

# THE ICEMAN OF THE ALPS

## A Historical Inquiry



In 1991, hikers in the Alps found a dead body and notified the authorities. They thought the person might have died on a recent hike, but extensive scientific testing revealed the body to be around 5,000 years old! Since the “Iceman” was frozen for all of this time, his body, clothing, and tools were all preserved intact, giving us a rare glimpse of what it must have been like to live in the Neolithic Era.



Photo by Helmut Simon  
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The discovery of the Iceman has also given us a mystery to solve. The **autopsy**<sup>1</sup> revealed many signs of a violent death. When historians inquire about the past, they examine **evidence** and put it together to tell a story. Examine the evidence below. What story does it tell?

### ARTIFACTS

- Copper Axe
- Flint Knife
- 14 bone-tipped arrows
  - two finished
  - twelve unfinished
- Unfinished Longbow
- Flints
- Mushrooms

### AUTOPSY

- Cerebral Trauma to the head
- Cuts and bruises on hands
- Arrow wound in shoulder (arrow probably removed)
- Blood from four people (DNA)
- 57 Carbon Tattoos (dots and lines on lower spine, back of knees, and right ankle)
- About 5,000 years old!

### **YOUR ASSIGNMENT:**

By yourself or with a partner, use at least **six** pieces of evidence to tell a story about the events leading to the Iceman’s death. Remember that the only wrong answer in history is an answer that lacks evidence. Be creative and have fun with this!

Your finished product should be about one page handwritten. Use the space provided for brainstorming and prewriting.

### **PREWRITING:**

<sup>1</sup> The examination of a corpse in order to determine the manner of death