

Neanderthal Boy

My name is Wolf and I live in a cave near the sea.

My family

I live with my mother, father, elder brother and baby sister. My grandmother and grandfather live here too as well as my father's brother, his wife and baby.

My father is very strong and wears a beautiful fur cape to keep him warm. He wears a fur hat too if it gets particularly cold as well as fur boots. This is the time when the daylight is short and the nights are long and cold.

My mother is also strong and sometimes helps with hunting. She is very clever at lighting fires and scraping the skins clean from the animals that we have caught.

My grandmother helps my mother and also collects berries and leaves for us to eat. She helps look after the younger children in our group but is very strict with them.

My grandfather can't walk anymore and always sits near the fire. He was injured badly when he jumped on a woolly rhinoceros' back to try to kill it for meat.

I have one brother who is older than me and he goes with my father and father's brother to hunt. I want to

be like him one day because he isn't afraid of anything, except for spiders!

Keeping healthy

I have very strong legs and can walk and run very far. I'm lucky that the skin on the bottom of my feet is tough and thick so I don't feel the sharp twigs and stones when I go hunting with my family. We walk or run everywhere. It's important to be able to run fast, especially if an angry bear is chasing you!

The women in our group know a lot about the plants that grow around our cave. If any of us are ill or injured, they make us eat special leaves and drink strange brews and put ointments on us to make us better. My mother has a lot of animal skin bags to keep these special plants safe in. It was my mother who pulled my grandfather's teeth out when they were rotten.

Clothes

We always have a fire in our cave because it keeps us warm and the nasty animals keep away when they see the fire. My mother, grandmother and auntie all work together scraping away the blood and guts from the animal skins and then after they've been stretched and dried we can wear them. We also use the skin of the deer and the wool of the bison and mammoth to wrap around us when we sleep. My bed is a big pile of straw covered with deep soft fur hides.

My grandmother made us all cold weather boots. They were very good and kept out the wet snow because

she'd rubbed the outside with lots of fat from the mammoth kill.

Tool making

Even though my grandfather can't walk, he can still make tools from big stones called flint. He makes hand axes and spears and sharp knives for cutting. He also makes scrapers for cleaning and de-hairing animal skins, and a tool that makes holes in animal skins called an awl. My grandfather is special and hunters come from all over the area to ask him to make tools for them.

Hunting

I sometimes go hunting with the men and women. It's very scary! Once we followed a herd of mammoth for a very long way. It was too late to go home so we built a shelter from big mammoth bones we found and some large sticks, and covered the top with twigs and bark. In the morning, we saw that one of the mammoths had left the herd and so we chased it until it fell over the cliff and died. We ran down the side of the mountain and cut it up there to make it easier to carry home.

Food

My favourite food is meat and lots of it. Sometimes we cook it on the fire but sometimes we don't bother and eat it raw. My sister likes bear meat best but my dad likes deer and my father's brother likes bison.

My grandfather is old and can't chew his meat any more because he doesn't have any teeth. My

grandmother chews it for him and then he eats it afterwards. Sometimes I do it for him but I don't always remember not to swallow!

When the warm weather comes and the snow fades away, you can see the huge flat land below our cave. Even though it's marshy and boggy, I love to follow the water channels and collect shells stuck to rocks. If you put them very close to the fire then they pop open and the meat inside is delicious. I found a few dead fish once and took them home. My family was delighted when they saw them as they made a beautiful supper for us all.

I love it when my family come back from hunting with part of a very big mammoth. We eat well for a very long time when that happens. I especially like the soft jelly that you can suck out of the bones. I also like the big tusks and hard bones because you can make good sharp tools with these, and what's more, we spread the fat over the top of a bunch of straw and then light it to help us see in the dark.

The Landscape

From our cave you can see for a very long way and the land changes throughout the year. Sometimes the sun shines and when it does we have long warm days and you can see pretty flowers, mosses and small trees on the vast grassland. This is when it's difficult to run on the ground because it's so soft and squishy with water on the surface. This is when my family leave our cave

and start following the animals that have come to the land to eat the grasses and mosses. This is the time when we live in the shelters made by my dad and his brother. When the cold times come, the winds blow strongly, the earth freezes and the snow falls. This is the time that we return to our cave because the animals go away and the land as far as you can see from our cave is completely white and you can't see the little trees at all!