

LESSON

1

FOCUS QUESTION

What led to the start of early civilizations?

VOCABULARY

Ice Age
glacier
archaeologist
specialize
surplus
civilization
descendant

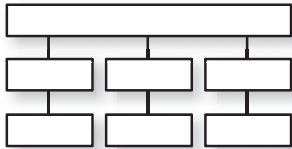
VOCABULARY STRATEGY

SUFFIXES A suffix can help you understand the meaning of a word. The suffix **-ist** describes a person, such as **dentist**.

READING STRATEGY

Identify Main Idea and Details

Use the chart to list the main idea and details about the settling of the Americas.



Settling the Americas

Start with Your CALIFORNIA STANDARDS

5.1 Students describe the major Pre-Columbian settlements, including the cliff dwellers and pueblo people of the desert Southwest, the American Indians of the Pacific Northwest, the nomadic nations of the Great Plains, and the woodland peoples east of the Mississippi River.

5.1.1 Describe how geography and climate influenced the way various nations lived and adjusted to the natural environment, including locations of villages, the distinct structures that they built, and how they obtained food, clothing, tools, and utensils.

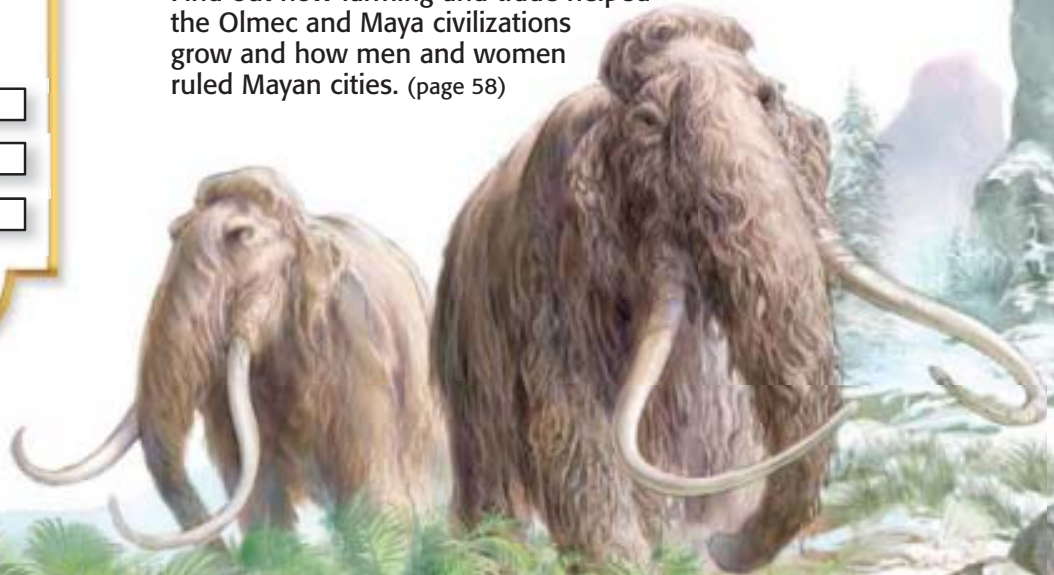
Discover how people came from many parts of the world to settle and live in the Americas. (page 57)

5.1.2 Describe their varied customs and folklore traditions.

Explore the everyday life of the Olmec and the Maya and how they played ball games and wrote poems, songs, and stories. (page 58)

5.1.3 Explain their varied economies and systems of government.

Find out how farming and trade helped the Olmec and Maya civilizations grow and how men and women ruled Mayan cities. (page 58)



28,000 B.C.

About 28,000–13,000 B.C.
Hunters move to
North America

1200 B.C.

About 1200 B.C.
Civilizations appear in
Mexico and Central America

600 B.C.

A.D. 1

About A.D. 300
Mayan culture grows
in Central America

A.D. 600

The woman's fingers worked the bone needle through the soft bison hide. The bison's meat had fed the family for a week, and its hide would make good winter clothes for the children. Suddenly she heard a growl. She dropped her sewing and fled. Ten thousand years later, that same bone needle provides a clue to the lives of early Americans.



The First Settlers 5.1.1

Did you know that Earth went through several changes between 800,000 and 10,000 years ago? At times, Earth was extremely cold. During these periods, called the **Ice Ages**, water froze into huge ice blankets, or **glaciers**. They covered much of the Northern Hemisphere. Sometimes so much water was frozen into glaciers that ocean levels dropped. In some places, land bridges, or land connecting two large land areas, appeared.

Crossing Land Bridges

One of these land bridges formed between Siberia in northeast Asia and Alaska. Today scientists call it Beringia. During the last great Ice Age, large mammals crossed Beringia looking

◀ Ice Age hunters followed woolly mammoths across land bridges.

for food. Following these animals were human hunters.

Were the hunters who crossed Beringia the first people to settle in North America? Most scientists think so. Others believe that the hunters sailed southward along the Pacific coast or along the glaciers between northern Europe and the northeastern part of North America.

Hunter-Gatherers

◀ **Archaeologists**, or people who study artifacts, have learned about the lives of early hunters. Today we know, for example, that they lived by gathering wild plants and hunting animals. Working together, they hunted large mammals. These included the elephant-like woolly mammoths and mastodons.

Hunter-gatherers followed the animals and took shelter in caves or in animal-skin tents. They wore clothing made from animal skins lined with fur.

REVIEW What allowed hunters to cross Beringia? *Main Idea and Details*

