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Importance of Catal Huyuk in Neolithic Revolution

Video game designers create the strategy, stories, and images for video games. Some video game designers create video games inspired by events that happened throughout history. For example, the video game Age of Empires is set in the Stone Age.



Today, you will create a video game that is inspired by a settlement called Catal Huyuk that existed during the Neolithic Revolution. Follow the steps below.

Step 1: Learn About Neolithic Revolution and Catal Huyuk

Read the passage about the Neolithic Revolution and Catal Huyuk. Then, answer the questions.

The Neolithic Revolution refers to the time period when hunter-gatherers began to create permanent settlements, grow food, and raise livestock. Before the Neolithic Revolution, hunter-gatherers moved from place to place and did not have a permanent home. For example, when food became scarce, hunter-gatherers moved on to find a new place to settle. As hunter-gatherers learned to farm, they found more lasting places to live.

In the 1960s, archaeologists discovered the remains of one permanent settlement in Turkey. The community is called Çatalhöyük, also known as Catal Huyuk. Established sometime between 6700 and 5700 BCE, Catal Huyuk was home to approximately 5,000 to 6,000 people.

Since then, archaeologists have discovered numerous artifacts from Catal Huyuk. The discovery of pottery, tools, religious figurines, and painted murals suggests that Catal Huyuk was an important center of trade and culture.

Catal Huyuk is also an example of a complex village. A complex village refers to a community with many elements. Complex villages had large populations and people who worked different jobs. Complex villages also had leaders and basic laws.

The secondary sources on the next page give more information on what Catal Huyuk looked like.

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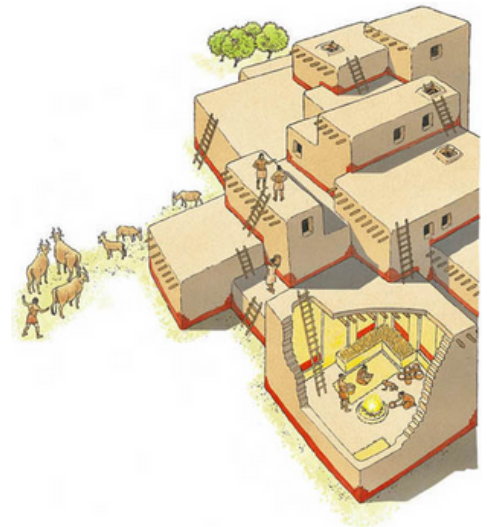
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This is an illustration of what archeologists believe Catal Huyuk could have looked like. The discovery of water birds' bones found at the site suggest that the village was built in a marshy area. Farming likely took place in areas outside the marsh land.

Image credit: Dan Lewandowski

This is an illustration showing what homes looked like in Catal Huyuk. People lived in simple mud-brick houses that were built close together. There were over a thousand houses packed tightly together. As many as fifty people might live in a single building. There were no streets or alleys that separated them. Notice how there are ladders that lead to the rooftop of the houses. To get in or out of a house, people climbed up and down ladders. The ladders also provided security because people could remove the ladders to keep someone from climbing into their house. Rooftops could be used for other things like a place to sleep when it was hot outside or a place to dry crops.



Credit: https://cdn.usborne.com/quicklinks-library/690/catalhuyuk_p108_b690.jpg



This is a model that shows the positioning of a ladder in a house so people in Catal Huyuk could leave and enter. The ladder leads to the roof.

Model Created By: Grant Cox

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This is a photograph of what the inside of a typical house might have looked like in Catal Huyuk. There were usually two rooms used for cooking and sleeping. The walls were covered by plaster. The clay fireplace to the left has rounded edges to prevent embers from spilling over and causing a fire. This small fireplace was used for heat and as an oven for cooking. Raised platforms were used to store bowls and baskets. The bull heads on the walls were important religious symbols in the community.



This is a photograph of a mural that many archaeologists believe to be the oldest map or landscape scene in the world. It is believed that the mural shows Catal Huyuk. The two peaks on the mural are of a volcano, known as Hasan Dağ, that erupted between 9500 and 8400 years ago near Catal Huyuk. It is important to note that not all professionals believe that this is what the mural shows. Some believe that the scene is not a map or landscape scene, but possibly a picture showing the pattern of a leopard on top of geometric designs.

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This illustration shows how people in Catal Huyuk buried the dead. When a person died, he or she was buried below the floors in the home. Burial pits were used again and again. After a body was placed in a pit, the pit was filled with clay. The opening to the pit was sealed with plaster and the platform above was given a new coat of plaster. When the time came to add a new burial, the platform floor was opened again, the earth cleared away, and the bones of any previous burials pushed aside to make room for the new body.

Illustration By: Kathryn Killackey



This photograph shows a reconstruction of what a shrine, or sacred space, might have looked like in Catal Huyuk. Unlike small villages, which mainly consisted of houses, Catal Huyuk also had buildings used as religious shrines and places for special ceremonies. Notice the many different heads of cattle mounted on the walls. Like many Neolithic groups, the people of Catal Huyuk believed in animal spirits. The heads are made of animal skulls covered in plaster. Archaeologists think the heads may have been used in special ceremonies.



This is a photograph of mural art painted on a building in Catal Huyuk. As more people arrived to the community, people developed specialized skills, like making tools, producing cloth, and making pottery. Artists painted murals on the walls of buildings throughout the city. Other craftsmen created luxury items, such as beads and mirrors.

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Answer the questions below.

1. How were roofs used in Catal Huyuk?

2. Why are sites like Catal Huyuk significant to understanding the Neolithic Period?

3. What characteristics of Catal Huyuk make it a complex village?

4. Do you think the people who lived in Catal Huyuk were innovative? Explain your reasoning.

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Step 2: Design a Video Game

You will design a video game called “Capture the Flag in Catal Huyuk.” The video game will be set at night in Catal Huyuk. Today, you will design level 1. The goal of level 1 is for players to capture 3 flags that are hidden in Catal Huyuk.

To design level 1, you must:

- Sketch a picture of Catal Huyuk and include at least one house and one shrine.
- Identify three places where the flags will be hidden in the city.
- Write three sets of clues so players know where to look for the flags.
- Design a minimum of three obstacles that players will have to overcome while looking for flags. For example, players might need to cross a balance beam and climb a ladder to get to a flag.

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Three Clues:

Obstacles: