

North America

The Americas Part 3



North America

Main Idea

As people settled in North America, they adapted to different types of geography by developing different styles of housing and ways of getting food.

Focus

1. How did cultures adapt to the environment of the Desert West?
2. How have scientists learned about the mound builders?
3. How did geography affect the Inuit, the Iroquois, and the plains Indians?

Key Terms

Adobe
Maize

Pueblo
Iroquois League

Kivas

Cultures of the Desert West

- Much of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico is desert.
- Early people in this region learned how to farm in the harsh, dry environment and to build their homes out of local materials.



Hohokam

- In the Desert West the Hohokam (ho-ho-kam) flourished from 300 BC to AD 1500.
- To farm in the desert, the Hohokam built shallow canals for irrigation.
- Next to the canals the Hohokam planted crops in a series of earthen mounds.
- Woven mats created dams in the canals that directed irrigation water toward the earthen crop mounds.



Hohokam

- The Hohokam expanded their irrigation system to channel water into their villages.
- In addition to wells and other types of containers for storing water, Hohokam villages contained dwellings called pithouses.
- Pithouses were formed by digging shallow holes in the ground and building walls and roofs with a mixture of clay and straw called **adobe.**



Anasazi

- The Anasazi lived in the Desert West near the Hohokam from about 100 BC to AD 1300.
- Like their neighbors, they lived in pithouses.
- However, around the end of the first century AD the Anasazi developed a new kind of architecture called *pueblo*.



Anasazi

- Pueblos were several stories high and had many rooms, similar to modern apartment buildings.
- It was easier for the Anasazi to add rooms in pueblos than to dig pithouses.
- Most villages also had underground rooms called *kivas*.
- Kivas were used as meeting places or for religious ceremonies.



Anasazi

- Also typical of Anasazi architecture were cliff dwellings.
- Pueblos were built in shallow caves high up in the walls of canyons.
- To enter their cliff dwellings, the Anasazi used staircases carved into the rock walls or ladders with notched footholds made from tree trunks.
- Because of their limited accessibility, cliff dwellings offered protection from attack.



How did cultures of the Desert West adapt their architecture to their environment?



North American Cultures

North American cultures within certain regions shared similar characteristics. The geography of a region determined to a large extent what people ate, where they lived, and how their societies functioned.

Which cultures relied most on fishing?

ARCTIC & SUBARCTIC



Ivory from walrus tusks was one of the few resources available to the Inuit for making ornaments.

- Peoples included the Inuit, Aleut, and Ingalik
- Environmental conditions included permanent snow and ice
- Relied on fishing and hunting sea mammals for food
- Built houses out of ice

FAR WEST

The bird and fish decoration on this spool shows two aspects of life for Native Americans in the far west.

- Peoples included the Haida, Chinook, Columbia, Miwok, and Chumash
- Geography included rivers, forests, and a long coastline
- Fishing in rivers and the ocean was a main method of getting food
- Built houses and canoes out of wood from the forests



The Mound Builders

- In the eastern woodlands of North America, near the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys, lived several societies known for the large earthen mounds they built.
- The mounds tell us about the cultures of these societies.



Hopewell

- One early group of mound builders was the Hopewell, who lived from 200 BC to AD 500.
- They built large stone and earth mounds as burial sites.
- The size of the mounds suggests that Hopewell society included some form of organized labor.



Hopewell

- Buried inside the mounds were objects such as pottery and metal ornaments. These objects provide other clues to Hopewell society.
- For example, daggers of obsidian from the Rocky Mountains and shells from the Gulf of Mexico show that the Hopewell developed an extensive trade network.



Hopewell

- In spite of their relatively organized society, the Hopewell culture gradually declined beginning around AD 400.
- Scientists are still unsure of the cause of this culture's decline.



Mississippian

- Later mound builders, the Mississippians, built some of the earliest cities in North America.
- Their largest city, Cahokia, had a population of up to 20,000 people and contained more than 100 mounds.
- Cahokia was a planned city.



Mississippian

- It was built by an organized Mississippian labor force using mathematical and engineering skills.
- For example, engineers used different types of soils in building the mounds to ensure proper drainage.



Mississippian

- The layout of the city and the objects found in its mounds suggest that Mississippian society was complex and had clear divisions between social classes.
- Priests ruled Cahokia and surrounding villages, with the ruler living atop the largest mound in the city center.
- Rows of other houses surrounded a central plaza.
- In addition, artifacts found in some burial mounds show differences between common people and people who had elite status in society.



DESERT WEST



The Cliff Palace at Mesa Verde in Colorado is the largest Anasazi cliff dwelling, containing 200 rooms.

- Peoples included the Hohokam, Anasazi, Apache, Shoshone, Tarahumara, and Yaqui
- Lived in a dry, rocky environment
- Used irrigation techniques to farm maize, beans, and squash
- Built houses out of adobe or into the sides of cliffs

GREAT PLAINS

This buffalo skin rattle shows the importance of the buffalo to the Plains Indians.

- Peoples included the Blackfoot, Sioux, Omaha, Comanche, and Crow
- Region consisted of treeless, grassy plains with fertile soil
- Hunted buffalo
- Lived in portable teepees made from buffalo skins



EASTERN WOODLANDS



Serpent Mound in Ohio was built by mound builders who lived about the same time as the Hopewell.

- Peoples included the Adena, Hopewell, Mississippian, Iroquois, Mohawk, and Seminole
- Warm and temperate forests were characteristic
- Relied on hunting and gathering, as well as farming some native crops
- Lived in log houses built from forest materials

What do the mounds tell us about Hopewell and Mississippian society?



Other Cultures of North America

- In other areas of North America, cultures developed differently according to their different environments.
- The varied geography of the continent determined the way these peoples got food, made shelter, and organized their societies.



The Inuit

- The Inuit lived in the Arctic regions of North America. In this frozen, treeless landscape, the Inuit could not depend on vegetation for their food source.
- Instead, they became skilled hunters and fishers.
- Using kayaks, the Inuit hunted sea mammals such as seals.
- They also caught fish through holes in the ice.



The Inuit

- In the summer, the Inuit hunted land animals like caribou.
- Caribou skins and furs were important for making warm clothing.
- They also served as furniture in the Inuit igloos, or houses made from ice blocks.



The Iroquois

- To the south, in eastern North America, where it was warmer, the Iroquois relied on materials in their forest environment.
- They built their dwellings, called longhouses, from elm bark.
- For food, they trapped forest animals.
- The climate also allowed the Iroquois to farm crops such as beans, squash, and **maize**, which is another word for corn.



The Iroquois

- Although they shared many similar characteristics, the Iroquois were actually made up of five different nations.
- They included the Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, and Seneca.
- These tribes eventually formed a joint government called the *Iroquois League*.
- Each chief in the league had one vote. In the 1700s the Tuscarora were admitted to the League.



Plains Indians

- Like the Iroquois, the Plains Indians consisted of different tribes. However, not all spoke the same language, so communication was a problem.
- To solve the problem, the Plains Indians developed a form of sign language to communicate more easily when they met on the Great Plains.



Plains Indians

- The Great Plains region is a mostly tree- less grassland.
- At first, the Plains Indians lived along rivers and streams, where they farmed the fertile land.
- After Europeans brought horses to the region, however, the lives of the Plains Indians changed.



Plains Indians

- They began to use horses to follow buffalo herds over long distances.
- The buffalo became an even greater part of their lives.
- The Plains Indians ate buffalo meat, made clothing and portable tents from the skins, and used the bones and horns to make tools.



What details show that the Inuit , Iroquois, and plains Indians lived in different environments?

