

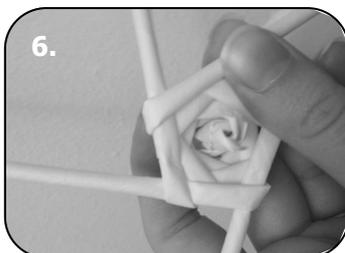
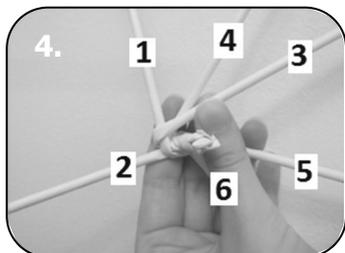
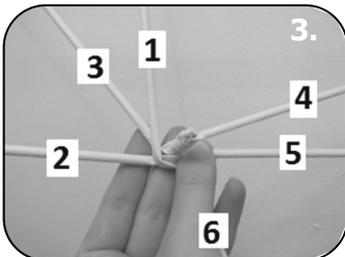
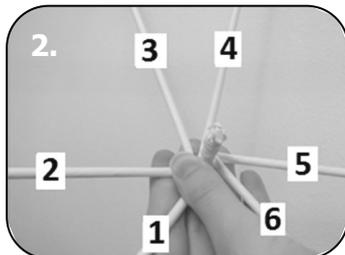
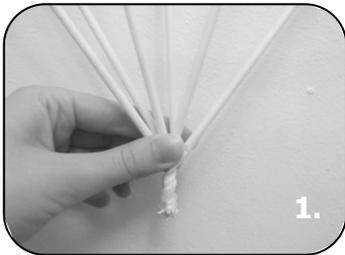


BACKGROUND

Mesolithic **fish traps** have been found in Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and Russia. They are still quite rare because they were made from **organic** materials like willow or birch which only survive in water-logged places.

Fish traps were shaped like a **cone** with a narrow opening so that the fish would be able to swim into the trap but not out again. Some fish traps had stones inside to weigh them down in the water.

Mesolithic people caught herring, cod, bass, sole, trout, plaice, salmon and eels. We know this because we find the bones of all these fish, and more, at Mesolithic sites.



INSTRUCTIONS

You will need:

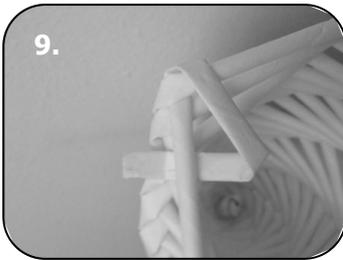
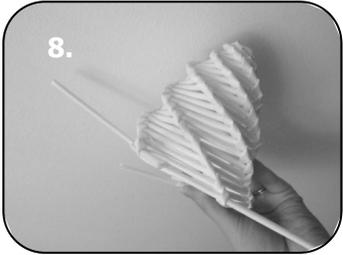
- * Art straws (approx. 32 per person)
- * Glue to secure new straws– *optional*
- * Fish sweets to test the traps– *optional*

The fish trap is made in two parts, each part using sixteen straws. To save straws each participant could make half a fish trap and join it to a partner's half trap to make a whole.

What to do:

1. Take six straws and twist the ends together.
2. Open the straws and lay them flat on the table with the twisted section pointing up.
3. Imagine the straws are numbered as in picture 2
 - Tip:** You could write the numbers on the straws of younger participants
- Take straw one and fold it over straws two and three in a clockwise direction– it should now look like picture 3.
4. Take straw three and fold it over straws one and four (picture 4).
5. Take straw four and fold it over straws three and five. Then take straw five and fold over straws four and six.
6. Continue to fold straws in this way to make a pentagon shape, like picture 6.
 - Tip:** Bend each straw slightly further away from the centre each time to make the fish trap wider and trap shaped.

Activity Sheet: Mesolithic Fish Traps



7. When you reach the end of the straws you need to add six more straws to the ends. Crush the end of the woven straws and slot the ends of the new straws over the top. Push down so that it is secure.

Tip: If the straws come apart you could use some glue to secure them.

8. Keep folding the straws in the same way until your trap looks like picture 8.
9. To finish the top flatten the left over straw and fold it under the top row of woven straws to make a neat edge.

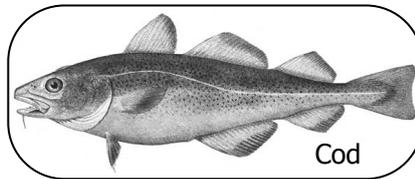
10. To make the entrance for the fish, untwist the bottom of the trap from the inside and push the loose ends out.

11. Un-wind the loose straws to widen the entrance and then push the loose straws back into the trap.

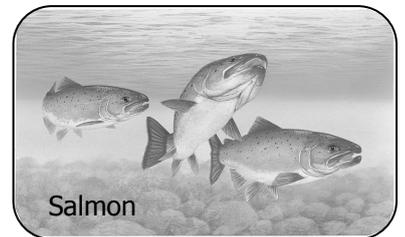
Fact: The loose strands inside the entrance would have made it harder for the fish to find the hole and escape.

12. Repeat steps one to 11 to make the second half of the fish trap, or work with a partner to make half each.

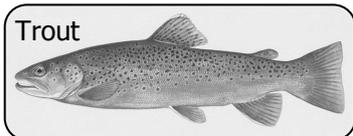
13. Use a spare straw to "sew" the two halves together by winding it around the top row of each half of the trap. Alternatively you could use glue to secure them.



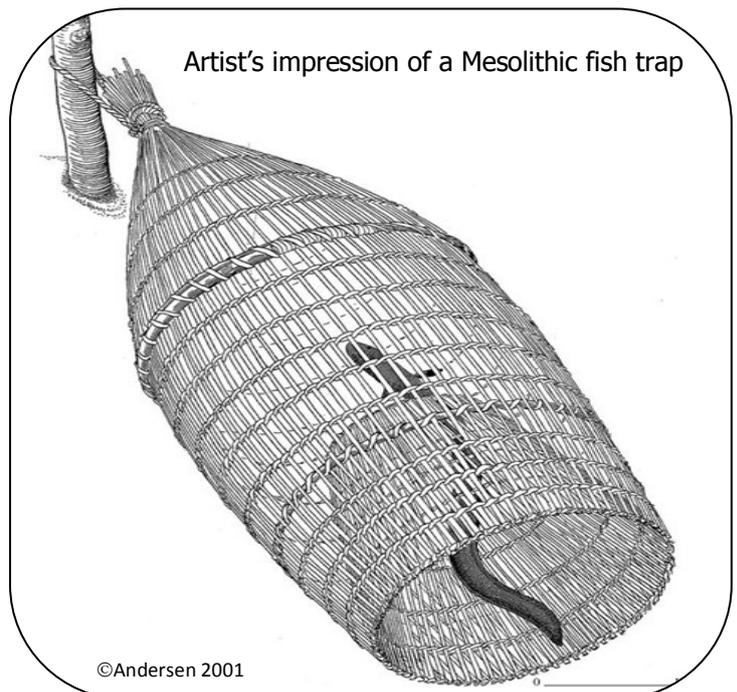
Cod



Salmon



Trout



Artist's impression of a Mesolithic fish trap

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