The Beginning of Korea

From A Historical Perspective
Pre-historic Period in Korea

- Hunting and gathering tribe activities traced back to 3000 BC.
- Dolman tombs and relics
- Archaeological recovery of pottery and stone tools in Neolithic age – dates uncertain
Paths of Human Migration in East Asia

Source: Atlas of Korean History
Neolithic Transformation

- Transformation of human life style
- Hunting and gathering ➔ farming
- Nomadic life ➔ Agriculture ➔ settlements ➔ society ➔ modern civilization = turning point for humankind.
- Earliest settles in Korea come from north, through Manchuria – different cultural heritage than the Chinese
Old Joseon (Go Joseon)  
During China’s  
Warring Period (475 BCE to 221 BCE)

Qin unified China in 221 BC;
Gojoseon ruled Korea 700 – 108 BC
Gojoseon (Ko Chosen)

- Ca. 700 BC(??) to 108 BC
- First state of Korean people
- Slavery society
- Transition from Bronze age to Iron age
- First recorded in Guanzi, a book from Han China
- Resisted foreign invasions, but finally defeated by Han China 108 BC.
Dolmens
Important artifact of Bronze age Korea

- Dates back to prehistoric days, exact dates unknown
- Used as altars/tombs
- As many as 35,000 in Korea
- UNESCO designated World-heritage sites
Dolmen on Gwangju Island

- The cap stone is 6.4 meters long and 5.2 meters wide.
- One of the biggest in South Korea.
Construction of Dolmens

First, suitable stones were dug up.

The capstone would then be placed on top and the earth between the vertical supports removed.

The stones were then moved into place using logs.

After erecting the supporting stones, the gap between them would be filled with earth.

Source: Atlas of Korean History
Questions

- What happened in the other parts of the world during the reign of Gojoseon (700 BC to 108 BC)?
- How does the historical Gojoseon differ from the mythical Gojoseon?
- Depending what people like to believe, Gojoseon has two starting dates: 2333BC and 700 BC. Does the shortened version of the Gojoseon history tarnished the glory of Korea? Why do you think so?
Korean Historical Timeline

Source: Information provided by Korean Embassy
Website: http://www.asianinfo.org/asianinfo/korea/history.htm