

## Kennewick Man and Spirit Cave Man

In the first enrichment activity of this lesson, you were briefly introduced to Kennewick Man, whose remains were found in 1996 in Kennewick, Washington. Kennewick Man's bones caused a major legal controversy because scientists considered them an important discovery that would contribute much knowledge about early human beings on the North American continent. However, some Native Americans believed that he was their ancestor and, thus, under federal law (The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act), they had the right to claim and rebury his bones.

In 1940, an archeologist found a very old partially mummified human body, with its skeleton intact, in a cave near Fallon, Nevada. This long-dead ancient man became known as Spirit Cave Man (after the local name of the cave where his remains were found). Using scientific techniques of the time, the archeologist concluded that Spirit Cave Man was not related to any known Native American tribe, but was probably up to 2,000 years old.

Do an Internet search on the key terms "Kennewick Man" and "Spirit Cave Man." Find and read articles from reputable sources about each of them. Then write an essay comparing and contrasting the discoveries and scientific studies of these two ancient human beings.

Sources you may find useful:

[dmla.clan.lib.nv.us/docs/museums/cc/mummy.htm](http://dmla.clan.lib.nv.us/docs/museums/cc/mummy.htm)  
[www.archeology.org/9609/newsbriefs/nevada.html](http://www.archeology.org/9609/newsbriefs/nevada.html)  
[www.abotech.com/Articles/firstamericans.htm](http://www.abotech.com/Articles/firstamericans.htm)

Be sure to give proper credit to each article you use in your own essay. Remember, if the information was not "common knowledge" to you before you read the article, you must give proper citation credit to your source — even if you are not using direct quotations. Paraphrasing the information or ideas in your source does not relieve you of the legal obligation to give proper credit to the source of the information.

Before writing your essay, consider the following questions:

- In 1940, why did scientists think Spirit Cave Man was as much as 2000 years old? Why didn't they do carbon-14 dating when he was found?
- What was the final court decision about whether Kennewick Man could be studied scientifically or had to be reburied as a Native American ancestor?
- Kennewick, Washington, and Fallon, Nevada, are more than 600 miles apart. Considering that fact and other information from your research, do you think Kennewick Man and Spirit Cave Man may have been members of the same population group?
- Using the most recent information from radiocarbon dating and other lines of evidence, do you think Kennewick Man is older than Spirit Cave Man? Why or why not?

- Was either one a genetic ancestor of any currently known Native American tribe?
- Both Kennewick Man and Spirit Cave Man lived before recorded human history and shortly after the end of the last ice age. What do you think they had in common?
- Are there other examples of human remains in the northwestern U.S. that appear to represent the same age?

(Idaho Falls Woman has been so described.)