

Teaching Guide: Dig: The Truth About Cavemen

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Objectives:

- * Students will gain an understanding of the prehistoric people
- * Students will learn about the job of an archaeologist

Prior Knowledge:

- Before reading the articles, ask the students to share what they know about prehistoric man.
- * Mention to the students about Otzi, the prehistoric iceman found in the Alps several years ago. This website has some additional information: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/icemummies/iceman.html>
- * Ask the students to brainstorm common needs that prehistoric people had with people living today.

What is a Neandertal pages 7- 9

Possible Vocabulary words: essential, significant, DNA

- * What problems did early humans face each day?
- * Why were large family units (called *extended families*) helpful to early humans? (For example: more people to hunt, protect, etc.)
- * Have the students draw a picture of a Neandertal and list 5 descriptive features and explain how these physical traits helped Neandertal man survive.

Enterprising pages 10-11

Possible Vocabulary Words: red ocher, pigments, elongated, longitudinally, millennia

- * Scientists have found a few hand prints on cave wall paintings. Have students brainstorm reasons for such findings. Have students suggest ways that prehistoric people made such prints.
- Before reading the article, ask students to suggest where prehistoric people got their paint pigments.
- * This is a wonderful site to show the famed Lascaux Cave of France.
<http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/arcnat/lascaux/en/> Students can take a virtual tour of the cave.
- * Have groups of students make a mural of a cave wall painting.
- * <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/arcnat/lascaux/en/> This site gives a brief history on some of the famous cave paintings of the world: http://www.beaconlearningcenter.com/documents/1137_01.pdf

Meet “Moshe” pages 12-13

Possible Vocabulary Words: foragers, disturbance, fragile, phenomenon, diagenesis, knapping

- * How did the discovery of Moshe cause scientists to re-examine previous ideas about the speaking abilities of Neandertals? (evidence that Neandertals had speaking abilities earlier than originally believed)
- * What is diagenesis? (process caused by water entering the cave and dissolving the bones)
- * What amazing find was found in the different layers of the cave? (fireplaces)
- * As a group discuss the role of an archaeologist. What are the characteristics of someone that is an archaeologist (ie: patient, likes to work outdoors, doesn't mind getting dirty). What are some of the positive aspects of the job of an archaeologist? What are the negative aspects? Give the students a piece of a chocolate chip cookie and a toothpick (place on a paper towel). Have the students carefully dig for artifact (chips) trying not to break it.
- * Try the project on pages 15, Fabulous Fake Fossils.
- * Write a journal entry pretending to be an archaeologist that has discovered Moshe. Include three-five specific facts learned from the reading.

Ice Age Party Animals pages 16- 17

Possible Vocabulary Words: radically, ritual, botanists, zoologists

* List ways that the author of the article says that Neandertals were similar to modern humans. In which ways were Neandertals different from modern humans?(For example: cared for ill, made tools/ didn't create art work or religious rituals)

*Have students suggest the first "weapon" of early man.(Perhaps the hand). How did early man make advances in learning new things?(trial and error and by accident). Have students try and list 5 weapons of early man in order of discovery(For example: hands, throw things, tie stones and sticks together, sharpen weapons, etc.)

* Without language, how could early people communicate?

* This website has some photographs of early prehistoric weapons:

<http://museums.ncl.ac.uk/flint/archhunt.html>

Questions at Lagar Velho pages 18-20

Possible Vocabulary words: prominent, receding, anatomically, mitochondrial DNA

*After reading the article, have the students make a cluster map(mind map) and write *Burial description* in the center. Have groups of students write four-five descriptions of the Lagar Helho burial site.

* On the chalkboard, write **Modern child** and **Neandertal child**. Have students review the reading for traits which scientists say should evidence of both.

* Have students write up a news report or give an oral presentation pretending to be a newscaster announcing the discovery at lagar Velho including *who, what, when, where and why*.

Here's How to Read Buried Finds pages 22- 24

Possible Vocabulary Words: intentional, funerary, cohesiveness, anthropologists, indicative, trauma

* On a piece of paper have the headings **FACTS** and **INFERENCES**. Discuss with the students what an inference is and how it differs from a fact. Archaeologists made inferences about prehistoric people based on the evidence or facts that they have. In groups have the students list 3-5 facts and the inferences that scientists have made from those facts. For example: **Prehistoric bodies found had old wounds which had healed/Neandertals survived injuries**

Excavating a Cave Site pages 25-27

* Describe the steps to uncovering an artifact.

* What is the sediment excavated around an artifact also taken?(to be studied for bone and flint)

*Why are archaeologists interested in more than finding the artifact?(to learn patterns in their activities to develop more understanding on how the early humans lived)

* Ask the students if they could live as a prehistoric person. What plants and berries would be good to eat? Which would be poisonous? Early man relied on trial and error.

Try this fun website to see if you'd survive being a prehistoric person with this food quiz.

<http://museums.ncl.ac.uk/flint/foodquiz.html>

Trivia Safari:

Readings: Elephants under the Sea p. 31, Ancient Beads, What's in a Name p 6, Oldest Human Face page. 5 and Stones and Bones p. 4

Use the following readings to have students to a **trivia safari**.

1. What did workers checking the foundation of the Brooklyn Bridge in NYC find?(a bunker with artifacts from the Cold War such as paper blankets, medical supplies, crackers and drugs)
2. The word "ne-ander" comes from the Greek meaning this.(New man)
3. What was the name of the first satellite that went into space in 1957 and which country sent it up?(Sputnik/Russians)
4. What was found in a rock-art -decorated cave in Vilhonnour,France?(only the 2nd drawing of a human face from the Upper Paleolithic period)
5. For about how many years do scientists think people have been wearing beads as jewelry?(25,000 years)

6. What did a fisherman in Maine recently find?(a mastoon tusk)