

**Lesson - The First Americans**

<b>Supporting Question</b>	When did the First Americans arrive?
<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	Compare and contrast theories of human settlement of the Americas.
<b>Conceptual Understanding</b>	7.1a - Geography and climate influences the migration and cultural development of Native Americans. Native Americans in North America settled into different regions and developed distinct cultures.
<b>Content Specifications</b>	7.1a.1 - EXAMINE theories of human settlement of the Americas.
<b>Sources</b>	<b>Source A</b> - Video - First Peoples - beginning - 8:15, 10:00 - 17:27, 20:22 - 31:56  <b>Source B</b> - Reading from <i>First Peoples</i> and teacher created worksheet
<b>Social Studies Practices</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gathering and Interpreting Evidence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geographic Reasoning

**Procedure:****Day 1:**

1. Write-Pair-Share background reading about *First Peoples*. I have the students pair up with their deskmate. One student will read the paragraph out loud, while the other students listen. Both students will then write a gist for the paragraph on the side of the paragraph in the space provided. Students will then discuss their gists with the class.
2. Discuss information as a class to clarify ideas.

**Day 2:**

3. Watch video - pausing to collect information, and discuss details.
4. Assign exit ticket as homework to assess student learning.

## Historians and Scientific Evidence

### First Peoples Background Essay

Historians often use textual evidence, especially from reliable primary sources, to support their claims about the causes and effects of what happened in the past. What do historians do, however, when there aren't any written texts, and they have to rely on scientific data instead? An especially difficult question for historians is what they should do when scientists disagree with each other and use the same data to support conflicting theories.

*The First Peoples* series presents some of the very latest scientific evidence available in the hope of answering long - held questions about the origins of modern humans and explores how our species evolved in Africa before migrating to each of the five major continents. Like archaeologists, anthropologists, and paleo - geneticists, historians want to be able to explain the lives of early humans, their migration patterns, and social relations. The dilemma for historians is how to use the available scientific evidence, especially when newer evidence comes to light. Scientists often change their theories when fresh evidence appears and when evidence for old theories is shown to be unreliable or scant. How do historians accommodate their conclusions about the past based on changing scientific evidence?

In this episode of *First Peoples*, different teams of scientists present new archaeological and genetic evidence collected from remote caves and ancient burial sites to paint a detailed picture of how and when Homo sapiens arose in Africa before migrating to each of the world's continents. Historians must weigh the scientists' claims based on fresh evidence including: DNA from ancient human bones, the distinctive shape of human bones and how they have changed over millennia ( especially skulls and teeth), animal bones with arrow head or butchering marks, scraping tools, cave paintings, observations of present - day hunter - gatherer peoples, prehistoric artifacts (jewelry and leather clothing), and geological scale climate data. All of these different types of evidence support theories that both scientists and historians make about early human migration waves and exchange networks of early humans.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Social Studies

Lesson - The First Americans

Period \_\_\_\_\_

Scientific data can support theories about when and where humans migrated even if historians cannot explain the exact motivating factors. For example, scientists point to causal factors related to climate data, such as the Ice Age making parts of the northern hemisphere difficult for supporting life for the first modern humans. Scientists can also show how the Ice Age changed coastlines over time, so *Homo sapiens*' ability to travel from Southeast Asia to Australia and from Asia to the Americas was more likely during certain time periods. *The First Peoples: Americas* episode presents evidence of both coastal and inland routes using geographic evidence and animal dung. Other evidence comes from analysis of the "toolkits" early humans brought with them or invented along the way.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Social Studies

Lesson - The First Americans

Period \_\_\_\_\_

**Supporting Question:** Who are the first Americans?

1st theory - The Clovis Peoples	
When did this group arrive?	
What evidence supports this theory?	Where was this evidence found?

2nd theory - Coastal Migration	
When did this group arrive? 16,000 years ago	
What evidence supports this theory?	Where was this evidence found?

## Exit Ticket - The First Americans

### Evaluating the Evidence:

1. Which theory do you think is stronger?

---

---

2. Why do you think that the theory you chose is stronger? Provide a piece of evidence from the graphic organizer to support your reasoning.

---

---

---

---

3. Contrast the theory you chose against the other theory provided in the video. Why is this theory weaker?

---

---

---

---

---

\_\_\_ **Complete** - Work provided above demonstrates student's thoughtful assessment of the evidence.

\_\_\_ **Incomplete** - Student provided some evidence of thinking, but the evidence provided was not complete, or answers were incorrect.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Lesson - The First Americans

Social Studies

Period \_\_\_\_\_

Answer key for graphic organizer - Use to check for correct answers.

**Supporting Question:** Who are the first Americans?

**1st theory - The Clovis Peoples**

- Americans arrived by foot over a land bridge - they were stuck in Canada because of the ice
- once the world warmed, the ice sheets melted, and people could walk south into the United States
- they followed mammoths and hunted them

**When did this group arrive?**

13,000 years ago

**What evidence supports this theory?**

- **giant boulders** - in Canada mark a passageway into North America
- **spearheads** - clovis points - that indicate that the first Americans hunted mammoths

**2nd theory - Coastal Migration**

- came by boat along the coast - ate kelp, fish and marine mammals

**When did this group arrive?**

as early as 16,000 years ago

**What evidence supports this theory?**

- **animal dung** - fungal spores - last thousands of years - can use the spores to find out how many animals were around - animals were being hunted before the Clovis people
- **bone of a mastodon that had a spearpoint** - 13,800 years ago
- **Kennewick Man** - ate seals - found in Seattle area and Eva's body (still both under debate)