

PREDICTION

Answer the following question. Make sure to provide a reason for your answer.

The title of this article is: "The First Americans." What do you think the article will be about? Why do you think so?

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Listen to the article, which is about four and a half minutes long. Listen only, and don't worry about understanding everything.

Step 2: Look at the questions. Read and understand them, then listen again. As you are listening, try to answer the questions in your head. Don't write the answers yet. Next, listen again and write the answers this time. Compare your answers with a partner.

Step 3: Read the article. Check in your dictionary any unknown words. Now listen again. Can you understand more?

Step 4: Listen! Listen! Listen! Listen to the article on the train or in your free time. Each time you listen, you will slowly improve!

SUMMARIZATION

Listen to the article. Write in one or two sentences the key idea about the paragraph to check comprehension. If you don't know, don't worry. Skip it. Then listen again.

ex. paragraph 1: *This paragraph explains the nuance between "discover" and "reach."*

1. paragraph 2:

2. paragraph 3:

3. paragraph 4:

4. paragraph 5:

5. paragraphs 6:

the ARTICLE

Listen again to the article. Write in the missing words.



There's something (a. _____) wrong with this statement: Christopher Columbus discovered America. Although it disregards other explorers who ventured as far as the shores of the Americas centuries before the famed Italian, this isn't the reason for its wrongness. Instead, the very word "discovery" suggests a Eurocentric view, as though two continents and their peoples were lost prior to the arrival of the Europeans. Columbus and other explorers didn't discover anything. They *reached* the New World--quite a significant feat nonetheless.

Yet in light of what happened to the (b. _____) peoples following Columbus's arrival, it seems silly to quibble over "reach" versus "discover." Within a few centuries after 1492, disease and war had devastated as much as 90% of the Native American population. Whole languages and cultures were forever lost, as was any future history except for that (c. _____) by land-hungry Europeans pursuing their own dreams. And those dreams didn't consider the Native American life whatsoever.

The people who came to America 10,000 to 50,000 years ago--the first Americans--did so across a land bridge between Siberia and Alaska during the previous Ice Age. Over (d. _____) millennia, additional waves of immigration made their way southwards into more temperate country, and eventually spread to all other points of the compass. By the time Columbus arrived, there were subsistence level hunter-gatherers up to organized nation-states, and everything in-between, in every part of North and South America.

Although unplanned in the sense that a government or religion purposely worked towards the (e. _____) extermination of the Native Americans, subsequent events practically accomplished their eradication. Early explorers conquered the organized nation-states. Later settlers came in never ending succession to escape religious persecution and wars in the Old World, or simply with the hope of an (f. _____) more prosperous life. They cleared forests, hunted game, and competed for resources with the indigenous peoples. Although Native Americans may have won (g. _____) now and then, they couldn't stop all the immigrants. There were simply too many.

Diseases played an even larger part in the destruction of the Native Americans. Previously unexposed to smallpox, influenza, and the measles, their immune systems couldn't fight the diseases. Whole villages could grow sick and die, or be left with a (h. _____) of survivors unable to offer any resistance, just from contact with Europeans. Some (i. _____) explorers and settlers offered gifts of blankets from disease victims, thus ensuring more would die.

The remaining tribes of today maintain old traditions as best as possible. (j. _____) tribes across the US have loosely banded together to form more powerful political units. Many have also capitalized on their limited sovereignty, and run casinos independent of local laws. But in other countries, Native Americans largely have no voice to affect change, and so live in abject poverty--a grim reality of a once culturally rich, independent, and diverse people.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES (optional)

1. Which paragraph was the easiest to listen to? Which paragraph was the most difficult? Look at the vocabulary and sentence structure, then think why one paragraph was easy and another difficult.

2. Listen and write the sentences:

Instead, the very word "discovery" suggests a Eurocentric view... (paragraph 1)

The people who came to America 10,000 to 50,000 years ago... (paragraph 3)

Although Native Americans may have won skirmishes now and then... (paragraph 4)

Some unscrupulous explorers and settlers offered... (paragraph 5)

3. What do you know about the Native Americans? What would have happened to the tribes if Europeans hadn't come to North or South America?

ANSWERS

PREDICTION				
The article is about Native Americans, who first came to the Americas 10,000 to 50,000 years ago.				
SUMMARIZATION - Listen and write the key idea of the paragraph.				
1. The paragraph explains what happened within a few centuries after Columbus came to the Americas.				
2. Paragraph three explains when the first Americans arrived, and their development in the New World.				
3. Paragraph four explains what happened as more and more Europeans came to the New World.				
4. Paragraph five talks about diseases, and how they affected the Native Americans.				
5. The last paragraph explains the current state of the indigenous peoples of North and South America.				
VOCABULARY - Fill in the missing words.				
a. inherently	b. indigenous	c. influenced	d. subsequent	e. utter
f. economically	g. skirmishes	h. handful	i. unscrupulous	j. Disparate
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES - Listen and match the parts of the sentences.				
1. ...as though two continents and their peoples were lost prior to the arrival of the Europeans.				
2. ...the first Americans--did so across a land bridge between Siberia and Alaska during the previous Ice Age				
3. ...they couldn't stop all the immigrants.				
4. ...gifts of blankets from disease victims, thus ensuring more would die.				