

Chapter 2: The Earliest Human Societies

Lesson 1 Hunters and Gatherers

MAIN IDEAS

Geography Early humans adapted to the natural environment.

Culture Humans created tools to ensure survival and to improve life.

Culture Early humans developed language, religion, and art.

Early Humans' Way of Life

ESSENTIAL QUESTION How did early humans interact with the environment?

Hunter-Gatherers Adapt to Environments

- Early humans were **hunter-gatherers**
 - hunted animals, gathered plants for food
 - moved to a new location when food ran out
- Depended on natural environment for shelter
 - lived in caves and shelters made of rocks, branches, animal skins

Small Bands

- Lived in small bands of about 30 people
 - group included several families
 - group size reflected how many people could live off food in region
- Men hunted, fished
- Women gathered nuts, berries; cared for children
 - children also worked

Early Humans on the Move

- Hunter-gatherers were **nomads**—people who moved from place to place
- Groups returned to the same places with the changes of seasons
 - bands joined together at certain times of year, formed communities
- Moved to new, distant lands while following animals to hunt
 - **migration**—moving from one place to settle in another

Early Humans on the Move

- By 15,000 B.C., hunter-gatherers had migrated through much of world
 - crossed land bridge between Siberia and Alaska, entering Americas
- Migrating groups entered territory of other groups
 - groups shared knowledge, tools
 - sometimes caused violent conflicts if groups feared each other

REVIEW QUESTION

Why did hunter-gatherers move often?

The Development of Tools

ESSENTIAL QUESTION What were some tools created by early humans?

The Use of Fire

- Early humans made and controlled fire around 500,000 years ago
- Fire provided heat and light, cooked food
 - also protected from animals, tempered metal tools

The Development of Technology

- **Technology**—the ways knowledge, tools, inventions are applied to meet needs
- Stone tools for cutting were made at least 2 million years ago
 - other tools included axes, bags, awls, drills
- Later complex tools included bows, flint spearheads, metal tools
- Tools used to hunt and butcher animals, build simple shelters
- Technology helped humans control environment, led to settled lives

REVIEW QUESTION

How did early humans use fire?

Early Human Culture

ESSENTIAL QUESTION What kind of culture did early humans create?

Language

- Language probably developed so people could work together
 - possibly developed to aid in hunting, gathering, sharing food

Religion

- **Religion**—worship of God, gods, or spirits
- Early humans probably believed all things in nature had a spirit
 - some think cave paintings honor spirits of animals killed for food

Art

- Prehistoric art found in Africa, Asia, Europe, Australia, Americas
- Over 200 cave art sites discovered in France, Spain
 - images show bulls, stallions, bison
- Early humans may have worn portable art (jewelry, figurines)
 - items may have had religious meaning
- Other art included music, dance, stories

REVIEW QUESTION

What were the main elements of prehistoric culture?

Lesson Summary

- Hunter-gatherers were nomads.
- Fire and tools improved lives.
- Early humans created language, religion, and art.

Why It Matters Now...

Early humans created the first tools. Today technology continues to improve our lives and help us survive.