Lesson 1
Prehistory

• Much of what we know about the past and about the earliest people who lived in Alabama comes from fossils and artifacts. Scientists have to look for clues from these fossils and artifacts because there was not a written language during that time. This period of history is called prehistory.
Fossils

• Paleontologists are scientists who study fossils. A fossil is the preserved remains of a plant or animal from long ago. Examples of fossils are shells, leaf prints, and skeletons.
Paleontologist

United Streaming “Paleontologists and Fossils” segment:
http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?guidAssetId=9BC5E52E-1C81-4E21-B7A3-FA9975E7E442

A song about fossils:
http://www.songsforteaching.com/curriculumrocks/fossils.mp3
Artifacts

- Archaeologists are scientists who study the lives and cultures of people from the past. An artifact is an object that was used by people long ago. Examples of artifacts are tools, bowls, and weapons.
Archaeologist

United Streaming “More Information About Archeologists and Artifacts” segment
http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?guidAssetId=CDCE97A8-2123-4DF8-9900-445FF2728C8D&blnFromSearch=1

Artifact Website
http://www.kidsdigreed.com/default.asp
First Alabamians

The first people to come to North America followed animals over a land bridge from Asia called the Bering Strait. Water now covers what used to be this land bridge. The first people to cross the Bering Strait migrated south. To migrate means to move from one place to another.

http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?guidAssetId=9992B834-A80D-400E-ABFD-E90CAF50C1C0&blnFromSearch=1
The Four Prehistoric Native American Time Periods

• Paleo-Indian
• Archaic
• Woodland
• Mississippian
Paleo-Indian Time Period

Native Americans in the Paleo-Indian time period:
Crossed the Bering Strait and migrated to Alabama
Were hunter-gatherers because they hunted large animals and gathered plants
They followed very large animals
They migrated long distances
Archaic Time Period

Native Americans in the Archaic time period:

People hunted smaller animals because the large animals became extinct.
They migrated less.
Invented the atlatl which is a spear that could be thrown.
They lived in caves and made the first shelters.
Fished for the first time.
Woodland Time Period

Native Americans in the Woodland time period:
Used a bow and arrow to hunt
Began to practice **agriculture** (plant and grow crops)
Lived in villages
Stayed in houses all year
Mississippian Time Period

Native Americans in the Mississippian time period:

Had the first **government** (system of ruling people)

Had chiefs

Made mounds for ceremonies and burial

Were craftspeople and made pottery, jewelry, and tools
Lesson 1 Links

Information on the 4 time periods:

http://bama.ua.edu/~alaarch/prehistoricalabama/paleoindian.htm

Archaeologist game:

http://bama.ua.edu/~alaarch/trueorfalsese-game/trueorfalse1.htm

Artifact game:

http://bama.ua.edu/~alaarch/trueorfalsese-game/trueorfalse1.htm
Lesson 1 Review

• **Paleontologists** study fossils. **Fossils** are preserved remains of plants or animals.

• **Archaeologists** study artifacts. **Artifacts** are objects that were made and used by people long ago.

• The first Native Americans **migrated**, or moved from one place to another, over the Bering Strait. The **Bering Strait** is a land bridge connecting Asia to North America.

• **Hunter-gatherers** gathered plants and hunted animals.

• **Agriculture** is planting and growing crops.

• Can you name one thing each Native American time period is known for?
Lesson 2
Native Americans Died Out

Explorers from Spain came to Alabama in the 1500’s. They carried germs that caused the Native Americans in Alabama to get sick. Native Americans were not able to fight the germs and many died. The Native Americans who survived formed four new groups of Native Americans in Alabama.

Look at the map on p. 77
4 Groups of Alabama Native Americans

- Choctaw
- Chickasaw
- Cherokee
- Creek
Cherokee

• Lived in Northeast Alabama
• Known as the “principle people”
• Had one chief in war and another in peace
• Sequoyah invented the Cherokee alphabet

Cherokee written language
http://www.native-languages.org/cherokee_animals.htm

What their houses looked like (the top pictures)
http://www.native-languages.org/houses.htm#daubhouse

Website about the Cherokee:
http://www.bigorrin.org/cherokee_kids.htm
Chickasaw
• Lived in Northwest Alabama
• Known to be great warriors
• Great hunters

Chickasaw website:
http://www.bigorrin.org/chickasaw_kids.htm
Choctaw

- Lived in Southwest Alabama
- Known to be friendly and they sold their land
- One of the most powerful
- The liked to flatten their heads

Choctaw Website
http://www.bigorrin.org/choctaw_kids.htm
Creek

• Lived in central and southeast Alabama
• Lived in the largest land area of Alabama
• Gave Alabama its name

Creek Website
http://www.bigorrin.org/creek_kids.htm
Alabama Native Americans
Chant

Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek
These are our Indians and this is their beat.

Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek
Alabama Indians are really neat.
Native American Life

• All of Alabama’s Native Americans had much in common because they lived close together.
• They shared a common folklore, or beliefs and customs. They passed down their beliefs through stories.
• Each group was led by chiefs (Cherokee and Creek had two chiefs).
• Men cleared fields, harvested corn, built homes, and hunted animals.
• Women cooked meals, cared for children, and made clothes and baskets.
Green Corn Ceremony

• The Green Corn Ceremony was held to give thanks for their harvest
• To get ready for the ceremony, women cleaned everything
• The men put out the last year’s fire and lit a new fire
• People enjoyed games and playing music
Native American Traditions

• Moundville Native American Festival
• Living historians that tell stories passed down for generations
• Names of places (Alabama, Eufaula, Tuscaloosa)

Moundville Native American Festival
http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?guidAssetId=C3F6281F-7B20-495F-822C-B3CBA1259432&blnFromSearch=1
Native American Facts

- Corn was the most important food
- People worshipped the sun
- Their most important contribution was the way they cared for the land
- Deer was used for clothing
- Kids gathered nuts, berries, fruit, and wild plants
Native American Facts

• Girls married at 13 or 14 years old
• Boys married at 16
• The women owned the family home
• Most Indians did not live in teepees
• Shelters were made of vines, mud, wood, and cane
• Played games and instruments
Review for Lesson 2

- Germs brought by explorers killed many Native Americans
- Men cleared fields, harvested crops, built homes, and hunted animals
- Women cared for children, cooked meals, and made clothes and pottery
- The Green Corn Ceremony was held to give thanks for the harvest
- Native Americans liked to dance, play games, and play instruments for recreation
Review for Lesson 2

- Native Americans gave us corn
- They worshipped the sun
- Their most important contribution was the way they cared for the land
- Their clothes were made of deer skin
- Boys married at 16, girls married at 13 or 14
- Review what each Native American tribe was known for