**Ch. 6 Early American Civilizations**

*pg. 186*

-First Americans came from Asia

-during last ice age, sea levels dropped and land connected

-land bridge formed called Beringia

-followed animals into the Americas

-hunted/fished for food, nomadic lifestyle

-started to settle down once they learn to farm (agriculture)

-more stable food source, cities/population grow, more time for other skills

(art, building, tools, technology)

Mesoamerica – land that is now Mexico and Central America, first settled groups

are here

Olmecs – first builders (built burial mounds, pyramids, monuments)

-known as the “mother culture” because they influenced other

Groups

-worshiped the jaguar

-invented a calendar, made artwork, carved hieroglyphics in stone

Mayans – lived in Yucatan peninsula of Mexico

-learned from the Olmecs, excellent farmers

-developed into individual city-states, not an empire

-had social classes and cities were linked by trade

-worked with math and astronomy, accurate 365 day calendar

-advanced writing system of 800 glyphs (symbols), used stone or

a bark paper book called a codex

-worshiped many gods

-practiced bloodletting and human sacrifice

Aztecs – settle in the Mexico City area, capital Tenochtitlan (island in the

middle of a big lake)

-emperor ruled over the empire, different social classes also

-built floating gardens called chinampas

-massive human sacrifice (daily), usually of conquered enemies

Section 2 South American Cultures pg. 195

-first cultures appear on the west coast (Andes mountains)

Chavin – mother culture of S. America, very religious

Moche – developed irrigation systems for farming

-built roads, very wealthy (gold, silver, precious stones)

-used sun-dried bricks of clay/mud called adobe to build

Nazca – made huge drawings on the earth (geoglyphs) for their gods

Incas – learned from earlier groups, most powerful

-capital was Cuzco, emperor was Pachacuti

-took over neighboring groups

-all people had to pay a mita – labor tax

-united everyone by language (Quechua) and religion

-messages sent by chasquis – system of runners/messengers

-no writing system

-learned to work with metals and weave cloth

Section 3 Early North Americans p.201

-many different cultures, divided into 10 areas

Southwest

-first to develop farming

-built irrigation systems and pueblos – large apartment homes made

of stone and clay (adobe)

-some groups (Anasazi) built homes in caves or beneath cliffs

East

-built burial mounds, great traders (items found from many regions)

-formed alliances to keep the peace (Iroquois League)

Inuit (Eskimos)

-lived in igloos on frozen land of northern Canada

-hunted/fished for food

Northwest Coast

-hunted whales, different social classes

-Potlatch – ceremony in which gives are given to guests to show off

wealth

*Common beliefs* 1. Polytheistic

2. Respect for the land

3. Family most important (totems were symbols of unity)