

**Developing Language** In addition to learning to make tools, early people developed language. Before they learned to talk, early people simply made sounds. Each sound meant something different. A yell, for example, meant a person was angry. Early people also pointed to objects and tugged at their elbows or shoulders to express meaning. Hand signals were probably used for such important things as water, food, animals, and weapons.

Gradually, people developed language. Experts think this probably came about when people began to hunt large animals with spears and bows and arrows. Since the people had to hunt large animals as a group, they needed to be able to give one another clear instructions. Sounds and hand signals were not enough.

**Discovering Fire** People also learned to make fire during the Paleolithic Age. At first, the only fires they knew about were in nature, such as those started when lightning struck a tree. Eventually, people learned to make fire themselves by rubbing sticks or striking stones together.

Once people learned to make fire, they could cook their food instead of eating it raw. They discovered that cooked food was easier to chew and digest. So, they spent less time eating and had more time to do other things.

Fire had other uses. By about 750,000 years ago, people were using fire to keep warm. They also used it as a weapon. They threw burning sticks of wood at animals to drive them away. By about 80,000 years ago, people were using fire to harden the points of their wooden weapons. The fire-hardened points were strong enough to go through the skin of large animals, such as the horse, leopard, and rhinoceros. Now, hunters were able to get more food.

**Making Clothing** After hunters began killing large animals, people learned to make clothing. They found that animal skins could be used to protect their bodies and to provide warmth. At first, they just wrapped the skins around themselves. Later, they learned how to fasten the skins together. They used a sharp stone or bone to punch holes in the skins. Then, they drew long, thin strips of animal skin through the holes to join one skin to another. Before long, people had fashioned the first needle—probably from bone.

Clothing affected where people lived. Before they had clothing, most people stayed in areas that were warm and dry. Once they had clothing to protect them from the effects of weather, people began to move into areas that were cooler and wetter.

Bone Needle and Button

