The First Americans
Prehistory to 1492

Petroglyphs are carvings or inscriptions on rock. These petroglyphs in southern Utah were created by several cultures.
Section 1: Migration to the Americas

Essential Question: How did agriculture change the lives of early people?

Section 2: Cities and Empires

Essential Question: How did the early civilizations of Mexico and Central America develop socially, politically, and economically?

Section 3: North American Peoples

Essential Question: How was the way of life of the Native Americans of North America related to their environment?

Organizing Information

Make this Foldable to help organize what you learn about the first Americans.

Step 1: Fold a sheet of paper in half from side to side.

Step 2: Turn the paper and fold it into thirds. Cut the top layer only to make three equal tabs.

Step 3: Draw and label your Foldable as shown.

Reading and Writing: On the front of the Foldable, diagram early migratory routes; label sites of the Mound Builders; show the empires of the Aztec, Inca, and other ancient civilizations; and include other visual information about the people of the Americas.
Migration to the Americas

American Diary

In 1974 at Meadowcroft, Pennsylvania, archaeologist James Adovasio and his team made an amazing discovery. Digging through soil and rock, they found fire pits, bones, shells, and stone tools. This evidence seemed to show that humans had been living there more than 14,000 years ago. For Adovasio, this “meant that people had been . . . in western Pennsylvania some four thousand years before any human being was supposed to have set foot anywhere in this hemisphere.”

—from The First Americans
The Journey From Asia

Main Idea: The first Americans were hunters and gatherers who came from Asia and spread throughout the Americas.

History and You: Do you know if any prehistoric mammals, such as giant woolly mammoths or saber-toothed tigers, lived in your area? Read to find out why early peoples migrated to the Americas.

Recent archaeological finds such as those in Meadowcroft suggest that the first Americans arrived thousands of years ago, much earlier than once believed. By A.D. 1500, millions of Native Americans, belonging to more than 2,000 different groups, lived on the two continents of North America and South America.

When Europeans arrived in the Americas in the late 1400s, they found Native Americans living there. The Europeans wondered where these peoples had come from and how they happened to settle in the Americas. Some believed the Native Americans had come from Atlantis, an island that supposedly sank beneath the Atlantic Ocean.

Modern scientists are still trying to determine how the first people came to the Americas. Experts in archaeology, the study of ancient peoples, continue to piece together the story of the first Americans.

Archaeologists learn about the past from artifacts—the tools, weapons, baskets, and carvings of early peoples. Their discoveries show that many early peoples may have come across a land that later sank into the sea. This land was not the mythical Atlantis, however, but a strip of land called Beringia that once joined Asia and the Americas.

Crossing the Land Bridge

During its long history, Earth has gone through several ice ages. These are periods of extreme cold. Huge ice sheets, or glaciers, formed and covered much of Earth in the ice ages. The most recent Ice Age began 100,000 years ago and ended about 12,000 years ago. The lower sea level during this period exposed a strip of land that would have run from Siberia in northeastern Asia to what is now Alaska, the westernmost part of the Americas. That land bridge, Beringia, now lies under the Bering Strait.

If You Were There: Early Toolmakers

A Way to Survive: As an early American, you moved from place to place in search of food and shelter. One of your most important advances was creating tools, which made hunting, gathering, building shelter, and making clothing much easier. You may have made tools from bone or antler. Most tools were made from stone. As technology advanced, you began making specific tools, such as food choppers, meat scrapers, and spear points.

Antler or bone tool found at Meadowcroft

Spear point from Meadowcroft

Early Americans left evidence of their culture at Meadowcroft Rockshelter, near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Critical Thinking: Making Inferences Why do you think you would have chosen stones to make tools?
Searching for Hunting Grounds

The early Americans were nomads, people who moved from place to place. They ate grains and fruits but depended on hunting for much of their food. While on a hunt, they crossed Beringia into what is now Alaska and Canada.

The crossing of the land bridge was a migration, a movement of a large number of people into a new homeland. As the centuries passed, many people traveled from Asia either on foot across the land bridge or in boats. They spread out across the Americas, going as far east as the Atlantic Ocean and as far south as the tip of South America.

Hunting for Food

Native American legends tell of giant beasts that roamed Earth in ancient times. When the first Americans arrived from Asia, they did indeed find huge mammals. There were the saber-toothed tiger, the woolly mammoth, and the mastodon. The mammoth and mastodon resembled modern elephants in shape but had shaggy fur and long tusks.

Early Americans were skilled at hunting these beasts. Armed with spears, bands of hunters stalked herds of bison, mastodons, or mammoths and then charged at the animals, hurling their weapons. A single mammoth provided tons of meat, enough to feed a group of people for months. The hunters and their families used every part of the animal. They made the skin into clothing, carved the bones into weapons and tools, and may have used the long ribs to build shelters.

About 15,000 years ago, the Earth’s temperatures began to rise. As the great glaciers melted and the oceans rose, Beringia was submerged again. The Americas were cut off from Asia. At the same time, the hunters of America faced a new challenge. The mammoths and other large animals began to die out, either from being overhunted or because of changes in the environment. Early Americans had to find other sources, or supplies, of food.

✓ Reading Check: Explaining How do archaeologists learn about the past?
American Diary

Stories of "lost" cities led American explorer John Lloyd Stephens to southern Mexico in 1840. Stephens followed a steep mountain trail to a flat area covered with trees. Suddenly through openings in the trees, he "saw the front of a large building richly ornamented with ... figures ... curious and elegant.”

Stephens knew this palace had been built by a very advanced people.

—from Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatán

The Maya built this great palace in the city of Palenque sometime during the A.D. 600s or 700s.
The Olmec, Maya, and Aztec

Main Idea The Olmec, Maya, and Aztec civilizations of Mexico and Central America flourished long before the arrival of Europeans.

History and You Do you use an electronic calendar to keep organized? Read to find out about the calendars and other accomplishments of early American civilizations.

Stephens had come across the ruins of Palenque (puh•LEHNG•kay), an early Maya city. Although it was small, Palenque was an extraordinary place. Its structures, carved from the gray granite of the mountaintop, were wonders of design and craftsmanship.

Long before the Europeans arrived in the early 1500s, several great civilizations, or highly developed societies, arose in what is now Mexico and Central America. These civilizations built enormous cities in thick jungles and on mountaintops that were hard to reach. They also developed complex, or highly detailed, systems for writing, counting, and tracking time.

Among the largest and most advanced of these early civilizations were the Olmec, the Maya, and the Aztec. Each of these civilizations spread out over hundreds of miles, included millions of people, and thrived for several centuries.

The Olmec

The Olmec flourished between 1500 B.C. and 300 B.C. along the Gulf Coast of what are now Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras. Olmec farmers produced enough food to sustain cities containing thousands of people. Olmec workers sculpted large stone monuments and built stone pavements and drainage systems. For reasons not fully understood, the Olmec civilization declined and then collapsed.

The Maya

The Maya built their civilization in the steamy rain forests of present-day Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and Belize. They planted maize, beans, sweet potatoes, and other vegetables to feed their large population, which may have reached 2 million people.

By the Numbers / Maya Mathematics

Number System The Maya used a system of dots and bars to represent their system of numbers. A dot represented a value of one, and a bar represented five. A shell-like figure stood for zero. To add two numbers together, the symbols for each number were combined to make a new single number.

\[
\begin{align*}
5 & + 6 = 11 \\
\end{align*}
\]

Critical Thinking

Inferring What does a sophisticated counting system reveal about the interests of the Maya?
By A.D. 300, the Maya had built many large cities in the area. Each city had at least one stone pyramid. Some pyramids reached about 200 feet (61 m)—the height of a 20-story building. Steps ran up the pyramid sides to a temple on top.

The temples on top of the pyramids were religious and governmental centers. Here, priests performed rituals dedicated to the Maya gods. The Maya believed the gods controlled everything that happened on Earth. Because only priests knew the gods’ wishes, the priests held great power in Maya society. Maya civilization was a theocracy, a society ruled by religious leaders.

Maya priests believed that the gods were visible in the stars, sun, and moon. They used their knowledge of astronomy to predict eclipses and to develop a 365-day calendar. Their desire to measure time increased their knowledge of mathematics. The Maya also developed a form of writing called hieroglyphics. Hieroglyphics uses symbols or pictures to represent things, ideas, and sounds.

Maya Transport and Trade

The Maya did not have wheeled vehicles or horses and carried goods overland on their backs. Maya traders traveled on a network of roads that were carved out of the jungle. Farmers brought maize and vegetables to outdoor markets in the cities and traded for cotton cloth, pottery, deer meat, and salt.

Maya traders also transported goods up and down Mexico’s east coast. Their canoes carried jade statues, turquoise jewelry, cacao beans for making chocolate, and other goods to traders throughout a large area.

Decline of the Maya

Around A.D. 900, the Maya civilization in the lowlands began to decline. By 1100, the great cities were almost ghost towns. No one knows what caused the decline. Perhaps the soil became too exhausted by erosion and fire to produce enough food for the people.
The Maya civilization collapsed, but descendants of the Maya still live in parts of Mexico and Central America today.

**The Aztec**

Centuries after the fall of the Maya, a group of hunters called the Aztec wandered through central Mexico, searching for a permanent home. In 1325 they came upon an island in Lake Texcoco (tehs•KOH•koh), today part of Mexico City. There the Aztec saw a sign: an eagle with a snake in its beak sitting on a cactus. According to Aztec legend, this sign from their god meant their journey had ended and that this island was to be their home.

**Tenochtitlán**

On this island emerged Tenochtitlán (tay•NAWCH•teet•LAHN), one of the greatest cities in the Americas. Its construction was a miracle of engineering and human labor. Directed by priests and nobles, workers toiled day and night. They pulled soil from the bottom of the lake to make causeways, or bridges of earth, linking—or connecting—the island and the shore. They filled parts of the lake with earth so they could grow crops.

In time the Aztec capital expanded to the mainland around the lake. At its height Tenochtitlán was the largest city in the Americas and one of the largest in the world. Tenochtitlán was also a center of trade, attracting thousands of merchants to its outdoor marketplaces.

**Aztec War and Religion**

The Aztec civilization grew into a military empire. In the 1400s, the Aztec army marched through central and southern Mexico, conquering nearly all rival communities. Conquered people were forced to work as slaves in Aztec cities and villages.

Like the Maya, the Aztec organized their society around their religion. The Aztec believed that human sacrifices were necessary to keep the gods pleased and to ensure abundant harvests. They made sacrifices of thousands of prisoners of war.
Inca Roads The Inca Empire was divided into four provinces. To help control the distant areas of the empire, the Inca built a large network of roads, some of which still exist today. The army and the king’s messengers could travel quickly along these roads.

Traveling an Inca Road These ruins are of travelers’ lodgings, or *tambo*, which were located along the roads throughout the empire.

Map Skill

Region In which modern-day countries was the Inca Empire located?

Maps in Motion See StudentWorks™ Plus or glencoe.com.

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A Great City Remembered

The first Europeans to see the Aztec capital were awed by its splendor. In 1519 Hernán Cortés led 550 Spanish soldiers into Tenochtitlán. Cortés wrote:

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

“There are forty towers at the least, all of stout construction and very lofty. . . . The workmanship both in wood and stone could not be bettered anywhere.”

—Hernán Cortés, *Five Letters*

Bernal Díaz del Castillo, one of the soldiers, marveled at the “great stone towers and temples and buildings that rose straight up out of the water.” Tenochtitlán, he explained, was a city of water. Some of the Spanish soldiers thought that Tenochtitlán was more magnificent than Rome and the other great European capitals of the time.

**Reading Check** Describing Why was Tenochtitlán important?

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The Inca

**Main Idea** The Inca in South America developed a well-organized empire with a structured society.

**History and You** How do you keep track of your school records? Read to learn about the Inca’s record-keeping system.

Another great American civilization developed in the western highlands of South America. The empire of the Inca was the largest of the early American civilizations.

Around 1200, the **Inca** people founded their capital city of Cuzco (KOO•s•koh). In 1438 the Inca emperor named Pachacuti (PAH•chah•KOO•tee) came to the throne. Through conquest, Pachacuti and his son, Topa Inca, built a large empire. It stretched from north to south for more than 3,000 miles (4,828 km), from present-day Colombia to northern Argentina and Chile.
The Inca state was built on war, and the Inca army was powerful. All men between 25 and 50 years old could be drafted to serve in the army for up to five years. Their weapons included clubs, spears, and spiked copper balls on ropes. Using slings, Inca soldiers could throw stones 30 yards (27 m).

Residents of conquered areas who did not resist were allowed to participate in the growing empire's government. Those who resisted or rebelled were dealt with harshly. Many people preferred to accept the terms offered by the Inca rather than go to war with the powerful Inca armies.

**Life in the Empire**

At its height, the Inca Empire had a population of more than 9 million, including many conquered peoples. To control this large empire, the Inca built at least 10,000 miles (16,093 km) of stone-paved roads that ran over rugged mountains, across deserts, and through dense jungles. Rope bridges, made from grass, crossed deep canyons and rivers.

Runners carried messages to and from the emperor and linked, or connected, outposts of the empire to Cuzco. The Inca language, Quechua (keh-chuh-uh), became the official language for the entire empire.

Although the Inca did not have a system of writing, they developed a system of record keeping with string called quipus (kee-pooz). Using various lengths and colors of string knotted in special patterns, the quipus were used to record information about resources such as grain supplies.

To farm their mountainous lands, the Inca cut terraces, or broad platforms, into steep slopes. They built stone walls on the terraces to hold the soil and plants in place. Inca farmers grew maize, squash, tomatoes, peanuts, chili peppers, cotton, and potatoes.

All Inca land belonged to the emperor, who was believed to be a descendant of the sun god. To please the sun god, the Inca made magnificent gold jewelry and temple ornaments. The Inca also built cities devoted to religious ceremonies, including Machu Picchu, a site hidden high up in the Andes.

**Reading Check**

3. How did the Inca farm steep slopes?

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**Section 2 Review**

**Vocabulary**

1. Write a short paragraph in which you use all of the following vocabulary terms: civilization, complex, theocracy, hieroglyphics, link, Quechua, quipu, terrace.

**Main Ideas**

2. **Describing** Describe the development of Tenochtitlán, and explain why the first Europeans to view the city were amazed by it.

3. **Explaining** How did the Inca build and govern their vast empire?

4. **Making Inferences** How does trade help enrich a civilization? Provide examples in your answer.

5. **Categorizing** Use a diagram like the one below to describe the role of religion in these early American civilizations.

6. **Persuasive Writing** Create a poster encouraging tourists to visit the ruins of an early American civilization. Use the images and text to describe the people and history of your chosen site.

7. **Answer the Essential Question** How did the early civilizations of Mexico and Central America develop socially, politically, and economically?
North American Peoples

American Diary

In a Comanche story, Humpback, a powerful being, kept all of the buffalo for himself in a corral. Coyote, an animal known for his tricks, changed himself into a little dog and befriended Humpback’s son. At night, Coyote slipped into the corral, barking loudly and stampeding the buffalo away. Humpback’s son cried, “Where is my little dog?” ‘That was no dog,’ Humpback said sadly. ‘That was Coyote the Trickster. He has turned loose all our buffalo.”

— from Dee Brown’s Folktales of The Native American
Early Native Americans

Main Idea: The Hohokam, the Anasazi, and the Mound Builders were among the most advanced of early North American civilizations.

History and You: Has your area ever experienced a drought? How did the drought affect you? Read to learn how droughts may have caused the decline of a Native American civilization in the Southwest.

The Comanche were only one of many Native American cultures that rose and flourished in North America long before Europeans arrived in the 1500s. Among the most advanced of these earliest Native American cultures were the Hohokam and Anasazi of the Southwest and the Mound Builders of the Ohio River valley.

The Hohokam

The dry, hot desert of what is now Arizona was home to the Hohokam people. They may have come from Mexico about 300 B.C. The Hohokam culture flourished from about A.D. 300 to 1300 in an area bordered by the Gila and Salt River valleys.

The Hohokam were experts at squeezing every drop of available water from the sun-baked soil. Their way of life depended on the irrigation channels, or trenches, they dug to carry river water into their fields. In addition to hundreds of miles of irrigation channels, the Hohokam left behind pottery, carved stone, and shells etched with acid. The shells came from trade with coastal peoples.

The Anasazi

The Anasazi (ah•nuh•SAH•zee) lived around the same time as the Hohokam, roughly A.D. 1 to 1300, in the area known as the Four Corners. (This is the meeting place of the states currently known as Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico.) There they built great stone dwellings that the Spanish explorers later called pueblos (PWEB•lows), or villages. Pueblo Bonito, one of the most spectacular of the Anasazi pueblos, can still be seen in New Mexico. The huge semicircular structure, or building, of stone and sun-dried earth resembles an apartment building. It is four stories high and has hundreds of rooms. Archaeologists have found traces of a complex road system linking Pueblo Bonito with other villages. This suggests that Pueblo Bonito was an important trade or religious center for the Anasazi people.

Primary Source: Buffalo Robe

For centuries, the Comanche and other Native American groups hunted herds of buffalo that used to wander on the Great Plains in what is now the central United States.

Using the Buffalo

Sacred to the Native American peoples of the Plains, the buffalo provided many of the people’s basic needs. Buffalo meat served as food, bones were made into tools and weapons, and skins were used to make shelters and clothing. Painted buffalo skins were often made into robes.

Critical Thinking

Explaining: How do you think Native Americans such as the Comanche depended on the environment?
The Anasazi also built dwellings in the walls of steep cliffs. Cliff dwellings were easy to defend and offered protection from winter weather. Mesa Verde (MAY•suh VUHR•dee) in Colorado, one of the largest cliff dwellings, held several thousand inhabitants.

In about 1300 the Anasazi began leaving the pueblos and cliff dwellings to settle in smaller communities. Their large villages may have been abandoned because of droughts, long periods of little rainfall, during which their crops died.

The Mound Builders

The early cultures of Mexico and Central America appear to have influenced people living in lands to the north. In central North America, prehistoric Native Americans built thousands of mounds of earth that resembled the stone pyramids of the Maya and the Aztec. Some of the mounds contained burial chambers. Some were topped with temples, as in the Maya and Aztec cultures.

The mounds dotted the landscape from what is now known as Pennsylvania to the Mississippi River valley. Archaeologists think that the first mounds were built about 1000 B.C. They were not the work of a single group but of many different peoples, who are referred to as the Mound Builders.

Among the earliest Mound Builders were the Adena, hunters and gatherers who flourished in the Ohio Valley by 800 B.C. They were followed by the Hopewell people, who lived between 200 B.C. and A.D. 500. Farmers and traders, the Hopewell built huge burial mounds in the shapes of birds, bears, and snakes. Archaeologists have found freshwater pearls, shells, cloth, and copper in the mounds, indicating a widespread pattern of trade.

Cahokia

The largest settlement of the Mound Builders was Cahokia (kuh•HOH•kee•uh) in what is today Illinois. A people called the
Mississippian built Cahokia after A.D. 900. The city may have had 16,000 or more residents. The largest mound in Cahokia, the Monks Mound, rises nearly 100 feet (30 m).

Cahokia resembled the great cities of Mexico, even though it was nearly 2,000 miles (3,200 km) away. The great pyramid-shaped mound dominated the city. A temple crowned the summit. Perhaps priests studied the heavens from the temple, or the priest-ruler may have lived there. A legend of the Natchez people, descendants of the Mississippian, hints of a direct link to Mexico:

**Primary Source**

"Before we came into this land, we lived yonder under the sun; [the speaker pointed southwest toward Mexico]... Our nation extended itself along the great water [the Gulf of Mexico], where the large river [the Mississippi] loses itself."

—Natchez legend

**Reading Check**  **Explaining** How did the Mound Builders appear to be related to the Maya and Aztec cultures?

**Hopewell Crafts and Trade**

Hopewell artisans crafted delicate artwork from materials they acquired through trade. This bird claw was made of mica from southwest North Carolina. ▶

**The Mississippian** The mounds at Cahokia (below) are at the center of the Mississippian culture, which stretched from Minnesota to Florida. Like the other Mound Builders, Mississippian also crafted artwork, such as the bronze engraving shown (left).

**Critical Thinking**  **Making Inferences** Look at the Serpent Mound on the facing page and read the description. What do you think the purpose of this mound was?

**Other Native North Americans**

**Main Idea** The early inhabitants of North America developed ways of life that were well suited to their environments.

**History and You** How has the climate in the area where you live affected the way that houses are built? Read to learn how Native Americans adapted to the climates of North America.

The civilizations of the Hohokam, the Anasazi, and the Mound Builders eventually faded away. A number of other Native American cultures arose to take their place. Around the time that Europeans began arriving, North America was home to many different societies.

**Peoples of the North**

The people who settled in the northernmost part of North America, in the lands around the Arctic Ocean, are called the Inuit. Some scientists think the Inuit were the last migrants to cross the land bridge that connected Asia with North America.

The Inuit had many skills that helped them survive in the cold Arctic climate. They may have brought some of these skills from Siberia, which was probably their original home. In the winter the Inuit built igloos, low-lying structures of snow blocks, which protected them from severe weather.

Their clothing of furs and sealskins was warm and waterproof. The Inuit were hunters and fishers. In the coastal waters, they pursued whales, seals, and walruses in small, skin-covered boats. On land they hunted caribou, large deerlike animals that lived in the far north. The Inuit made clothing from caribou skins and burned seal oil in lamps.

**Peoples of the West**

North America’s West Coast had a mild climate and dependable food sources. These conditions created a favorable environment for many different groups.
The peoples of the northwestern coast, such as the Tlingit (TLIHNG•kuht), Haida, and Chinook, depended on the forest and the sea. They built wooden houses and made canoes, cloth, and baskets from tree bark. They fished for their main food, salmon, along the coast and in rivers such as the Columbia. They preserved the salmon by smoking it over fires.

Salmon was also important for the people of the plateau region, the area between the Cascade Mountains and the Rocky Mountains. The Nez Perce (NEHZ PUHRS) and Yakima peoples fished the rivers, hunted deer in forests, and gathered roots and berries. The Native Americans of the plateau region lived in earthen houses.

A great variety of cultures lived in what is now California. Along the northern coast, Native Americans fished for their food. In the more barren environment of the southern deserts, nomadic groups collected roots and seeds. In the central valley of California, the Pomo gathered acorns and pounded them into flour.

In the Great Basin region, between the Sierra Nevada and the Rocky Mountains, the soil was too hard and rocky for farming. Peoples such as the Ute (YOOT) and Shoshone (shuh•SHOHHN) traveled in search of food. They ate small game, pine nuts, juniper berries, roots, and some insects. The Great Basin peoples created temporary shelters from branches and reeds.

Peoples of the Southwest

Descendants of the Anasazi formed the Hopi, the Acoma, and the Zuni peoples of the Southwest. They built their homes from sun-dried mud bricks called adobe. They raised corn or maize as their basic food. They also grew beans, squash, melons, pumpkins, and fruit. Their trade network spread throughout the Southwest and into Mexico.
In the 1500s, two new peoples settled in the region—the Apache and the Navajo. Unlike other peoples of the Southwest, these new groups were hunters and gatherers. They hunted deer and other game. In time, the Navajo settled in villages and built square houses called hogans. In addition to hunting, they began to grow maize and beans. They also began raising sheep in the 1600s.

Peoples of the Plains

The peoples of the Great Plains were nomadic. Their villages were temporary, lasting only for a growing season or two. When the people moved from place to place, they dragged their homes—cone-shaped skin tents called tipis—behind them. The men hunted antelope, deer, and buffalo. The women planted maize, squash, and beans.

When the Spanish brought horses to Mexico in the 1500s, some got loose and made their way north. Native Americans captured and tamed the wild horses. The Comanche, the Dakota, and other Plains peoples became skilled riders. They hunted and fought on horseback, using spears, bows and arrows, and clubs while riding.

People of the East

The peoples who lived in the woodlands of eastern North America formed complex societies. The many Algonquian groups were linked by similar languages. The Iroquois (IH•R•uh•KWAI) and Cherokee had formal law codes and formed federations, governments that linked different groups.

The Iroquois lived near Canada in what is now northern New York State. There were five Iroquois groups or nations: the Oneida, the Seneca, the Mohawk, the Oneida, and the Cayuga.

These groups often warred with each other. Finally, in the 1500s, these five groups established the Great Peace, an alliance that was joined in 1715 by the Tuscarora peoples. This alliance was called the Iroquois League.
The League created a constitution. At first the constitution was represented symbolically through art. Later, after the arrival of the Europeans, it was written down.

The Iroquois constitution established the Grand Council, a group of leaders who met regularly to settle disputes among the various peoples. Although Grand Council members were men, women played an important part in choosing delegates to the council. The different members of the Iroquois League were organized according to clans, or groups of related families. The women in each clan chose a clan mother. These clan mothers then chose the male members of the Grand Council.

The Iroquois constitution describes the Iroquois people's desire for peace:

**Primary Source**

"I am Dekenawidah and with the Five Nations' Confederate Lords I plant the Tree of Great Peace... Roots have spread out from the Tree of the Great Peace, one to the north, one to the east, one to the south and one to the west."

—Dekenawidah, Iroquois Constitution

**Peoples of the Southeast**

The Southeast was also a woodlands area but with a warmer climate than the eastern woodlands. The Creek, Chickasaw, and Cherokee were among the region's Native American peoples.

The Creek lived in loosely knit farming communities in what is now Georgia and Alabama. There they grew corn, tobacco, squash, and other crops. The Chickasaw, most of whom lived farther west in what is now Mississippi, farmed the fertile river bottomlands. The Cherokee farmed in the mountains of Georgia and the Carolinas.

Wherever they lived in North America, the first Americans developed ways of life that were well suited to their environments. In the 1500s, however, the Native Americans would meet a new people with vastly different beliefs, cultures, and ways of life. These newcomers were the Europeans, and their arrival would change the Native Americans' world forever.

**Reading Check**

Describing: How did the peoples of the Great Plains use horses?

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**Section 3 Review**

**Vocabulary**

1. Use each of these terms in a sentence that will help explain its meaning: channel, pueblo, structure, federation, clan.

**Main Ideas**

2. **Describing** Describe the cliff dwellings of the Anasazi and explain the advantages those dwellings offered.

3. **Explaining** What was the significance of the Iroquois League?

**Critical Thinking**

4. **Making Connections** What evidence suggests that the Mound Builders were influenced by other cultures?

5. **Contrasting** Use a diagram like the one below to show how the ways of life of Native American cultures differed by comparing their regions and forms of shelter.

   - **Inuit**
   - **Hopi**
   - **Dakota**

   
   - Region:
   - Shelter:

6. **Descriptive Writing** Choose one of the Native American peoples of North America and write two or three paragraphs describing a typical day in the life of a member of that group. Be sure to include details about the environment and the way of life of the group.

   **Answer The Essential Question**

   How was the way of life of the Native Americans of North America related to their environment?
Prehistoric Migration to the Americas (beginning c. 28,000 B.C.)

Nomadic hunter-gatherers arrived over a land bridge from Siberia or by boat and migrated throughout North and South America.

Temperatures rose, ocean waters submerged the land bridge, and large animals died out. Populations grew as people hunted smaller animals and began farming.

Cities and Empires in Central and South America (beginning c. 1500 B.C.)

Civilizations developed large cities and empires; systems for writing, time keeping, and counting; farming and manufacturing; engineering; far-ranging trade; and religion-based societies.

- Olmec
- Maya
- Aztec
- Inca

Native American Civilizations in North America (beginning c. A.D. 300)

North and West: adapted to Arctic, forest, ocean, and desert life

Plains: nomadic hunters and farmers skilled at riding horses

East: woodland dwellers; Iroquois developed a federation and a constitution

Southwest: adapted farming to desert conditions

Southeast: hunted and farmed in the fertile valleys of the Appalachian Mountains

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The First Americans Chapter 1 23
Reviewing Main Ideas

Directions: Choose the best answer for each of the following questions.

1. Archaeologists believe that the Americas were first populated by people who
   A sailed ships from Europe and landed in what is now Greenland.
   B crossed into South America from Antarctica.
   C crossed a land bridge that connected northeastern Asia to what is now Alaska.
   D None of the above; evidence indicates that humans have always lived in the Americas.

2. The most important agricultural product grown by early Americans was probably
   A wheat.
   B maize.
   C tobacco.
   D rice.

3. Maya civilization can best be described as a society ruled by religious leaders, or a
   A theocracy.
   B democracy.
   C dictatorship.
   D kingdom.

4. The Creek, Chickasaw, and Cherokee peoples
   A fished for salmon, their main food source, along North America's West Coast.
   B are considered by most scientists to be the last migrants to cross Beringia into the Americas.
   C lived in farming communities throughout southeastern North America.
   D built thousands of mounds of earth, much like those of the Maya and the Aztec.

Short-Answer Question

Directions: Base your answers to question 5 on the excerpt below and on your knowledge of social studies.

If a Lord of the Confederacy should seek to establish any authority independent of the jurisdiction of the Confederacy of the Great Peace, which is the Five Nations, he shall be warned three times in open council, first by the women relatives, second by the men relatives and finally by the Lords of the Confederacy of the Nation to which he belongs. If the offending Lord is still unwilling to change he shall be dismissed by the War Chief of his nation for refusing to conform to the laws of the Great Peace. His nation shall then install the candidate nominated by the female name holders of his family.

—The Iroquois Constitution

5. What does this excerpt indicate about the role of women in Iroquois society?

Review the Essential Questions

6. Essay Compare the cultures of Native Americans of Mexico and Central America with the woodland Indians of eastern North America.

To help you write your essay, review your answers to the Essential Questions in the section reviews and the chapter Foldables Study Organizer. Your essay should include information about:

• the development of agriculture;
• the physical environment; and
• the customs and culture of various Native American peoples.
Document-Based Questions

Directions: Analyze the documents and answer the short-answer questions that follow.

Document 1

The following map shows two possible routes early Native Americans might have taken to move from Asia into the Americas.

7. How might the information on this map help explain the presence of early Native Americans in South America before they arrived in what is now the United States?

Document 2

In this excerpt from *The Conquest of New Spain*, Spanish conquistador Bernal Díaz del Castillo describes the manner of Aztec sacrifices.

They strike open the wretched Indian's chest with flint knives and hastily tear out the palpitating [beating] heart which, with the blood, they present to the idols in whose name they have performed the sacrifice.

Source: *The Conquest of New Spain*

8. What do you think was the author's feeling about this Aztec ritual? Explain.

Document 3

A Cacique chief expressed these thoughts to conquistador Hernando de Soto, who had summoned the chief to him.

It is not my custom to visit any one, but rather all, of whom I have ever heard, have come to visit me, to serve and obey me, and pay me tribute, either voluntarily or by force: if you desire to see me, come where I am; if for peace, I will receive you with special goodwill; if for war, I will await you in my town; but neither for you, nor for any man, will I set back one foot.

Source: Edward Gaylord Bourne, "Account of Elvas"

9. Based on this document, describe the chief's position.

Document 4

The following illustration depicts a Pueblo Indian using a digging stick to plant corn seeds.

10. What might this illustration tell you about the lifestyle of the Pueblo Indians?

11. Expository Writing Using the information from the five documents and your knowledge of social studies, write an essay in which you:

- identify some ways Native Americans adapted to their environments; and
- explain why not all Native American cultures developed similarly.