Introduction to Prehistoric Art
The Dawn of Time

- The Earth was formed 4 Billion years ago.
- Life (in the form of small blue algae) appeared 200 billion years ago.
- Dinosaurs walked the Earth 200 million years ago.
- The most distant ancestors of modern man, *Homo Sapiens*, appeared 200,000 years ago in Africa.
- *Homo Sapiens* arrived in France only 35,000 years ago. This was *Cro-Magnon* man, responsible for the cave paintings at Lascaux 17,000-18,000 years ago.
Prehistory is defined as the time before writing, and without written records, we have only the works themselves and archeological evidence to help us interpret them.
Prehistoric artifacts have been found widely spread throughout Europe, Russia, Africa and China.
Prehistoric art is divided into two periods-
1. Paleolithic
2. Neolithic

The first period is called the **PALEOLITHIC** period, otherwise known as the **OLD STONE AGE**.

The Paleolithic period was from 30,000 - 10,000 B.C..

The second period is called the **NEOLITHIC** period, otherwise known as the **NEW STONE AGE**.

The Neolithic period was from 8,000 - 5,000 B.C.
History Timeline

30,000 - 10,000 B.C.E. Paleolithic Era
8,000 - 5,000 B.C.E. Neolithic Era

1974 When Ms. Buckley was born
2014 You are here

Year 1

*These are in order of sequence, not incrementally placed.*
Arrange the dates in order from earliest to most recent on a timeline:

1988
10,000 B.C.E.
500
500 B.C.E.
2006 B.C.E.
2007
Why did they paint the cave?

- Just the animals that were around at that time.
- Instructions on how to hunt or not to hunt.
- The cave was used for religious ceremonies.
- Painting were for good luck in hunting.

What do the paintings mean?
Bison at Altamira (Santander, Spain), c. 12,000-11,000 BCE
Around 15,000 B.C.,
ancient hunters drew
and painted important
life events on cave
walls.

These are now called the
Lascaux Cave Paintings
and are found in France.

In 1940, a group of young boys discovered the caves
by accident. They had been untouched until then.
The pictures in the caves tell us a lot about the
lives of our Prehistoric ancestors.
Lascaux Caves, France
15,000-13,000 B.C.E.
Hall of the Bulls (Lascaux), c. 15,000-13,000 BCE

Tour Lascaux
Wounded man and disemboweled bison (Lascaux), c.15,000 - 13,000 BCE

Religious ritual
Hunting Magic
Materials

- **Primitive “paint” (ground minerals)**
- **Feathers**
- **Moss**
- **Fur**
- **Chewed sticks**
- **Finger painting**
- **“Spray Paint”**
Bison with turned head (La Madeleine), c. 12,000 BCE, reindeer horn
Venus of Willendorf (Austria), c. 28,000-23,000 BCE, limestone
cult of the fertility goddess/ lack of naturalistic rendering
Human skull from Jericho, c. 7000-6000 BCE
Oldest continuous city
spirit trap
Stonehenge (Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire, England), c. 2000 BCE
Sarcen
Bluestone
cromlech
stonehenge video