

Chapter 1 Notes: Investigating the Past

Type of Social Scientist	What do they do?	What questions do they ask?
Archaeologists	Study the past by examining artifacts such as tools and coins.	Who lived in this place? When did they live here? What were they like?
Historians	Record the past. Study artifacts and documents.	What happened in the past? Why did events happen the way they did?
Geographers	Study natural and human features of the Earth. Create maps.	Where did people live? How did they use their environment to survive?

- Social scientists are like detectives because they examine clues, ask questions, make observations, and come up with theories about how humans came to be.
- From cave paintings, social scientists can learn what kinds of animals roamed the Earth, what methods people used to hunt them, and what people believed.
- Many social scientists think that some paintings were created as part of a hunting ritual. The artist may have been either asking for a successful hunt or recording something that actually happened.
- Social scientists' ideas include that the artist may have been trying to either capture the animals' "magical powers" or honor or please spirits. Some paintings may have also been used in a religious ceremony.
- Many social scientists think that the handprints were a way for artists to sign their paintings. The geometric shapes may have had special meanings in rituals.
- Some social scientists think that the spear thrower tool was created for hunting. The horse carving may have been a good-luck symbol. It may have had some relation to the hunter's name or clan. Or it may have just been a decoration.
- Social scientists think some sculptures may have been created to show that the cave belonged to a certain clan or that an important coming-of-age ceremony took place there.
- Social scientists think that the grindstone was used for grinding minerals into powder to make paints. The sharpened stone might have been used for sculpting and engraving.