

Unit 1: The First Americans

Inquiry Journal

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 1: Origins of the First Americans Supporting Questions	
LESSON 1	<i>How does the study of artifacts contribute to the creation of a historical narrative?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 2	<i>How does oral history contribute to the crafting of a historical narrative?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 3	<i>How can artifacts and oral history challenge historical narratives?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 1: Origins of the First Americans

Compelling Question

How do historians use artifacts, oral history, and evolving research on the first Americans to construct and revise a historical narrative?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

[CER Paragraph to be written at conclusion of week.]



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 2: Diversity of Indigenous American Life Supporting Questions	
LESSON 4	<i>In what ways did tribes from various regions of North America exhibit similarities and differences in their cultures, traditions, and ways of life?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 5	<i>How did trade between tribes help spread culture between different Native American regions in North America?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 2: Diversity of Indigenous American Life

Compelling Question

How did interactions among Indigenous peoples shape and reflect the diversity and interconnectedness of their cultures, traditions, and ways of life?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

[CER Paragraph to be written at conclusion of week.]



Unit 1 Inquiry Journal: The First Americans

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Assessment	
LESSON 6	<i>What are the impacts of underrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in children’s literature?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 7	<i>How does the portrayal of Indigenous people in historical and contemporary media influence attitudes towards Indigenous cultures and issues?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 8	
	K:
	W:



Essential Question

How do primary and secondary sources help historians understand the past and explain the diverse ways of life of Indigenous societies in North America, including their interactions with the natural environment?

Directions: Read the essential question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

[CER Paragraph to be written at conclusion of week.]



Paragraph Template

Claim, Evidence, Reasoning

CLAIM (Your argument)	
EVIDENCE #1 (Facts, examples, sources)	
REASONING #1 (Explanation of how the evidence supports the claim)	
EVIDENCE #2 (Facts, examples, sources)	
REASONING #2 (Explanation of how the evidence supports the claim)	



Unit 1: The First Americans

Inquiry Journal (Exemplar)

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 1: Origins of the First Americans Supporting Questions	
LESSON 1	<i>How does the study of artifacts contribute to the creation of a historical narrative?</i>
	K: Artifacts are objects that still exist long after the people are gone. They can give clues about the way that people lived.
	W: How do archaeologists and historians know how old artifacts are?
LESSON 2	<i>How does oral history contribute to the crafting of a historical narrative?</i>
	K: Oral history is when the stories of the past have been spread by word of mouth instead of being written down.
	W: If the story is told in different ways by multiple people, how do you know which one to believe?
LESSON 3	<i>How can artifacts and oral history challenge historical narratives?</i>
	K: Historical narratives are found in textbooks. This would be hard to change because it is believed by so many people.
	W: How does the narrative get changed? Who gets to decide?



Topic 1: Origins of the First Americans

Compelling Question

How do historians use artifacts, oral history, and evolving research on the first Americans to construct and revise a historical narrative?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

Historians use artifacts, oral history, and evolving research on the first Americans to construct and revise historical narratives by integrating physical evidence with cultural perspectives and new discoveries. For example, the discovery of Clovis points in New Mexico served as key evidence in establishing the "Clovis First" theory, which held that the first Americans migrated across a land bridge from Asia. This evidence led historians to believe that these artifacts represented the earliest human activity in North America. However, oral histories from Native American tribes, which often describe arrivals by sea, challenge the land bridge theory and offer alternative narratives. As archaeologists uncovered pre-Clovis sites, such as those at Meadowcroft and Monte Verde, the evidence contradicted the Clovis First model, suggesting that human settlement in the Americas occurred earlier and possibly through multiple migration routes. By combining physical artifacts with oral traditions and the latest research findings, historians continually update and refine the historical narrative of the first Americans, recognizing that our understanding of the past is dynamic and subject to change with new evidence.



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 2: Diversity of Indigenous American Life Supporting Questions	
LESSON 4	<i>In what ways did tribes from various regions of North America exhibit similarities and differences in their cultures, traditions, and ways of life?</i>
	K: There were many different tribes in North America. What we know about these tribes has come from artifacts and oral history.
	W: What factors caused similarities and differences in Indigenous tribes in North America?
LESSON 5	<i>How did trade between tribes help spread culture between different Native American regions in North America?</i>
	K: The many different tribes in North America had varying cultures and ways of life. The Inka Road was a major way that some groups were able to interact across a long distance.
	W: What specific cultural practices or ideas were exchanged and how do we know this occurred?



Topic 2: Diversity of Indigenous American Life

Compelling Question

How did interactions among Indigenous peoples shape and reflect the diversity and interconnectedness of their cultures, traditions, and ways of life?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

Interactions among Indigenous peoples reflected both diversity and unity as the goods, ideas, and cultural practices were exchanged through trade networks. For example, the Mississippi River and the city of Cahokia were used as avenues and hubs for people to come together. Agricultural practices, such as Three-Sisters farming from the Eastern Woodlands region, and cultural ceremonies, such as the Sun Dance from the Plains region, would have been exchanged across vast regions. The interconnectedness of Indigenous peoples is evident as many shared beliefs, including animism, and values, including celebration of Two-Spirit people, can be seen throughout North America. By interacting through trade and cultural exchanges, Indigenous peoples were able to influence one another while also preserving their own unique traditions. Many aspects of culture were established in connection with their local environment. So while the exact aspects of a practice may be different across cultures, similarities can be seen in the broader nature of a ceremony or ritual. This created a rich tapestry of interconnected cultures where diversity thrived alongside shared practices.



Essential Question

How do primary and secondary sources help historians understand the past and explain the diverse ways of life of Indigenous societies in North America, including their interactions with the natural environment?

Directions: Read the essential question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

Primary and secondary sources are essential tools for historians studying Indigenous societies in North America, as they provide firsthand accounts and an analysis that help understand the past. Primary sources, such as oral histories and artifacts offer direct evidence of Indigenous experiences, beliefs, and interactions with the natural environment. Oral traditions, which have been passed down through generations in many Indigenous cultures, often recount historical events, creation stories, and the ways in which Indigenous societies understood their relationship with the land. For example, the records of the Iroquois Confederacy and the Haudenosaunee Great Law of Peace provide a framework for understanding governance. These primary sources help historians better understand the rich diversity of Indigenous ways of life and how they engaged with their environment. Secondary sources, on the other hand, help historians to interpret the broader effects of historical events. These sources, including scholarly articles and books help to combine information across various Indigenous societies. These interpretations help reveal how Indigenous communities adapted to changing environments. By combining primary and secondary sources, historians can construct a more thorough understanding of Indigenous societies in North America. Together, these sources allow historians to explain the diverse ways of life of Indigenous communities and their interactions with the natural environment.

