4-01 Finding fossil（n.化石） man

We can read of读到，获悉 things that happened 5,000 years ago in the Near East, where people first learned to write. But there are some parts of the word （where even now people cannot write）.

The only way that they can preserve保护，保存 their history is to recount叙述；描述it as sagas英雄故事—— legends （handed down把…传下去；传给（后代） **from** one generation of storytellers **to** another）.

These legends are useful / because they can tell us something about migrations迁移 of people who lived long ago, but none could write down what they did.

Anthropologists人类学家 wondered where the remote遥远的 ancestors祖先 of the Polynesian岛名 peoples （now living in the Pacific Islands） came from. The sagas of these people explain that some of them came from Indonesia about 2,000 years ago.

But the first people who were like ourselves lived **so** long ago **that** even their sagas, 插入if they had any, are forgotten. So archaeologists考古学家 have **neither** history **nor** legends to help them to find out where the first 'modern men' came from.

Fortunately, however, ancient men made tools of stone, especially flint燧石, because this is easier to shape **than** other kinds.

They **may** also **have** us**ed** wood and skins, but these have rotted（使）腐烂 away彻底腐烂；完全腐败. （may +动词的「现在完成时」结构：通常含有“或许/也许发生……了”这样怀疑或推测的意味。）

Stone does not decay（使）腐烂，腐朽, and so the tools of long time ago have remained 让步状从when尽管 even the bones of the men who made them have disappeared without trace.

1. when引导「让步状语从句」的用法：

Some of them will make trouble / when nothing good is to be expected of it. 即使什么好处都得不到，他们中的一些人也还是要捣乱的。（when引导「让步状语从句」）

4-02 Spare（v.）使免遭伤害;使幸免 that spider

**Why**, you may wonder, **should** spiders be our friends? Because they destroy so many insects昆虫, and insects include some of the greatest重要的；（数量）极大的 enemies of the human race.

Insects would make it impossible for us to live in the world； they would devour狼吞虎咽地吃光；吞没，毁灭 all our crops农作物；产量；庄稼/ and kill our flocks兽群；成群结队 and herds兽群；牧群, if it were not for如果不是因为/由于 the protection （we get from insect-eating animals）.

We owe a lot to为…感激…，把…归功于… the birds and beasts who eat insects / but all of them （put together加在一起） kill only **a fraction**  **of**一小部分，些微；不相连的一块，片段 the number destroyed by spiders.

Moreover, unlike some of the other insect eaters, spiders never do the least harm to us or our belongings.

Spiders are not insects, 插入as many people think像人们想象的那样, nor even nearly related to them. One can tell the difference [almost **at a glance**（望）一眼（就）], for a spider always has eight legs / and insect never more than six.

How many spiders are engaged（adj.）从事 in this work on our behalf（n.）利益，代表? One authority权威 on有关…的、从事…研究的 spiders made a census统计数字；人口普查 of the spiders in a grass field in the south of England, and he estimated that there were more than 2,250,000 in one acre英亩； that is **something like**大约，将近 6,000,000 spiders of different kinds on a football pitch球场.

Spiders are busy（adj.） [for at least half the year] in killing insects. It is impossible to make more than the wildest guess at how many they kill, （make a guess at sth. 猜测某事。make a wild guess at sth.不着边际地猜测某事。）

but they are hungry creatures, not content（adj.）满足的 with only three meals a day.（be content（adj.） with 对…感到满意）

It has been estimated that *the weight of all the insects destroyed by spiders in Britain in one year* would be greater **than** the total weight of all the human beings in the country.

1. Why should…?形式的疑问句，往往用来表达“不能理解”的含义。
2. if it were not for (如果不是因为/由于）是表示与现实不符的「虚拟语气」结构，通常用于表示“因为现实这一特定条件而改变了一切”之意，如:

[If it were not for his wife's money] he’d never be a director. 如果不是他妻子有钱，他永远也不会成为一个董事。

1. do harm to sb./sth. 与 do sb./sth. harm 均表示“对某人/某物造成损害”。
2. something relates to a particular subject 涉及;关于

I had papers （relating to the children） which my wife and I had to sign. 我有一些关于孩子的文件需要我和妻子签字。

→（v.）one thing relates to another相关;有关联

More studies will be required [before we know what the functions of these genes are / and whether they relate to each other]... 要弄清这些基因的功能以及它们彼此之间是否关联，我们还需要开展更多的研究。

→（v.）you can relate to someone产生共鸣;认同

He is unable to relate to other people... 他无法理解他人的想法。

1. Someone who is engaged（adj.） in or engaged on a particular activity，adj.从事…的;忙于…的
2. carry out/ take/ make a census（n.） of……：对…进行一次(数据统计）调査
3. be busy +in doing sth.忙于做某事。

be busy +with sth. 忙于某事