

# THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2106/210629-dragon-man.html>

Researchers in China have shown an ancient skull to the world for the first time. The skull could belong to a completely new species of humans that lived in Asia over 146,000 years ago. It could be from a group of humans that are the closest relatives to us. The researchers have nicknamed the person the skull came from "Dragon Man". It was originally found in the city of Harbin in 1933 but was kept hidden. The Japanese army occupied the city at the time. The Chinese worker who found the skull decided to keep it safe. He hid it at the bottom of his family's well. It stayed there for nearly 90 years. The man recently told his family about the skull before he died. His family located it and gave it to scientists.

Scientists say Dragon Man could greatly change our understanding of human evolution. They say it belonged to "a large-brained male in his 50s with deep-set eyes and thick eyebrow ridges". He looked more like today's humans than any other extinct members of the human family tree. The species Dragon Man belonged to is probably closer to modern-day humans than Neanderthals were. Researcher Chris Stringer of the Natural History Museum in London described Dragon Man's group. He said: "This population would have been hunter-gatherers, living off the land. From the winter temperatures in Harbin today, it looks like they were coping with even harsher cold than the Neanderthals."

Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-57432104>  
<https://asiatimes.com/2021/06/dragon-man-skull-offers-clues-to-human-evolution/>  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-01738-w>  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-021-01738-w>

# VOCABULARY MATCHING

## Paragraph 1

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 1. ancient    | a. From or in the beginning; at first.   |
| 2. species    | b. A person connected to another person by blood or marriage.                          |
| 3. relative   | c. A group of living things of the same kind that can produce young or exchange genes. |
| 4. nicknamed  | d. Found out where something was.  |
| 5. originally | e. Very, very, very old.   |
| 6. hid        | f. Given a different name to the one someone or something already has.                 |
| 7. located    | g. Put somewhere so no-one can find or see it.   |

## Paragraph 2

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 8. evolution    | h. The area of hair growing above a person's eye.   |
| 9. eyebrow      | i. A particular group of people living in an area or country.   |
| 10. extinct     | j. Managing to make a problem smaller.  |
| 11. described   | k. Of a group of animals, plants, etc. having no living members.  |
| 12. population  | l. How hot or cold something or someone is.   |
| 13. temperature | m. Reported on what something or someone looks, smells, feels, etc. like.                                   |
| 14. coping      | n. The process by which different kinds of living organisms are thought to have changed from earlier forms. |

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2106/210629-dragon-man.html>

## 1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

1. An ancient skull has been shown to the world for only the second time. **T / F**
2. The skull is over 140,000 years old. **T / F**
3. The skull was first found almost 90 years ago. **T / F**
4. A man hid the skull in a well belonging to his family. **T / F**
5. The skull could change how we think we evolved. **T / F**
6. The skull is of a teenager who had no eyebrows. **T / F**
7. The Neanderthals are still the closest relatives to humans. **T / F**
8. The skull belonged to a man who lived in very hot climates. **T / F**

## 2. SYNONYM MATCH: (The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <b>ancient</b>    | a. more severe    |
| 2. <b>completely</b> | b. relations      |
| 3. <b>relatives</b>  | c. development    |
| 4. <b>hidden</b>     | d. surviving      |
| 5. <b>died</b>       | e. very, very old |
| 6. <b>evolution</b>  | f. passed away    |
| 7. <b>extinct</b>    | g. inhabitants    |
| 8. <b>population</b> | h. totally        |
| 9. <b>coping</b>     | i. vanished       |
| 10. <b>harsher</b>   | j. concealed      |

## 3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. a completely new species             | a. of human evolution    |
| 2. The researchers have nicknamed       | b. tree                  |
| 3. The Japanese army occupied the       | c. his family's well     |
| 4. He hid it at the bottom of           | d. cold                  |
| 5. His family located it and            | e. the person            |
| 6. greatly change our understanding     | f. of humans             |
| 7. a large-brained male in his 50s with | g. gatherers             |
| 8. family                               | h. gave it to scientists |
| 9. hunter-                              | i. deep-set eyes         |
| 10. coping with even harsher            | j. city at the time      |

# COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2106/210629-dragon-man.html>

1. How old is the skull?
2. What is the nickname given to the man from whom the skull came?
3. When was the skull originally found?
4. Where did a man hide the skull?
5. Who did the man's family give the skull to?
6. What could the skull change our understanding of?
7. How old was the man when he died?
8. Who is probably our closest living ancestors?
9. What did Dragon Man live off?
10. What was very harsh in the area Dragon Man lived?



## ANCIENT HUMANS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'dragon'?
3. How interested are you in ancient humans?
4. What do you know about early humans?
5. In what ways might life 146,000 years ago be better than now?
6. What do you think of the name Dragon Man?
7. How important is the 146,000-year-old skull?
8. Who were our ancestors?
9. What might we look like in 146,000 years from now?
10. Do you think scientists should recreate Dragon Man using DNA?

*Scientists show the world 'Dragon Man' – 29th June, 2021*  
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## ANCIENT HUMANS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'human'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. What do you think of evolution?
15. How might Dragon Man change our understanding of evolution?
16. How far back can you trace your family tree?
17. What do you know about Neanderthals?
18. Should we all go back to being hunter-gatherers?
19. How did people survive the cold thousands of years ago?
20. What questions would you like to ask Dragon Man?