

Lesson 28 — The First Americans

American History • ages 8–12 • 30 minutes • one screen, the free game, this page

At a Glance

- Game: The Homeschool Climb, History of the Americans for Kids section (free, no login, plays in the browser) — read.globalsovereignuniversity.org/homeschool-climb.html#americans. Also on the Homeschool hub: globalsovereignuniversity.org/homeschool.
- Ages & time: American History • ages 8–12 • 30 minutes • one screen, the free game, this page.
- Prep (2 min): read the Teaching Creed once, open the game to the History of the Americans for Kids section, and have a map of the Americas nearby. That's the whole setup.

Why this lesson

The American story did not begin in 1620 or 1776. It began more than ten thousand years earlier, when the first people crossed into the Americas and spread across two continents. Their nations built cities, farms, trade routes and cliff towns. This lesson starts there, with the book's story of the first Americans, then uses the climb to walk the whole American story forward from those first peoples.

What the learner will be able to do

- Explain how and when the first people reached the Americas.
- Describe two ways the first Americans lived, such as farming and trade.
- Explain that there were many Native nations, each with its own language and way of life.
- Place the first Americans at the start of the American timeline.

The 30-Minute Climb

How to read this: the gold box in each step is your lesson, word for word — run it exactly. The notes beneath are optional support. “The room/the group” = your family; “host” = you.

1 • The Hook (3 min)

“How long ago do you think people first lived in America? Write down a guess.” (Most people guess a few hundred years. The answer is more than ten thousand.)

Say it like this: collect the guesses, then reveal the real answer and point to the land bridge on the map.

Watch for / if it stalls: ask how people could cross from Asia without boats. That question leads straight to the ice bridge.

2 • Play Together (12 min)

Climb the History of the Americans for Kids section together. Read each teach card aloud, then vote. Stop on the first card, about the Native nations, and talk about it before going on.

Two rituals make it work: (1) read each teach card aloud before the question appears; (2) everyone votes before anyone clicks, so no one just follows the screen.

Watch for / if it stalls: on the first card, point on the map to where different nations lived. Hundreds of nations means hundreds of languages and ways of life.

3 • The Talk (8 min)

1. How did the first Americans reach the land? 2. What did they build, grow and trade? 3. Why is it wrong to think American history starts with the Pilgrims?

You're not fishing for a right answer — you're listening for depth:

- Q1 — across a land bridge from Asia during the Ice Age, and along the Pacific coast.
- Q2 — listen for corn and farming, mound cities, cliff towns and trade across the continent.
- Q3 — thousands of years of history came before. Leaving it out leaves out the first Americans.

4 • Solo Climb (5 min)

Answer the questions at your own pace.

Why solo: each learner should be able to tell the story's beginning on their own.

5 • The Takeaway (2 min)

"The American story is more than ten thousand years old, and the first Americans wrote its first chapter." • Homework: pick one Native nation from your own region and find three facts about how its people lived.

The badge moment: finishing all five steps earns the Bronze ring of this lesson's badge, The Chronicler. Mark it on the Passport now; the homework is how Silver and Gold are earned during the week.

The Teaching Creed

You are not the expert; the game is. Your job is to vote last, read aloud well, and ask "why?" one more time than feels natural. Celebrate wrong answers loudly — in here, wrong is where the lesson lives.

GENO — the GSU tutor you can actually TALK to, free, 24/7, understands 70+ languages (32 fully optimized) — can explain any answer a second way.

Adapt It & Measure It

Differentiation

- Younger (8–9): act out the long walk across the land bridge, then plant pretend corn.
- One child: visit a local museum, or a library book, about Native peoples of your own region.
- Large co-op: each team researches one way of life (hunting, farming, trading, building) and reports back.
- Older child (11–12): compare two Native nations from different regions and how their land shaped their lives.

Evidence of learning (no exam)

Look for three things — Tried (found three facts about a Native nation from their region), Noticed (can explain how the first people reached the Americas), Changed (places the first Americans at the start of the American timeline). Those three words are the whole rubric, and they map onto the badge tiers below.

Gamify It — The Campus Climb

Every GSU lesson is one badge on the Climber's Passport, each earned at four depths — the GSU standard Bronze → Silver → Gold → Platinum.

LESSON 28 BADGE — The Chronicler · Bronze — The Climb: finished the 30-minute lesson, all five steps. · Silver — The Try: found three facts about a Native nation from their own region. · Gold — The Proof: reached Gold on the History of the Americans climb and told the story of the first Americans in their own words. · Platinum — The Teacher: ran this lesson as host for someone else. The harvest of a teacher is teachers.

The book behind this lesson: History of the Americans for Kids, by Dr. Gene A Constant — Chapter 1 (The Great Ice Bridge Adventure), Chapter 6 (Learning to Grow Food) and Chapter 14 (Many Nations, Many Ways).

"Every person on Earth is born with an American spirit: an untamed yearning for a better tomorrow." — Dr. Gene A. Constant

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