Chapter 1 The First Americans

Lesson 1 Ancient American Civilizations

Most experts believe people crossed into America from Asia by a land bridge called Beringia

-Beringia is now the Bering Strait

People moved throughout America chasing animals for food

Migrate – travel from one living place to another

Culture – a set of beliefs (way of life) that is special to a certain group

Hunter-gatherer – travel to find food from plant and animal sources

Agriculture – planting and raising crops

-this allowed people to stay in one place year-round

Civilizations – cultures with complex ways of life

Mayans

-charted sun, moon, stars

-created accurate calendar

-irrigation – system for bringing water to dry fields

Lesson 2 Adapting to Different Places

Adapt – to change in order to survive the conditions faced

Bison – large animal that once roamed the plains by the millions

Example culture locations:

-Iroquois – Northern Woodlands

-Makah – Pacific Northwest

-Powhatan – Southeast

-Cherokee – Southeast

-Paiute – Southwest

Economies were based on geography and environment:

-Plains Indians relied on bison

-Pacific Northwest, people relied on the sea

-California, people burned shrubs to grow grasses that would attract deer

Lesson 3 Native American Cultures

Women had many responsibilities:

-gathered, grew, and prepared food

-cared for children

-made clothing and other household goods

Nomads – people who move often in search of food

It was believed that children had a special connection to the spirit world

Government – system for making rules and decisions to help guide a group

Council – A decision-making body made up of leaders

League – group whose members share the same goal

-Iroquois

Religious concepts:

-animals and the earth had spirits

-seek advice from kachina spirits

-shamans had special skills