Narrator: Listen to part of a lecture in an archeology class.

Professor: OK, we’ve been talking about early agriculture in the near east. So let’s concentrate on one site and see what we can learn from it. Let’s look at Catalhoyuk. Ah… I’d better write that down. Catalhoyuk, that’s about as close as we get in English. It’s Turkish, really. The sites in modern day Turkey, and who knows what the original inhabitants called it.

Anyway, uh…Catalhoyuk wasn’t the first agricultural settlement in the near east, but it was pretty early, settled about 9000 years ago in the Neolithic period. And ... umm... the settlement...ah...town really, lasted about a thousand years and grew to a size of about eight or ten thousand people. That certainly makes it one of the largest towns in the world at that time.

One of the things that make the settlement of this size impressive is the time period. It’s the Neolithic, remember, the late Stone Age. So the people that lived there had only stone tools, no metals. So everything they accomplished, like building this town, they did with just stone, plus wood, bricks, that sort of thing.

But you got to remember that it wasn’t just any stone they had, they had obsidian. And umm... obsidian is a black, volcanic, well, almost like glass. It flakes very nicely into really sharp points. The sharpest tools of the entire Stone Age were made of obsidian. And urrr... the people of Catalhoyuk got theirs from further inland, from central Turkey, traded for it, probably.

Anyway, what I wanna focus on is the way the town was built. The houses are all rectangular, one storey made of sun dried bricks. But what’s really interesting is that there are no spaces between them, no streets in other words, and so generally no doors on the houses either. People walked around on the roofs and entered the house through a hatchway on the roof, down a wooden ladder. You can still see the diagonal marks of the ladders in the plaster on the inside walls.

Once you were in the house, there would be one main room and a couple of small rooms for storage. The main room had the hearths, for cooking and for heat. It would’ve been pretty cold during the winters. And it also looks like they made their tools near the fire. There tends to be a lot of obsidian flakes and chips in the hearth ashes, but no chimney.

The smoke just went out the same hatchway that people used for going in and out themselves. So there would have been an open fire inside the house with only one hole in the roof to let the smoke out. You and I would have found it a bit too smoky in there. You can see on the walls, which they plastered and decorated with paintings. They ended up with a layer of black soot on them, and so did people’s lungs. The bones found in the graves show a layer of soot on the inside of the ribs. And that’s another unusual feature of Catalhoyuk, the burial sites.

The graves have all been found under the houses, right under the floors. And it maybe this burial custom that explains why the houses were packed in so tightly without streets. I mean, you might think it was for protection or something, but there has been no evidence found yet of any violent attack that would indicate that kind of danger. It maybe they wanted to live as near as possible to their ancestors’ graves and be buried near them themselves. But it makes a good point.

Based on excavations, we can know the layout of the houses and the location of the graves, but we’re only guessing when we tried to say why they did it that way. That’s the way it is with archeology. You are dealing with the physical remains that people left behind. We have no sure access to what they thought and how they felt about things. I mean it’s interesting to speculate. And the physical artifacts can give us clues, but there is a lot we can’t really know.

So, for instance, their art. They painted on the plastered walls and usually they painted hunting scenes with wild animals in them. Now they did hunt and they also raised cereal crops and kept sheep, but we don’t know why so many of the paintings are of hunting scenes. Was it supposed to have religious or magical significance? That’s the kind of thing we can only guess at based on clues. And hopefully, further excavation of Catalhoyuk will yield more clues. But we’ll probably never know for sure.

独白：听一段考古学课堂讲座 教授：各位同学我们一直讨论关于近东地区早期农业的话题，现在，让我们把精力集中在一个遗址，看看我们能从中学到什么。我们看一下catelhoyuk.嗯...这个名字还是给大家写出来吧。catalhoyuk,英语这样读算是最接近的了。这是土耳其语，不骗你们。遗迹在现代土耳其境内，至于最初土著人怎么叫我们就不用管了。

总之，嗯...虽然catalhoyuk不是近东地区最早的农业定居点，但也是相当早的，大约在9000年前的新石器时代就有定居耕作。还有...嗯...定居...城市延续了一千年，并且发展到八千至一万人口规模（的城市）。这在当时肯定是世界上最大的城市。让这个集居点的规模变得如此惊人的原因之一是这个时代--新石器时代。居住在那里的人只有石器，没有金属工具。他们做的每一件事，如修建城镇，用的都是石头和木头，砖头之类的建材。但大家注意一点，他们所用的石头并不都是普通的石头，还有黑曜石。哦...黑曜石是一种黑色，火山岩质类似玻璃的石头。它能成片剥落而形成精致的尖角。整个石器时代最锋利的工具由黑曜石制成。同时，嗯。。。catalhoyuk人从更远的内陆--土耳其中部，采集，甚至交换得到他们的黑曜石。总之，我想把精力集中在城市是如何建成的。所有的房子都是用晒干的土砖砌成，成矩形，一层高。但真正有趣的是房子间并无间隔，换句话说：没有街道。因此，房子也一般没有门。人们在屋顶行走，透过屋顶的天窗（架设）的木梯进入房子。你在内墙上还能看到用灰泥画的楼梯对角线标识。进入房间后，里面有一个主室和几个用来储存的小房间。主室里有用来做饭和取暖的壁炉。那时的冬天很冷的。看上去好像他们也在火边制造工具。壁炉灰里有大量的黑曜石碎片，对了，没有烟囱。烟从人们当门用的天窗出去。这样看来，屋子里升起一对明火，只有一个天窗来通气。我们看来在屋里会觉得有点呛人。不难看到涂以灰泥和用图案装饰过的四壁，均被烟熏黑，想必当时人们的肺也会近烟者黑。在坟墓中找到的骨头中发现肋骨内侧有一层“呛黑层”。这是catalhoyuk墓葬遗址又一特征。在房子地板的正下方我们发现这些墓葬。或许这种丧葬风俗解释了为什么房子间间隔今走没有街道的原因。我猜你会认为间隔紧凑处于安全的考虑，但是没有发现能表明存在此种危险的证据。也可能他们想生前死后都与祖先“朝夕相处”。这样看来，倒是有几分道理。通过挖掘，我们了解房子的布局和墓葬的位置，但是我们前面说过的安全考虑只是瞎猜而已。考古就需要这样做。因为你面对的只是古人留下的实物残骸。没有可靠的途径来了解他们的思想和他们对事物的看法。我想推测也不失为一件乐事。当然这些古器实物能给我们提供线索，但是很多信息我们仍旧无从得知。比如说，他们的艺术。他们在灰泥墙上作画，也常画有野兽（和有人）的狩猎图。他们确实打猎，同时也在种植粮食作为物、饲养绵羊，但我们不知道为什么有这么多画都只与狩猎相关。难道有宗教或魔法方面的意义？而这些我们只能基于拥有线索的估测。所幸的是，对catalhoyuk进一步的挖掘工作将出土更多的实物和线索。但这一点谁也不能保证。