CHAPTER 1 – HUMANITY BEFORE HISTORY (5 million – 3,500 B.C.)

1. What sorts of spiritual explanations have there been for the beginnings of life on earth?

2. Describe the modern scientific version of earth’s origins telling where earth was located, what processes were occurring, and how life emerged.

3. What were the on-going changes in land forms that ended up structuring the geology, geography, and climate of earth?

4. What does the author mean when he says “There were many ways in which our common humanity determined our destiny as a species on this planet?”
5. What were some of the early life forms which appeared on earth?

6. For only how many years have archeologists, anthropologists, biologists, and paleontologists been working to discover the earliest stages of human life on earth?

7. About how old is the entire human evolutionary path, that is when hominids evolved from chimps and bonobos?

8. Where did the earliest hominid species evolve?

9. What disciplines have been involved piecing together the story of the early human past?

10. Why did hominid bands such as Homo Erectus, leave Africa and migrate out all over Eurasia?

11. How did early humans migrate to and reach Canada, America, and Australia?
12. Was the fanning out from Africa systematic, organized, and deliberately planned?

13. What branch of the hominid line survived when all of the others died out?

14. What accounts for the racial differences which are part of our heritage?

15. Why has the mixing of races produced good results?

16. What is the scientific name given to the period of time of the first 5 million years of hominid development?

17. What is the meaning of paleolithic?

18. What were the 3 main ways early humans obtained food?

19. What was and perhaps still is the main effort needed for survival?
20. How many families were there in a typical hunter/gatherer band?

21. What sort of tools did hunter/gatherers use?

22. Which hominid discovered how to generate fire?

23. For what percent of human history were humans hunters/gatherers?

24. Were hunters/gatherers divided into different social classes, religions and races?

25. What were women’s roles in hunter/gatherer societies?

26. How far back did supernatural beliefs go? What were these beliefs?

27. Give several examples of early human art.

28. What does neolithic mean?

29. During what years did the Neolithic period last?
30. What were the 2 main advances humans made during the Neolithic Era?

31. What factors caused the breakthroughs in lifestyles from the hunter/gatherer era to the Neolithic era?

32. Was food growing (farming) a rapid, sudden change in human history or was it a gradual, slow process?

33. How were animals domesticated?

34. How did pastoralists live and why did they desire the goods of settled people?

35. Describe life in a Neolithic village.

36. According to the author, what was humankind’s most amazing enterprise?
37. In what lifestyle did 99% of the human venture take place?

38. What factors determined which type of lifestyle people would live – whether it was agricultural, pastoral, or hunter/gatherer- from 8,000-3500 B.C.?

39. What did civilization consist of?

40. When and why did civilization emerge?

41. What 3 organizational principles dominated early civilization? Define each of them.
42. Describe the main economic, technological, and cultural foundations of civilization.