Traces of Daily Life

Reading evidence of hunter-gatherer life across two ages

AWH.C.1.3 "Describe the characteristics of the hunter-gatherer societies (e.g., use of tools and fire, hunting weapons, physical adornments) from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic Age."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two examples of tools or weapons, circle two uses of fire, and number three details that show what continued or changed from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic Age.

What a Campsite Can Tell Us

1 Imagine a small group returning to a riverside camp during the Paleolithic Age. They gather edible plants and fish, then share food from a hunt. People shape sharp flakes from stone to cut meat and scrape hides. Wooden spears tipped with stone help hunters strike animals from a distance. A fire warms the camp, cooks food, and provides light after sunset. Moving to places where food is available is a common way of life, but groups choose routes according to local seasons and landscapes. Their survival depends on shared knowledge, tools, and the resources around them.

2 Objects left behind tell another part of the story. Some Paleolithic people pierce shells or animal teeth and string them into necklaces. Others use pigments such as red ochre on their bodies or objects. These adornments may have expressed identity or belonging, although an ancient object's exact meaning is often uncertain. Tools and weapons also vary by place and time. A group near water might use bone points to catch fish, while a group on open ground might rely more on spears. The details differ, but people across many regions adapt their equipment and appearance to the lives they lead.

3 During the Neolithic Age, farming spread in many regions, but not every community became a farming village. Some people continued to hunt, fish, and gather, sometimes alongside neighbors who grew crops. In some places, people used carefully ground stone axes to work wood; stone blades and projectile points also remained useful for preparing food and hunting. Fire still helped people cook and stay warm. Beads and other personal ornaments continued to appear, sometimes made from materials obtained through exchange. The shift toward farming did not erase older practices at once. Evidence shows both continuity and change, rather than one identical path for everyone.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Describe how two Paleolithic tools or weapons met different needs at the riverside camp.

2. Describe two ways fire supported life at a Paleolithic camp. How did its use continue in the Neolithic Age?

3. What might Paleolithic adornments tell us about people's lives? What evidence shows that adornment continued in the Neolithic Age?

4. As farming spread during the Neolithic Age, describe one hunter-gatherer practice that continued and one change in how some people lived.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four- or five-sentence museum label for a Neolithic campsite where archaeologists found a stone blade, fish bones, and a shell bead. Explain what the finds suggest, identify one uncertainty, and connect the camp to a Paleolithic practice.

ANSWER KEY

Traces of Daily Life

HIGH SCHOOL · AWH.C.1.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two examples of tools or weapons, circle two uses of fire, and number three details that show what continued or changed from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic Age. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Describe how two Paleolithic tools or weapons met different needs at the riverside camp.	**Sharp stone flakes cut meat and scraped hides. Stone-tipped wooden spears helped hunters strike animals from a distance.**
2	Describe two ways fire supported life at a Paleolithic camp. How did its use continue in the Neolithic Age?	**Fire warmed the camp and cooked food. Neolithic people also used fire to cook and stay warm.**
3	What might Paleolithic adornments tell us about people's lives? What evidence shows that adornment continued in the Neolithic Age?	**Shell or tooth necklaces and pigments may have expressed identity or belonging. Beads and other personal ornaments also appeared in the Neolithic Age.**
4	As farming spread during the Neolithic Age, describe one hunter-gatherer practice that continued and one change in how some people lived.	**Some people continued to hunt, fish, and gather, while others grew crops in farming villages.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A stone blade suggests people prepared food or other materials at this Neolithic camp. Fish bones suggest that fish was part of their diet, but they do not prove who caught it. A shell bead may have been a personal ornament, although its meaning is unknown. Stone tools and ornaments also appeared in Paleolithic communities, so these finds show a possible connection across the ages.

Accept other passage-supported examples of tools, fire use, and continuity or change. For the museum label, accept cautious inferences from the finds rather than claims that any find proves exactly how it was used.