• In small groups, have students research various Stone Age tools. Students can classify tools according to use, describe how the tools were made, and show how Stone Age tools evolved from pebble-tools to blade-tools. Useful resource: www.hf.uio.no/iaakk/roger/lithic/sarc.html

• Dorothy Garrod was the archeologist credited with discovering the Natufians. She was also a pioneer in the field of archeology and was the first female professor at Cambridge University. Have students research the life and archeological contributions of Garrod. Useful resource: www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/information/biography/fghij/garrod_dorothy.html

Suggested Internet Resources
Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

• museums.ncl.ac.uk/flint/menu.html
  Fun site about various aspects of the Stone Age containing various links.

• www.ackviking.com/SocialStudies/MapCrescent.html
  This site has a good map of the Fertile Crescent.

Suggested Print Resources

The First Farmers

Grades 7–12

The Stone Age, named so because the tools that were used were fashioned out of stone, is a prehistoric stage of human development that began around 600,000 to 700,000 years ago. This preliterate stage in human development is subdivided into three shorter time periods — the Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic — each characterized by the types of tools these prehistoric people used. Generally speaking, the stone tools that Stone Age people employed ranged from the simple to the complex and from nonspecialized to specialized implements designed for specific tasks. Stone Age populations existed over vast areas; from the Fertile Crescent in the Middle East to Northern Europe, and each population developed according to its specific needs, which were primarily dictated by the environmental conditions under which they lived. The Stone Age is the period in history where anatomically modern humans took the first steps that eventually led to modern civilization.
Program Summary

*The First Farmers* explores the development of the Natufians, a Stone Age civilization that existed about 8,000 years ago in what is now known as the country of Jordan. The Natufians were the earliest people known to modern man who made the great leap from hunting and gathering to farming. Spurred on by the Younger Dryas — a kind of mini-ice age that caused a severe drought in the Middle East — the Natufians were forced to abandon the lands on which they had lived for over 2,000 years and create a new way of life. The advent of agriculture was the catalyst that brought about fundamental changes in the way these Paleolithic people lived and thought about their world. Farming meant settling in one place and a surplus of food, which in turn brought about larger families and the creation of villages and later, towns. The growing population of people living together in one place facilitated the beginnings of both politics and commerce. In ways both subtle and grand, these prehistoric people were the harbingers of modern civilization.

Vocabulary

**Ice Age** — Any period of time in which the earth’s surface was covered by glaciers. The last Ice Age ended about 10,000 years ago.

**Younger Dryas** — A short period of cold temperatures about 10,000 years ago.

**hunter gatherers** — People whose primary mode of existence is to hunt animals and gather foods like nuts and berries.

**nomads** — People who have no permanent home who travel from place to place to hunt and gather food.

**Stone Age** — The time in human prehistory, also known as the Paleolithic Period, that occurred from 600,000 to 700,000 years ago. People of this period are known for making tools out of stone.

**glacier** — Gigantic deposits of ice that move and erode the landscape.

**Fertile Crescent** — The geographic area extending from modern-day Israel to Iraq, which was the home to the many Paleolithic peoples.

**Dorothy Garrod** — The ground-breaking archeologist who discovered the Natufians.

**Natufians** — A paleolithic people who lived about 8,000 years ago in what is now called Jordan, and are credited with being the first farmers.

**flint** — A hard stone used by Stone Age people as tools.

**bola** — A hunting weapon used in the Paleolithic period. It consists of two large stones attached to the ends of a kind of rope. It is flung at animals, entangling them.

**sling shot** — A hunting weapon used in the Paleolithic period used to shoot small stones at potential prey.

**basalt** — A type of rock used to fashion tools during the Paleolithic period.

**granary** — A specialized building used for storing surplus grain.

**sickle** — A farming tool used by the Natufians to cut down wheat and barley.

**mortar and pestle** — Grinding tools used by Paleolithic people fashioned out of stone.

Pre-viewing Discussion

- The development of the Natufians was precipitated by a dramatic change in the environment. Have students discuss how current environmental concerns may facilitate great changes in the way modern people live.
- The survival of the Natufians depended upon their intelligence and flexibility. Have students think about the true nature of what it means to be “smart.” What is the relationship between intelligence and problem-solving?

Focus Questions

1. What does it mean to be a hunter-gatherer?
2. What effect did the Younger Dryas have on the Natufians?
3. Where was the Fertile Crescent located?
4. What sorts of things did the Natufians do in their spare time?
5. Describe a Natufian burial.
6. Name at least one major impact the Natufians had on their environment.
7. What sorts of tools did archeologists find in the Natufian tool kit?
8. What impact did farming have on the bodies of the Natufians?
9. What archeological evidence is there that Natufians lived in communities?
10. Name at least two changes that farming had on Natufian culture.

Follow-up Discussion

- Have students discuss how the availability of grains changed the lives of the Natufians. Consider especially their nomadism, work, hunting, development of community and artistic activities.
- Have students discuss what archeologists discovered in the fireplaces of Natufian houses. What does their refuse tell us about their way of life?
- After the end of the Younger Dryas, the Natufians were solely farmers controlling the growth and harvesting of grain. Have students discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this total reliance on grain.

Follow-up Activities

- In small groups, have students research Stone Age houses discovered in different parts of the world. Encourage students to make connections between the types of dwellings and the climatic conditions in the areas in which they were discovered. Useful resource: [www.personal.psu.edu/users/w/x/wxk116/habitat/](http://www.personal.psu.edu/users/w/x/wxk116/habitat/)
- In small groups, have students research the diet of Stone Age peoples. Students can create a Paleolithic food pyramid, and find out the nutritional values of various food available to the Stone Age man. Students can compare the Stone Age diet with the modern diet and cite strengths and weaknesses in each. Useful resource: [www.earth360.com/diet_paleodiet_balzer.html](http://www.earth360.com/diet_paleodiet_balzer.html)