



Chapter 1

The Earliest Americans

The Big Idea

Native American societies developed across Mesoamerica and South America.

Main Ideas

- Climate changes allowed Paleo-Indians to begin the first migration to the Americas.
- Early societies existed in Mesoamerica and South America.



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Main Idea 1: Climate changes allowed people to migrate to the Americas.

- **Paleo-Indians** crossed the **Bering Land Bridge** from Asia to present-day Alaska during the last ice age between 38,000 and 10,000 BC.
- This movement of peoples from one region to another is called **migration**.
- Paleo-Indians and their descendants moved into present-day Canada, the United States, Mexico, and South America.



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Climate Affects Early Peoples

- Early peoples in the Americas were **hunter-gatherers**, who hunted animals and gathered wild plants.
- The warming climate created new **environments**: climates and landscapes that surround living things.
- Different environments influenced the development of Native American societies: groups that share a common culture.
- **Culture** is a group's common values and traditions.



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Main Idea 2: Early societies existed in Mesoamerica and South America.

Olmec

- Developed around 1200 BC in Mesoamerica
- Known for use of stone in architecture and built the first pyramids in the Americas
- Civilization ended around 400 BC

Maya

- Developed after the Olmec
- By AD 200, were building large cities
- Created great pyramids, temples, palaces, and bridges
- Civilization ended around AD 900



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Aztec and Inca

Aztec

- Conquered central Mexico
- Founded capital city, Tenochtitlán, in AD 1325; it became the greatest city in the Americas and one of the world's largest cities.
- By the early 1500s they ruled the most powerful state in Mesoamerica.

Inca

- Began as a small tribe in the Andes Mountains in South America
- Capital city was Cuzco.
- By the 1500s, the empire stretched along much of the western South American coast.
- Known for a strong central government, their architecture, and their art



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Native American Cultures

The Big Idea

Many diverse Native American cultures developed across the different geographic regions North America.

Main Ideas

- Several early societies developed in North America long before Europeans explored the continent.
- Geographic areas influenced Native American cultures.
- Native American cultures shared beliefs about religion and land ownership.



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Main Idea 1: Several early societies developed in North America long before Europeans explored the continent.

- Earliest people in North America were hunter-gatherers.
- Learned to farm around 5,000 BC.
- The Anasazi was an early farm culture in Southwest.
 - Grew maize, beans, and squash
 - Developed irrigation methods
 - Lived in **pueblos**, aboveground houses made of heavy clay called adobe
 - Built **kivas**, underground ceremonial chambers, for religious ceremonies
 - Began to abandon villages around AD 1300



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Mound Building Cultures

Hopewell

- Lived in Mississippi, Ohio, and lower Missouri river valleys
- Supported population with agriculture and trade
- Built large burial mounds to honor the dead

Mississippian

- Developed later in same area as the Hopewell
- Built hundreds of mounds topped with temples for religious ceremonies

Others

- Developed throughout eastern North America
- Cultures declined and by the 1700s, no longer existed



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Main Idea 2: Geographic areas influenced Native American cultures.

- Researchers use culture areas to help describe ancient Native American peoples.
- Culture areas are geographic locations that influence societies.
- North America is divided into several culture areas, including the Far North, Pacific Coast, California, West, Southwest, Great Plains, and East.



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North and Northwest Culture Areas

Arctic

- Inuit people in present-day Alaska and Canada
- Aleut people in Alaska
- Fished and hunted large mammals

Subarctic

- Dorgrib and Montagnais peoples
- Hunters followed migrating deer.
- People lived in temporary shelters made of animal skins.

Pacific Northwest

- Carved images of totems, ancestor or animal spirits, on tall, wooden poles
- Held feasts called potlatches
- Thrived on abundant game animals, fish, and wild plants



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West and Southwest Culture Areas

California

- Many food sources, such as acorns, fish, and deer
- People lived in isolated family groups of 50 to 300.
- More than 100 different languages were spoken.
- Groups included the Pomo, Hupa, and Yurok peoples.

Southwest

- Dry climate
- Groups included the Apache, Navajo, and Pueblo.
- The Pueblo irrigated land to grow crops.
- The Apache and Navajo hunted game and raided the villages of other groups.



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Great Plains and Eastern Culture Areas

Great Plains

- Stretched from Canada to Texas and from the Mississippi Valley to the Rocky Mountains
- Mainly grasslands, with game such as buffalo
- Used buffalo skins for shields, clothing, and coverings for **teepees**, cone-shaped shelters
- **Matrilineal** societies that traced ancestry through their mothers, not their fathers
- Groups included the Mandan, Pawnee, Arapaho, Blackfoot, and Comanche.

Northeast and Southeast

- Region rich in sources of food and shelter
- Southeastern groups, such as the Cherokee and Creek, lived in farming villages.
- The Algonquian and Iroquois were the main groups in the Northeast.
- The Iroquois formed the **Iroquois League**, a confederation that waged war against non-Iroquois peoples.



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Main Idea 3: Native American cultures shared beliefs about religion and land ownership.

- Shared religious beliefs
 - Religion linked to nature
 - Spiritual forces were everywhere— even in plants and animals.
- Shared beliefs about property
 - Individual ownership applied only to the crops one grew.
 - Land was for the use of everyone in the village.
 - Believed they should preserve the land for future generations
- Despite shared beliefs, Native Americans on the North American continent were independent culture groups and did not form large empires.



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Trading Kingdoms of West Africa

The Big Idea

Using trade to gain wealth, Ghana, Mali, and Songhai were West Africa's most powerful kingdoms.

Main Ideas

- West Africa developed three great kingdoms that grew wealthy through their control of trade.
- Slaves became a valuable trade item in West Africa.



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Main Idea 1: West Africa developed three great kingdoms that grew wealthy through their control of trade.

- For hundreds of years, trade routes run by Berbers, a northern African group, crisscrossed West Africa.
- Eventually though, trade routes were taken over by a succession of West African kingdoms:
 - Ghana
 - Mali
 - Songhai



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Kingdom of Ghana

- Began around 300 AD as farmers banded together for protection
- Developed into a trading center
 - Salt from the Sahara in the north
 - Gold mined from Ghana itself
- As trade increased, so did Ghana's power. By 800 it controlled all of West Africa's trade routes.
- Used wealth to build an army and an empire
- In the 1060s, Muslim groups attacked Ghana in an effort to force its leaders to convert to Islam. This cut off many trade routes and led to the decline of the Ghana empire.
- Islam eventually became the most practiced religion in the region.



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Kingdoms of Mali and Songhai

Mali

- Developed along the fertile banks of the upper Niger River
- Controlled trade along the river
- King **Mansa Musa** led the kingdom to the height of its wealth, power, and fame by building important trade cities like Timbuktu.
- Mansa Musa also encouraged the spread of Islam in West Africa by building mosques, buildings for Muslim prayer, and by making a hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca.
- Declined after the death of Mansa Musa

Songhai

- Lived along the Niger River
- Came to power as the Mali empire weakened
- Greatest ruler was **Askia the Great**. He was a devout Muslim, supported education and learning, and worked to develop a strong government.
- After Askia's death, the kingdom declined and was invaded by Moroccans from the north.



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Main Idea 2: Slaves became a valuable trade item in West Africa.

- Slavery existed in Africa for centuries and involved black Africans, who were both slaveholders and slaves.
- People who were captured by warring groups, criminals, and even relatives of people who owed money, were sold into slavery.
- Beginning in the 600s, Arab Muslims and Europeans became interested in the slave trade.
- Slave market increased as Muslim traders bought or seized black Africans to sell in North Africa.
- Slave trade became important part of West African economy.
- West Africa was home of many enslaved Africans brought to the Americas.



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Europe before Transatlantic Travel

The Big Idea

New ideas and trade changed Europeans' lives.

Main Ideas

- The Greeks and Romans established new forms of government.
- During the Middle Ages, society eventually changed from a feudal system to a system with a middle class of artisans and merchants.
- The Renaissance was a time of rebirth in the arts and in learning.



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Main Idea 1: The Greeks and Romans established new forms of government.

Greek Government

- Philosophers such as **Socrates**, **Plato**, and **Aristotle** worked to teach people to think and question their beliefs and to live lives based on **reason**, or clear and ordered thinking.
- Greeks established the first **democracy**, a form of government in which people rule themselves.
 - Citizens vote on every issue.
 - Ideas are debated at an assembly of citizens.

Roman Government

- Established a republic
 - Citizens elect representatives to vote on issues.
 - Ideas are debated at an assembly of representatives.
- Laws, which protected citizens' rights, were written and kept on public display.



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The Middle Ages

- After the fall of the Roman Empire, Europe began to divide into many smaller kingdoms.
- Feudalism, a system of agreements between lords, and vassals, including **knights**, developed. The lord promised to give lands to his knights in exchange for military service. The knight promised to support the lord in battle.
- Knights allowed peasants to farm land on their large estates, called manors. In return, the peasants had to give the knights food or goods as payment.
- The Catholic Church served as a strong unifying force between kingdoms.
- The Crusades, a long series of wars beginning in the 1000s between European Christians and Muslims in Southwest Asia, helped create trade links between Europe and Asia.



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Main Idea 2: During the Middle Ages, society eventually changed from a feudal system to a system with a middle class of artisans and merchants.

- As travel became safer, more trade routes opened and spread all across Europe.
- Trade brought not only goods, but also diseases like the **Black Death** that spread across Europe, killing nearly 25 million people.
- Worker shortages meant that peasants and serfs could demand payment. They moved to cities for work, and the cities grew.
- The growth of trade and cities led to the decline of feudalism.
- A new middle class of artisans and merchants developed.
- Trade cities became commercial centers.



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Main Idea 3: The Renaissance was a time of rebirth in the arts and in learning.

- The Renaissance period brought new ways of thinking to Europe.
- Began in Italy and spread to other parts of Europe
- European rulers began to increase their power over the nobles in their countries.
- Fewer invasions from the outside helped bring a period of peace and stability.
- Renaissance means “rebirth.”



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Growth of Knowledge and Learning

Ancient Texts

- Classical writings were found and scholars rediscovered the glories of ancient Greece and Rome.

Humanism

- Focus shifted from religion to the importance of people and human value.

Art and Literature

- Great artists like Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci reflected the ideals of the Renaissance in their sculptures and paintings. Writers also penned great works of literature during this time.

Science and Invention

- Advances were made in mathematics and astronomy. German-born Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press which allowed thousands to read the same books and share ideas about them.



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Renaissance Economy

- Growth of trade and services sparked a commercial revolution.
- Mercantilism, an economic system that unifies and increases the power and wealth of a nation, developed.
- Italy developed powerful trading cities that served as ports and manufacturing centers.
- Banks emerged that kept money for merchants from all over Europe.
- Merchants began to create **joint-stock companies**, or businesses in which a group of people invest together in order to reduce individual risk.



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