



History Knowledge Organiser

Year: 7

Topic: Native Americans

Half term: Summer One



- It is thought that the first Americans arrived 40,000 years ago, during the last Ice Age, crossing what is known as the Bering Strait from Eurasia to North America.
- Different groups of Native Americans, in different parts of North America, lived very different lives; these were the Plains, Woodlands and Deserts.
- Their environment affected how Native Americans saw and interacted with the world around them.
- In 1492, when Columbus reached the Americas, the number of Native Americans was at least 5 million.
- In 1620 a party of Puritans from Britain landed in America and to begin with had good relations with Native Americans.
- By the 1630s these settlers began to take land away from the Natives.
- Relations got worse; Native Americans were forced to live on tiny reservations and there were lots of battles between the two sides.
- The discovery of gold in 1848 caused great changes to happen in a short amount of time.
- Native Americans panned for gold but within 10 years, the Europeans murdered whole tribes and stole their land to keep the gold for themselves.
- By 1890 the population of Native Americans was just 250,000.

Homework tasks

1. Learn the key words and their definitions.
2. Design your own KO using the knowledge gained in your lessons.
3. Research a Native American belief and create a story board about it.
4. Choose one of the topics we have covered in this unit and teach a family member. Ask them to write a review of what you have told them.

Submit your homework to your class teacher for achievement points!

→ 40,000 years ago the first Americans arrive in North America

→ Late 900s, Leif Erikson, the first European to land in North America

→ 1492 - Christopher Columbus "discovers" America, thinking he found India. The population of Native Americans was at least 5 million.

→ 1566 -earliest European settlement. Spanish settle in St Augustine, coming up from Central America.

→ 1607 - the English settle in Jamestown

→ 1620 - Puritans arrive on the East Coast. English settle in Plymouth
Dutch settle in New Amsterdam

→ 1812 - Russians settle near San Francisco

→ 1848 - Gold is discovered in California

→ 1861 - American Civil War begins

→ 1865 - American Civil War ends

→ 1890 - population of Native Americans has decreased by 95%, to 250,000. European population had risen to over 75 million

Key Terms

Tribe	A social division in a traditional society consisting of families or communities
Puritan	Christians who wanted church services to be simple, and all teaching to come from the Bible
Immune	Resistant to a particular disease or illness
Reservations	Small areas of often poor-quality land on which tribes were forced to live
Sacred	Regarded with great respect and reverence by a particular religion, group, or individual.
Panned	Search for gold in rivers.
Culture	Way of life
Portrayal	How something is presented

Suggested Reading:

- **Sundown** by John Joseph Matthews
- **The Round House** by Louise Erdrich
- **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** by Sherman Alexie
- **Love Medicine** series by Louise Erdrich

Suggested Viewing

- Pocahontas
- The Legend of Sarila
- Brother Bear
- Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron (Miss Woolnough's favourite film!)