



The First People



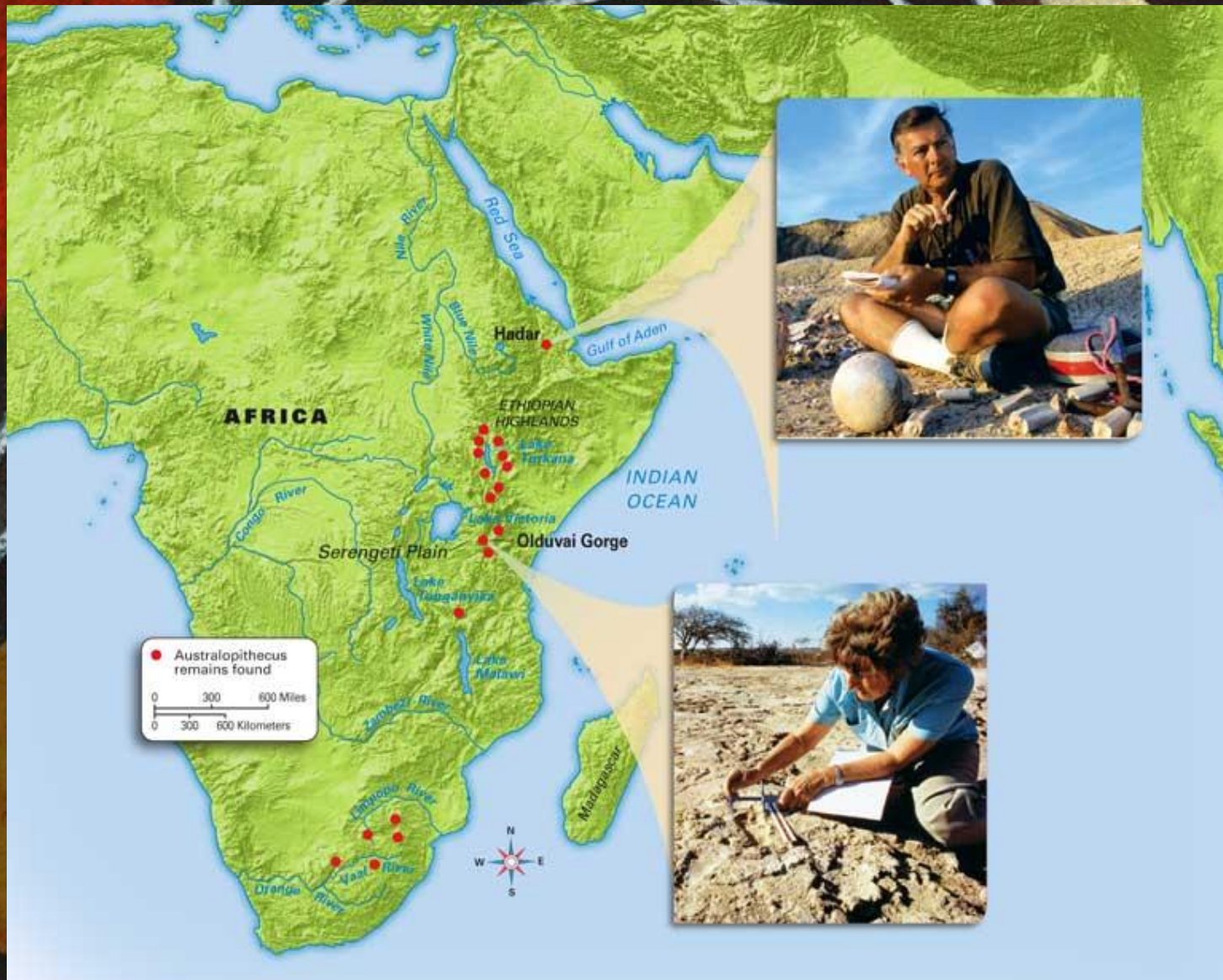
Scientists Study Remains

- Although humans have lived on the earth for more than a million years, writing was not invented until about 5,000 years ago. Historians call the time before there was writing **prehistory**.



Prehistory

- To study prehistory, historians rely on the work of archaeologists and anthropologists.
- Archaeologists have found old bones that appear to belong to **hominids**, early **ancestors** of humans.
- Discoveries of ancient bones give us information about early humans and their ancestors, but not all scientists agree on the meaning of these discoveries.



Donald Johanson discovered the bones of Lucy, an early hominid that lived more than 3 million years ago. Mary Leakey found some of the earliest ancestors of humans in Olduvai Gorge.



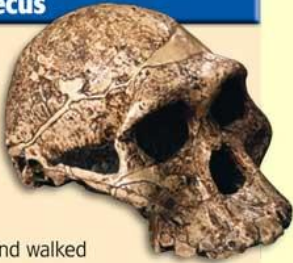
Hominids and Early Humans

- As time passed hominids became more like modern humans.
- Many scientists think that the first modern humans appeared in Africa about 200,000 years ago.
- Scientists call these early humans *homo sapiens*, or “wise man.” Every person alive today belongs to this group.

Early Hominids

Australopithecus

- Name means "southern ape"
- Appeared in Africa about 4–5 million years ago
- Stood upright and walked on two legs
- Brain was about one-third the size of modern humans



Homo habilis

- Name means "handy man"
- Appeared in Africa about 2.4 million years ago
- Used early stone tools for chopping and scraping
- Brain was about half the size of modern humans



An early Stone Age chopper

Homo erectus

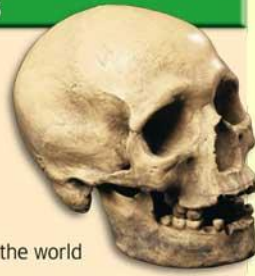
- Name means "upright man"
- Appeared in Africa about 2–1.5 million years ago
- Used early stone tools like the hand ax
- Learned to control fire
- Migrated out of Africa to Asia and Europe



A hand ax

Homo sapiens

- Name means "wise man"
- Appeared in Africa about 200,000 years ago
- Migrated around the world
- Same species as modern human beings
- Learned to create fire and use a wide variety of tools
- Developed language



A flint knife

Four major groups of hominids appeared in Africa between 5 million and about 200,000 years ago. Each group was more advanced than the one before it and could use better tools.



Stone Age Tools

- During the **Paleolithic** (pay-lee-uh-LI-thik) **Era**, which lasted until about 10,000 years ago, people used sharpened stones as **tools**.
- Stone tools were probably used to:
 - cut
 - Chop
 - scrape roots, bones, or meat.
- Later, people learned how to attach wooden handles to sharp stones to make hand axes and spears.



Hunter-Gatherer Societies

- Anthropologists believe that early humans lived in small groups of **hunter-gatherers**.
- In these **societies**, men hunted and women collected plants to eat and took care of children.

Hunter-Gatherers

Hunting

Most hunting was done by men. They worked together to bring down large animals.

Art

People painted herds of animals on cave walls.

Gathering

Most gathering was done by women. They gathered food like wild plants, seeds, fruits, and nuts.

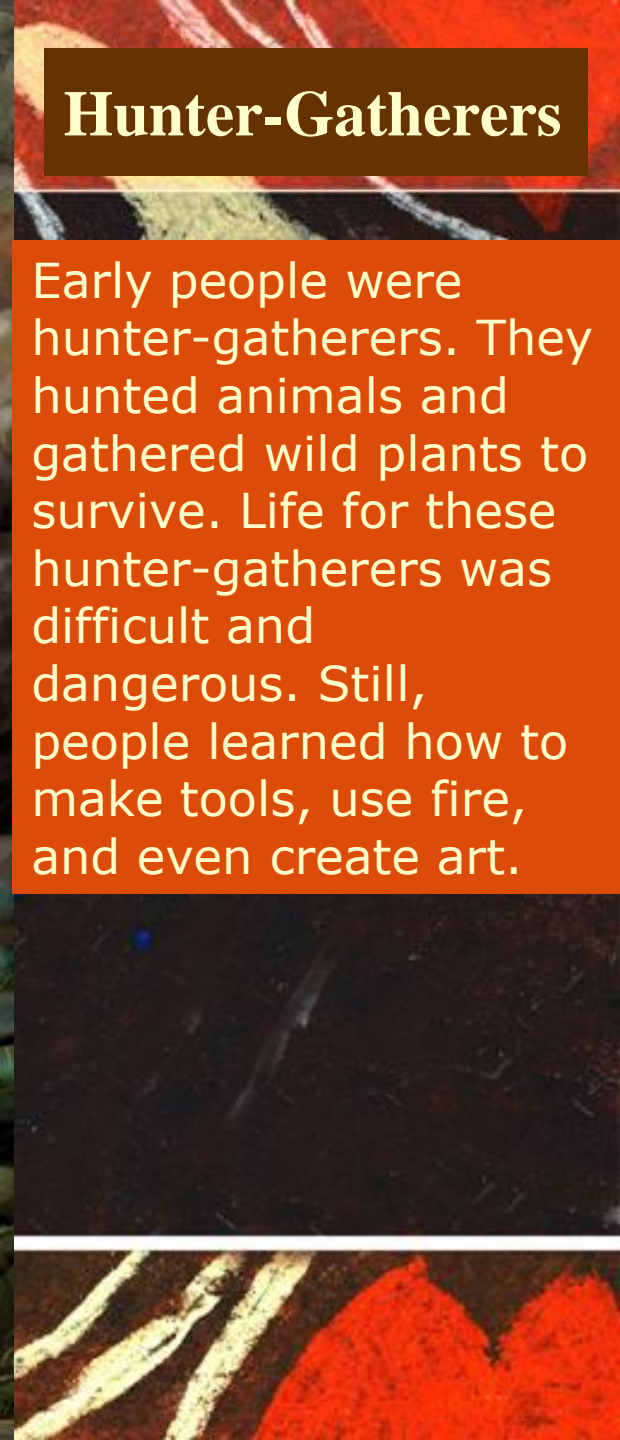
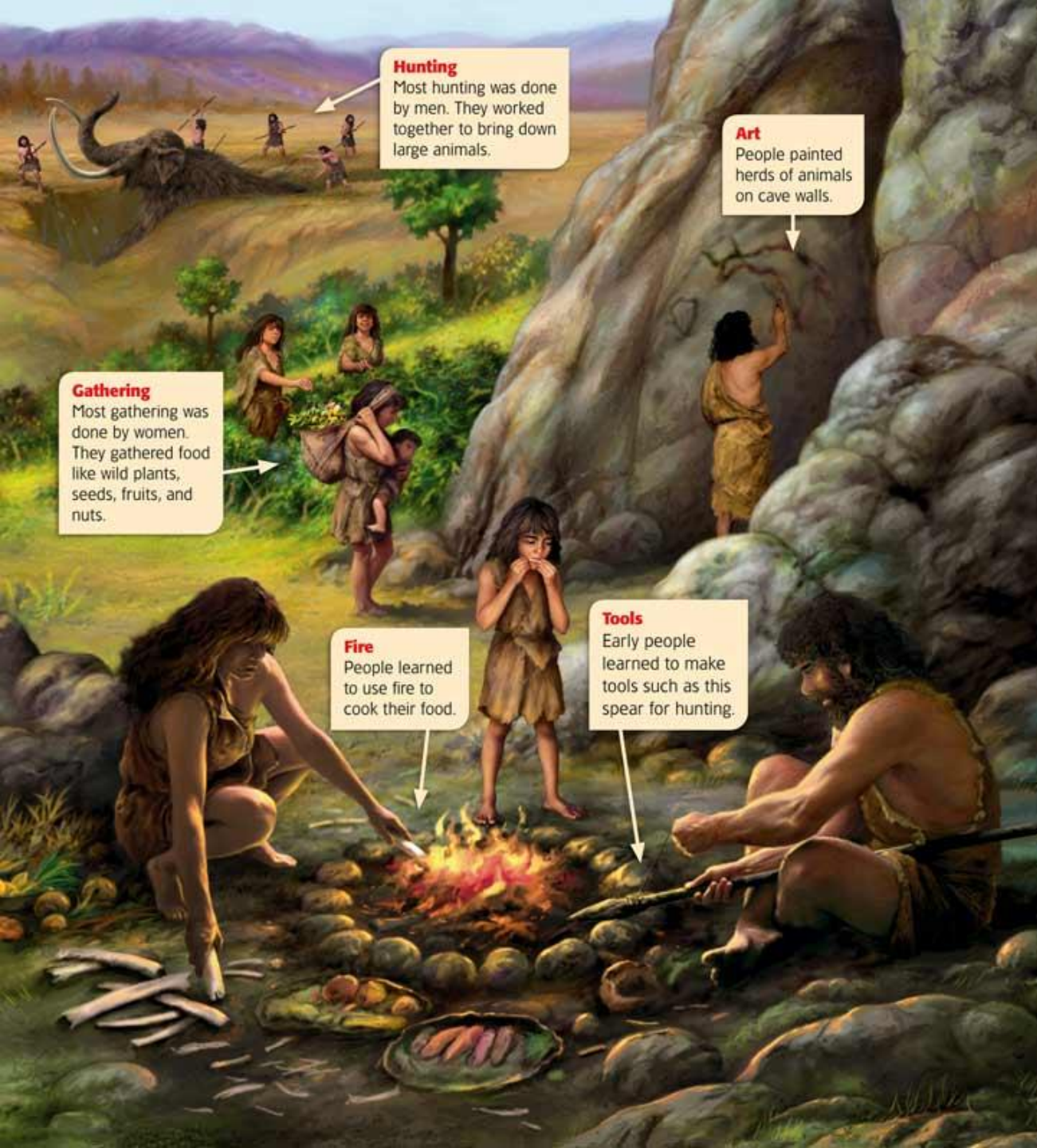
Fire

People learned to use fire to cook their food.

Tools

Early people learned to make tools such as this spear for hunting.

Early people were hunter-gatherers. They hunted animals and gathered wild plants to survive. Life for these hunter-gatherers was difficult and dangerous. Still, people learned how to make tools, use fire, and even create art.





Hunter-Gatherer Societies

- These societies developed cultures with language, religion, and art.
- Language developed as a means of communicating and of resolving issues like how to **distribute** food.



Stone Age Tools



Cave Painting