

Summary: People Come to Florida

Florida's Ancient History

History is the events that happened in the past. We study history by reading what people wrote about their times. Diaries, letters, and newspapers help us to find out what happened long ago.

Many things happened before people invented writing, during a time called prehistory. Scientists learn about prehistory by looking for clues about people's lives. They study artifacts from the past, such as spear points, fishing hooks, cooking pots, and pieces of leather.

Long ago, there was a period of time called the Ice Age. Ice covered much of the earth. The sea level was lower. Land that was once underwater could be seen above the water. Scientists think that Asia and North America during this time were connected by land. They think people crossed this land to come to North America. It was cooler and drier in Florida back then. There were fewer lakes and rivers.

Hunting and Gathering

Scientists have studied artifacts to learn about prehistoric Floridians. Scientists think ancient people lived in family groups. They camped by springs to get fresh water. They left these camps to hunt and gather food.

Hunters used spears to hunt huge mammals. They also hunted smaller animals, such as rabbits and raccoons. People caught fish. They gathered fruits and nuts as they moved from place to place.

The levels of the seas rose when the Ice Age ended. Water covered Florida's coasts. The climate grew warmer and wetter. Huge mammals such as the woolly mammoth died. Some scientists think the huge mammals could not adapt to the warmer climate.

Ancient people had to adapt to the changes. When the large mammals disappeared, people hunted smaller animals. They continued to gather wild plants.

Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

history *noun*, the events of the past that lead us to the present

prehistory *noun*, the time before people invented writing

artifact *noun*, an object made by human hands

adapt *verb*, to change in order to live in a new environment

After You Read

REVIEW How can scientists learn about prehistory? What do scientists look for? What do they study? Circle two sentences that tell you the answer.

REVIEW What did Ice Age Floridians eat? Draw a box around the paragraph that tells you the answer.