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Level 3 – 21st March 2024

Human speech is 8 times older than we thought

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<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

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Please try Levels 0, 1 and 2 (they are easier).

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THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

Researchers say they have found the likely time in history when human beings first began to speak. Dr Steven Mithen, an archaeologist and expert in prehistory, suggested that basic language was formed around 1.6 million years ago. This is eight times earlier than many scientists thought. Experts in evolution previously believed that spoken human language began around 200,000 years ago. Mithen said his studies show that the first human language developed either in eastern or southern Africa. He said the ability to speak helped evolution. He said speech was, "without doubt, the key which made much of subsequent human physical and cultural evolution possible".

Dr Mithen explains how he believes human speech developed so long ago in his new book called, "The Language Puzzle". He says our brain quickly increased in size just over 1.5 million years ago. This increase changed the structure of our brain. An area called the frontal lobe developed. This is the part of the brain that produces language. Another important change was the development of our vocal tract. This is where we produce sound, and therefore speech. Mithen said speech allowed humans to spread around the world. It meant humans could do three important things. They could think of and plan future actions, and they could pass on knowledge. Mithen said language "changed the human story profoundly".

Sources: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/archaeology/human-language-study-origins-speaking-b2514451.html>
<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/celebrity/humans-speaking-lot-longer-originally-145649872.html>
<https://sciworthy.com/how-did-humans-learn-to-speak/>

WARM-UPS

1. HUMAN SPEECH: Students walk around the class and talk to other students about human speech. Change partners often and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

researchers / history / human beings / archaeologist / scientists / language / evolution long ago / new book / puzzle / sound / important things / planning / future actions

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. GLOBAL LANGUAGE: Students A **strongly** believe one global language is better than thousands of local languages; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

4. THE HUMAN STORY: How did these things change the human story? What is the future of these things? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	Changes	The Future
Television		
Cars		
Telephones		
Airplanes		
Books		
Pens		

5. HISTORY: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "history". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. LANGUAGES: Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Spoken language
- Coding
- Body language
- Bad language
- Poetic language
- Sign language
- Technical language
- Written language

VOCABULARY MATCHING

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1. likely | a. The gradual process by which living things change over time. |
| 2. human being | b. A person; a member of the species Homo sapiens. |
| 3. archaeologist | c. A person who knows a lot about a particular subject. |
| 4. expert | d. Probably going to happen or be true. |
| 5. prehistory | e. Happening or coming after something else. |
| 6. evolution | f. Someone who studies ancient societies by examining old things, old sites and remains. |
| 7. subsequent | g. The time before written records began. |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 8. developed | h. The organ inside the head that controls thought, memory, and movement. |
| 9. puzzle | i. The way something is built or organized. |
| 10. structure | j. Information and understanding about a subject. |
| 11. brain | k. Having many advanced industries and a well-organized society. |
| 12. vocal | l. A problem or game that challenges one's thinking. |
| 13. knowledge | m. Very deeply or intensely. |
| 14. profoundly | n. Related to the voice or speaking. |

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

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

1. An archaeologist looked into when humans first began to speak. **T / F**
2. An expert said spoken language first started 1.6 million years ago. **T / F**
3. The expert said human speech first started in South Africa. **T / F**
4. An expert said speech made the evolution of culture possible. **T / F**
5. The expert wrote a book called "The Puzzled Language". **T / F**
6. An area of the brain called the rear lobe developed 1.5 million years ago. **T / F**
7. Sound comes from a part of our body called the vocal tract. **T / F**
8. The expert said sound meant humans could plan future actions. **T / F**

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

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. likely | a. fundamental |
| 2. expert | b. research |
| 3. basic | c. societal |
| 4. previously | d. specialist |
| 5. began | e. aided |
| 6. studies | f. started |
| 7. ability | g. probable |
| 8. helped | h. following |
| 9. subsequent | i. skill |
| 10. cultural | j. earlier |

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

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. they have found the likely | a. profoundly |
| 2. an archaeologist and | b. on knowledge |
| 3. the ability | c. evolution |
| 4. without | d. in size |
| 5. physical and cultural | e. expert in prehistory |
| 6. our brain quickly increased | f. sound |
| 7. This increase changed the structure | g. time in history |
| 8. This is where we produce | h. of our brain |
| 9. they could pass | i. doubt |
| 10. language changed the human story | j. to speak |

GAP FILL

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

Researchers say they have found the (1) _____ time in history when human beings first began to speak. Dr Steven Mithen, an archaeologist and (2) _____ in prehistory, suggested that basic language was formed around 1.6 million years ago. This is eight times earlier than many scientists thought. Experts in (3) _____ previously believed that spoken human language began around 200,000 years ago. Mithen said his (4) _____ show that the first human language developed either in (5) _____ or southern Africa. He said the (6) _____ to speak helped evolution. He said speech was, "without (7) _____, the key which made much of (8) _____ human physical and cultural evolution possible".

studies
expert
subsequent
ability
likely
eastern
evolution
doubt

Dr Mithen explains how he believes human speech developed so (9) _____ ago in his new book called, "The Language Puzzle". He says our brain (10) _____ increased in size just over 1.5 million years ago. This increase changed the (11) _____ of our brain. An area called the frontal lobe developed. This is the (12) _____ of the brain that produces language. Another important change was the development of our vocal tract. This is where we (13) _____ sound, and therefore speech. Mithen said speech allowed humans to spread (14) _____ the world. It meant humans could do three important things. They could think of and (15) _____ future actions, and they could pass on knowledge. Mithen said language "changed the human (16) _____ profoundly".

structure
produce
long
plan
part
story
quickly
around

LISTENING – Guess the answers. Listen to check.

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

- 1) they have found the likely time in history when human beings first _____
 - a. began to spoke
 - b. began to speak
 - c. began to speaks
 - d. began to speaker
- 2) Dr Steven Mithen, an archaeologist and _____
 - a. export in prehistory
 - b. expat in prehistory
 - c. expert in prehistory
 - d. except in prehistory
- 3) This is eight times earlier than _____
 - a. many scientists thought
 - b. many scientist thought
 - c. many scientists throughout
 - d. many scientists thorough
- 4) He said the ability to _____
 - a. speak helped evolution
 - b. speak helped revolution
 - c. speak helped devolution
 - d. speak helped volition
- 5) the key which made much of subsequent human physical and _____
 - a. cultural evolution possibility
 - b. cultural evolution possible
 - c. cultural evolution possibly
 - d. cultural evolution passible
- 6) Dr Mithen explains how he believes human speech developed _____
 - a. so long ago
 - b. so longs ago
 - c. so longer ago
 - d. so longing ago
- 7) Another important change was the development of _____
 - a. our vocal track
 - b. our vocal tact
 - c. our vocal tract
 - d. our vocal truck
- 8) This is where we produce sound, _____
 - a. and therefore speak
 - b. and therefore screech
 - c. and therefore speech
 - d. and therefore spoke
- 9) They could think of and plan future actions, and they could _____
 - a. pass on knowledge
 - b. pass in knowledge
 - c. pass up knowledge
 - d. pass son knowledge
- 10) Mithen said language changed the _____
 - a. human story profound
 - b. human story profoundly
 - c. human story profundity
 - d. human story pro foundry

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

Researchers say they have found the (1) _____ history when human beings first began to speak. Dr Steven Mithen, an archaeologist and expert in prehistory, suggested that (2) _____ formed around 1.6 million years ago. This is (3) _____ than many scientists thought. Experts in evolution previously believed that spoken human language began around 200,000 years ago. Mithen said his studies show that the first human language developed (4) _____ or southern Africa. He said the ability to (5) _____. He said speech was, "without doubt, the key which made much of subsequent human (6) _____ evolution possible".

Dr Mithen explains how he believes human speech developed (7) _____ in his new book called, "The Language Puzzle". He says our brain quickly increased (8) _____ over 1.5 million years ago. This increase changed the structure of our brain. An area called the frontal lobe developed. This is (9) _____ the brain that produces language. Another important change was the development of our vocal tract. This is where (10) _____, and therefore speech. Mithen said speech allowed humans to spread around the world. It meant humans could do three important things. They could think of and (11) _____, and they could pass on knowledge. Mithen said language "changed (12) _____ profoundly".

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

1. What is Dr Steven Mithen an expert in?
2. When did Dr Mithen say humans first started to speak?
3. Where did Dr Mithen say human speech started?
4. What did Dr Mithen say the ability to speak help?
5. What kind of evolution has speech made possible?
6. What's the name of Dr Mithen's book?
7. What new area of the human brain developed 1.5 million years ago?
8. What part of our body produces sound?
9. How many important things did speech allow humans to do?
10. What did speech allow humans to pass on?

MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

- 1) What is Dr Steven Mithen an expert in?
 - a) prehistory (and archaeology)
 - b) phonics
 - c) the vocal cords and voice box
 - d) world languages
- 2) When did Dr Mithen say humans first started to speak?
 - a) 1.8 million years ago
 - b) 1.9 million years ago
 - c) 1.6 million years ago
 - d) 1.7 million years ago
- 3) Where did Dr Mithen say human speech started?
 - a) in northern and western Africa
 - b) in eastern or southern Africa
 - c) in central Africa
 - d) all over Africa
- 4) What did Dr Mithen say the ability to speak help?
 - a) winning arguments
 - b) poetry
 - c) farming
 - d) evolution
- 5) What kind of evolution has speech made possible?
 - a) physical and cultural evolution
 - b) the evolution of the mouth and nose
 - c) skills and talents evolution
 - d) the evolution of writing
- 6) What's the name of Dr Mithen's book?
 - a) Puzzling Languages
 - b) Language Puzzles
 - c) The Puzzled Language
 - d) The Language Puzzle
- 7) What new area of the human brain developed 1.5 million years ago?
 - a) the pituitary gland
 - b) the frontal lobe
 - c) the hypothalamus
 - d) the cerebellum
- 8) What part of our body produces sound?
 - a) the mouth
 - b) the nose
 - c) the neck
 - d) the vocal tract
- 9) How many important things did speech allow humans to do?
 - a) 1
 - b) 2
 - c) 3
 - d) 4
- 10) What did speech allow humans to pass on?
 - a) fishing tips
 - b) knowledge
 - c) secrets
 - d) skills

ROLE PLAY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

Role A – Spoken Language

You think spoken language is the most important language. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their languages aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): body language, sign language or written language.

Role B – Body Language

You think body language is the most important language. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their languages aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): spoken language, sign language or written language.

Role C – Sign Language

You think sign language is the most important language. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their languages aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): body language, spoken language or written language.

Role D – Written Language

You think written language is the most important language. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their languages aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): body language, sign language or spoken language.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'human' and 'speech'.

human	speech
--------------	---------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• found• basic• studies• either• ability• doubt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• long• size• area• vocal• three• pass
--	---

HUMAN SPEECH SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

Write five GOOD questions about human speech in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

HUMAN SPEECH 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 'human'?
3. How do you think humans started to speak?
4. What do you think the first words spoken by humans were?
5. What do you know about prehistory?
6. Why do we have so many languages in the world?
7. How difficult is it to speak English?
8. What do you know about human evolution?
9. What do you think of your native language?
10. What other languages would you like to learn?

Human speech is 8 times older than we thought – 21st March 2024
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HUMAN SPEECH 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 'speech'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. Would you like to read Dr Mithen's book?
15. What do you know about the brain?
16. What sounds in English are the most difficult to hear or say?
17. What advice do you have to pronounce English well?
18. How will technology change human speech?
19. What do you think the human story will be like from now?
20. What questions would you like to ask the experts?

DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

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

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

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

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

LANGUAGE - CLOZE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

Researchers say they have found the (1) _____ time in history when human beings first began to speak. Dr Steven Mithen, an archaeologist and (2) _____ in prehistory, suggested that basic language was formed around 1.6 million years ago. This is eight times earlier than many scientists thought. Experts (3) _____ evolution previously believed that spoken human language began around 200,000 years ago. Mithen said his studies show that the first human language developed (4) _____ in eastern or southern Africa. He said the (5) _____ to speak helped evolution. He said speech was, "without doubt, the (6) _____ which made much of subsequent human physical and cultural evolution possible".

Dr Mithen explains how he believes human speech developed (7) _____ long ago in his new book called, "The Language Puzzle". He says our brain quickly increased (8) _____ size just over 1.5 million years ago. This increase changed the structure of our brain. An area called the frontal lobe developed. This is the (9) _____ of the brain that produces language. Another important change was the development (10) _____ our vocal tract. This is where we produce sound, and therefore speech. Mithen said speech allowed humans to spread around the world. It (11) _____ humans could do three important things. They could think of and plan future actions, and they could pass (12) _____ knowledge. Mithen said language "changed the human story profoundly".

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. | (a) liked | (b) liking | (c) likely | (d) likeable |
| 2. | (a) expert | (b) expect | (c) exact | (d) expat |
| 3. | (a) in | (b) at | (c) by | (d) to |
| 4. | (a) either | (b) ether | (c) nether | (d) neither |
| 5. | (a) capable | (b) ability | (c) able | (d) abled |
| 6. | (a) padlock | (b) chain | (c) lock | (d) key |
| 7. | (a) sew | (b) sow | (c) so | (d) such |
| 8. | (a) of | (b) on | (c) at | (d) in |
| 9. | (a) part | (b) apart | (c) party | (d) partner |
| 10. | (a) of | (b) by | (c) to | (d) on |
| 11. | (a) mean | (b) meant | (c) meaning | (d) mint |
| 12. | (a) to | (b) of | (c) on | (d) up |

SPELLING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

Paragraph 1

1. the lkeliy time in history
2. an archaeologist and pxerte in prehistory
3. in sртаene or southern Africa
4. the abtiily to speak
5. without bduto
6. physical and cultural oleiutvon

Paragraph 2

7. human speech dpeedlvoe so long ago
8. changed the erscututr of our brain
9. the development of our vlaco tract
10. speech laeldow humans to spread
11. they could pass on dgoweekln
12. changed the human story yupfordoln

PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

Number these lines in the correct order.

- () much of subsequent human physical and cultural evolution possible".
- () to speak. Dr Steven Mithen, an archaeologist and expert in prehistory, suggested that basic
- () sound, and therefore speech. Mithen said speech allowed humans to spread around the
- (**1**) Researchers say they have found the likely time in history when human beings first began
- () called, "The Language Puzzle". He says our brain quickly increased in size just over 1.5 million years ago. This increase
- () in evolution previously believed that spoken human language began around 200,000 years ago. Mithen said his studies
- () changed the structure of our brain. An area called the frontal lobe developed. This is the part of the brain that produces
- () world. It meant humans could do three important things. They could think of and plan future
- () show that the first human language developed either in eastern or southern Africa. He said the
- () language was formed around 1.6 million years ago. This is eight times earlier than many scientists thought. Experts
- () ability to speak helped evolution. He said speech was, "without doubt, the key which made
- () language. Another important change was the development of our vocal tract. This is where we produce
- () Dr Mithen explains how he believes human speech developed so long ago in his new book
- () actions, and they could pass on knowledge. Mithen said language "changed the human story profoundly".

PUT THE WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

1. They found history . in have likely the time
2. years language Basic formed around ago . 1.6 million was
3. many thought . than times Eight scientists earlier
4. He to helped evolution . said speak ability the
5. doubt, was, He the without said key . speech
6. human He so long developed speech believes ago .
7. brain our increased says in He size . quickly
8. that language . part the produces of brain The
9. humans spread around to Speech world . allowed the
10. language changed human the said profoundly . story Mithen

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD (20 PAIRS)

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

Researchers say they have *fond / found* the likely time in history when human beings first *beginning / began* to speak. Dr Steven Mithen, an archaeologist and expert in prehistory, suggested that *basically / basic* language was formed around 1.6 million years ago. This is eight times *earlier / early* than many scientists thought. *Experts / Expats* in evolution previously *beliefs / believed* that spoken human language began around 200,000 years ago. Mithen said his studies show that the *fast / first* human language developed *either / ether* in eastern or southern Africa. He said the ability to speak helped evolution. He said speech was, "*without / within* doubt, the key which made much *to / of* subsequent human physical and cultural evolution possible".

Dr Mithen explains how he believes human speech developed *such / so* long ago in his new book called, "The Language Puzzle". He says our brain *quickly / quick* increased in size just over 1.5 million years ago. This increase changed the structure of *our / their* brain. An area *called / calling* the frontal lobe developed. This is the part *of / at* the brain that produces language. Another important *change / chance* was the development of our vocal tract. This is where we produce sound, and therefore *before / speech*. Mithen said speech allowed humans to spread *abound / around* the world. It meant humans could do three important *thing / things*. They could think of and plan future actions, and they could pass on knowledge. Mithen said language "changed the human *novel / story* profoundly".

Talk about the connection between each pair of words in italics, and why the correct word is correct. Look up the definition of new words.

INSERT THE VOWELS (a, e, i, o, u)

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

R_s__rch_rs s_y th_y h_v_ f__nd th_ l_k_ly t_m_ _n h_st_ry wh_n h_m_n b__ngs f_rst b_g_n t_ sp__k. Dr St_v_n M_th_n, _n _rch___l_g_st _nd _xp_rt _n pr_h_st_ry, s_gg_st_d th_t b_s_c l_ng__g_ w_s f_rm_d _r__nd 1.6 m_ll__n y__rs _g_. Th_s _s __ght t_m_s __rl__r th_n m_ny sc__nt_sts th__ght. _xp_rts _n _v_l_t__n pr_v___sly b_l__v_d th_t sp_k_n h_m_n l_ng__g_ b_g_n _r__nd 200,000 y__rs _g_. M_th_n s__d h_s st_d__s sh_w th_t th_ f_rst h_m_n l_ng__g_ d_v_l_p_d __th_r _n __st_rn _r s__th_rn _fr_c_. H_ s__d th_ _b_l_t_y t_ sp__k h_lp_d _v_l_t__n. H_ s__d sp__ch w_s, "w_th__t d__bt, th_ k_y wh_ch m_d_ m_ch _f s_bs_q__nt h_m_n phys_c_l _nd c_lt_rl _v_l_t__n p_ss_bl_".

Dr M_th_n _xpl__ns h_w h_ b_l__v_s h_m_n sp__ch d_v_l_p_d s_ l_ng _g_ _n h_s n_w b__k c_ll_d, "Th_ L_ng__g_ P_zzl_". H_ s_ys __r br__n q__ckly _ncr__s_d _n s_z_ j_st _v_r 1.5 m_ll__n y__rs _g_. Th_s _ncr__s_ ch_ng_d th_ str_ct_r_ _f __r br__n. _n _r__c_ll_d th_ fr_nt_l l_b_ d_v_l_p_d. Th_s _s th_ p_rt _f th_ br__n th_t pr_d_c_s l_ng__g_. _n_th_r _mp_rtn_t ch_ng_ w_s th_ d_v_l_p_mnt _f __r v_c_l tr_ct. Th_s _s wh_r_ w_ pr_d_c_ s__nd, _nd th_r_f_r_ sp__ch. M_th_n s__d sp__ch _ll_w_d h_m_n_s t_ spr__d _r__nd th_ w_rld. _t m__nt h_m_n_s c__ld d_ thr__ _mp_rtn_t th_ngs. Th_y c__ld th_nk _f _nd pl_n f_t_r_ _ct__ns, _nd th_y c__ld p_ss _n kn_wl_dg_. M_th_n s__d l_ng__g_ "ch_ng_d th_ h_m_n st_ry pr_f__ndly".

PUNCTUATE THE TEXT AND ADD CAPITALS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

researchers say they have found the likely time in history when human beings first began to speak dr steven mithen an archaeologist and expert in prehistory suggested that basic language was formed around 16 million years ago this is eight times earlier than many scientists thought experts in evolution previously believed that spoken human language began around 200000 years ago mithen said his studies show that the first human language developed either in eastern or southern africa he said the ability to speak helped evolution he said speech was without doubt the key which made much of subsequent human physical and cultural evolution possible

dr mithen explains how he believes human speech developed so long ago in his new book called the language puzzle he says our brain quickly increased in size just over 15 million years ago this increase changed the structure of our brain an area called the frontal lobe developed this is the part of the brain that produces language another important change was the development of our vocal tract this is where we produce sound and therefore speech mithen said speech allowed humans to spread around the world it meant humans could do three important things they could think of and plan future actions and they could pass on knowledge mithen said language changed the human story profoundly

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2403/240321-human-speech.html>

Researchers say they have found the likely time in history when human beings first began to speak. Dr Steven Mithen, an archaeologist and expert in prehistory, suggested that basic language was formed around 1.6 million years ago. This is eight times earlier than many scientists thought. Experts in evolution previously believed that spoken human language began around 200,000 years ago. Mithen said his studies show that the first human language developed either in eastern or southern Africa. He said the ability to speak helped evolution. He said speech was, "without doubt, the key which made much of subsequent human physical and cultural evolution possible". Dr Mithen explains how he believes human speech developed so long ago in his new book called, "The Language Puzzle". He says our brain quickly increased in size just over 1.5 million years ago. This increase changed the structure of our brain. An area called the frontal lobe developed. This is the part of the brain that produces language. Another important change was the development of our vocal tract. This is where we produce sound, and therefore speech. Mithen said speech allowed humans to spread around the world. It meant humans could do three important things. They could think of and plan future actions, and they could pass on knowledge. Mithen said language "changed the human story profoundly".

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about this news story. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. HUMAN SPEECH: Make a poster about human speech. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. SECOND LANGUAGE: Write a magazine article about requiring everyone to learn a second language. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for and against this.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT? Write a newspaper article about the next stage in this news story. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

6. LETTER: Write a letter to an expert on human speech. Ask him/her three questions about it. Give him/her three of your opinions on the importance of speech. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

VOCABULARY (p.4)

1. d 2. b 3. f 4. c 5. g 6. a 7. e
8. k 9. l 10. i 11. h 12. n 13. j 14. m

TRUE / FALSE (p.5)

- 1 T 2 T 3 F 4 T 5 F 6 F 7 T 8 T

SYNONYM MATCH (p.5)

1. g	2. d	3. a	4. j	5. f
6. b	7. i	8. e	9. h	10. c

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (p.9)

1. Prehistory (and archaeology)
2. 1.6 million years ago
3. In eastern or southern Africa
4. Evolution
5. Physical and cultural evolution
6. The Language Puzzle
7. The frontal lobe
8. The vocal tract
9. Three
10. Knowledge

WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER (p.19)

1. They have found the likely time in history.
2. Basic language was formed around 1.6 million years ago.
3. Eight times earlier than many scientists thought.
4. He said the ability to speak helped evolution.
5. He said speech was, without doubt, the key.
6. He believes human speech developed so long ago.
7. He says our brain quickly increased in size.
8. The part of the brain that produces language.
9. Speech allowed humans to spread around the world.
10. Mithen said language changed the human story profoundly.

MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ (p.10)

1. a 2. c 3. b 4. d 5. a 6. d 7. b 8. d 9. c 10. b

ALL OTHER EXERCISES

Please check for yourself by looking at the Article on page 2.
(It's good for your English ;-)