

The Early Peoples

I. The Old Stone Age or Paleolithic Age (1,000,000 – 8,000 B.C.)

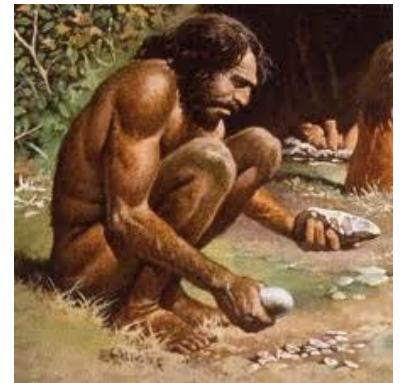
These people were “nomads” who wandered from place to place in search of food. Humans learned to live in small groups, cooperate in hunting and fighting, seek shelter in caves, paint pictures on cave walls, and make fires. These people shaped rough stone into crude tools and weapons, such as flat hatchets, knives, spearheads, and chisels. People evolved (changed) from “Neanderthal” (short, stocky, low-browed) → “Cro-Magnon” (taller and more intelligent) → “Homo Sapiens” (thinking man).



II. The New Stone Age or Neolithic Age (8,000 B.C. – 4,000 B.C.)

These people polished stone into sharper implements. They settled into small communities and secured food by farming. They learned to plow the soil, domesticate (tame) animals, use the wheel for transportation, and weave plant fibers into cloth.

Neanderthal Man



III. The Copper and Bronze Age (4,000 B.C. – 1,000 B.C.)

These people used metals to form more serviceable implements such as daggers, swords, axes, and hammers. The first “civilizations” (advanced societies) developed during this period. People organized governments, built cities, developed industry, established trade, and kept the first written records.

IV. The Iron Age (1,000 B.C. – Present)

People forged iron into stronger tools and weapons. Iron is a harder, more durable metal than bronze. Today’s complex industrial civilization depends greatly on iron and steel.

Questions to Answer

1. How did people evolve (change) during the Old Stone Age?
2. Why was it important to domesticate (tame) animals and use the wheel?
3. Why was the development of civilization important?
4. Why is iron and steel important?