

Stages of Civilization

MATERIALS:

Format: Classified nomenclature for Fundamental Human Needs across time

- picture cards
- name slips (note: if you use the free Hub material, you'll have to write the name slips on the back of the date slips)
- text cards
- Booklet: made by combining picture cards and text cards (serves as control of error)

(Download materials [here](#))

To make materials:

- Download two copies
- Cut one copy of pictures/date slips
- Write name of need on back of cut date slips
- Make booklet with the second printed set

NOTES FOR ADULTS:

The Stages of Civilization work is our first exploration of the child's area of interest, and it has two steps. The first step is a guided conversation down the branch of the Fundamental Needs Chart that houses your child's interest. So, for example, if your child is interested in log cabins because they're reading *Little House on the Prairie*, then the guided conversation will explore the Shelter column.

Your conversation should follow these four steps:

1. Describe the material/object (e.g. wood, stone, iron/steel)
2. Briefly explain how humans used it (benefits and challenges)
3. Point out the human occupations (jobs) that came about due to this material
4. Emphasize how those humans worked hard so that others could satisfy their needs.

So, for example, in the Shelter column, I would talk about how the first shelters used animal skins and wood. I would discuss how humans used wood first as a skeleton to build temporary housing like straw huts, teepees and wigwams. Later it was used to build log cabins. Discuss how wood was susceptible to rot and fires, explain in some detail the work of loggers, millers, and carpenters, and point out that thanks to these hard-working individuals, people were able to provide shelter for themselves and their families, and protect themselves from wildlife and the elements. You don't have to give a huge lecture, just a brief but descriptive overview that highlights human work, paints a vivid picture in your child's mind, and leaves them wanting to find out more.

After this conversation, either in the same session or on the following day, pull out the picture cards that correspond to the need you discussed. It can be helpful to read the text cards prior to presenting the material, so you know what each card represents. Remember, you don't have to know everything, but it helps to be one step ahead of your child. Go through the cards one by one, in no particular order, briefly discussing the details in each image. And then invite your child to match the labels and text cards to the images they're now familiar with.

Notes:

- We are NOT using a chronological order during the initial presentation and card work.
- We should have a narrative for each of the fundamental human needs (see example presentation).
- **There's no need to follow a script. Simply use the materials once before you work with the kids, read the cards, and think about how to share the concepts with them in a way that focuses on human ingenuity and progress. Your narrative can be shorter than the one in this lesson.**
- If you talk about the materials, you dehumanize the process. We want to tell the human story.

PRESENTATION:

- Take one of the folders (e.g. Story of Clothing) and ask the children where we would put clothing on our chart. Put the folder on top of the chart, on its corresponding picture.
- Do the same thing with the other folders (i.e. shelter, clothing, food, defense, transportation).
- Choose one of the folders with which to work (we're choosing shelter for this example) and put the others away for the children to explore later.
- **Put the cards aside and focus on the chart for the first/conversational part of the work.**
- Review what we see on the chart for shelter:
 - a. animal skins
 - b. timber (i.e. wood)
 - c. stone/bricks
 - d. iron
- This tells us that people have used these materials in order to build their homes. Ask: **Why do you think people build homes?** (Answer: safety, shelter, warmth, etc.)
- Discuss raw materials people used to meet their need for shelter: (This is an outline of the most important points, use it to guide your conversation)
- **Animal skins: animal kingdom**
 - a. First material available to humans
 - b. They used the entire animal when they killed it
 - c. Had to strip the skin, dry it, maybe even sew them together
 - d. Benefits: Warm, waterproof
 - e. Drawbacks: soft and susceptible to the elements, needed a frame
 - f. Human work around using skins:
 - i. Hunters
 - ii. Butchers
 - iii. Tanners
 - iv. Tailors (sewing the skins together to cover more area)
 - g. **All these people work hard so that other human beings can satisfy their needs for shelter.**
- **Timber: plant kingdom**
 - a. At first people used branches - directly available
 - b. Then began using trunks of trees

- i. People developed techniques for building with wood: stripping, cutting, seasoning the planks
 - c. New trades arose from building with timber:
 - i. loggers, lumberjacks - harvest the wood
 - ii. Millers - cut the wood
 - iii. Carpenters - build with the wood
 - d. **All these people work hard so that other human beings can satisfy their needs for shelter.**
- **Stones/bricks: involves the mineral kingdom**
 - a. What stones do you think human beings might have used first to build their homes? Stones from the river. (Children can try building with river stones, it's hard because they're rounded).
 - b. To shape the stones, people had to quarry them from the sides of mountains, and cut/shape the stones - hard work.
 - i. Stone was only used for pyramids and monuments to the gods.
 - c. New discovery: brick
 - i. Soft and easy to shape
 - ii. When it dries, it becomes hard like stone
 - iii. Bricks arranged in a staggered pattern to reduce leaks
 - iv. Mortar applied to bind and hold bricks together
 - v. At first, bricks were left to dry in the sun. Then humans discovered how to cook them - how to "fire" them.
 - d. New trades/occupations:
 - i. Quarrymen and stonemasons
 - ii. Brickmakers, kiln operators, bricklayers
 - e. **All these people work hard so that other human beings can satisfy their needs for shelter.**
- **Iron/steel: mineral kingdom**
 - a. Humans had to transform what nature offered
 - b. Iron is found mixed with other things - this is called an "ore"
 - c. Metal needs to be separated from the rest of the mineral - "smelting" by heating metal
 - d. Later, steel was developed - it's iron mixed with carbon to prevent rusting
 - i. Ironsmiths: would heat iron as much as possible (plastic texture)
 - ii. Later, they were able to make iron liquid and pour it into casts to make the shape they wanted
 - iii. When it cools, it's very hard - this is how beams are made
 - iv. Beams act as a skeleton
 - e. New trades/occupations:
 - i. Miners: find and extract ores
 - ii. Smelters: separate the iron from the rest of the rock
 - iii. Smiths: worked the iron
 - iv. Steelworkers: use steel to build machines, buildings...
 - f. **All these people work hard so that other human beings can satisfy their needs for shelter.**

- Our homes require other materials too: roofs, windows, doors, door frames, etc.
- Now let's see what kind of dwellings people built over time. (Start with the classified nomenclature.)

Classified Nomenclature

Note: Remember, **we're not working in chronological order**. This is just a conversation to familiarize the child with the different types of homes.

We have a home, we're in it right now. But we're not the only ones who've ever needed a home. We're going to go back to a long time ago, to see what sorts of houses other people had. (Adapt the information in this section to fit the cards you have).



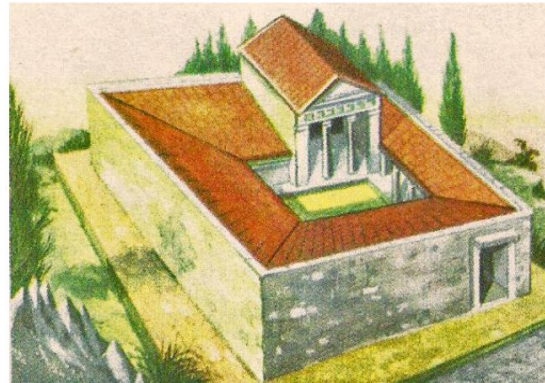
Medieval castle:

- Walled for protection against enemies
- Strong door - notice arch (Romans were first to build those arches)
- High towers to look out for invading armies
- Small windows to keep out the cold
- What is it made from? Stone or brick: Imagine how long it took to build!
- Lots of people lived and worked behind those walls:
 - Royalty and their court
 - Farmers and shepherds
 - Falconer and master of the hounds
 - Tailors and cobblers



Cave:

- People didn't build caves; just found them.
- Lived near entrance - near light
- Only started using caves when they were able to harness the power of fire
 - Able to keep animals out



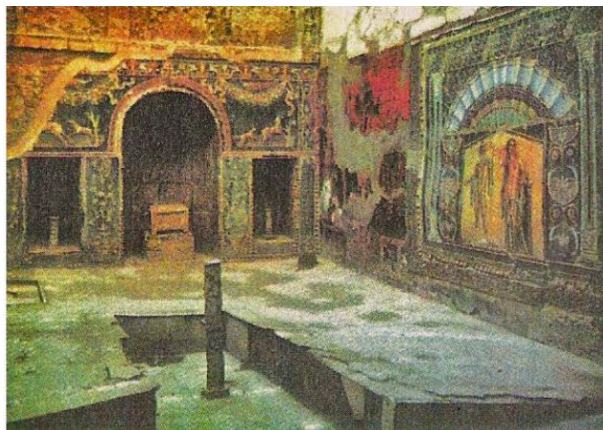
House of Greek nobility:

- Greek house of long ago
- Built around a courtyard - no windows on the outside
- Roof slopes to collect water in a cistern in the courtyard (didn't rain year-round)
 - Cistern: like a well that collects water that falls from the roof
- Men and women lived in different quarters or parts of the house.
 - The male part of the house was called the androecium (meaning "male house").
 - The women lived in the gynoecium (meaning "female house").
 - Note: Connection to the parts of the flower (botany)



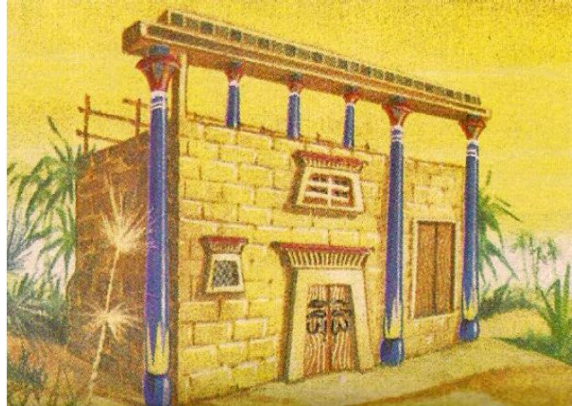
Skyscraper:

- Found in center of modern cities
 - Shortage of space, people build vertically
- Used for living or working
- Countries compete to see who has the tallest building
- Requires lots of manpower and machinery to build



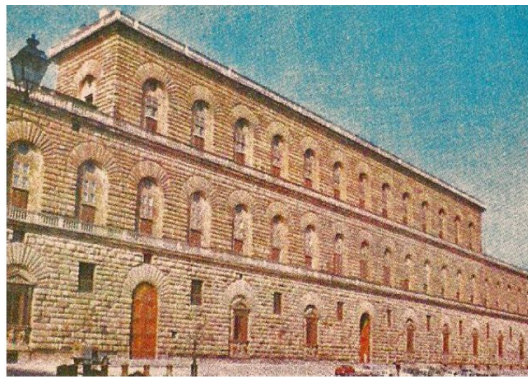
Roman house:

- Also had courtyard (they copied greek house design)
- Also collected water
- Walls were decorated with paintings (frescoes)
- Enjoyed having gardens
- Decorated their floors with ornate tile artwork (later children can explore this art)
- Wealthy families had statues



Egyptian house:

- Wealthy person's home or home for priests (called a "temple")
- One story, flat roof, possibly had a roof garden.
- Thick walls made of unbaked brick.
- Small windows to keep house cool (it was very hot in the summers)
- Beautifully decorated.



Renaissance Palace:

- Home for a noble family.
- Adopted elements from Greek and Roman buildings (called "classical style")
 - Note the arches
- Multi-generational families lived in these palaces
- Had many rooms (called 'salons'), each one connecting to the next (like a museum)
 - Had a ballroom, guest rooms, gallery for keeping portraits

**Straw hut:**

- Typical of early human groups
- Caves weren't used year-round; in warm seasons they used huts.
- Cylindrical with conical roof
- Used natural plant materials are used, including straw, grass, or leafy branches.
- Maintenance was required
- Still used in some warm parts of the world (like southern Mexico)
- Great for areas where hurricanes hit; would blow away but people wouldn't be hurt

Following activities:

- labels (word reading)
- descriptive texts (sentence reading)