

## What You Will Learn...

## Main Ideas

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

## The Big Idea

Native American societies developed across Mesoamerica and South America.

## Key Terms and People

Bering Land Bridge, p. 6  
 Paleo-Indians, p. 6  
 migration, p. 6  
 hunter-gatherers, p. 6  
 environments, p. 7  
 culture, p. 7

## TAKING NOTES

As you read, take notes on the migrations of early peoples to the Americas, as well as their earliest societies and locations.

Early Migrations to the Americas	Early Societies and Their Locations

# The Earliest Americans

## If YOU were there...

You are living in North America about 10,000 years ago, close to the end of the Ice Age. For weeks, your group has been following a herd of elk across a marshy landscape. This trip has taken you far from your usual hunting grounds. The air is warmer here. There are thick grasses and bushes full of berries. You decide to camp here for the summer and perhaps stay a while.

**How would settling here change your way of life?**

**BUILDING BACKGROUND** The first settlers to the Americas probably came in small groups from Asia. Over thousands of years, they moved into nearly every region of North and South America. In the Americas, these people encountered, and adapted to, many different climates and types of land.

## First Migration to the Americas

Many scientists believe that the first people arrived in North America during the last Ice Age. At the start of the Ice Age, Earth's climate became intensely cold. Large amounts of water froze into huge, moving sheets of ice called glaciers. As a result, ocean levels dropped more than 300 feet lower than they are today. When the sea level fell, a land bridge between northeastern Asia and present-day Alaska was exposed. Geographers call this strip of land the **Bering Land Bridge**. Although no one knows exactly when or how people crossed into North America, evidence suggests that people called **Paleo-Indians** crossed this bridge into Alaska between 38,000 and 10,000 BC.

This **migration**—a movement of people or animals from one region to another—took place over a long time. It is believed that Paleo-Indians traveled south into Canada, the United States, and Mexico following herds of animals. Over time, their descendants went as far as the southern tip of South America. These people were **hunter-gatherers**, people who hunted animals and gathered wild plants for food.

## Land Migrations of Early Peoples

About 8000 BC, Earth's climate grew warmer, and the Ice Age ended. Rising temperatures melted glaciers. Water levels in the oceans rose, and the Bering Land Bridge was covered with water.

The warmer climate at the end of the Ice Age created new **environments**, climates and landscapes that surround living things. Large herds of animals such as buffalo and deer ate new short grasses that thrived in the warm climate. As the number of these animals grew, Paleo-Indians hunted these animals for survival.

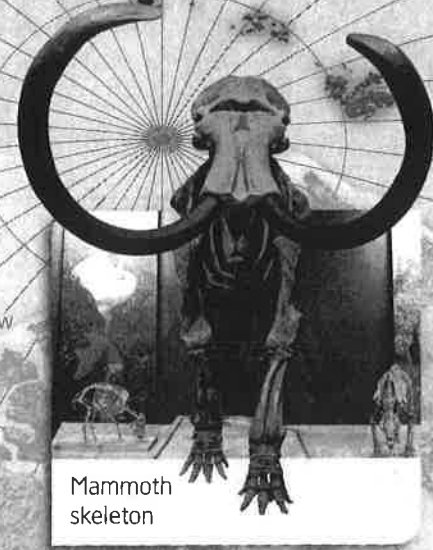
Varied environments influenced the development of different Native American societies, or groups that share a culture. **Culture** is a group's set of common values and traditions, including language, government, and family relationships.

Like all societies, Native American groups changed over time. People planted seeds, and eventually they learned to breed animals, farm, and grow plants. Maize, or corn, was one of their most important early crops. Later, they learned to grow beans and squash. Farming allowed people to stop moving around looking for food and to settle in one place. With adequate food supplies, settlements could support larger populations. As populations grew, more advanced societies began to develop.

**READING CHECK** **Drawing Conclusions** How did climate change affect early peoples' migrations?

### GEOGRAPHY SKILLS INTERPRETING MAPS

- 1. Movement** In what general direction did early peoples migrate?
- 2. Human-Environment Interaction** What natural features affected the route people took from Alaska to southern North America?



Mammoth skeleton



Kernels of maize



Maya pyramid, Chichén Itzá, Mexico

## Early Mesoamerican and South American Societies

Some of the earliest American cultures arose in Mesoamerica, a region that includes the southern part of what is now Mexico and the northern parts of Central America.

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

**develop** the process of growing or improving

### THE IMPACT TODAY

On the site of the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlán, workers filled the lake to build Mexico City, the modern-day capital of Mexico.

### Olmec and Maya

Around 1200 BC the Olmec **developed** the earliest known civilization in Mesoamerica. The Olmec are known for their use of stone in architecture and sculpture. They built the first pyramids in the Americas, and they created sculptures of huge stone heads. When their civilization ended around 400 BC, trade had spread Olmec culture throughout the region.

Like the Olmec, the Maya grew maize and other crops and lived in small villages. These villages traded goods with each other, and by about AD 200, the Maya were building large cities.

Maya cities had pyramids, large stone temples, palaces, and bridges. The Maya also paved large plazas for public gatherings and built canals to control the flow of water through the cities.

In the 900s Maya civilization began to collapse. Historians are still not sure what caused this great civilization's decline.

### Aztec

The Aztec were fierce warriors, and their superior military ability was key to their success. Around the mid-1100s AD, the Aztec migrated south to central Mexico. They conquered many towns, made alliances to build their empire, and controlled a huge trade network.

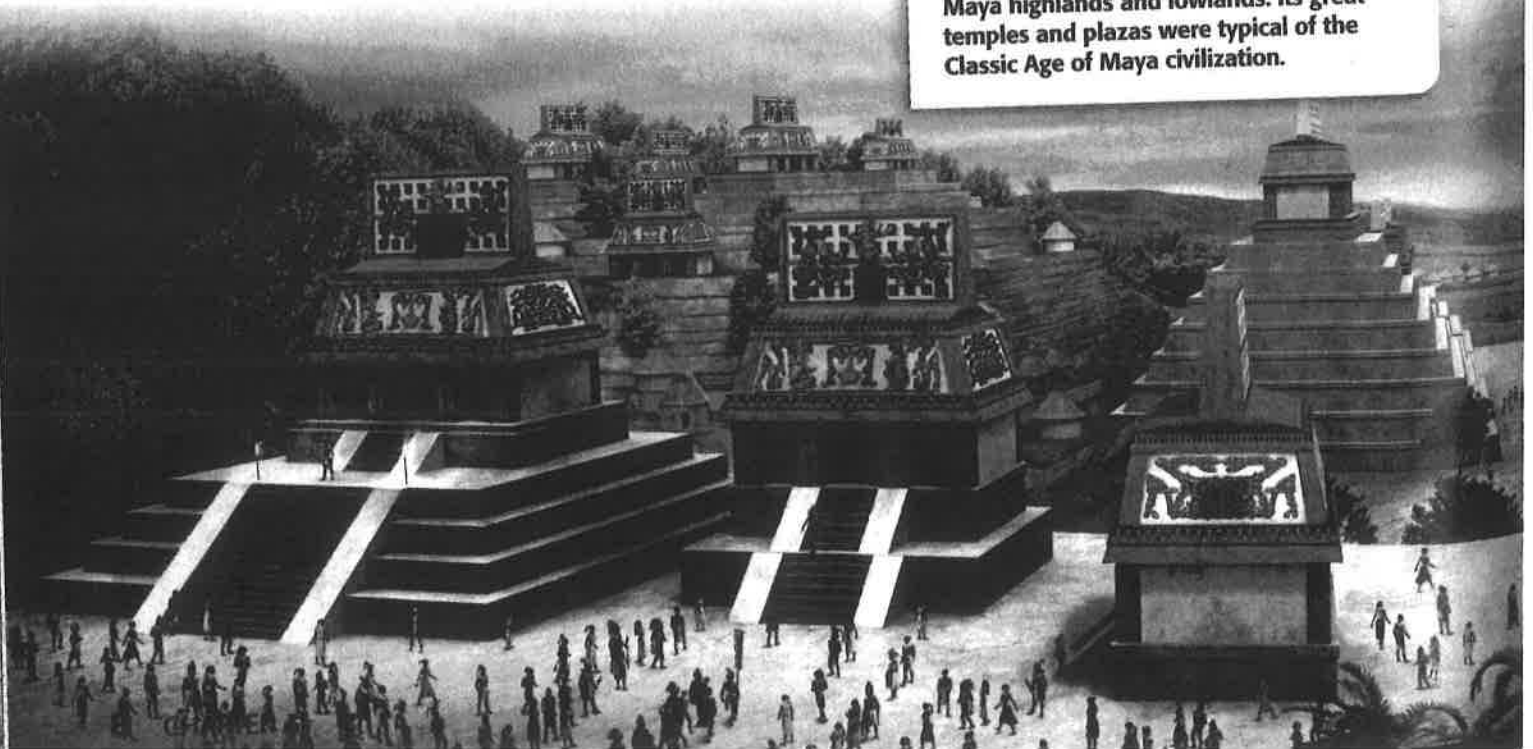
In AD 1325, the Aztec founded their capital, Tenochtitlán (tay-nawch-teet-LAHN), on an island in Lake Texcoco. It became the greatest city in the Americas and one of the world's largest cities. The city's island location made travel and trade difficult, so the Aztec built raised roads to connect the island to the shore.

Trade and tribute paid by conquered people in the form of cotton, gold, and food made the Aztec rich. By the early 1500s, they ruled the most powerful state in Mesoamerica.

### Inca

The Inca began as a small tribe in the Andes Mountains of South America. They named their capital city Cuzco (koo-skoh). In the

The ancient Maya city of Palenque was a major power on the border between the Maya highlands and lowlands. Its great temples and plazas were typical of the Classic Age of Maya civilization.



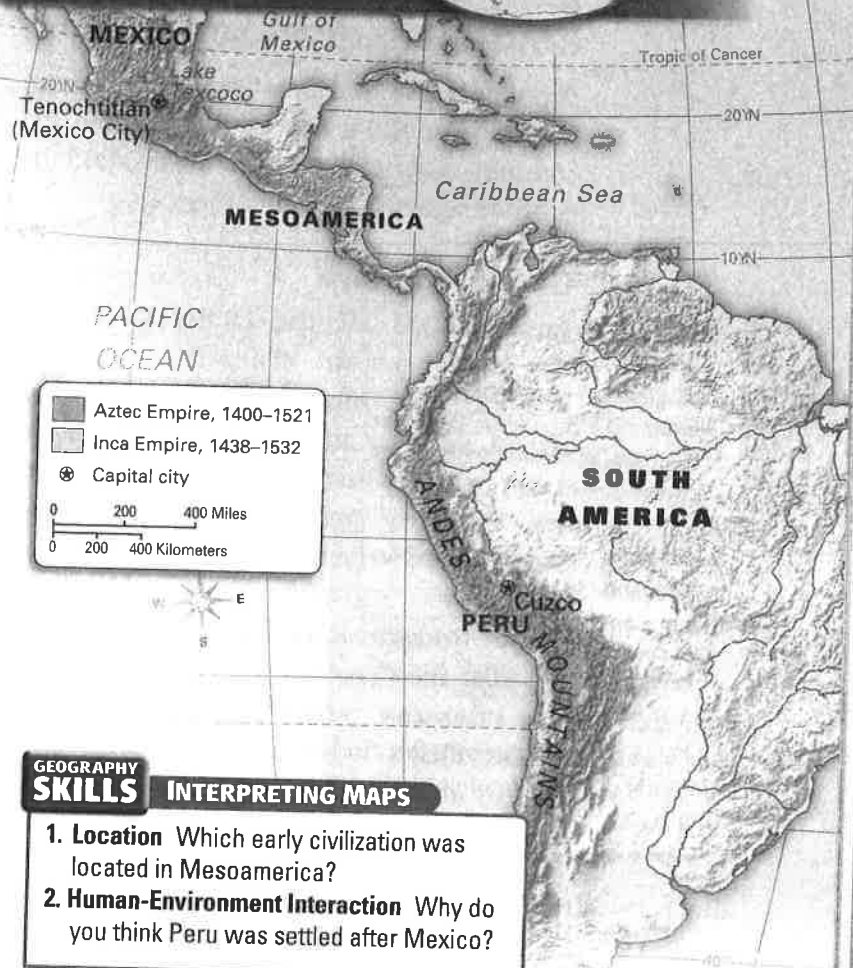
mid-1400s, the Inca began to expand their territory. By the 1500s the empire stretched along the Pacific coast from what is now northern Ecuador to central Chile. In time, the empire was home to about 12 million people. The Inca formed a strong central government with a king as ruler. The official language of the empire was Quechua. Because there was no written language, records were kept on a system of knotted strings called *quipu*.

The Inca are known for building and for art. Massive buildings and forts were made of huge stone blocks. An advanced system of highways ran the length of the empire. Paved roads and rope bridges connected all parts of Inca territory. This enabled the Inca to communicate with and control their large empire.

**READING CHECK** **Summarizing** What early civilizations existed in Mesoamerica and South America?

**SUMMARY AND PREVIEW** Early people migrated into North and South America and developed societies. In the next section you will learn about Native American cultures in North America.

## Aztec and Inca Civilizations



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLS INTERPRETING MAPS

- 1. Location** Which early civilization was located in Mesoamerica?
- 2. Human-Environment Interaction** Why do you think Peru was settled after Mexico?

## Section 1 Assessment

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**Online Quiz**

KEYWORD: SR8 HPI

### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- a. Recall** What was the Ice Age?
  - b. Summarize** Why were early peoples able to use the **Bering Land Bridge**?
  - c. Predict** Why do you think early peoples in the Americas **migrated** south?
- a. Identify** What is the earliest known civilization in the Americas, and where was it located?
  - b. Analyze** How did the Aztec build such a powerful, rich state?
  - c. Draw Conclusions** Which of the four civilizations discussed do you think was the most highly developed?

### Critical Thinking

- 3. Categorizing** Review your notes on the migration of early peoples and their societies. Then copy the table below and use it to identify the accomplishments of early American civilizations.

	Rise	Significant Accomplishments
Olmec		
Maya		
Aztec		
Inca		

### FOCUS ON WRITING

- 4. Understanding Ancient Peoples** Use the descriptions of the earliest Americans found in this section to list some similarities and differences between the lives of ancient peoples and your life today.

## What You Will Learn...

## Main Ideas

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

## The Big Idea

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

## Key Terms and People

pueblos, p. 11

kivas, p. 11

totems, p. 12

teepees, p. 14

matrilineal, p. 14

Iroquois League, p. 14

## TAKING NOTES

As you read, take notes on early societies.

Write your notes in a chart like the one below.

Early Societies	
Culture Areas	
Beliefs	

# Native American Cultures

## If YOU were there...

You live in the North American Southwest about 1,000 years ago. You've been working in the fields for several hours today. The maize crop looks good this summer, and you are hoping for a successful harvest. After finishing your work, you walk home. The opening to your house is in a cliff wall 30 feet above a canyon floor. You must use ladders to get to the opening.

**Do you like the location of your home? Why?**

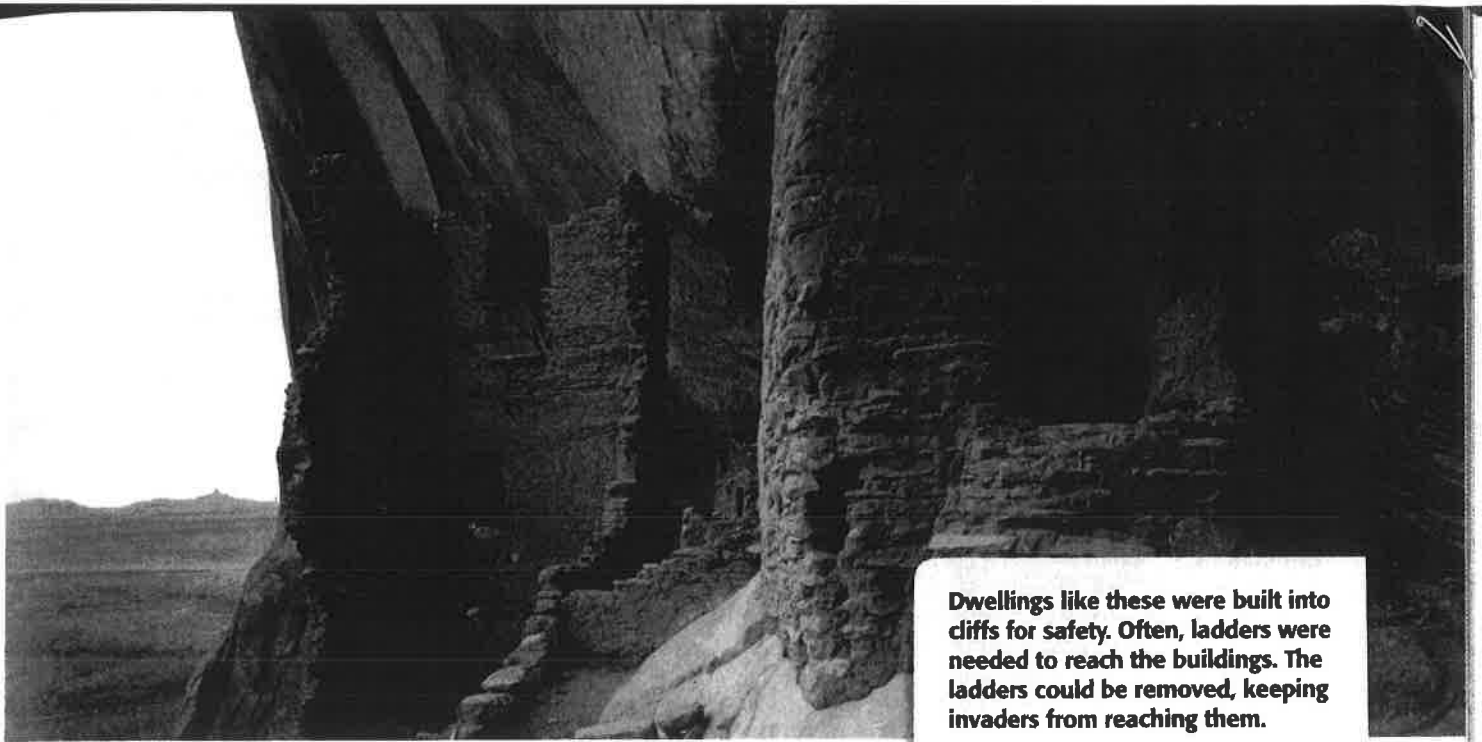
**BUILDING BACKGROUND** After crossing the land bridge from Asia during the Ice Age, hunter-gatherer groups spread into every region of North America. Many diverse cultures formed as Native Americans adapted to their different environments.

## Early Societies

The earliest people in North America were hunter-gatherers. After 5000 BC some of these people learned how to farm, and they settled in villages. Although less populated than South America and Mesoamerica, North America had many complex societies long before Europeans reached the continent.

### Anasazi

By 1500 BC the people who lived in the North American Southwest, like those who lived in Mesoamerica, were growing maize. One of the early farm cultures in the Southwest was the Anasazi (ah-nuh-SAH-zee). The Anasazi lived in the Four Corners region, where present-day Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah meet. Anasazi farmers adapted to their dry environment and grew maize, beans, and squash. Over time, they began to use irrigation to increase food production. By the time the Anasazi settled in the area, they were already skilled basket makers. They wove straw, vines, and yucca to make containers for food and other items, and they eventually became skilled potters as well.



**Dwellings like these were built into cliffs for safety. Often, ladders were needed to reach the buildings. The ladders could be removed, keeping invaders from reaching them.**

The early Anasazi lived in pit houses dug into the ground. After about AD 750 they built **pueblos**, or aboveground houses made of a heavy clay called adobe. The Anasazi built these houses on top of each other, creating large multistoried complexes. Some pueblos had several hundred rooms and could house 1,000 people.

The Anasazi often built their houses in canyon walls and had to use ladders to enter their homes. These cliff dwellings provided a strong defense against enemies. The Anasazi also built **kivas**, underground ceremonial chambers, at the center of each community. Kivas were sacred areas used for religious ceremonies. Some of these rituals focused on the life-giving forces of rain and maize.

The Anasazi thrived for hundreds of years. After 1300 AD, however, they began to abandon their villages. Scholars believe that drought, disease, or raids by nomadic tribes from the north may have caused the Anasazi to move away from their pueblos.

## **Mound Builders**

Several farming societies developed in the eastern part of North America after 1000 BC. The Hopewell lived along the Mississippi, Ohio, and lower Missouri river valleys.

They supported their large population with agriculture and trade. They built large burial mounds to honor their dead.

The Hopewell culture had declined by AD 700. Another culture, the Mississippian, began to thrive in the same area. Skilled farmers and traders, the Mississippian built large settlements. Their largest city, Cahokia, was located near present-day Saint Louis. It had a population of 30,000.

The Mississippian built hundreds of mounds for religious ceremonies. Cahokia alone had more than 100 temple and burial mounds. These mounds had flat tops, and temples were built on top of the mounds. Many of the mounds were gigantic. Monks Mound, near Collinsville, Illinois, for example, was 100 feet high and covered 16 acres.

Several other mound-building cultures thrived in eastern North America. More than 10,000 mounds have been found in the Ohio River valley alone. Some of these mounds are shaped like birds and snakes. The mound-building cultures had declined by the time European explorers reached the Southeast. Their societies no longer existed by the early 1700s.

**READING CHECK** Summarizing Why did some Native American groups build mounds?

## Native American Culture Areas

Researchers use culture areas—the geographic locations that influenced societies—to help them describe ancient Native American peoples. North America is divided into several culture areas.

### North and Northwest

The far north of North America is divided into the Arctic and Subarctic culture areas. Few plants grow in the Arctic because the ground is always frozen beneath a thin top layer of soil. This harsh environment was home to two groups of people, the Inuit and the Aleut. The Inuit lived in present-day northern Alaska and Canada. Their homes were igloos, hide tents, and huts. The Aleut, whose home was in western and southern Alaska, lived in multifamily houses that were partially underground. The two groups shared many cultural features, including language. Both groups survived by fishing and hunting large mammals. The Aleut and Inuit also depended on dogs for many tasks, such as hunting and pulling sleds.

South of the Arctic lies the Subarctic, home to groups such as the Dogrib and Montagnais peoples. While they followed the seasonal migrations of deer, these peoples lived in shelters made of animal skins. At other times, they lived in villages made up of log houses. Farther south, the Kwakiutl and the Chinook thrived, thanks to the rich supply of game animals, fish, and wild plants that allowed large populations to increase without the need for farming.

Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest carved images of **totems**—ancestor or animal spirits—on tall, wooden poles. Totem poles held great religious and historical significance for Native Americans of the Northwest. Feasts called potlatches were another unique, or unusual, aspect of these Native Americans' culture. At these gatherings, hosts, usually chiefs or wealthy people, gave away most of their belongings as gifts. In this way, the hosts increased their social importance.

#### FOCUS ON READING

What is the definition of **totems** according to this sentence?

### West and Southwest

Farther south along the Pacific coast was the California region, which included the area between the Pacific and the Sierra Nevada mountain range. Food sources were plentiful, so farming was not necessary. One major plant food was acorns, which were ground into flour. People also fished and hunted deer and other game. Most Native Americans in the California region lived in groups of families of about 50 to 300. Among these groups, including the Pomo, Hupa, and Yurok, more than 100 languages were spoken.

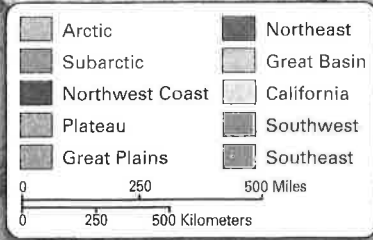
The area east of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Great Basin, received little rain. To survive, Native Americans adapted to the drier climate by gathering seeds, digging roots, and trapping small animals for food. Most groups in this area, including the Paiute, Shoshone, and Ute, spoke the same language.

The Southwest culture region included the present-day states of Arizona and New Mexico, and parts of Colorado and Texas. Pueblo groups, such as the Hopi and Zuni, lived there. Like the Anasazi, these Native Americans also adapted to a dry climate. The Pueblo irrigated the land and grew maize, squash, and beans. These crops were vital to southwestern peoples. The Pueblo religion focused on two key areas of Pueblo life, rain and maize. The Pueblo performed religious rituals hoping to bring rain and a successful maize crop to their peoples.

Pueblo peoples were settled and built multistoried houses out of adobe bricks. Over time their towns grew larger, and some towns had more than 1,000 residents. Pueblo peoples made fine pottery that featured beautifully painted designs.



# Native American Culture Areas



Human-hand carving, Great Plains culture area



Beaver-shaped pipe, Northeast culture area



ROCKY MOUNTAINS

## MESOAMERICA

Human figure, Southwest culture area



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLS INTERPRETING MAPS

- 1. Region** Why did some culture areas have fewer groups of people than other culture areas did?
- 2. Human-Environment Interaction** What natural features served as boundaries between culture areas?



## Iroquois Longhouse



Northeast Indians such as the Iroquois lived in longhouses made of the bark of trees. The drawing shows how the longhouses were arranged in one Iroquois village.

*Why do you think a fence was placed around the longhouses?*

The Apache and Navajo also lived in the Southwest. These groups were nomadic—they moved from place to place hunting small animals and foraging for food. The Apache and Navajo also supported themselves by raiding the villages of the Pueblo and others.

### Great Plains

The huge Great Plains region stretches south from Canada into Texas. This culture area is bordered by the Mississippi Valley on the east and the Rocky Mountains on the west. The Plains were mainly grassland, home to millions of buffalo. Deer, elk, and other game also thrived there.

Most Great Plains peoples were nomadic hunters. Many groups hunted buffalo using bows and spears. Blackfoot and Arapaho hunters sometimes chased the animals over cliffs, drove them into corrals, or trapped them in a ring of fire. Native Americans used buffalo skins for shields, clothing, and coverings for their **teepees**—cone-shaped shelters.

Some Plains groups were farmers. The Mandan and Pawnee settled in villages and grew corn, beans, and squash. The Pawnee lived in round lodges made of dirt. Like some other Native American groups, Pawnee society was **matrilineal**. This means that people traced their ancestry through their mothers, not their fathers.

### Northeast and Southeast

Eastern North America was rich in sources for food and shelter. Animals, plant foods, and fish were plentiful in the region's woodlands and river valleys. Forests provided wood for housing.

Most southeastern groups, including the Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole, lived in farming villages governed by village councils. In the Northeast, groups like the Algonquian survived by hunting and gathering plants. Those in the south farmed, hunted, gathered plants, and fished.

To the east of the Algonquian lived the Iroquois. They were farmers, hunters, and traders who lived in longhouses, or rectangular homes made from logs and bark, that housed 8 to 10 families.

The Iroquois created the **Iroquois League**. This confederation, or alliance, was established by the Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, and Seneca. The league waged war against and made peace with non-Iroquois peoples. Its goal was to strengthen the alliance against invasion. The league helped the Iroquois become one of the most powerful Native American peoples in North America.

**READING CHECK** **Generalizing** How did environment influence Native American cultures in North America?

## Shared Beliefs

Although they were different culturally and geographically, Native American groups of North America shared certain beliefs. The religion of most Native American peoples, for example, was linked to nature. Native Americans believed that spiritual forces were everywhere, dwelling in heavenly bodies and in sacred places on the earth. Spirits even lived within animals and plants. Native Americans tried to honor the spirits in their daily lives.

Ceremonies maintained the group's relationship with Earth and Sky, which were believed to be the sustainers of life. In addition, individuals who wanted help prayed to their spirit protector.

Native Americans also shared beliefs about property. They believed that individual ownership only applied to the crops one grew. The land itself was for the use of everyone in the village, and a person's right to

use it was temporary. Native Americans also believed they should preserve the land for future generations. These beliefs contrasted sharply with those of Europeans—a difference that would cause conflict.

Despite their shared beliefs, the diverse culture groups of North America had little interest in joining together into large political units. As a result, Native Americans on the North American continent did not form large empires like the Aztec and Inca of Mesoamerica did.

### READING CHECK Identifying Points of View

What religious beliefs did Native American groups share?

**SUMMARY AND PREVIEW** People of North America formed many complex societies. In the next section you will read about societies in West Africa.

## Section 2 Assessment

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Online Quiz

KEYWORD: SR8 HPI

### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- a. Recall** Why did the Anasazi build **kivas**?

**b. Summarize** What different types of housing were built by the Anasazi?

**c. Draw Conclusions** Why do you think that some mounds were built in the shape of birds and snakes?
- a. Identify** What are culture areas?

**b. Contrast** How did food sources for Native Americans of the North and Northwest differ from those of Native Americans living in the West and Southwest?

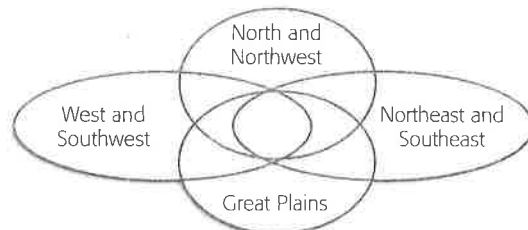
**c. Elaborate** Why was the formation of the **Iroquois League** considered to be a significant political development?
- a. Recall** How did Native Americans view land ownership?

**b. Analyze** What role did religion play in the lives of Native Americans?

**c. Predict** Why do you think most Native American groups did not form large empires like the Aztec and the Inca did?

### Critical Thinking

- Comparing and Contrasting** Review your notes on early societies and culture areas. Then use a Venn diagram like this one to identify similarities and differences among Native American culture groups.



### FOCUS ON WRITING

- Describing Culture** Look back through this section to discover ways in which a group's beliefs, environment, and practices can be described. Write down phrases that you think are especially useful in understanding Native American cultures.