

Section 1: Geography and History
The Beginnings of Human Society

Reading Readiness Guide

Anticipation Guide

How much do you think you know about the geography and history of the ancient world? As your teacher reads the statements, mark whether you think each statement is true (T) or false (F) in the Me column. Then discuss your answers with your group and mark the group's decision in the Group column. As you read, look for information that will clarify whether the statements are true or false.

After you read the section, read the statements again and mark the After Reading column to indicate whether they are true or false.

Before Reading		Statements	After Reading
Me	Group		
		1. About five thousand years ago, early civilizations developed systems of writing.	
		2. Iceman, whose frozen and preserved body was found in the Alps in 1991, lived about one thousand years ago.	
		3. Oral histories, stories passed down by word of mouth, often change as they are told and retold.	
		4. Prehistory is the period of time before humans inhabited the earth.	
		5. The rich soil caused by annual flooding of the Nile River helped Egyptian farmers grow large numbers of crops.	

CHAPTER
1

Prepare to Read

Section 1
Geography and History

Objectives

1. Learn what tools are used to understand history.
2. Find out how geography and history are connected.

Target Reading Skill

Preview and Set a Purpose Reading a textbook is different from reading a novel or the newspaper. To read to learn effectively, you must preview and set a purpose for your reading.

Before you read this section, take a moment to preview it. Look at the title "Geography and History" and the objectives. Now flip through the next two pages. Read each heading. They tell you about the section's contents. They tell you what to expect to learn from each section. As you preview, use this information to give yourself a reason to read the section. Are you curious about anything in the section, like how people learn about history? Read to satisfy that curiosity—that's your purpose for reading.

Vocabulary Strategy

Using Context Clues Words work together to explain meaning. The meaning of a word may depend on its **context**. A word's context is the other words and sentences that surround it. The context gives you clues to a word's meaning.

Try this example. Say that you do not know the meaning of the word *history* in the following sentence:

"History began when people started to keep written records of their experiences."

You could ask yourself: "What information does the sentence give me about the word?" Answer: "I know that history began when people started writing down their experiences. This tells me that history must be the written record of human experience."

Section 1 Summary

- 1 In 1991 two hikers found the frozen body of a man in the Alps. They called the frozen man the Iceman. Scientists studied his clothing, tools, and body. They hoped to learn about the Iceman's life and death. The
- 5 scientists learned that he lived about 5,000 years ago. The most important clue was the Iceman's copper ax. Europeans first used copper in about 4000 B.C. The ax told scientists that the Iceman lived after people had learned to use copper.

Understanding History

- 10 Humans want to know what life was like long ago. About 5,000 years ago, people began writing down what happened to them. That was the beginning of history. The time before people learned to write is called prehistory.
- 15 To learn about life in prehistoric times, scientists can't study written records. They must use other kinds of clues. Archaeologists are scientists who study objects to learn about the past. Objects such as bones and tools tell them how people lived. For example, the
- 20 size of a spear point can tell whether it was used to kill a large or small animal.
- Historians don't just use objects to learn about the past. They also study written records. Many written records began as oral traditions. They were passed
- 25 down by word of mouth. They tell stories about heroes or things that happened. Not all oral stories are accurate. People often mix facts with tall tales about heroes. Still, oral stories tell historians how people lived and what they thought was important. ✓

Key Terms

history (HIS tuh ree) *n.* the written events of people

prehistory (pree HIS tuh ree) *n.* time before writing was invented

archaeologist (ahr kee AHL u jist) *n.* a scientist who studies objects to learn about the past

oral traditions (AWR ul truh DISH unz) *n.* stories passed down by word of mouth

Target Reading Skill

If you want to learn about studying history, how does reading about archaeologists help you meet your goal?

Reading Check

Why are historians interested in oral traditions?

Linking Geography and History

³⁰ It is important to know when something happened. But historians want to know more. They want to understand *why* things happened. To do this, they often look at geography. Geography is the study of the earth's surface and how it was shaped. It also refers to

³⁵ a place's climate, landscape, and location.

Often geography and history are linked. Many things affect people's lives. Whether a place is hot or cold affects the lives of the people who live there. So does its water supply. For example, the geography of

⁴⁰ Egypt helps explain why the ancient Egyptians had a successful civilization.

Egyptian civilization was built on the banks of the Nile River in Africa. Each year, the Nile flooded. Rich soil was left on the river banks. Because of this,

⁴⁵ Egyptian farmers were able to grow large crops. They were able to feed large numbers of people in cities. That meant that not everyone had to farm. Some people could do other kinds of jobs. That helped develop the civilization. Without the Nile and its floods,

⁵⁰ Egyptian civilization would not have done so well. This is one way geography affects history. ✓

Vocabulary Strategy

What does the word *civilization* mean in the underlined sentence? What clues can you find in the surrounding words, phrases, or sentences? Circle the words in this paragraph that could help you learn what *civilization* means.



✓ Reading Check

Give one example of geography's effect on history.

Review Questions

1. What do scientists study to learn about prehistory?

2. How can geography help us understand history?

Key Term

geography (jee AHG ruh fee) *n.* the study of Earth's surface and how it is shaped

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Guided Reading and Review

A. As You Read

Directions: As you read Section 1, answer the following questions in the space provided.

1. What did scientists learn from the Iceman's copper ax?

2. What other clues did scientists use to learn about the Iceman's life?

3. In what parts of the world did people first develop a system of writing?

4. Even though oral traditions might contain stories that are not historically accurate, what can they tell us about the past?

5. Why does the study of the geography of Egypt help us to better understand Egyptian civilization?

B. Reviewing Key Terms

Directions: Complete each sentence by writing the correct term in the blank provided.

6. The recorded events of people are known as _____.
7. The period of time in the past before writing was invented is known as _____.
8. Scientists who examine objects to learn about past people and cultures are known as _____.
9. The written records studied by historians often began as _____, or stories passed down by word of mouth.
10. The study of Earth's surface and the processes that shape it are known as _____.

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Section Quiz

A. Key Terms

Directions: Define the following terms on a separate sheet of paper.

1. history
2. prehistory
3. archaeologist
4. geography
5. oral traditions

B. Main Ideas

Directions: Write the letter of the correct answer in each blank.

- _____ 6. About 5,000 years ago, history began when
- | | |
|---|--|
| a. the Nile started to flood its banks. | c. people developed a system of writing. |
| b. the Iceman climbed the Alps. | d. people learned to make copper. |
- _____ 7. To learn about life in prehistoric times, scientists use
- | | |
|--|--|
| a. oral traditions of ancient civilizations. | c. early writings found on clothing and tools. |
| b. objects such as bones and tools. | d. powerful computers to translate ancient writings. |
- _____ 8. If scientists find only large spear points in a prehistoric camp, they know that the people who lived there
- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. hunted small birds. | c. hunted large animals. |
| b. grew their own food. | d. had an oral tradition. |
- _____ 9. Historians use oral traditions to
- | | |
|---|---|
| a. describe their research. | c. examine the geography of a civilization. |
| b. learn what people in a society consider important. | d. determine the date of objects. |
- _____ 10. Egyptian civilization developed on the banks of the Nile because
- | | |
|--|---|
| a. the sunshine in Africa allowed life to flourish. | c. the river connected to the Mediterranean Sea. |
| b. the river flooded each year, depositing rich soil on its banks. | d. people were growing crops in the surrounding desert. |