

FOCUS QUESTION

How did the Mound Builders develop their powerful empires?

VOCABULARY

mound
obsidian
palisade

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

SUFFIXES The suffix **-an** means of or relating to. Think of other words ending in **-an**, such as **American**.

READING STRATEGY

Summarize

Use the chart below to summarize what you learn about the Mound Builders in this lesson.

Mound Builders performed religious ceremonies on the mounds they built. ▶

The Mound Builders

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.

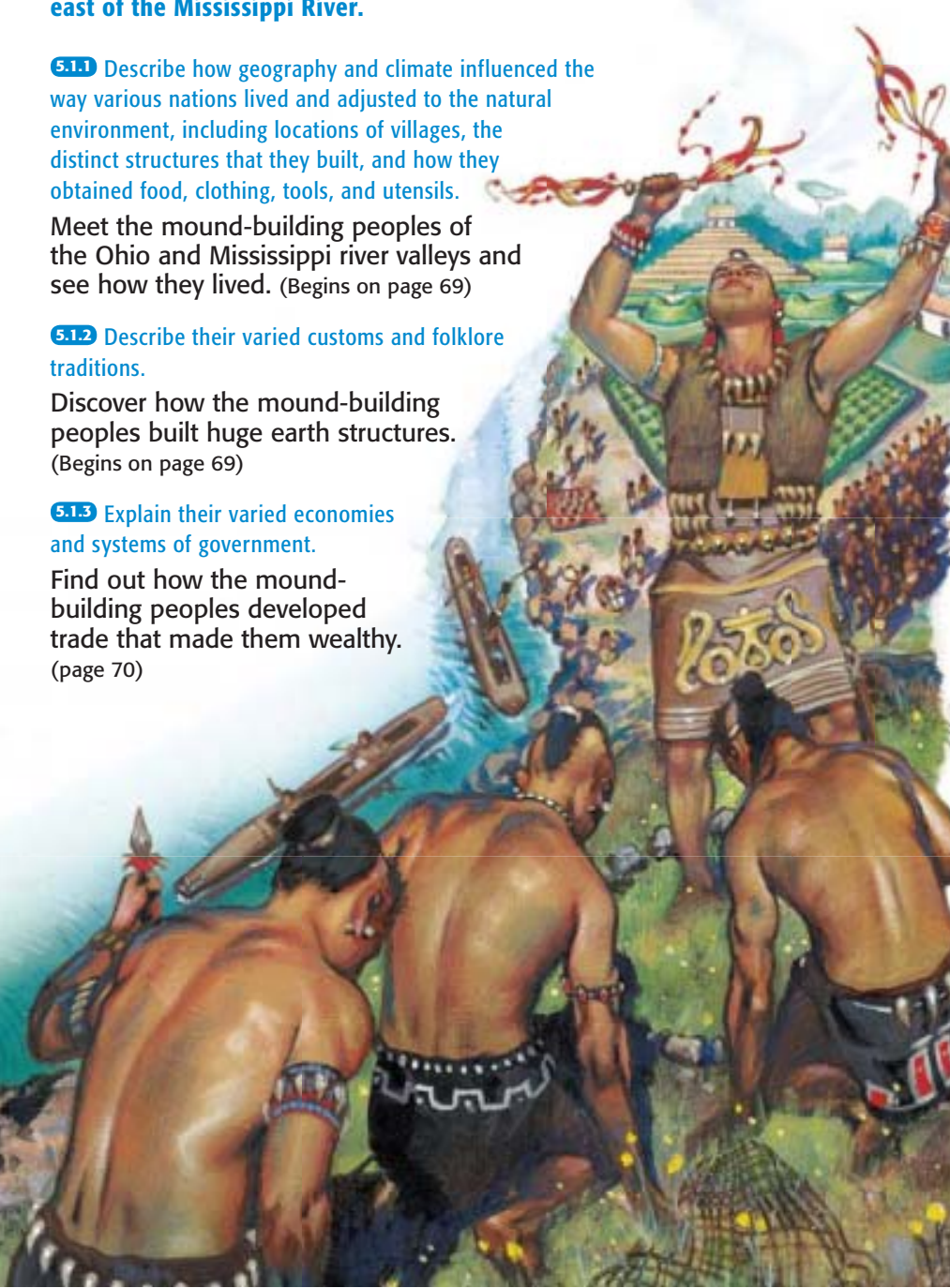
Meet the mound-building peoples of the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys and see how they lived. (Begins on page 69)

5.1.2 Describe their varied customs and folklore traditions.

Discover how the mound-building peoples built huge earth structures. (Begins on page 69)

5.1.3 Explain their varied economies and systems of government.

Find out how the mound-building peoples developed trade that made them wealthy. (page 70)



500 B.C.

circa 500 B.C.
Adena build huge mounds of earth

A.D. 1

circa 200 B.C.
Hopewell culture rises in North America

A.D. 500

circa A.D. 700
Huge cities built in the Mississippi Valley

A.D. 1000

A.D. 1500

circa A.D. 1300
Cahokia city abandoned

He had been a great man—a respected leader, and a fine warrior. In death, he was still impressive. His people laid his body down on a bed of logs, and surrounded it with tools, and objects that would comfort him on his long journey. They drove four stakes into the earth and made a roof for him. They covered it with bark. Then they covered his tomb with earth.



Early Mound Builders 5.1.1 5.1.3

The first Europeans to explore the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys were surprised by cone-shaped hills, high earthen walls, and huge animal-shaped **mounds** that spread across some areas. A mound is a hill or ridge of earth.

Early mounds were built by a people we call the Adena. They were named for a town in Ohio where mounds were first studied by archaeologists. Like other early Native Americans, the Adena used spears to hunt small game. They made nets to trap birds and fish, and gathered plants that grew on the riverbanks.

Adena Farmers

In time, the Adena began to farm. The Ohio River valley receives plenty of rain throughout the year to grow sunflowers, pumpkins, and a leafy green called goosefoot. The Adena made stone and

copper tools. They also used clay from soil where rivers once flowed and shaped it into pottery. The Adena traveled along rivers in canoes they made from hollowed logs. Traders spread their way of life as far east as what is today Pennsylvania and New York.

The Adena lived in round houses made from logs. The roofs were covered with bark. As with other ancient Americans, almost everything we know about the Adena comes from their tombs. The Adena placed their dead in small rooms made of logs. In these rooms they placed stone tools and other items they believed would help the dead on their journey to the next world. Then they added tons of earth on the tombs, often reaching as high as 60 feet. The end of the Adena in about A.D. 200 is thought to have been caused by the rise of another culture in the area, the Hopewell.

REVIEW How did the Adena use their river environment? *Summarize*