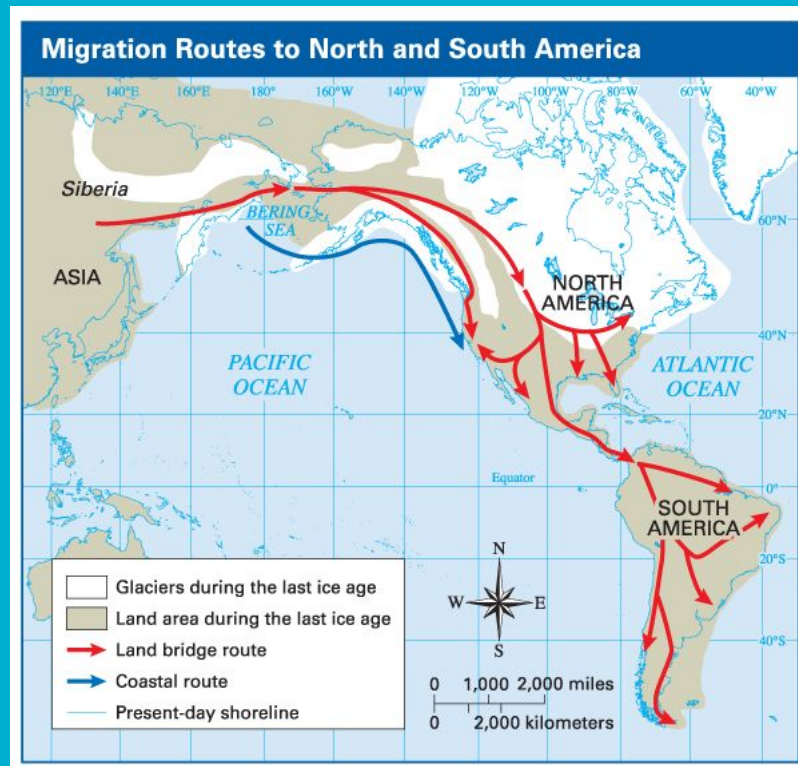


# Section 2- Migration



Today, most scientists agree that the first people in North America came from Asia.

This migration is estimated to have taken place during the last ice age, at least 12,500 years ago.

An ice age is a long period of time during which large areas of Earth's surface is covered with thick sheets of ice.

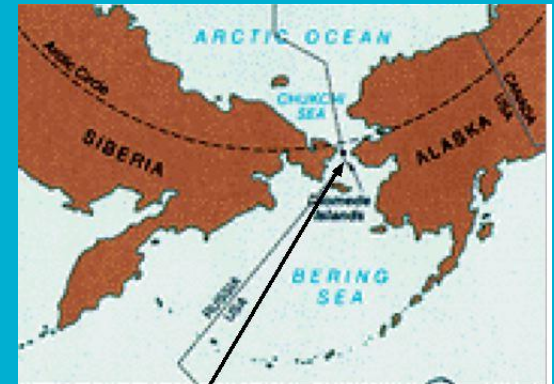


The last ice age began about 2.6 million years ago and ended about 10,000 years ago.

During the last part of the ice age, about 25,000 years ago, the Bering Sea did not separate Asia and North America, as it does today.

Instead, a bridge of land almost 1,000 miles wide connected them.

Visit: [http://instaar.colorado.edu/groups/QGISL/bering\\_land\\_bridge/](http://instaar.colorado.edu/groups/QGISL/bering_land_bridge/)



**Bering Strait**

The **Bering Strait** connects the **Arctic Ocean** and the **Bering Sea**.

Most scientists believe that the first Americans came from Siberia, which is a region in northeastern Asia.

The people living in this region followed and hunted big game, such as mammoths (large, elephant-like animals), bison (also called buffalo), and caribou (reindeer).



Scientists believe that these large animals ate the grass on the land bridge.

As the years passed, they moved across the land bridge. Small groups of Siberian hunters followed the animals, reaching North America after a long time.

Other Siberians may have moved along the southern coast of the land bridge in small boats. They may have continued along the Pacific coast of Alaska and Canada and then turned south.



For hundreds of years, early Americans hunted big game. The animals likely led the hunters south through North and South America, with groups of people settling in areas along the way. Others kept moving until they reached the southern tip of South America. The paths they took to reach their new homes are called migration routes.



# Section 3-Environments of American Indian Tribes



After the last ice age, there was a change in the climate that affected the plants and animals found in each area.

Different areas each have their own environment. Sunlight, air, water, land, animals, insects, and plants are parts of an environment.

A variety of environments appeared across North America following the ice age.

Over time, early American Indians settled in environments that differed greatly from one another.



One feature of an environment is its climate.

In each place, people survived by changing their ways of life.

They used what was around them in nature to build homes, make clothes, and get food.

Their homes and clothing were made to fit the climate.

American Indians adapted their way of life to what they found in the area around them.

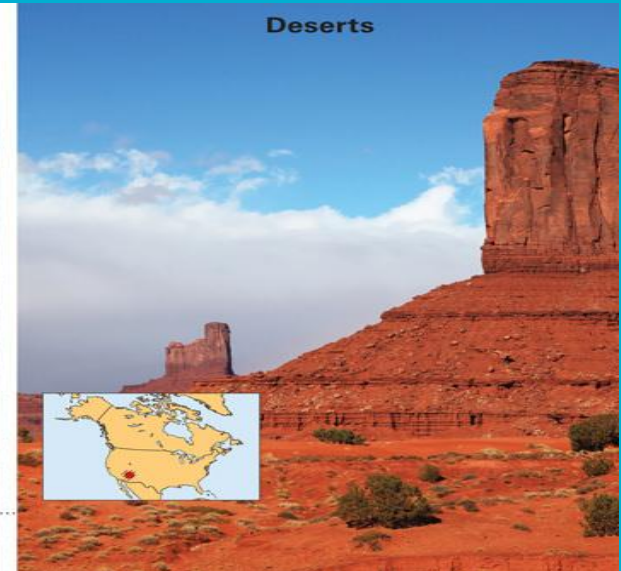
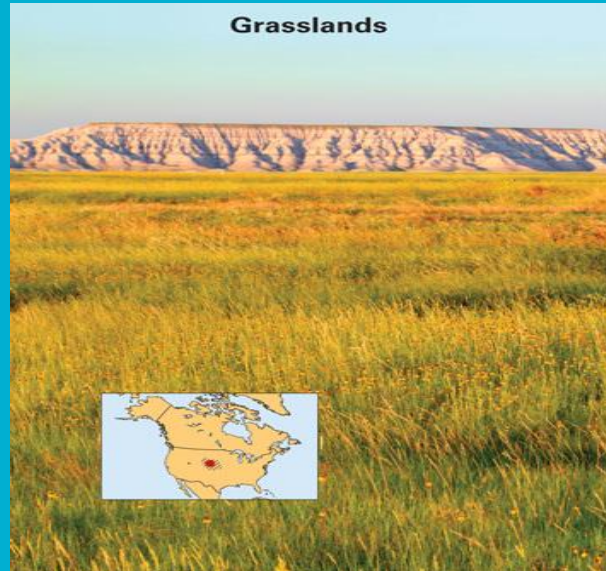
Each group found ways to use nearby natural resources wisely, which helped the people survive in their environment.

However, in areas with few resources, life proved to be difficult.

One environment American Indians lived in was the grasslands. Some grasslands in North America get only enough rain to support different types of grasses since most trees and bushes need more water to survive.

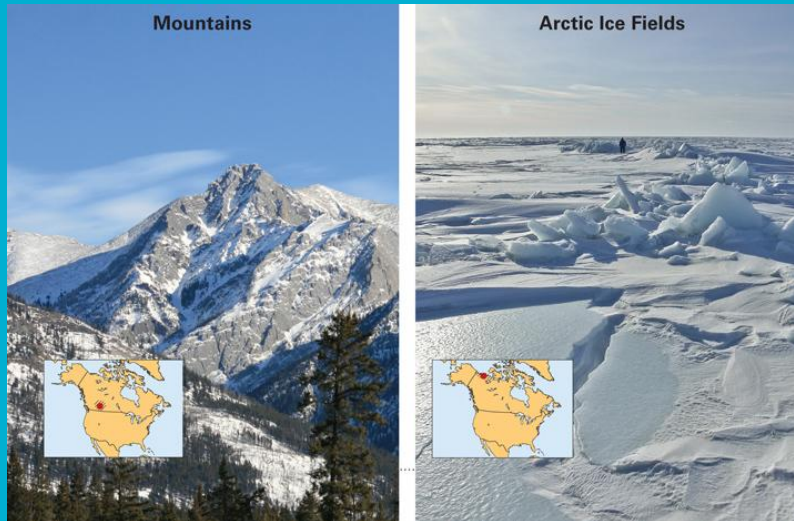
A second type of environment American Indians settled in was the desert, which gets very little rain.

People living in desert areas often dig wells and ditches to get enough water for drinking and for raising crops.



Some American Indians lived in the rainy and snowy mountain regions of North America. While forests of pine, fir, and spruce often grow below the highest points, the tops of mountains have little or no plant life.

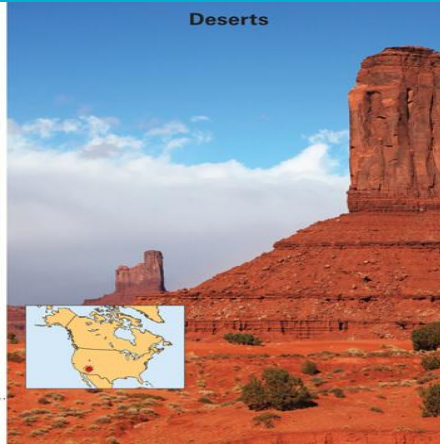
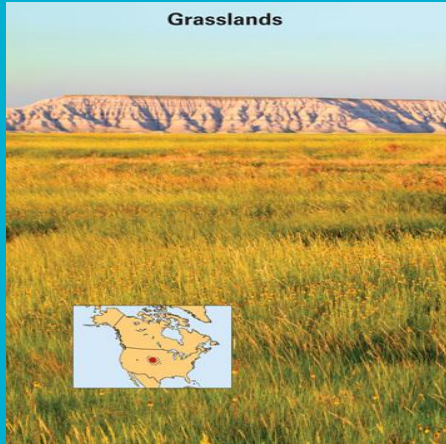
Other groups settled in the Arctic ice fields, which are near the North Pole. Here, huge sheets of ice cover the land for most of the year.



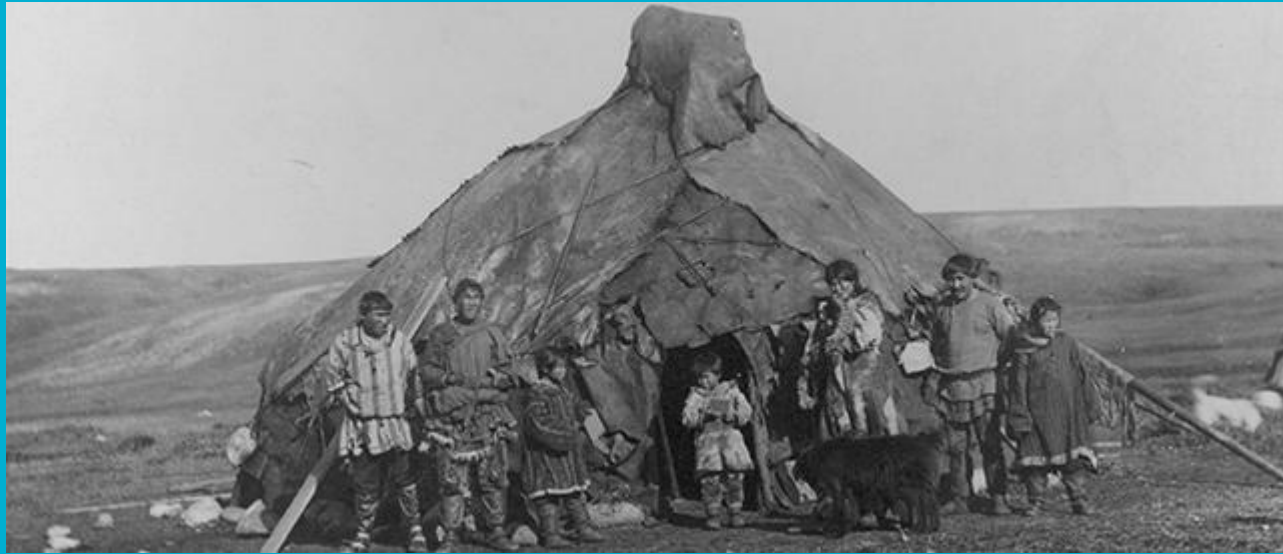
Most American Indians chose areas that were rich in **natural resources**. These environments had mild climates and plenty of food and water. Even though life was hard in places such as the desert of the Southwest and the icy Arctic region, some groups stayed in such regions where resources were scarce.

## Left Side Assignment

*Directions: Think about the different environments discussed in today's lesson (Grasslands, Desert, Mountains, Arctic Ice Fields.) If you were an American Indian settling into a new environment, which would you choose? Why? Be descriptive and draw a picture of your new home.*



# Section 4- The Inuit Tribe



One group that lived in a harsh environment were the Inuits, who are also known as Eskimos.

They built their culture in present-day northwestern Alaska, northern Canada, and Greenland. These places are part of Earth's Arctic region.

The Inuits had to adjust to their harsh environment.

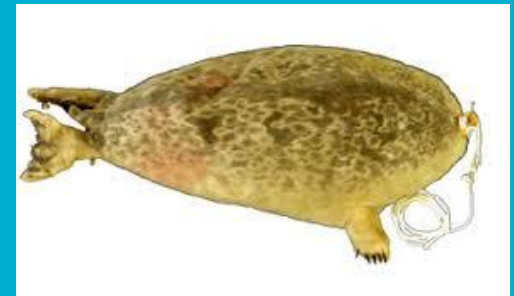
They hunted and fished animals such as whales, walruses, seals, caribou, polar bears, Arctic foxes, squirrels, salmon, and birds.

These adaptations were necessary for the Inuit to survive.



The Inuits did not waste any part of the animals that they caught. They ate the meat, burned animal fat for fuel, and sewed animal skins together to make clothing, blankets, and tents. They used bones to make dogsleds and to support tent frames, and they also carved them for tools such as knives and harpoons, or long spears.

The Inuits even learned to fill sealskins with air to make floats. They attached the floats to harpoons that they used to hunt walruses and whales. These floats helped to tire out the animals when they tried to escape by diving underwater.



To build shelters, the Inuits used the materials that they found around them.

In the summer, they made tents by stretching the skins of caribou or seals over driftwood. Sometimes they used whale bones to support the roof.

They placed heavy stones at the bottom of a tent to keep it in place.

In the winter, they built houses, called igloos, out of snow and ice.



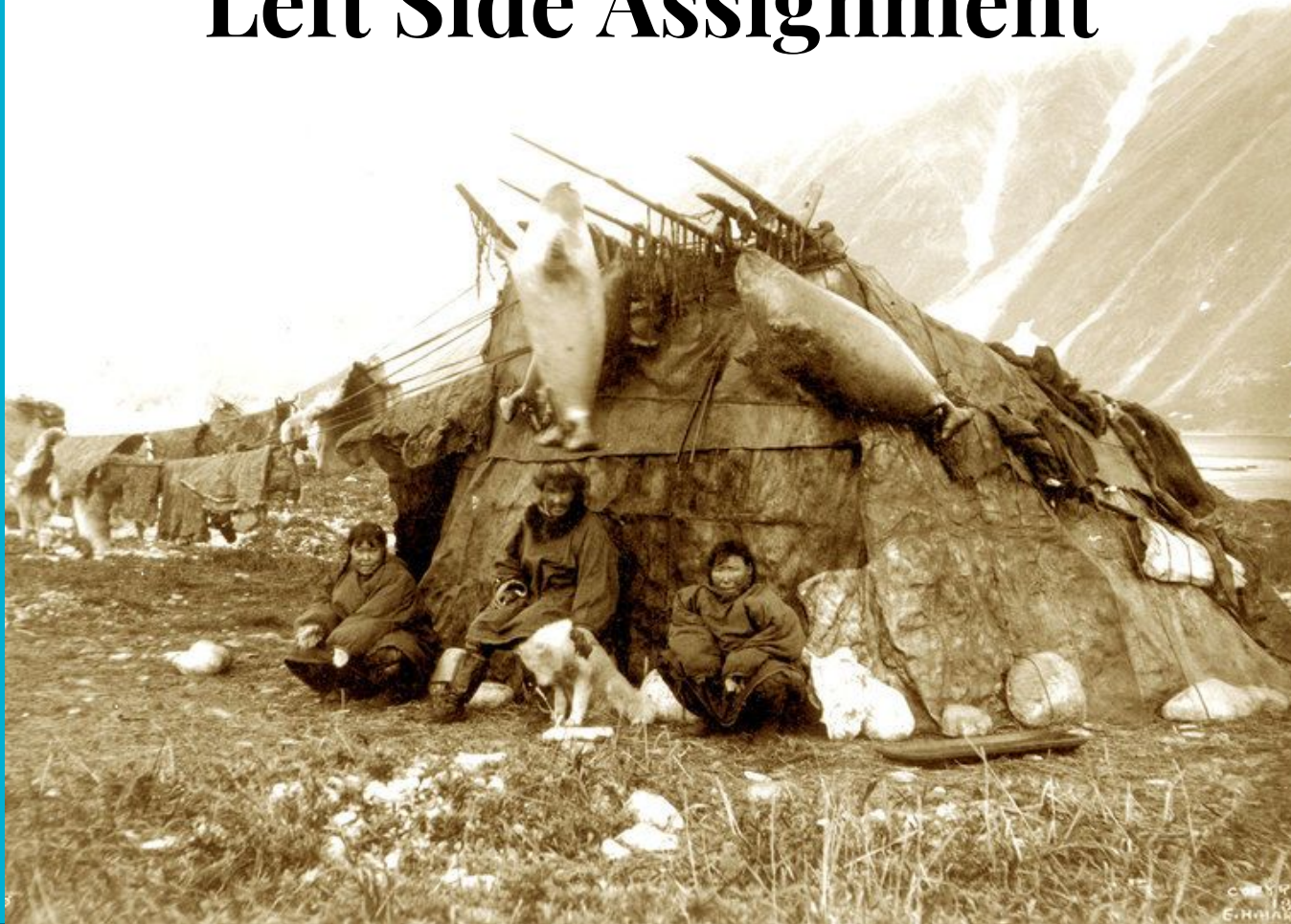
To keep warm, the Inuits dressed in animal skins and furs.

To protect their eyes from the bright glare of the sun shining on snow and ice, they wore snow goggles.

Snow goggles were made from bone or wood and had narrow openings to look through.



# Left Side Assignment



# Reading Further

## Lakota Tribe and Recording History



For a long time, American Indians did not write.

They told stories about their history, and sometimes they made drawings to keep records.



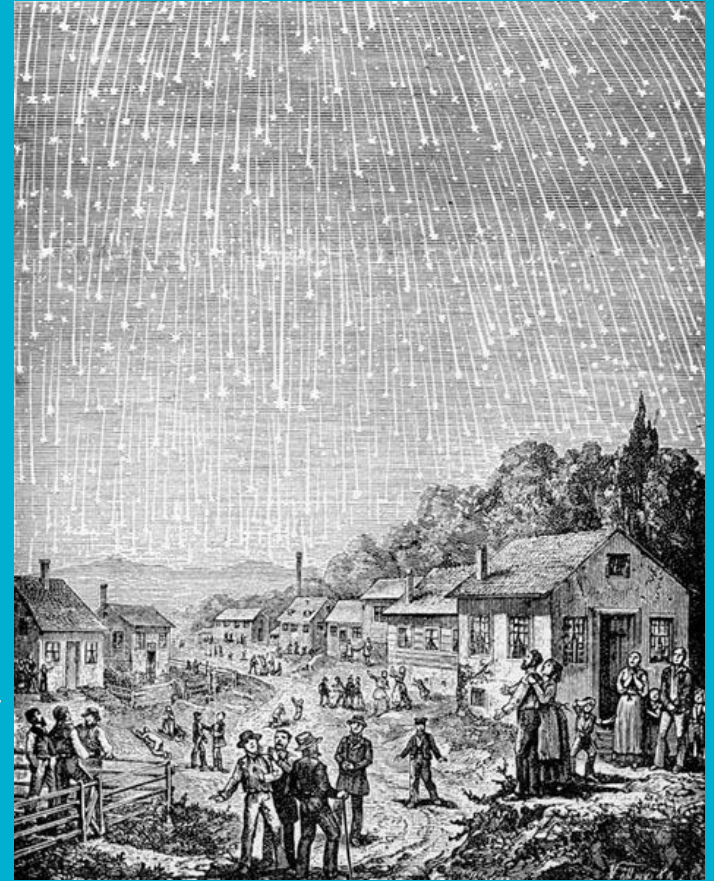
American Indians called the Lakotas lived on the Great Plains.

A group of Lakota families watched the night sky, certain that the world was coming to an end. Streaks of bright light darted above the Great Plains before falling into the blackness. Then new streaks flashed and fell across the sky—so many that one could not count them.

***(What was this grand display of fire in the heavens?)***

Historians now know the Lakotas observed the Leonid meteor shower in November 1833.

Scientists say that hundreds of thousands of shooting stars fell toward Earth on that cold, clear night.





The Lakotas who watched this amazing natural event would never forget it. They wanted to be sure that their children and grandchildren would know about it, so they made a record of the meteor shower for future generations.

To do this, the Lakotas would make a pictograph—such as a star—on an animal skin, or hide. The hide might already have other pictographs that represented memorable events from earlier years.

One pictograph might show a buffalo hunt, or perhaps a war dance. Another image shows the meteor shower and stands for the year 1833. The Lakotas began calling this year the Year the Stars Fell.

Nature was important to the Lakotas. For example, they used the first snowfall of winter to mark the start of each year.

These records are called “winter counts” and were made with pictographs. Each pictograph on a winter count showed a key event from a different year.

Winter counts are primary sources because the people who created them witnessed the events depicted in the pictographs. Historians study primary sources to learn about past events.

They also study **secondary sources**, or records of events created by people who were not there. A painting of the 1833 Leonid meteor shower by an artist who was not around during the event is an example of a secondary source.

In each band of Lakota, one individual called the keeper had the honor of painting the pictographs on the winter count.

For a long time, only a man could be the keeper. However, by the 1900s, women were occasionally allowed to take on this role.

The hides wore out over time, forcing the keeper to repaint the winter counts onto other hides. He might use cloth or perhaps paper if it was available.

The Lakotas made winter counts for many generations. But once they began to write in the 1800s, many Lakotas stopped using pictographs to keep records.

Today, some Lakotas use new forms of communication—like video and the Internet—to record their history.

# Left Side Assignment

Create your own winter count to show how your environment affects your life.

Think of five key events in your life that have been influenced by your natural surroundings. Choose events that you would like others to remember. For example, going on a family vacation to the mountains or beach near your home might be one event that you think is memorable.

Think of a pictograph, or picture, for each event. Pick a start point and an end point, and draw the pictographs in a circle on your “animal hide”. →



Share your winter counts with a classmate and try to figure out what each other’s five pictographs represent. How are your winter counts alike? How are they different? What do the events show about the environment in which you live?

**Day 5- Assessment Day!**

**Time to show what you KNOW!**