

CLASS VI
HISTORY
CHAPTER 2: FROM HUNTING-GATHERING TO GROWING FOOD

By
Net Explanations Teacher

THINGS TO ANSWER AFTER READING FROM THE CONTEXT

1. Why were the earliest people called “hunter gatherers”? Cite two reasons.
2. What kind of tools did the hunter gatherers possibly use? Why did they use those tools?
3. How do you think the hunting carried out today by modern people is different from the ones carried out by hunter gatherers?

❖ **Before starting the chapter, you need to understand about some stages, that is the Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic. The word “Lithic” means “stone” and the words paleo, meso and neo means old, middle and new respectively.**

- **Paleolithic: The old stone age**
- **Mesolithic: The middle stone age**
- **Neolithic: The new stone age**

❖ **THE HUNTER GATHERERS: THE NOMADIC PEOPLE**

- **STORY BEHIND THE NAME:** The “hunter gatherers” were one of the earliest beings in the subcontinent who lived some two million years ago. They were always on the move, wandered from one place to another, and were excellent hunters. The name “hunter gatherers” is used to describe them because they carried out hunting to kill animals and gather food. Unlike modern hunters, they did not kill for pleasure, they killed for their food and survival.
- **REASONS FOR WANDERING:** The hunter gatherers did not always stick to one place, they did not have homes and families like we do have today, but were limited to caves and trees. Apart from hunting, they survived on fruits and other resources available in the forest.

- a. They never permanently settled at one place as they felt they would use up all the resources, and so travelled from one place to another.
- b. Secondly, they would follow the animals who followed their prey, or vegetation to hunt them down.
- c. They were close to nature and understood the seasons and the fruits that would grow in them. So, they chose places according to the seasons and the resources that would be available in the particular season.
- d. Even the earliest human beings planned their settlements near the rivers and streams, for easy availability of water. So, in the dry seasons, in case they did not live near perennial rivers, they would move to different places.

❖ **THINGS TO ANSWER AFTER READING THE CONTEXT**

1. What are the best possible evidences that suggest the existence of hunter gatherers?
2. What is the difference between factory and habitation sites?

❖ **EVIDENCE OF THEIR EXISTENCE**

The existence of hunter gatherers came to light when the archeologists discovered wall paintings made by the early beings, and the stone, bones or wood tools made by them for hunting or probably, for other reasons as well. The hunter gatherers were smart people, they made tools according to their needs.

- They made tools for separating meat and bones from the animal's body that they hunted, for chopping fruits, barks of trees and making clothes out of animal skin.
- The stone tools have survived till date. Other than that, they spiked the edges of stone to attach them to wood or bone, to make arrows.
- The tools and the material used began to improve with each passing age.

❖ **FACTORY AND HABITATION SITES**

As mentioned earlier, the archeologists came to know about the hunter gatherers as they found tools and paintings. The hunter gatherers chose areas that had good resources like water, food and good quality stones. These were the factors that affected the decisions of the hunter gatherers.

- **Factory Sites:** The factory sites are those sites where stone tools and chips of stone, probably the waste part of stones chipped out while making tools, were found. Here, the tools were made, and so they have been named as the factory sites.
- **Habitation cum Factory Sites:** The sites where tools were made, and where the hunter gatherers resided for longer periods of time, were called habitation cum factory sites.

Remember, we are using the term “hunter gatherers” here, as we are talking about people who had not settled and had not started farming yet. They were wanderers, and led a nomadic life.

❖ THINGS TO ANSWER AFTER READING THE CONTEXT

1. How do you think were the tools made?
2. Find out about the best tools made by the hunter gatherers.
3. How was the fire invented?
4. What was the best use of fire?
5. How was the society of hunter gatherers different from the ones we live in today?

❖ THE ART OF MAKING STONE TOOLS

Hunter gatherers had developing minds, and they used it to create tools out of different techniques. Let’s learn about the two possible techniques used by the nomadic people to make tools.

- **Stone on stone technique:** Have you noticed how a hammer is used to bring shape to the wood, or how it is used to make things? The technique is somewhat similar, where one stone was used as a hammer, held in one hand,

and the other stone was the one which was used to make a tool, also called a core, held in the other hand. The stone tool, the hammer one, was used to strike on the other stone, where flakes of stone were cut off, until it became a desired tool.

- **Pressure Flaking:** The core was placed on a firm surface, with the hammer stone placed on a bone or stone, placed on the core. The flakes were removed to make a desired tool.

The tools were used for many purposes like digging up the soil for edible roots, making clothes and also cutting meat.

❖ THE INVENTION OF FIRE

Archeologists often say or assume that fire was a sudden, unplanned invention, or should I say discovery. It is said that fire was suddenly invented when the early man was rubbing two dry stones together, when a spark hit one of the dry leaves on the ground, and a fire lit up. They started noticing that wild animals were scared of the fire. And the art of cooking, it started when a piece of meat fell into the fire, and when they ate it, they found it much more soft and edible.

The traces of ashes have been found at the Kurnool caves.

❖ A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT: HERDING AND LEARNING

It is said that herding started due to climate change, which happened some 12,000 years ago, and because of which grasslands started appearing. With the coming up of grasslands, came grass eating animals like deer, antelope, cow and many others. The early men started noticing their eating habits and breeding seasons, and this might have led to the culture of rearing animals. The change in climate also led to the natural growth of wheat, barley, maize and other edible crops in different parts of the world. Men might have collected or observed their growth, and started planting themselves, and the culture of farming started with these observations.

❖ THE WORK DIVISION

There was no gender divided work, after the farming and rearing culture started among the early men. It is very important for you to understand that when the culture of cultivation and rearing started, the early man started settling at one place, and the family and society culture started taking place, where man stopped wandering around and lived in huts, and started socializing. We can assume that men and women worked in the fields together, or women might have been more engaged in household work, with less physical labor, like painting and men might have gone for more collection of food and fruits.

Download from: www.netexplanations.com