

- PRINTED NOTES -
SOCIAL STUDIES NOTES
LAND AND PEOPLE BEFORE COLUMBUS
SECTION 1: THE FIRST AMERICANS



NAME _____ PERIOD _____

HOMEROOM TEACHER _____

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Critical Vocabulary Words

1. **glacier**: huge sheets of ice
2. **band**: a small group of people who work together to go an activity
3. **religion**: belief about God or gods
4. **agriculture**: farming
5. **nomads**: wanderers who have no settled home
6. **culture**: the way of life for a group of people
7. **archaeologists**: scientists who study the cultures of people who lived long ago
8. **Paleo-Indians**: people who are believed to be the first to live in the Americas-"paleo" is Greek for ancient.
9. **pueblo**: a group of adobe houses that the Anasazi lived in
10. **evidence**: proof
11. **migration**: movement of people from one place to another
12. **atlatl**: ancient spear thrower
13. **origin story**: a story that tells of a people's beliefs about the world and their place it
14. **technology**: the use of scientific knowledge or tools to make or do something
15. **extinct**: no longer alive, to die out like a certain type of animal
16. **maize**: corn
17. **tribe**: a group of people made up of many bands who share the same culture and land
18. **specialize**: to work on one job one can do well

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19. **civilization**: a culture that has well-developed forms of government, religion, and learning
20. **temple**: places of worship
21. **earthwork**: a mound, or hill of earth, that people have built
22. **artifacts**: objects made by early people.
23. **pyramid**: a building with three or more sides shaped like triangles.
24. **adobe**: a mixture of sandy clay and straw that is dried into bricks.
25. **mesa**: high, flat-topped hills.
26. **drought**: a long dry spell.
27. **cultural diffusion**: the spread of culture from one place to another.
28. **kiva**: special underground rooms used for religious services
29. **theory**: a possible explanation for something
30. **surplus**: more than is needed



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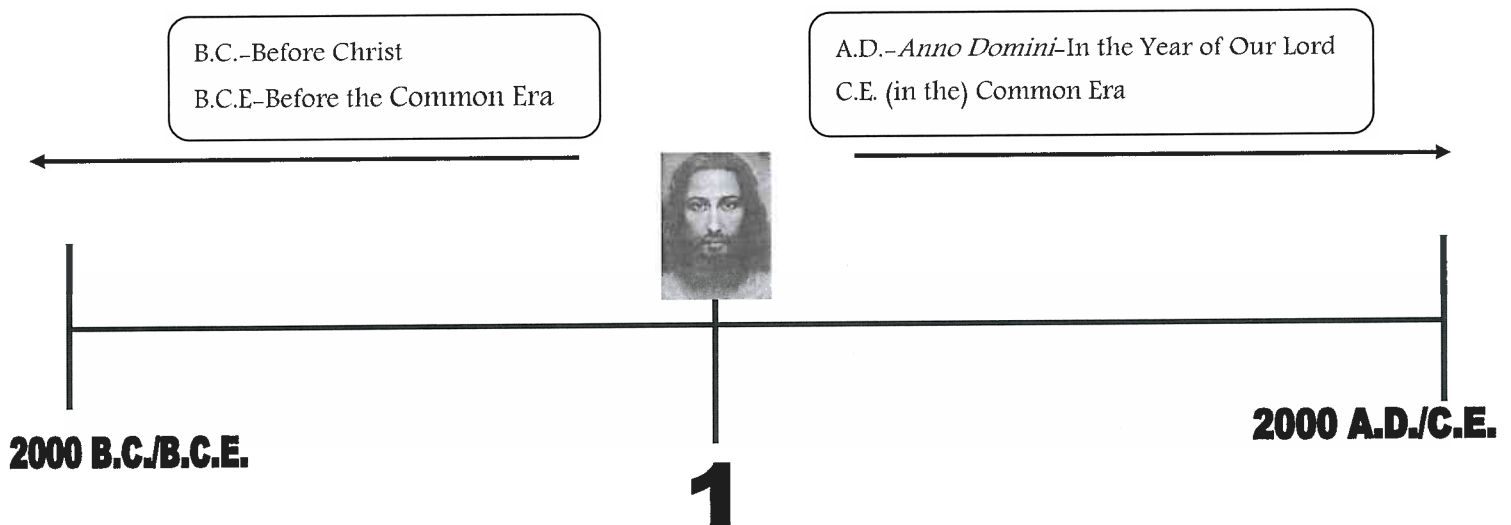
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Section 1: The First Americans

Lesson 1: Timelines

1. In order to understand history, you must first understand timelines.
2. Timelines are the way historians, archaeologists, and scientists place historical events so they make sense in time order.
3. Timelines can use 4 ways to measure past time:
 - * B.C., which stands for "Before Christ",
 - * AD, which is Latin for "Anno Domini", or "In the Year of Our Lord",
 - * C.E., or (in the) Common Era,
 - * B.C.E., or Before the Common Era.
4. Most scientists and historians today use B.C.E. and C.E. out of respect for cultural diversity.

**Note: In Social Studies class, both "Native Americans" and "American Indians" are considered appropriate terms. Ms. Stephens will use them interchangeably.*



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Lesson 2: Over the Land Bridge

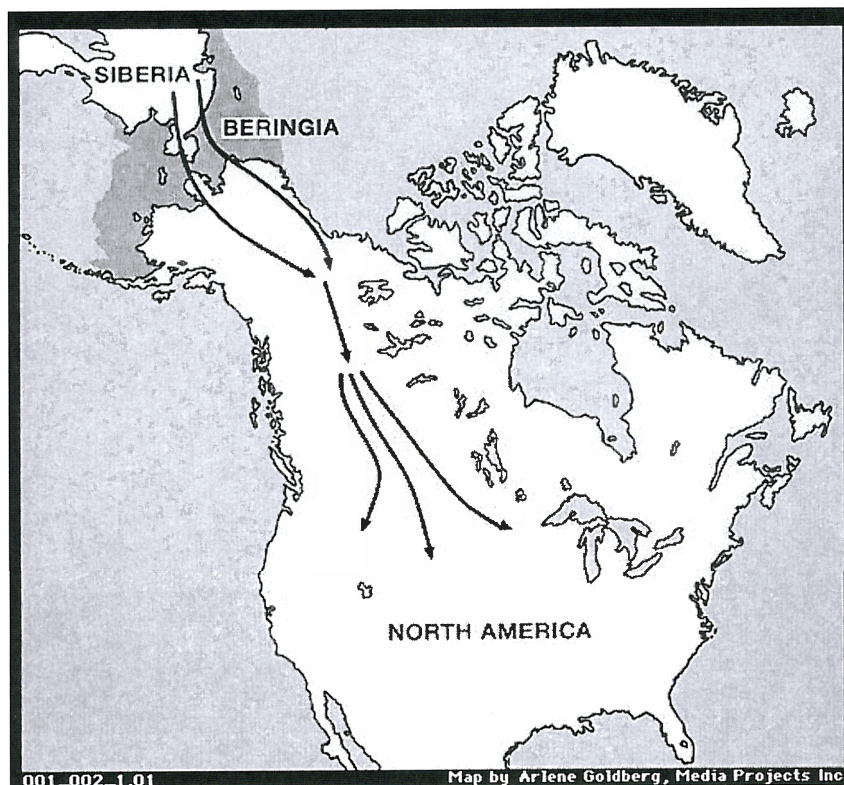
1. During the last Ice Age, scientists and historians believe Asian Nomads crossed a land bridge that connected Asia to North America in the regions of Russia and Alaska.
2. The nomads were following the large woolly mammoth in bands of hunting parties. History calls these people Paleo-Indians. Paleo is Greek and means ancient.
3. Paleo-Indians did not realize they were changing history by crossing the land bridge. It is now called Beringia, because it is located in what is now called the Bering Strait.
4. The nomads migrated all the way down through Canada and North America and through Mexico and South America over time.
5. Beringia is no longer there. Scientists believe it has been covered by water after the Ice Age ended and the sea levels rose when the glaciers melted. Any evidence it existed is gone.
6. Some scientists and historians also believe in the theory of Pangea, which states that all land masses in the world were once connected, then moved away from each other.
7. The land masses could be put back together like a puzzle. When they were connected,

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Paleo-Indians walked across from Asia to the Americas.

8. Later, changes in the environment had an impact on the culture of those Paleo-Indians who spread across the Americas.
9. Some archaeologists have found evidence that Paleo-Indians may have moved to the Americas earlier than 14,000 years ago. Biblical scholars, however, believe this happened no more than 6,000 years ago.
10. The descendants of these ancient Americans created origin stories to explain their beliefs about the creation of the world.
11. Their religion is an important part of these stories.



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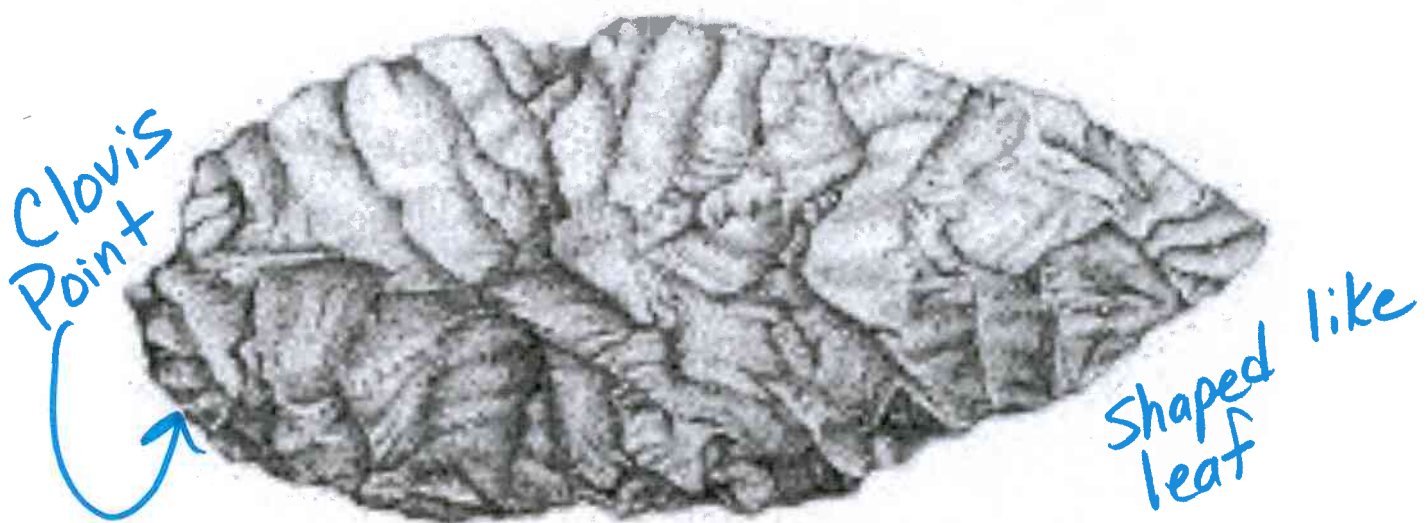
Lesson 3: Ancient Native American Indians and Culture

1. Descendants of the Paleo-Indians that may have crossed Beringia are the ancestors of Native American Indian people.
2. They had technology. Technology is described as anything that makes your life better, not just something you plug in.
3. One technology Paleo-Indians created were deadly Clovis points and atlatls, or spear-throwers. This technology helped early peoples become successful hunters of large animals like the woolly mammoth.
4. The change to a warmer, drier climate in North America, however, led to the extinction of the woolly mammoth.
5. When the environment became warmer, Paleo-Indians adapted to the new environment by becoming food gatherers and hunters of smaller animals.
6. The most dramatic change in early Native American Indian culture occurred when these early peoples began to plant seeds and grow some of their own crops.
7. This was the beginning of agriculture, or farming in the Americas.
8. Agriculture allowed Native American Indians to settle in one place, so they no longer had to be nomads.

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9. It also allowed them to have a food surplus, and begin job specialization.
10. After specialization, Paleo-Indians had the TIME to create elements of culture like art, music, and religion.
11. Native American Indians created theories to explain their beliefs about the world and their place in it.
12. Religion is an important part of these stories.
13. Culture is the way of life of a group of people.
14. All cultures must meet these basic needs to exist: Food (includes water), clothing, and shelter. This is all they had time to do before agriculture.
15. These basic needs were expanded after the invention of agriculture.
16. Farming, or agriculture, changed the world.



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Section 1: The First Americans

Lesson 4: Early Cultures and Civilizations

Olmecs & Mound Builders

The Olmecs

1. Archaeologists have learned that the Olmecs lived along the Mexican east coast from 2,500 B.C.E. to around 400 B.C.E.
2. The Olmec civilization is known as the "mother civilization of the Americas" because of its influence on later Native American groups that came after them.
3. The Olmecs carved huge stone heads to represent their gods.
4. These stone heads had what appears to be metal helmets on and misshapen heads. They looked different from how the Olmecs themselves probably looked. Historians wonder where the people of these heads came from.
5. The Olmecs practiced body modification. They would use wooden boards to mold the heads of their babies to make them to appear more like their gods. They used the wooden boards when the babies grew older.
6. The result was people with very oblong skulls.
7. The Olmecs are the ancestors of the Mayans and possibly the Aztecs.
8. The Olmecs also had a written language based on pictures.
9. The first Pyramids in the Americas were built by the Olmecs.

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The Mound Builders

10. From about 3400 B.C.E to the 1500s C.E., the Mississippians, Hopewell, and Adena made up the Mound Builder civilization in North America.
11. The Mound Builders' culture lasted for over 5000 years.
12. Although the three groups lived in many different areas, the people shared many beliefs, artifacts, and religion.
13. One group, the Hopewell, was located in parts of what are now the Pennyroyal, Knobs, Bluegrass, and Eastern Coalfield regions of Kentucky.
14. The most important thing the three groups all shared were the earthworks they built.
15. The Mound Builders buried their dead in the mounds and often built temples on top of them that were often shaped like pyramids.
16. These temples were places to worship.
17. The dead were buried in the mounds and then covered over with layers of dirt.
18. Artifacts in the form of items from the person's life were buried in the mound with the body.
19. Archaeologists have uncovered many layers of skeletons, shards of pottery, and tools.

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Section 1: The First Americans

Lesson 5: Early Cultures and Civilizations

Mayans & Aztecs

The Mayans

20. The Mayans lived in Meso-America, today known as Central America between 2000 B.C.E. and the mid 1500s C.E.
21. They were the ancestors of the Olmecs.
22. The Mayans were the most advanced people in the Americas and were astronomers and architects of large pyramids made from a substance they invented, called ch'uul.
23. The Mayans invented the concept of the number zero which did not occur in Europe until hundreds of years later.
24. Their ability to use zero to count very high enabled them to create a very accurate calendars which was round not linear.
25. The Mayans believed time was a circle and that certain parts of time would occur again.
26. Their calendar was not just the way they marked the passage of time, it was also a big part of their religion. They were obsessed with time.
27. The Mayans accurately predicted lunar and solar eclipses thousands of years into the future. Sometimes these predictions have been interpreted as messages of doom for the future.
28. Another part of the Mayan's culture was human sacrifice.
29. They believed the sun fed on blood and would stop shining if the sacrifices were not made.
30. The blood was used in religious ceremonies.

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The Aztecs

31. Farther north from Meso-America lived a group of Native Americans called the Aztecs between 1200 C.E. and the 1520s C.E.
32. The Aztecs conquered all the cultures in central America and made them pay heavy tribute or taxes.
33. This enabled the Aztecs to build the greatest city in the Americas called Tenochtitlan in what is today Mexico City, one of the largest cities in the world.
34. Tenochtitlan was in the middle of a swamp called Lake Texcoco.
35. The Aztecs were brilliant engineers, much like the Mayans.
36. Much of their history was destroyed by Spanish explorers who came to colonize the land.
37. The Aztecs had a calendar similar to the Mayans called a sunstone.
38. Like the Mayans, the Aztecs practiced human sacrifice.
39. They, too, used the blood in religious ceremonies.
40. Because the Spanish explorers were Christians, they believed the Aztecs were evil because of the human sacrifice.
41. This was one of the main reasons the Spanish used to justify the destruction of the Aztec culture.

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Lesson 6: Early Cultures and Civilizations

Anasazi & Incas

The Anasazi

42. The Anasazi civilization existed from about 1000 B.C.E. to 1300 C.E. in the Southwestern United States.
43. As with the Olmecs and Mound Builders, religion was central to the Anasazi civilization.
44. The Anasazi grew corn and worshipped it as well.
45. They built huge Pueblos in groups much like our apartments today.
46. Later, for reasons archaeologists cannot explain, they began building their pueblos high in cliffs. Many of them are still there today, like the Mesa Verde pueblo in Colorado.
47. The Anasazi disappeared; scientists do not know why. They theorize an extended drought drove them from their land.
48. This could also be why the Anasazi moved their pueblos to cliffs. It could have been a way to protect food surpluses.
49. Some archaeologists believe there is evidence to suggest some Anasazi even practiced canibalism, or the eating of human flesh.
50. The Anasazi were named by the Navajo, a later group of people thought to be their descendants. Anasazi means "Ancient Ones" in the Navajo language.

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The Incas

51. The Incas lived high in the Andes Mountains in South America from 1200 C.E. to around the mid 1500s.
52. They are known mostly for their strong central government, their religion, and their cities
53. The Incas worshipped the sun, like many ancient people.
54. They believed gold to come from the sun, and made many religious objects from it.
55. These objects were holy, not used as money or to represent greed.
56. The Incas were able to build huge cities on the very tops of mountains like Cousco and Mach Picchu
57. The Incas also practiced human sacrifice, but in a different way from the Mayans and Aztecs.
58. Instead of cutting the hearts from the bodies of the sacrifices and behead them, the Inca cast them off the highest of the mountains.
59. Many Inca mummies have been found preserved in ice as there is a huge glacier in the mountains of South America.
60. Some of these mummies look as if they are only sleeping and have not been dead for hundreds of years.
61. The Inca culture was destroyed by Spanish explorers.