

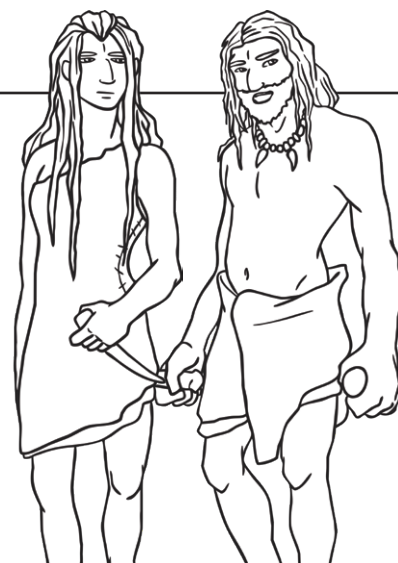
Comprehension

Part A

Read the text and then answer the questions.

Hunter-Gatherers

Early humans' survival depended on finding food. We call them hunter-gatherers because they had to hunt animals and fish and gather wild food. Humans didn't grow and raise their own food until the Neolithic period – before then, they would hunt whatever animals they could find. During the Stone Age in Britain, this could have been animals such as horses, deer, mammoths, hares, rhino and hyena. They would also hunt seals, seabirds and fish from rivers and the sea.



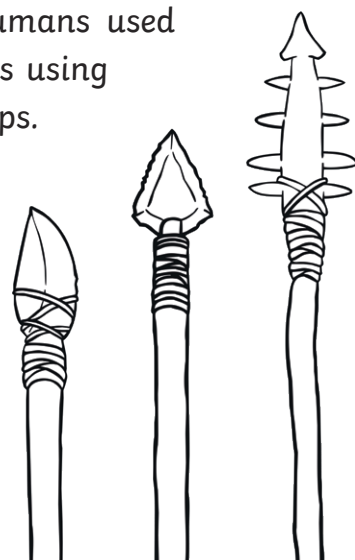
1. When did humans begin to grow and farm their own food?

2. Which animals did humans hunt on land?

Weapons

Hunters used different weapons to kill their food. These weapons could be made from bone, ivory, wood, antlers, stone or flint. The first early humans used rocks, stone axes and wooden spears that were hardened at the tips using fire. Later, humans developed spears that had sharp bone or flint tips. They also invented spear-throwers, which were tools to help them throw spears further and with more force. Spear-throwers made it possible to kill or wound an animal from a safer distance.

For hunting fish, hunters would carve barbs into antlers to make a harpoon that would stick into the flesh of the fish. These would be attached to the end of spears. They used bows and arrows to hunt smaller forest animals. By around 12,000 BC, hunters were using dogs to help in the chase.



3. Once humans started to add tips to their spears, what did they make the spear tips from?

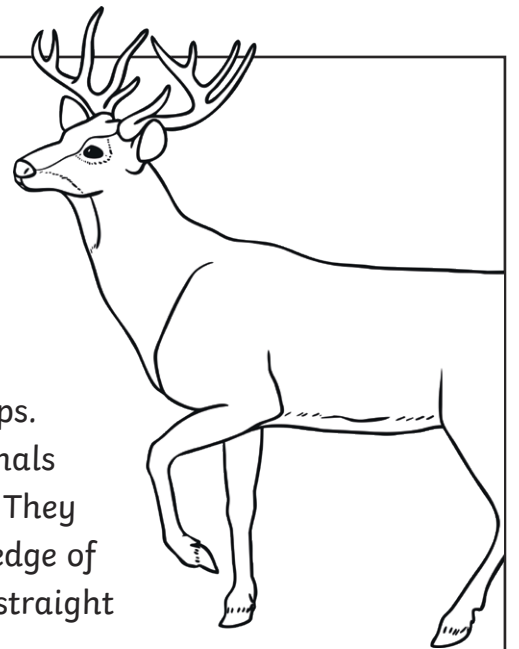
4. How did spear-throwers help early humans to hunt more effectively?

5. When did humans begin to grow and farm their own food?

6. Which animals did humans hunt on land?

Hunters had to be clever in order to catch animals that were larger and quicker than them. They would find out where the animals went to drink, or where they crossed rivers, so that they could attack when the animals were most vulnerable. They would choose the animals that looked weaker.

Animals could also be caught in snares or carefully set traps. Often, hunters would work together to chase a herd of animals into a ravine, or a swamp, where they were easier to attack. They used stones to build walls in a funnel shape that led to the edge of a cliff and then chased the animals between the walls and straight over the cliff.



7. Why did hunters attack animals while they were drinking?

8. How would hunters kill animals near a cliff?

9. Which other foods do you think were eaten in Stone Age times, apart from the ones mentioned in the text above?

Part B

Read the text and then answer the questions.

Section 1

In Stone Age times, when an animal had been killed in a hunt, every part of a kill was used. One big kill could feed a family for months. They cooked the meat to eat or dried it to save it for later. Early humans would eat absolutely everything from an animal, including the blood, feet and brain. They made bones into tools and weapons. They could also smash the bones so they could eat the marrow from the inside. Marrow is high in fat so it would have been a good energy source. They would also make animal hides into clothes, use the fat in lamps and make antlers into tools and weapons.



Section 2

There is evidence that early humans started using fire in Britain up to 400,000 thousand years ago. Today, we have many different ways to cook food and several different appliances that we can use. However, they still managed to cook with some variety back then. Sometimes, they grilled or roasted meat on a spit. At other times, they wrapped meat in straw or leather and secured it with a twig or straw rope. They put this into a pot of water that was heated by dropping in red-hot stones that had been heated in a fire. A trough or pit would be heated with fire and lined with hot stones. The pot would be put inside and covered with more hot stones.



Section 3

The Stone Age diet would have varied according to what was local and available. They had access to a wide variety of natural foods like seeds, berries, nuts and roots and they knew which plants were safe to eat. They used herbs to flavour food, just like we do today. They would gather eggs, insects, snails and caterpillars. Large quantities of wild nuts and berries grew in the woods. Nuts were particularly good because they could be easily stored. At the coast, humans could eat mussels, crabs, oysters, lobsters and other seafood all year round.



1. Did a tribe eat all of the meat from a kill quickly before it went off?

2. List two different uses of bones from an animal that had been killed during the Stone Age.

a) _____

b) _____

3. What was an advantage of eating marrow?

4. How did Stone Age people heat water to cook their meat in?

5. What was one advantage of gathering nuts for food in the Stone Age?

6. Read the text again to find words with similar meanings to the following words or phrases:

equipment	
diversity	
attached	
in the neighbouring area	
obtainable	
amounts	

7. This text could be improved by the use of subheadings. Which subheadings would you choose for the different sections within the text?

Section 1	
Section 2	
Section 3	

★ ★
★ Challenge Task ★

Design a meal that someone might have eaten during Stone Age times. Explain how they would have got the food and how they would have cooked it. You may choose between writing or drawing and labelling for this challenge.



Comprehension Answers

Part A

1. When did humans begin to grow and farm their own food?
 - *Humans began to grow and farm their own food in the Neolithic period.*
2. Which animals did humans hunt on land?
 - *Humans hunted horses, deer, mammoths, hares, rhino and hyena on land.*
3. Once humans started to add tips to their spears, what did they make the spear tips from?
 - *The spear tips were made from sharp bone or flint.*
4. How did spear-throwers help early humans to hunt more effectively?
 - *Spear-throwers helped humans to throw spears further and with more force, making it possible to kill or wound an animal from a safer distance.*
5. When did humans begin to use dogs to help them hunt?
 - *They used bows and arrows to hunt smaller forest animals.*
6. When did humans begin to use dogs to help them hunt?
 - *Humans began to use dogs to help them hunt by around 12,000 BC.*
7. Why did hunters attack animals while they were drinking?
 - *They attacked animals while they were drinking because the animals were vulnerable at that moment and not fully concentrating on everything around them.*
8. How would hunters kill animals near a cliff?
 - *Stone Age hunters used stones to build walls in a funnel shape that led to a cliff edge and then stampeded the animals between the walls and straight over the cliff.*
9. Which other foods do you think were eaten in Stone Age times, apart from the ones mentioned in the text above?
 - Example answer: *Ducks, berries, nuts.*

Part B

1. Did a tribe eat all of the meat from a kill quickly before it went off?
 - *The tribe did not eat all of the meat from a kill straight away. They dried some meat to save it for later.*

2. List two different uses of bones from an animal that had been killed during the Stone Age.
 - *Humans used bones to make tools and weapons.*
 - *Humans smashed bones open to eat the marrow inside.*
3. What was an advantage of eating marrow?
 - *The advantage of eating marrow was that it was high in fat so it was a great energy source.*
4. How did Stone Age people heat water to cook their meat in?
 - *They heated water by dropping hot stones into the pot.*
5. What was one advantage of gathering nuts for food in the Stone Age?
 - *One advantage of gathering nuts for food in the Stone Age was that they were easy to store.*
6. Read the text again to find words with similar meanings to the following words or phrases:

equipment	<i>appliances</i>
diversity	<i>variety</i>
attached	<i>secured</i>
in the neighbouring area	<i>local</i>
obtainable	<i>available</i>
amounts	<i>quantities</i>

7. This text could be improved by the use of subheadings. Which subheadings would you choose for the different sections within the text?

Section 1	<i>How a Kill Was Used</i>
Section 2	<i>Preparing Food</i>
Section 3	<i>Gathering Food</i>

★ Challenge Task ★

Design a meal that someone might have eaten during Stone Age times.

Accept reasonable answers. Children may mention food that they have read about in 'How to Skin a Bear', this comprehension text or food from their own knowledge about the Stone Age.

Here is an example answer:

Mammoth meat – the mammoth was killed with spears or stampeded over a cliff and the meat was heated in a pit of hot stones.

Bone marrow – smashed from the centre of a mammoth bone.

Seeds and caterpillars – gathered fresh today.