Chapter 1: The Atlantic World (to 1600)

Section 1: The Native American World

- How did people settle the Americas and adapt to the environment of North America?
- What customs and beliefs did the early Native Americans share?
- How did trade and beliefs about land affect the Native American economies?

I. Settlement of the Americas

A. The earliest Americans came from the continent of Asia.
B. A “land bridge” between Asia and North America allowed migration, the movement of people for the purpose of settling in a new place.
C. That land bridge, now covered with water, is known as the Bering Strait.
D. Some experts believe that people migrated to the Americas before the land bridge was exposed, entering from more than one point.
E. These ancient Americans and their descendants are known as Native Americans, or Indians. Over time, Native American societies settled in different areas and developed a variety of languages and customs.

II. North American Life

A. The North American environment varies greatly from region to region. The first inhabitants had to adapt their way of life to fit their environment.
B. Many early Americans were nomads, people who move their homes regularly in search of food.
C. In the Americas, farming practices that began in Mexico, spread to the Southwest region of North America, where corn, squash, beans, and peppers were grown.
D. The North
   - The Inuit and Aleut peoples were skilled at hunting on ice and snow.
   - Other nomadic groups hunted, fished, and gathered food in present-day Canada and Alaska.

The Northwest Coast
   - Waterways were the primary source of food for the Native Americans of the Northwest Coast.

California
   - The Chumash, Yurok, and other Native American groups ate deep-sea fish, food products made with flour from acorns, and beans from the mesquite plant.

The Plateau
   - The Chinook and Cayuse survived on salmon and edible roots. They built villages on high riverbanks.

The Great Basin
   - People worked together in small groups to hunt and gather food, including roots, pine nuts, rabbits, and insects.
III. Shared Customs and Beliefs
   A. Despite their different lifestyles, early Native Americans shared a culture that included a common social structure and religion.
      1. Social Structure — Family relationships, called kinship, determined the social structure. Kinship groups provided medical and child care, settlement of disputes, and education. Kinship groups were organized by clans. A clan is made up of groups of families who are all descended from a common ancestor.
      2. Religion — Early Native Americans believed that the most powerful forces in the world were spiritual. Their religious ceremonies recognized the power of those forces.
      3. Preserving Culture — Early Native Americans relied on oral history to keep their beliefs and customs alive. Through oral history, traditions are passed from generation to generation by word of mouth.

IV. Native American Trade
   A. All Native American groups carried out barter, both within their group and outside it. Trading food and goods was seen as a show of hospitality, friendship, and respect.
   B. Native American trading routes crisscrossed North America.
   C. Native Americans used natural trade routes, like the Mississippi River and the Great Lakes, but they also built a network of trading paths.
   D. These routes often led to centers where Native Americans held trade gatherings during the summer.

V. Native Americans and Land
   A. Native Americans did not trade, buy, or sell land. They believed that land was part of nature and could not be owned.
   B. The Europeans who arrived in North America in the 1400s did not understand these Indian attitudes about land.
   C. Fundamental differences in beliefs about land would have lasting consequences for both the Native Americans and the European settlers.

Section 2: The European World
   - What was life like in Europe during the early Middle Ages?
   - What changes took place during the late Middle Ages?
   - What was the Renaissance?

I. The Early Middle Ages
   A. European Invasions
      1. Germanic tribes settled across much of Europe.
      2. Viking warriors attacked from the north and caused great destruction to parts of Europe.
      3. The Muslim empire spread across North Africa and into Spain.
   B. Feudalism
      1. Under the political and economic system of feudalism, powerful nobles divided their landholdings among lesser lords.
      2. Peasants, called serfs, worked the land, and gave the lord a portion of the harvest in exchange for shelter and protection.
   C. Medieval Religion
      1. The Roman Catholic Church governed the spiritual and daily lives of medieval Christians.
      2. The Pope had authority over rulers and often appointed them.
      3. The clergy were virtually the only educated people in medieval Europe.
II. The Late Middle Ages
A. The Crusades — From 1096 to 1291, the Church organized a series of military campaigns, known as the Crusades, to take Jerusalem from the Turks. The Crusades failed, but they increased Europeans’ awareness of the rest of the world and accelerated economic change.
B. The Growth of Cities — Centers of trade grew into towns and cities, especially in northern Italy and northern France. This growth had three major effects:
1. It created a new middle class, a social class between the rich and poor.
2. It revived a money economy.
3. It contributed to the eventual breakdown of the feudal system.
C. “Black Death” — In the 1300s, the bubonic plague, carried by fleas and rats, destroyed one third of Europe’s population. From the devastation came a loss of religious faith and doubts about the Church.
D. The Rise of Monarchs
1. Europe’s growing wealth increased the power of monarchs.
2. Monarchs, those who rule over a state or territory, sometimes clashed with each other and with their nobles.
3. In 1215, England’s King John was forced by his nobles to sign a document, the Magna Carta, granting them various legal rights.
4. The Magna Carta would become the foundation for American ideals of liberty and justice.
E. The Rise of Universities
1. Nobles and wealthy men began enrolling in the universities that arose in the 1100s.
2. Ancient Greek and Roman writings were translated into Latin and became available in Europe.
3. Arab knowledge of math and science intrigued Europeans.
4. Latin literature was translated into languages more commonly understood.
5. Roman architecture inspired the builders of Europe’s cathedrals.

III. Key Events in Europe, circa 500–1600

| circa 500–1000 | Breakup of the Roman Empire opens Europe to invasions |
| 600s | Rise of the Muslim empire |
| 700s | Feudal system evolves; trade and money economy dissolve |
| 1066 | Norman Conquest leads to blending of Anglo-Saxon and French cultures |
| 1096-1291 | Crusades draw Europe from isolation and help revive trade |
| 1100s | Rise of universities |
| 1215 | King John signs the Magna Carta |
| 1275 | Merchants including Marco Polo arrive in China |
| 1347 | Bubonic plague reaches Europe |
| 1300s | Renaissance begins in Italy |
| 1418 | Prince Henry of Portugal starts navigation school |
| 1455 | Gutenberg prints Bible text using movable type |
| 1469 | Marriage of Isabella and Ferdinand unites kingdoms in Spain |
| 1488 | Portugal’s Bartolomeu Dias sails around the tip of Africa |
| 1492 | Muslims and Jews driven from Spain |
| 1500s | Northern Renaissance begins |
| 1517 | Reformation begins |

IV. The Renaissance
A. The Renaissance, an era of enormous creativity and rapid change, began in Italy in the 1300s and reached its height in the 1500s.

**The Pursuit of Learning**
- This period produced many great figures of Western civilization: Michelangelo, Da Vinci, and Shakespeare.
- European thinkers began using reason and experimentation to understand the physical world.

**Cultural Change in Italy**
- Wealthy merchants became supporters of the arts.
- The Medici family became the most famous Renaissance patrons of the arts.

**A Golden Age**
- The core philosophy of this era was humanism, which explored the physical world and the individual’s role in it.
- Artistic subjects were treated more realistically.
V. The Renaissance—Sea Travel
A. Instruments developed by Renaissance scientists made long-range sea travel possible.
   1. Compass: used to determine direction
   2. Astrolabe and quadrant: used to determine approximate location
B. Prince Henry of Portugal, later called Prince Henry the Navigator, established a mariners’ school in Portugal. His seamen developed the caravel, a ship that could sail against the wind as well as with it. Portuguese mariner Vasco da Gama sailed from Portugal to India, opening the first sea route from Europe to Asia.
C. Spain became determined to surpass Portugal in the race to explore new sea routes and to bring Christianity to new lands.

Section 3: The World of the West Africans
- How did West Africans and Europeans first meet?
- What are some key features of early West African cultures?
- How did a trading relationship develop between Europe and the kingdoms of West Africa?
- What was the role of slavery in African society?

I. West Africans and Europeans Meet
A. Europeans had been trading with North Africans since ancient times. The North Africans traded gold which came from their West African trading partners.
B. Europeans decided to bypass the North Africans and go straight to the West Africans for gold.
C. In the 1400s, Spain and Portugal competed for that gold as they explored Africa’s Atlantic Coast.
D. Early relations between the two cultures were mostly peaceful.

II. West African Cultures

Geography and Livelihoods
- In the rainforest region, Africans hunted, fished, mined, and farmed.
- Nomads hunted and raised livestock on the savanna, a region near the equator with tropical grasslands and scattered trees.
- The deserts remained largely uninhabited. Some towns sprang up around watering holes, where camel caravans stopped to rest.

Family Life
- Societies were organized according to kinship groups.
- A kinship group that can trace its line of origin to a common ancestor is called a lineage.
- West Africa’s ruling classes generally came from powerful lineage groups.

Religion
- Africans worshipped a Supreme Being as well as many lesser gods and goddesses, or spirits.
- Spirits were thought to inhabit everything in the natural world.
- Humans were thought to be living spirits both before and after death.
III. Kingdoms and Trade
A. Benin
1. The coastal kingdom of Benin arose in the late 1200s.
2. Benin’s great wealth came from trading in such goods as palm oil, ivory, and beautiful woods.
3. Benin’s artisans were known for producing unique sculptures of human heads; those sculptures with beards and helmets are believed to represent the Portuguese.
B. Songhai
1. The Songhai empire, which stretched across much of West Africa, existed from the mid-1400s to the late 1590s.
2. Songhai had a complex government with departments for defense, banking, and farming.
3. Its capital city, Timbuktu, was an important center of learning.
4. Songhai was made a Muslim empire under the famed monarch Askia Muhammad.
5. Traders paid heavy fees to move their goods across Songhai.

IV. Slavery in Africa
A. Europeans placed a high value on land because it was so scarce (in short supply). Because land was plentiful in Africa, Africans valued labor more than land. The power of African leaders was judged by how many people they ruled, rather than how much land they controlled.
B. Slaves provided the labor needed to work the land, and also became valuable as items of trade. Slaves in Africa tended to be people who had been captured in war, orphans, criminals, and other rejects of society.
C. African slaves became adopted members of the kinship group that enslaved them. They frequently married into a lineage and could move up in society and out of slave status.
D. Children of slaves were not slaves themselves. Slaves carried out roles that were not limited to tough physical labor. Some slaves became soldiers and administrators.

Section IV: The Atlantic World Is Born
- What is known about the early life of Christopher Columbus?
- What events occurred on Columbus’s expeditions?
- Describe the debate concerning the impact of Columbus’s voyages.

I. Christopher Columbus
A. Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa, Italy, in 1451. His father was a merchant. His mother was the daughter of a wool weaver.
B. After spending some time as a mapmaker and a trader, he traveled to Portugal for navigator training.
C. He honed his navigational skills on journeys to Iceland, Ireland, and West Africa.
D. Columbus was ambitious and stubborn. He was highly religious and believed that God had given him a heroic mission: to seek a westward sea route to the “Indies,” meaning China, India, and other Asian lands.

II. A Daring Expedition
A. In 1492, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain granted Columbus the title of noble and agreed to sponsor his journey. Spanish nobles and clergy wanted his mission to succeed for several reasons:
1. The people of any new non-Christian lands would be ripe for conversion to Catholicism.
2. Wealthy merchants and royalty wanted a direct trade route that bypassed the existing Muslim-controlled routes.
3. An easier western route to Asia would give Spanish traders an advantage over Portuguese traders.
B. In 1492, Columbus set off with three ships, the Niña, Pinta, and Santa María. He had underestimated the distance of his journey. Two months after setting sail, he and his crew landed in the Bahamas, instead of Asia.
C. The Native Americans welcomed Columbus and gave him gifts: parrots, cotton thread, and spears tipped with fish teeth.
D. Columbus traveled to other islands and collected more gifts—often by force—including Native Americans, to present to the rulers of Spain.
E. Columbus returned to Spain and was awarded the governorship of the present-day island of Hispaniola in the Caribbean.
F. Columbus made four more trips to the Americas. When Spanish settlers complained about his governing of Hispaniola, Columbus lost his position.
G. He died in 1506, never accepting that he had discovered a new continent.

III. Columbus’s Impact
A. The Columbian Exchange
1. Columbus’s journeys launched a new era of transatlantic trade.
2. The Columbian Exchange allowed Europeans and Native Americans to exchange goods, weapons, and culture. Unfortunately, Native Americans became exposed to Europe’s most deadly diseases; they had no resistance to these germs, and many perished.

B. Treaty of Tordesillas
1. European Catholics believed that the Pope had the authority to divide up any newly conquered non-Christian lands. In 1494, Portugal and Spain signed the Treaty of Tordesillas, under which the two countries divided all lands on Earth not already claimed by other Christians.

C. Africans Enslaved
1. Portugal and Spain established plantations or large farming operations that produced crops for sale. Such crops are called cash crops. The plantations supplied the American foods, such as sugar and pineapple, that Europeans demanded.
2. At first, Native Americans were kidnapped and forced to work the plantations. But their lack of resistance to many European diseases made them an unreliable work force. As a result, Europeans began bringing enslaved Africans to the Americas.
3. Europeans regarded slaves as property, and as such, many slaves were mistreated.
4. Estimates of the total number of West Africans abducted and taken to North and South America range from about 9 million to more than 11 million.

Key People, Terms, and Questions:
Define the following terms and answer the questions in complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper. NOT all answers are found in the notes; you will have to use your textbook to answer some of the questions.

Section 1: The Native American World
- migration
- nomad
- kinship
- clan
- oral history
- barter

1. What are nomads? Give some examples of nomadic groups.
2. How were kinship and clan membership important to the structure of Native American societies?
3. Why did Native Americans keep an oral history?
4. What types of items did various Native American groups use for barter?

Section 2: The European World
- Middle Ages
- feudalism
- Crusades
- middle class
- monarch
- Magna Carta

5. What were the Middle Ages?
6. What was feudalism?
7. What is the relationship between the rise of the middle class and the increased power of monarchs?
8. What was the importance of the Magna Carta?
9. What events led to the Reformation?

Section 3: The World of the West Africans
- savanna
- lineage
- scarce

10. How did trade develop between the West Africans and the Europeans? What items were traded?
11. Describe the savanna and other vegetation regions of West Africa
12. What is the importance of lineage in West African society
13. What does scarce mean?
14. What were the religious traditions of West Africa?
15. What were some characteristics of the Benin and Songhai governments?

Section IV: The Atlantic World Is Born
- Columbian Exchange
- Treaty of Tordesillas
- Plantation
- cash crop

16. What did the Spanish hope to gain from Columbus's voyage?
17. What was the Columbian Exchange
18. What did the Treaty of Tordesillas accomplish
19. How were plantations and cash crops connected to the slave trade?