

Lesson 1: Early Gatherers and Hunters

DIRECTIONS: Review the vocabulary terms in the box. Then read the summary to reveal how we use archaeology to learn about early peoples. As you read, underline important details in each section that relate to that section's title. Think about what you already know, what you want to know, and what you have learned after reading the summary.

Vocabulary

prehistory: the period of time before people developed systems of writing and written language

archaeology: the study of past cultures through the things they left behind

archaeologist: a scientist who uncovers and studies past cultures

artifact: an object made by a person long ago

migrate: to move from one area to another

glacier: a huge ice sheet

Studying Prehistory (p. 11)

Prehistory is the period of time before people developed a system of writing and written language. Prehistoric people did not leave behind books or other writings. They left other objects.

Artifacts are objects such as tools, weapons, pottery, or jewelry that were made by early peoples. Artifacts may tell us whether early people hunted or what tools they used. Artifacts may also show us what early people used from their environment. **Archaeology** is the study of past cultures. An **archaeologist** is a scientist who draws conclusions about the daily lives of ancient peoples. Archaeologists study/analyze artifacts such as bone needles or bones left behind from meals to give them clues about ancient cultures/peoples.

Early Peoples (p. 12)

Archaeologists and historians (people who study history) believe that early peoples lived in East Africa about 3.5 million years ago. They also believe that groups of people began to move, or **migrate**, from East Africa to Europe and Asia thousands of years ago. Archaeologists and historians began to question who the first Americans were, where they came from, and how they migrated to the Americas.

Early Americans (p. 12)

Earth was in an Ice Age from about 1.6 million years ago until about 10,000 years ago. Huge ice sheets called **glaciers** covered large areas of land. When temperatures rose, the glaciers began to

shrink and retreat. Land underneath the glaciers was uncovered. Plants and animals could live on this land. About 70 years ago, archaeologists found objects made by early humans near Clovis, New Mexico. These artifacts, including stone points called Clovis points, are thought to be about 11,000 years old.

A Migration Path (p. 14)

During the Ice Age, which lasted until about 10,000 years ago, the seas were lower than they are today. A large area of land called Beringia was uncovered. Beringia, now known as the Bering Strait, stretched from Asia to North America. This formed the Beringia “land bridge” between the two continents. Animals were able to migrate between Asia and North America. Archaeologists think that more than 11,500 years ago hunters followed herds of animals across the land bridge into the Americas.

Different Paths (p. 16)

For years, scientists believed that the Clovis people of 11,000 years ago were the First Americans. Then 20 years ago, archaeologists found even older artifacts in Monte Verde, Chile. These artifacts were about 12,500 years old. Many archaeologists did not believe that this date was correct. It meant that the First Americans came to North America 1,000 years earlier than scientists had thought. Archaeologists discovered tools that were as much as 18,000 years old at the Topper site in South Carolina.

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DIRECTIONS: Use the terms in the box to complete each sentence with information from Lesson 1. Some terms will be used more than once. You will use your textbook and/or summary (other side) to find your answers.

artifacts ^{x2}	ancient	Clovis	hunters	Americans
archaeology	migrated	Ice Age	land bridge	archaeologists

- p. 11 1. Archaeology is the science of studying past cultures through objects they left behind.
- p. 11 2. Tools, weapons, and jewelry are examples of _____.
- p. 11 3. Archaeologists are interested not only in _____, such as bone sewing needles, but also in anything else, such as bones left behind from a meal, that will give them clues about ancient cultures.
- p. 11 4. An archaeologist’s job is to draw conclusions about the daily lives of _____ peoples.
- p. 12 5. Some scholars believe that early peoples _____ from East Africa to Asia and Europe thousands of years ago.
- p. 12 6. The _____ lasted until about 10,000 years ago.
- p. 12 7. About 70 years ago, human-made objects that were approximately 11,000 years old were discovered in _____, New Mexico.
- p. 14 8. One scientific theory states that Beringia, now called the Bering Strait, became a _____ when the seas were low during the Ice Age.
- p. 14 9. Scientists believe that _____ followed animals across the land bridge between Asia and North America.
- p. 16 10. For years, scholars believed that the First _____ were the Clovis people of 11,000 years ago.
- p. 16 11. Many _____ refused to accept the idea that artifacts found in Chile predate those they once believed were left behind by the first Americans.