

OKLAHOMA!



Land of Opportunity

Chapter 2:
Early Cultures in Our Land
STUDY PRESENTATION





Section 1: The Earliest People

Section 2: Historic Native American Cultures

Section 1: The Earliest People

➤ Essential Question:

- What were the characteristics of Oklahoma's earliest people?



Section 1: The Earliest People

- What terms do I need to know?
 - prehistoric people
 - archaeologist
 - artifact
 - petroglyph
 - fossil
 - anthropologist
 - nomadic
 - atlatl
 - protohistoric



Searching for Clues

- Artifacts include items such as pottery, tools, bone, jewelry, and paintings that were made or used by people.
- Archaeological digs are excavations of a site where people lived or worked long ago.
- Archaeologists study and document any fragment of an artifact discovered.
- Pieced together, artifacts help tell more about past peoples.
- Fossils are traces or remains of living things like animals, birds, and people.
- The most common fossils are teeth, bones, or shells.
- Carbon dating is used to obtain age estimates on organic (once-living) matter.
- DNA studies, fluorine dating, and dendrochronology are other methods of determining the age of an artifact.
- Fossil pollen can give clues to types of plants from the past.



Prehistoric Cultures

- The earliest people to live in America came from Asia.
- Around 10,000 B.C., the Bering Strait was a “land bridge” from Asia to North America.
- Over 16,000 prehistoric and early American Indian sites are found in Oklahoma.



[Click to see modern-day map.](#)



Paleo Indians

- 1961: scientists discover evidence of Paleo Indian hunters in Oklahoma.
- Thousands of years ago, six-foot tall bison, camels, horses, and sloths the size of elephants lived in the area that is Oklahoma.
- Columbian mammoth bones were found at the [Cooperton site](#) in Kiowa County.
- Soil deposits date to about 30,000 years ago at Burnham site.



Paleo Indians: Clovis People

- The Clovis people, named after the New Mexico site where first artifacts were reported, were known for their spears (spear point usually 3-4 inches long)
- There is an important Clovis site near Stecker in Caddo County.
- The Clovis people first hunted mammoths and then switched to bison as the mammoth population declined.

[Click for information on Jake Bluff.](#)



Paleo Indians: Folsom People

- The Folsom people sites include the Cooper Bonebed and the Waugh site as evidenced by various spear points and a painted bison skull.
- The Dalton people lived some 9,000-10,000 years ago. They were skilled in making clothing, containers, tools, and covers for shelters from the animals they killed.



Archaic Culture Foragers

- As climate changed, the people adapted and their culture changed.
- They become hunters and harvesters and made flour and stored it in baskets.
- Pieces of bone and antler became spear points, needles, awls, punches, and atlatl hooks.
- They ate a variety of wild animals and knew how to start a fire with a wood drill.



Woodland Culture

- About 2,000 years ago, Woodland culture emerged.
- People planted, cultivated, and harvested food (e.g. squash, corn, beans, sunflowers).
- The first farms were in the Grand River area, the Ouachita Mountains, the Cimarron River area, and along the Canadian and Washita Rivers.
- Bow and arrow were developed about this time and made hunting easier.
- Because farming meant growing crops, people moved less and villages began to develop.



Plains Village Farmers

- These groups lived in Oklahoma from about 1,200 to 500 years ago.
- They grew corn, beans, squash, gourds, sunflowers, and tobacco.
- They hunted bison and deer along with nuts and wild berries.
- Villages of about 100 people were built near waterways.
- Houses were rectangular, made of wood posts, sticks, and cane covered with clay. There was a fireplace and roof covered with grass.



The Mound Builders

- Along with Plains Villages, there were Spiro Mound Builders, or Caddo people.
- They built the Spiro Mounds, now a part of the Spiro Mounds State Archaeological Park.
- The people lived in small farming villages.
- Spiro men and women painted themselves with colorful paints.
- They were fine craftsmen and worked with stone, shell, and copper.
- The Spiro were ruled by a chief who had control over the people's resources.



Early Plains Indians

- About 500 years ago, climate change caused the people to move to a more nomadic way of life.
- They hunted buffalo, deer, antelope, rabbit, or whatever was available.
- They foraged for wild plant foods and lived in grass houses covered with buffalo hide.
- These hunters may be ancestors of Wichita people.



Section 2: Historic Native American Cultures

➤ Essential Question:

- What elements of culture were exhibited by the Indians during first contact with Europeans?



Section 2: Historic Native American Cultures

➤ What terms do I need to know?

- viceroy
- barter
- totem
- shaman
- polygamy



Introduction

- Christopher Columbus began to explore in the New World in 1492.
- Antonio de Mendoza was approved for an expedition to find golden cities in 1540.
- Francisco Vasquez wandered the Central Plains looking for any sign of civilization.



Christopher Columbus Takes Possession of the New Country, a 19th-century view by L. Prang & Co.

First Encounters

- 1493: Coronado's expedition was the first recorded contact between Indians and the Spanish.
- Famous explorers Hernando de Soto, Louis Joliet and Father Jacques Marquette, and Bernard de La Harpe made contacts here, as well.
- 1542: Spanish monks found the Kaw people.



Indian Culture

- Native Americans belonged to different tribes and spoke different languages.
- They believed in many gods and spirits, an afterlife, and cleansing themselves to purify their spirits.
- Life was sacred to all Plains tribes.
- Prayer was to the Great Spirit, Mother Earth, and totems.
- The shaman (medicine man) used herbs and prayer to heal sick, interpreted dreams and signs, passed down history and beliefs through spoken word.
- Members of a tribe worked together for the good of the group, parents and older members were shown respect, and honest was valued. Children were rarely punished.



Indian Culture: The Family

- Marriages were permitted between related tribes and a man could have more than one wife.
- Men were warriors and hunters. They held important leadership roles such as chief.
- Women kept the shelter (such as a tipi) and kept the family clothed and fed.
- Boys and girls were taught their roles and needed skills at early ages.



Indian Culture: Food

- Women prepared the food.
- Meats were eaten raw, roasted, boiled, or dried.
- Wild animals were a main food source (bear, squirrel, turkey, duck, turtles, fish, etc.).
- Other foods were wild honey and other natural foods such as corn, pumpkins, squash, etc.



Indian Culture: Plants

- Native Americans used many wildflowers and plants for natural healing.
- About 170 plants used by Indians have been found to have modern use in medicine (e.g. digitalis comes from foxglove, aspirin from willow bark, mint for nausea).
- The people used the resources that they found and learned to live in the lands we call Oklahoma.





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