



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

Class: IX	Department: Social Science	Sub: HISTORY
Chapter-4 Study Material	Topic: The Stone Age: The Earliest People	Year: 2026-2027

Early man was a hunter-gatherer and also a nomad. It means that he moved from place to place in search of food, depended on nature for all his needs and travelled great distances to find food. There were many reasons for his moving from place to place.

- If he stayed at one place for a long time all the available food would have been eaten up.
- Animals move from place to place in search of grass and water. Early man, who was a hunter, had to follow their movements.
- Plants and trees bear fruits in different seasons. So, early man had to move in search of different fruits and other plant products.
- People, plants and animals need water to survive. People living on the banks of seasonal rivers had to go in search of water during the dry seasons.

It was not easy for early man to hunt. To hunt he had to have proper tools and a quick and alert mind, and a knowledge of the animals they hunted.

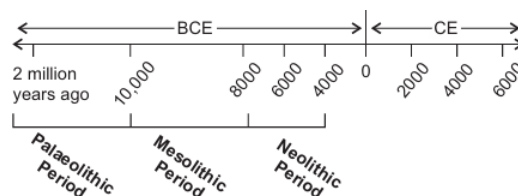
To gather food, he had to know which food to gather, which food to eat, and the knowledge of the season when he could gather a particular fruit or food. In short, he needed skills and knowledge. Early man initially used tools such as sticks to dig up wild roots. Gradually, he started making tools out of stone. This led to the beginning of the **Stone Age**.



The Early man

THE STONE AGE

The Stone Age is divided into three periods:



- Palaeolithic Period
- Mesolithic Period
- Neolithic Period

Palaeolithic Period:

The Palaeolithic period began about two million years ago and lasted till about 10,000 BCE.

Mesolithic Period:

The Mesolithic period lasted from 10,000 BCE till 8000 BCE.

Neolithic Period:

The Neolithic period began around 8000 BCE and lasted till about 4000 BCE.

1.THE PALAEOLITHIC PERIOD

The Palaeolithic period or the **Old Stone Age** roughly began about two million years ago. During this period, man hunted and gathered food. He moved from place to place in search of food and wild animals. He ate whatever he could find. He did not wear anything in summers and in winters he covered himself with animal skins and leaves to keep himself warm.

As he was a wanderer, he moved in search of food from place to place. He had no home. At night he slept on trees or hide in caves.



Old Stone Age tools

The Palaeolithic Period is further subdivided into

Lower Palaeolithic period, Middle Palaeolithic period, and Upper Palaeolithic period.

Lower Palaeolithic Period

During this period, most of the earth's surface was covered with thick sheets of ice. The climate was very cold. This period was also called the **Ice Age or Pleistocene Period**. Hand axes were used by early man during this age.

Middle Palaeolithic Period

The tools used during the Middle Palaeolithic Period were scrapers and borers made of stone flakes. Needles were used to sew furs and skins for body coverings.

Upper Palaeolithic Period

During the Upper Palaeolithic Period, the climate became slightly warmer. Tools such as blades and projectile points were used for hunting and skinning wild animals.

Use of Tools

Tools were used by early man for different purposes.

- They were used as weapons for hunting wild animals.
- They were used for shaping or cutting materials.
- They were used for digging the ground for cutting edible roots.
- They provided a sense of security and protection from wild beasts and enemies.

2.MESOLITHIC PERIOD

Mesolithic Period or the **Middle Stone Age** was the period in history that existed between the Palaeolithic Period and the Neolithic Period. Mesolithic People used tools made of bones, and wood for hunting, fishing and gathering food. Later, they used tools formed from chips like blades, points, borers and scrapers known as **microliths**.



Mesolithic tools – Microliths



The people living during the Mesolithic Period were hunter-gatherers. Gradually, towards the end of this period, they moved on from being food gatherers to food growers. They experimented with seeds by dropping them on the ground and seeing them grow. They realised that by growing plants they received food in sufficient quantity. They made attempts to domesticate animals like goats, sheep and cattle which provided them with milk and food.

Mesolithic sites

Mesolithic sites in India are spread across various regions, with notable examples including Bhimbetka, Adamgarh, Panchmarhi (Madhya Pradesh), Bagor and Tilwara (Rajasthan) and Langhnaj (Gujarat)

Tilwara



Tilwara Mesolithic Site

Westernmost Mesolithic site in India.

Bagor



Bagor Mesolithic Site

Largest Mesolithic site of India

Located in Eastern Rajasthan, near Kothari River.

One of the best documented microlithic sites.

Langhnaj



Langhnaj Mesolithic Site

Situated in Gujarat.

It is most extensively studied site in Gujarat.

Evidence of relationship with Harappan culture, supplying honey and hunted meat.

3.NEOLITHIC PERIOD

The Neolithic Period began around 8000 BCE and lasted till about 4000 BCE. The Neolithic people learnt to make more polished tools. One of the major developments of this period was the adoption of agriculture. They moved to larger settlements and realised the importance of domestic animals like dogs, sheep and cattle. They used them as means of transport and for providing them with milk and meat.

The Neolithic Revolution

The Neolithic Revolution (8,000 – 4000 BCE) was a foundational shift from nomadic hunting and gathering to settled agriculture. It featured the domestication of plants and animals, permanent settlements, use of polished stone tools, pottery and population growth. Humans began cultivating crops such as wheat, barley, rice and domesticating animals such as sheep, goats and cattle for food, labour, and resources like milk and wool. Instead of migrating, people established permanent villages with improved housing. The period is marked by the use of polished stone tools (sickles, axes), wearing of textiles, and the development of pottery for storing food.

Development of Agriculture

The emergence of agriculture was the most important development of the Neolithic Age. Early man turned into a Food Producer from a Food Gatherer. Agriculture led to a settled life. Man moved into larger settlements. He cultivated the fields, grew crops and stayed in one place. He did not have to move from place to place in search of food. He started living in huts made of dried leaves and mud. The first cereals to be grown were wheat and barley. Later, he learnt to domesticate animals like dog, goat, sheep and cattle. Agriculture was first practiced by the people of the Near East (Modern Iran, Iraq, Turkey) and the Levant (Lebanon, Palestine and Southern Syria) as early as 7000 BCE. Many Neolithic sites have been discovered where traces of wheat, millets, lentils, grains and animal bones have been found. They are

Mehrgarh in Pakistan.

Mahagara in Uttar Pradesh.

Burzahom in Kashmir.

Hallur in Karnataka and Paiyampalli in Tamil Nadu.

Domestication of Animals

The first domesticated animal was the dog. Dogs were most probably used for guarding caves and for pulling loads. Cattle, goat and sheep provided meat, milk and wool. The domestication of animals gave rise to pastoralism. Pastoralism is a form of farming in which animals such as camels, goats, cattle and sheep move in herds in search of fresh pastures and water.

Pottery

Once early man learnt how to grow food, he also developed the art of storing food. He needed vessels for it. Neolithic man needed vessels to store food grains and water. He learned to make clay pottery with his hands. Later, these pots were decorated with various designs of animal

figures on them. With the invention of potter's wheel, various types of pottery could be made easily and faster.

Invention of the Wheel

One of the major achievements of the Neolithic period was the invention of the wheel. The potter's wheel enabled him to make pots of different shapes and sizes. The use of wheels made transportation easier and faster. The invention of wheel led to invention of carts and then to bullock-driven carts. Man could now move heavy loads easily and go from one place to another faster. Various types of pottery enabled early men to store grains and seeds for the next season. The invention of wheel quickened the march of civilization.



Neolithic Tools

Tools of the Neolithic Period included agricultural implements like sickles, digging sticks, hoes and grinding tools like the mortar and pestles. Polished stone tools with fine cutting edge were used for grinding grains and other products. Some tools were made of bones too. Stone axes found from Bellary district (Karnataka) also belonged to this period.



Neolithic tools



Polished stone tools of the Neolithic Period

Mesolithic: The Middle Stone Age when men started making advanced stone tools.
Neolithic: The New Stone Age when men began to grow plants and domesticate animals.
Nomad: One who moves from place to place in search of food.
Paleolithic: The Old Stone Age when men used only stone tools and were food gatherers.
Sites: Places where material remains of the past are found
Microliths: Small tools used by people of Mesolithic period.