

ROOTS OF AMERICAN PEOPLE STRUCTURED NOTES

MR. ZINDMAN'S CLASS

The First Civilizations of the Americas

- ✓ The first people to arrive in the Americas crossed the land bridge when glaciers formed.
- ✓ Global warming made the land bridge disappear so no one was able to cross the land bridge again.
- ✓ Scientists have dug up the tools, weapons, baskets, and carvings found throughout the Americas in the ground. These objects that are dug up are called artifacts.
- ✓ Archaeologists studied the culture of Native Americans.
- ✓ The earliest culture in the Americas was the Olmecs.
- ✓ Mayan people built their homes out of stone. The Mayan people recorded their information in hieroglyphics. The Maya built great cities along the coasts of Mexico. They lived in rainforests.
- ✓ The Aztecs built the capital of Tenochtitlan with great causeways. The Aztecs sacrificed people to honor their Sun God.
- ✓ The Incas were great engineers located in South America. They were excellent farmers. They carved homes in mountainsides. The Incas built roads to connect their empires and used medicine.
- ✓ The Incas created a quipu to record quantities.
- ✓ The Anasazi farmed the desert using irrigation. They made homes from adobe brick, called pueblos.
- ✓ The Mound Builders lived in Mississippi. They built their homes out of mounds of dirt.

Native American Cultures

- ✓ In 1492, Christopher Columbus arrived in the Americas. He settled on an island he named Hispaniola. Other Europeans followed in his footsteps.
- ✓ Climate and natural resources shaped the Native American cultures.
- ✓ The Inuits lived in the Arctic region. They made their homes out of ice, called igloos. In the warmer season they lived in pit houses.
- ✓ The Utes and Shoshones of North America were hunters and gathers
- ✓ Families would hold a potlatch to show off their wealth.
- ✓ The Natchez and Cherokees worshiped the Great Sun God.
- ✓ Native Americans respected nature.
- ✓ Native Americans held Kachinas to insure a good harvest.
- ✓ Native Americans in the Great Plains lived in teepees.
- ✓ The most powerful people of the woodlands were the Iroquois.
- ✓ The Iroquois built long houses. Many families shared a long house.
- ✓ The Iroquois sachems met to settle the nation's problems. These five nations were known as the League of the Iroquois.
- ✓ Native Americans showed settlers how to grow food.

The Muslim World

- ✓ Arabia is at the center of trade routes linking the Mediterranean world with Asia and Africa. They called their trade route the Silk Road.
- ✓ **Islam:** Emerged in Arabia in the early 600s. Muslims, or Islam's followers, believe that their holy book, the Quran, contains the word of God as revealed to Muhammad. *Muslim traders carried their religion to people along their trade routes.*
- ✓ Muslim sailors developed expert knowledge of the Indian Ocean. They sailed to the many ports of Africa and India.
- ✓ Muslim traders also traveled overland across Central Asia. The Central Asian routes linking China and the Middle East are known as the Silk Road. Because the Silk Road was dangerous, traders formed caravans – groups of people who traveled together for safety.

The Trading States of Africa

- ✓ Wealth from trade helped East African rulers build strong city-states – large towns that have their own governments and control the surrounding countryside.
- ✓ Many rulers became Muslims. A new language, Swahili, blended Arab words and African languages.

Ways of Life in Africa

- ✓ Most people of Africa lived in small villages away from the powerful trading states.
- ✓ Most people made a living by herding, fishing, or farming.
- ✓ Family relationships were important. Many people lived within an extended family – several generations living in one household.
- ✓ Ties of kinship, or sharing a common ancestor, linked families. People related by kinship owed loyalty to one another.
- ✓ Beliefs varied widely. However, common beliefs included the idea that links among family members lasted even after a person died. Africans honored the spirits of their ancestors as well as the forces of nature.

China's Overseas Trade in the 1400's

- ✓ China was ruled by an emperor.
- ✓ An emperor who came to power in 1402 was eager for trade. He ordered a fleet of more than 300 ships to be built. The fleet was commanded by Admiral Zheng He.
- ✓ Zheng He made seven voyages. His fleet traded in Southeast Asia, India, Arabia, and East Africa.
- ✓ After Zheng He's death in 1435, China's overseas voyages abruptly ended. No one is sure why.

Judaism

- ✓ Jews believe in one God and feel a duty to obey God's rules.
- ✓ Jews credit Moses with bringing God's laws to them, including the Ten Commandments, which is a set of religious and moral rules.

- ✓ The history of the Jews was written in the Torah.

Christianity

- ✓ Christians are followers of Jesus, who believed in the Ten Commandments and other Jewish traditions. He preached that there is one God.
- ✓ Jesus preached about God's goodness and mercy and that anyone could achieve salvation, or everlasting life. Everyone was equal in the eyes of God.
- ✓ Christians organized a strong church. The church sent out missionaries, people who spread Christian teachings.

Greek Traditions

- ✓ Around 400 B.C., Greece entered a golden age. Greek artists created fine marble statues and elegant temples. Poets and playwrights created works that are still read today.
- ✓ Greek thinkers, such as Socrates and Aristotle, valued human reason. They believed that by using reason, individuals could understand the natural world.
- ✓ Greek thinkers made important contributions to science and mathematics, including the study of geometry and medicine.
- ✓ The people of ancient Athens created direct democracy, a form of government in which ordinary citizens have the power to govern. Athenian democracy was limited to free men whose parents had been born in Athens.

Roman Traditions

- ✓ In 509 B.C., the Romans overthrew their king and set up a republic, a system of government in which citizens choose representatives to govern them. A Senate and an assembly made the laws.
- ✓ The republic came to an end. Julius Caesar named himself dictator for life. His nephew Octavian declared himself emperor in 27 B.C. As emperor, he was called Caesar Augustus. The empire lasted for almost 500 years. In that time, Rome spread its language, Latin, across a wide area.
- ✓ Romans also spread their ideas about law. Everyone was equal before the law. Accused people were considered innocent until proven guilty. There were rules about the use of evidence in court.

The Middle Ages

- ✓ Weak European Kings divided their lands among their nobles. This system was called feudalism.
- ✓ A series of religious wars, called crusades, were fought to gain the control of the holy land.
- ✓ Trade brought about new inventions like the astrolabe and compass.
- ✓ New discoveries led to the Renaissance.