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memory craft

Improve your memory using the most powerful methods from around the world

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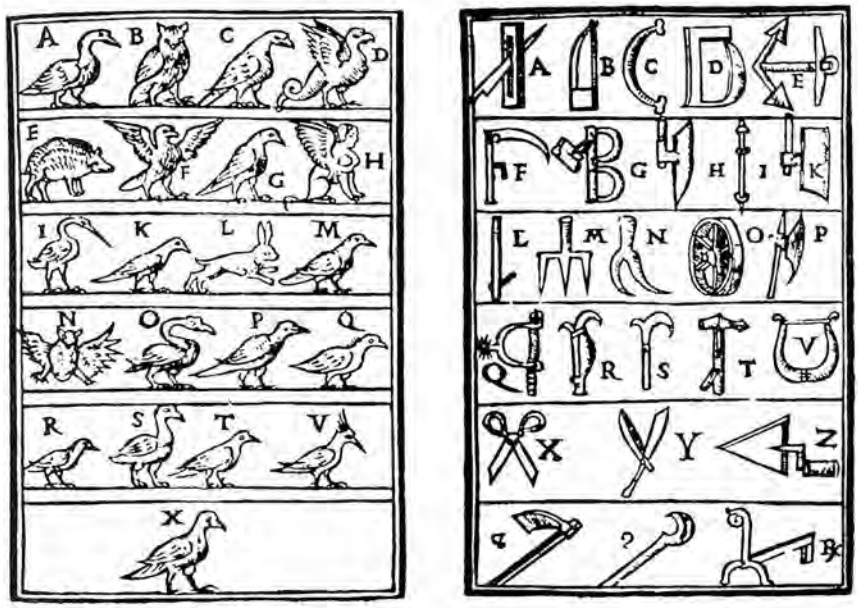


FIGURE 1.1 Romberch's visual alphabets from *Congestorium artificiose memoriae* (Venice, 1533).

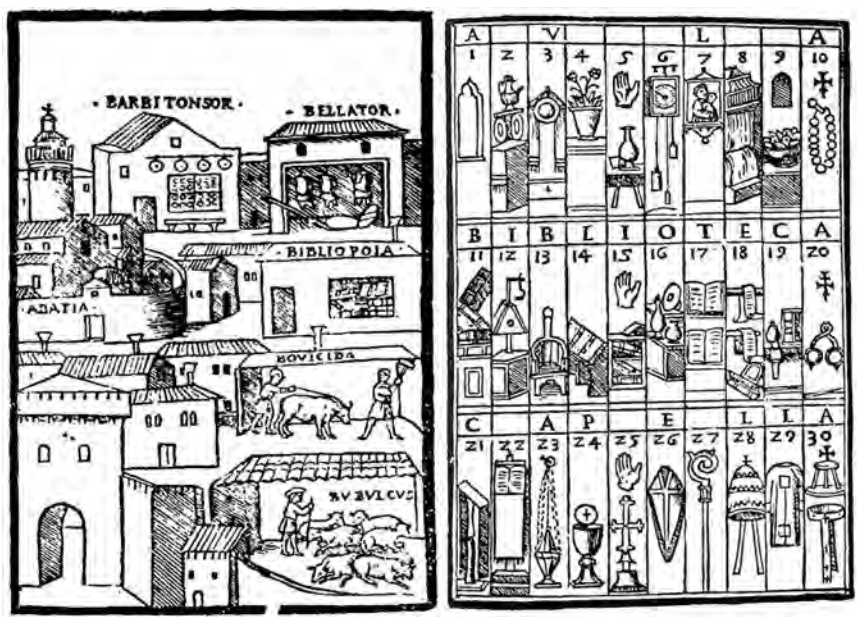


FIGURE 2.1 Romberch's drawings of the abbey as a memory palace from his *Congestorium artificiose memoriae* (Venice, 1533).

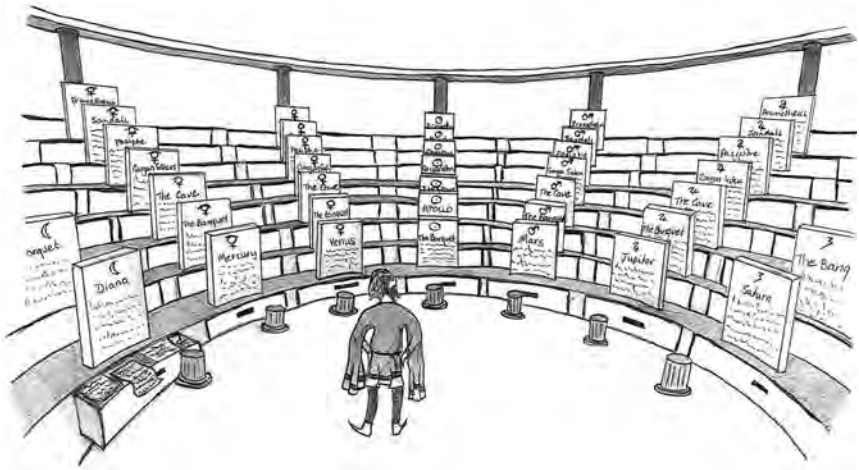


FIGURE 2.2 My impression of Camillo's Memory Theatre. (LYNNE KELLY)

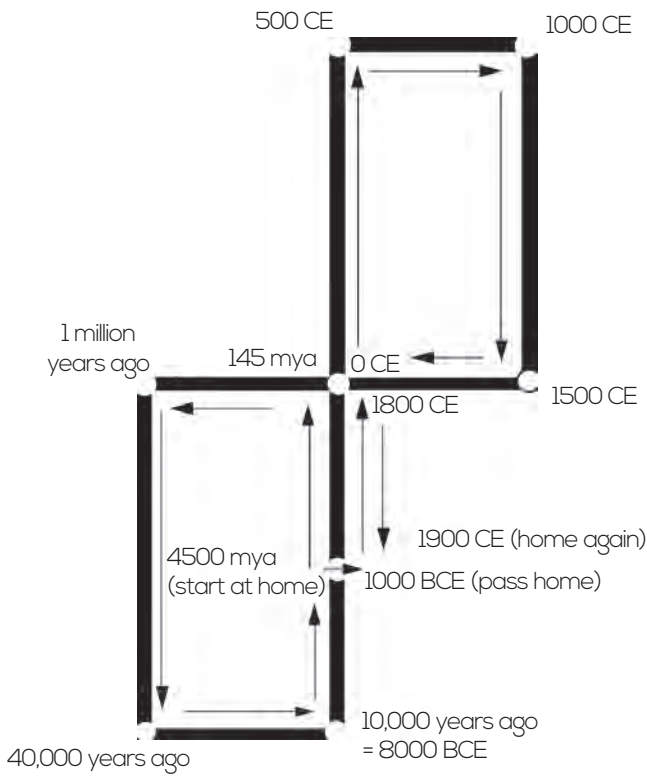


FIGURE 2.3 A map of my History Journey, starting from home at 4500 million years ago and arriving back home at 1900 CE. My Twentieth-Century Journey goes around the house and garden, with a location for every year.

FIGURE 3.1 Le Petit Professeur and Fleur, with objects sorted according to their gender in French. (LYNNE KELLY)

FIGURE 5.1 Julia Adzuki with her stack of memory boards. (LYNNE KELLY)

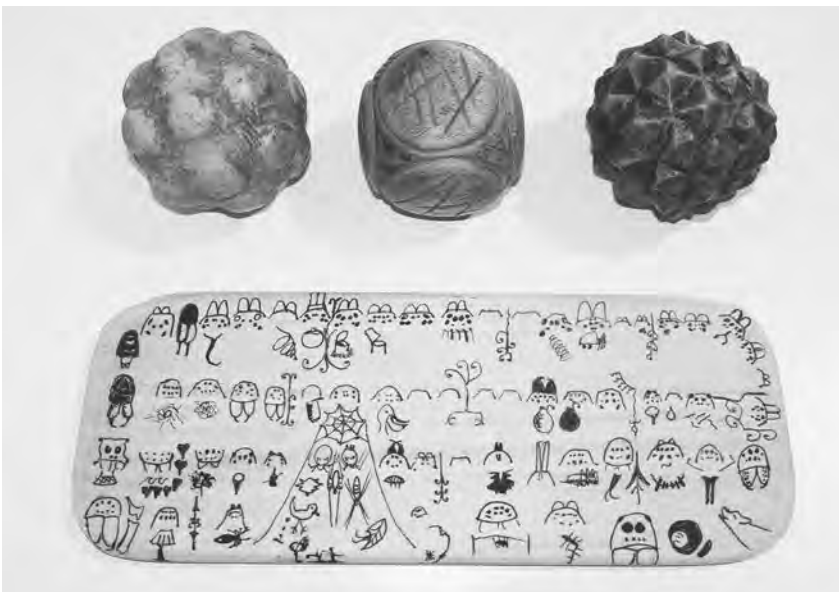


FIGURE 5.2 Top: Spheres for ceremonial cycles, carved by Tom Chippindall and modelled on the Neolithic carved stone balls from Scotland. Bottom: One side of my memory board for spiders. (LYNNE KELLY)

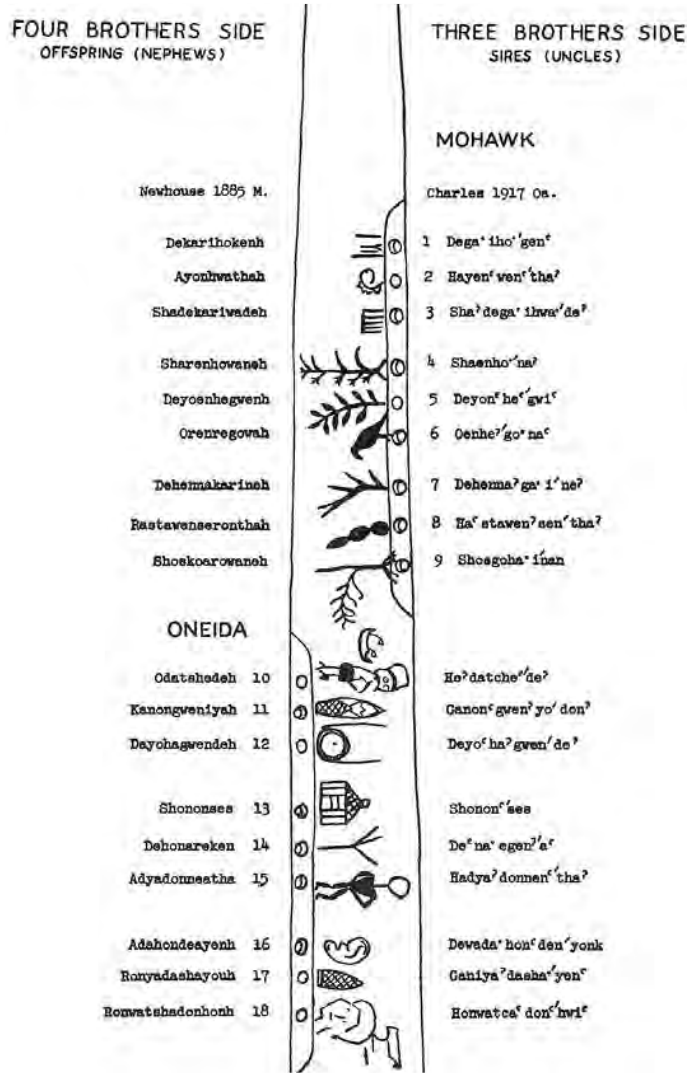


PLATE 1 My visual alphabet: A–Arachne, B–bird of paradise, C–cat, D–dragon, E–eagle. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 2 My visual alphabet continued: F–frog, G–goat, H–Hydra. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 3 My visual alphabet continued: I–imp, J–jester, K–kitten, L–lion. (LYNNE KELLY)

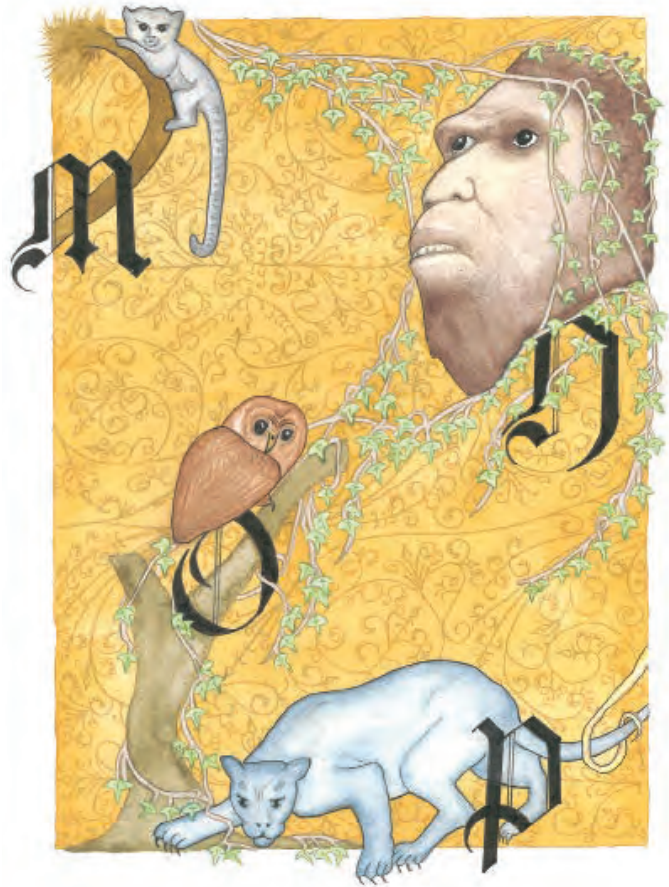


PLATE 4 My visual alphabet continued: M–marmoset, N–Neanderthal, O–owl, P–panther. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 5 My visual alphabet continued: Q–Quetzalcoatl, R–rat, S–skull, T–toucan, U–unicorn. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 6 My visual alphabet continued: V–vulture, W–wombat, X–Xena, warrior woman, Y–yak, Z–Zeus. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 7 Two pages from Giovannino de' Grassi's visual alphabet, c. 1390, held by the Biblioteca Civica, Bergamo, Italy.

PLATE 8 Illustration of a bat (folio 51v) from the Aberdeen Bestiary, c. 1200, held by the Aberdeen University Library.

PLATE 9 A sample of my bestiary: Aa–aardvark, Ab–Abyssinian, Ac–acorn, Ad–adder. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 10 A sample of my bestiary: Ae–aerialist, Af–Afghan hound, Ag–agaric fungi, Ah–a sigh, Ai–Airedale terrier. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 11 *Kachina* of the Pueblo cultures from the US southwest, late nineteenth century, as stored at the Brooklyn Museum, New York. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 12 *Kachina* by Pueblo artist Jacida L, from my collection. (LYNNE KELLY)

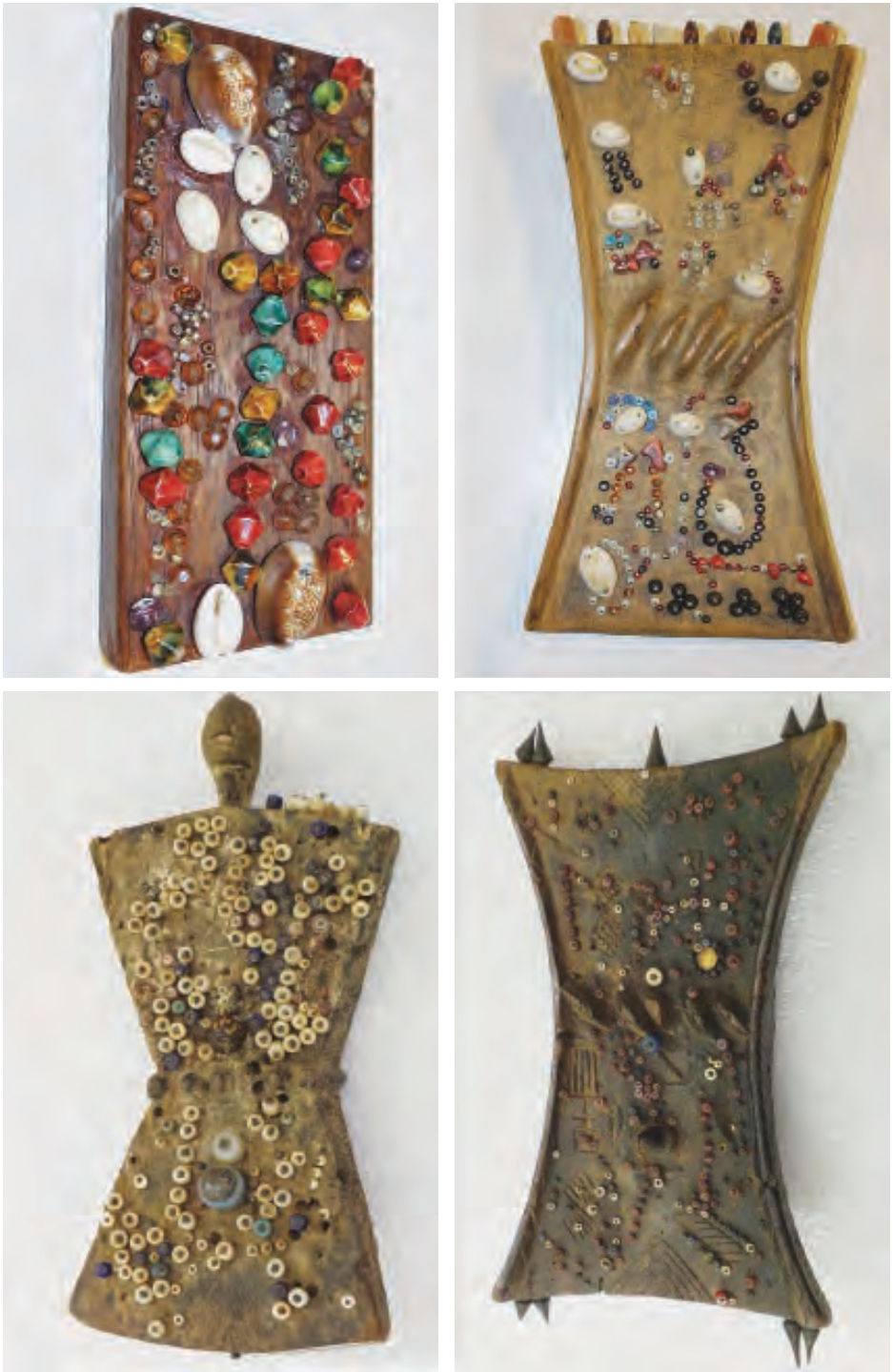


PLATE 13 Top left: My bird *lukasa*. Top right: My *lukasa* for the story of writing. Bottom left and right: two real *lukasas* (or *nkasa*) from the Brooklyn Museum, New York. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 14 Objects for Greek mythology shown centre stage at the end of Act 1 of my personal retelling. Chaos is centre top, with, from left to right, Tartarus, Gaia, Nyx and Erebus below. The next level includes, from left to right, Typhon, Uranus, my favourite stone, Pontus (the markings look like the seashore), then Aether and Hemera with their daughter, Thasalla, below. The lowest stone represents the primordial deities, Ourea. The characters for the next few acts are waiting in the wings. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 15 The *Schatzbehalter* hands, from *Schatzbehalter des wahren Reichtümer des Heils* (1491) by Stephan Fridolin.

PLATE 16 Top: A string of beads to recall a list of Shakespeare's plays in chronological order. Bottom: The beads representing the main characters and scenes of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. (LYNNE KELLY)

PLATE 17 *Khipu* in the Museo Machu Picchu, Casa Concha, Cusco.

PLATE 18 Mandala of Vishnu, Nepal, Bhaktapur, dated 1681, currently in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

PLATE 19 A Japanese scroll, *Annual Festivities* (*Nenchū gyōji*), created by Ōishi Matora (Shinto) (1794–1833), in the National Gallery of Victoria. (LYNNE KELLY)

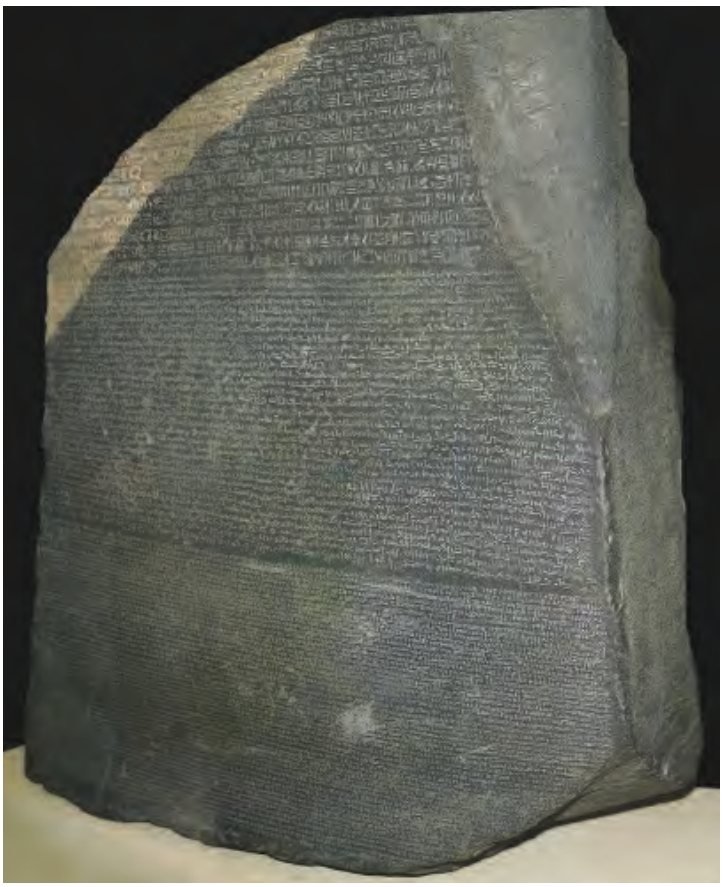


PLATE 20 The Rosetta Stone in the British Museum. (HANS HILLEWAERT)

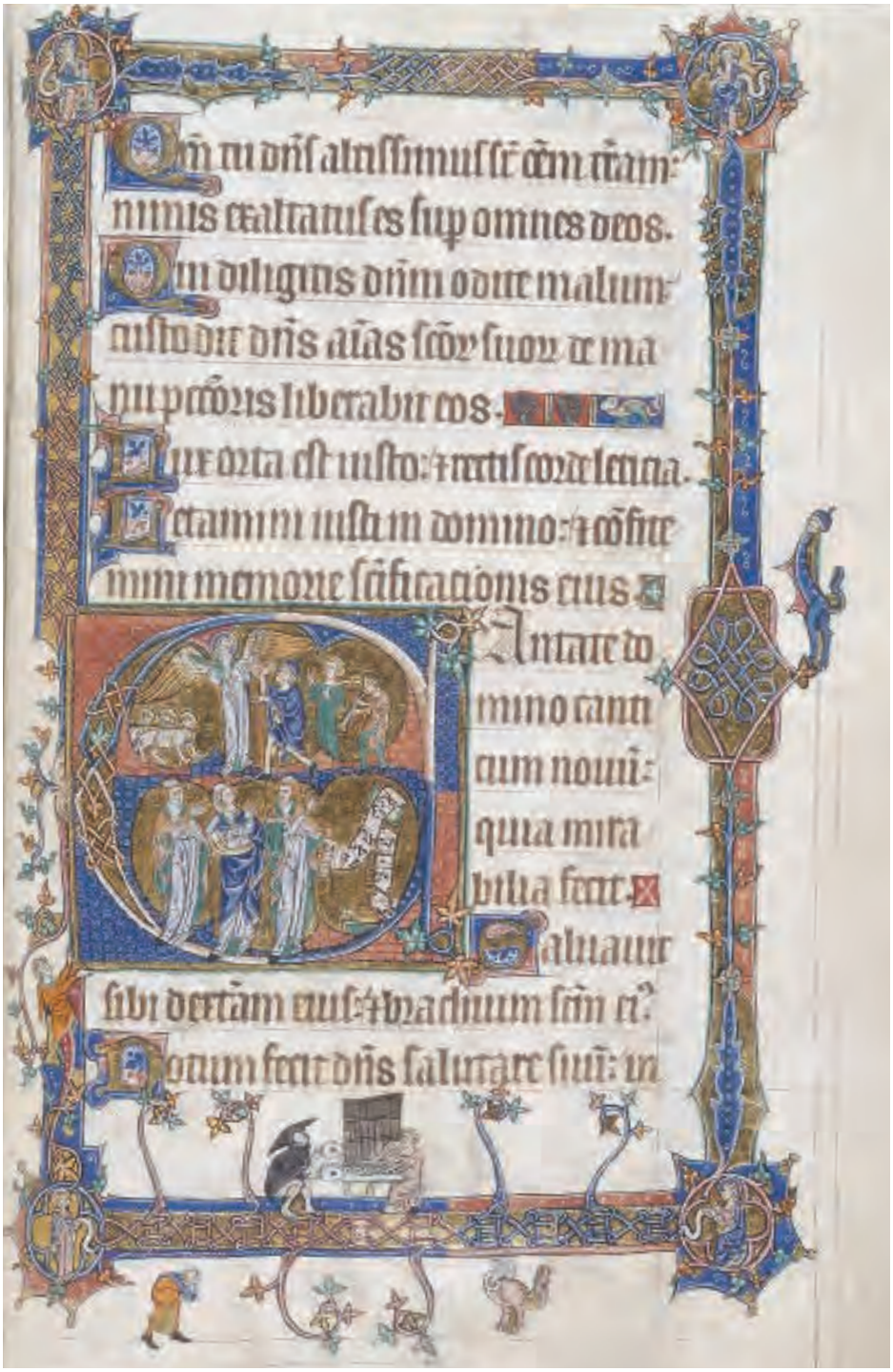


PLATE 21 A page from the Gorleston Psalter, dating from between 1310 and 1324, East Anglia, England. This is just one of the images from the incredible British Library collection available to view online.

PLATE 22 Canon tables from the Book of Kells written in the ninth century CE and held in Trinity College Library, Dublin.

PLATE 23 'Scenes from the Passion', Saint Augustine Gospels. (MS 286, CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE)

PLATE 24 *The Triumph of St Thomas Aquinas*, by Andrea da Firenze, fresco, c. 1366–1367, Cappellone degli Spagnoli, Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

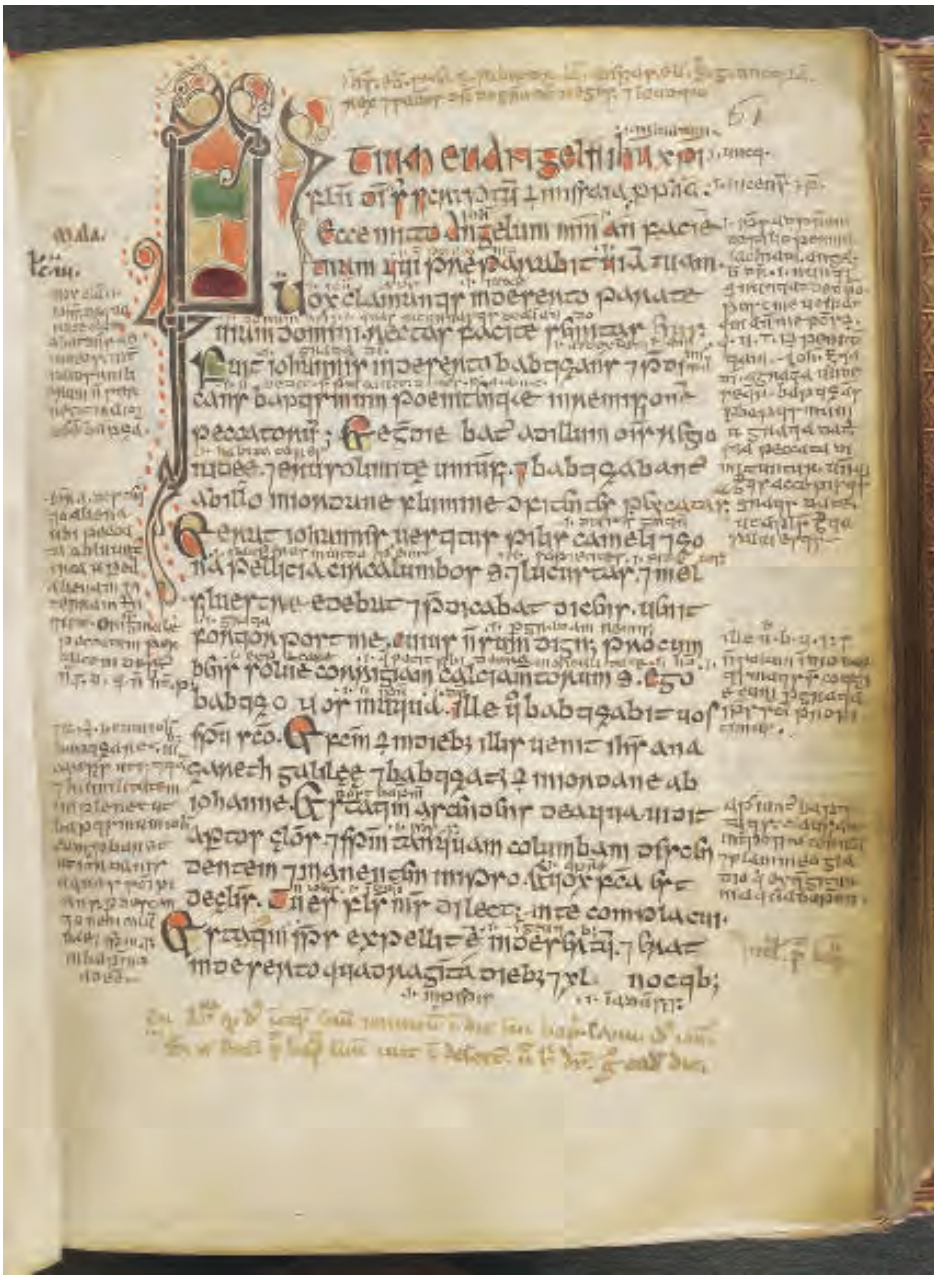


PLATE 25 A glossed manuscript with animal heads from the British Library collection. (HARLEY MS 1802, ARMAGH, IRELAND)

PLATE 26 Geese hanging a fox, one of the many drolleries in the *Decretals of Gregory IX with glossa ordinaria* (the Smithfield Decretals), c. 1340, held by the British Library.

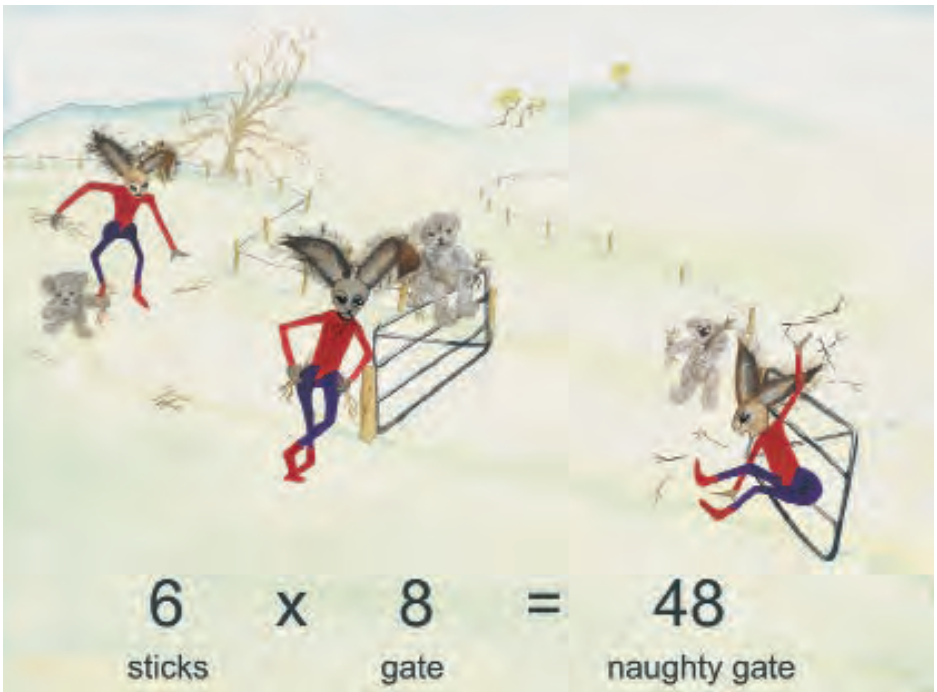
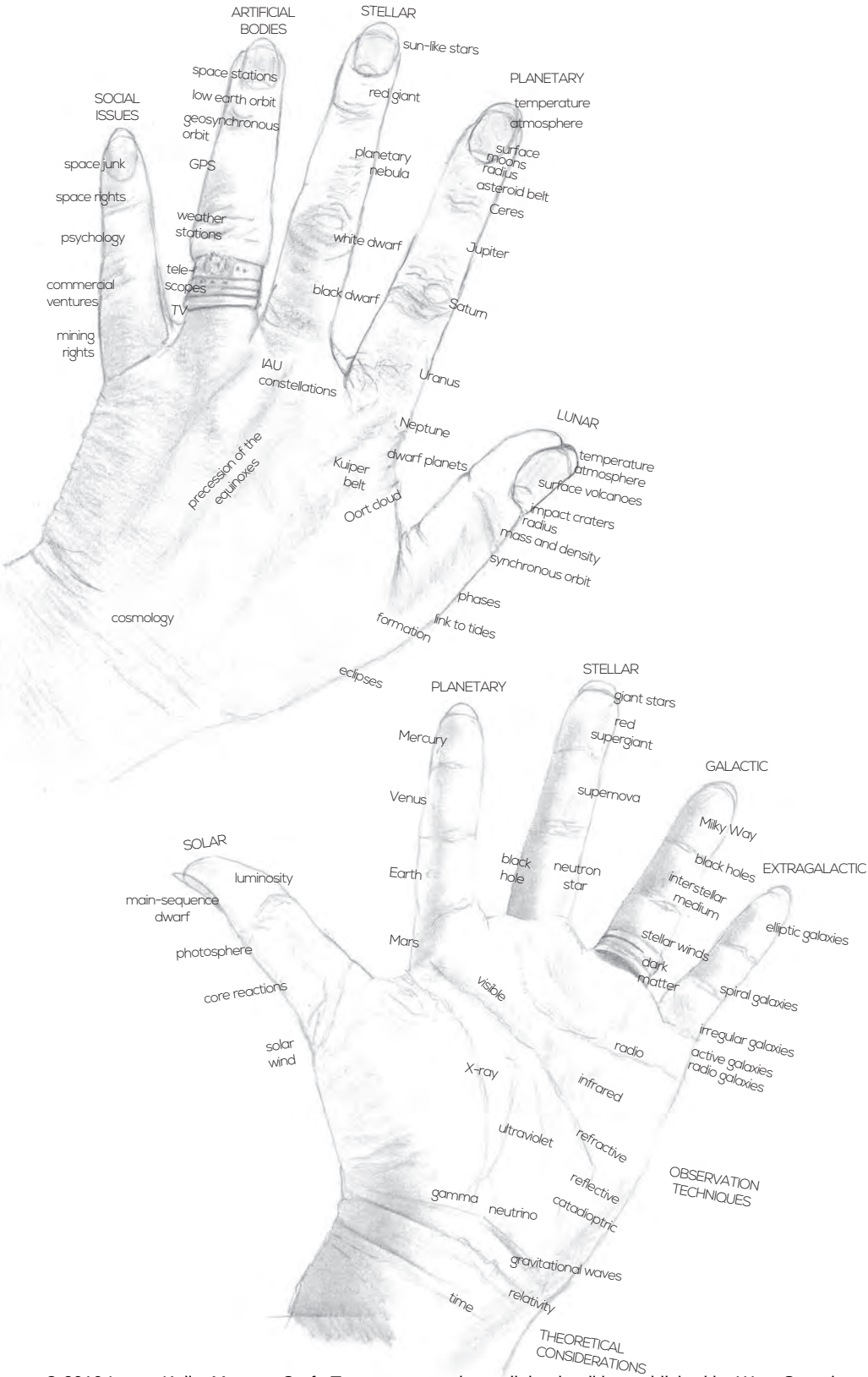


PLATE 27 An example of Rapscali's mathematical tables. (LYNNE KELLY)



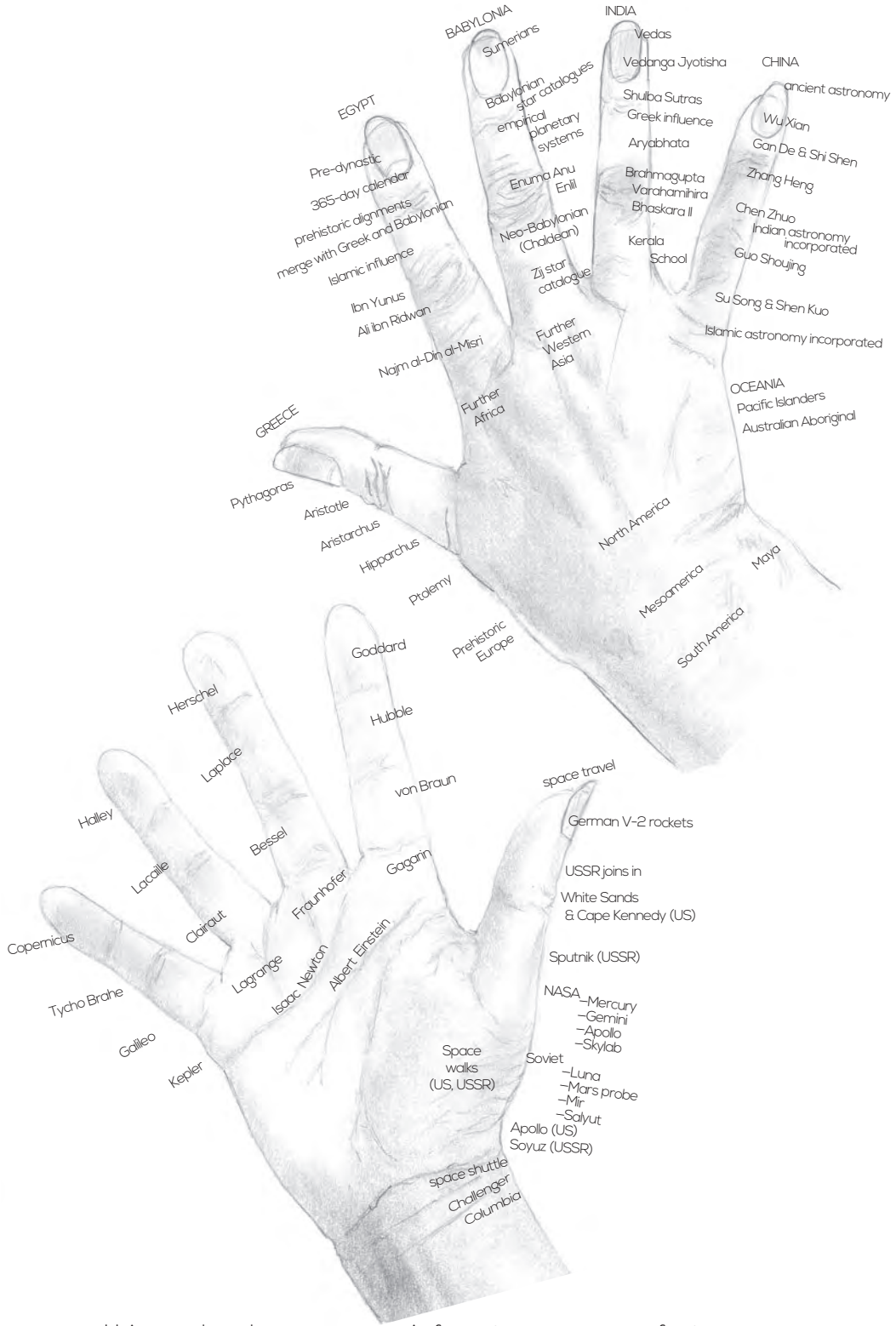


FIGURE 5.4 Using my hands as a mnemonic for astronomy—every feature on both left and right, back and front, can be utilised. (LYNNE KELLY)

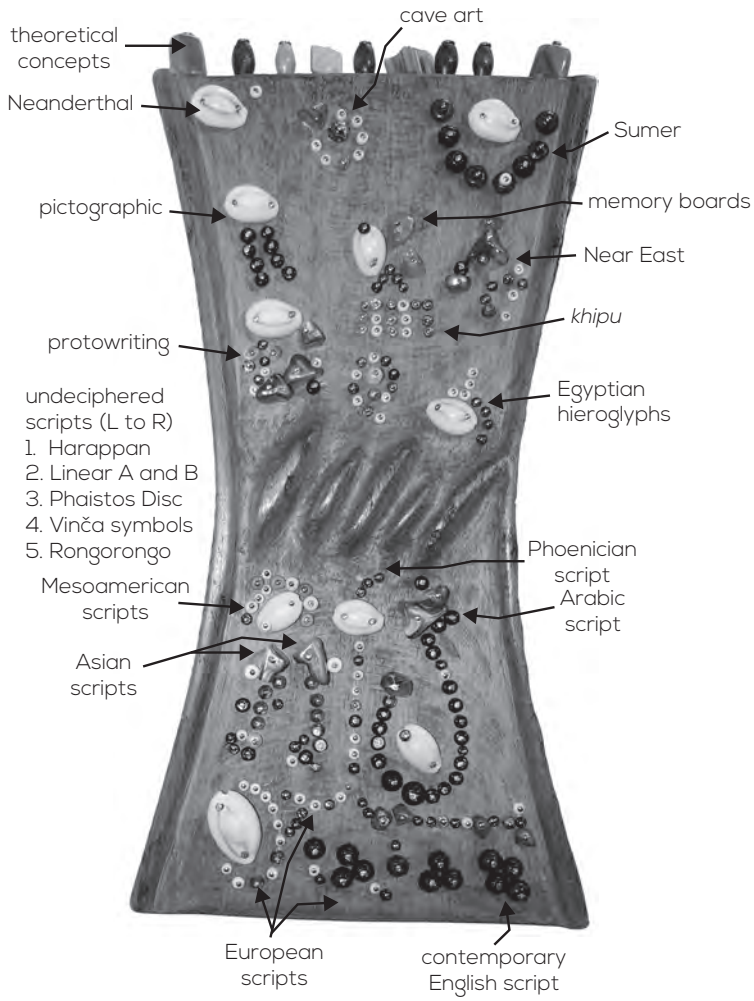


FIGURE 6.1 My *lukasa* for the story of writing, made by Tom Chippindall. (LYNNE KELLY)

FIGURE 6.2 The Phaistos Disc, which may, or may not, be a script waiting for someone to decipher, date and verify. (C. MESSIER)

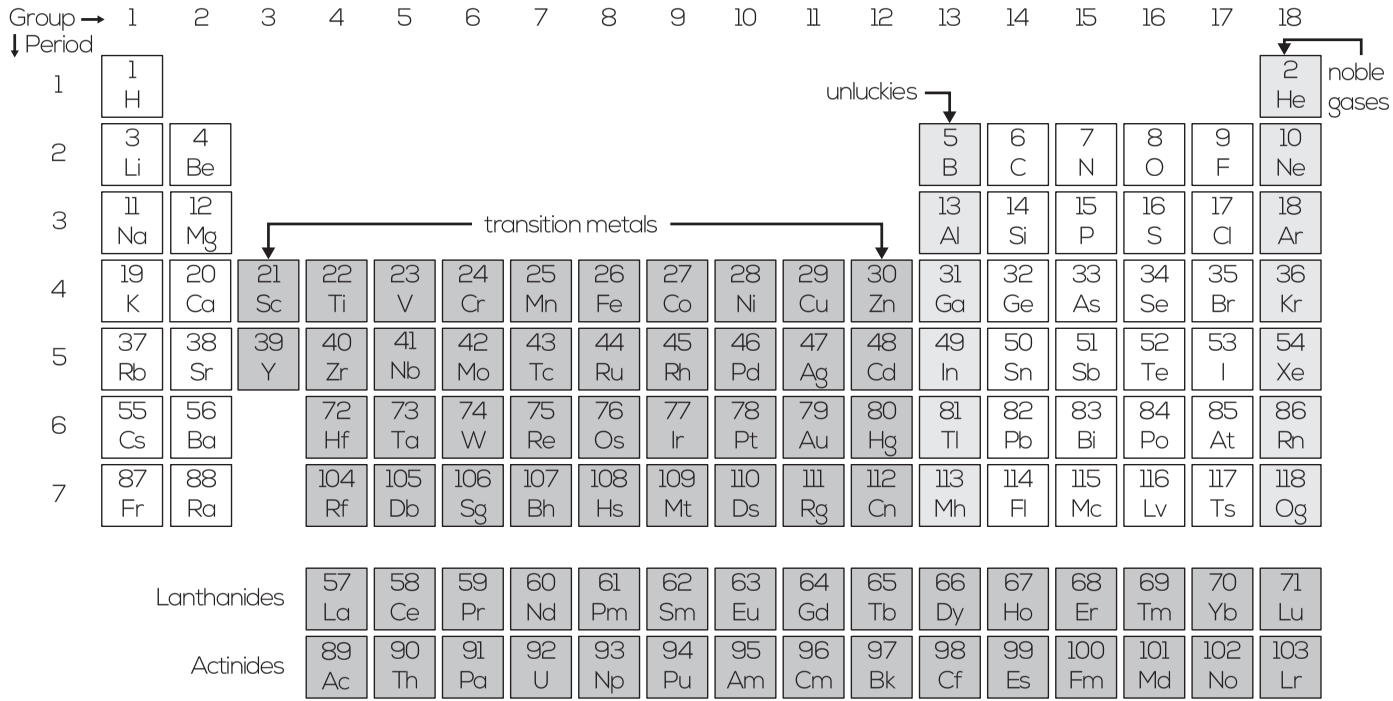


FIGURE 8.1 The periodic table with the Noble Gases, Unluckies and Transitionals shown.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
3	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36
4	4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40	44	48
5	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
6	6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72
7	7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70	77	84
8	8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80	88	96
9	9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90	99	108
10	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120
11	11	22	33	44	55	66	77	88	99	110	121	132
12	12	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120	132	144

FIGURE 8.2 My multiplication plan. Only 31 white multiplications must be memorised. Those below the diagonal are reflected above it. Multiples of 1, 2, 9, 10 and 11 can be known quickly by pattern. (The 9s can be memorised later by the same method.)
(LYNNE KELLY)

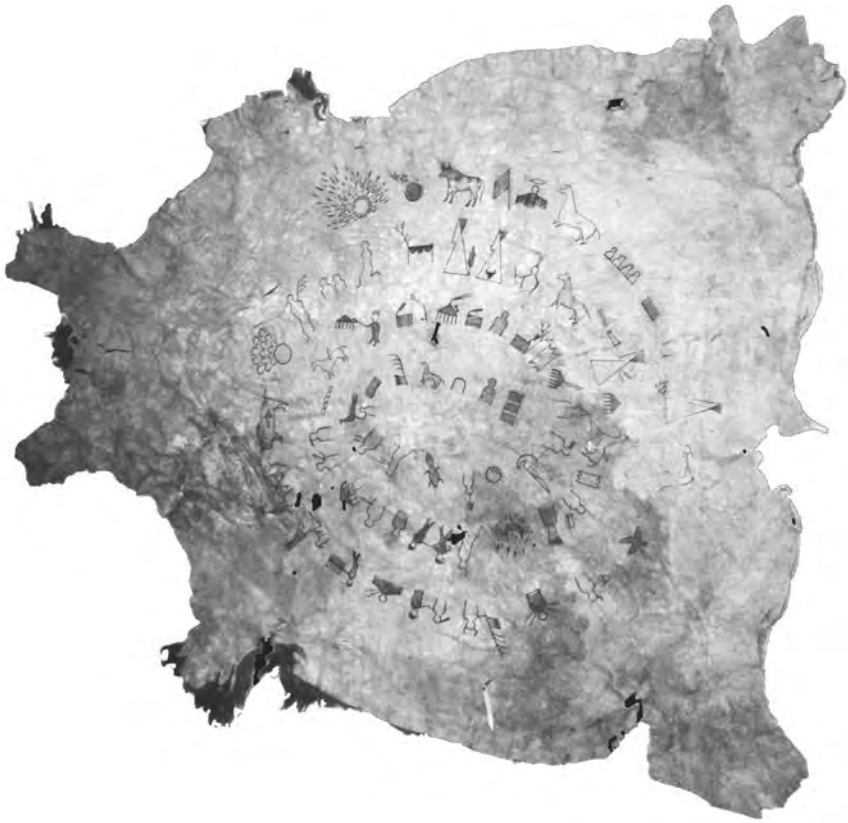


FIGURE 9.1 Lone Dog's winter count records 70 years of memorable events for the Lakota Sioux. (COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY, BENTONVILLE, ARKANSAS)

FIGURE 9.2 Alice Steel with her son, Haku, telling stories from Alice's winter count. (ALICE STEEL)

APPENDIX A

Table of memory methods

	Method	Chapter	Example in this book	Suitable for
1	**Visual alphabet**	1	Public speaking	Temporary data, but also useful for anything that works like a list
2	**Bestiary**	1	Names	Useful for anything for which a word is significant but there is no requirement to remember an order
3	**Story, imagination**	1	Everything	The basis of all memory methods

	Method	Chapter	Example in this book	Suitable for
4	**Memory palace (discrete)**	2	Countries, periodic table, French verbs and genders, Chinese radicals	Almost anything as long as the knowledge can be structured. The most powerful and effective memory method known
5	**Memory palace (continuous)**	2	History Journey	Any data that does not have discrete items; for example, time, which is continuous
6	**Bush songline**	2	Calendar, seasons, natural environment	Linking memory palaces with the natural environment they are set in. For anything environmental or seasonal
7	**Dance, song**	2	Countries	Enhances all methods
8	**Skyscape**	4	None given as I have not found this a practical method for me	Works as a form of memory palace, but also works for timekeeping and navigation due to movement. Not easy to use in contemporary life and well-lit cities
9	**Posts, poles and standing stones**	4	Victorian mammals	Not very practical unless you have large natural stones or a post you can decorate

	Method	Chapter	Example in this book	Suitable for
10	**Rapscallions**	4	French genders	Adding conversation, emotions and narrative to abstract information. Characters add to the emotional impact of stories and therefore enhance all memory methods
11	**Card decks**	4	Historic people	Useful for sets of discrete data with a limited number of items
12	**Dominic System**	4	Dates	Anything with numbers
13	**Lukasa-board-1**	5	Field guide to birds	Just like a miniature memory palace and can be used for any data that can be structured
14	**Stave or cane**	5	Genealogies	Useful for any information with a linear structure
15	**Memory boards**	5	Spider families	There are many formats of memory boards from around the world that work like the *lukasa* above and can be used for almost any information that can be structured

	Method	Chapter	Example in this book	Suitable for
16	**Landscape memory board**	5	History	Enhancing landscape memory palace recall
17	**Songboard**	5	Anatomy	Singing knowledge makes it more memorable. The songs can be represented on a physical device
18	**Body parts**	5	Ancient mnemonists	Order not critical. Knowledge you want at hand at any time
19	**Necklaces, bracelets and other beaded objects**	5	Shakespeare's plays	Sequential data of limited length. The beauty of these objects is that you can wear them
20	**Knotted cord *khipu***	5	Art and artists	These are a very adaptable aid including numeric data. They are best when physically present, e.g. when worn
21	**Set of objects**	5	Greek and Roman mythology	Wonderful for data with a complex structure that suits narrative rather than sequential memory systems
22	**Hands**	5	Astronomy science and history	Like a memory board, almost anything that can be structured, but has limited detail

	Method	Chapter	Example in this book	Suitable for
23	**Memory ball**	5	Ceremonial cycle	Any shape will work as a memory board, including carved spheres
24	**Lukasa-board-2**	6	Evolution of writing systems	Just like a miniature memory palace, but designed to suit the data, making it more effective
25	**Mandala**	6	Legal precedent, physics experiment	Like mind maps, mandalas are great when the information doesn't suit a linear layout but is related to a central theme or character
26	**Narrative scroll**	6	History of timekeeping	These really suit information that follows a narrative path, especially anything to do with history—recent or ancient, over short periods or long
27	**Drolleries and text decoration**	7	Medieval manuscript on musical instruments	Decoration of notes on any topic can make them more memorable, especially more abstract aspects
28	**Story illustrations with rapscallions**	8	Mathematical tables and equations, spelling and grammar	Abstract concepts are made memorable by giving them character and narrative

	Method	Chapter	Example in this book	Suitable for
29	**Winter count**	9	Personal history, twentieth-century history	Discrete events with limited number. Added to regularly
30	**Deck of cards**	10	Memory competitions	Use of memory palaces with added stress!
31	**Major system**	10	Random number lists	For memorising numbers for competition or general purposes

APPENDIX B

Bestiary

A suitable animal was not always possible, so some inventiveness was necessary.

Aa aardvark
Ab Abyssinian cat
Ac acorn
Ad adder
Ae aerialist
Af Afghan hound
Ag Agaric fungi
Ah Ah!—a sigh
Ai Airedale terrier
Aj Ajax
Ak Akita (dog breed)
Al alligator
Am amulet
An angel
Ap ape
Aq aquatic leech
Ar armadillo
As asp
At atlas
Au auroch
Av avocet
Ax axolotl
Ay aye-aye
Az Aztec
Ba bat
Be bee
Bi bison
Bl bloodhound
Bo bower-bird
Br brontosaurus
Bu butterfly
By Byron
Ca camel
Ce cenotaur
Ch chipmunk
Ci cicada
Cl clown
Co cow
Cr crab (hermit)
Cu cupid
Cy cyborg
Da dalmatian
De devil
Di diamond python
Do dolphin
Dr dragonfly
Du duck
Dw dwarf
Dy dystopia
Ea earwig
Eb ebb and flow

Ec echidna
Ed edelweiss
Ee eel
Ef effigy
Eg egret
Ei eider
El elephant
Em emu
En engraving
Er ermine
Es eskimo
Et ethereal
Eu eucalypt
Ev Eve
Ew ewe
Ex Excalibur
Ey eye
Ez Ezekiel
Fa falcon
Fe ferret
Fi fish
Fl flamingo
Fo fox
Fr frogmouth
Fu fuchsia
Ga gaggle
Ge genie
Gh gharial
Gi giraffe
Gl glider
Gn gnome
Go gorilla
Gr griffin
Gu gull
Gw gwardar
Gy gypsy
Ha hare
He heron
Hi hippopotamus
Ho horse
Hu hummingbird
Hy hyena
Ia iambic
Ib ibex
Ic Icarus
Id identical twin
Ig iguana
Il illusionist
Im impala
In insect
Ir Iris
Is island
Iv ivy
Ja jackass
Je jellyfish
Ji jigsaw
Jo jonquil
Ju juggler
Ka kangaroo
Ke kestrel
Kh khaki
Ki kiwi
Kn knight
Ko kookaburra
Kr kraken
Ku kumquat
Ky kylin (dragon)
La lapwing
Le leprechaun
Li limpets
Ll llama
Lo lobster
Lu lute
Ly lynx
Ma macaw
Mc McScottish
Me Medusa
Mi millipede
Mo monkey
Mu muskrat
My mynah
Na nautilus
Ne Neptune
Ni nit
No noddy (bird)
Nu numbat
Ny nymph
Oa oak
Oc octopus
Od Odin
Og ogre
Ok okapi
Ol olive
On onion
Op opossum
Or orangutan
Os ostrich
Ot otter
Ow owlet
Ox oxen
Oy oyster
Pa panda
Pe penguin
Ph phoenix
Pi pig
Pl platypus
Po polar bear
Pr praying mantis
Pu puffin
Py python
Qu quail

Ra	raven	Sw	swallow	Vu	Vulcan
Re	reindeer	Sy	symphony	Wa	walrus
Rh	rhinoceros	Ta	tapir	We	weevil
Ri	ringtail	Te	termite	Wh	whippet
Ro	rooster	Th	thornbill	Wi	witch
Ru	runner bean	Ti	tiger	Wo	wolf
Ry	rye	To	toad	Wr	wren
Sa	satyr	Tr	troll	Wy	wyvern
Sc	scorpion	Tu	turkey	Xa	xanthorrhoea
Se	seahorse	Tw	twitcher	Ya	yachtsman
Sh	shrew	Ty	tyrannosaurus	Ye	yeti
Si	Siamese cat	Ul	Ulysses	Yo	Yorkshire terrier
Sk	skunk	Um	umbrella bird	Yu	yucca plant
Sl	sloth	Un	univalve	Yv	scroll apology
Sm	smuggler	Ur	urchin	Za	Zapotec
Sn	snail	Us	usher	Ze	zebra
So	sourpuss	Ut	utopia	Zi	zither
Sp	spaniel	Va	vampire bat	Zo	zombie
Sq	squirrel	Ve	Venetian	Zu	zucchini
St	stingray	Vi	viper	Zy	zygote
Su	sugar glider	Vo	volcano		

For all others use the visual alphabet:

A	Arachne	J	jester	S	skull
B	bird of paradise	K	kitten	T	toucan
C	cat	L	lion	U	unicorn
D	dragon	M	marmoset	V	vulture
E	eagle	N	Neanderthal	W	wombat
F	frog	O	owl	X	Xena, warrior woman
G	goat	P	panther		
H	Hydra	Q	Quetzalcoatl	Y	yak
I	imp	R	rat	Z	Zeus

APPENDIX C

Prehistory Journey

Many of the dates given here have been updated or are the matter of much debate. The Prehistory Journey gives me an idea of the chronological order of events and reasonable dates. I update the dates by adding to the stories when I become aware of new research.

Time (general)	Geologic eons and eras	Time (specific)	Geologic periods and epochs	Examples of events occurring in the time period
START 4500 mya	HADEAN EON			The moon formed
4000 mya	ARCHEAN EON			First life, photosynthesis
2500 mya	PROTEROZOIC EON			Eukaryotes—first multicellular animals emerge during this eon
540 mya	PHANEROZOIC EON Paleozoic era	540,000,000		First land plants
		530,000,000		Cambrian explosion—fast rate of evolution, 540–520 mya
235 mya	Mesozoic era	235,000,000	TRIASSIC PERIOD	Dinosaurs
		201,000,000	JURASSIC PERIOD	
1st CORNER 145 mya		145,000,000	CRETACEOUS PERIOD	
125 mya		125,000,000		Flowering plants appear
66 mya	Cenozoic era (geologic era till present)	66,000,000	PALEOGENE PERIOD Paleocene epoch	
		65,500,000		Major event—killed the dinosaurs

Time (general)	Geologic eons and eras	Time (specific)	Geologic periods and epochs	Examples of events occurring in the time period
		56,000,000	Eocene epoch	
		34,000,000	Oligocene epoch	
23 mya		23,000,000	NEOGENE PERIOD Miocene epoch	
		15,000,000		*Pierolapithecus*—common ancestor Hominidae, great apes
		6,000,000		*Orrorin tugenensis*—Millennium Man, Kenya
5.3 mya		5,300,000	Pliocene epoch	
		4,000,000		*Australopithecus* 2 spp.
		4,000,000		*Australopithecus afarensis*
		4,000,000		*Kenyanthropus platyops* (Lake Turkana, Kenya)
		3,300,000		*Archaeological time scale begins overlapping with the Geological time scale*
		3,200,000		Lucy—*Australopithecus afarensis*, Ethiopia, 1974

Time (general)	Geologic eons and eras	Time (specific)	Geologic periods and epochs	Examples of events occurring in the time period
		2,700,000		*Paranthropus* spp., robust australopithecines
2.58 mya		2,580,000	QUATERNARY PERIOD Pleistocene epoch	
ARCHEOLOGICAL TIME SCALE				
		3,300,000	Start Lower Paleolithic	
		2,600,000		*H. habilis*
		2,000,000		*H. erectus*
		2,000,000		*H. georgicus* (Georgia, first outside Africa)
		2,000,000		*H. ergaster*
		2,000,000		*H. erectus*: Turkana Boy, Kenya
2nd CORNER 1 mya		1,000,000		*H. erectus* in China
900 kya				
800 kya				

Time (general)	Geologic eons and eras	Time (specific)	Geologic periods and epochs	Examples of events occurring in the time period
700 kya		700,000		*H. pekinensis*, Peking man, near Beijing (or *Homo erectus pekinensis*)
600 kya		600,000		*H. heidelbergensis*
500 kya		500,000		*H. heidelbergensis*, Boxgrove, UK, West Sussex
		430,000		*Homo neanderthalensis* or *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*
400 kya		400,000		*H. neanderthensis*
		315,000		*H. sapiens*
300 kya		300,000	Start Middle Paleolithic	
200 kya		200,000		
		150,000		Mitochondrial Eve
		125,000		Peak Eemian stage interglacial
		120,000		*H. sapiens* left Africa, mtDNA haplogroup N, C, A?
100 kya		100,000		
		90,000		Y chromosomal Adam

Time (general)	Geologic eons and eras	Time (specific)	Geologic periods and epochs	Examples of events occurring in the time period
		75,000		Toba volcano eruption
		70,000		Blombos Cave
		65,000		Kakadu
		60,000		Humans to Australia
50 kya		50,000		Lake Mungo
		50,000		Humans to Near East, Haplogroup B
		42,000		Paleolithic flutes in Europe
		41,000		Denisova hominins, Siberia
3rd CORNER 40 kya		40,000	Start Upper Paleolithic	
		40,000		Cro-Magnon colonisation of Europe
		35,000		Zar and other caves, Azerbaijan
		32,000		Aurignacian culture in Europe
30 kya		30,000		Chauvet cave
		30,000		Haplogroup X, I

Time (general)	Geologic eons and eras	Time (specific)	Geologic periods and epochs	Examples of events occurring in the time period
		30,000		Bow and arrow
		28,500		Humans to New Guinea
		28,000		Humans to Japan
		26,000		Start Last Glacial Maximum
20 kya		20,000		
		18,000		End Last Glacial Maximum
		18,000		Altamira
		17,000		Lascaux
15 kya		15,000		Humans to Americas
12 kya		11,700		End last Ice Age and end of Pleistocene
		11,000		Göbekli Tepe
		10,800		Start Younger Dryas
4th CORNER 10 kya		10,000		Burrup Peninsula = Murujuga
		10,000		Natufian culture
		10,000		Barley, wheat, Mesopotamia, now Iraq

Time (general)	Geologic eons and eras	Time (specific)	Geologic periods and epochs	Examples of events occurring in the time period
		9700	Start European Mesolithic	Start of Holocene epoch in geologic time scale
8000 BCE		8000 BCE		
		7500 BCE		End Younger Dryas
		7500 BCE		Çatalhöyük, Turkey
		7150 BCE		Cheddar Man, Cheddar Gorge, United Kingdom
7000 BCE		7000 BCE		Jiahu, China
6000 BCE		6000 BCE		Iberian megalithic cairns and plaques
5500 BCE		5500 BCE		Copper, Pločnik, Serbia
		5500 BCE		Agriculture started in Ancient Egypt
		5500 BCE		Beginning of the Xinle culture in China
5000 BCE		5000 BCE		Start of Neolithic constructions in Orkney
		5000 BCE		Goseck circle, Germany

Time (general)	Geologic eons and eras	Time (specific)	Geologic periods and epochs	Examples of events occurring in the time period
		5000 BCE		Wheel
		5000 BCE		Protowriting
		4700 BCE		Menhirs and mounds, Brittany, France
4500 BCE		4500 BCE		Nabta Playa, Egypt, stone circles built
		4500 BCE		Maltese temples
		4000 BCE		Hal-Saflieni Hypogeum, Malta
4000 BCE		4000 BCE		Mesopotamian civilisations
		3800 BCE		First agriculture, Windmill Hill, Avebury
		3800 BCE		Post Track, Sweet Track—causewayed enclosures
		3700 BCE		Minoan culture starts
3500 BCE		3500 BCE		First mummies in Egypt
		3500 BCE		Watson Brake, Louisiana, United States

Time (general)	Geologic eons and eras	Time (specific)	Geologic periods and epochs	Examples of events occurring in the time period
		3300 BCE		Newgrange, Knowth, Dowth, Ireland
		3100 BCE		Standing Stones of Stenness; passage cairns, Orkney
3000 BCE		3000 BCE		Stonehenge started
		3000 BCE		Stone rows, Carnac, France
		3000 BCE		Avebury henge constructed, United Kingdom
		2700 BCE		Minoans; Knossos
		2600 BCE		Caral-Supe, Peru
		2600 BCE		First pyramid, Egypt
		2560 BCE		Great pyramid, Egypt
2500 BCE		2500 BCE		Ring of Brodgar, Orkney
		2500 BCE		Skara Brae, Orkney
		2100 BCE		Xia Dynasty, China (c. 2100–c. 1600 BCE)
2000 BCE		2000 BCE		Pre-classic Maya (to 250 CE)
		1800 BCE		Poverty Point, United States

Time (general)	Geologic eons and eras	Time (specific)	Geologic periods and epochs	Examples of events occurring in the time period
1500 BCE		1500 BCE		Shang Dynasty, China (c. 1700–1046 BCE)
		1500 BCE		Stonehenge abandoned
		1400 BCE		Olmecs emerge, Mexico
		1400 BCE		Lake Condah Aboriginal eel traps and stone huts, Victoria, Australia
		1323 BCE		Tutankhamun died, Egypt
		1200 BCE		Chavin de Huantar
		1200 BCE		Trojan War (very approximate date)
END 1000 BCE		1000 BCE		Start of History Journey

APPENDIX D

My chosen ancestors

Some of the dates in this appendix list are debated. I have quoted those I found most consistently when researching the characters. Spellings also vary. I did try hard to include more women but the selection criterion was those I could learn *from*, not just *about*. Regrettably, history did not often record the words of women in earlier times and I need those words to learn from. The History Walk has a better gender balance, with an abundance of women and men to learn about. I admit that my personal biases show in this list—physicists and mathematicians are overrepresented, while other fields of endeavour should be more prominent. But this is my list of chosen ancestors.

Chosen ancestor		Birth	Death
1	Homer	c. 800 BCE	unknown
2	Pythagoras	570	c. 495
3	Confucius	551	479
4	Herodotus	484	425
5	Socrates	470	399
6	Plato	c. 428	c. 348
7	Aristotle	384	322
8	Alexander the Great	356	323
9	Euclid	c. 300	unknown
10	Archimedes	287	212
11	Cicero	106	43
12	Julius Caesar	100	44
13	Cleopatra	69	30
14	Augustus	63	14 CE
15	Jesus	4 BCE	30/33 CE
16	Pliny the Elder	23 CE	79
17	Ptolemy	90	168
18	Constantine the Great	272	337
19	Augustine of Hippo	354	430
20	Attila the Hun	406	453
21	Muhammad	570	632
22	Charlemagne	742	814
23	Averroës	1126	1198
24	Genghis Khan	1162	1227
25	Fibonacci	c. 1170	1240
26	Thomas Aquinas	1225	1274
27	Dante Alighieri	1265	1321

Chosen ancestor		Birth	Death
28	William of Occam	c. 1287	1347
29	Petrarch	1304	1374
30	Geoffrey Chaucer	1343	1400
31	Johannes Gutenberg	1398	1468
32	Mehmed the Conqueror	1432	1481
33	Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui	1438	1471
34	Christopher Columbus	1450	1506
35	Leonardo da Vinci	1458	1519
36	John Major	1467	1550
37	Niccolo Machiavelli	1469	1527
38	Nicolaus Copernicus	1473	1543
39	Michelangelo	1475	1564
40	Sir Thomas More	1478	1535
41	Martin Luther	1483	1546
42	Henry VIII	1491	1547
43	Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor	1500	1558
44	John Calvin	1509	1564
45	Miguel de Cervantes	1547	1616
46	Francis Bacon	1561	1626
47	William Shakespeare	1564	1616
48	Galileo Galilei	1564	1642
49	Johannes Kepler	1571	1630
50	Thomas Hobbes	1588	1679
51	René Descartes	1596	1650
52	Oliver Cromwell	1599	1658
53	Blaise Pascal	1623	1662
54	Louis XIV, the Sun King	1638	1715

Chosen ancestor		Birth	Death
55	Isaac Newton	1643	1727
56	Gottfried Leibniz	1646	1716
57	Daniel Defoe	1660	1731
58	Voltaire	1694	1778
59	Benjamin Franklin	1706	1790
60	Carl Linnaeus	1707	1778
61	Leonhard Euler	1707	1783
62	Jean-Jacques Rousseau	1712	1778
63	Denis Diderot	1713	1784
64	Adam Smith	1723	1790
65	Immanuel Kant	1724	1804
66	James Cook	1728	1779
67	Catherine the Great	1729	1796
68	James Watt	1736	1819
69	Edward Jenner	1749	1823
70	Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	1749	1832
71	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	1756	1791
72	Napoleon Bonaparte	1769	1821
73	Ludwig von Beethoven	1770	1827
74	Jane Austen	1775	1817
75	Johann Carl Friedrich Gauss	1777	1855
76	Charles Babbage	1791	1871
77	Michael Faraday	1791	1867
78	Charles Lyell	1797	1875
79	John Stuart Mill	1806	1873
80	Abraham Lincoln	1809	1865
81	Charles Darwin	1809	1882

Chosen ancestor		Birth	Death
82	Otto von Bismarck	1815	1898
83	Karl Marx	1818	1883
84	Queen Victoria	1819	1901
85	Florence Nightingale	1820	1910
86	Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky	1821	1881
87	Gregor Mendel	1822	1884
88	Louis Pasteur	1822	1895
89	Augustus Pitt Rivers	1827	1900
90	Marianne North	1830	1890
91	James Clerk Maxwell	1831	1879
92	Sitting Bull	1831	1890
93	Lewis Carroll	1832	1898
94	Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky	1840	1893
95	Friedrich Nietzsche	1844	1900
96	Alexander Bell	1847	1922
97	Frances Hodgson Burnett	1849	1924
98	Oscar Wilde	1854	1900
99	Sigmund Freud	1856	1939
100	Nikola Tesla	1856	1943
101	J.J. Thompson	1856	1940
102	Emmeline Pankhurst	1858	1928
103	Max Planck	1858	1947
104	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle	1859	1930
105	Marie Curie	1867	1934
106	Gertrude Bell	1868	1926
107	Vladimir Lenin	1870	1924
108	Ernest Rutherford	1871	1937

Chosen ancestor		Birth	Death
109	Winston Churchill	1874	1965
110	Albert Einstein	1879	1955
111	Helen Keller	1880	1968
112	Pope John XXIII	1881	1963
113	Mustafa Kemal Atatürk	1881	1938
114	Benito Mussolini	1883	1945
115	John Maynard Keynes	1883	1946
116	Niels Bohr	1885	1962
117	Srinivasa Ramanujan	1887	1920
118	Erwin Schrödinger	1887	1961
119	Jawaharlal Nehru	1889	1964
120	Mao Zedong	1893	1976
121	Louis Leakey	1903	1972
122	Alan Turing	1912	1954
123	Paul Erdös	1913	1996
124	Nelson Mandela	1918	2013
125	Rosalind Franklin	1920	1958
126	Benoit Mandelbrot	1924	2010
127	Martin Luther King	1929	1968
128	Mikhail Gorbachev	1931	—
129	Kofi Annan	1938	2018
130	Linus Torvalds	1969	—