

Dakota Pathways Episode 5
The First Hunters and Farmers
Guided Notes- answer key

Pictures cut into stone are called **petroglyphs**.

Archaeologists are scientists who study objects from the past to learn how humans lived. They usually find these objects by digging underground.

There's always work to do: hunting animals and making pots from clay found at the creek, gathering seeds and berries to mix with **buffalo** meat and fat to make a food called **pemmican**.

And there is farm work to do. The people who lived here a thousand years ago grew some of the same crops that South Dakota farmers grow today: **squash**, **beans**, and **corn**.

Corn was first grown in **Mexico**, and it moved north over hundreds of years with people who planted it along rivers.

Early people knew that when they found spots where corn would grow, their families would eat well most years. The Mitchell area was one of those spots, and the village probably lasted **50** or **75** years.

How do archaeologists find these objects? At Mitchell there is a structure called an **archaeodome** built over two spots where homes once were. This structure allows workers to dig year-round.

Early people at Mitchell used **cache pits**. These are holes dug into the ground inside the lodges for storing food.

Was the village deserted because crops failed, or because the bison left? Probably not. More likely, the people ran out of trees for firewood, and for building new lodges. So they moved away in search of trees, and probably ended up a hundred or so miles west, along the **Missouri River**.

The homes at Mitchell looked like much later homes built by the American Indian people called the **Mandan**.

Temperatures were extremely cold and a lot of the earth's water was frozen in big chunks of ice, called glaciers. All that frozen water made the seas lower, exposing some of the land that had been covered by water, and creating a land bridge between **Asia** and **North America**.

No one can say when the first of these people would have reached South Dakota. But when they did, they hunted a great animal that provided even more meat than they bison, the **mammoth**.