farm the land, domesticating animals such as sheep and goats and planting crops. In addition to hunting wild animals and collecting the food that

already existed, they began to produce food and shape the development of animals and plants by breeding them according to human requirements.

Task: Can you classify each of the words, phrases and pictures below into either the **Old Stone Age** or the **New Stone Age**? (You can draw the pictures in the right column!)



longer period of time • shorter period of time •
nomadic • animal domestication • hunting • cropping
• settling in one place • finding food • producing food
• breeding animals • hard, repetitive work •
precarious existence



Old Stone Age	New Stone Age

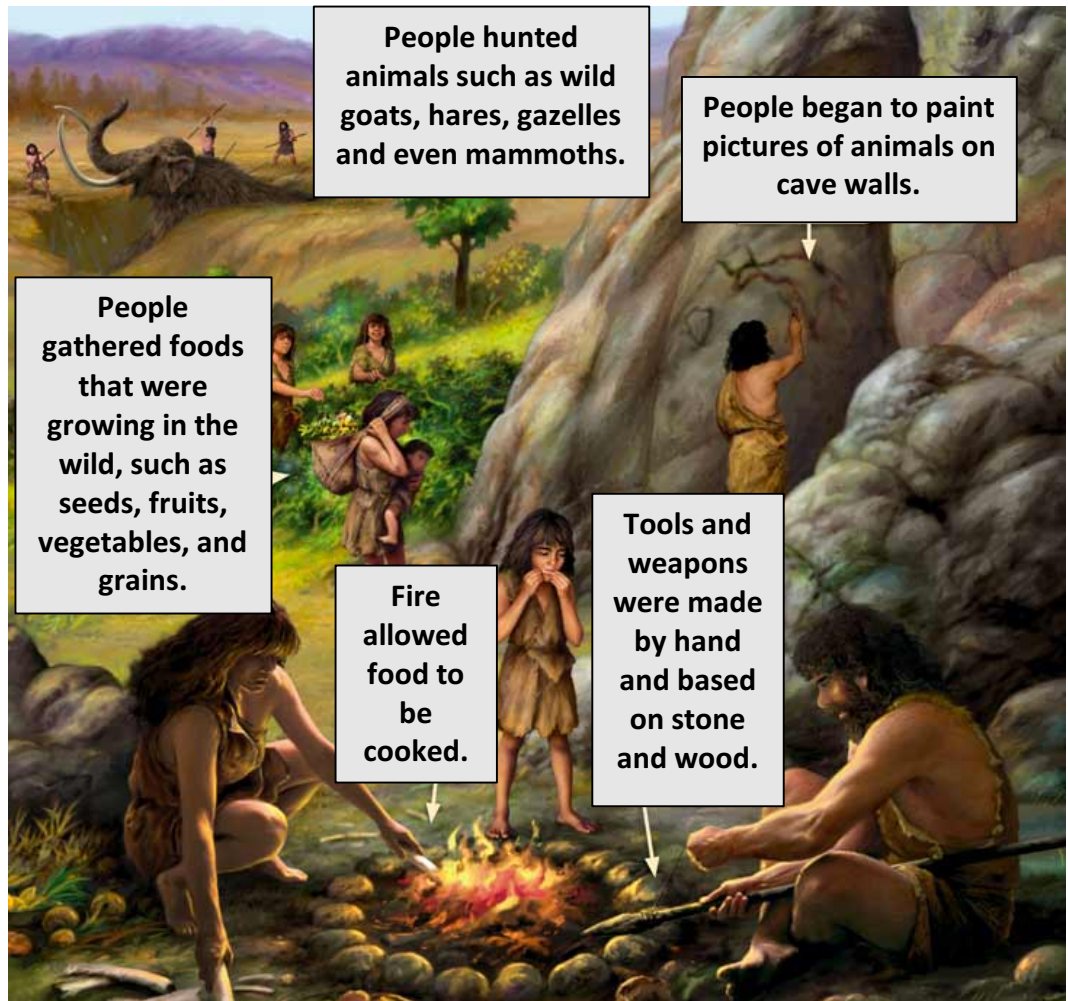
Hunting and Gathering

a Highlight these words in the text below:

- (i) a person who studies the remains of human cultures
- (ii) another word for “gather”
- (iii) a word meaning “doubt” or “lack of confidence”
- (iv) two words indicating that the hunter-gatherer lifestyle was far from easy

b Gap-fillers:

animals • fertile • fractures • Ice Ages • million • nomads • plants • starvation • stone • thousand



The hunter-gatherer lifestyle dominated human existence from at least two _____ years ago until about ten _____ years ago. This lifestyle continued in many parts of the world for much longer.

During this period, people constantly travelled on foot from place to place. In other words, they were _____. They followed the migrating herds of wild _____ and moved around to forage for wild _____.

They hunted wild animals for meat and gathered wild foods such as berries, nuts, fruits, vegetables and eggs, using tools and weapons made of _____ and wood.

Their lives would have been harsh and difficult at times. They had to find food during the ____ _____. Archaeologists have discovered that hunter-gatherers often had bone _____ and injuries caused by hunting accidents. They also had to cope with constant uncertainties about food, especially in the less _____ areas. It is said that they lived “one meal away from _____”.