Human Origins and the Agricultural Revolution Lesson

Content Benchmarks and Learning Objectives:

- SS.8.W.2.1 Compare the lifestyles of hunter-gatherers with those of settlers of early agricultural communities.
- SS.8.W.2.2 Describe how the developments of agriculture and metallurgy related to settlement, population growth, and the emergence of civilization.
- SS.8.W.2.3 Identify the characteristics of civilization.

Essential Questions:

1. What were the similarities and differences between hunter-gatherers and settlers of early agricultural communities?
2. How did the beginning of agriculture and metallurgy lead to the development of civilizations?
3. What are the characteristics of civilizations?

Key Vocabulary

Paleolithic; nomadic; technology; ice ages; domesticate; Neolithic Age; agriculture; Bronze Age; Civilization

Materials Needed:

Attachment A: Stone Age Cartoon
Attachment B: Comparing Paleolithic and Neolithic Handout
Attachment C: Early Civilizations Handout

Steps to Deliver the Lesson:

1. Introduction/Hook: Ask students to make a list of tools (e.g. hammer, plow, spatula, etc.). Using the think-pair-share strategy, have students compare their lists with a partner and then create a class list on the board. Explain to students that using tools and technology is a part of human culture, and that in this lesson they will be learning about some of the earliest humans.
2. Project the cartoon depicting a father and son during the Stone Age (Attachment A) and ask students to analyze the image using the following guiding questions:

   a. What do you see? Objects? People? Words? Actions?
   b. How does the cartoon depict early humans? Do you think it is an accurate depiction? Why or why not?
   c. How does the relationship depicted between father and son compare to family relationships today?

3. **Activity:**
   a. Have students work in small groups to research either Paleolithic Age humans or Neolithic Age humans using their textbook (McGraw Hill Discovering Our Past: A History of the World pp. 54-67) or other online resources. Students will create a concept map poster to illustrate what they have learned. Posters should include the following information:
      i. Title and time period
      ii. Key details about tools and technology
      iii. Key details about culture and daily life
      iv. Visuals to illustrate the information
   b. Place Paleolithic Age and Neolithic Age concept map posters around the room and have students do a gallery walk activity, rotating from poster to poster to complete part I of their handout (Attachment B). Encourage students to add additional details to their graphic organizer as they view each poster.
   c. Finally, have students finish part II of their handout (Attachment B) with their group in order to compare the Paleolithic Age to Neolithic Age.

4. **Activity:**
   a. Introduce students to the concept of early civilizations by having them recreate a map of the early river valley civilizations using the map on p. 68 of their textbook. Have students label and shade in or color each of the following using the blank map handout (Attachment C):
      - Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Indus Valley, Ancient China
      - Nile River, Tigris River, Euphrates River, Indus River, Huang He River
      - Oceans and other major physical features
      - Create a map key
   b. Next, have students work with a partner to read about the characteristics of early civilizations using their textbook (pp. 68-69) and complete the Characteristics of Civilizations graphic organizer (Attachment C).
   c. Finally, discuss with students how the characteristics of early civilizations compare to civilizations today.
5. **Lesson Closure**: Have students answer the essential questions as an exit slip.
   a. What were the similarities and differences between hunter-gatherers and settlers of early agricultural communities?
   b. How did the beginning of agriculture and metallurgy lead to the development of civilizations?
   c. What are the characteristics of civilizations?

**Optional Extension Activity/Home Learning**

Have students select a research topic related to this lesson and create a PowerPoint, Prezi, or Sway presentation based on their findings. Some suggested topics:

- Cave paintings
- The Ice Ages
- Domestication of plants and animals
- Jericho
- Catalhuyuk
- Bronze Age
- Modern nomadic cultures

**Technology**

The following websites provide additional resources that can be used for teaching about this time period:

- Mr. Donn’s resources on Early Human History for students and teachers: [http://ancienthistory.mrdonn.org/EarlyMan.html](http://ancienthistory.mrdonn.org/EarlyMan.html)
- Videos on Agricultural and Urban Revolutions: [http://www.learner.org/courses/worldhistory/unit_main_4.html](http://www.learner.org/courses/worldhistory/unit_main_4.html)
Source: http://baloo-baloosnon-politicalcartoonblog.blogspot.com/2011/03/
Comparing the Paleolithic and Neolithic Ages

I. Include key details about each time period in order to understand what life was like during the Stone Age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period (Dates)</th>
<th>Tools and Technology</th>
<th>Culture and Daily Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paleolithic Age (Old Stone Age)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolithic Age (New Stone Age)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. For each of the images below, indicate whether it illustrates the Paleolithic or Neolithic Age.

Include details in the Venn diagram below to compare the Paleolithic Age with the Neolithic Age.

[Diagram showing a Venn diagram with Paleolithic Age and Neolithic Age categories]
Locate and label each of the following on your map. Then create a map key.

**Early Civilizations:**
- Ancient Egypt
- Mesopotamia
- Indus Valley
- Ancient China

**Key Rivers:**
- Nile River
- Tigris River
- Euphrates River
- Indus River
- Huang He River

**Oceans and Other:**
- Atlantic Ocean
- Indian Ocean
- Pacific Ocean
- Arabian Sea
- Mediterranean Sea
**Characteristics of Civilizations**

As you read about the characteristics of civilizations, write a description and create a picture or symbol to represent each. The first one is done for you as an example.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Picture or Symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cities and Government</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Early civilizations formed cities and governments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Large populations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Governments protected people and food supplies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The first governments were monarchies (king or queen)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing and Art</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do the characteristics of early civilizations compare to civilization today?

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__________________________________________________________________________________________