

**Reading  
Through  
History**

**Pre-History &  
Early Exploration**

Excerpt from Oklahoma History  
by Jake Henderson & Robert Marshall  
©2014

All images are taken from public domain.  
This includes images taken by employees of  
various US Government agencies;  
images published prior to 1923;  
or images that have otherwise  
been released to public domain.

**Please visit our sites at**  
**<https://www.facebook.com/ReadingThroughHistory>**  
**<http://readingthroughhistory.com>**

**Earliest Native Settlers**

*Native Americans have lived in Oklahoma for thousands of years. Which native tribes lived in the area? What were their lives like?*

The earliest natives to live in Oklahoma were nomadic wanderers. These tribes hunted big-game animals such as the woolly mammoth. The oldest settlements found in the state belong to the Clovis people. The tribe was given this name because evidence of their existence was first discovered near Clovis, New Mexico. The Clovis people lived in Oklahoma approximately 8,000 to 12,000 years ago.



Archaeologists have found considerable evidence of the Clovis people's presence, as well as that of other ancient native tribes. Spear points, tar-lined bags (for carrying water), and mammoth skulls with painted markings have all been discovered. They have also found multiple sites where mammoth were tracked down and killed at that location.

About 7,000 years ago, bands of foragers moved into what is today Oklahoma. The foragers collected seeds, nuts, roots, and berries. They hunted smaller animals than their predecessors, including deer, antelope, rabbits, wild turkey, and even mice. Remnants of their society have been discovered as well. Bags made of animal skin, sandals, rugs, and baskets have all been identified.

As time progressed, the native tribes living in Oklahoma began farming. Evidence suggests that farmers were living in the area as far back as 2,000 years ago. These natives lived in small villages and assisted each other in tending their crops and fields. They also helped each other defend their homes from any outside threats.

Cultivation of the ground was done by hand, using sticks and small tools made of stone or perhaps bone. Crops included corn, beans, squash, sunflowers, and tobacco. These tribes also hunted, using bows and arrows, as well as axes.

A little more than 500 years ago, the Spiro mound builders were living in far eastern Oklahoma. The Spiro were ancestors of the Caddo tribe and a considerable amount is known about the tribe today. The men were talented craftsmen, creating items from shells, copper, and stone. Women produced garments, bags, and blankets made from various types of animal fur and feathers.

The tribe amused themselves by playing a game called chunky. Chunky was popular amongst tribes across North America. It involved rolling a disc-shaped stone across the ground while participants attempted to throw spears as close to the stone as possible. The earliest explorers who encountered these tribes claimed that the natives would play this game endlessly during their free time.

*Words to watch for:*

*nomadic forager  
remnants cultivation*

The tribe is known as the mound builders because of one type of historic artifact they left behind. The Spiro Mounds are large mounds made of cedar logs which were covered by a significant amount of dirt. The dirt was brought in by hand, using baskets full of loose earth. Twelve mounds have been discovered in all. The purposes of these mounds are debated, but it is believed that two of them served as religious temples, while nine others were constructed as homes. One seems to have been built as a burial mound. In 1933, this burial mound was excavated by archaeologists. Many priceless artifacts were likely taken and sold by looters, but much valuable knowledge was still gained from the excavation of this site.

Today, the Spiro mounds can still be visited. The mounds are located at the Spiro Mounds State Archaeological Park just outside of Spiro, Oklahoma.

**Multiple Choice:** *Select the choice that completes the statement or answers the question.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best summarizes the earliest native settlers in Oklahoma?
  - a. The earliest settlers were farmers who raised beans, squash, sunflowers, and tobacco.
  - b. The earliest settlers were nomadic wanderers who hunted big game like the woolly mammoth.
  - c. The earliest settlers were French fur trappers who trapped raccoons and beaver.
  - d. The earliest settlers were Spanish conquistadors who believed there was gold in the area.
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following is not evidence, found by archaeologists, of the Clovis people?
  - a. spear points and tar-lined bags made for carrying water
  - b. journals and logs left by Clovis hunters
  - c. mammoth skulls with painted markings
  - d. sites where mammoth were tracked down and killed
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best identifies crops raised by the farmers of 2,000 years ago?
  - a. corn, beans, squash, sunflowers, and tobacco
  - b. wheat, barley, rye, and potatoes
  - c. broccoli, okra, corn, tomatoes, and beets
  - d. milo, canola, peanuts, and sunflowers
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best summarizes the game known as chunky?
  - a. It involved small sticks with baskets attached. The object of the game was to use the sticks to throw a ball into hoops at either end of the playing field.
  - b. It involved kicking a ball as far as they could and then racing to see who could reach it first.
  - c. It involved hitting a ball with a stick and running bases, very similar to baseball.
  - d. It involved rolling a disc-shaped stone, with participants throwing spears as close to the stone as possible.
  
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best describes the Spiro Mounds?
  - a. The Spiro Mounds were made of cedar logs covered with dirt. They were used for religious temples and burial mounds.
  - b. The Spiro Mounds were constructed of bricks and mortar. They were used as housing by ancestors of the Caddo.
  - c. The Spiro Mounds were supposedly made of solid gold. Although many archaeologists have searched for them, the mounds have never been found.
  - d. The Spiro Mounds were made entirely of ivory. They were used strictly as burial chambers for wealthy tribe members.

**Vocabulary:** *Match each word with its correct definition. Consider how the word is used in the lesson. This might help you define each term. Use a dictionary to help if necessary.*

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| a. nomad         | d. remnants    |
| b. archaeologist | e. cultivation |
| c. forage        |                |
6. \_\_\_\_\_ small parts or fragments that are leftover
  7. \_\_\_\_\_ one who studies the artifacts and other remains of ancient cultures
  8. \_\_\_\_\_ a wanderer who has no established home and moves in search of food
  9. \_\_\_\_\_ the preparation of ground to promote the growth of crops
  10. \_\_\_\_\_ searching for food

**Guided Reading:** *Fill in the blanks below to create complete sentences.*

1. The earliest natives to live in Oklahoma were nomadic \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ have found considerable evidence of the Clovis peoples presence, as well as that of other ancient native tribes.
3. Foragers hunted smaller animals than their predecessors, including deer, antelope, \_\_\_\_\_, wild turkey, and even mice.
4. As time progressed, the native tribes living in Oklahoma began \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The tribes of about 2,000 years ago also hunted, using bows and \_\_\_\_\_, as well as axes.
6. The Spiro women produced garments, bags, and \_\_\_\_\_ made from various types of animal fur and feathers.
7. The tribe amused themselves by playing a game called \_\_\_\_\_.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Spiro Mounds have been discovered in all.
9. Many priceless artifacts had been taken from the Spiro Mounds and sold by \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Today, the mounds are located at the Spiro Mounds State Archaeological Park, which is just outside of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Summarize:** *Answer the following questions in the space provided. Attempt to respond in a complete sentence for each question. Be sure to use correct capitalization and punctuation!*

1. Who were the Spiro Mound builders the ancestors of?
  
2. What did foragers collect?
  
3. When were the Spiro Mounds excavated?
  
4. Where was the first evidence of the Clovis tribes found?
  
5. Why do you suppose so much is known about the Spiro Mound builders today?
  
6. How was cultivation done 2,000 years ago?

**Student Response:** *Write a paragraph addressing the questions raised below. A thorough response should consist of three to five complete sentences.*

7. Why do you suppose it is so difficult for us to learn about ancient tribes that lived hundreds, or even thousands of years ago? Explain your answer as thoroughly as possible.

**Francisco Coronado & Spanish Exploration**

*In the 1500s, several Spaniards explored the southwest region of the United States. Who were these explorers? What were they searching for?*

Francisco Coronado was a Spanish conquistador (conqueror) who arrived in New Spain (Mexico) in 1535. He was 25 years old and, like most other conquistadors, searching for gold and glory. Rumors had reached the Spaniards of fabulous cities off to the north. Legends claimed that these cities contained untold riches. The residents of these cities supposedly had so much gold that they ate their meals from golden plates and used golden utensils. The cities were known as Cíbola, or the seven cities of gold.



On February 23, 1540, Coronado set out with a large expedition of about 400 Spaniards, over 1,000 Mexican Indians, and a large number of family members and servants. The group took with them a large herd of cattle, sheep, and hogs, all of which were animals introduced to North America by the Spaniards.

They traveled throughout the southwest region of what is now the United States, exploring the regions that are Arizona and New Mexico today. Each step of the way, instead of cities of gold, they found simple Native American villages. Their hopes were frequently aroused by the distant sight of dwellings which appeared to shimmer as if made of gold. However, when they arrived, they found only adobe huts. The adobes were made of mud bricks, and an optical illusion caused the distant golden appearance.

At each village they visited, Coronado displayed little respect for the natives living there. He forced the villagers to carry his men's baggage and equipment, robbed them of their food, and even took tribal chiefs hostage.

*Words to watch for:*

*conquistador adobe*

*illusion fabled*

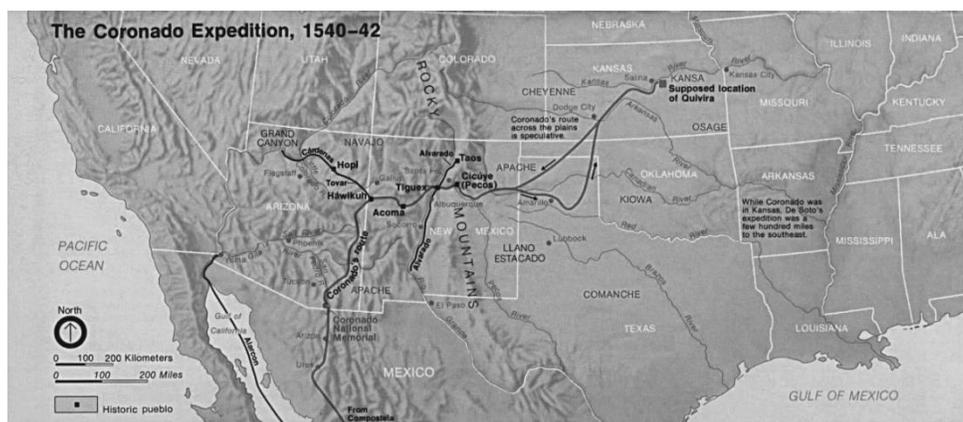
Eventually, Coronado was introduced to a native guide, The Turk. The Turk told Coronado of a different mythical city, the legendary golden city of Quivira. The Turk offered to guide Coronado and his expedition to this fabled city. Today, it is highly speculated that The Turk's true intention was simply to lead Coronado far away from his own people.

From there, The Turk led Coronado's expedition into the panhandle of Texas as well as Oklahoma, where Coronado took notes of what he observed. He and his men were awed by the vastness of the Great Plains. They saw enormous herds of buffalo, but few trees. In fact, there were so few trees that his men were reduced to using buffalo manure as fuel for their fires. He also observed a tribe of Apache who hunted the buffalo, ate the meat raw, and used the hides for tents and clothing.

Coronado and his men traveled into Kansas and crossed the Arkansas River. Eventually, they arrived at a Native American village (most likely ancestors of the Wichita). It was not a city of gold as Coronado had hoped for. Instead, he had found straw-thatched huts and fields of corn, beans, and squash. He and his party stayed with the villagers for twenty-five days, making observations and taking notes. Disappointed, Coronado had The Turk executed for deceiving him before returning to Mexico.

Friar Juan Padilla had traveled with Coronado during this first journey. After returning to Mexico, Friar Padilla hoped to Christianize the tribe they had visited. He, two of his followers, and a conquistador named Andres de Campo, set out to find the village once more. The villagers welcomed them warmly, and Friar Padilla had much success in his missionary work. Therefore, he and de Campo sought out another village. They found the Kaw tribe less receptive and Friar Padilla was killed. De Campo and Friar Padilla's followers returned to Mexico, traveling through large portions of Kansas, central Oklahoma, and Texas. Just as Coronado had done, they took extensive notes of all that they saw. The three men finally returned to Mexico five years after their journey had begun.

Juan de Oñate was another Spanish conquistador who was sure he could succeed where Coronado had failed. In 1601, he undertook his own expedition of the Great Plains in search of the fabled cities of gold. He explored the Canadian River region and saw vast prairies where "the grass was high enough to conceal a horse". Similar to Coronado's expedition, he found no cities of gold, only simple native villages.



**Multiple Choice:** *Select the choice that completes the statement or answers the question.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following statements about Francisco Coronado is *not* accurate?
  - a. Coronado had traveled to New Spain (Mexico) in search of gold and glory.
  - b. Coronado hoped to Christianize the natives while exploring North America.
  - c. Coronado was a 25-year-old conquistador when his journey began.
  - d. Coronado was searching for the Seven Cities of Cibola.
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best summarizes how Coronado treated the Native Americans he encountered?
  - a. He had little respect for the natives, forcing them to carry his equipment while robbing them of their food.
  - b. Coronado was very friendly towards the natives and traded many items with them.
  - c. Coronado attempted to be friendly, but was chased away by the Native Americans who attacked him.
  - d. Coronado did not encounter any Native Americans during his expedition.
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best describes the likely intentions of The Turk as he guided Coronado and his expedition?
  - a. The Turk hoped to lead them to the mythical city of Quívira.
  - b. The Turk hoped to lead them into an ambush.
  - c. The Turk hoped that Coronado might take him back to Spain.
  - d. The Turk hoped to guide the Spaniards away from his own people.
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best summarizes the purpose of Juan Padilla's expedition?
  - a. Padilla was searching for the Seven Cities of Cibola.
  - b. Padilla was searching for the Fountain of Youth.
  - c. Padilla was attempting to Christianize the Wichita Indians.
  - d. Padilla was attempting to locate the source of the Red River.
  
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following statements about Juan de Oñate is *not* true?
  - a. Oñate was searching for the fabled cities of gold.
  - b. Oñate explored the Canadian River and saw massive grass prairies.
  - c. Oñate eventually climbed the Rocky Mountains.
  - d. Oñate found no cities of gold, only simple native villages.

**Vocabulary:** *Match each word with its correct definition. Consider how the word is used in the lesson. This might help you define each term. Use a dictionary to help if necessary.*

- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| a. conquistador | d. Quívira |
| b. adobe        | e. fabled  |
| c. illusion     |            |

6. \_\_\_\_\_ a legendary mythical city of gold
7. \_\_\_\_\_ a Spanish explorer who arrived in North America during the 1500s
8. \_\_\_\_\_ a false or misleading impression of reality
9. \_\_\_\_\_ a building made of sun-dried bricks
10. \_\_\_\_\_ having no real existence; fictitious

**Guided Reading:** *Fill in the blanks below to create complete sentences.*

1. On February 23, 1540, Coronado set out with a large expedition of about 400 \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Coronado traveled throughout the American southwest, exploring the regions that are now Arizona and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The Turk led Coronado's expedition into the panhandle of Texas as well as Oklahoma, where Coronado and his men were awed by the vastness of the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Villagers welcomed Friar Padilla warmly, and he had much success in his \_\_\_\_\_ work.
5. Andres De Campo and Friar Padilla's followers returned to Mexico and took extensive \_\_\_\_\_ of all that they saw along the way.

**Correct the Statement:** *Each of the following sentences is false. Circle the incorrect word and write the word or phrase that makes the statement correct in the answer blank provided.*

6. Francisco Coronado was a conquistador from France.  
\_\_\_\_\_.
7. Coronado and his men were searching for the seven lost cities of silver.  
\_\_\_\_\_.
8. The Turk led Coronado's expedition into the panhandle of Texas and Nebraska. \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The Native Americans that Coronado found in Kansas were most likely ancestors of the Cherokee. \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Andres de Campo was a friar who hoped to Christianize the Wichita Indians. \_\_\_\_\_.

**Summarize:** *Answer the following questions in the space provided. Attempt to respond in a complete sentence for each question. Be sure to use correct capitalization and punctuation!*

1. Who guided Coronado when he was searching for Quivira?
2. What did Coronado find that resembled gold when spotted from a distance?
3. When did Coronado depart on his expedition?
4. Which present-day states did Coronado visit?
5. Why was The Turk executed?
6. How did Friar Padilla's expedition end?

**Student Response:** *Write a paragraph addressing the questions raised below. A thorough response should consist of three to five complete sentences.*

7. Why do you suppose the conquistadors were so willing to believe stories about cities made of gold? Explain your answer as thoroughly as possible.

**French Exploration**

*The French once owned the large piece of land known as the Louisiana Territory. How did the French gain possession of this territory? What did they do with it?*

Robert de LaSalle was a French explorer who arrived in North America in 1666. He established a series of forts along the Mississippi River. While exploring the Mississippi, he gave the name “Louisiana” to the territory lying west of the river and claimed it in the name of France. During his travels, he also established the outpost that would eventually become Little Rock, Arkansas. Despite never exploring the actual Louisiana Territory, his actions were significant because it gave France a claim to this vast expanse of land.



*Robert de LaSalle*

In 1718, Bernard LaHarpe left France with forty men. They arrived in North America with the intention of exploring the Louisiana Territory. LaHarpe and his men followed the Red River to where the present-day town of Idabel, Oklahoma is. They then turned north and headed through the Ouchita Mountains where they made contact with a band of Osage. After twenty-three days of travel, LaHarpe and his party came across a large Wichita settlement (just south of present-day Tulsa). They estimated that this village had between 6,000 and 7,000 people. They were greeted warmly by the village and spent several days amongst the Wichita.

*Words to watch for:*  
*intention extensive*  
*fertile enterprise*

While traveling, LaHarpe took extensive notes of what he observed. According to his notes, the Wichita were excellent farmers and had tame horses. He also noted that the area was plentiful in wildlife. The forests were full of animals and the streams and rivers were teeming with fish. The land itself was fertile and rich with minerals.

LaHarpe treated his hosts well, giving the local chiefs gifts of guns, knives, hatchets, and paint. As a result, the French were able to establish good trading relationships with the Native Americans of the region. In no time at all, French fur trappers and traders had moved into the region, hunting for buffalo hide, deer and beaver skins, and many other types of fur. By the 1760s, French fur traders such as Pierre Laclede and Auguste Chouteau had settled in the region and made the fur trade a valuable enterprise.

The work of these French explorers, trappers, and traders was significant, for they made the first extensive explorations of the area that would someday become Oklahoma. Their maps and notes proved to be valuable assets for the American explorers who would arrive in the early 1800s. Evidence of the French presence in Oklahoma can still be found in some town names. Sallisaw, Poteau, Chouteau, and Kiamichi are all town names with French origins.

**Multiple Choice:** *Select the choice that completes the statement or answers the question.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following is not significant about Robert de LaSalle?
  - a. He established several forts along the Mississippi River.
  - b. He gave the name Louisiana to the area west of the Mississippi River.
  - c. He explored the Louisiana Territory and made detailed maps of the area.
  - d. He claimed Louisiana Territory for France.
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best summarizes Bernard LaHarpe's journey?
  - a. He followed the Red River, traveled through the Ouachita Mountains, and eventually found a large settlement of Wichita Indians.
  - b. He followed the Arkansas River, traveled through the Winding Stair Mountains, and eventually found a large settlement of Osage Indians.
  - c. He followed the Mississippi River and established several trading posts, one of which eventually became Little Rock, Arkansas.
  - d. He followed the Colorado River, traveled through the Rocky Mountains, and eventually reached the Pacific Ocean.
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following accurately summarizes the notes LaHarpe made about his journey?
  - a. He noted that the Wichita were unfriendly, the area was virtually devoid of wildlife, and that the land was a barren desert.
  - b. He noted that there was little water, very few trees, and it was not fit for human habitation.
  - c. He noted that the local natives were very hostile, most of the wildlife was predatory in nature, and overall the territory was a very dangerous place.
  - d. He noted that the Wichita were excellent farmers, the area was plentiful in wildlife, and the that land was fertile and rich with minerals.
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best describes the relationship between the French and Native Americans?
  - a. The French were rude to the Native Americans and had a difficult time getting along with them.
  - b. The French treated the Native Americans well and were able to establish good trade relations with them.
  - c. The French attacked the Native Americans immediately and attempted to chase them out of the area.
  - d. The French did not encounter any Native Americans during the earliest explorations of the Louisiana Territory.
  
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Why are Pierre Laclede and Auguste Chouteau significant?
  - a. They were the first men to find the source of the Red River.
  - b. They established several forts on the Mississippi River, including New Orleans.
  - c. They were fur traders who settled in the region and made fur trading a valuable enterprise.
  - d. They were missionaries who worked in and amongst the Wichita for many years.

**Guided Reading:** *Fill in the blanks below to create complete sentences.*

1. Robert de LaSalle was a \_\_\_\_\_ explorer who had arrived in North America in 1666.
2. During LaSalle's travels, he also established the outpost that would eventually become \_\_\_\_\_, Arkansas.
3. LaHarpe and his men followed the Red River to where the present-day town of \_\_\_\_\_, Oklahoma is.
4. LaSalle and his party came across a large Wichita settlement which they estimated had between 6,000 and \_\_\_\_\_ people.
5. LaHarpe noted that the forests were full of animals, and the streams and rivers were teeming with \_\_\_\_\_.
6. LaHarpe treated his hosts well, giving the local chiefs \_\_\_\_\_ of guns, knives, hatchets, and paint.
7. In no time at all, French fur \_\_\_\_\_ and traders had moved into the region, hunting for buffalo hide, deer skins, beaver skins, and many other types of fur.
8. The work of these French explorers, trappers, and traders was significant, for they made the first extensive \_\_\_\_\_ of the area.
9. Evidence of the French presence in Oklahoma can still be found in some \_\_\_\_\_ names.
10. Sallisaw, \_\_\_\_\_, Chouteau, and Kiamichi are all town names with French origins.

**Vocabulary:** *Match each word with its correct definition. Consider how the word is used in the lesson. This might help you define each term. Use a dictionary to help if necessary.*

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| a. intention | d. enterprise |
| b. extensive | e. asset      |
| c. fertile   |               |

11. \_\_\_\_\_ far-reaching; comprehensive; thorough
12. \_\_\_\_\_ the purpose or reason a certain action was done; goal
13. \_\_\_\_\_ a useful or desirable thing
14. \_\_\_\_\_ capable of producing vegetation
15. \_\_\_\_\_ a commercial business

**Summarize:** *Answer the following questions in the space provided. Attempt to respond in a complete sentence for each question. Be sure to use correct capitalization and punctuation.*

1. Who named the territory “Louisiana”?
  
2. What gifts did LaHarpe give the local chiefs?
  
3. When did Robert de LaSalle arrive in North America?
  
4. Where did LaHarpe find the large settlement of Wichita?
  
5. Why were the French able to establish good trading relations with the Native Americans?
  
6. How were the efforts of the French explorers able to help the American explorers who arrived in the early 1800s?

**Student Response:** *Write a paragraph addressing the questions raised below. A thorough response should consist of three to five complete sentences.*

7. History shows us that the native tribes reacted to Spanish and French explorers very differently. Why might this have been the case? Explain your answer as thoroughly as possible.

**American Exploration**

*Many American explorers traveled through present-day Oklahoma. Who were these explorers? What was the purpose of their missions?*

In 1803, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France for \$15 million. Shortly after this purchase, President Thomas Jefferson sent Meriwether Lewis & William Clark to explore the northern region of the territory. Other teams were assembled to explore the southern portion of Louisiana.



*Zebulon Pike*

One such expedition was led by Zebulon Pike. Pike was given instructions to find the source of the Arkansas River and Red River. While traveling, he was to make detailed maps of the region, determine the value of natural resources, and attempt to establish friendly relationships with Native Americans. This journey began on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 1806.

*Words to watch for:*

*summit comprehensive*

*tributary topography*

In November, the team spotted the summit of an enormous mountain. Pike took a small number of men in an effort to climb this mountain. However, they underestimated its distance and were forced to turn back before reaching it. This mountain, Pike's Peak (in Colorado), bears his name today.

At one point during their journey, Pike and his men became lost, drifting into Spanish-held territory. They were captured and detained for a period of time before being released.

James Wilkinson was a part of the Pike Expedition. He and five others were given the task of exploring the Arkansas River while Pike and his men explored the Red. Their exploration of the Arkansas River began in the fall of 1806 and continued on through the winter months. They started in boats, but were reduced to walking because of dry river beds. Even where water existed, the boats became useless because the rivers were frozen over. They were forced to cut through the ice using axes.

As their journey wore on, they suffered from frostbite and lack of food. They were out of ammunition, which meant they could not hunt. The group

managed to survive by trading with friendly Osage Indians who were camped out on the river's edge.

In 1811, George Sibley, an agent of the U.S. government, was sent to negotiate with the Osage. During his negotiations, he and a group of about twenty others explored the territory. While searching, he discovered a region that was “glistening like a field of snow in the summer sun.” He had discovered the Great Salt Plains. He wrote in his notes that there was an “inexhaustible supply of ready-made salt.” With additional exploration, Sibley discovered even more salt, the Big Salt Plain, near present-day Freedom, Oklahoma.



Stephen Long

In 1820, Stephen H. Long and John Bell led another expedition through what is today Oklahoma. The Long-Bell Expedition had a similar goal to the Pike Expedition. Explore the Red River and Arkansas River, and map out the area.

John Bell and his twelve men explored the Arkansas River. They traveled through portions of Oklahoma during the hot summer months. They faced temperatures of more than one hundred degrees and found little water. Hunting was difficult because no animals could be found. When the team finally returned to Fort Smith, they were hungry and exhausted.

Stephen Long took the other half of the expedition to explore the Red River. They became lost and ended up on the Canadian River instead (a tributary to the Arkansas). However, they took comprehensive notes of the region's topography. Long observed that there was little timber for home building, virtually no surface water, and vast herds of bison. He claimed that the region was not fit for settlement by anyone dependent upon agriculture and referred to the area as “a great desert”. It was from this description that the phrase “The Great American Desert” became widely used.

One final exploration of the state was done by Thomas Nuttall. Nuttall was an English botanist who studied the wide variety of plant and animal life he observed. With the help of native guides, he explored many different regions, from the Great Salt Plains, to the Osage prairies, and the Cimarron River.

**Multiple Choice:** *Select the choice that completes the statement or answers the question.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best summarizes the purpose of Zebulon Pike's expedition?
  - a. He was to find Pike's Peak and climb it.
  - b. He was to find the source of the Arkansas and Red Rivers, make detailed maps, and determine the value of natural resources.
  - c. He was to find the source of the Mississippi River and establish friendly relationships with Native American tribes.
  - d. He was to find deposits of salt and silver, as well search for the mythical cities of gold that Coronado had searched for.
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best summarizes the expedition led by Lt. James Wilkinson?
  - a. They explored the Arkansas River through the winter months, facing extreme cold and ice.
  - b. They explored the Red River through the summer months, facing extreme heat with little water.
  - c. They explored the Canadian River through the spring and thought the region was wonderful.
  - d. They explored the Arkansas River through the fall months and became hopelessly lost.
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following significant discoveries did George Sibley make?
  - a. He discovered the Sibley Falls, which is the tallest waterfall in North America.
  - b. He discovered Sibley Peak, which is the tallest mountain west of the Mississippi River.
  - c. He discovered the Great Plains and gave it the nickname "the Great American Desert".
  - d. He discovered the Great Salt Plains, "an inexhaustible supply of ready-made salt."
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best summarizes what Stephen Long described during his journey through the Louisiana Territory?
  - a. He described it as one of the most beautiful places he had ever seen, with many trees and abundant wildlife.
  - b. He described it as a great desert, with little timber or surface water, and not fit for settlement or agriculture.
  - c. He described it as a frozen tundra, with very little water and no plant life.
  - d. He described it as a perfect spot for farming, with thousands of acres of flat ground and fertile fields.
  
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Which of the following best describes Thomas Nuttall's contribution to exploring the Louisiana Territory?
  - a. He was the first to see the Gloss Mountains and gave them their name.
  - b. He discovered the source of the Arkansas River and followed it back to the Mississippi.
  - c. He located the Great Salt Plains and took extensive notes about the region.
  - d. He studied the wide variety of plant and animal life found in the Louisiana Territory.

**Vocabulary:** Match each word with its correct definition. Consider how the word is used in the lesson. This might help you define each term. Use a dictionary to help if necessary.

- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| a. summit        | d. topography |
| b. comprehensive | e. botanist   |
| c. tributary     |               |

1. \_\_\_\_\_ a stream that flows into a larger river
2. \_\_\_\_\_ a scientist who studies plant life
3. \_\_\_\_\_ a large scope; covering or involving much; all-inclusive
4. \_\_\_\_\_ the land forms or surface features of a region
5. \_\_\_\_\_ the highest point of a hill or mountain

**Guided Reading:** Fill in the blanks below to create complete sentences.

6. In 1803, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France for \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Pike was given instructions to find the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Arkansas River and Red River.
8. Pike took a small number of men, hoping to climb \_\_\_\_\_, which is named after him today.
9. At one point during their journey, Pike and his men became lost, drifting into \_\_\_\_\_-held territory.
10. James Wilkinson and his men started in \_\_\_\_\_, but were reduced to walking because of dry river beds.

**Correct the Statement:** Each of the following sentences is false. Circle the incorrect word and write the word or phrase that makes the statement correct in the answer blank provided.

11. George Sibley was an agent of the U.S. government, sent to negotiate with the Apache.  
\_\_\_\_\_.
12. Stephen H. Long and John Bell were to explore the Red River and Canadian River and map out the area. \_\_\_\_\_.
13. John Bell and his twelve men traveled through portions of Oklahoma during the hot winter months.  
\_\_\_\_\_.
14. Stephen Long and his expedition were to explore the Red River, but they became lost and ended up on the Colorado River instead. \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Thomas Nuttall was a biologist who studied the wide variety of plant and animal life he observed.  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Summarize:** *Answer the following questions in the space provided. Attempt to respond in a complete sentence for each question. Be sure to use correct capitalization and punctuation!*

1. Who was sent to explore the northern region of the Louisiana Territory?
2. What phrase came to be widely used to describe the region that Stephen Long explored?
3. When did Zebulon Pike's journey begin?
4. Where is the Big Salt Plain?
5. Why did Stephen Long not feel that the area was fit for settlement?
6. How did James Wilkinson's expedition manage to survive?

**Student Response:** *Write a paragraph addressing the questions raised below. A thorough response should consist of three to five complete sentences.*

7. Stephen Long referred to part of the Louisiana Territory as "a great desert" and stated that it was not fit for settlement. How was his opinion of the region shaped? Cite specific textual evidence to help support your answer.

**Answer Key:**

**Early Native Settlers:**

**Multiple Choice:**

- 1) B
- 2) B
- 3) A
- 4) D
- 5) A

**Vocabulary:**

- 6) D
- 7) B
- 8) A
- 9) E
- 10) C

**Guided Reading:**

- 1) Wanderers
- 2) Archaeologists
- 3) Rabbits
- 4) Farming
- 5) Arrows
- 6) Blankets
- 7) Chunkey
- 8) Twelve
- 9) Looters
- 10) Spiro, Oklahoma

**Summarize:**

1. The Spiro Mound builders were ancestors of the Caddo.
2. Foragers collected seeds, nuts, roots, and berries.
3. The Spiro Mounds were excavated in 1933.
4. The first evidence of this tribe's existence was found near Clovis, New Mexico.
5. The Spiro built mounds which had many artifacts in them (OR: Their tribe's existence was much more recent than the other tribes).
6. Cultivation of the ground was done by hand, using sticks and small tools made of stone or perhaps bone.

**Student Response:**

7. Student answers will vary.

**Francisco Coronado & Spanish Exploration:**

**Multiple Choice:**

- 1) B
- 2) A
- 3) D
- 4) C
- 5) C

**Vocabulary:**

- 6) D
- 7) A
- 8) C
- 9) B
- 10) E

**Guided Reading:**

- 1) Spaniards
- 2) New Mexico
- 3) Great Plains
- 4) Missionary
- 5) Notes

**Correct the Statement:**

- 6) Spain
- 7) Gold
- 8) Oklahoma
- 9) Wichita
- 10) Juan Padilla

**Summarize:**

1. The Turk guided Coronado while searching for Quivira.
2. Coronado found adobes that shimmered in the sun like gold from a distance.
3. Coronado and his men left on February 23, 1540.
4. Coronado visited Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas.
5. The Turk was executed for trying to deceive Coronado.
6. Friar Padilla was killed by the Kaw Indians and his followers walked back to Mexico.

**Student Response:**

7. Student answers will vary.

**French Exploration:**

**Multiple Choice:**

- 1) C
- 2) A
- 3) D
- 4) B
- 5) C

**Guided Reading:**

- 1) French
- 2) Little Rock
- 3) Idabel
- 4) 7,000
- 5) Fish
- 6) Gifts
- 7) Trappers
- 8) Explorations
- 9) Town
- 10) Poteau

**Vocabulary:**

- 11) B
- 12) A
- 13) E
- 14) C
- 15) D

**Summarize:**

1. Robert de LaSalle named the territory "Louisiana".
2. He gave the local chiefs guns, knives, hatchets, and paint.
3. LaSalle arrived in North America in 1666.
4. The large settlement of Wichita was just south of present-day Tulsa.
5. The French were able to establish a good relationship with Native Americans because they were treated with respect and offered them gifts.
6. They made detailed maps and notes which proved helpful to American explorers.

**Student Response:**

7) Student answers will vary.

**American Exploration:**

**Multiple Choice:**

- 1) B
- 2) A
- 3) D
- 4) B
- 5) D

**Vocabulary:**

- 1) C
- 2) E
- 3) B
- 4) D
- 5) A

**Guided Reading:**

- 6) \$15 million
- 7) source
- 8) Pike's Peak
- 9) Spanish
- 10) boats

**Correct the Statement:**

- 11) Osage
- 12) Arkansas
- 13) Summer
- 14) Canadian
- 15) Botanist

**Summarize:**

1. Meriwether Lewis & William Clark were sent to explore the northern portion.
2. This region became known as the "Great American Desert".
3. Zebulon Pike's journey began on July 15, 1806.
4. The Big Salt Plain is just outside the present-day town of Freedom, Oklahoma.
5. He felt the area was not fit for settlement because there was little timber and not much surface water.
6. They managed to survive because of friendly Osage Indians that traded with them.

**Student Response:**

7. Student answers will vary.