Uncovering the Past

Section 1

MAIN IDEAS
1. History is the study of the past.
2. We can improve our understanding of people’s actions and beliefs through the study of history.
3. Historians use clues from various sources to learn about the past.

Key Terms and People

- **history**: the study of the past
- **culture**: the knowledge, beliefs, customs, and values of a group of people
- **archaeology**: the study of the past based on what people left behind
- **fossil**: a part or imprint of something that was once alive
- **artifacts**: objects created by and used by humans
- **primary source**: an account of an event created by someone who took part in or witnessed the event
- **secondary source**: information gathered by someone who did not take part in or witness an event

Academic Vocabulary

- **values**: ideas that people hold dear and try to live by

Section Summary

THE STUDY OF THE PAST

**History** is the study of the past. Historians are people who study history. Historians want to know how people lived and why they did the things they did. They try to learn about the problems people faced and how they found solutions. They are interested in how people lived their daily lives. They study the past to understand people’s culture.

**Culture** is the knowledge, beliefs, customs, and values of a group of people.

The study of the past based on what people left behind is called **archaeology** (ahr-kee-AH-luh-je). Archaeologists explore places where people once...
lived, worked, or fought. They examine the things that people left in these places to learn what they can tell about the past.

UNDERSTANDING THROUGH HISTORY
Understanding the past helps you understand the world today. History can even teach you about yourself. What if you did not know about your own past? You would not know what makes you proud about yourself. You would not know what mistakes you should not repeat.

History is just as important for groups. What would happen if countries had no record of their past? People would not remember their nation’s great triumphs or tragedies. History shapes our identity and teaches us the values that we share.

History also teaches about cultures that are unlike your own. Learning other people’s stories can help you respect and understand different opinions. You also learn to understand how today’s events are shaped by events of the past. History encourages you to ask important questions.

USING CLUES
We learn about history from a variety of sources. Fossils, such as bones or footprints preserved in rock, give us clues to life very long ago. Artifacts, such as tools, coins, or pottery, also give us information. Writing has taught us a great deal. Writing can be a primary source (by someone who took part in or witnessed an event) or a secondary source (information gathered by someone who did not take part in or witness an event).

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY
Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences Imagine a tribe or group of people that might have lived a long time ago. Write a short essay about their culture.
DIRECTIONS Use the seven vocabulary words from the section to write a summary of what you learned in the section.

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

DIRECTIONS On the line provided before each statement, write T if a statement is true and F if a statement is false. If the statement is false, write the correct term on the line after each sentence that make the sentence a true statement.

_____ 1. A fossil is a part or imprint of something that was once alive.

____________________________________________________________________

_____ 2. A primary source is information gathered by someone who did not take part in or witness an event.

____________________________________________________________________

_____ 3. Artifacts are objects that were created and used by humans.

____________________________________________________________________

_____ 4. A secondary source is an account of an event created by someone who took part in or witnessed the event.

____________________________________________________________________

_____ 5. The study of the past is called history.

____________________________________________________________________

_____ 6 The study of the past based on what people left behind is called history.
Uncovering the Past

SECTION 1

Summary
(First Page) historians
(Second Page) Possible answer: It can teach us about the history of our cultures and their traditions; Students should circle the sentence: Learning other people’s stories can help you respect and understand different opinions; fossils, artifacts, written sources

Challenge Activity
Answers will vary. Student essays should include the group or tribe’s identity and a description of some of their beliefs, customs, and values.

Written Summary
Answers will vary. Sample answer: History and archaeology are both ways to study the past. Tools people use to learn about the past include artifacts, fossils, primary sources, and secondary sources. Together these items help us learn about the cultures of long-ago people.

True/False
1. T
2. F; A secondary source is information gathered by someone who did not take part in or witness an event.
3. T
4. F; A primary source is an account of an event created by someone who took part in or witnessed the event.
5. T
6. F; The study of the past based on what people left behind is called archaeology.

The Stone Ages and Early Cultures

SECTION 1

Summary
(First Page) prehistory
(Second Page) homo sapiens; Possible answers—Handles would allow people to swing tools harder or to protect their hands from injury; language

Challenge Activity
Answers will vary. Student essays should present logical conclusions a future scholar might draw from an examination of modern artifacts.

Words or Phrases
Answers will vary. Sample answers:
1. relative who lived long ago
2. early ancestor of humans