

Ancient Tool Project

For my ancient tool project, I built a tool that would've been used in the Lower Paleolithic period. But... I couldn't use any modern equipment. Nothing like glue, tape, scissors, staplers, or anything like that. When I was doing this project there was definitely challenging parts about it but I think it was a great experience.

Back in the Paleolithic periods life was *very* different. There wasn't the option for them to go out and buy their materials. There was no technology at all. So the people couldn't just go order food, clothing, or materials, like we can now. They had to work for it. Men had to hunt animals for food, they had to kill and skin animals for clothing, and find materials to use. For almost everything they did, they needed tools. So tools were a really important thing at the time.

Another thing that was really different then was how many things they had to worry about. For example, they had lots and lots of predators. Since most people in the Paleolithic era lived in Africa, they had to worry about cheetahs, lions, hyenas, elephants, rhinos, tigers, leopards, and much more. Due to all of those they had to build houses. The houses were mostly wood huts but some people also lived in caves and even houses made out of bone, but they were *not* comfortable. This makes me feel very lucky to have a nice, comfortable home.

When we were assigned this project I had no idea what type of tool I was going to do. After some research, I decided on a stone tool. It turns out that the people in the Lower Paleolithic era used mostly stone tools for stuff like killing prey, making clothing, making their shelter, protecting themselves from predators and more. So I started taking some notes and doing research on early stone tools.

Once I finished research and had a better idea of what the tools were like, I was ready to find some good rocks to start with. I got some shoes on, put on a jacket, and headed for the creek in my backyard. People in the Lower Paleolithic Periods wanted to live by creeks and rivers because they found good rocks for tools there, so I felt very lucky I have one in my backyard. Actually not that long ago, my parents were hearing mountain lion calls coming from the creek, so I made sure to get my mom to come with me. As we were going down, we noticed some Stinging Nettle growing around so we had to be very careful. There were so many rocks that it was hard to find one that seemed right, but I ended up finding one. It was pretty big with curved edges that looked great for chipping off to make a point.

When we were coming back up from the creek, suddenly my mom yelled, "Ouch!" I looked at her and she was holding her finger really tight trying to stop the pain. I realized that

she touched Stinging Nettle. We got up to the house as fast as we could to try to get it under water. She was rubbing it and squeezing it and I could tell she was really hurting. Once we got up she ran it under cold water and I looked up the remedies for Stinging Nettle. It said to put soap and water on it but make sure not to rub or scratch it. Uh oh! That's exactly what she did. Her fingers started getting really pink and swollen, but we did everything we could and eventually it got better. After we treated her rash, I looked down at my legs and realized they were really scratched up. It turns out that as we were running back up to the house, my mom and I ran through the bushes and got pretty scraped. I realized that this is what people used to have to go through if they wanted to make a tool and they had to work really, really hard.

Once everything was taken care of, I started on my rock. I thought about all the old techniques the people in the Lower Paleolithic period. I chipped off little flakes around the edges by banging another rock against it. And it was such hard work! My hands were getting really sore but I stuck with it. I was doing it for about an hour when it started getting a better shape and I was really happy with it. There was also some flakes that were coming off that would be great for skinning animals, cutting them up for food, or just getting the rest of the meat off the bone. It was starting to get dark when I was doing some finishing touches to the rock. Crack! I just hit it too much in the middle, and it seemed like it was about to break. I lifted it up and... "No!" I yelled. It just broke in half! I was so sad and so disappointed that I just ruined my tool. I decided that I would go down to the creek again tomorrow and start new.

The next day after school, I really wasn't feeling like going down to the creek again. I wished I could just relax instead of working on my project but I knew I should because that's what people used to have to go through if they needed a tool. This time I got my dad to come with me. We went down and started looking for good rocks. Soon enough, I found a rock that looked great. I got it and we headed back up to the house. I did the same thing except this time I was a little more careful about it; I chipped off smaller pieces around the edges to get a better shape just like the people in the Lower Paleolithic did.

After only 30 minutes my hands already started aching. I realized how difficult life was for the people in that time period. After a while and lots of hard work I was finally done with my tool! It was in the shape of a raindrop and had a pretty sharp tip. It didn't turn out exactly how I wanted but I was still proud of what I had.

I really enjoyed doing this project and learning about the Lower Paleolithic Period. I realized how hard life was and how much people used to have to work. They spent so much of

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their time building shelter, protecting themselves, finding food, and more. This made me feel very lucky to have a safe house to live in and not having to fight off animals everyday!