

? 1. Early Humans: The earliest humans shared most characteristics with other animals

Although the earliest humans were not categorically different than other animals, our incredible brain growth (partly thanks to fire) set the foundation for us to become the complex thinking creatures we are today.

? 2. The Cognitive Revolution: Advances in thinking made homo sapiens masters of the world

70,000 years ago, humans began using language to work together in complex new ways. This made us more effective than any other animal at survival and getting food. Humans also began making art, passing down cultural patterns and using advanced tools like boats.

?? 3. Homo Sapiens Domination: Our species probably wiped out the other human species

Whenever homo sapiens arrived in a new area, the other human species like Neanderthals soon died out. We either outcompeted them for food or exterminated them in conflict. Some rare interbreeding took place too.

? 4. Mass Extinctions: Early humans drastically impacted ecosystems, causing mass extinctions every place they arrived

Homo sapiens caused dozens of giant animals species to become extinct including giant sloths, camels and elephant birds. Soon after they arrived in a new continent or island, the big animals died out according to the fossils.

? 5. The Agricultural Revolution: The invention of farming increased our population, but lowered quality of life

Around the Mediterranean Sea, humans started growing crops and raising animals. Farming dramatically increased the human population. Yet compared to hunter-gatherers, farmers had worse health, more famines, more disease and longer work hours.

? 6. Common Myths: Shared beliefs and stories unite people, allowing millions of strangers to cooperate

Mass cooperation is what fundamentally separates humans from other animals. By working together, we can create space stations and medicines. And what enables millions of people to live and work together are common myths, myths like money, laws and nations.

? 7. Money and Trust: Currencies rely on shared belief in their value; they're one of the most important common myths

Money is not coins or paper bills, but an incredibly useful common myth. Throughout history, people have used many forms of money, including barley, sea shells, gold, coins and virtual numbers. The dollars of a country have value only because everyone agrees to accept them in exchange for their labour or goods.

?? 8. Empires' Dual Role: Imperial rule oppressed people, but also unified them

An empire is a political order that can flexibly expand its borders, swallowing more and more groups of people. Empires spread standardized languages, laws and religions, leading to more global connectedness.

? 9. The Scientific Revolution: Advances in science were driven by imperialism, creating a world of constant change

In the past 500 years, science has changed human societies beyond recognition. Many of the earliest overseas expeditions contained both scientists like Charles Darwin as well as soldiers pursuing military goals. It's difficult to separate science from the political, economic and imperial goals which funded it.

? 10. Modern States: In today's world, states and markets increase person freedom, but weaken social bonds

Today we rely less on our families and local communities, and more on the state and market to provide security. This means we have more individual freedom than before, but also less feeling of belonging to a tight-knit community.

? 11. The Future & Happiness: Did all this progress improve human happiness at all? And what lies ahead?

Modern people are very comfortable and secure, but does that mean we're any happier? People get used to new conveniences, quickly taking them for granted. Most people have found meaning in life through family, marriage, close relationships and religion, which are less stable than in the past.

This is just a sample!

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