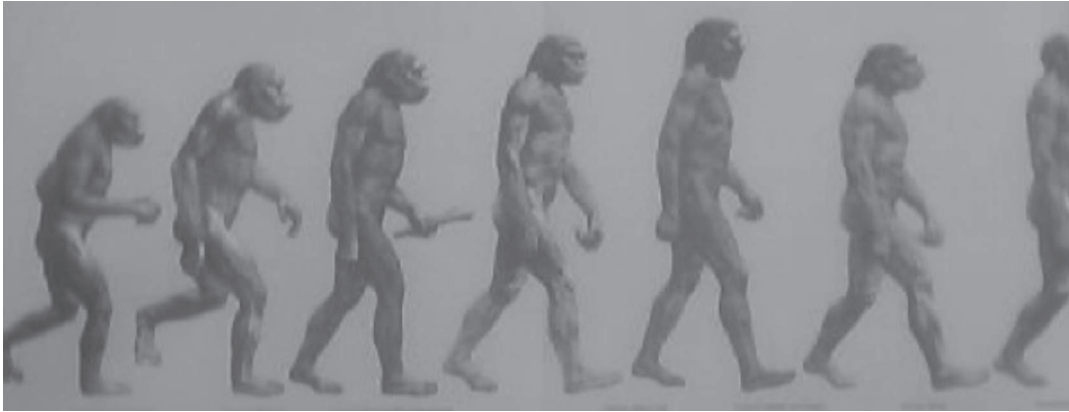


The First Hominids



1 When did humans first appear?

About 3 million years ago, the first “hominids” – known as *Australopithecus* – appeared in Southern Africa. Ancestors of many of the animals you see today were plentiful: deer, giraffes, hyenas, cattle, lions, elephants, sharks, birds ... These ancestors are as similar to the creatures you know today as you are to the first hominids.

7 The early hominids were different from apes because:

- they could walk upright, without using their hands
- their hands were jointed differently: whereas an ape’s hands are perfect for hanging and climbing, the hands of *Australopithecus* were perfect for making and using tools.

12 Their diet was mostly vegetarian, along with some meat, probably obtained by scavenging. The tools that *Australopithecus* made were simple, made mostly from bone and used for digging and scraping.

15 Who came next?

As far as we know, true humans, *Homo habilis*, first appeared in Africa about 2 million years ago.

18 *Homo habilis* were taller than *Australopithecus* and had larger brains. They often sheltered under cliffs as they followed herds of animals. These early people soon learned that there was safety in numbers and would band together to hunt and look after each other. *Homo habilis* couldn’t make fire.

22 When did people have fire?

Homo erectus date from around 1.5 million years ago. These people looked more like we do today: they were about the same size as modern humans although their brains were only two-thirds as big. *Homo erectus* could make fire. That meant that the people could now:

- choose where they camped – they didn’t always need shelter
- cook food – making it more edible as well as killing off diseases
- begin to develop a more formal family and social life around the fire.

Name:	Class:	Date:
--------------	---------------	--------------

1 Why do you think the writer chose to start the piece with an illustration?

2f

1 mark

2 Why are all the headings in the form of questions?

2g

1 mark

3 “Their diet was mostly vegetarian along with some meat, probably obtained by scavenging.”

The word “scavenging” is closest in meaning to which option below? Tick **one**.

catching and eating animals

eating animals that are already dead

trapping and eating animals

farming and eating animals

2a

1 mark

4 a) Were the lions that were around 3 million years ago exactly like the ones we see today?

Yes

No

b) How do you know?

2d

1 mark

5 What is the main way in which *Homo erectus* is different from *Homo habilis*?

2h

1 mark

6 Tick the best explanation for why the writer uses bullet points in the last section. Tick **one**.

to summarise what has already been said

to explain why *Homo erectus* had a big brain

to show the main reasons why life began to change for *Homo erectus*

to show why *Homo erectus* did not have to hunt

2f

1 mark

7 Why did the writer organise the three sections of this text in the order they are in?

2f

1 mark

8 Draw lines to match the different hominids to their diet.

Australopithecus raw meat

Homo habilis mostly plants

Homo erectus cooked meat

2b

1 mark

9 Suggest an alternative heading for the text.

2c

1 mark