

MYSTERIOUS MAYAS, AMAZING AZTECS, & INVENTIVE INCAS

UNIT OVERVIEW

This thematic, integrated unit about the Mayas, Aztecs, and Incas will provide both the teacher and the students with a broad understanding of the topic. It is designed to provide a variety of teaching strategies, allowing students to explore the topic in many different ways. “**Part I - Core Teaching Lessons**” is a series of lessons presented in a direct instruction format. “**Part II - Student Handbook**” is a handbook that can be reproduced for each student. Its contents correlate with the lesson activities in Part I. “**Part III - Optional Lessons**” offers ideas for optional lessons to extend learning on the topic - if the teacher desires. “**Part IV - Major Project**” is a project designed to demonstrate student knowledge obtained throughout the unit. In addition, the unit’s format allows for effective teaching of Ancient America because it addresses different ability levels and modalities in your classroom.

PART I - CORE TEACHING LESSONS

In this section, each ancient civilization is introduced individually. Student activities in each lesson allow students to demonstrate knowledge of what is learned. Due to all of the information contained in the lessons, plan on using at least two class periods for each lesson. The lesson titles and subsequent activities are as follows:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) Introduction to Ancient American Civilizations | Pre-test, Mapping activity, Sequencing dates and events |
| 2&3) Mysterious Mayas | Folktale handout, Math problems, Compare/Contrast paper |
| 4&5) Amazing Aztecs | Sunstone activity, Onion paper, Aztec cloak design |
| 6&7) Inventive Incas | Pictorial story, Treasure mapping, Creative writing |

PART II - STUDENT HANDBOOK

This section contains information pages and activities for Part I lessons. It can be photocopied in booklet form for each student to use during the lessons.

PART III - OPTIONAL LESSONS

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|------------------------------|---|
| 1) Unit Post-Test | 7) Ancient American Picture And Chapter Books |
| 2) Venn Diagram | 8) Inca Headresses |
| 3) Aztec Trading Post | 9) Internet Sites |
| 4) Clay Pottery | 10) Ancient America Crossword Puzzle |
| 5) Head Slings | 11) Ancient America Wordsearch |
| 6) Popcorn and Patolli Party | 12) The Lost City Of Machu Picchu |

PART IV - MAJOR PROJECT

This section of the unit is designed to be a culmination activity in which students create Ancient American *codices* (books) that summarize interesting facts about the three civilizations studied in this unit. A step-by-step outline and grading scale are provided.

CREATIVE INCA STORY

Directions: Choose ten of the following words that have to do with the Inca Empire and write a creative story.

1. **Acillacuna** - "chosen women" who served as priestesses and servants to the Sapa Inca
2. **Adobe** - dried mud bricks used for building
3. **Amauta** - wise men who served as teachers and advisors
4. **Ayllu** - a family clan that lived and worked together
5. **Catus** - marketplace
6. **Chasquis** - relay runners who carried messages throughout the empire
7. **Chicha** - a beer made out of corn
8. **Conquistador** - Spanish conqueror
9. **Coya** - the wife and older sister of the Sapa Inca; the Inca Queen
10. **Cumbi** - fine hand-woven cloth
11. **Cuzco** - the capital city of the Inca Empire, meaning "navel"
12. **Fiesta** - religious festival honouring the gods
13. **Huaca** - holy person, place, or thing
14. **Inti** - the Sun god
15. **Llama** - type of camel that hauled goods; provided wool for clothing and meat for eating
16. **Locro** - meat and potato stew

INTRODUCTION TO MAYAN CIVILIZATION

Historians estimate that the Mayan civilization could date back to as early as the year 2000 B.C. However, it wasn't until about 200 A.D. that the Mayan civilization began to significantly develop in an area known as the Yucatan Peninsula ("the land of turkey and deer"). This area is now known as parts of Mexico, Belize, Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

For several centuries, approximately 300 to 900 A.D., the culture thrived as grand cities were built deep in the hot and humid tropical rain forests of Central America. Around 1000 A.D., the Mayan cities were mysteriously abandoned—perhaps war, famine, drought, overpopulation, disease, or lack of resources were to blame. Only a few Mayas remained in the cities after that time. When Spanish conquistadors arrived in the 1500's, they easily captured the Mayan territory.

Many years later, around 1800, explorers rediscovered these Mayan cities that the rain forest had grown over and almost completely covered. They made many interesting discoveries about the long lost civilization. We now know that the Mayas were experts at mathematics, science, and astronomy. They developed calendars and built observatories to study the planets and stars. The study of Mayan books reveals the most complex writing system at that time. Palaces, temples, pyramids, and roads demonstrate the great architectural ability, as well as a very religious civilization that worshipped over 150 different gods. In addition, the Mayas were skilled farmers, artists, and craftsmen. They were truly an amazing culture.

Today, six million Mayan descendants continue to live in the Yucatan Peninsula. They still weave and make delicious tortillas like their ancestors did. Many choose to live very similar lifestyles to their ancestors by the clothes they wear, the food they eat, and the homes they live in. The mystery of what happened to the Mayas in 1000 A.D. may never be solved, but their legacy somehow survives and lives on even today.

ANCIENT AMERICA CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Name: _____



ACROSS:

2. When Inca Emperors died they were made into _____.
8. _____ was a popular crop that was used to make many different meals from.
9. Ancient Americans used cacao beans to make _____.
11. Incas believed that gold was the "_____ of the Sun".
12. Incas kept a record of their inventories on coloured, knotted strings called _____.
14. The _____ was what the Aztecs used to keep track of the days.
15. Tenochtitlan was an _____ with three causeways to the mainland.

DOWN:

1. Inca crops were grown on _____ or large steps cut out of the mountainside.
3. Aztecs and Mayas created books called _____.
4. The special beer for Inca religious festivals was called _____.
5. Temples were built on top of Mayan _____.
6. Incas used _____ to haul goods, provide wool for clothing, and eat.
7. Aztecs and Incas paid taxes called _____ to the government and to their gods.
10. The Inca Emperor was called the _____ Inca.
13. Pizarro held Atahualpa for ransom for a room full of _____.

ANCIENT AMERICAN CODEX OUTLINE

Objective:

Each student will create an Ancient American codex summarizing three different aspects of Ancient American life.

Directions:

You will need to complete the following:

1. Choose one interesting topic about each of the Ancient American civilizations you have just learned about. (Use your student handbook as a resource.) You should find a total of three topics - one from each of the Mayan, Aztec, and Inca civilizations.
2. Using a plain white piece of paper, fold it into quarters. Open it up and number each square from 1 to 4. (Each quarter will be used to sketch out a rough draft of your codex: 1 - cover, 2 - Maya, 3 - Aztec, and 4 - Inca.)
3. Think of pictures or symbols that represent ideas or words related to the topic. Begin sketching them into those three quarters of your paper. (Quarters 2, 3, & 4)
4. When you have finished your sketching, write the title and your name on the cover quarter (1). Create a colourful border around the edge of your cover.
5. Now you are ready to make your codex. First, gather your materials: paper, paint or markers, ruler, etc.
6. Fold your paper "accordion style" so that there are four pages. Use your ruler to measure carefully so that you fold it correctly.
7. Use a pencil to lightly sketch your drawings on your codex.
8. Use a black marker or paint to outline all the drawings by simply drawing over your pencil lines.
9. Add colour inside your drawings with markers or paint.
10. On the back of each topic page, write one paragraph (in black pen) explaining your drawings and what they represent from that Ancient American civilization. (Make sure you write it on a piece of notebook paper first as a rough draft.)

You are done!

ANCIENT AMERICA WORDSEARCH

Name: _____

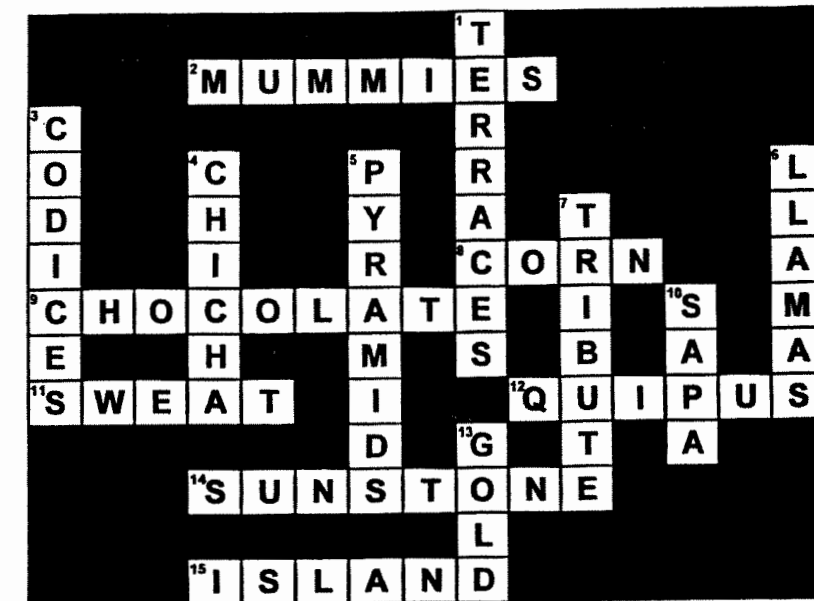
Find and circle all the vocabulary words listed below. The words can be found horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. Good luck!

C I V I L I Z A T I O N H W B
M O N T E Z U M A Y Z H I T B
T G N P S A C R I F I C E B B
R S U Q N A H U A T L N R E L
I M I D U D A S T R O N O M Y
B A W W A I N C A C B A G Q D
U L O S Z L S S H L T K L U C
T L E Z T L P T U M A W Y E U
E P I D E M I C A N Z J P C Z
T O J I C T Z Y L D S U H H C
Q X A E L P A S P V O T S U O
T R E A S U R E A N Z R O A R
D D N P P Y R A M I D X F N T
T E M P L E O E T E R R A C E
X B N Q P T U P H A T M H M S

ASTRONOMY	CUZCO	NAHUATL	SUNSTONE
ATAHUALPA	EPIDEMIC	PIZARRO	TEMPLE
AZTEC	HIEROGLYPHS	PYRAMID	TENOCHTITLAN
CIVILIZATION	INCA	QUECHUA	TERRACE
CONQUISTADOR	MAYA	SACRIFICE	TREASURE
CORTES	MONTEZUMA	SMALLPOX	TRIBUTE

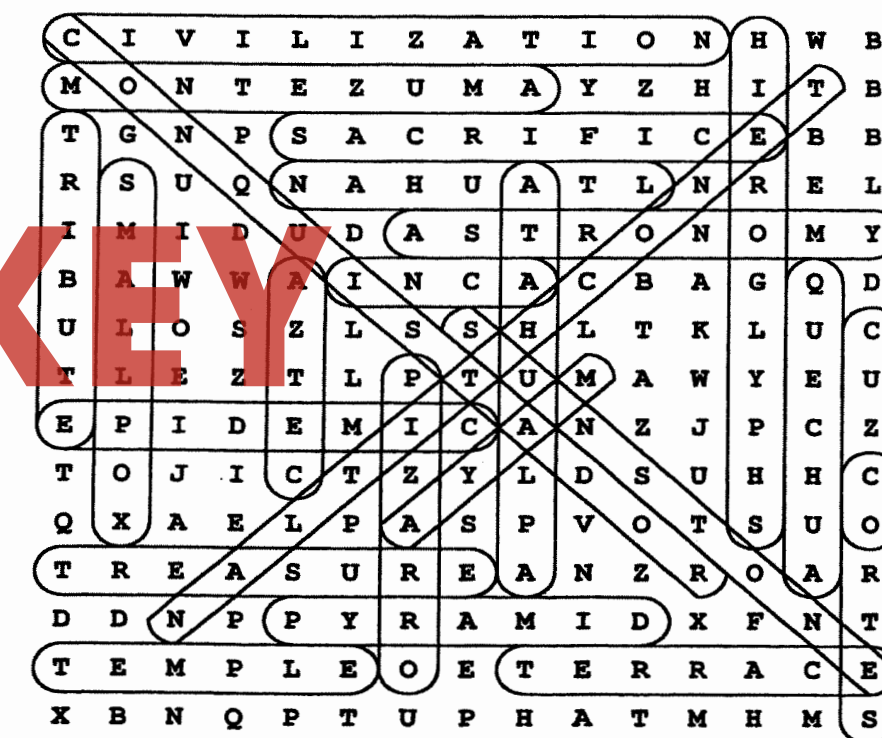
Teachers may wish to use this crossword puzzle as an enrichment or a review activity.

Answer Key



Lesson #11 - Ancient American Wordsearch

Teachers may wish to use this wordsearch as an enrichment or a review activity for the students.



Lesson #12 - The Lost City Of Machu Picchu

For enrichment, students use the internet to find out more about this once-great city.