

17. Evidence of the Ancients.



The culture and societies of **prehistoric** people may seem difficult to find evidence for. There are few buildings, there are few statues or **monuments**, and there are no written records of these times. But evidence exists, and archaeologists and **anthropologists** have been able to find a great deal which tells us about the societies in the distant past.

Tools

A great many tools from prehistoric people have survived to today. Stone knives, arrowheads, axes, and spearheads, have easily lasted the tens of thousands of years since they were used. They can tell us about the technology available to these people, as well as their hunting and living **habits**.

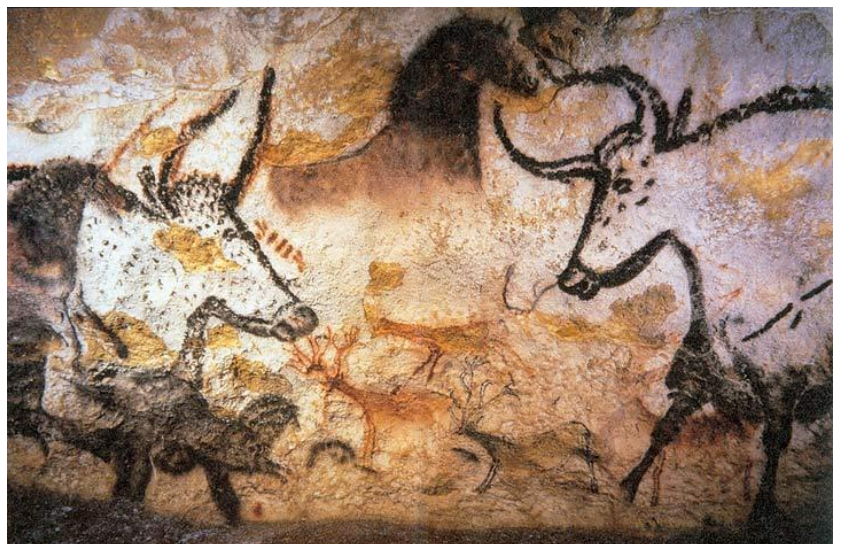
Buildings

Very few buildings survive modern times, houses built 50 or even 10 years ago are regularly destroyed to make way for new ones. Australia's **colonial** past, just over 200 years ago, would be mostly lost if it wasn't for **preservation** and **heritage** laws that protect places like The Rocks in Sydney. Finding prehistoric buildings is a rare thing, but an entire **settlement** of homes and buildings has survived in Scotland in a place called Skara Brae. This settlement gives us great **insight** into this prehistoric community.



Paintings.

People of the past were just as creative as people are today, and they have left behind a treasure **trove** of cave paintings. All over the world, from Europe to Australia, prehistoric people recorded their lives and thoughts in paintings on stone walls. Many of the paintings have survived **millennia** and tell us about their hopes and ideas, the animals they hunted, and their everyday life.



Activities



Comprehension Questions

Before you start, define the terms in **bold>.**



1. Why is it difficult to find evidence for prehistoric cultures and societies?
2. Which tools have survived to the present day and why?
3. What can we learn from ancient tools?
4. Why do few buildings survive very long?
5. What has saved Australia's colonial past?
6. Where has a prehistoric settlement survived?
7. Where have cave paintings been found?
8. What do cave paintings tell us?

Thinking Questions

1. Which artefacts from today's world do you think will survive thousands of years? Give reasons for your answer.
2. Which artefacts from the past do you think are the most important?

