

First Americans

The first people to arrive in North America came from Asia during the Ice Age. During this time Asia and North America were connected by a land bridge known today as the Bering Strait. They crossed into North America looking for food. Eventually people began to spread throughout North, Central, and South America. They are the first Americans.

Geography and climate affected how various American Indian groups met their basic needs. The American Indians fished, hunted, and harvested crops for food. Clothing was made from animal skins and plants. Their shelter (homes) were made from resources found in their environment; such as, sod, stones, animal skins, and wood. In our study of the American Indians, we will be focusing on five different groups living in five very different areas of the United States. By the end our unit study, you will be able to see how important it is to adapt to the geography and climate you are in for survival.

We first will travel to present-day Alaska and northern Canada. This was the home of the **Inuit**. They lived in arctic areas where the temperature was below freezing much of the year. They had to rely on the resources found in this type of region for survival. They build igloos and insulated them with sealskin to get the warmth inside. They used caribou and seal fur to make warm clothing. They would also line their clothing with sealskin to act as a water proofing system. Since the climate was so cold and icy, it was difficult for the Inuit to farm. Their source of food came from hunting reindeer and caribou. The Inuit also build skin covered canoes so that they could fish whales, seals, and walruses. Even though the environment was treacherous for the Inuit, they used their available resources to survive



Directions: Using the Inuit story as a guide, complete the following questions.

1. The first people to arrive in North America came from what continent?

2. The first people to arrive in North America came during what period in history?

3. Historians believe that the first Americans came across a frozen land bridge known as the _____ into North America. They were following their food source.

4. Name three different ways that American Indians got food.

A. _____ B. _____ C. _____

5. Name four things that American Indians found in their environment to build their homes from.

A. _____ B. _____

C. _____ D. _____

6. The Inuit lived in present day Alaska and northern _____.

7. The Inuit use caribou and _____ fur for clothing.

8. Name two ways the Inuit got their food

A. _____ B. _____

9. What did the Inuit use to water proof their clothing? _____

10. What type of home did the Inuit live in? _____
