

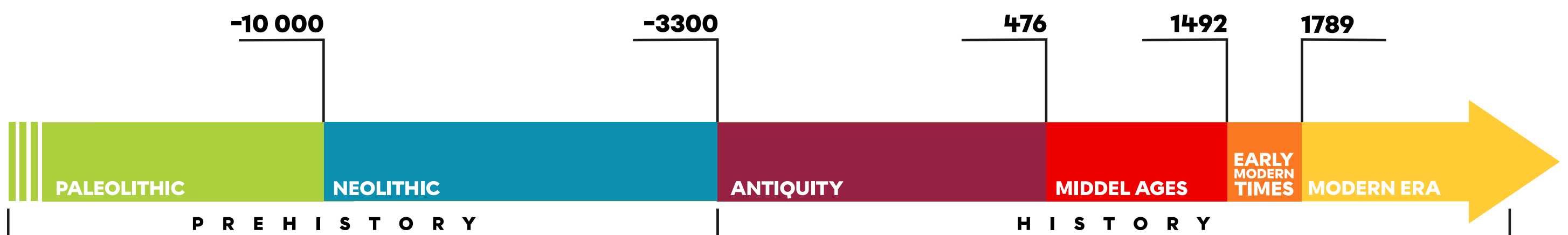
Historical Periods

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The history of humanity spans millennia. It began with the appearance of the first humans in Prehistory, and continues to the present day in the Modern Era.

To make things easier to understand, historians have divided history into what's known as historical periods or eras. Each of these time spans is a bit like chapters in the great book of humanity.



Paleolithic

The Paleolithic period, or the *Stone Age*, began around 2.5 million years ago and ended 10,000 years ago. During this time, humans were nomadic and fed themselves by hunting and gathering.



Neolithic

The Neolithic period, or the *Age of Polished Stone*, began when agriculture and livestock farming began to appear. Humans began to settle. This sedentarization was made possible by the invention of new tools and techniques. The Neolithic period ended in 3,300 BC with the appearance of writing.



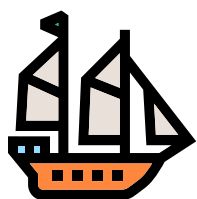
Antiquity

Antiquity began with the appearance of writing around 3,300 BC. This period was also marked by the emergence of various civilizations, including the Mesopotamian, Greek, and Roman civilizations.



Middle Ages

The Middle Ages began with the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 and marked the rise of Christianity. Innovations in agriculture meant that people could grow more food; the surplus was then sold in towns called *burghs*. The Middle Ages ended with the start of the Renaissance.



The Early Modern Times

The Early Modern period began in 1453 or 1492, depending on your interpretation. It was marked by the Age of Exploration, the Enlightenment, the American Revolution, and the beginnings of industrialization in Europe. The French Revolution in 1789 marked the end of this historical period.



The Modern Era

The Modern Era began in 1789 and continues to the present day. This era has been marked by imperialism, two world wars, and many advances in technology, including the creation of the internet.



Did you know?

Prehistory is the period before writing existed. **History** is the period that begins with the appearance of writing and lasts until the present day.