

# Aim #3: How was the introduction of agriculture a turning point in prehistory?

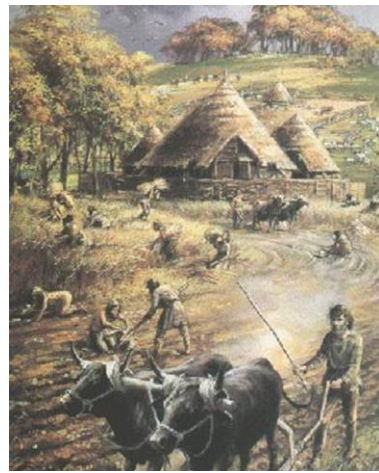
## The Neolithic Revolution

NYS SS Framework: 9.1a

Simple shaped stone tools like cutters, hand axes, primitive spear tips, and sharpened sticks.



More advanced stone tools, bow and arrows, refined spear tips, harpoons.



### Mini Lecture

- **Prehistory** is divided into Old Stone Age, or **Paleolithic** Period, & New Stone Age, or **Neolithic** Period.
- During both, people made stone tools. However, during the New Stone Age, people began to develop new skills & technologies that led to dramatic changes.
- A **turning point** in history is a time or an event in which a significant & lasting change occurs.
- During the Paleolithic Period, people were nomads who moved around in small groups, hunting & gathering food.
- These people made simple tools & weapons, built fires for cooking, & used animal skins for clothing. They also developed spoken language.
- Some also began to bury their dead. This suggests belief in a spiritual world or life after death. Cave paintings around the world depict animals and humans. Many scholars think that our ancestors believed the world was full of spirits & forces that might reside in animals, objects, or dreams. Such beliefs are known as **animism**.
- The New Stone Age began about 12,000 years ago (about 10,000 B.C.), when nomadic people made a great breakthrough—they learned to farm.
- By producing their own food, people no longer needed to roam in search of it. As a result, early farmers settled the first permanent villages. This transition from nomadic life to settled farming brought about such dramatic changes in way of life that it is often called the **Neolithic Revolution**.
- These early farmers were the first to **domesticate** plants and animals.
- In these settled communities, people accumulated personal property. A council of male elders or elite warriors made the important decisions for all the villagers.
- To farm successfully, people developed new technologies, such as ways to protect their crops, calendars, and the use of animals for plowing.

### Timeline of Prehistory

Paleolithic Era	Neolithic Era	Bronze Age
2,000,000 BCE- 9,000 BCE	9,000 - 3,000 BCE	3,000- 1,000 BCE

## Graphic Summary: The First People

People of the Old Stone Age and the New Stone Age made many important discoveries.

### Old Stone Age or Paleolithic Period (2,500,000 B.C.)

- Very Small population
- Nomads
- Hunters and gatherers
- Simple tools and weapons
- First spoken languages
- Discovery of fire
- Cave paintings
- Belief in afterlife
- Women important

### New Stone Age or Neolithic Period (10,000 B.C.)

- Increasing population
- Villages
- Farmers
- Domestic animals
- Calendars and technology
- Personal possessions
- Village headman and council of leaders
- Women less important

### Review Questions

1. What religious beliefs did early modern humans develop during the Old Stone Age?
2. What led to the establishment of the first permanent villages?
3. Summarize In your own words, summarize how the Neolithic Revolution changed the way people lived.

### Resources/Documents

- [“Stories from the Stone Age \(1 of 15\)”](#) (1:00-5:30) and [“Stories from the Stone Age \(2 of 15\)”](#) (start-3:28, 8:15-8:42).
- Cave paintings
- Images of Tools

**Further Reading:** Chapter 1, Section 2



**Video: The Paleolithic Era**



➔ Directions: Watch excerpts of the videos [“Stories from the Stone Age \(1 of 15\)”](#) (1:00-5:30) and [“Stories from the Stone Age \(2 of 15\)”](#) (start-3:28, 8:15-8:42), then respond to the prompts below.

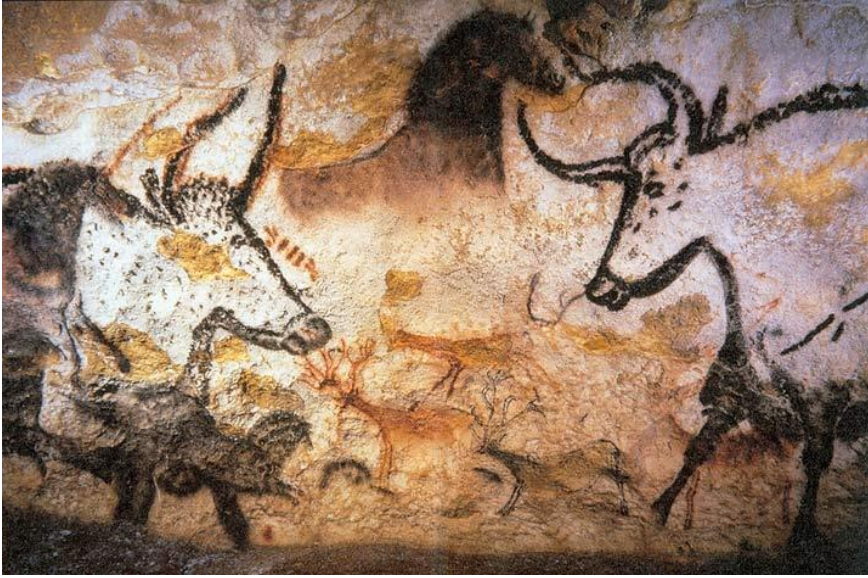
1. What food did people eat in the Paleolithic Era?	2. How did people get food in the Paleolithic Era?	3. Approximately how many people lived together in Paleolithic communities?

4. What effects did the hunter-gatherers in the videos have on their environment?	5. What effects did their environment have on them?

6. In the chart below, identify two advantages (+) and two disadvantages (-) of being a *nomad* and hunting and gathering for one’s food.

+	-

## Document 1



A Paleolithic cave painting in the Lascaux Cave in France depicting a bull and horses, animals that were important to the nomadic hunters that created the images.

[Lascaux painting.jpg](#) by Prof saxx is published under the [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported](#) license

Based on the cave painting above, identify one characteristic of Paleolithic life.

## Document 2

### Tools from Hunter-Gatherer Societies



Hunter-gathering societies have used various types of stones, as well as bone and antler, to make a variety of tools such as scrapers, blades, arrows, spearheads, needles, awls, fishhooks, and harpoons. The 6.5- to 6.7-cm (2.5- to 2.6-inch) flint blades on the left are from North Africa, dating from 5000–4500 BCE. The 5.7- x 4.6-cm (2.2- x 1.8-inch) scraper on the right is made of green jasper, dates from 5200 to 2500 BCE, and was found in the south-central Sahara Desert.

[Image](#) is courtesy of Wikimedia and is in the public domain

Based on the images and description above, describe the technology used during the Paleolithic Era.

### Document 3

A modern day artist created these images to show the paleolithic lifestyle.



Based on this image,  
identify *two*  
characteristics of life  
the Paleolithic Era.


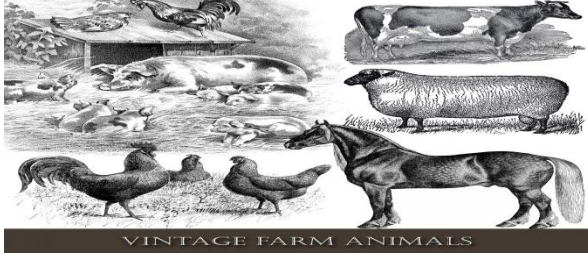

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Image modified by New Visions ([CC BY-SA-NC](#)). Original [image](#) is from Wikimedia and is in the public domain

## What was the Neolithic Revolution?

➡ **Directions:** Read and annotate the definition below and define the review terms on the left hand side. Then, read the words, definitions, and examine the images related to each of the vocabulary words below, then predict the effects of each innovation on Paleolithic people.

*The **Neolithic Revolution** was a **turning point** in history that changed the way Paleolithic people lived their lives. People shifted from **hunting and gathering** for food to **agriculture**. Instead of living as **nomads**, people settled down in **permanent settlements**. The Neolithic Revolution led to the **first civilizations**.*

Innovation & Definition	Image	What effects might this innovation have had on Paleolithic people?
<b>agriculture-</b> farming		
<b>domestication-</b> the act of changing a wild plant or animal so it can be grown or raised by humans		
<b>permanent settlements-</b> places where people live for long periods of time, possibly for their whole lives		

[Agriculture in Vietnam with farmers.jpg](#) by Dennis Jarvis is published under the [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic](#) license

[Image](#) is courtesy of Public DomainPictures.net and is in the public domain

[Laténium-maquette-village-laustre.jpg](#) by Laténium is published under the [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported](#) license

## The Neolithic Revolution



➔ **Directions:** Watch the video entitled [“Human Prehistory 101 \(Part 3 of 3\): Agriculture Rocks Our World”](#) from 23andMe and read through the infographic below and complete the activity that follows.

**WHY HUNT? WHY GATHER?** JOIN THE **NEOLITHIC** REVOLUTION!

**How goes the hunt?**  
Not so great. How's **gathering**?  
So-so.

**Look! A village!**  
I wonder what they do over there ...?

**Excuse me.**  
I couldn't help but **overhear**. Let me tell you about living the **Neolithic Way!**

First off – we don't just **look around** for our food ... we actually **grow** some of it ourselves, **where we live!**

**Plant and animal domestication is the key.** We grow **edible plants** ourselves, right out of the **ground**, time after time!

**Yum!**

**Enjoy regular meals!**

**Build permanent structures!**

**Be civil!**

**Settle down!**

**Animals, too!** We **control** their reproduction to select **desirable characteristics** and eliminate bad ones.

**Wow!** How can we live the **Neolithic way**?

**You can start by joining us in the village! Leave your troubles behind!\***

**Reshape your environment!**

**Be sociable!**

**Form complex societies!**

\*Some hunting and gathering may be necessary to maintain dietary variety and avoid famine.

Special offer!  
Free booklets!  
**The Pleasures of Porridge**  
Earn Your Animals' Respect  
How to Tell a Weed

**Your KEYS to a BETTER LIFE!**

### Harness Plant Power!

- Learn how the seeds you drop can become next fall's crop!
- Use seed selection to make future plants more productive and easier to harvest!
- Preserve and store surpluses for hard times!
- Invent new ways of preparing and cooking plant foods!

### Put Animals To Work For You!

- Learn which species are slow and submissive!
- Use food and fences to keep them around!
- Influence their choice of mates!
- Breed the best and eat the rest!

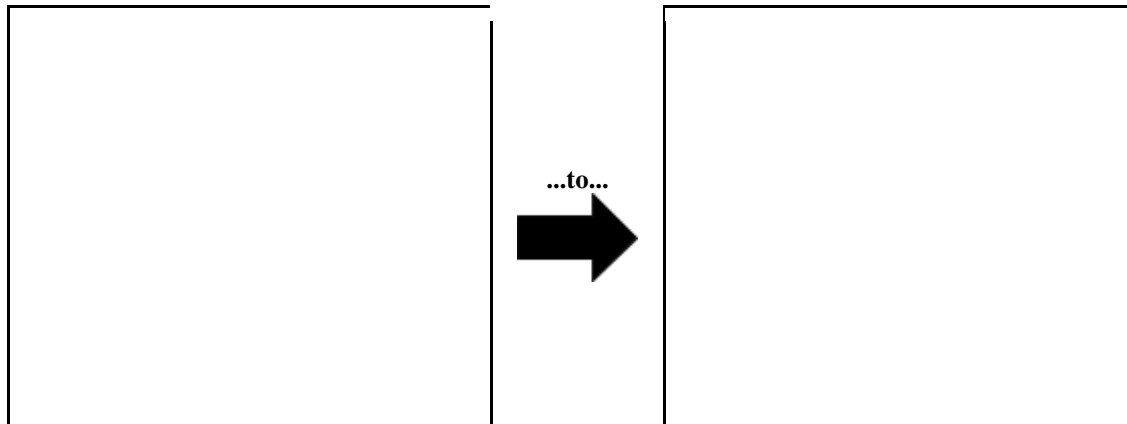
Source: Mysteries of Çatalhöyük!, Science Museum of Minnesota, [www.smm.org/catal](http://www.smm.org/catal) (adapted) from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam, January 2010.

1. Using the infographic above complete the statement below by filling out the chart:

The Neolithic Revolution was a turning point in which people changed from...

*describe how people lived before the Neolithic Revolution, during the Paleolithic Era*

*describe how people lived after the Neolithic Revolution, during the Neolithic Era*



2. Based on the video and infographic, fill in the charts below with the advantages and disadvantages of hunting and gathering and agriculture.

Hunting and Gathering

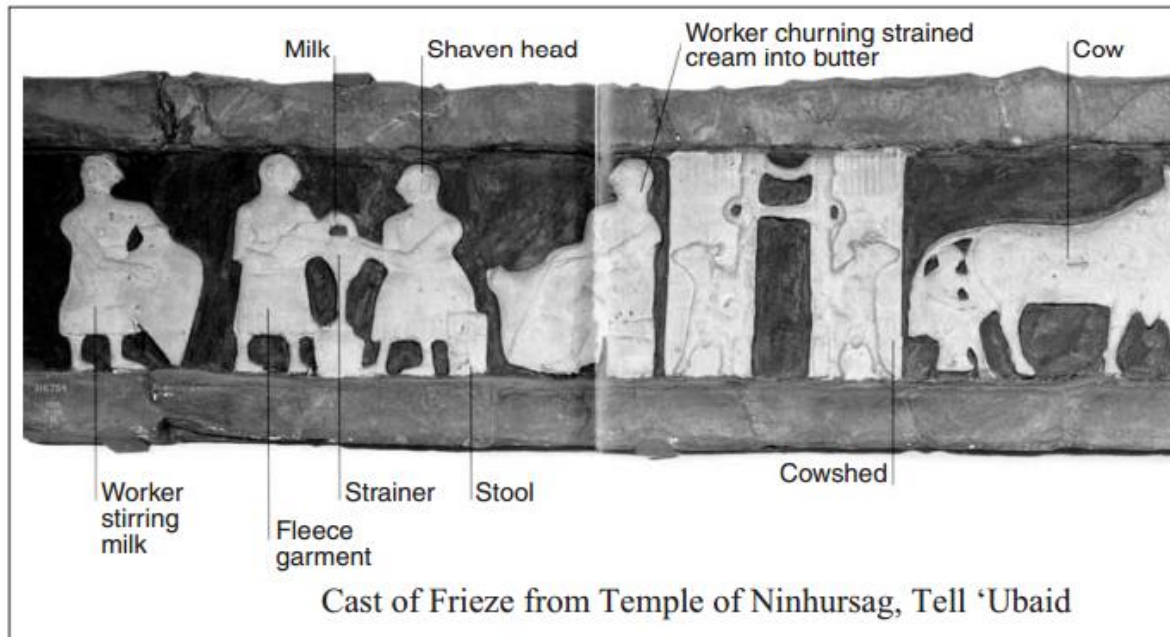
Agriculture

Hunting and Gathering		Agriculture	
+ advantages	- disadvantages	+ advantages	- disadvantages



## Document 1

### Mesopotamia: Everyday Life



A frieze is a horizontal decoration placed on a wall, usually near the ceiling. The frieze above came from Mesopotamia, a region in the Middle East, from around 2500 BCE. It depicts a scene common to Neolithic life.

**Source (Image):** The Visual Dictionary of Ancient Civilizations, Dorling Kindersley (adapted) from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam, January 2010.

1 Based on this frieze, identify one characteristic of Neolithic life.

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**Document 2a**



[HMB Essen und Kochgerät Jungsteinzeit.jpg](#) by Sandstein is published under the [CC BY 3.0](#) license

**Document 2b**



[CucuteniAgriculture.JPG](#) by CristianChirita is published under the [CC BY-SA 3.0](#) [Unported](#) license

Neolithic cutlery and foodstuffs found at sites in Switzerland. The items include: millstones, charred bread, grains and small apples, a clay cooking pot, and containers made of antlers and wood.

These tools were used by Neolithic farmers to plough fields, plant crops, and harvest the plants. The tools are made out of deer antler.

2a Based on the images and description above, describe the technology used during the Neolithic Era.

2b. Based on the images and description above, what were the tools pictured used for?

### Document 3



Catal Hüyük 10.JPG by Stipich Béla is published under the [CC BY-SA 3.0 Unported](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/) license

Catal Hüyük EL.JPG by Eleicht is published under the [CC BY-SA 3.0 Unported](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/) license

Catal Huyuk, in modern Turkey, was one of the first places in the world where humans lived in dense settlements. From about 7500 to 5700 BCE, an estimated average of between 5,000 and 8,000 people lived in mud-brick houses with rooftops serving as streets. The first image is a photograph of the excavation site of Catal Huyuk. The second image is a photograph of a recreation of a room from Catal Huyuk.

3 Based on the images and description above, describe a Neolithic village.

### Document 4

#### Specialization of Labor

Within the villages, towns and cities, it was possible for people to specialize in the sort of work they could do best. Many stopped producing food at all, making instead tools and other goods that farmers needed, and for which they gave them food in exchange. This process of exchange led to trade and traders, and the growth of trade made it possible for people to specialize even more...

Source: D.M. Knox, *The Neolithic Revolution*, Greenhaven Press, adapted from the January 2004, NYS Regents Exam.

4 According to D.M. Knox, what is one way the development of agriculture affected life in the Neolithic Era?





