Ancient America, Before 1492

**Archaeology and History**

* Historians and Archaeologists use artifacts to reconstruct what happened in the past
* Arch. focus on the physical remains (pottery, clothing, buildings)
* Historians focus on the writings, teachings and historical records left behind
* Writing originated in China, Egypt and Central America around 8,000 years ago
* Symbolic representations are not considered language

**The First Americans**

* They migrated from Asia, more specifically, across the land bridge in the Bering Strait.
* They hunted large mammals

**African and Asian Origins**

* There was a supercontinent called Pangea
  + We originated in Africa about 2 million years ago
    - We evolved into Homo Erectus
* BP : years before the present; any time before 2000 years ago
* First migrants from the Bering Strait are called the Paleo Indians
  + Small bands of hunters (no more than 25)

**Paleo-Indian Hunters**

* Clovis Point: a tool they used to kill their prey
* Early preservation techniques included submerging the bodies filled with stones in icy lakes

**Southwestern Cultures**

* Mogollon
  + A dozen pit houses
  + Had houses that were ancestors to the **kiva** houses made later on
* Hohokam culture
  + Rise in the salinity of the soil lead to the decline in crop return
* Anasazi culture
  + Pueblo Bonito
    - Found in Chaco Canyon, NM
    - Huge stone walled pueblos
    - Much like an apartment complex
    - They had an understanding of summer and winter
      * Likely believed in higher powers
    - Drought lead to the dispersal of the Anasazi culture
* Burial mounds were created for dead people
  + Only the elite seem to have gotten this treatment given the amount of time and effort it took to construct
  + There also seemed to be a chiefdom
    - A division of power and labor
  + Hopewell culture originated in Ohio and this is where the majority of the mounds were made