

HISTORY: CLASS-6: SUMMARY

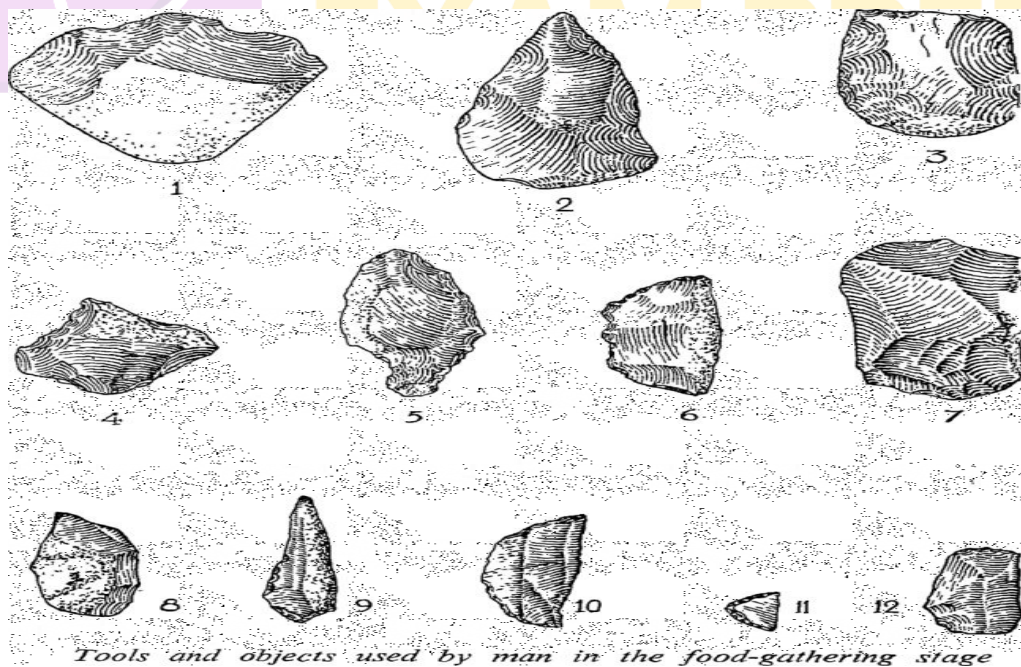
CHAPTER 1- EARLY MAN

Points of Discussion

- Nomadic human
- Tools and weapons
- Clothes
- Beginning of the settled life

1.Man as a nomad

- They wandered in groups from place to place, mainly in search of food and shelter.
- Eating fruits and hunting animals for food was common since they did not know how to grow vegetables and grains. Caves and leafy branches of trees were their shelter. India was covered with forests. Wild animals roamed freely; therefore, they needed tools to defend themselves-



- No written records; Only remains of the “prehistoric period” were these stone tools, the period has been given the name “STONE AGE”.
- EARLY STONE AGE TOOLS - Pebble tool – It was used as chopper, hand axe, cleaver, etc.
- MIDDLE STONE AGE TOOLS - borer, arrowhead, scrapper
- LATE STONE AGE TOOLS- points, crescentic blade, scrapper

1. Manuscripts- Manuscripts are ancient books, written either on dried palm leaves or the thin bark of the birch tree or on paper. Some of the languages in which the very old books are written are Pali and Prakrit, and some are written in Sanskrit and Arabic.

2. Inscriptions- Inscriptions refer to writing that is engraved either on a stone surface or on metal or on bricks.

3. Monuments- Some of the very ancient towns and villages were either abandoned or destroyed, and their buildings were buried under the earth. They have to be dug out or excavated. But some buildings are still standing (such as temples) and do not need to be excavated.

4. Script- It refers to the forms of writing a language. The writing or the scripts in which the manuscripts of India are written resemble the modern scripts.

5. Archaeology— It refers to the study of the remains of the ancient past. This consists of monuments or buildings, coins, pottery, tools made of stone and metals, figures, images, and various other articles which people, who lived many centuries ago had used in their daily life.

2. Tools and Weapons-

- The larger pieces of stone of a size that can be held in a man’s fist were shaped into hammers and choppers and axe-heads. In the beginning, axe-heads were used without a handle for cutting branches of trees, etc. Later, they were tied to a stick which made it easier to use them. It enabled man to cut down trees, to kill animals, to dig the earth and to shape wood and stone.
- The smaller pieces of stone, usually the chips and flakes from the larger pieces, were worked very carefully until there was a thin edge to the stone, and these



pieces were then used as-knives and scrapers for finer work or were given a sharp point and tied to arrows and spears.

- Flint is a type of stone; it served a lot of purposes, including producing fire. Flint is hard but it chips easily. It was used with other stones for making tools and weapons. Some of these are found in the valley of the Sohan river in Punjab.
- In Kashmir valley, the bones of animals were used.
- Primitive man often lived by the side of a river or a stream in order to be near his water supply. Seen in parts of Deccan plateau- Narmada valley

3. Clothes- Faced little difficulty; When the weather was warm, little clothing was required. When it rained or the weather became cold, the skins of the animals which they killed as well as the bark of trees and large leaves were used as clothes. A deerskin or two wrapped around the body was enough to keep a man warm.

Beginning of the settled life:

1. **AGRICULTURE-** The most important discovery was growing plants and grain. This was the beginning of agriculture. He stopped being a nomad and began to settle down in one place as an agriculturist. It took almost 300,000 years for man to change from a “food-gatherer” to a “food-producer”. But once he had learnt to be a “food-producer”, he advanced very quickly.

2. **TAMING OF ANIMALS-** Another exciting discovery was that some of the animals of the forest could be tamed, that is, man could tame them and use them for his own purpose.

3. **DISCOVERY OF METALS** - Cutting down trees with stone axes was a tiring job. But with the discovery of metals, it was easier to cut down trees. Example- Copper was mixed with other metals, such as tin, zinc and lead, to make a new metal or alloy, called bronze. The period of stone implements used alone is called Stone Age (the Paleolithic and Neolithic Age) and the period when man began to use metal together with very tiny stone implements is called the Copper or Bronze Age (or the Chalcolithic Age). There are many places in India where copper or bronze axes and knives have been found- Brahmagiri (near Mysore) and Navda-Toli (on the Narmada).

4. **THE WHEEL-** A very important discovery was that of the wheel. No one knows who discovered it or when or where. Even to this day, the wheel is necessary, whether it be, for something as tiny as a wristwatch-or as large as the railway train. In addition, the use of the wheel improved the making of pottery.



5. NEOLITHIC AGE- The New Stone Age- “food-producing” stage-

- He began to domesticate animals and cultivate plants. The dog, goat and sheep were the first of the animals to be domesticated. Among plants, wheat and barley were the earliest cereals grown. To do this, man had to settle down in certain selected areas. This led to the growth of villages and farming communities.
- He needed certain tools with which he could clear the land, and others with which, he could prepare the land for cultivation. He required vessels to store his surplus grains or to hold liquids. This necessity led him to make earthen pots. The earliest pots were made by plastering round clay baskets. Later, they were made without using baskets.

6. EARLY VILLAGES- The wandering groups now settled in one place, forming a village where they built huts for themselves, grew barley, rice or wheat and kept goats and other animals. These were the earliest villages or village communities. They were to be found all over India but more often in river valleys and, on the flat plains, where the soil was more fertile, and it was easier to grow crops.

- The villages were small and the huts were close to each other. It was easier to defend the villages from wild-animals if everybody lived near each other. The area of the huts was probably surrounded either by mud wall or by a fence of some prickly bush. The fields lay outside the fence. The village itself was usually built on a slightly higher ground than the fields. The huts were thatched and ordinarily, consisted of just one room.
- Food was now cooked and not eaten raw. Meat was roasted over the fire. Grain was ground between two stones and the flour was made into bread. Cooking required vessels in which the food could be cooked. These were made of clay in earlier times, and later of metal. In the beginning, clay pots were made by women who shaped the clay by hand into forms resembling round jars, bowls and plates; these were dried in the sun. Later, the dry clay vessels were baked in a kiln which made them so hard and firm that they do not dissolve when put into water. Later, when the wheel came into use, it was quicker to make the pots on the wheel. The Chalcolithic potter sometimes decorated his pots with beautiful designs.

7. DRESS AND ORNAMENTS- The Chalcolithic man was fond of ornaments and decoration. The women wore ornaments of shell and bone and carried finely worked combs in their hair. Animal skins, bark and leaves were no longer the only forms of



clothing. Man had invented the technique of spinning and weaving cloth from the fluffy substance of the cotton plant. Leisure hours were given to fun and amusement.

8. SOCIETY - Living with other families and other groups meant that there had to be some law and order in the villages. The first thing was to decide what each person's job was to be. Some of the men went to work in the fields, while others looked after the animals or built huts, tools and weapons. Some of the women had to spin and weave cloth, and others made pottery, cook the food or look after the children. The decision to who should do what was taken by the village as a whole.

9. RELIGION- Men were afraid of thunder and earthquakes because they did not know what caused them. There was a sky-god who allowed the-sun to travel across the sky each day. The earth was like a mother feeding her children with crops and plants. They believed that if the sun was to rise each morning and the earth to bear crops, they must be worshipped with sacrifices and hymns. Small clay images were also made of the earth-goddess in the form of a mother. So, some of the men became 'magic men' who claimed they could control the weather and cure illness and prevent the people from being harmed. Later, there arose a group of priests who performed sacrifices and sang hymns on behalf of the whole community.

- When a man or a woman died, he or she was buried in a grave. Or, if a child died, it was placed in a large pot or urn and then buried in a grave. The grave was sometimes lined with large slabs of stone. Along with the body, pots and beads and any other items which the village believed the dead person would require on his journey were placed in the grave.

10. CULTURE- Man did not know how to write. He could teach his children how to grow crops and look after animals or make pots. But he could not write down his knowledge. The knowledge of writing came at a later stage, when cities came into existence.

