

The Americas

Earliest Americans
 Olmec Peoples
 Zapotec Peoples
 Andean Civilizations

The Earliest Americans

- Migrated from Asia over a land bridge called Beringia
 - Beringia appeared at the end of the last ice age (approx. 10,000 BC)
 - The build up of glaciers had lower sea levels & exposed land features that were normally under water.
 - People crossed between Asia & Alaska
 - Wild animals came as well



- Another theory says that people traveled from the Middle East to the Americas by boat.
- Ag: squash, gourds, beans, avocados & chilies which grew naturally in the area
 - Major change in diet come w/ the growing of maize = corn. (white or black)







- The story of developed civilizations in the Americas begins in MesoAmerica. (area between modern day Mexico & Honduras)



Olmec Peoples:






- Called the “mother culture” of the Americas
- Exist between 1200-400BC
- Lived along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico
- Rains a lot = lots of floods
- Gather salt & tar for trade
- Loved to build:
 - columns, alters, 44 ton sculpted heads
- Worshiped the jaguar spirit:
 - God of the rain, fertility, & maize
- Left no written records (only pictures & sculptures)



Zapotec Peoples:

- Settled in the Oaxaca Valley
- Biggest city was named Monte Alban
 - 25,000 people
 - Plaza, star observatory, pyramids, temples, & palaces
- Around 600AD the people just disappeared

Andean Peoples:

Civilization & where they lived	When they flourished	Aspects of Culture
Chavin Highlands of Peru	900BC-200BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious images in stone carvings • Pyramids • Giant earth mounds
Nazca Southern Peru	200BC-600AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigation system with canals • Pottery and textiles
Moche Northern Peru	100AD-700AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigation • Gold and silver jewelry • Musical Instruments

