Purpose: For students to investigate the influence of the natural environment on the development of early civilizations around the world. Specifically, students will examine early First Nations and Inuit civilizations within the geographic regions of Canada eventually comparing these civilizations to that of another continent.

Estimated time: 80 minutes

Resources required:
- Chart paper
- Resources for research (e.g.: books, encyclopedias, internet, etc.)

Resources included:
- Blackline master 1 and 2

Activity:
1. Ask students to define an early civilization. Write student answers on the board.

2. Explain to students that an early civilization is any type of culture or society of an early period in history.

3. Ask students to provide examples of early civilizations they have heard of or have studied in this class.

4. Explain to students that in this activity, they are going to look at the early civilization of Aboriginal Canadians.

5. Tell students that at the time of European contact, the First Nations and Inuit People of Canada of common cultures existed in about eight geographic regions in Canada. These geographic regions are:
   - The Pacific Coast
   - The Cordillera or Plateau
   - The Prairies
   - The Canadian Shield
   - The St. Lawrence and Great Lakes Lowlands
   - The Atlantic Provinces or Eastern Woodlands
   - The Sub-Arctic
   - The Arctic North

6. Explain that a geographic region is an area on the earth that has similar and distinct characteristics. These characteristics are different from the other geographic regions around it.

7. Ask students to describe how Canadian geography could have influenced early Aboriginal civilizations. List students’ answers on the board.

8. Explain to students that they are going to learn about these early Aboriginal civilizations and how their lifestyles were influenced by the physical geography of Canada.

9. Divide the class into eight groups and assign each group one of the following topics:
   - The Pacific Coast: The Haida
   - The Cordillera or Plateau: The Kootenay
   - The Prairies: The Blackfoot
   - The Canadian Shield: The Cree
   - The St. Lawrence and Great Lakes Lowlands: The Huron
   - The Atlantic Provinces: The Mi’kmaq
   - The Sub-Arctic: The Dene
   - The Arctic North: The Iglulik Inuit

10. Distribute blackline master 1 and 2 to each group.

11. In their groups ask students to research the information on blackline master 1 filling in the chart. Explain that they must also identify their geographic region on the map on blackline master 2.

12. Encourage students to use resources around the classroom (e.g.: books, encyclopedias, internet, etc.) to research their topics.

13. Once students have completed blackline master 1 and 2, bring the class back together. Encourage each group to say a few words about their assigned early civilization explaining how their early civilization shaped and used the environment to meet their physical needs for food, homes, clothing and health.

14. At the end of the presentations, explain that now groups must compare their assigned Aboriginal People to that of another early civilization from another continent (e.g. Egyptians).

15. Ask groups to create a Venn Diagram comparing their two selected civilizations and outlining the similarities and differences between the two civilizations.

16. Distribute chart paper to each group and allow them to begin their comparison.

17. When Venn Diagrams are complete, ask each group to stand up and share their comparison with the class.

18. Encourage an active discussion at this time.
19. Before concluding this activity, ensure students have a firm understanding of early First Nations and Inuit civilizations and how they compare to other early civilizations around the world.
Aboriginal People: 

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BLACKLINE MASTER 2
MAP OF CANADA