16-2 Notes

**Maya**

* Settled in Petén, a flat, dense forest region in present-day Guatemala
* Rulers said they were descended from the sun and claimed the right to rule as god-kings.
* Alliances (political agreements to make city-states stronger) were created by royal marriages.
* Women played important roles in society: warriors and queens
* Marched into battle wanting captives to use as human sacrifices to their gods.
* Developed an organized type of government called city-states
* Mayans were astronomers and developed a 365 day calendar, math system based on 20 and invented a written language (hieroglyphics)

**Aztec**

* Aztec people lived in the Valley of Mexico.
* Nomads who settled in an area of soggy land; dug soil from the lake to build bridges and floating gardens.
* Tenochtitlan was the Aztec city which means “place of the prickly pear cactus.”
* Social classes: King, nobles, commoners, unskilled laborers, enslaved people
* Commoners could join the noble class by acting bravely in war.
* The Aztec saw death as honorable – those worthy of and afterlife included soldiers who died in battle, captives who gave their lives in sacrifice, and women who died in childbirth.
* Built a “Great Temple” in the city-state which was used for worshiping their gods and human sacrifice.

**Inca**

* Pachacuti – the Inca leader whose name means “earthshaker”. He is named after the highest Incan god, Pachamac, “Lord of the earth” who was blamed for eartquakes.
* Pachacuti and his son, Topa, built the largest ancient empire in the Americas.
* Paachacuti set up a strong central government.
* The Incan people had no written language, but used a Quipi – a rope with knotted cords of different lengths and colors to do math.
* The Inca people had used irrigation and fertilizers to grow crops and built roads for travel and trade.
* All Incans, young and old, had work to do to keep the society strong.

**Inuit**

* “the people” who settled in the far north of North America: Artic regions of Canada and Alaska.
* Built igloos, dome-shaped homes from blocks of ice and snow
* Traveled by dog sled and seal-skin kayaks
* Survived by hunting seals, walruses, whales, caribou, and polar bears

The people who settled along **North America’s Pacific Coast** used towering cedar trees to build wooden houses and huge oceangoing canoes. They fished for otters, seals, and whales. They also carved wooden totem poles.

People who settled in the dry deserts of **North America’s Southwest** dug irrigation canals to irrigate crops. They used a type of sun-dried mud brick called adobe to build apartment-like homes.

People who settled on **North America’s Great Plains** were farmers. They hunted buffalo on foot, because at the time there were no horses in America. The buffalo gave them meat for food, bones for tools, and skins for clothing and shelter.

**Eastern Woodlands of North America**

* Combined farming with hunting and fishing
* Some groups formed governments, but a few set up Confederations – governments that link several groups
* The most famous confederation was the Iroquois League – a confederation which formed to end the fighting among several Native American groups. It included five groups: Onondaga, Seneca, Mohawk, Oneida, and Cayuga
* The Iroquois League was formed in order to end fighting among the groups.