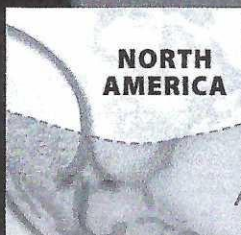


- ✓ **GRAPHIC ORGANIZER**
Reasons Early Peoples Migrated
- ✓ **MAP** Routes to the Americas
- ✓ **VIDEO**



Lesson 1

Migration to the Americas

ESSENTIAL QUESTION What are characteristics that make up a culture?

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Human history in the Americas began thousands of years ago.

The Migration Begins

GUIDING QUESTION Who were the first Americans and how did they live?

The written history of the Americas is several hundred years old, yet human beings have been living on these continents for thousands of years. Where did these people come from? How and when did they get here? How did the different corners of North and South America get settled?

Today, scientists are still seeking answers to these questions. Experts in **archaeology** (AHR•kee•ah•luh•jee), the study of ancient peoples, continue to piece together evidence that tells the story of the first Americans.

Archaeologists have learned a lot about the past from **artifacts** (AHR•tih•fakts)—the tools, weapons, and other objects that early people left behind. Based on this and other types of evidence, archaeologists have offered some possible answers to questions about the first Americans. A widely held theory of recent times is that the first humans might have come to the Americas perhaps 20,000 or more years ago. This theory maintains that early people traveled along a strip of land that once linked Asia and the Americas.

A Land Bridge Revealed

Throughout Earth's history, the climate has changed. Several periods of extreme cold have occurred. The most recent of these ice ages began 100,000 years ago and ended about 12,000 years

Taking Notes: Identifying

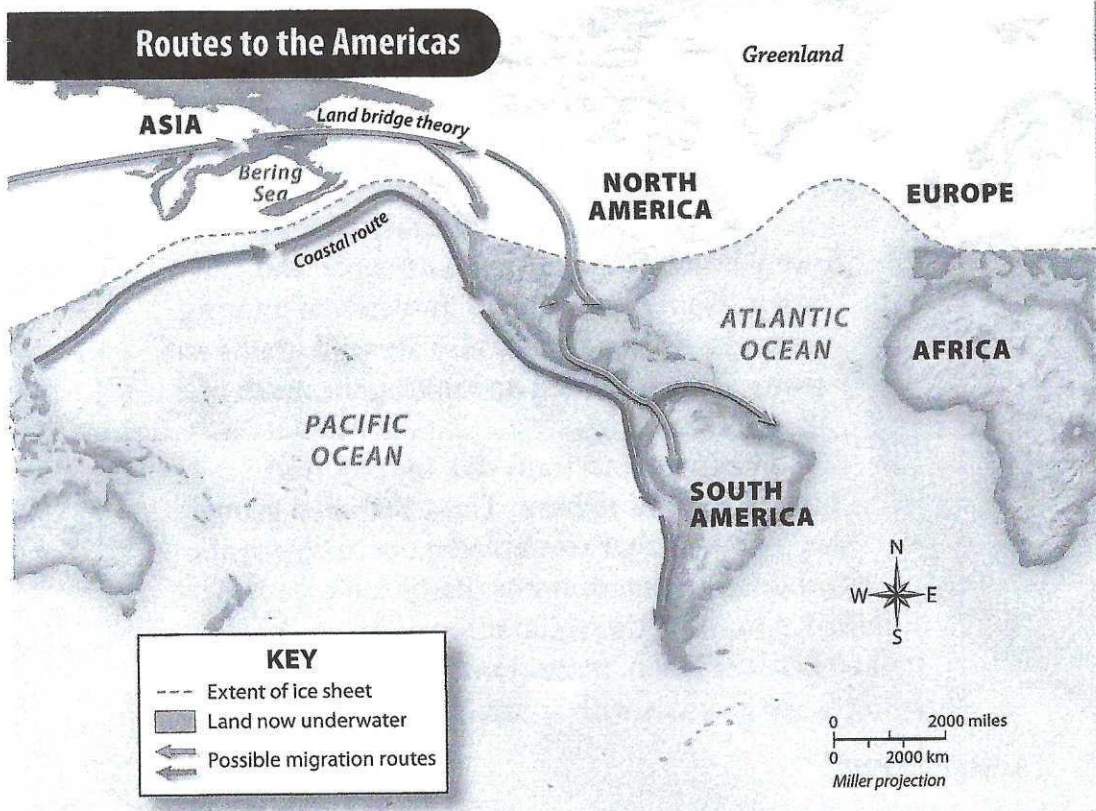
As you read, use a chart like this one to record reasons early peoples migrated from place to place.

Reasons Early Peoples Migrated	
1.	
2.	

Content Vocabulary

- **archaeology** • **migration** • **carbon dating**
- **artifact** • **nomad** • **culture**
- **strait** • **maize**

Routes to the Americas



GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Over thousands of years, prehistoric people migrated to and then throughout the Americas.

- 1 MOVEMENT** Based on this map, how did prehistoric people get to North America from Asia?
- 2 CRITICAL THINKING**
Analyzing Why do you think prehistoric people moved from one place in the Americas to another?

ago. During these years, a large share of Earth's water formed huge sheets of ice, or glaciers. The glaciers held so much water that ocean levels were lower. The lower sea level exposed a strip of land—a "land bridge"—connecting northeastern Asia to what is now Alaska. Scientists today call this land bridge Beringia. It now lies beneath the Bering Strait, a body of water named for explorer Vitus Bering. A **strait** is a narrow body of water that connects two larger ones.

Many scientists believe early people traveled from Asia to North America across the land bridge. Yet not all scientists agree on how or when this might have happened. For example, some think people might have come to the Americas by boat. This might have allowed humans to spread faster throughout the Americas. As archaeologists discover new artifacts and evidence, new theories emerge to challenge old ones.

Searching for Hunting Grounds

It is clear, of course, that humans arrived in the Americas. Over centuries, they traveled throughout both continents. In time, settlements stretched as far east as the Atlantic Ocean and as far south as the tip of South America.

archaeology the study of the material remains of ancient peoples

artifact a tool, weapon, or other object left behind by early peoples

strait a narrow passage of water between two larger bodies of water