

Oak Meadow

Grade 6

Ancient Civilizations
Teacher Manual

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Grade 6



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The Stone Age

Reading

Read “The Stone Age” (found in Reading Selections below).

Assignments

1. Draw a large map of the outline of the continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe on a large piece of poster paper. Use a world map as a reference and try to draw continents accurately and to scale. Do not add any countries yet. You will be adding to this map all year, so you should use a very large piece of paper. Make your continents big enough that you have space to add in the countries later. You can put the North and South American continents on this map, or you can create a separate map for them (in lesson 30).

Include the following on your map (each should be labeled):

A compass rose showing the four directions (north, south, east, west)

Major bodies of water

The equator

Keep this map. You will be adding to it throughout the year.

It might help if your student first draws an outline on the paper with one finger, getting a general idea of where each continent will go and how big it will be. Next, your student can use a pencil and lightly sketch the outlines, making sure that everything fits on the page in relative size and proximity before making the lines permanent.

Check that each continent and major body of water is labeled, and that the equator is clearly shown.

2. Choose one of the following topics and write one page:
 - a. In what ways do you think fire was important to the Stone Age people? What do you think they used it for? What kinds of changes in their lives might have occurred after they learned to use fire?

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- Read “The Stone Age.”
- Begin creating a world map.
- Write about a topic related to life in the Stone Age.
- Draw a representation of prehistoric art.
- Choose a project to complete.
- Activity: Stone Age Art and Tools

Fire was important to Stone Age people for warmth, to light the inside of caves and other shelters, to cook meat, to keep animals away, and to provide protection from others. Your student may think of more ideas.

- b. Find out three animals that were alive at the same time as the Stone Age people. Think about the ways in which people may have used the different parts of each animal. Give specific examples and add illustrations if you'd like to.

Some animals concurrent to the Stone Age, and now extinct, are the mammoth, saber-toothed tiger, and woolly rhinoceros. Animals that are not extinct, but hunted by the cave men, include pig and wild boar, deer, caribou and reindeer, rhinoceros, fish, bison, bear, hare, and fox. Animal parts and their possible uses include the following:

Bones were used for tools and weapons; mammoth bones were sometimes used to make the frame for a hut.

Skins and fur were used for clothing and bedding and to carry things; thick hides were used for shelter.

Horns, antlers, and tusks were used for tools and weapons.

Sinew was used for tying, strapping, and sewing.

Hoofs were used for tools.

- c. Explore your neighborhood and look for food that you think a Stone Age person might eat in your area today. (Remember, list only foods that would be naturally found in the environment.) Write a report describing the foods and why they might be edible or appealing to eat. If you like, make a colorful illustration of the nuts, berries, leaves, fruits, and roots you find.

Results will vary according to the part of the country the student lives in. A *Peterson's Field Guide* is a helpful resource.

3. Go to the library or search online to look at pictures of early cave paintings and carvings. Draw a picture showing an accurate representation of one or more. Label it with where the original was found and any other information known about it.

The most famous cave paintings have been found at Lascaux in France and Altamira in Spain. Other sites include Font de Gaume, La Mouthe, Pair-non-Pair, and Niaux in France. Carvings and figures have been located at La Madeleine, Lespugne, Laugerie Basse, and Mas d'Azil in France, Pavlov and Brno in Czechoslovakia, and in Kostienko, Russia.

4. Do **one** of the following projects this week:
 - a. Write a diary about one week in the life of a cave man, woman, or child. Write it in the first person, with yourself as the central character.

This project should include information about life as a hunter and/or gatherer. Students are likely to mention the difficulty of having to find food, and may describe details of shelter and clothing. Dangers from wild animals, harsh weather, and rudimentary medicine might also be mentioned.

- b. Pretend you are going on an archeological assignment. You are about to excavate one of the early caves used by primitive humans. Write a newspaper article describing your findings. Be sure to include information about the tools you find, the floor plan of the cave, paintings on the walls, and various other artifacts you might find. You will need to look in the encyclopedia or other resource book to find more information about caves and archaeological finds of early humans to help you write this article.

Information given in the article might include the following:

Descriptions of tools, such as spears, knives, axes, hammers, skin scrapers, arrowheads, sewing needles, and digging sticks, including what they are made of and how they were made

Any humanlike bones or skulls

Artifacts such as carvings or paintings

Evidence of the use of fire

An idea of what was found in which parts of the cave and thoughts as to why

- c. Pretend you are mysteriously transported back in time to the Stone Age, where you meet a cave man, woman, or child. List ten questions you would like to ask this person. What would you like to know about the world of the past? After listing your questions, write a dialogue between you and the Stone Age person in which he or she answers your questions and discusses what prehistoric life is like.

Questions should not only ask what the Stone Age person eats or wears, but where and how they got the food or the garments. Look for details in the responses that show a clear sense of the era (even if the details are not strictly historically accurate).

Activity

Stone Age Art and Tools

Choose **one** of the following activities to complete:

1. Cave Painting
2. Stone Tools
3. Clay Figurine

The student may want to look at pictures on the Internet in the library to get ideas for this creative project.

FOR ENROLLED STUDENTS

You will be sending a sample of work from this lesson to your Oak Meadow teacher at the end of lesson 2. In the meantime, feel free to contact your teacher if you have any questions about the assignments or the learning process. You can use your assignment summary checklist, weekly planner, and the learning assessment form to keep track of your student's progress. You will be sending this documentation to your teacher every two weeks (with each submission of student work).

Learning Assessment

These assessment rubrics are intended to help track student progress throughout the year. Please remember that these skills continue to develop over time. Parents and teachers can use this space to make notes about the learning the student demonstrates or the skills that need work.

SOCIAL STUDIES	Not Yet Evident	Developing	Consistent	Notes
Demonstrates knowledge of prehistoric human culture				
Demonstrates knowledge of Stone Age tools and art				
Draws a map to scale with detail, color, and labels				

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Ancient Mesopotamia

Reading

Read “Ancient Mesopotamia” (found in Reading Selections below).

Assignments

1. Add the Fertile Crescent to your map and name it. Make sure to include the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Use color to make your map more interesting. Make sure your labels are clear (both legible and clearly attached to a particular feature of your map).

The Fertile Crescent includes the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, (Iraq) and then curves around to the west to include present day Syria and the area on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon). The Arabian Desert is inside its curve.

2. Draw a picture or build a model of a ziggurat. Look at a variety of pictures first to get a good sense of how they were built.
3. How do you feel about Hammurabi’s code of laws? How do you think it would be received in your town today? Do you think you could live with it? Write at least one full paragraph. Follow the rules for paragraph writing (topic sentence, supporting details, concluding sentence, complete sentences, correct punctuation, etc.).

When you have completed your writing, choose one statement from Hammurabi’s Code and draw or paint it to accompany your paragraph. Make a border for it and illustrate it.

Students are asked to express their own feelings and ideas about Hammurabi’s laws. Hammurabi’s code of laws may evoke strong emotion in students. They may express shock at the brutality inherent in the laws, or may notice how the laws unfairly favor wealthy citizens or those of higher social rank. Encourage your student to consider how it would impact him or her personally if such a code of laws was in effect today.

Look for students to express their ideas in an organized way, writing at least one paragraph that shows thoughtful consideration of the topic.

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- Read “Ancient Mesopotamia.”
- Add to your world map.
- Draw or build a model of a ziggurat.
- Write about Hammurabi’s code of laws.
- Choose a project about ancient Mesopotamia.
- Activity: Life in Ancient Babylon

4. Choose **one** of the following projects.

- a. The Babylonians wrote on clay tablets. Make a list of some of the ways in which we use paper today, and then describe how our culture would be different if we had to use clay tablets instead of paper. Think of as many examples as you can.

As your student goes through the day, have him or her make note of the many ways paper is used in the environment and how it would be different if we did not have paper. Consider bags, newspapers, signs, food labels, art, books, etc.

- b. Research the Sumerians and find examples of their accomplishments. List and describe what you discover.

This option is a research and writing assignment. Some accomplishments are listed below.

Plow drawn by oxen

Dairy processing

Beer made from mashed barley

Inventing the wheel, carts, and wagons

Making metal and inventing bronze

Trading by ship and by land with India and eastern Africa

Building the first cities, harbors, canals, temples, and palaces

Instituting a ruling class

Inventing writing and record keeping

- c. Find out more about the city of Ur and why it was an important discovery. Give specific examples in your discussion.

This option is a research and writing assignment. The city of Ur (sometimes called Uruk, located in the “Land of Ur”) is considered to have the most extensive and comprehensive sources of the earliest known civilization. It has been called “the country of origin” for many of the things that we now take for granted as being a part of civilization. Some believe it was where the gods first gave Earth to humankind, or even that it was where the original Garden of Eden was located. Language, art, worship, mathematics, commerce, tool making, agriculture, government, etc., were all developed for the first time into what we can undoubtedly call “civilization.”

Activity

Life in Ancient Babylon

Choose **one** of the following projects.

- a. Personal Trademark

- b. Cuneiform Writing
- c. Measuring System
- d. Moon Calendar
- e. Hanging Gardens
- f. Clay Writing.

FOR ENROLLED STUDENTS

At the end of this lesson, you will be sending the first batch of work to your Oak Meadow teacher along with your assignment summary checklist, the weekly planner (from the English coursebook), and the learning assessment forms, or any alternate form of documentation. Include any additional notes about the lesson work or anything you'd like your teacher to know. Feel free to include questions with your documentation—your teacher is eager to help.

If you have any questions about what to send or how to send it, please refer to your parent handbook and your teacher's welcome letter. Your teacher will respond to your submission of student work with detailed comments and individualized guidance. In the meantime, proceed to lesson 3 and continue your work.

Learning Assessment

These assessment rubrics are intended to help track student progress throughout the year. Please remember that these skills continue to develop over time. Parents and teachers can use this space to make notes about the learning the student demonstrates or skills that need work.

SOCIAL STUDIES	Not Yet Evident	Developing	Consistent	Notes
Demonstrates knowledge of cuneiform and early systems of writing				
Compares historical culture to modern day				
Demonstrates knowledge of Sumerian and Babylonian cultures				
Identifies locations on a map				
Draws a map to scale with detail, color, and labels				