

Today's Activity:

Domestication of Animals

Era 1: The Beginnings of Human Society

From Hunter-Gatherers to Farmers

Activity 1:

Human beings began to domesticate animals around 10,000 BC (*the first was probably the dog*). They realized that animals could be extremely useful. Have students brainstorm some of the basic uses of animals. Here are some ideas:



- ◆ Food
- ◆ Milk
- ◆ Leather
- ◆ Wool
- ◆ Skins (*for shelters and clothing*)
- ◆ Animal fat (*can be used as oil for lighting*)
- ◆ Protection (*i.e. guard dogs*)
- ◆ Manure (*fertilizer*)
- ◆ Assistance when hunting
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Drafting (*pulling wagons or equipment*)
- ◆ Rodent control (*i.e. cats*)
- ◆ Companionship

Review the above list with students and ask them which of these uses human beings probably took advantage of first (*even the earliest humans used animals for food and skins*). Discuss the ways that we use animals for today (*all of the above*).

Ask students how the evolution of humans would be different if certain animals had never been domesticated (*for example, consider the dog, the cow, and the horse*). Discuss what impact this would have had on hunting, farming, transportation, and food supply.

Bonus Activity

See if students can put these following animals in order of when they first became domesticated: *cat, dog, cow, horse, guinea pig, chicken, sheep, hamster*.

Here are the answers:

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|---------------|----------|
| 1) Dog | 10,000 BC | 5) Horse | 4,000 BC |
| 2) Sheep | 8,000 BC | 6) Chicken | 3,500 BC |
| 3) Cat | 7,000 BC | 7) Guinea pig | 900 |
| 4) Cow | 6,000 BC | 8) Hamster | 1930s |

Ask students to think of other pets or farm animals and research when they were first domesticated.

Curriculum Goals: The Beginnings of Human Society

Standard: Understand how and why humans established settled communities and experimented with agriculture.

The student should be able to:

- Describe leading theories to explain how and why human groups began farming and domesticate cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs after the last Ice Age.