

Table of Contents

UNIT SYNOPSIS	1
CONTENT STANDARDS	3
ROADMAP	7

UNIT SYNOPSIS

PURPOSE: Why study Indigenous American Communities?

The United States is often described as “a nation of immigrants.” While this is an important part of our national heritage, it is only one part of our history—and it is only true for immigrants who arrived of their own free will, beginning in the 17th century. Before European colonization, the Americas were home to over 2,000 diverse Indigenous communities. In this unit, you will introduce your students to some of the major Indigenous American cultural groups while engaging in immersive project-based learning and building key literacy skills.

The National Standards for History call for elementary students to “compare and contrast the different ways in which early Hawaiian and Native American peoples...adapted to their various environments and created their patterns of community life long ago.” This study leads your students through this rich comparative study of Indigenous Americans, starting with the Indigenous peoples of the Northwest Coast, then the Plains, the Southwest, and, finally, the Aztec Empire of Mesoamerica. In each week of the unit, you will guide students to explore the influence of the natural environment on a new group’s distinct way of life. In doing so, your students will be able to articulate aspects of culture and daily life that make each Indigenous community unique, as well as the common characteristics and beliefs Indigenous Americans shared. This approach illustrates the incredible diversity of pre-Columbian and present-day Indigenous American communities and combats the stereotypical misconception that all Indigenous Americans are “the same.”



Map depicting the major cultural regions of North and Central America.

You will introduce and reinforce important ideas about Indigenous American society through culturally responsive, whole-class Read Aloud books that build content knowledge throughout the unit. You will also challenge students to convey their understanding of Indigenous Americans through robust project work that reflects the area and culture they are learning about in class—such as designing their own painted pottery and Nahua textiles!

Connection to Scope And Sequence: If you are a Lavinia partner who uses our year-long Grade 1 scope and sequence, your first graders have just explored life in medieval African and European communities. As you begin this unit, connect this study of Indigenous Americans back to students' earlier studies of daily life in communities long ago. Concepts such as different roles for men, women, and children and each member of a larger community should feel familiar to your students. These connections will help you show students important ideas of change and continuity among different times, people, and places throughout history.

Following this unit, your first graders will complete their content-focused studies of community in another Insight Social Studies™ unit, *Anahuac, New Spain, Revolution: Mexican Communities Past and Present*. By the end of this sequence, your first graders will be able to explain the most important characteristics of medieval Europe and Indigenous American civilizations, worlds that will collide in the final unit on colonization and Mexican independence. This knowledge provides an essential foundation from which to understand the diversity and cultural heritage of communities in the U.S. that students will study as second graders.

Goals: Throughout this unit, students will develop a deep understanding of the culture, beliefs, daily lives, and achievements of diverse Indigenous American groups. Students will understand the distinct characteristics that made these cultural groups unique, as well as common customs and beliefs across Indigenous communities, such as the importance of and respect for their environment.

Standards-Based Historical Content Knowledge and Essential Questions: This unit develops students' understanding of standards-based concepts listed below. These Essential Questions and key ideas are based on the National Standards for History listed in appendix A, and they are foundational understandings that will prepare your students for their historical studies about community life in the rest of first grade and beyond. This unit focuses on inspiring curiosity about and appreciation of Indigenous American cultures across the Americas and the ways in which these groups were similar and different. Returning often to the following key ideas and Essential Questions and understanding how each lesson introduces or deepens student understanding of these ideas will help you keep instruction focused on the most important standards in this unit.

- **Who are Indigenous Americans? What was life like for the Indigenous Americans of the Northwest Coast?** Indigenous Americans were the first people to live here, and there were many distinct communities across North and Central America. The Indigenous Americans of the Northwest Coast are one of these groups; they adapted to life in their colder coastal environment and are known for their wooden carvings.
- **What was life like for the Indigenous Americans of the Plains? How were the Plains people similar to and different from the Indigenous Americans of the Northwest Coast?** Like the Northwest Coast people, the Plains people relied on their environment to

survive. The Indigenous Americans of the Plains were also skilled hunters and warriors who lived in nomadic communities across the Great Plains.

- What was life like for the Indigenous Americans of the Southwest? How were the Southwest people similar to and different from other Indigenous Americans? Like other Indigenous Americans, the Indigenous People of the Southwest were also heavily influenced by their environment and lived in collaborative communities. The unique desert environment of the Southwest was especially challenging, and it shaped Southwest customs, art, culture, and daily life.

CONTENT STANDARDS

Below are the standards **taught** and **assessed** in this unit.

Unit Standards (UCLA National Standards)

- **Standard 1B:** The student understands the different ways people of diverse racial, religious, and ethnic groups, and of various national origins have transmitted their beliefs and values.
- **Standard 2:** The history of students' own local community and how communities in North America varied long ago.
- **Standard 3A:** The student understands the history of indigenous peoples who first lived in their state or region.
- **Standard 7A:** The student understands the cultures and historical developments of selected societies in such places as Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe.

Texas Alignment (TEKS)

Geography

- 1.3: The student understands the relative location of places. The student is expected to:
(B) locate places using the four cardinal directions
- 1.4: The student understands the purpose of geographic tools, including maps and globes.
(B) locate and explore the community, Texas, and the United States on maps and globes.
- 1.5: The student understands physical and human characteristics of place to better understand their community and the world around them.
(A) identify and describe the physical characteristics of place such as landforms, bodies of water, Earth's resources, and weather; and
(B) identify and describe how geographic location influences the human characteristics of place such as shelter, clothing, food, and activities.

Economics:

- 1.6: The student understands how families meet basic human needs. The student is expected to:
(A) describe ways that families meet basic human needs
(B) describe similarities and differences in ways families meet basic human needs.
- 1.8: The student understands the condition of not being able to have all the goods and services one wants. The student is expected to:
(A) identify examples of people wanting more than they can have

Government:

- 1.10: The student understands the purpose of rules and laws. The student is expected to:
(A) explain the purpose for rules and laws in the home, school, and community; and
(B) identify rules and laws that establish order, provide security, and manage conflict.
- 1.11: The student understands the role of authority figures and public officials.
(A) identify the responsibilities of authority figures in the home, school, and community;

Culture:

- 1.14: The student understands the importance of family and community beliefs, language, and traditions.
(A) describe and explain the importance of beliefs, language, and traditions of families and communities; and
(B) explain the way folktales and legends reflect beliefs, language, and traditions of communities.

Science, technology, and society.

- 1.15: The student identifies individuals who created or invented new technology and understands how technology affects daily life, past and present. The student is expected to:
(A) describe how technology has affected the ways families live;
(B) describe how technology has affected communication, transportation, and recreation; and

Social Studies Skills:

- 1.16: The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including technology.

(A) gather information about a topic using a variety of valid oral and visual sources such as interviews, music, pictures, symbols, and artifacts with adult assistance; and
(B) sequence and categorize information.

1.17: The student communicates in oral, visual, and written forms.

(C) express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences;
(D) create and interpret visual and written material; and
(E) use social studies terminology correctly.

1.18: The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others. The student is expected to use problem-solving and decision-making processes to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution.

Florida Alignment (NGSSS)

American History:

Historical Inquiry and Analysis: SS.1.A:

- SS.1.A.1.1 - Develop an understanding of a primary source.
- SS.1.A.1.2 - Understand how to use the media center/other sources to find answers to questions about a historical topic.

Historical Knowledge: SS.1.A.2

- SS.1.A.2.1 – understand history tells the story of people and events of other times and places
- SS.1.A.2.2 – compare life now with life in the past
- SS.1.A.2.5 – distinguish between historical fact and fiction using various materials

Geography:

The World In Spatial Terms: SS.1.G.1

- SS.1.G.1.2 - Identify key elements (compass rose, cardinal directions, title, key/legend with symbols) of maps and globes .
- SS.1.G.1.3 –Construct a basic map using key elements including cardinal directions and map symbols.
- SS.1.G.1.4 - Identify a variety of physical features using a map and globe.

Economics:

Beginning Economics: SS.1.E.1

- SS.1.E.1.4 - Distinguish people as buyers, sellers, and producers of goods and services.
- SS.1.E.1.6 - Identify that people need to make choices because of scarce resources.

Civics and Government

Foundations of Government, Law, and American Political System

- SS.1.CG.1.1 – Explain the purpose of rules and laws in the home, school and community
- SS.1.CG.1.2 – Describe how the absence of rules and laws impacts individuals and the community

Structure and Function of Government

- SS.1.CG.3.2- Explain responsible ways for individuals and groups to make decisions

ROADMAP

Below is the recommended sequence of instruction for this unit.

At a Glance Unit 1: Early & Medieval African Communities								
Day	Lesson	Type	Day	Lesson	Type	Day	Lesson	Type
1	1	Read Aloud	16	8	Content Booster D	31	16	Read Aloud
2	1	Read Aloud	17	8	Content Booster D	32	17	Project: Buffalo Hides
3	2	Content Booster A	18	9	Read Aloud	33	17	Project: Buffalo Hides
4	2	Content Booster A	19	9	Read Aloud	34	17	Project: Buffalo Hides
5	3	Read Aloud	20	10	Content Booster E	35		Review
6	3	Read Aloud	21	10	Content Booster E	36		Assessment
7	4	Content Booster B	22	11	Read Aloud	37		Flex Day 1
8	4	Content Booster B	23	11	Read Aloud	38		Flex Day 2
9	5	Read Aloud	24	12	Read Aloud	39		Flex Day 3
10	5	Read Aloud	25	12	Read Aloud	40		Flex Day 4
11	6	Content Booster C	26	13	Content Booster F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and move flex days around as needed! • Reference your Scope and Sequence for scanning deadline! 		
12	6	Content Booster C	27	13	Content Booster F			
13	7	Project: Paper Canoe	28	14	Read Aloud			
14	7	Project: Paper Canoe	29	14	Read Aloud			
15	7	Project: Paper Canoe	30	16	Read Aloud			