

Visual Analysis

In this activity, you will first examine images from the passage without reading the captions. It is important to gain information about an image solely based on what it conveys, without referring to its caption. By reading the caption after making your initial observations of the image, you will see that making inferences is a multitiered process. The process can help you build on previous knowledge, avoid inherent biases and expand initial observations that can shape your impression of an image. As you learn more about the image, the process can also help you assess how close (or not) your analysis was.

To start, look at the image at the bottom of this pdf, which can also be found in this lesson's passage. Place your hand or a piece of paper over the caption at the bottom of the image. Examine the image by scanning all over it. Make some notes detailing what you see and how you feel when you look at the image. What strikes you as interesting or unusual? When everyone has finished their notes, assemble all together and share your impressions. Record your responses on a shared space such as a front board or chart paper.

In small groups, analyze one of the other images from the passage. Select one of the images not examined in the activity above. Place your hand or a piece of paper over the caption that accompanies the image. As a group, look at the image to get first impressions—as you did before. Then look more deeply at the image, using the following to guide you.

- **First Impressions:** What is your overall impression of the image? How do you feel when you look at it? What contributes to the feeling? (For example, what emotions come to mind when you look at the images? What do they remind you of?)

- **Content:** What do you see in the image? (People? Objects? Describe them.) What seems to be going on in the image?
- **Time Period:** Does the image depict a different time period? When do you think? What evidence helps support your thinking?
- **Summary:** From what you've observed, list three things you might infer from this image.

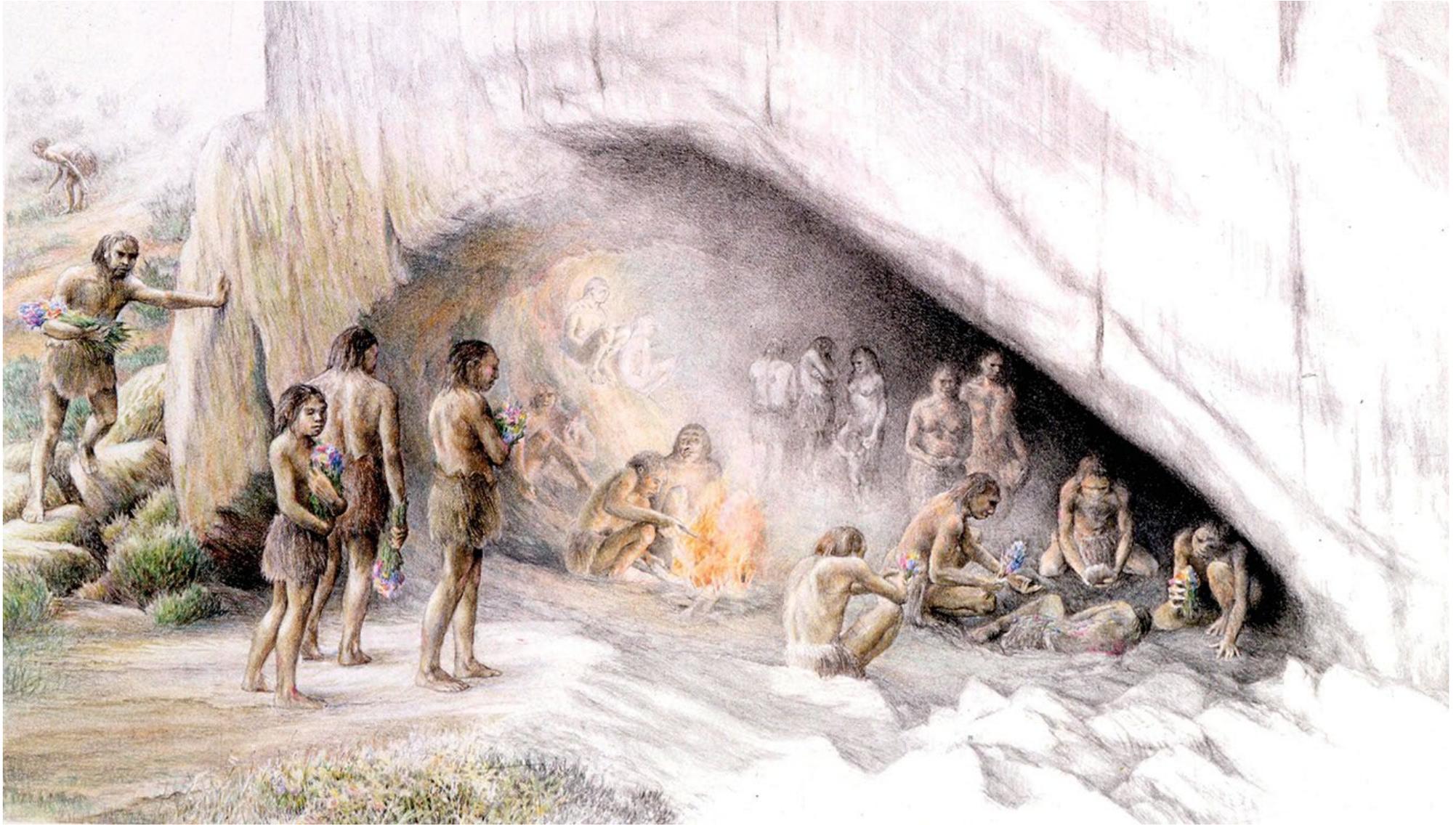
After you've reached a summary, convene all together and present your image and analysis and listen to what others share. Ask one another how each arrived at a conclusion of his/image.

Now look at the caption that accompanies your image. What information does it give you that you didn't pick up from your observation? How does it change the three inferences you made earlier? What does this teach you about your observation skills and the conclusions you made?

Common Core Standard(s) met:

CCRA.R.1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCRA.R.7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.



SMITH ARCHIVE / ALAMY An artist's impression of a Neanderthal burial at Shanidar Cave draws on the finds of Solecki and Barker to show a community gathering and laying flowers around the body of the deceased.

