

## Living Off the Land

When people need food today, they go to the grocery store. It hasn't always been so easy! Our early ancestors didn't have grocery stores. They didn't know how to grow plants and raise animals for food. Instead, they went out each day to hunt wild animals and gather fruits and vegetables. They ate whatever food nature provided. People who obtain their food this way are called *hunter-gatherers*.

Although early hunter-gatherer societies did not leave written records, **archaeologists** know a lot about what these societies were like. These scientists make **deductions** from fossils and tools left behind by ancient people. They also study the practices of the few hunter-gatherer societies that exist today, such as the San people of southern Africa. Archaeologists believe that early hunter-gatherers lived together in small communities, or bands, of about 25 to 50 people from related families. The people were **nomads**, which means that they often moved from place to place. They always settled near a source of freshwater, such as a river or a lake. They built **temporary** shelters out of whatever materials they could find.

In ancient hunter-gather societies, people spent most of their time collecting and preparing food. They divided the labor, with the men hunting and fishing and the women and children gathering wild fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts, and roots. When they had used up all the food in an area, the people moved on to a new location. Although they moved often, they stayed within a certain territory and were familiar with its various plants and animals. This knowledge allowed them to be more effective at finding food.



Archaeologists can learn much about ancient hunter-gatherers from the cave paintings they made.

Sometime in the last 5,000 to 10,000 years, many hunter-gatherers settled in one place and became farmers. They discovered the advantages of raising their own animals and planting their own food. By settling down, the people were **eventually** able to develop civilizations.

### MONDAY

Choose the definition that matches the bold word in the sentence.

- Archaeologists** learn about ancient humans from fossils and tools.
  - Ⓐ scientists who study stars
  - Ⓑ scientists who study past human life and activity
- Based on the age of the surrounding rock, we made a **deduction** that the fossil was millions of years old.
  - Ⓐ a logical conclusion
  - Ⓑ something that is taken away
- Grandpa lives like a **nomad**, staying with each of his six children for a few weeks at a time.
  - Ⓐ a city dweller
  - Ⓑ a wanderer who does not live in a fixed place
- We used a shoe box as a **temporary** home for the squirrel until we could release it in the park.
  - Ⓐ not permanent
  - Ⓑ comfortable
- I hope my older sister will **eventually** move out so that I can have a room to myself.
  - Ⓐ at a later time
  - Ⓑ ancient

# TUESDAY

What information did you learn from the picture and caption?

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# WEDNESDAY

Choose the correct answer.

- Who are the San people?  
Ⓐ an ancient hunter-gatherer society  
Ⓑ a modern hunter-gatherer society  
Ⓒ a group of archaeologists  
Ⓓ people who live in San Francisco
- Why did hunter-gatherers move from place to place?  
Ⓐ They moved when food ran out.  
Ⓑ They became bored with the scenery.  
Ⓒ They wanted to stay in shape.  
Ⓓ The passage does not say.
- What was the author's purpose in writing this article?  
Ⓐ to persuade  
Ⓑ to entertain  
Ⓒ to inform  
Ⓓ to tell a story

# THURSDAY

Write **M** if the sentence is the main idea. Write **D** if it's a detail.  
Write **X** if the information is not in the passage.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Hunter-gatherers made tools from animal bones and stones.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hunter-gatherers divided labor between men and women.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hunter-gatherers always settled near freshwater sources.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hunter-gatherers built temporary shelters out of the materials they found.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hunter-gatherers got all their food and other materials from nature.

# FRIDAY

What advantages do farmers have over hunter-gatherers?

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