

Summary

By using the story of the Battle of Jericho as its starting point, this Unit opener charts the transition from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic periods and the beginnings of the Bronze Age. It investigates the development of early civilizations and the key role played by the discovery of bronze and other metals, and the ability of people to work with them. It demonstrates the changing importance of lip-blown instruments as religion and warfare become central in the lives of ancient peoples.

Objectives

Students will:

- **Recount** the story of the battle of Jericho
- **Describe** the changes in living patterns between the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods
- **Identify** the characteristics of “civilization”
- **Explain** why the sound of the ram’s horn was so important to the Hebrews
- **Locate** the position of Ragnar’s story on the historical timeline and explain how lip-blown instruments evolved during the Bronze Age.

UNIT II

A BLAST FROM THE ANCIENT PAST

PALEOLITHIC
(OLD STONE AGE)
c. 2,500,000 – 12,000 BCE

NEOLITHIC
(NEW STONE AGE)
c. 10,000 – 2500 BCE



28

Learning Activities

After reading or listening to **Unit II: A Blast from the Ancient Past**, ask students the following questions:

Q. What were the things that Ragnar heard or saw around him that were different from the moment he disappeared in **Winter is Coming**?

A. Walking with a thousand people; no trees or grass, just sand (desert); a great wall; shiny objects like spears (metal weapons); white and brightly colored cloth.

Explain that large groups of people, man-made structures, metal objects and manufactured cloth are some of the characteristics of the next period of human history (the Neolithic period) and that Ragnar found himself in a famous biblical story about the Hebrews entering the city of Jericho.¹ Find Jericho on a map and show that

unlike Ragnar’s home, the terrain around the city was a desert.

Q. What kind of horn was Ragnar holding, and why did he blow it?

A. He was holding a ram’s horn, and he blew it because he was terrified by the angry-looking men shouting at him. Ragnar thought he might frighten them off, as this was one of the ways he used his bison horn in his prehistoric life.

Ask students to look at the red arrow in the timeline on SE p. 28, noting that it is pointing to both the Neolithic period and the Bronze Age. (Explain that bronze is an extremely durable metal, made from copper and tin.) Ask students to turn to **Meet Ragnar, Your Tour Guide** (SE p. 4-5), and ask which time period Ragnar came from. *Hint: Read “Did You Know?”*

A. 25,000 years ago in the Paleolithic period or Old Stone Age.

BRONZE AGE
c. 3500–500 BCE

IRON AGE
c. 1000 BCE–CE 50



SUDDENLY, Ragnar couldn't see. The sun was blinding. He heard many sounds around him, including sounds that were somewhat like his bison horn, but different. It took several moments before everything came into focus. Ragnar found himself walking along—just as he had with Annika and his wandering friends. But now, his old friends were gone and he was surrounded by another group—this one made up of a thousand people! There were no trees, no grass, no birds—just sand in every direction. It seemed as though the people were moving toward a great wall off in the distance. Ragnar noticed many men carrying long shiny objects that looked dangerous, like spears.

Then everyone came to an abrupt halt. Six men wearing robes stared at Ragnar in disbelief. Their heads were wrapped in white cloth, and each man held a ram's horn. As Ragnar looked down, he realized that he was holding the same type of horn. The men spoke angrily, pointing at him, and other people began to shout at him. Ragnar was terrified!

Not knowing what to do, Ragnar put the horn to his lips, hoping to scare them away. He took a deep breath and blew a brilliant

DAWEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

29

Key Points

- 1 The highlighted details on this page show that Ragnar found himself in the Neolithic period, at the start of human civilization, when people started to live in significantly larger communities than they had done in earlier times.
- 2 As people began to live in fixed housing in large numbers, towns or cities were formed where people engaged in economic, political, and religious activities. Walls were often built around these cities to protect them from outsiders.
- 3 As the name Bronze Age suggests, the use of metal was one of its the most significant technological developments. It provided better tools for farming and construction, and swords for warfare. It could also be used in pursuit of more artistic ends, such as the manufacture of jewelry and decorative or ceremonial items.
- 4 Ragnar may already have seen cloth of some sort, as the earliest known textile material is from around 30,000 BCE.. On the other hand, the white and brightly colored cloth, probably made with a loom, would have been new to him.²

Next, ask students to turn to the **History of Lip-Blown Instruments** (SE p. 10-11, TE p. 20-21). Explain how the color-coding of the instrument labels corresponds with each time period and ask students to list lip-blown instruments from the Paleolithic period.

A. Bone, shell, wood, animal horns, etc.

Then ask which instruments were made in the Bronze Age, and what they were made of.

A. Mesopotamian trumpet, Egyptian šnb, Hindu sankh, Jewish shofar, Oxus trumpet, made of metal, shells, and animal horns.

Add that although lip-blown instruments began to be made from metal during the Bronze Age, instruments made from natural materials have continued to be used across the globe, right up to the present day.

Ask students to read **Reality Check!** (SE p. 31, TE p. 45) and discuss the term “civilization” and how it relates to the Neolithic period. To help students organize their thoughts, draw a vertical line to form two columns on a chalk or white board, with the headings “Paleolithic” on the left side, and “Neolithic” on the right. Then ask students questions about how people lived in each period, writing down important characteristic under each heading to highlight the differences. Some categories include: subsistence (hunting & gathering/agriculture & domestication of animals); clothing (animal skins & fur/textiles & cloth); tools & weapons (stone/metal); communication (primitive communication/language & writing); social organization (nomadic bands/fixed housing under power of kings or rulers); beliefs (cave art & shamans/organized religion & priests); and finally lip-blown instruments (bone, shell, wood, animal horns/metal).³

Key Points, cont.

5 The conquest of Jericho by the Israelites (Joshua 5:13–6:27) is the earliest recorded example of the use of the ram’s horn (*shofar*, pl. *shofarot*) in war. Having escaped slavery at the hand of the Egyptians, the Israelites led by Moses, went to Mt. Sinai where Moses received the Ten Commandments. It was on this occasion that an exceedingly loud *shofar* blast was heard. This is the first written account (Exodus 19:16) of the *shofar* itself, and it clearly represents the power and authority of the Hebrew God. Forty years later, following God’s instructions, Joshua marched the Israelites to the city of Jericho. Led by seven priests blowing *shofarot*, they circled the city carrying the Ark of the Covenant (the gold-covered wooden chest in which were kept the tablets of the Ten Commandments) until the 7th day when they took the city by force. It is often said that it was the sound of the *shofarot* that made the walls fall, but a more precise reading indicates that the *shofar* blast was signal for the crowds to shout loudly, and it was this that caused them to fall.²⁵ Regardless, it is certain that the sound of the *shofar* had a tremendous impact on people on both sides of the battle, and its sound has continued to hold great significance for the Jewish people to this day.

Everyone was shocked and stepped back in amazement. Slowly, their anger turned to smiles and laughter. The people began dancing around him, singing at the top of their voices. One of the men gave Ragnar a brightly-colored cloth to wear around his waist as they marched toward the wall, which 5 surrounded a great city called Jericho.

For six days, the entire group circled the city, as Ragnar and the others blew their horns. On the seventh day, they circled the city again. But this time, as Ragnar and the others blew as loudly as they could, they were joined by forceful shouts from the entire group. Ragnar couldn’t believe it! The blast of the horns, plus the shouting, made the city wall collapse to the ground. They entered the city, victorious!



HEAR IT
ONLINE
www.hearragnar.com

30

Learning Activities, cont.

Q. Ask students why they think humans created their towns or cities in river valleys.

A. The river provided water for sustenance (drinking, washing, bathing, and growing food) and transportation to facilitate trade and travel by boat.

Read **Did You Know?** (SE p. 31) and ask students if they think the sound of seven ram’s horns and people yelling at the tops of their voices could knock down a wall. Some will say yes, and some no.

(See **Teaching Tip**, TE p. 44) Explain that regardless of whether or not the sound of the *shofarot* made the walls fall, the story demonstrates the importance of the *shofar* in the Jewish religion and illustrates some of the uses of lip-blown instruments in this new period of history. These include giving courage to troops in battle, frightening the enemy, and signaling battle commands, as well as representing the power and authority of God.⁴

REALITY CHECK!

What the Experts Say About

THE NEXT PERIOD OF HUMAN HISTORY

At this point in the story, Ragnar has traveled from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic period, or New Stone Age. Approximately ten thousand years ago, people began to change the way they lived.

They went from hunting and gathering to growing food, keeping animals, and living in fixed housing. This is said to be the start of civilization. Humans lived in larger groups known as communities, and towns or cities were later created, often in river valleys. These new communities had a king or ruler who built armies to fight other civilizations. Farming was introduced as a way of producing food, and pottery was made for storage, transportation, and cooking. Religion and ritual was important in daily life, and writing was developed using shapes and letters to keep records.

Great trade routes such as the Silk Road connected Asia and Europe. Other smaller trade routes joined communities in other parts of the world. When people met, they would often exchange goods, ideas, beliefs, art, and music. In addition, they would share knowledge of how to make things. Late in the Neolithic period, people discovered that rocks containing copper and silver could be heated, and the metal used to make tools and weapons.

Of all the trumpets used in ancient history, we know the most about the ram's horn, or *shofar*. This has been played by the Hebrews, (or Jews) for over three thousand years, and is still played to this day in Jewish places of worship called synagogues. The most famous story about the *shofar* is found in the book of Joshua, a section of the Old Testament. The story says that the Hebrews had been wandering for forty years without a home, but were told by God to go back to the Holy Land and take control of the city of Jericho. For six days, the sound of the *shofar* circled Jericho as seven priests played their instruments outside the walls. On the seventh day they circled the city seven times, still playing their instruments loudly. After the people yelled at the top of their voices, the city walls collapsed.

DID YOU KNOW?



6 Of all the trumpets used in ancient history, we know the most about the ram's horn, or *shofar*. This has

been played by the Hebrews, (or Jews) for over three thousand years, and is still played to this day in Jewish places of worship called synagogues. The

5 most famous story about the *shofar* is found in the book of Joshua,

a section of the Old Testament. The story says that the Hebrews had been wandering for forty years without a home, but were told by God to go back to the Holy Land and take control of the city of Jericho. For six days, the sound of the *shofar* circled Jericho as seven priests played their instruments outside the walls. On the seventh day they circled the city seven times, still playing their instruments loudly. After the people yelled at the top of their voices, the city walls collapsed.

31

Key Points, cont.

6 We know so much about the *shofar* because of its 3,000 plus years of uninterrupted use, and the numerous sources, both written and oral, that illuminate its meaning, use, and significance for the Jewish people.⁵ (TE p. 47)

7 Although the Hebrews used a ram's horn, in the story of Jericho, they also used a trumpet made from silver called the *Hassrah*, which God told Moses to make when he was on Mt. Sinai. This instrument likely resembled the Mesopotamian or

Egyptian trumpet.⁶ (SE p. 10, TE p. 14)

8 Anthropologists, archaeologists, and historians have pieced together the start of civilization between 10,000–2,000 BCE. As the last ice age came to an end, a change occurred in human living patterns, from hunting and gathering, to farming and the domestication of animals, and this allowed people to live in fixed housing, forming communities which eventually grew to become towns and cities. What is a “civilization”? A civilization has many characteristics including political, social, economic, cultural, and religious elements.

Teaching Tip

When discussing religion or belief systems with students, place these beliefs in a historical context so that students have a knowledge of them and their role in human history.

These new communities had a social structure that placed a king or ruler at the top, religious and military elites in the middle, and farmers and artisans in the lower orders. In addition, a bureaucracy developed which enabled the growth of armies, to provide security or wage war. Systemic agriculture was introduced as a way of producing food, and artisans and craftspeople began to specialize and make pottery, textiles, and tools. Distinct religious beliefs emerged, with gods becoming crucial in people's lives. Systems of writing were developed, using shapes and letters as a way for kings, priests, artisans, and merchants to keep records. It also enabled people to write down music. Finally, the appearance of bronze from as early as 3,500 BCE resulted in changes in technology, including advanced metalworking.⁷ The earliest civilizations were located in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, Peru, and China. From this time onwards trumpets of many types (made of both natural materials and metals) were in use. How do we know? First, ancient texts such as *The Epic of Gilgamesh*⁸, the Old Testament⁹, and the *Rig Veda*¹⁰ mention the use of trumpets in ancient civilizations. Second, images of trumpets have been found on ancient artwork, stone carvings, and pottery.¹¹ Finally, many ancient trumpets have survived to this day and are housed in museums across the globe.¹²