

The Aztecs



The Aztec capital, Tenochtitlan, was built on an island in Lake Texcoco.

Tenochtitlan

The Aztec Indians had already built one of the most advanced civilizations in the western hemisphere by the time Columbus made his first voyage to the Americas. Archeologists believe that the Aztec capital **Tenochtitlan** may have had a population of over 200,000. This was larger than any city in Spain or England during the same time.

Mythology tells that the Aztecs began as wandering tribes in the north or northwest part of Mexico. This territory, called **Aztlan**, is the source of the name Aztec. Today we refer to the people as Aztecs, but they called themselves Mexica or Tenochca.

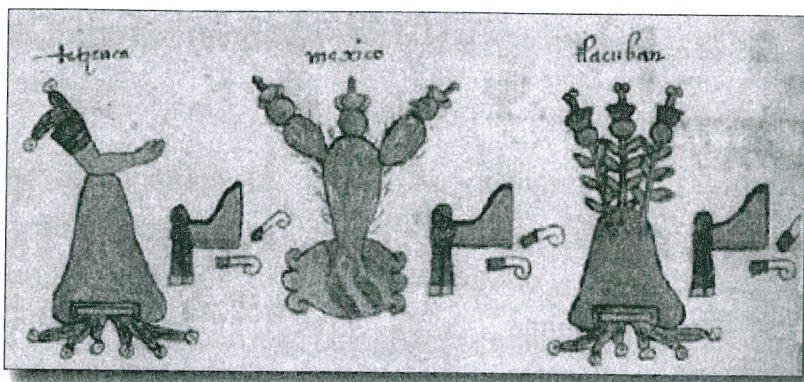
The ancient tribes wandered for many years. In the 1200s, they began to settle in the **Valley of Mexico**, which is in the central part of the country. The area rises about 7,500 feet above sea level. It is surrounded by tropical rain forests, but the high altitude gave the region a mild climate.

Nahuatl was the language spoken by the Aztecs. Many words we use today came from this ancient language. Aztec words include Acapulco, Mexico, avocado, chocolate, and tomato. The Aztecs developed a form of picture writing. Some pictures represented ideas; other pictures stood for sounds. They did not develop an alphabet, so their writing was limited in what it could express.

The Aztecs soon founded their greatest city, Tenochtitlan, on an island in Lake Texcoco. Eventually, that lake was filled in and became the site of Mexico City, the modern capital of Mexico.

The Aztec Empire

By the early 1400s, the Aztecs had gained control of their region and established a number of city-states. Each **city-state** had its own government and distinct culture. The three major city-states—Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, and Tlacopan—formed an alliance that became the Aztec empire. At one time, 489 cities paid tribute and taxes to the empire.



The pictorial symbols for Texcoco, Tenochtitlan, and Tlacopan.

A council of nobles always chose the emperor from members of the royal family. The greatest emperor, **Montezuma I**, ruled from 1440 to 1468/9. His name is also spelled Moctezuma and Motecuhzoma. He expanded the empire from the Atlantic to Pacific coasts and from Central America to what is now Guatemala. His grandson, Montezuma II, became emperor in 1502. He ruled when the empire was at its peak.

The Aztecs made no attempt to unify the area they commanded or to change the customs of the conquered peoples. The emperor stationed military units throughout the empire to maintain control. A great noble commanded each army and also served as governor. Most offices were hereditary, but service to the emperor was also a way to obtain a high office.

Aztec Society

Aztecs belonged to a large family group called a **calpolli**, a word that meant “big house.” Each calpolli owned a plot of land to meet the needs of its members. In addition to providing necessities for their own members, each calpolli presented the government with part of the harvest as a tribute.

There were four main social classes in Aztec society. The upper-class nobles owned land in addition to the land of their calpolli. The commoners farmed the calpolli land or made crafts and gave tributes to the nobles in return for protection. Serfs who farmed the land of the nobles formed the third major class. Slaves were the lowest class. They had either been captives in war, criminals, or citizens who became unable to pay their debts. Slaves became household servants or worked alongside the serfs in the fields.

The Spanish Invasion

Spaniards, under the leadership of Hernando Cortés, invaded Mexico in search of gold. Many of the smaller city-states helped the Spanish destroy the Aztec empire in 1521. They helped the Spanish because they resented paying tributes to the Aztec empire.

The glory of the Aztec empire vanished during the Spanish invasion, but today Aztec designs still have a strong influence on Mexican art, and thousands of modern Mexicans can trace their ancestry to the Aztecs.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Knowledge Check

Matching

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. Tenochtitlan | a. the language spoken by the Aztecs |
| _____ 2. Aztlan | b. an independent government unit centered on a city |
| _____ 3. Valley of Mexico | c. the region of north or northwest Mexico from which the Aztecs came |
| _____ 4. Nahuatl | d. the region in central Mexico where the Aztecs settled |
| _____ 5. city-state | e. an Aztec family group; meant "big house" |
| _____ 6. Montezuma I | f. the Aztec capital city |
| _____ 7. calpolli | g. the greatest Aztec emperor |

Multiple Choice

8. What was once at the site of Tenochtitlan and the modern-day Mexico City?
- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| a. a lake | b. a volcano |
| c. a desert | d. a mountain |
9. Which word below is not from the Nahuatl language?
- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| a. avocado | b. chocolate |
| c. Mexico | d. quipu |
10. Which social class was made up of captives in war, criminals, or citizens who couldn't pay their debts?
- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| a. serfs | b. slaves |
| c. nobles | d. commoners |

Constructed Response

11. How was the Aztec empire organized? Use details from the reading selection to help support your answer.

Aztec Daily Life

Huetzin woke up an hour before the sun appeared. He rolled his sleeping mat into a small bundle and put it into the corner of the room. He was still sleepy as he went into the small steam bath attached to his house. He threw some water onto the hot rocks to make the steam. As the steam subsided, he went outside and dove into the canal that ran along beside the house. He shivered at the cold water of the canal. Now he was fully awake.

Aztec Houses

A small house made of **adobe** brick was home to Huetzin. The house had a roof made of **thatched** straw. Aztec homes had little furniture. They used woven straw mats that were placed on the dirt floors instead of beds and chairs. The only pieces of furniture Huetzin's family owned were a few wooden chests to hold valuables and kitchen utensils.

Some of the houses were large because many family members lived together. Households included the husband and wife and their unmarried children, as well as other relatives of the husband. The rooms of the house surrounded a patio. The kitchen and eating area was the largest room in the house. The fire was in the middle of the room. Each morning Huetzin's mother would rekindle the fire and begin her chores of preparing the family's food for the day. She packed a special lunch for Huetzin and his father to eat at the workshop. Huetzin had a pouch filled with food just like the one his father carried. Huetzin carried his own lunch to the workshop. Aztecs expected the children to share in all of the work.

Aztec Education

Huetzin looked forward to his next birthday. Then he could attend the **Telpuchcalli**. This was a school sponsored by his family's tribe. Both boys and girls attended the Aztec schools. Training at the school included lessons in citizenship, history and tradition, religious ceremonies, and arts and crafts. In addition to these classes, the boys learned about methods of warfare. The girls learned singing and dancing skills. Some students also went to the **Calmecac**, which was a special school to train priests.



Aztecs carrying cargo on their backs. These Aztecs are wearing simple loincloths.



Aztecs ate corn pancakes, which the Spanish called *tortillas*, twice a day.

All of the children helped with the household chores. Huetzin's sisters remained at home with their mother. The girls learned cooking, spinning cotton, weaving, and other household skills. The women of the household prepared the meals and made the clothing for the family.

Clothing

Huetzin and his family wore cotton clothes with some decoration sewn on. His family was wealthy enough to afford cotton. The poorer Aztecs wore cloth made of fibers of the **maguery** plant. Decoration on clothing indicated the wealth and social rank of the person. Members of the upper class wore colorful and highly embroidered clothing.

Men wore a loincloth wrapped around their hips. Some men also wore cloaks tied over one shoulder. Aztec women wore loose, sleeveless blouses and wraparound skirts. People went barefoot most of the time, but some wore sandals made of leather or woven maguey fibers.

Learning a Craft

Most of Huetzin's relatives were farmers in the nearby fields, but his father was a craftsman. His father carved jade and other precious stones into small decorations. Every day Huetzin would go to the workshop with his father. His father taught him many things. He learned how to hunt and fish as well as how to use the tools to create beautiful objects to be sold in the market. He also learned the stories of his ancestors from his father.

All day, Huetzin helped his father at the workshop. He looked forward to the time when he would be a master stone carver and work alongside his father. He and his father ate lunch with the others at the workshop. That afternoon Huetzin went to the marketplace and helped sell the carvings that had been made during the week.



Aztecs trading for quetzal feathers.

Food

Huetzin and his father returned home just before sunset. They washed in the canal and then joined the rest of the family for supper. The women served the meal to the men of the household and then ate their own meals separately.

The Aztecs had a variety of food available. Members of the family brought **maize** (corn), beans, squash, chili peppers, and tomatoes from the fields. The men hunted to provide deer, rabbits, ducks, and geese. The Aztecs raised dogs and turkeys for additional meat. Corn was the main part of the Aztec diet. Twice daily, the women baked the cornmeal pancake, which the Spanish later called a **tortilla**. The Aztecs filled the tortillas with other foods much like our tamales and tacos today. The Aztecs did not have cattle or pigs, so they had little fat in their diets. The food was baked or boiled. Since they used many peppers in their cooking, the food was often spicy and hot.

Two special treats at the end of the meal might include chicle-zapoil or chocolate. **Chicle** came from a gum tree and is the basis for modern-day chewing gum. Chocolate was processed from the cacao bean. It was a delicacy and not served often. Many times the Aztecs flavored their chocolate with vanilla and other spices.

Family Time

After the meal, all members of the family worked on various chores. Huetzin's father mended tools for tomorrow's work. His uncle repaired a broken planting stick. The women continued working at their looms. This was Huetzin's favorite part of the day. As they worked in the dim glow of the fire, Huetzin listened to his grandfather tell stories of battles of the old days. Grandfather seemed to like the old days. Huetzin knew many of the stories by heart, but he enjoyed hearing his grandfather tell them again.

Soon it was time for Huetzin to go to bed. He went to his room and unrolled his sleeping mat. He was tired from his busy day, and it was not long before he fell asleep.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Knowledge Check

Matching

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| _____ 1. adobe | a. covered with plant material, such as straw |
| _____ 2. thatched | b. a school for training Aztec priests |
| _____ 3. Telpuchcalli | c. comes from the gum tree and is used in chewing gum |
| _____ 4. Calmecac | d. a brick made of sun-dried earth and straw |
| _____ 5. maguey | e. an Aztec school sponsored by a family calpolli |
| _____ 6. chicle | f. plant with tough fibers used in clothing for poorer Aztecs |

Multiple Choice

7. What did the Aztecs have little of in their diets?

a. spice	b. sweets
c. vegetables	d. fat

8. Cornmeal pancakes were later called what by the Spanish?

a. tortillas	b. maize
c. flapjacks	d. tacos

9. What did the Aztecs sit or sleep on in their houses?

a. chairs	b. benches
c. cushions	d. woven mats

10. Who would usually not be living in an Aztec house?

a. unmarried children	b. husband and wife
c. a wife's brother	d. a husband's sister

Constructed Response

11. How would a young Aztec boy learn a craft? Use details from the reading selection to help support your answer.

Aztec Society

The Aztec Clan

The clan was the basis of all Aztec society and government. Each person was a member of an extended family. The extended family included grandparents, aunts, and uncles, as well as parents, brothers, and sisters. Groups of the extended families joined to form **clans**. Twenty clans combined to form a **tribe**.

Calpolli was the Aztec word for a clan. Calpolli came from the Aztec word calli, which meant "big house." Although some nobles owned their own land, the calpolli owned most of the land. The clan divided its land among the families.

Each calpolli elected its own officers to run its business. The calpolli was a true democracy. Most of the important decisions were made by popular vote. Aztec women did not have the right to vote, however.

Aztec Tribes

Aztec tribes met together often to take care of common needs. Each tribe chose a leader to be in the **council**. The members of the council then chose one of the leaders to be its chief. The chief was in charge of civil and religious affairs. The council enforced the laws of the clan. They also punished wrongdoers.

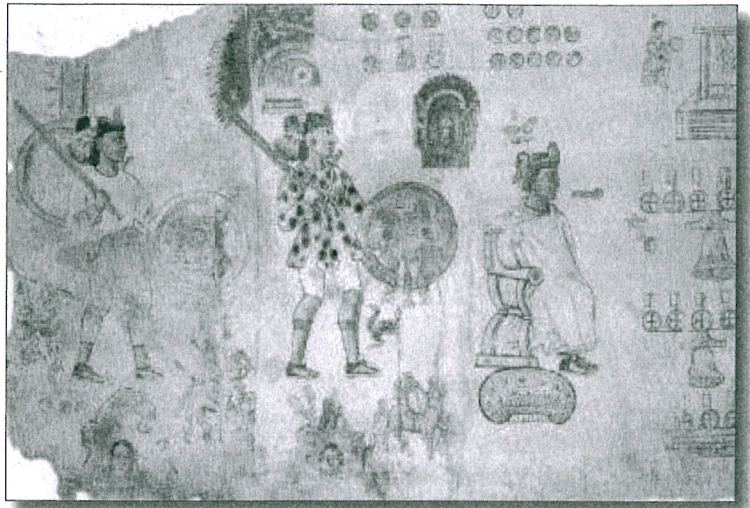
The council elected a second chief to be in charge of war matters. The calpolli expected all of its able-bodied men to fight in any wars. The men considered it an honor in addition to a duty to fight for their clan.

Life in the Calpolli

All aspects of its members' lives were governed by the calpolli. At the birth of a child, the parents consulted the calpolli's priest. The priest looked in the book of fate to see if the birth date was lucky. Four days later, the family held a feast to celebrate the birth and give the child a name. During the celebrations, family members showed weapons and tools to baby boys. They showed weaving items and musical instruments to the baby girls.

The Aztecs taught the children in their homes. They taught the boys methods of hunting and fishing or crafts. The women taught the girls spinning, weaving, cooking, and other household duties. At about the age of 13, the children went to schools operated by their clans. There, the boys learned about weapons and methods of war and the girls learned additional homemaking skills as well as music and dance.

The family arranged for all marriages. The boy and girl involved usually gave their consent to be married. A young person could only marry someone outside the clan. During the wedding ceremonies, the priest tied the cloaks of the bride and groom together. This was a symbol of the joining together of the two. The bride then became a member of her husband's clan.



An Aztec calpolli governed many aspects of its members' lives, including schooling and marriages.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Knowledge Check

Matching

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| _____ 1. clan | a. the Aztec word for clan; meant "big house" |
| _____ 2. tribe | b. a group made up of 20 clans |
| _____ 3. calpolli | c. a group with members from each tribe who chose a chief, enforced the laws, and punished wrongdoers |
| _____ 4. council | d. a group of extended families |

True/False

Place a *T* on the line if the statement is true or an *F* if it is false.

- _____ 5. All able-bodied men were expected to fight in any wars.
- _____ 6. The council's second chief was in charge of religious affairs.
- _____ 7. The calpolli owned most of the land.
- _____ 8. Baby boys were shown weapons and tools, while girls were shown weaving items and musical instruments.
- _____ 9. Young Aztecs could marry anyone they fell in love with.
- _____ 10. At the age of 9, children went to schools operated by their clans.
- _____ 11. Most important decisions were made by popular decision, but Aztec women did not have the right to vote.

Constructed Response

12. What were some advantages of joining together to form clans and tribes? Use details from the reading selection to help support your answer.

Aztec Religion

Gods and Goddesses Rule the Days

The Aztecs worshipped many gods and goddesses. Each village and each occupation had its own patron god. A different god also watched over each day and each division of the day. The people worshipped the various gods and goddesses to attract the good forces of nature and to repel harmful powers. Each month of the calendar had a festival with music, dancing, processions, and sacrifices.



Tlazolteotl was the earth mother goddess.

The Festival of Ochpaniztli

Just before the sun rose, distant sounds of the temple drums woke young Xochitl. She dressed quickly, and as she went into the main room of the house, she saw that the rest of the family was already awake and making preparations to go to the temple for the festival of **Ochpaniztli**, the festival of the eleventh month. This celebration honored **Tlazolteotl**, the earth mother goddess. Her mother gave her a basket of corn to place on the temple altar as a tribute to the goddess Tlazolteotl.

Hundreds of people had arrived and were lining the road leading to the temple. The crowd quieted down as the beat of the drums stopped. Though they were too far away from the temple to hear what was said, Xochitl knew that the priests were now presenting the sacred chants. The chants provided magic to avoid rains at harvest and to celebrate the refreshment of Earth Mother Tlazolteotl. Xochitl knew that the next part of the ceremony would be a human sacrifice to appease the gods.

In this ceremony, a young woman impersonating the goddess of ripe corn would be the sacrifice. This was one of the few Aztec ceremonies that sacrificed a young woman. Usually the victims of the sacrifices were men who were either captives of wars or slaves. Many of the Aztec religious festivals included human sacrifices. The priest cut open the victim's chest and tore out the heart. He then placed the victim's heart on the altar of the god or goddess. In one ceremony to the god Tlaloc, sacrifices even included children. Xochitl's mother had explained the Aztec belief that the blood given in sacrifice gave the gods new strength and energy.

When Xochitl heard the drums and other music begin, she knew it was time for the **grand procession**. First came the young men of each clan, dressed in their finest ceremonial outfits. Xochitl enjoyed the colorful display of brightly painted clothing and fancy feather work that decorated the clothes. Each clan member also carried a military weapon and shield decorated with the insignia of the clan.

Xochitl watched closely until she recognized her clan's group. Pride filled Xochitl's heart as they passed. She especially enjoyed seeing her uncles and cousins in the procession. She knew that when he was older, her brother would also march with them.

After the last clan passed, groups of warriors with special rank and privileges passed by. Two of the special groups, the **Knights of the Eagle** and the **Knights of the Jaguar**, wore animal skins to represent their mascot. These two groups then staged a mock battle to entertain the crowd.

The rest of the festival day was spent visiting friends and feasting. Occasionally other special events provided entertainment and excitement. Other contests and games filled the afternoon. The most important of the games was **tlachti**. This was a fast-moving game using a rubber ball. Each team tried to score points by putting the ball through rings on the sides of the playing field.



Huitzilopochtli was the Aztec Sun god and god of war. He was also the chief god of Tenochtitlan.

The festival was over by sunset. Xochitl and her family returned home. After the evening meal, Xochitl went to bed early. She had had a busy and tiring day, but in 20 days she would be ready to celebrate the next festival.

AZTEC GODS AND GODDESSES

The ancient Aztecs worshipped over 60 gods and goddesses. This is a list of the more important ones.

NAME	DESCRIPTION
TEZCATLIPOCA	Sun god; most powerful of all gods; chief god of the town of Texcoco
HUITZILOPOCHTLI	Sun god and god of war; chief god of the town of Tenochtitlan
TLAZOLTEOTL	Mother of gods; earth goddess
TLALOC	Rain god; most important to the farmers
QUETZALCOATL	God of learning and the priesthood, also god of arts and crafts
CHICOMECOATL	Goddess of crops
CENETEOTL	God of corn
XIPE TOTEC	God of spring, planting, and re-growth
TONATIUH	A Sun god
MICHLANTECUHLI	God of the dead
XIUHTECUHTLI	Ancient fire god
CHALCHIHUITLICUE	Our Lady of the Turquoise skirt; goddess of lakes and rivers

Name: _____ Date: _____

Knowledge Check

Matching

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Ochpaniztli | a. group of Aztec warriors with special rank and privileges; |
| _____ 2. Tlazolteotl | wore animal skins to represent their mascot |
| _____ 3. grand procession | b. a fast-moving game with a rubber ball |
| _____ 4. Knights of the Jaguar | c. the Aztec earth mother goddess |
| _____ 5. tlachti | d. a parade of young men from each clan and special warrior groups |
| | e. the festival of the eleventh month to honor Tlazolteotl |

Multiple Choice

6. The young woman being sacrificed represented what?
- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. the goddess of water | b. the goddess of ripe corn |
| c. the earth mother goddess | d. the goddess of the sky |
7. What would the Knights of the Eagle and the Knights of the Jaguar do to entertain the crowd?
- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. stage a mock battle | b. sacrifice two of their members |
| c. stage a harvest ceremony | d. compete in a tug-of-war contest |
8. The priests used what to ask for magic to avoid rains at harvest time and to celebrate the refreshment of the earth mother goddess?
- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| a. the grand procession | b. sacred chants |
| c. a human sacrifice | d. drum music |
9. Which god was a sun god and the most powerful of all the Aztec gods?
- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| a. Tlaloc | b. Huitzilopochtli |
| c. Quetzalcoatl | d. Tezcatlipoca |

Constructed Response

10. Why did the Aztecs use human sacrifices? Who were usually sacrificed in the ceremonies? Use details from the reading selection to support your answer.

Aztec Warfare

Warfare was an important part of Aztec life. Every able-bodied Aztec man participated in fighting. The Aztecs believed it was a religious duty to be a warrior.

Training for War

At the age of about 13, Aztec boys attended a school named the **telpuchalli**. At this school, the boys learned how to use weapons and the basics of warfare. Each boy would follow an experienced warrior into battle.

Taking Captives

It was important for the warrior to take **captives**. The Aztec honored the men who took many captives. The successful warriors often received social rank, land, or important offices as their reward.

Weapons

Aztec warriors used many weapons. The **macuahuitl** was the most important. It was a sword edged with sharp pieces of obsidian glass. The Aztecs also used bows and arrows, javelins, clubs, and slings.

Protective Clothing

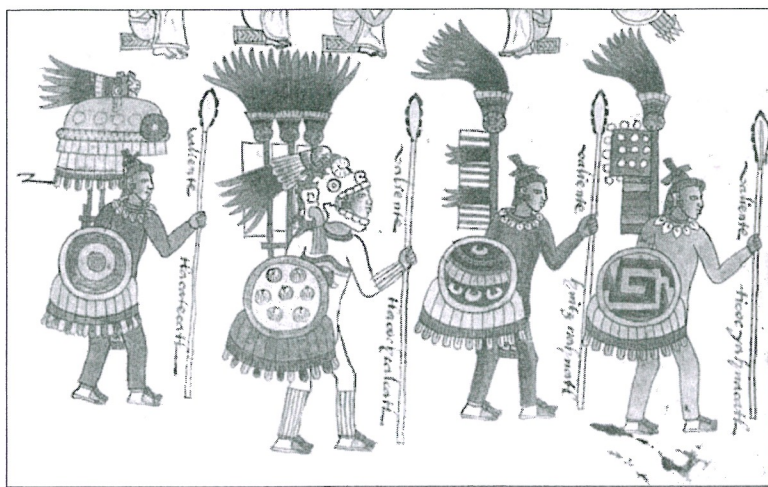
The warriors carried shields and wore padded cotton armor. They decorated the shield with paint and feathers. They also wore brightly colored feather headdresses. They did not have uniforms. Each warrior dressed as he wished. They often had the sign of their group on their shield. The main warrior groups were the Order of the Eagle, the Order of the Jaguar, and the Order of the Arrows.

Battles

Battles did not last long. They did not use animals to carry supplies. The soldiers had to carry all of their supplies, so they did not have enough food and weapons to support a long attack. Most of the fighting was **hand-to-hand combat**. The first tribe to retreat was the loser.

The Aztecs went to war for two main reasons. They fought to get tribute and the needed supply of sacrificial victims for religious ceremonies. The tribe that lost the battle had to give the winning tribe gold, jewels, crops, and other valuable items. **Tribute** was everything the losing tribe had to give to the winning tribe. Often, the losing tribe paid tribute each year for many years after the battle. Tribute from many defeated tribes helped keep the Aztecs strong and powerful.

The goal of Aztec warfare was to capture rather than kill the enemy. Members of the losing tribe became slaves or sacrifices. Aztec religion demanded many human sacrifices to please the gods.



Aztec warriors were armed with slings, javelins, clubs, bows and arrows, and swords called macuahuitls. Warriors also carried shields decorated with paint and feathers.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Knowledge Check

Matching

- _____ 1. telpuchalli
 - _____ 2. captives
 - _____ 3. macuahuitl
 - _____ 4. hand-to-hand combat
 - _____ 5. tribute
- a. an Aztec sword edged with sharp pieces of obsidian glass
 - b. a school attended by Aztec boys of age 13 where they learned the basics of warfare
 - c. everything the losing tribe had to give to the winning tribe
 - d. those taken prisoner during warfare; often used as slaves or sacrifices
 - e. fighting close enough for the warriors to come in contact

Multiple Choice

- 6. Which was NOT one of the main Aztec warrior groups?
 - a. Order of the Eagle
 - b. Order of the Jaguar
 - c. Order of the Arrows
 - d. Order of the Falcon
- 7. Why didn't battles last for a long period of time?
 - a. They couldn't carry many supplies.
 - b. They did not want to fight.
 - c. They didn't have many weapons.
 - d. Other tribes were too scared to fight.
- 8. Which warriors were the most honored?
 - a. Those who took the most captives.
 - b. Those who killed the most.
 - c. Those who took the most loot.
 - d. Those who died in battle.
- 9. What kept the Aztecs strong and powerful for many years?
 - a. gold from Aztec mines
 - b. the macuahuitl
 - c. tribute from defeated tribes
 - d. human sacrifice

Constructed Response

10. Why did the Aztecs want to capture rather than kill their enemies? How did they reward those warriors who took many captives? Use details from the reading selection to help support your answer.

The Arrival of the Spaniards

Expeditions Into Mexico

Soon after Columbus landed in the Americas in 1492, the Spanish began settlements in the “new world.” The Spanish governor of Cuba sent expeditions into Mexico in 1517 and 1518. **Hernando Cortés** headed the third expedition in 1519. They were looking for riches and slave labor for the plantations in Cuba. Cortés and his men, known as **Conquistadors**, encountered the Aztecs.

Conquering the Aztecs

Cortés and his men conquered the Aztecs in just three years. Many other tribes helped Cortés defeat the Aztecs. These tribes resented the heavy taxes they had to pay to the Aztecs.



The Aztec god Quetzalcoatl

The great Aztec chief **Montezuma II** did not oppose the Spaniards. He remembered an Aztec legend that said that the powerful god Quetzalcoatl had sailed across the sea and would return someday. Montezuma had never seen white men before. The metal armor of the Spanish also impressed him. Montezuma thought Cortés represented the returning god. Since he offered no resistance, the Spanish took Montezuma prisoner.

In 1520, the Aztecs rebelled against the invaders and drove the Spanish from the city of Tenochtitlan. By May 1521, Cortés and his men returned. They began a bloody attack against the Aztecs. Montezuma died from wounds he received in the attack. The next Aztec ruler, Cuauhtemoc, surrendered to the Spanish in August 1521.

Destroying the Aztec Culture

The Spanish conquerors destroyed the Aztec cities. They made the Aztecs their slaves. The conquistadors took the Aztecs' gold and other treasures and sent them to Spain. Later, Spanish **missionaries** arrived. They destroyed Aztec temples and wiped out all traces of the Aztec religion. The religion of the white man soon replaced the old Aztec beliefs.

The Aztecs had little chance against the invaders. The Spanish had better weapons and armor than the natives. The Spanish also brought a new disease called **smallpox** with them from Europe. The natives did not have any resistance to this new infection. Thousands of Aztecs, including warriors, died from the disease.

After defeating the Aztecs, the Spanish invaders fought the Incas and the Mayas. The Spanish defeated the Incas in 1533. The last city of the Mayas fell in March 1697. The Spanish now had full control of the region.



When Montezuma II met Cortés, he thought the Spaniard was the god Quetzalcoatl returning from across the sea, so he did not oppose the Spanish.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Knowledge Check

Matching

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. Hernando Cortés | a. religious people who go into a foreign country to convert the natives to their religion; usually Christian |
| _____ 2. Conquistadors | b. Spanish soldiers who conquered the natives of the new world |
| _____ 3. Montezuma II | c. leader of the 1519 and later expeditions into Mexico that conquered the Aztecs |
| _____ 4. missionaries | d. deadly disease brought by the Spanish for which the Aztecs had no resistance |
| _____ 5. smallpox | e. ruler of the Aztecs at the time of the Spanish invasion |

Multiple Choice

6. Who sent expeditions into Mexico?

a. the French king	b. the Spanish governor of Cuba
c. the Spanish king	d. the English governor of Virginia

7. Montezuma II thought the white men with metal armor represented what?

a. the return of Montezuma I	b. soldiers of the king of Spain
c. the return of the god Quetzalcoatl	d. an attack by a distant tribe

8. Who helped the Spanish defeat the Aztecs?

a. other native tribes	b. the French
c. the Portuguese	d. missionaries

9. Who was the last native group to be defeated by the Spanish?

a. the Cubans	b. the Incas
c. the Aztecs	d. the Mayas

Constructed Response

10. How did the spread of smallpox help the Spanish defeat the Aztecs? Use details from the reading selection to help support your answer.
