

Early Humans and the Agricultural Revolution

Lesson 2 The Agricultural Revolution

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do people adapt to their environment?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *How did farming change people's lives?*
2. *What was life like during the Neolithic Age?*
3. *What characteristics did early civilizations share?*

Terms to Know

domesticate to tame

systematic agriculture farming

Neolithic Age the period of time from 8000 to 4000 B.C.

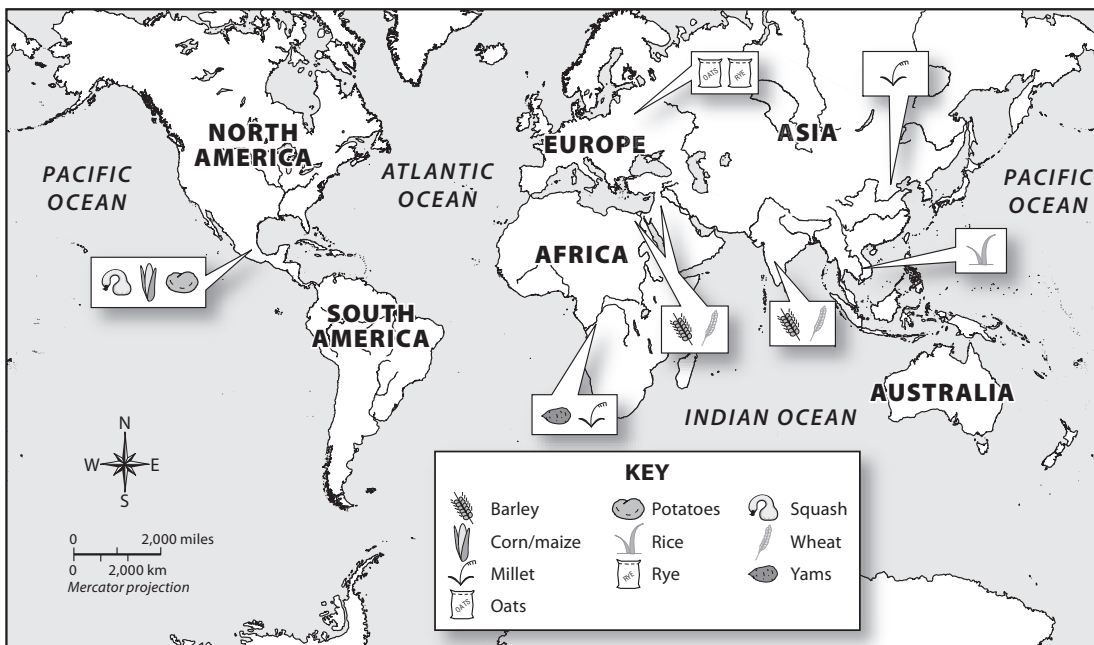
specialization training for a particular job

Bronze Age the period of time from 3000 to 1200 B.C.

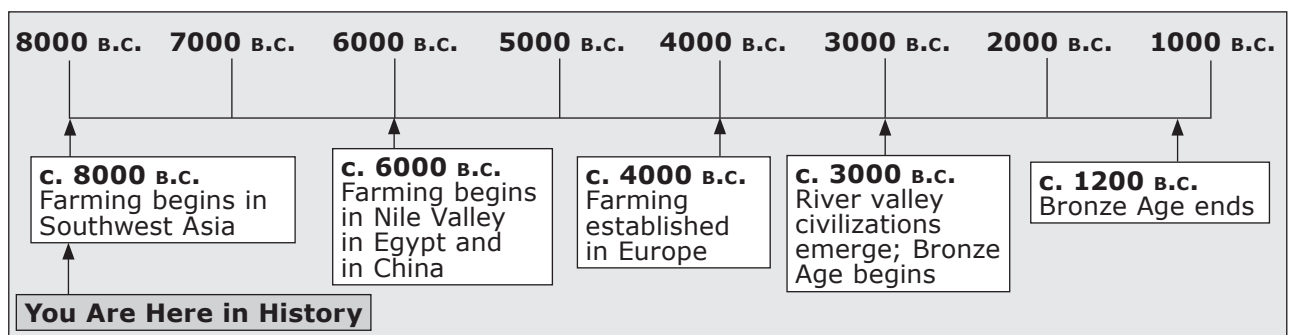
monarchy a government led by a king or a queen

shrine a place where people worship

Where in the world?



When did it happen?



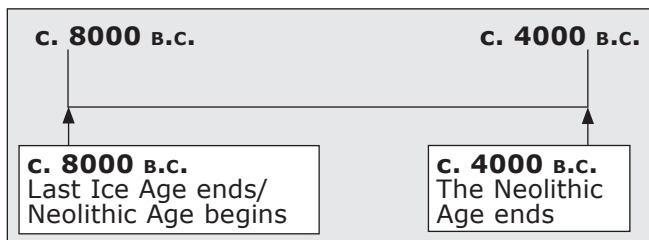
Early Humans and the Agricultural Revolution

Lesson 2 The Agricultural Revolution, *Continued*

Neolithic Times

The last Ice Age ended about 10,000 years ago. The climate on Earth became warmer and the ice melted. People began to stay in one place. They started to grow grains and vegetables. People also began to **domesticate**, or tame, animals. This was the beginning of **systematic agriculture**, or farming. Farming slowly replaced hunting and gathering as the main source of food for people.

This change in the way people lived marked the start of the **Neolithic Age**. The Neolithic Age began about 8000 B.C. and ended about 4,000 years later. Agriculture was the biggest change that took place during the Neolithic Age. This change happened very slowly.



The switch from hunting and gathering to farming is called the Agricultural Revolution. Once humans learned how to grow crops and tame animals, their lives became very different. There was a steady supply of food. The population, or the number of people who live in a place, grew. People stopped moving around to look for food. They began to live in settled communities. These changes took place around the world.

Life in the Neolithic Age

Neolithic farmers grew fruits, nuts, and different grains. Some farmers also raised sheep, goats, and cattle. People ate fish and eggs. Some men continued to hunt. People in early communities often had more and better food than nomads.

Better food led to healthier people. Healthier people lived longer and had more children. The population grew. More people could grow more crops. Eventually, farmers grew more food than they could eat. They began to trade food for things they could not make themselves.

Marking the Text

1. Circle the word that means the same as *tame*. Circle the word that means the same as *farming*.

Defining

2. What is the Agricultural Revolution?

Reading Check

3. How did the spread of farming change the lives of nomads?

Cause and Effect

4. What was the effect of having a better supply of food?

Early Humans and the Agricultural Revolution

Lesson 2 The Agricultural Revolution, *Continued*

Marking the Text

5. Underline the work done by men. Circle the work done by women.

Reading Check

6. How did the spread of agriculture affect trade?

Comparing

7. What were two things that early civilizations had in common?

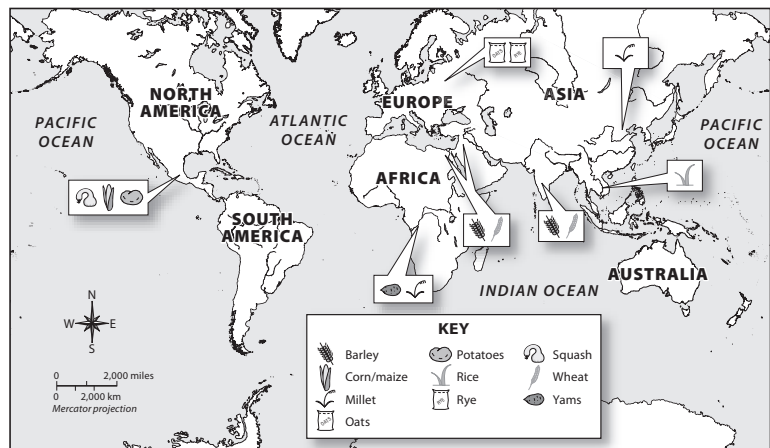
People began to do work other than farming. They could do tasks that matched their talents. This is called **specialization**. Some people made jewelry or weapons. Others made pottery or wove cloth. These people also traded their products for goods they did not have.

In Neolithic communities, most men were farmers. They grew the food and protected the village. Women took care of the children and wove cloth for clothing.

People continued to make advancements. In western Asia, people discovered that mixing tin and copper created bronze. Bronze was stronger than copper. Bronze tools and weapons were better than those made of stone. Bronze became widely used between 3000 and 1200 B.C. This period is known as the **Bronze Age**.

Civilizations Emerge

By the beginning of the Bronze Age, four great civilizations had appeared in river valleys. These civilizations were Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China.



These civilizations were far apart. But they had things in common.

- They developed in river valleys. The rich soil in river valleys made it easier to grow crops. Rivers provided fish. Rivers also encouraged trade.
- Increased trade led to the development of cities. Cities became the centers of civilization.
- People formed governments. Governments protected their people and food supplies. The first governments were monarchies. A **monarchy** is a government led by a king or a queen. Monarchs made laws to keep order.

Early Humans and the Agricultural Revolution

Lesson 2 The Agricultural Revolution, *Continued*

- Religion became more complex. People built **shrines**, or holy places. Priests performed ceremonies to win the approval of the gods and goddesses.
- People were organized into social classes. The classes were based on the type of work people did and the amount of wealth or power they had. Rulers and priests belonged to the highest class. Below this class were farmers and craftspeople. Enslaved people formed the lowest class.

During this time, written language developed. Early writing used symbols. People in early civilizations also produced art. They created paintings and sculptures. They built huge buildings, such as the pyramids.

Check for Understanding

Put these events in order. Write the letters in the order that the events happened.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| a. River valley civilizations emerge | 1. _____ |
| b. Farming begins in Southwest Asia | 2. _____ |
| c. Bronze Age begins | 3. _____ |
| d. Neolithic Age ends | 4. _____ |

List four characteristics shared by early river valley civilizations.

5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Reading Check

8. Why did early peoples form governments?



9. Place a two-tab Foldable along the dotted line to cover the Check for Understanding. Label the anchor tab *Warmer Climate Brings Change*. Label one of the two tabs *Neolithic Age* and the other *Bronze Age*. On the front of the tabs, list three words or phrases that you remember about each title. Use your notes to help you complete the activity under the tabs.

Glue Foldable here