## PREHISTORIC PERIODS CHARACTERISTICS

### Paleo-Indian Period (ca. 10,000 to 8,000 B.C.)
- Colder climate with associated vegetation including spruce and fir trees.
- People organized in very small, nomadic bands.
- Lifestyle focused on hunting of large mammals, many of which are now extinct including the mastadon, saber tooth tiger, giant beaver, and giant short-faced bear.
- Major hunting weapon is a wooden spear shaft tipped with a medium-to-large finely chipped stone point.

### Archaic Period (ca. 8,000 to 500 B.C.)
- Gradual warming of climate. Environment becomes more similar to present.
- People make transition from nomadic to semi-sedentary living as group size increases from family bands to at least seasonal aggregations of multiple bands.
- Hunting of smaller species, including white tail deer, using spear and atlatl (spear thrower).
- Spear points include side notched, corner notched, and stemmed varieties of medium-to-large size.
- Gathering of wild foods, including nuts, and fishing complement hunting.
- Regional trade and exchange networks appear and toward the end of the period earthen mounds and ceramic pottery occur.

### Woodland Period (ca. 500 B.C. to 1000 A.D.)
- Large, permanent villages develop.
- Hunting continues, with corn agriculture becoming increasingly important.
- Tribal organization arises.
- Burial mounds become common.
- Pottery appears in many forms, functions and decorative treatments.
- Toward the latter end of this period the bow and arrow appears as indicated by very small chipped stone projectile points.
- Fortified villages and arrow points imbedded in human skeletons reveal a tendency to warfare among native groups.

### Mississippian Period (ca. 1000 to 1550 A.D.)
- Large temple mounds denoting ceremonial sites appear along with extensive villages.
- Multi-level societies called chiefdoms replace tribal organizations in many areas.
- Warfare increases.
- A wide variety of pottery occurs, characteristically including shell as a tempering agent.
- Agriculture incorporating corn, beans, and squash becomes the dietary mainstay, although hunting, gathering, and fishing continue.
- Intensive regional and interregional trade in both raw materials and finished products is ongoing.