

North American Peoples

Essential Question

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

Reading Guide

Content Vocabulary

pueblo (p. 17) clan (p. 22)
 federation (p. 21)

Academic Vocabulary

channel (p. 17) structure (p. 17)

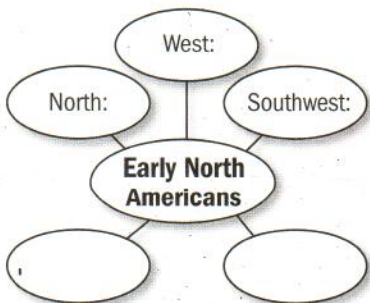
Key People and Events

Mound Builders (p. 18)

Iroquois (p. 21)

Reading Strategy

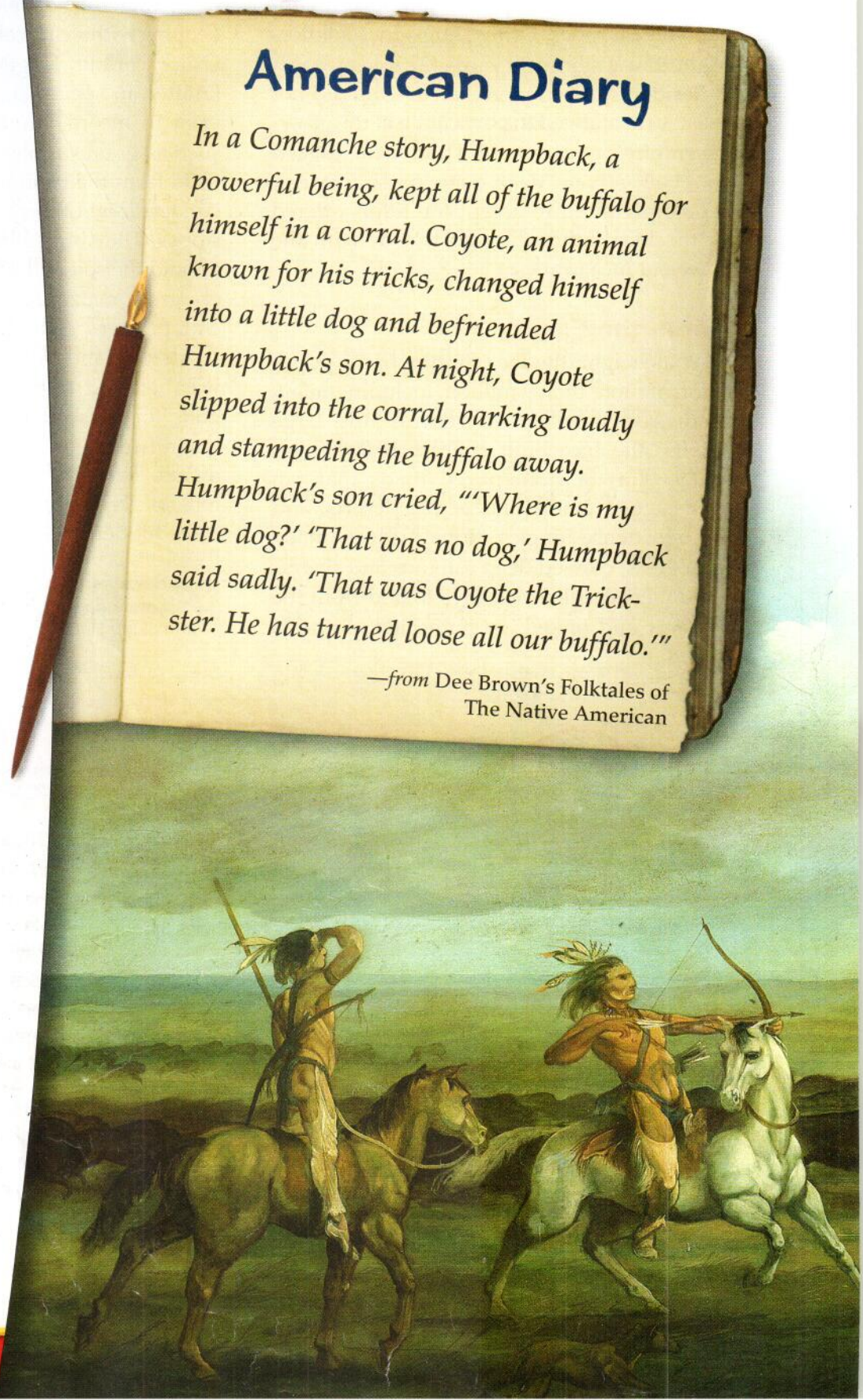
Taking Notes As you read, identify the Native American peoples who lived in the different areas of North America.



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** (PWEH•blohs), 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.

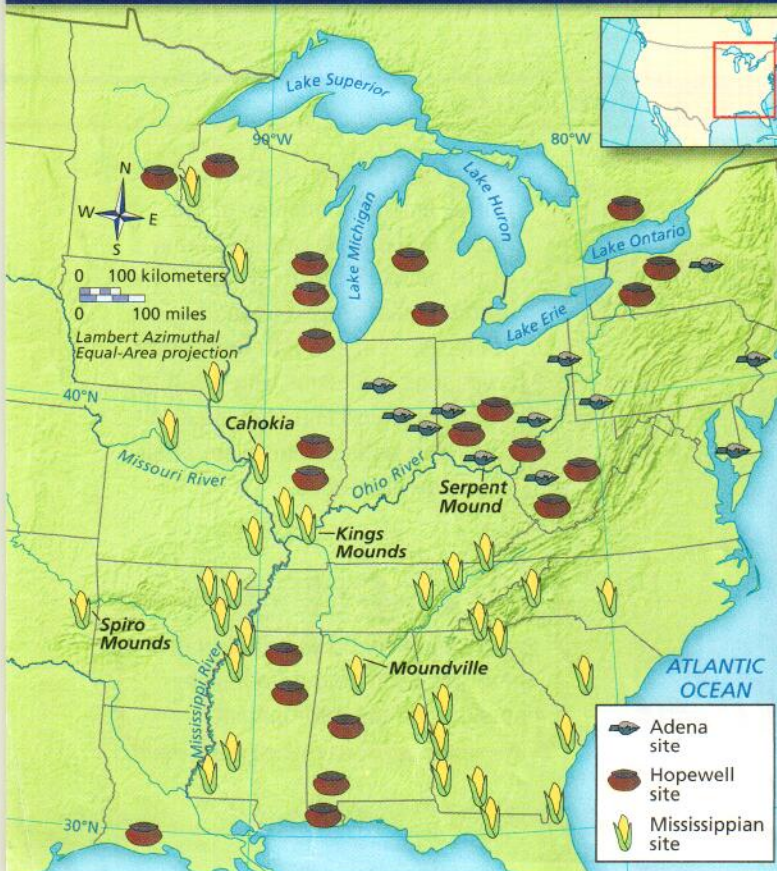
The mounds dotted the landscape from what is now known as Pennsylvania to the Mississippi River valley. Archaeologists think that the first mounds were built about 1000 B.C. They were not the work of a single group but of many different peoples, who are referred to as the **Mound Builders**.

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

Selected Sites of the Mound Builders



Adena Culture The Great Serpent Mound in southern Ohio (below) is an example of the earthen mounds built by the Adena people. At nearly a quarter mile long, it is the largest serpent effigy mound in the United States. An effigy mound is one made in the shape of a living creature. ▼



Mississippians 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 Mississippians, 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?

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 walrus 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.

Hopewell Crafts and Trade

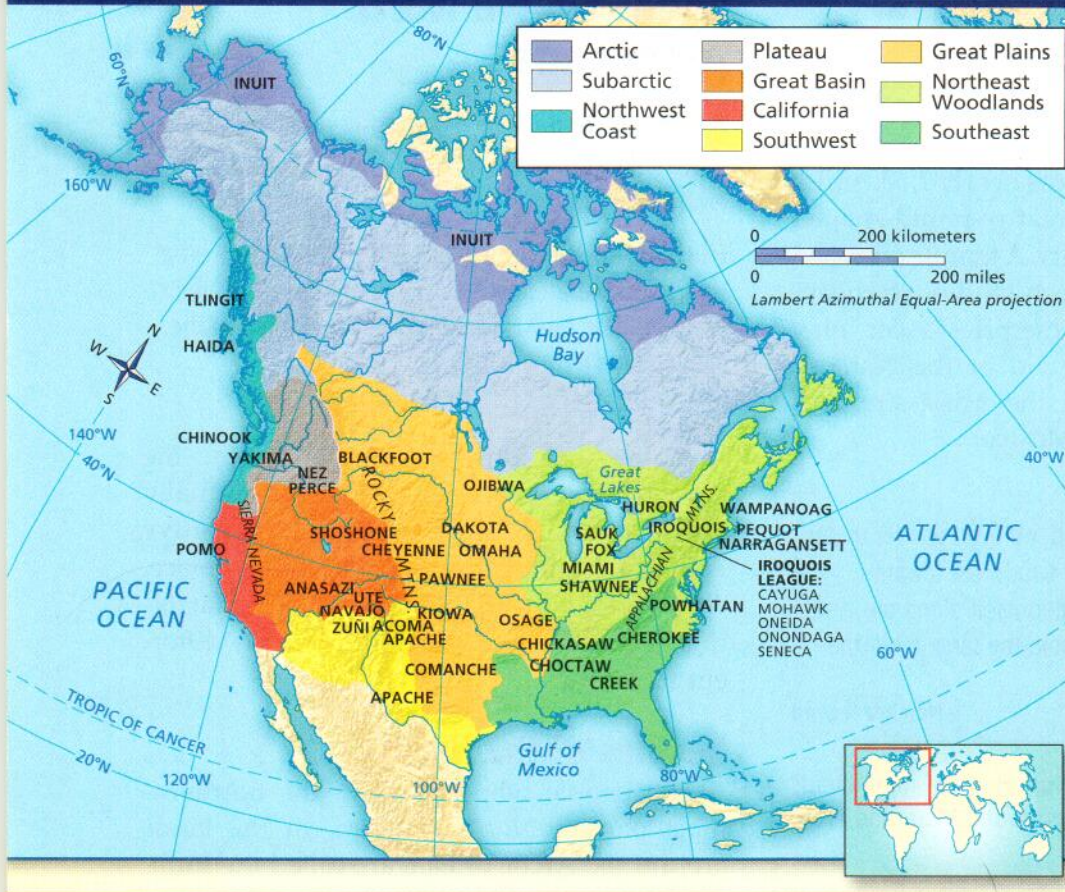
Hopewell artisans crafted delicate artwork from materials they acquired through trade. This bird claw was made of mica from southwest North Carolina. ▶



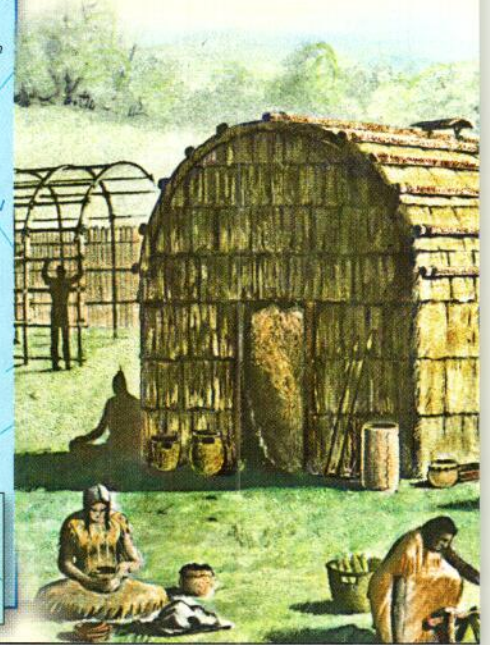
▼ **The Mississippians** The mounds at Cahokia (below) are at the center of the Mississippian culture, which stretched from Minnesota to Florida. Like the other Mound Builders, Mississippians also crafted artwork, such as the bronze engraving shown (left).

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?



Differing Cultures Native American groups across North America developed their own unique ways of life. Styles of lodging and crafts varied from people to people.



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•SHOHN) 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.

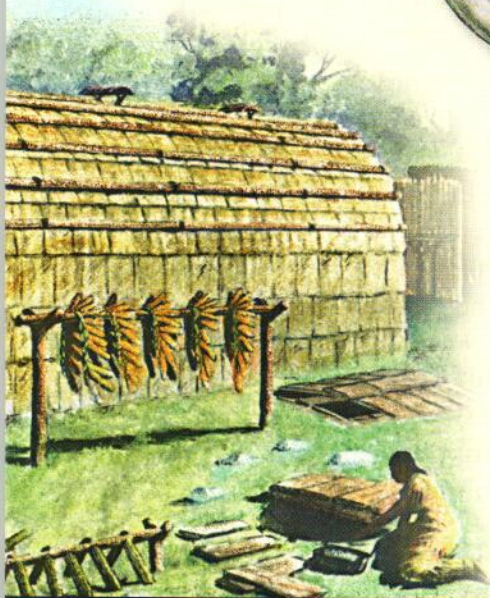
Southwest Pottery The peoples of the Southwest created beautiful pottery from the same clay with which they built their homes. Pots were used to store water and food. ▶



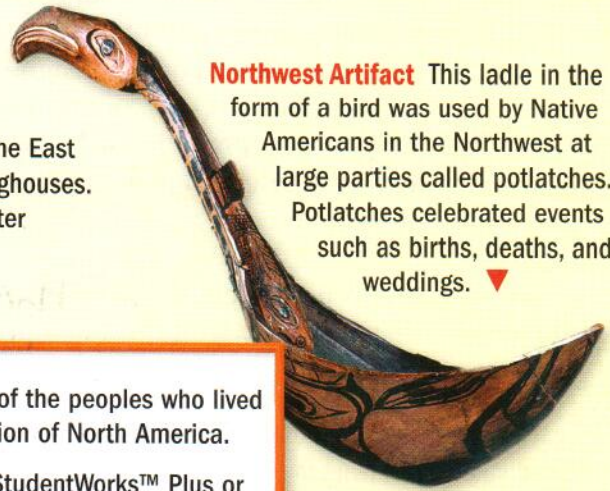
Buffalo Skin Bag The Native Americans of the Plains used the skins of the buffalo they hunted to make a number of everyday items. This buffalo skin bag shows a horse and rider. ▶



◀ **Longhouses** People of the East lived in bark-covered longhouses. Each building could shelter several families.



Northwest Artifact This ladle in the form of a bird was used by Native Americans in the Northwest at large parties called potlatches. Potlatches celebrated events such as births, deaths, and weddings. ▼



Map Skill

Region Identify some of the peoples who lived in the Great Plains region of North America.

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

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 tepees—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.

Peoples 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** (IHR•uh•KWAH) 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 Onondaga (AH•nuhn•DAW•guh), 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 Dekanawidah 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."

—Dekanawidah, 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?

Section 3 Review

History ONLINE
Study Central™ To review this section, go to glencoe.com.

Vocabulary

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

Main Ideas

- Describing** Describe the cliff dwellings of the Anasazi and explain the advantages those dwellings offered.
- Explaining** What was the significance of the Iroquois League?

Critical Thinking

- Making Connections** What evidence suggests that the Mound Builders were influenced by other cultures?
- 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:	Region:	Region:
Shelter:	Shelter:	Shelter:

- 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?