

## North American Indians in 1492 – Outline

### I. Alaska

- a. Eskimos—includes groups such as the Inupiat and Yupik
- b. Tundra—treeless permafrost with freezing temperatures
- c. Hunting and fishing—polar bears, caribou, and sea mammals

### II. Northwest Coast

- a. Pacific coast from Alaska to California
- b. Heavily forested—technology based on wood
- c. Fisherfolk—salmon, seals, shellfish, otters, and whales
- d. Potlatches—feasts with gifts for guests
- e. Totems—animal spirits
- f. Totem poles as family and tribal symbols

### III. Western Indians

- a. Located in California, Columbian Plateau, and Great Basin
- b. Hunter-gatherers (traveled)—antelope, berries, deer, elk, grass seed, rabbits, roots, waterfowl
- c. Tightly-woven baskets

### IV. Pueblo Indians

- a. Located along Rio Grande
- b. Farming (“Three Sisters” and cotton) along with hunting and gathering
- c. Lived in villages—pueblo is Spanish for “village”
- d. Houses with multiple stories
- e. Kivas—religious rooms located underground

### V. Plains Indians

- a. Farmed along river valleys—“Three Sisters” plus sunflowers and tobacco
- b. Groups such as the Apache
- c. Hunted buffalo—but there were no horses in the Americas before the Spanish arrived
- d. Settled around pueblos to trade during the winter

### VI. Southeastern Indians

- a. Movement of Mississippians from large settlements to smaller villages along river valleys
- b. Groups such as the Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Creek Indians
- c. Creek Indians—red towns and white towns
- d. War leaders drawn from red towns

- e. Main chiefs drawn from white towns
- f. Hunted animals like deer in the winter
- g. Green Corn Dance—played two-stick lacrosse

## VII. Northeast Indians

- a. Groups such as Algonquin and Iroquois
- b. Algonquins lived in wigwams (round, covered in bark)
- c. Iroquois lived in longhouses (about 10 families in each)
- d. Mixture of farming and hunting
- e. Slash-and-burn agriculture

## VIII. League of the Iroquois

- a. Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, and Seneca
- b. Great Law of Peace created by prophet known as the Peacemaker and promoted by Hiawatha
- c. Grand Council, consisting of chiefs from each tribe, operated under fairly democratic constitution
- d. Protected rights of women and children

## IX. Review Questions

- a. What was life like for groups such as the Inupiat and Yupik in Alaska?
- b. What were potlatches?
- c. What is a pueblo?
- d. What large animal was hunted by Plains Indians?
- e. Where and when was two-stick lacrosse played?
- f. Describe the homes of the Algonquin and the Iroquois.
- g. What was the League of the Iroquois and what did it do?
- h. How might you generally describe the groups of Native Americans living in North America in 1492?