

systems existed prior to the establishment of the United States government and Constitution in 1789. Read on to learn why groups of people who inhabited North America across the ages created governments.

**A3**

**Directions:** Read the following passage: *The Poverty Point Culture*, and describe why the people who lived there developed a form of government. After determining why they developed a form of government, describe the type of government they developed. Use the graphic organizer to record your findings.

**Lexile:** 1310

## The Poverty Point Culture

Before the first Europeans arrived in North America, there was a population of eight million or more **Indigenous** Americans living throughout the continent. These Indigenous Americans had been in North America for centuries. At the time of contact with the Europeans, there were hundreds of independent nations with different languages and government structures living across the entire continent. These nations had developed diverse cultures, agricultural practices, and trading networks. They had built complex social systems and rich oral traditions, passing down their knowledge and history through storytelling.

During the Archaic Period (around 8000 to 1000 BCE), there were many small hunter-gatherer groups living in present-day Louisiana. Many of these groups built hill-like mounds,



**Poverty Point:** This image depicts the Poverty Point mound complex, located near Epps, Louisiana.