

# **Teacher's Guide for DIG: *Who Were The First Americans***

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## **Objectives:**

Students will gain an understanding on the different tools and evidence archaeologists use to piece together the facts about the past

Students will comprehend specific science vocabulary

Students will apply knowledge of cultural art and traditions to their own projects

## **Stones and Bones: pg. 4**

Why is it important to leave archeological discoveries where you find them?

Are you up to the test? Experiment: how many students would be able to resist temptation for touching, even keeping something cool they found. Place something of interest in the middle of the hallway during class change. Predict how many students will either not notice or just ignore it. Also predict how many students will pick it up, try to keep it or show it others. Chart your discoveries.

## **A Butcher Shop: pg. 4**

What types of tools did Neanderthals use to butcher their kill?

## **Tomb Tubes: pg. 5**

Why was brass more valuable than gold to the ingenious Taino people?

What makes something valuable to a culture? What is valuable to our culture and why?

## **Ice Age Americans: pg. 6-10**

Vocabulary: Geneticists, DNA, Mutation

According to the article, the large geographic area of Native language suggests that Native Americans have been on the North American continent at least how long?

What does DNA decide?

Discuss some things that we can visibly see in our relatives that we know would be genetically passed down generation to generation. Exp. eye color, mom and sister have the same nose, etc...

By counting the number of mutations in the x and y chromosomes, how long can scientists now guess that Native Americans have been living in the Western Hemisphere?

Look at a world map or globe and have students define the borders that make up the Western Hemisphere.

### **Who owns the past?: pg. 11**

Although Native Americans were here long before Europeans, when were they given citizenship, and the right to vote? Discuss if the class thinks this is fair.

Which two presidents made huge steps in restoring Native Americans true abilities to live their own way?

### **The Cherokee Story of Grandmother Spider: pg. 12-13**

Play a story retelling game. Begin with one student who starts off the summarization by stating one sentence of the story. Move from student to student with each child adding only one sentence to the summery.

### **Clues in the Gulf: pg. 15-16**

Vocabulary: Inhabitant, Prehistoric, Continental Shelf, Adaptation, Excavation

When was the last ice age?

Create a timeline showing the ice age and its melting process.

### **Sticks in the Mud: pg. 18-22**

What did geologist's study in order to determine the age of the stakes found at the Boston site?

Draw a flow chart of the stick discoveries. After completing the chart answer the following question in a paragraph form.

Explain why archeological evidence throughout the years has changed scientist's minds on the original estimate of how old the stakes are.

### **Birdman and Friends: pg. 24-28**

Vocabulary: artifacts, depiction, mythical, severed, symbolic

Name at least three symbols that we can recognize and know their meanings. Discuss where one might find these symbols.

Project: Pass out a piece of paper to each student. Using colors, pens, pencils, etc. have each student create their own symbol. On the back of the paper have students write a description of their symbols' meaning.

### **Mysteries of Cahokia: pg. 28-30**

Vocabulary: periodically, commodity, depletion

What similarities were found between the Cahokia site and other Native American sites?

What evidence supports the thought that Cahokia was a city that imported and exported

goods?

**‘Selam’ A Child of Lucy’s Time: pg. 32**

Selam means what in the Ethiopian language?

Name some amazing discoveries that archeologists have found out about Australopithecus Aferansis based on the skeletal remains of Selam.

**Hohokam Shell Art: pg. 33**

Project: Bring in one shell for each student. If shells are not available, use big beads. Have students paint the shells and then trade with other students.

**Dig This! Petroglyphs: pg. 34**

Project; each student needs to bring in a rock or slab on concrete, granite etc. At least 2 in by 2 inch. Not bigger than what can be held comfortably. Have students paint their symbol they created before on the rock. As a class, place symbolically painted rocks around the outside of the school for future archeologists to find.