

TOPIC
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Note Taking Study Guide

AMERICA'S CULTURAL ROOTS

Focus Question: What were the cultures that began to interact in the Americas in the late 1400s and early 1500s? What features and events helped shape each culture?

As you read, take notes about the three main cultures that began to interact in the Americas after Europeans arrived. Identify where each culture developed. Then record details about the characteristics of each culture and the historical events that helped shape them.

I.

A.

- 1.
- 2.

B.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

C.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

II.

A.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

III.

A.

- 1.
- 2.

B.

- 1.
- 2.

C.

- 1.
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- 4.

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LESSON 1**Lesson Summary****THE PEOPLES OF THE AMERICAS****MODIFIED CORNELL NOTES**

Until recently, most scholars believed that Paleoindians, the first people in the Americas, arrived 15,000 years ago during an **ice age**. Since much of the planet's seawater was frozen and the sea level was lower, hunters crossed a land bridge between Siberia and Alaska. Now, some scholars theorize that the first Americans migrated, or traveled, from Asia some 40,000 years ago.

About 12,000 to 10,000 years ago, the climate warmed, allowing the environment to become more diverse. Wild plants were domesticated and grown for food. The expanded food supply encouraged population growth, which led to larger, permanent villages. In Mexico, some villages grew into great cities ruled by powerful chiefs. Along the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean coast, the leading peoples were the Olmecs and later the Mayas. In the highlands of central Mexico, the Aztecs became the most powerful people. In the Southwest, the Hohokam and the Anasazi built villages and houses of **adobe**, a type of sun-dried brick.

The people who lived in the Mississippi River valley enjoyed a humid and temperate climate. These Mississippians built large towns and developed trade. During the ninth century, some Mississippians moved westward onto the Great Plains, an immense, windy, and **arid** grassland. They built villages, planted crops, and hunted bison in mobile camps. These Great Plains villagers sometimes clashed with hunting **nomads** from the Rocky Mountains.

The Choctaws, Creeks, and other southeastern groups were primarily farmers, but they also depended on hunting and fishing. Northeastern people developed into two major language groups: the Algonquians and the Iroquoians. Five Iroquois people united to form the Iroquois League, a ritual forum for promoting peaceful cooperation among the members.

Despite their cultural diversity, most American Indian groups shared several cultural features. American Indians believed that spirits could be found in every plant, animal, rock, cloud, and body of water. They possessed little private property and maintained a respectful equality among the various groups of Indians.

Lesson Vocabulary

ice age period in Earth's history with low global temperatures and glaciers covering large areas

adobe sun-dried brick made from earth, water, and straw

arid very dry; having little rain or water

nomads people who move from place to place instead of staying and settling in one place

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LESSON 2**Lesson Summary****THE WEST AFRICANS****MODIFIED CORNELL NOTES**

West Africa is a diverse land with valuable **natural resources** such as salt and gold. Hundreds of years ago, these resources formed the basis of trade among the people in West Africa. Trade revolved around trading centers, which grew into great and powerful empires with rich and thriving cultures.

The kingdom of Ghana, running from the Atlantic Ocean to the Niger River, rose to prominence around A.D. 800. By the eleventh century, Ghana supplied much of the gold for the Mediterranean region. Attacks by outsiders weakened Ghana, and the new kingdom of Mali replaced Ghana around A.D. 1200. In the early 1300s, Mali's famous king Mansa Musa expanded Mali's domain westward to the Atlantic coast and increased the role of Islam within the empire. By the 1400s, Mali was eclipsed by the rise of Songhai.

In West Africa, land was not held by individuals as private property. Instead, it belonged to extended kinship networks. Slavery was common and an important part of West Africa's economic foundation. Owning slaves (or wives) rather than property determined one's wealth. Humans were used as items of trade along with gold, salt, ivory, and other resources. Slaves were usually adopted by the families into which they were sold. They were allowed to marry, and their children did not inherit the status of slaves. Most importantly, slavery was not based on the notion of racial inferiority.

As Portuguese explorers made voyage after voyage along the coast of Africa, they discovered a profitable **enterprise**: trade with the people of West Africa. To conduct their African trade, the Portuguese mariners received the assent of the powerful West African kings. The Portuguese greatly expanded the slave trade. By 1500, Europeans purchased about 1,800 African slaves each year. Some were sent to Europe, but most were sent to work on plantations located on the Madeira, Canary, and Azores islands. Thus began the brutal exploitation of West African slaves by Europeans—a fate that would befall millions more African men and women in the centuries ahead.

Lesson Vocabulary

natural resources anything found in nature that is useful to people

enterprise business, or business organization

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LESSON 3

Lesson Summary

EUROPEANS MAKE CONTACT

MODIFIED CORNELL NOTES

Europe was changing quickly in the 1400s. The Middle Ages, a period marked by limited trade, the absence of strong nations, and little interaction with the outside world, was ending. During the Middle Ages, church leaders sought to ensure that all thought adhered to their understanding of the world. In the mid-1400s, the Renaissance brought renewed interest in learning and the arts. Trade with and awareness of the world beyond Europe also expanded, producing wealth and fueling exploration.

Western Europe was divided into warring kingdoms. Each kingdom was ruled by a monarch who let the elite govern. Nearly all land and wealth was held by the elite, who made up less than 5 percent of the population. Three out of five western Europeans were working poor and one tenth to one fifth were beggars.

Many Europeans felt hemmed in by the wealth, power, and technology of their neighbors, the Muslims, who were adherents of Islam rather than Christianity. The Muslims had won a series of religious wars launched by European Christians during the Middle Ages. The Muslim realm stretched across North Africa, around the southern and eastern Mediterranean Sea to parts of eastern Europe and the Middle East. They controlled most of the lucrative trade routes. Inspired by the travel accounts of explorers such as Marco Polo, Europeans dreamed of an alternative trade route around the Muslim world and longed for the fabled riches of India and China.

European expansionists found hope on the Iberian Peninsula. With the 1469 marriage of Prince Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile joined to create the new nation of Spain. They completed the *Reconquista* (reconquest) when Granada, the last Muslim stronghold in Iberia, was seized.

Close to Africa and facing the Atlantic, Spain and Portugal were well placed to lead the maritime expansion of Europe. Portugal took the lead in 1419. Prince Henry, known as Prince Henry the Navigator, became a supporter of oceangoing exploration as a means to spread Christianity and outflank Muslim domination of trade. He helped finance a series of expeditions down the coast of West Africa and founded a school of navigation.

Throughout the 1400s, the Portuguese sought a route around Africa's southern tip into the Indian Ocean. In 1487, the Portuguese mariner Bartolomeu Dias discovered how to use the counterclockwise winds of the South Atlantic to get around southern Africa. In 1498, Vasco de Gama used this discovery to reach India, opening a very profitable channel of trade.

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Lesson Vocabulary

adhere to follow rules closely or stick firmly to a belief

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LESSON 3

Lesson Summary**EUROPEANS MAKE CONTACT (continued)****MODIFIED CORNELL NOTES**

Christopher Columbus, an Italian mariner, pursued Spain's dream of westward exploration in the Atlantic Ocean. When Columbus reached the present-day Bahamas and adjacent islands, he mistakenly believed these islands were off the mainland of Asia. He claimed the land for Spain despite the presence of native people.

In 1497, John Cabot, a Genoese mariner, sailed to Newfoundland, and a Portuguese fleet led by Pedro Alvarez Cabral discovered Brazil in 1500. A year later, another Genoese mariner, Amerigo Vespucci, deemed South America a new continent. Between 1519 and 1522, a voyage begun by Ferdinand Magellan circled the entire globe.

In 1519, Hernán Cortés marched to the inland home of the Aztec Empire in Mexico. The Spanish captured the capital city of Tenochtitlán and began building a Spanish capital, Mexico City, on its ruins. The Spanish expanded their empire deep into North and South America. The **conquistadors** were motivated by religious faith and loyalty to their monarch, as well as wealth. European diseases such as smallpox devastated native populations, which had no natural defenses against them. With the death of so many Indians, the colonists turned to African slaves to work the new sugar plantations.

The colonizers also introduced plants and animals that were new to the Americas in what is referred to as the Columbian Exchange. These new plants and animals brought drastic changes to the environment. Europeans also began farming American plants such as maize and potatoes. Large harvests aided by these new American crops fueled European population growth while native populations declined.

Lesson Vocabulary

conquistador Spanish conqueror

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LESSON 4

Lesson Summary

SPAIN AND FRANCE IN THE AMERICAS

MODIFIED CORNELL NOTES

Enriched by conquests in the Americas, Spain financed an aggressive military policy in Europe. This aggression alarmed the Dutch, French, and English, who sought their own share of the riches in America. With the spread of the Protestant Reformation, religious divisions added to the conflict among nations in Europe.

The conquistadores were successful at conquering territory but not at running the colonies. Catholic **missionaries** aimed to convert Indians to Christianity and to persuade them to conform to Spanish culture. The missionaries relied on Spanish soldiers, who set up **presidios**, or forts, near the mission.

Spain's American empire was divided into two immense regions, New Spain and Peru. Each was ruled by a **viceroy** appointed by the king. Most of the colonists were men, and many took Indian wives. Their children became known as **mestizos**. The mestizos became the largest segment of Spain's colonial population by the eighteenth century. Next in proportion were enslaved Africans, especially in the Caribbean region. In both New Spain and Peru, the Spanish developed an urban and cosmopolitan culture.

Hernando de Soto and Francisco Vázquez de Coronado led expeditions into the lands north of Mexico. De Soto's men explored present-day Florida and other areas, leaving behind deadly new diseases. Coronado searched for a golden kingdom named Quivara, but found only villages of grass-thatched lodges. After the failures of de Soto and Coronado, the Spanish Crown lost interest in the northern lands. Friars tried to transform Indians into Hispanics by building **missions** in native villages. In New Mexico, the Pueblo Indians would not give up all their traditional beliefs. The missionaries' harsh punishments for these infractions angered the Pueblos.

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Lesson Vocabulary

missionary person sent to a foreign country in order to convert others to their religion

presidio fort built by the Spanish in colonial America, usually in what is today the U.S. Southwest and California

viceroy in colonial Spanish America, king-appointed official who governs a province, colony, or country

mestizos people in Spanish colonial America who were of European and Native American descent

missions religious settlements usually run by Catholic priests and friars in colonial Spanish America

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LESSON 4

Lesson Summary

SPAIN AND FRANCE IN THE AMERICAS (continued)

MODIFIED CORNELL NOTES

Conditions worsened during the 1660s and 1670s. A prolonged drought undercut the harvests, reducing many Pueblos to starvation. In 1680, the Pueblos revolted under the leadership of a shaman named Popé. The rebels destroyed and plundered missions, farms, and ranches. The Pueblo Revolt was the greatest setback that the Indians ever inflicted on colonial expansion. After Popé's death, the Spanish reclaimed New Mexico. The bloody revolt taught the Pueblos and the Spanish to compromise.

During the early 1500s, French explorers wanted to find a Northwest Passage to Asia. They probed the eastern coastline of North America, from present-day North Carolina to Newfoundland. The French king claimed the region around the St. Lawrence River as New France. French mariners fished for cod and hunted for whales and seals. They met Indian hunters who offered beaver fur in trade. The coastal Indians sought new stocks of beaver by invading the hunting territories of their neighbors, provoking wars between Indian groups.

The traders also plundered and killed one another in their competition for furs. To repel rivals, a French company built a fortified trading post on the St. Lawrence River in 1608. Quebec was the first permanent settlement in Canada. Its founder, Samuel de Champlain, traded with the Montagnais, Algonquin, and Huron Indians. In return, they expected Champlain to help them against their foes, the Iroquois, who lived to the south in what is now New York. The Iroquois acquired guns from Dutch traders on the Hudson River, becoming better armed than their enemies.

New France grew slowly. By 1700, the colony had only 15,000 colonists. Its government resembled that of New Spain. The French king appointed a military governor-general, a civil administrator, and a Catholic bishop. Like the Spanish, the French used Catholic priests as missionaries to convert the Indians. To the west, Indians dominated the vast hinterland of forest and lakes, where the colonists were few and scattered. In the Great Lakes and Illinois countries, the French established some small settlements. They lived by a mix of farming and trade. Many fur traders, known as *coureurs de bois*, married Indian women. The children of these marriages were known as the *metis*.

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Lesson Vocabulary

coureurs de bois from the French for "runner of the woods," French colonists who lived in the woods as fur traders

metis person in French colonial America who was of French and Native American descent

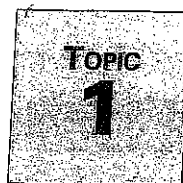
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LESSON 4

Lesson Summary**SPAIN AND FRANCE IN THE AMERICAS (continued)****MODIFIED CORNELL NOTES**

At the end of the 1600s, the French also established a southern colony along the lower Mississippi Valley. They named this Louisiana, in honor of King Louis XIV. In 1718, they founded New Orleans, which became the colony's largest town and leading seaport. The French valued Louisiana as a military base to keep the English from taking control of the Mississippi watershed.



Review Questions

AMERICA'S CULTURAL ROOTS

Answer the questions below using the information in the Lesson Summaries on the previous pages.

Lesson 1: The Peoples of the Americas

1. Describe the theories that scholars have about the arrival of Paleoindians in America.

2. **Identify Main Ideas** What cultural features did most Native American groups share?

Lesson 2: The West Africans

3. Describe the practice of slavery in West Africa.

4. **Identify Details** How did Mansa Musa alter the kingdom of Mali?

Lesson 3: Europeans Make Contact

5. **Summarize** Describe how life changed in Europe during the Renaissance.

6. Explain why the Europeans felt hemmed in by the trade routes of the Muslim world.



Review Questions

AMERICA'S CULTURAL ROOTS (continued)

Lesson 4: Spain and France in the Americas

7. How did Spain organize its American empire?

8. **Compare and Contrast** How were Spanish America and New France alike and how were they different?
