

Pre-Columbian America

300–1550

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS • *In what ways were civilizations in early Mesoamerica and South America complex?* • *How were civilizations in early Mesoamerica and South America influenced by previous cultures?*

networks

There's More Online! about pre-Columbian America.

CHAPTER 14

Lesson 1

The Peoples of North America and Mesoamerica

Lesson 2

Early South American Civilizations

The Story Matters...

Between 2000 B.C. and A.D. 1500, new civilizations arose in several regions of the Western Hemisphere. In fertile Mesoamerica (present-day Mexico and Central America), a series of cultures, including the Olmec, Maya, Toltec, and Aztec, built great cities that nurtured rich traditions. At their peak around A.D. 900, the Maya had a stable government, a written language, and a calendar. The Maya also created great works of architecture, painting, pottery, and sculpture.

◀ This Maya mask, constructed of jade with inlaid mother of pearl eyes, was made between the seventh and tenth centuries near the city of Palenque, in modern-day Mexico. The mask is a striking example of the skill of Maya craftspeople in representing the stylized human form.

PHOTO: DEA / G. DAGLI ORTI/De Agostini Picture Library/Getty Images

CHAPTER 14

Place and Time: The Americas 1200 B.C.—A.D. 1500

In Mesoamerica and South America, new civilizations emerged beginning in the second millennium B.C. As the older civilizations, such as the Olmec, the first-known civilization in Mesoamerica, and the Chavin, an early South American civilization, declined, a series of new civilizations took their places. From their religious beliefs to their farming and building methods to their calendars, later civilizations, such as the Aztec and Inca, shared many characteristics with the earlier ones. It is believed that these cultural traits and customs were disseminated throughout the region by both conquest and trade.

Step Into the Place

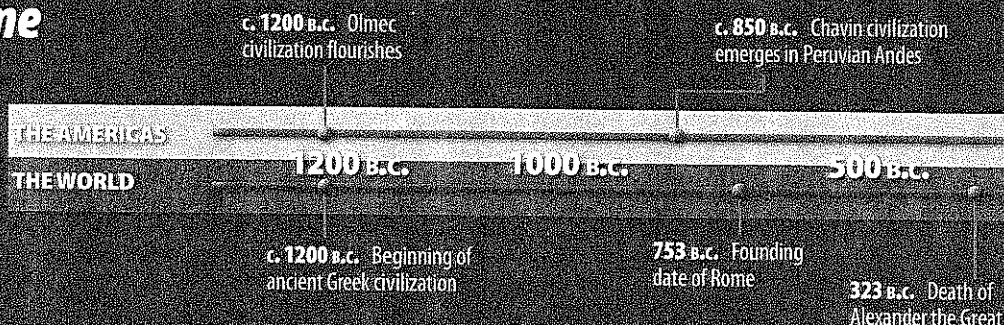
Read the table and look at the information presented on the map.

DBQ **Identifying Evidence** What features of early Mesoamerican and South American society remained the same throughout several civilizations? Which features changed?

	Agriculture	Religion	Architecture	Calendar and Writing
Olmec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> raised fields drainage canals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> jaguar-god human sacrifice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monumental pyramids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> astronomical calendar hieroglyphics
Zapotec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> slash-and-burn farming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> several gods human sacrifice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cities with temples and plazas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> solar and ritual calendars hieroglyphics
Chavin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> potatoes, peanuts, and yams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gods with human and feline traits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> platform temples adobe and cut stone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no calendar system no written language
Maya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> slash-and-burn farming swamp drainage terracing and irrigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> worship of Quetzalcoatl human sacrifice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monumental pyramids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ritual, solar, "long count" calendars hieroglyphics
Aztec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>chinampas</i>, artificial islands for farming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> many gods worship of Huitzilopochtli human sacrifice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenochtitlán island city with canals and causeways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ritual and civil calendars written language
Inca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> terracing irrigation drainage canals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> many gods human sacrifice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> massive stone structures without mortar 19,000 miles of roads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12-month calendar no written language; <i>quipu</i>, knotted strings to record expenses and trade

Step Into the Time

Determining Cause and Effect Research a civilization from the time line and write a paragraph describing the reasons for its fall.



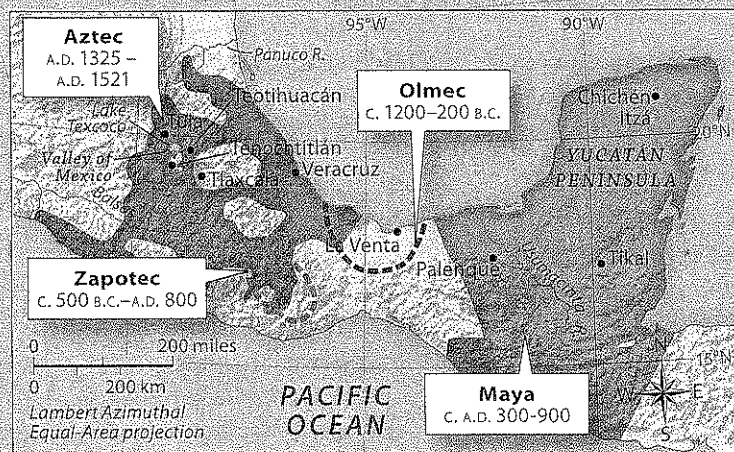
networks

There's More Online!

- ✓ **MAP** Explore the interactive version of this map on Networks.
- ✓ **TIME LINE** Explore the interactive version of the time line on Networks.

Cultures of the Americas

- Aztec civilization, A.D. 1500
- Inca civilization, A.D. 1530
- Maya civilization, c. A.D. 300–900
- Olmec heartland, c. 1200–200 B.C.
- Zapotec civilization
- Area of Chavin influence



Caribbean Sea

ATLANTIC OCEAN

Chavin
c. 850–200 B.C.

SOUTH AMERICA

Inca
A.D. 1350–1533

0 800 miles
0 800 km
Lambert Azimuthal Equal-Area projection

c. A.D. 250 Classic Maya period begins in Mexico and Central America

c. A.D. 900 Toltecs burn city of Teotihuacán

A.D. 1325 The Aztecs establish Tenochtitlán as their capital

after A.D. 1438 Pachacuti expands Inca Empire

A.D. 1521 Tenochtitlán is demolished; end of Aztec Empire

A.D. 1533 Inca capital Cuzco falls to the Spanish

202 B.C. – A.D. 220 Han dynasty rules in China

A.D. 320 Gupta dynasty rules in India

A.D. 476 Last Roman emperor deposed; fall of the Western Roman Empire

8th century Kingdom of Ghana emerges in Africa

A.D. 1453 Constantinople falls to Ottoman forces

There's More Online!

- ✓ BIOGRAPHY Pacal the Great
- ✓ BIOGRAPHY Topiltzin
- ✓ IMAGE Pyramid of Kukulkan
- ✓ IMAGE Teotihuacán
- ✓ INTERACTIVE SELF-CHECK QUIZ
- ✓ MAP Tenochtitlán
- ✓ PRIMARY SOURCE Anasazi Legend
- ✓ SLIDE SHOW North American Societies and their Environments
- ✓ VIDEO The Peoples of North America and Mesoamerica

Reading **HELPDESK**

Academic Vocabulary

- consist
- area

Content Vocabulary

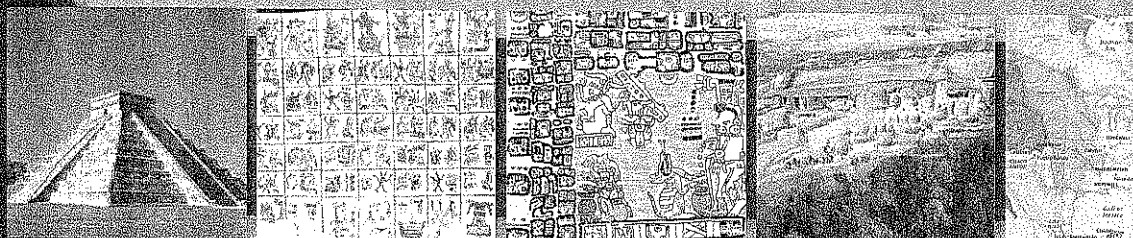
- longhouse
- clan
- tepee

TAKING NOTES:

Key Ideas and Details

Organizing As you read, use a table like the one below to organize information on the Maya, Toltec, and Aztec.

	Politics and Society	Religion and Culture
Maya		
Toltec		
Aztec		



LESSON 1

The Peoples of North America and Mesoamerica

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS • How did early civilizations in early human history develop? • How were civilizations in the Americas different from those in the Old World? • How did the Americas influence the world's cultures?

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Across the Atlantic Ocean from the great civilizations of the Old World, new civilizations were in the process of being formed. Most of these early peoples in the Americas lived by hunting and fishing or by food gathering. By 1200 B.C., the first organized societies started in Central America.

The Peoples of North America

GUIDING QUESTION Who were the early peoples of North America?

During the last Ice Age, a natural land bridge connected the Asian and North American continents. Early hunters used this land bridge when they followed herds of bison and caribou into North America. These hunters became the first people to live in North America.

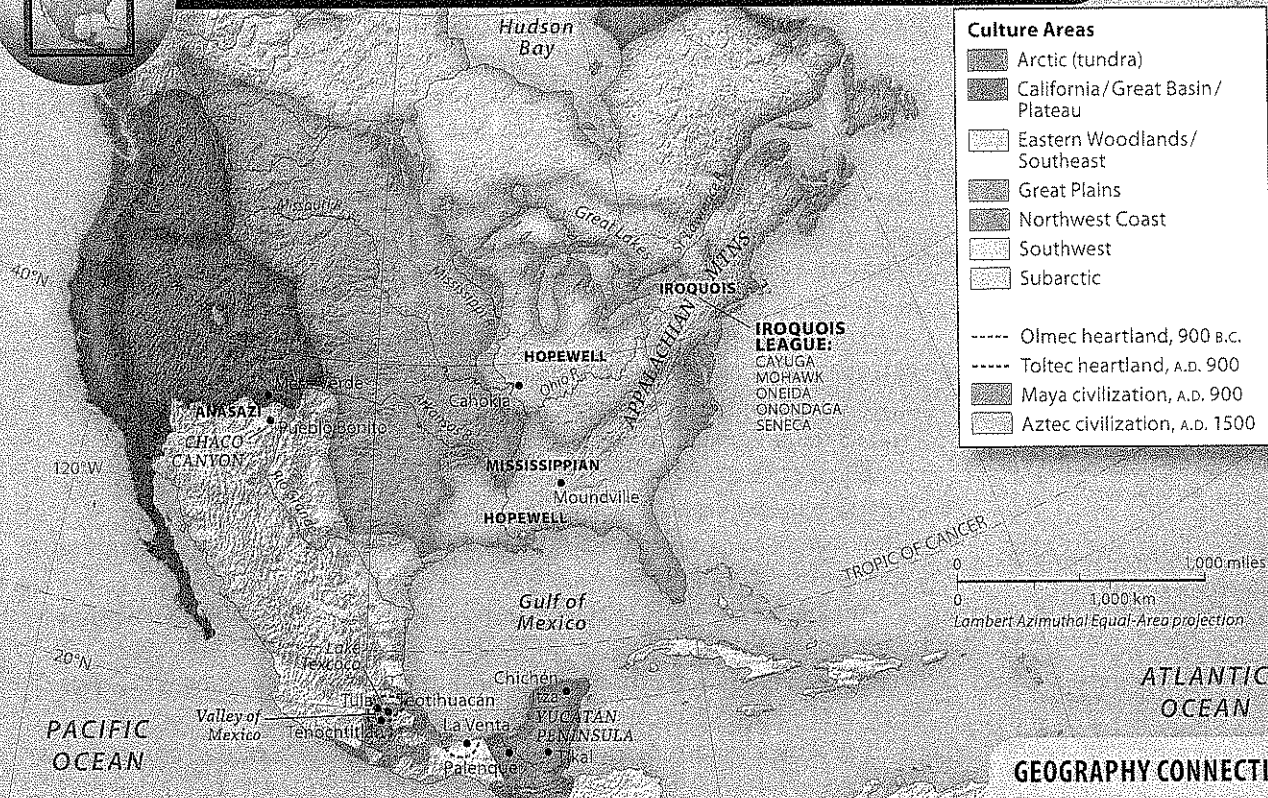
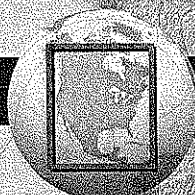
Eastern Woodlands

Around 1000 B.C., farming villages appeared in the Eastern Woodlands, the land in eastern North America from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. People here grew crops but also continued to gather wild plants for food. Best known are the Hopewell peoples in the Ohio River valley, who extended their culture along the Mississippi River. The Hopewell people, known as the Mound Builders, built large, elaborate earth mounds that were used as tombs or for ceremonies. Some were built in the shape of animals.

The shift to full-time farming in approximately A.D. 700 led to a prosperous culture in the Mississippi River valley. This Mississippian culture grew corn, squash, and beans together to provide plants with nutrients, support, and shade.

Cities began to appear, and some of them contained 10,000 people or more. At the site of Cahokia (kuh • HOH • kee • uh), near the modern city of East St. Louis, Illinois, archaeologists found a burial mound more than 98 feet (30 m) high. It had a base larger than the base of the Great Pyramid in Egypt. Between A.D. 850 and 1150, Cahokia flourished and served as the seat of government. For reasons unknown, Cahokia collapsed during the 1200s.

North American and Mesoamerican Cultural Centers 900 B.C.—A.D. 1500



GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

- 1 THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS** *Why do you think more culture groups were located in the south than in the north?*
- 2 PLACES AND REGIONS** *List the major Mesoamerican civilizations and suggest reasons for where their cities were situated.*

To the northeast of the Mississippian culture were people known as the Iroquois (IHR • uh • kwoy). The Iroquois lived in villages that **consisted of longhouses** surrounded by wooden fences for protection. Each longhouse, built of wooden poles covered with sheets of bark, was 150 to 200 feet (46 to 61 m) in length and housed about a dozen families.

Iroquois men hunted deer, bear, caribou, and small animals such as rabbits and beaver. They were warriors who protected the community. Women owned the dwellings, gathered wild plants, and grew crops. The most important crops were the “three sisters”—corn, beans, and squash. Women also cooked, made baskets, and cared for the children.

Wars were common, especially among groups of Iroquois who lived in much of present-day Pennsylvania, New York, and parts of southern Canada. Legend holds that sometime during the 1500s, the Iroquois peoples were nearly torn apart by warfare. Deganawida, an elder of one Iroquois group, appeared and preached the need for peace.

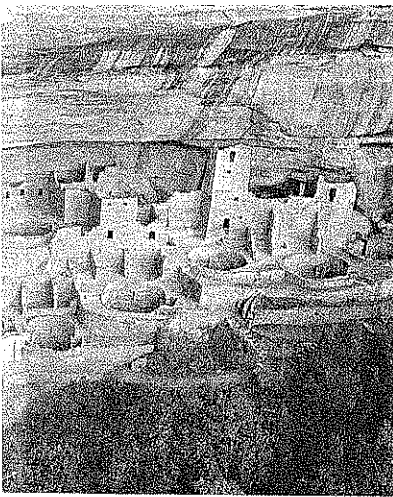
One who listened was Hiawatha, a member of the Onondaga (AH • nuhn • DAW • guh) group. From the combined efforts of Deganawida and Hiawatha came the Great Peace, which created an alliance of five groups called the Iroquois League.

A council of representatives, a group of 50 Iroquois leaders known as the Grand Council, met regularly to settle differences. Representatives were chosen in a special way. Each Iroquois group was made up of **clans**, or groups of related families. The women of each clan singled out a well-respected woman as the clan mother. The clan mothers then chose the male members of the Grand Council. Much was expected of these men—patience and firmness, but also a tenderness for their people and calm deliberation.

consist to be composed of or made up of

longhouse Iroquois house about 150 to 200 feet (46 to 61 m) long built of wooden poles covered with sheets of bark and housing about a dozen families

clan a group of related families



▲ Cliff Palace at Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado, is one of many cliff dwellings built by the Anasazi.

tepee a circular tent made by stretching buffalo skins over wooden poles

area a geographic region

Great Plains and Southwest

West of the Mississippi River basin, the Plains Indians cultivated beans, corn, and squash along the river valleys of the eastern Great Plains. Every summer, the men left their villages to hunt buffalo, a very important animal to the Plains culture. Hunters would work together to frighten a herd of buffalo, causing them to stampede over a cliff.

The buffalo served many uses for Plains peoples. They ate the meat, used the skins for clothing, and made tools from the bones. By stretching buffalo skins over wooden poles, they made circular tents called **tepees**. Tepees provided excellent shelter; they were warm in winter and cool in summer.

The Southwest covers the territory of present-day New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado. Conditions are dry, but there is sufficient rain in some **areas** for farming. The Anasazi (AH • nuh • SAH • zee) peoples established an extensive farming society there.

Between A.D. 500 and 1200, the Anasazi used canals and earthen dams to garden in the desert. They were skilled at making baskets and pottery. Using stone and adobe (sun-dried brick), they built pueblos, or multistoried structures that housed many people.

At Chaco Canyon in northwestern New Mexico, they built an elaborate center for their civilization. At the heart of Chaco Canyon was Pueblo Bonito, a large complex that contained some 800 rooms housing more than 1,000 people. However, persistent droughts led the Anasazi to abandon it.

The Anasazi culture did not die. In southern Colorado, a large community formed at Mesa Verde (MAY • suh VEHR • dee) (today, a national park). Groups of Anasazi built a remarkable series of buildings in the recesses of the cliff walls. However, in the late 1200s, the Anasazi abandoned the settlement due to a prolonged drought.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Making Connections How did the shift to farming contribute to the development of various cultures in North America?

The Maya

GUIDING QUESTION *What made the Maya one of the most sophisticated civilizations of the early Americas?*

Signs of civilization in Mesoamerica—a name we use for areas of Mexico and Central America that were civilized before the Spaniards arrived—appeared around 1200 B.C. On the Yucatán Peninsula, one of the most sophisticated civilizations in the Americas arose. This was the civilization of the Maya, which flourished between A.D. 300 and 900.

The Maya built splendid temples and pyramids and developed a complicated calendar that was as accurate as any in existence in the world at that time. Maya civilization included much of Central America and southern Mexico.

Sometime around 800, the Maya civilization in the central Yucatán Peninsula began to decline. Why did this happen? Explanations include invasion, internal revolt, a volcanic eruption, or overuse of the land that led to reduced crop yields.

Whatever the case, Maya cities were abandoned and covered by dense jungle growth. They were not rediscovered until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Political and Social Structures

Maya cities were built around a central pyramid topped by a shrine to the gods. Nearby were other temples, palaces, and a sacred ball court. Some scholars believe that more than 100,000 inhabitants might have lived in urban centers such as Tikal in present-day Guatemala.

Maya civilization was composed of city-states, each governed by a hereditary ruling class. These Maya city-states were often at war with each other. Ordinary soldiers who were captured in battle became slaves. Captured nobles and war leaders were used for human sacrifice.

In the powerful city-state of Palenque (pah • LEHNG • kay) the ruler Pacal claimed to be descended from the gods, as did other Maya rulers. These rulers were supported by nobles and a class of scribes who might also have been priests. Maya society also contained peasants and townspeople who worked as skilled artisans, officials, and merchants.

Most of the Maya peasants were farmers. They lived on tiny plots or on terraced hills in the highlands. Houses were built of adobe and thatch. There was a fairly clear-cut division of labor. Men did the fighting and hunting; women provided the homemaking and raising of children. Women also made cornmeal, the basic food of much of the population. The Maya also cultivated cacao trees, the source of chocolate, which was used as a beverage by the upper classes.

Religion and Culture

Crucial to Maya civilization was its spiritual perspective. For the Maya, all of life was in the hands of divine powers. The name of their supreme god was Itzamna (eet • SAWM • nuh) or “Lizard House.” Gods were ranked in order of importance. Some, such as the jaguar god of night, were evil rather than good.

Like other ancient civilizations in Mesoamerica, the Maya practiced human sacrifice to appease the gods. Human sacrifices were also used for special ceremonial occasions. When a male heir was presented to the throne, war captives were tortured and then beheaded. The Maya created a sophisticated writing system based on hieroglyphs or pictures. Unfortunately, the Spanish conquerors of the sixteenth century had little respect for the Maya language and made no effort to decipher it. The Spaniards assumed the writings were evil or worthless and destroyed many of them.

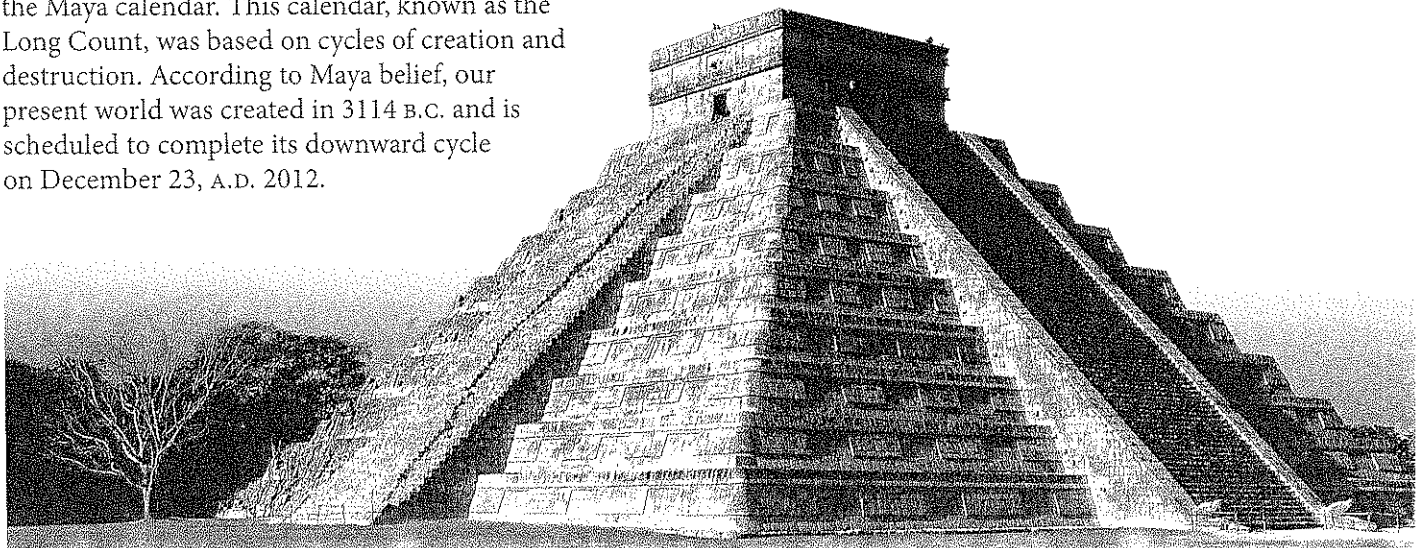
The Maya wrote on bark, folding it like an accordion, then covering the outside with thin plaster. Four of these books have survived. Maya writing was also carved into clay, jade, bone, shells, and stone monuments.

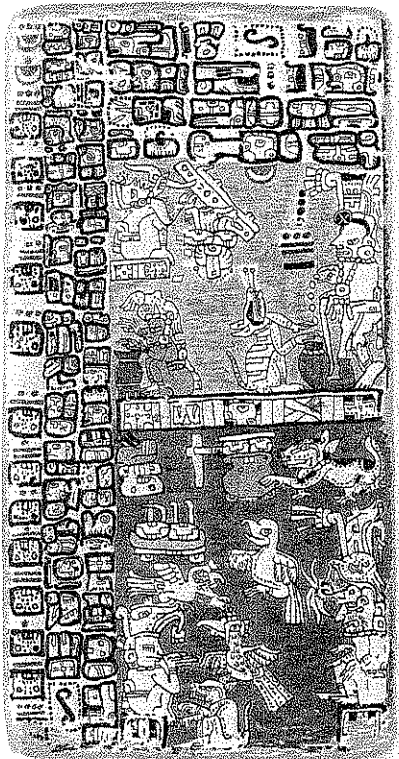
Maya hieroglyphs remained a mystery for centuries. Then, scholars discovered that many passages contained symbols that recorded dates in the Maya calendar. This calendar, known as the Long Count, was based on cycles of creation and destruction. According to Maya belief, our present world was created in 3114 B.C. and is scheduled to complete its downward cycle on December 23, A.D. 2012.

▼ The design of the Maya pyramid of Kukulcan was shaped by celestial events. For example, during the spring and fall equinoxes (when the days and nights are of equal length), the stepped sides of the pyramid show a snake-like pattern.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Drawing Conclusions Why might the Maya have constructed a pyramid to show solar events?





▲ This page from the Codex Troano, a Maya calendar, depicts gods and symbolic creatures.

The Maya used two different systems for measuring time. One was based on a solar calendar of 365 days, divided into 18 months of 20 days each and an extra 5 days at the end. The other was based on a sacred calendar of 260 days, divided into 13 weeks of 20 days. Only trained priests could read and use this calendar. These priests also used mathematics for astronomical and religious purposes. Maya numerals were based on the number 20 and included a symbol for zero—a concept developed independently from European and Asian cultures.

Many Maya hieroglyphics record important events in Maya history. One of the most important collections of Maya hieroglyphs is located at Palenque. There, archaeologists discovered a royal tomb covered with hieroglyphs that record the accomplishments of the great ruler Pacal.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Drawing Conclusions How did the belief system of the Maya affect their daily life?

The Toltec

GUIDING QUESTION *What contributions did the Toltec make to early Mesoamerican culture?*

Around A.D. 1000, new peoples rose to prominence in central Mexico. Most significant were the Toltec. The Toltec empire reached its high point between A.D. 950 and 1150. The center of the empire was Tula, which was built on a high ridge about 43.5 miles (70 km) northwest of present-day Mexico City. The Toltec irrigated their fields with water from the Tula River and grew a number of crops, including beans, maize, and peppers. This agriculture enabled Tula to support a population of 40,000 to 60,000 people.

The Toltec were a warlike people. Their empire included much of northern and central Mexico. They also extended their conquests into the Maya lands of Guatemala and the northern Yucatán. The Toltec controlled the upper Yucatán Peninsula from Chichén Itzá for centuries.

The Toltec were also builders who constructed pyramids and palaces. They brought metal-working to Mesoamerica and were the first people in the region to work in gold, silver, and copper.

The Toltec empire began to decline around 1125 as a result of fighting among different groups in Tula. Around 1170, the city was sacked and much of it burned. There was no single ruling group for nearly 200 years until the Aztec Empire emerged, carrying on many Toltec traditions.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Identifying What caused the decline of the Toltec empire?

The Aztec

GUIDING QUESTION *How did the Aztec continue the tradition of building successful civilizations in Mesoamerica?*

The origins of the Aztec are uncertain. Sometime during the twelfth century, they began a long migration that brought them to the Valley of Mexico. They eventually established a capital at Tenochtitlán (tay • NAWCH • teet • LAHN), now Mexico City.

According to their legends, when the Aztec arrived in the Valley of Mexico, other peoples drove them into a snake-infested region. However, the Aztec survived, strengthened by their belief in a sign. Huitzilopochtli (wee • tsee • loh • POHKT • lee), their god of war and of the sun, had told them

that when they saw an eagle perched on a cactus growing out of a rock, their journey would end.

In 1325 under attack by another people, they were driven into the swamps and islands of Lake Texcoco (tehs • KOH • koh). On one island, they saw an eagle standing on a prickly pear cactus on a rock. There they built Tenochtitlán (or “place of the prickly pear cactus”):

PRIMARY SOURCE

“Now we have found the land promised to us. We have found . . . peace for the weary Mexican people. Now we want for nothing.”

—quoted in *500 Nations*

For the next 100 years, the Aztec constructed temples, other public buildings, and houses. They built roadways of stone across Lake Texcoco to the north, south, and west, linking the islands to the mainland.

The Aztec at Tenochtitlán formed a Triple Alliance with two other city states, Tetzcoco and Tlacopan. This alliance enabled the Aztec to dominate an empire that included much of today’s Mexico, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean and as far south as the Guatemalan border. This alliance lasted until the reign of Montezuma and the arrival of Spanish in the 1500s.

The new Aztec kingdom was not a centralized state but a collection of semi-independent territories that local lords governed. The Aztec ruler supported these rulers in return for tribute, goods or money paid by conquered peoples to their conquerors.

Political and Social Structures

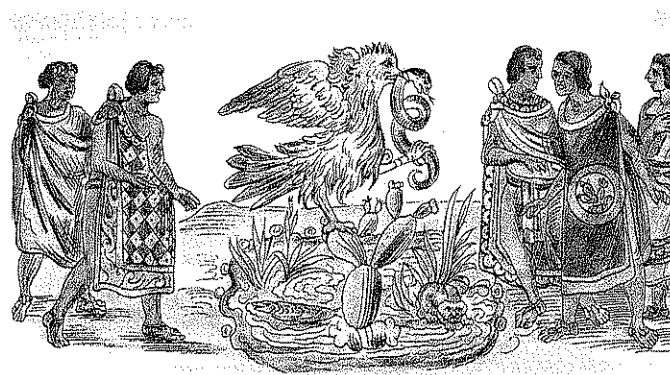
By 1500, as many as four million Aztec lived in the Valley of Mexico and the surrounding valleys of central Mexico. Like all great empires in ancient times, the Aztec state was authoritarian. The monarch, who claimed lineage with the gods, held all power. A council of lords and government officials assisted the Aztec ruler.

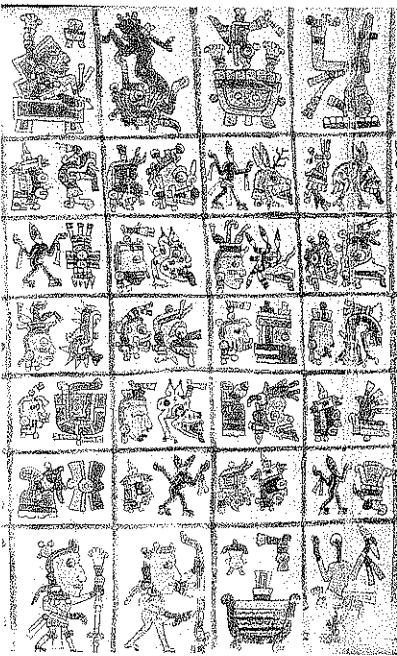
The nobility, the elite of society, held positions in the government. Noble male children were sent to temple schools, which stressed military training. When they became adults, males would select a career in the military service, the government bureaucracy, or the priesthood. As a reward for their services, nobles received large estates from the government. The rest of the population consisted of indentured workers, slaves, and commoners. Indentured workers were landless laborers who contracted to work on the nobles’ estates. Sold in the markets, male and female slaves worked in wealthy households.

Most people were commoners, many of whom were farmers. Farmers built *chinampas*, swampy islands crisscrossed by canals that provided water for their crops. The canals also provided easy travel to local markets. Aztec merchants were active traders. Especially in Tenochtitlán and other large cities, merchants exported and traded goods made by Aztec craftspeople from imported raw materials. In exchange for their goods, the traders obtained tropical feathers, cacao beans, animal skins, and gold. When the Spanish arrived, they were astonished to find city markets that were considerably larger and better stocked than any markets in Spain.

From infancy, boys and girls in Aztec society had very different roles. The midwife who attended the birth of a male infant said, “You must

▼ This image depicts Aztec priests discovering the location to build Tenochtitlán.





▲ The Codex Cospi is an Aztec calendar. Like the Maya calendar, it was created by priests.

► **CRITICAL THINKING**

Comparing and Contrasting How were the the Codex Troano and Codex Cospi similar? How were they different?

understand that your home is not here where you have been born, for you are a warrior.” To a female infant, the midwife said, “As the heart stays in the body, so you must stay in the house.” Though not equal to men, Aztec women could own and inherit property and enter into contracts, something not often allowed in other world cultures at the time. Most women worked in the home, weaving textiles and raising children. However, some were trained as priestesses.

Religion and Culture

Like other peoples in Central America and around the world, the Aztec had a polytheistic religion, believing in many gods. There was a supreme god, called Omoteotl, who represented the all-powerful forces of the heavens. Huitzilopochtli, the god of the sun and war, was particularly important to Aztec warriors as they expanded control over neighboring peoples.

Another important god was Quetzalcoatl, who had a more direct impact on the lives of the people. According to Aztec tradition, Quetzalcoatl had left his homeland in the Valley of Mexico in the tenth century, promising to return in triumph. When the Aztec first saw Spanish explorers in the 1500s, they believed that representatives of Quetzalcoatl had returned.

Aztec religion was based on a belief in an unending struggle between the forces of good and evil throughout the universe. This struggle created and destroyed four worlds, or suns. People believed they were now living in the time of the fifth sun. This world, too, was destined to end with the destruction of Earth by earthquakes. To postpone the day of reckoning, the Aztec practiced human sacrifice, which they believed would appease the sun god Huitzilopochtli.

Religion had a significant influence on Aztec art and architecture. At the center of Tenochtitlán was the sacred district, dominated by a massive pyramid dedicated to Huitzilopochtli. At the top was a platform containing shrines to the gods and an altar for performing human sacrifices.

The Aztec also made advances in astronomy, which is evident in their sun calendar. It contained pictographs that showed days, months, and larger cosmic cycles. Like those of the Maya, Aztec priests not only computed the calendar, but also observed the movements of the stars and planets to gain knowledge of the future. Like the Maya, the Aztec also had a number system based on units of 20.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Recognizing Relationships What factors indicate that the Aztec had an advanced civilization?

PHOTO: SWENET FORMAN/CORBIS

LESSON 1 REVIEW

Reviewing Vocabulary

1. **Describing** Where was Cahokia located, and how was it important to the Hopewell peoples? What did archaeologists find at the site? Be specific.

Using Your Notes

2. **Comparing and Contrasting** Use your notes to compare and contrast the three great Mesoamerican civilizations.

Answering the Guiding Questions

3. **Listing** Who were the early peoples of North America?

4. **Identifying** What made the Maya one of the most sophisticated civilizations of the early Americas?

5. **Summarizing** What contributions did the Toltec make to early Mesoamerican culture?

6. **Analyzing** How did the Aztec continue the tradition of building successful civilizations in Mesoamerica?

Writing Activity

7. **INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY** How were the Maya, Toltec, and Aztec civilizations influenced by geography? Be specific.

There's More Online!

- ✓ BIOGRAPHY Huayna Capac
- ✓ IMAGE Inca Ice Maiden
- ✓ IMAGE Moche Arts
- ✓ IMAGE Nazca Lines
- ✓ IMAGE Quipu
- ✓ IMAGE Terraced Farming
- ✓ INFOGRAPHIC The Inca Trail
- ✓ INTERACTIVE SELF-CHECK QUIZ
- ✓ MAP Civilizations in South America, A.D. 700–1530
- ✓ SLIDE SHOW Inca Technology
- ✓ VIDEO Early South American Civilizations

Reading HELPDESK

Academic Vocabulary

- instruct • resident

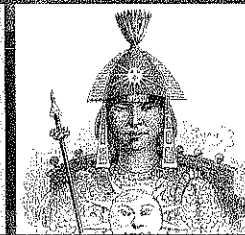
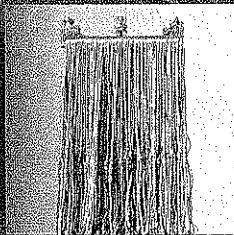
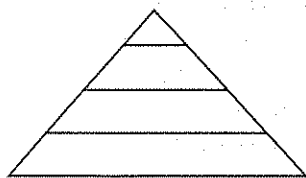
Content Vocabulary

- maize • quipu

TAKING NOTES:

Key Ideas and Details

Organizing As you read, use a pyramid diagram like the one below to show the hierarchy of the Inca political organization.



LESSON 2

Early South American Civilizations

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS • *In what ways were civilizations in early Mesoamerica and South America complex?* • *How were civilizations in early Mesoamerica and South America influenced by previous cultures?*

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

The Nazca and Moche cultures, which existed in South America before the Inca, built stone buildings and sophisticated irrigation systems. Later, the Inca created a spectacular, well-organized empire. The Inca Empire was still flourishing when the Spanish arrived in the sixteenth century.

The Nazca

GUIDING QUESTION *What characteristics defined the early civilizations of South America?*

As in Mesoamerica, great civilizations flourished in early South America. The people of the Nazca and Moche cultures lived before the Inca gained power. While not much is known about these cultures, the cities, buildings, and artifacts these peoples left behind provide some clues.

Beginning around 200 B.C., the Nazca culture appeared in southern Peru. At its height, the Nazca culture covered more than 200 miles of territory. They prospered until approximately A.D. 600.

Nazca culture preserved some aspects of Chavin culture, especially its style of pottery. However, the Nazca, unlike the Chavin, did not build great temples. The Nazca might have practiced their religion outdoors, as suggested by ancient formations known as the Nazca Lines. These are grooves etched into the rocky soil of southern Peru in the image of animals, especially birds, as well as humans and geometric shapes, including triangles, trapezoids, and spirals. The images are so large, however, that their shapes can only be seen from the air. Although many theories have been presented, the exact significance of these lines remains unknown.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Identifying How do the structures and artifacts the Nazca left behind provide clues about their civilization?

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

- 1 THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS** Estimate in miles the length of the Inca Empire.
- 2 HUMAN SYSTEMS** How did physical geography affect the settlement patterns of early South American cultures?



The Moche

GUIDING QUESTION What characteristics defined the early civilizations of South America?

Around A.D. 300, another civilization developed near the Pacific coast not far south of the border of Ecuador. At Moche (MOH • cheh), a major urban center arose amid irrigated fields in the valley of the Moche River. This river flows from the foothills of the Andes into the Pacific Ocean. Farmers in the area grew **maize**, peanuts, potatoes, and cotton. They probably supplied much of the food for peoples living throughout the region.

Moche was the capital of a powerful state. The authority of the Moche rulers might have extended as far as 400 miles (644 km) along the coast. The people of Moche had no written language, but their pottery gives us some idea of their interests. Among other things, the pottery indicates that the people at Moche, like those in Central America, led lives centered on warfare. Moche paintings and pottery frequently portray warriors, prisoners, and sacrificial victims.

After the collapse of the Moche civilization in the eighth century A.D., a period of decline set in until a new power arose about 300 years later. The kingdom of Chimor dominated the area for nearly four centuries. Then, it was destroyed by a people who created a more spectacular empire—the Inca.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Inferring Why was it important for the urban center at Moche to be in a river valley?

maize corn

The Inca

GUIDING QUESTIONS *How did the Inca develop their successful empire?
What were the main attributes of Inca culture?*

In the late 1300s, the Inca (IHNG • kuh) were only a small community in the area of Cuzco (KOOS • koh), a city located at 11,000 feet (3,353 m) in the mountains of southern Peru. In the 1440s, however, under the leadership of the ruler Pachacuti, the Inca launched a campaign of conquest that eventually brought the entire region under Inca control.

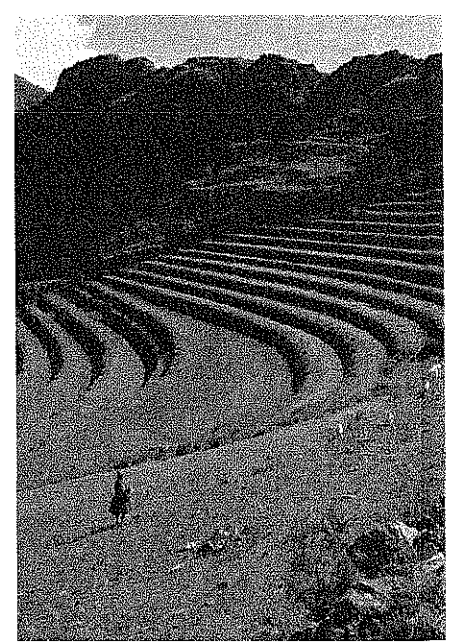
Pachacuti created a highly centralized state. The capital of Cuzco was transformed from a city of mud and thatch into an imposing city of stone. The city's most impressive structure was a temple dedicated to the sun.

Political and Social Structures

Pachacuti and his immediate successors, Topa Inca and Huayna Capac Inca—*Inca* means “ruler”—extended the boundaries of the Inca Empire as far as Ecuador, central Chile, and the edge of the Amazon basin. The empire included perhaps 12 million people.

Like the civilizations of the Aztec and the Maya, the Inca state was built on war. All young men were required to serve in the Inca army. With some 200,000 members, the army was the largest and best armed in the region. Because the Inca, like other people in the early Americas, did not make use of the wheel, supplies were carried on the backs of llamas.

After an area was placed under Inca control, the local inhabitants were **instructed** in the Quechua (KECH • uh • wuh) language. Control of new territories was carefully regulated. A noble of high rank was sent to govern the new region. Local leaders could keep their posts as long as they were loyal to the Inca ruler. To encourage loyalty, the children of local leaders were taken as hostages to the Inca capital, where they were educated in Inca ways before returning home.



▲ This Inca agricultural terrace is still in use in Pisac, Peru.

instruct to teach or to train

ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

Enforcing Inca Laws

Most of our knowledge of Inca practices is based on narratives written after Pizarro's conquest. Garcilaso de la Vega, born in Cuzco, was the son of a Spanish conqueror and an Inca princess. Bernabé Cobo, a Spanish Jesuit missionary, went to Cuzco in 1599 and stayed there for most of his adult life.

“The Incas [made laws] always with the intention of applying them to anyone who dared to break them. . . . [According to one Inca ruler] He who kills another . . . condemns himself to death. . . . Thieves are in no wise to be permitted; . . . wherefore it is only right that thieves should be hanged. . . . Judges who secretly take gifts from litigants and suitors should be regarded as thieves, and as such punished with death.”

—Garcilaso de la Vega, from *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, 1609



“Justice was not equal and common to all. . . . [O]ther kinds of punishment were given to the higher-born and rich than those given to the humble and poor. The practice originated in the belief that to an Inca of royal blood a more public reprimand was by far a greater punishment than death was for a plebeian. . . . Crimes which, when common people were in question, were punished with death, were, when persons of the noble Inca family were involved, only punished with public reprehension.”

—Bernabé Cobo, quoted in *The Last of the Incas*

DBQ Analyzing Historical Documents

- 1 **Contrasting** In what way do these accounts of Inca justice differ?
- 2 **Identifying Central Ideas** How might you account for the difference between their accounts?

resident one who resides in a place

To create a well-organized empire, Pachacuti divided it into four quarters, with each ruled by a governor. In turn, the quarters were divided into provinces, each also ruled by a governor. Those chosen to be governors were usually related to the royal family. Each province was supposed to contain about 10,000 **residents**. At the top of the entire system was the emperor, who was believed to be descended from Inti, the sun god.

Forced labor was another important feature of the state. All Inca subjects were responsible for labor service, usually for several weeks each year. Laborers, often with their entire communities, were moved according to need from one part of the country to another to take part in building projects. Forced laborers probably built the buildings and monuments of the capital city of Cuzco.

Inca society was highly regimented. So, too, were marriage and the lives of women. Men and women were required to select a marriage partner from within their immediate tribal groups. After marriage, women were expected to care for the children and to weave cloth. Some young girls were chosen to serve as priestesses in temples.

Economics and Culture

The Inca economy was based on high-altitude agriculture. In the mountains, they used terraced farms, watered by irrigation systems that carried precise amounts of water into the fields. These were planted with corn, potatoes, and other crops suited to high altitudes. The farmers' houses, built of stone or adobe with thatched roofs, were located near the fields.

The Inca also established extensive trade networks for long distance trade. This trade, however, was organized by government officials and not by independent merchants. Food products, textiles, and pottery were the major articles that were exchanged.

The Inca were great builders, the best engineers among Native American peoples. They built a system of some 24,800 miles (around 40,000 km) of roads extending from the border of modern-day Colombia to a point south of modern-day Santiago, Chile. Two major roadways extended in a north-south direction—one through the Andes and the other along the coast with connecting routes between them.

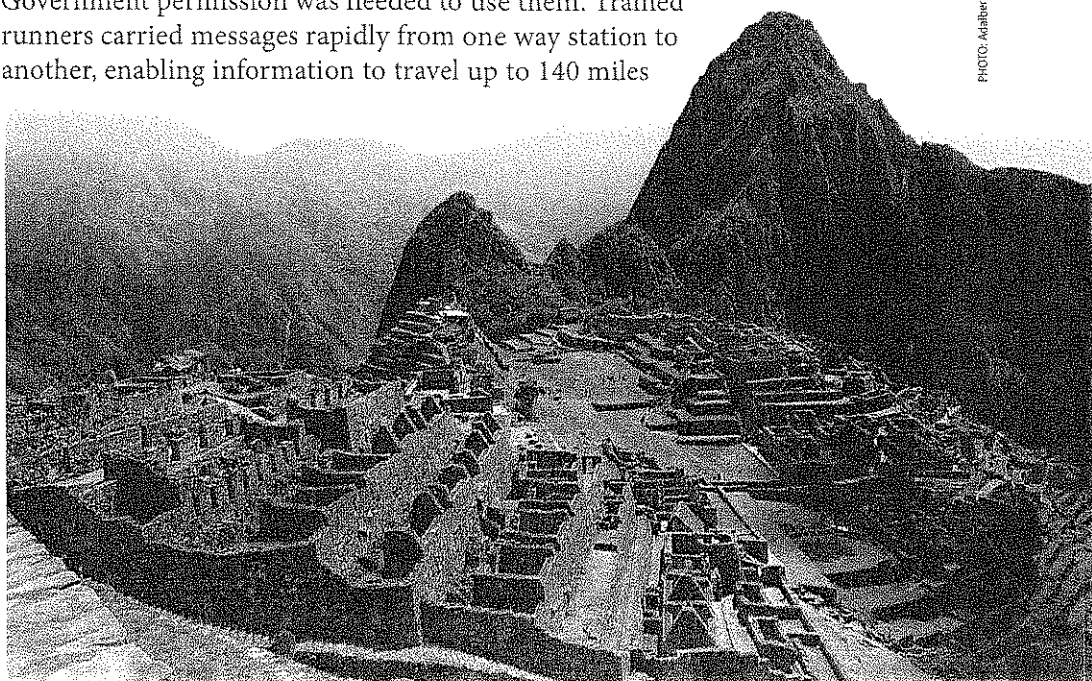
Rest houses, located a day's walk apart, and storage depots were placed along the roads. Various types of bridges, including some fine, premodern examples of suspension bridges, were built over ravines and waterways. The roads were used chiefly for official and military purposes. Government permission was needed to use them. Trained runners carried messages rapidly from one way station to another, enabling information to travel up to 140 miles

PHOTO: Adalberto Rios Salas/Sesto Sol/Getty Images

► Machu Picchu was created by the Inca Empire during its height.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Drawing Conclusions What do the ruins of Machu Picchu suggest about the civilization of the Inca?



in a single day. Most people walked the roads, but rulers and other high officials were carried in litters (covered couches used for carrying passengers).

The buildings and monuments of the capital city of Cuzco were the wonder of early European visitors. These structures were built of close-fitting stones without mortar—the better to withstand the frequent earthquakes in the area.

Nothing shows the architectural genius of the Inca more than the ruins of the abandoned city of Machu Picchu (MAH • CHOO PEE • CHOO). Machu Picchu, elevation 8,000 feet (2,400 m), was built on a lofty hilltop surrounded by mountain peaks far above the Urubamba River. Machu Picchu was hardly a city, containing only about 200 buildings. Perhaps 1200 people lived there, growing crops on agricultural terraces similar to the ones used throughout the mountainous regions of the Inca Empire. The buildings were placed harmoniously in their natural setting, creating a place of incredible beauty. In one part of Machu Picchu, a long stairway leads to an elegant stone known to the Inca as the “hitching post of the sun.” Carved from the mountain, this “hitching post” might have been used as a solar observatory. During the sun festivals held in June and December, the people of Machu Picchu gathered here to chant and say prayers to Inti.

The Inca had no writing system. Instead, they kept records using a system of knotted strings called the **quipu**. The **quipu** enabled the Inca to record the number of men who went to war and goods that were exchanged. The Inca number system was based on units of 10.

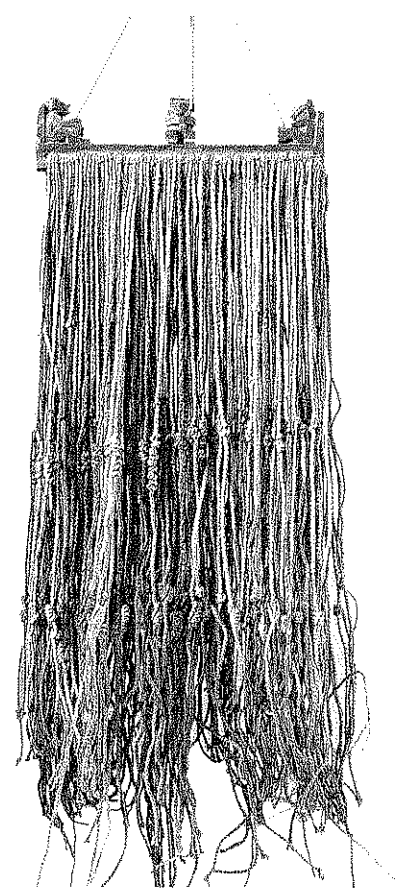
The lack of a fully developed writing system, however, did not prevent the Inca from attaining a high level of cultural achievement. Since the **quipu** could only be a record of things that could be counted, Inca wise men turned historical events into stories, which were told to young people as a way of passing down their history.

The Inca had a well-developed tradition of court theater, consisting of tragic and comic works. Plays often involved the recounting of valiant deeds and other historical events. Actors were not professionals—they were members of the nobility. Poetry was also recited, often accompanied by music played on reed instruments.

Like the Maya and Aztec, the Inca made astronomical observations. They created two calendars based on the path of the sun, one of which was based on a year of 365 days.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Making Connections How did the Inca use technology to support their empire?



▲ This **quipu** was made circa 1430–1532. The number and position of the knots and the color of the string represented information such as population figures and the size of the harvest.

quipu a system of knotted strings used by the Inca people for keeping records

PHOTO: ©Werner Forman/CORBIS

LESSON 2 REVIEW

Reviewing Vocabulary

1. **Describing** How did the Inca use the **quipu** in place of a formal system of writing?

Using Your Notes

2. **Organizing** Use your notes to describe the organization of the Inca government.

Answering the Guiding Questions

3. **Analyzing** What characteristics defined the early civilizations of South America?

4. **Drawing Conclusions** How did the Inca develop their successful empire?

5. **Finding the Main Idea** What were the main attributes of Inca culture?

Writing Activity

6. **INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY** How did geography influence how the Inca road system and Machu Picchu were built? How do these feats of engineering point to the complexity of the Inca culture?

CHAPTER 14 Assessment

Directions: On a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions below. Make sure you read carefully and answer all parts of the questions.

Lesson Review

Lesson 1

- 1 **MAKING GENERALIZATIONS** How would you describe the Iroquois people before Deganawida and Hiawatha? After Deganawida and Hiawatha?
- 2 **MAKING CONNECTIONS** How was the Aztec nobility similar to the nobility of medieval Europe?

Lesson 2

- 3 **SPECULATING** Why might the Nazca have created images so huge that they could only be seen from the air?
- 4 **IDENTIFYING** How did the Inca emperor ensure that newly conquered territories were loyal to him?

21st Century Skills

- 5 **GEOGRAPHY SKILLS** What geographical feature allowed the Moche's economy to flourish?
- 6 **ECONOMICS** Describe the economy of the Inca.
- 7 **COMPARE AND CONTRAST** Compare and contrast the political characteristics of the Maya, Aztec, and Incan civilizations.
- 8 **IDENTIFYING CAUSE AND EFFECT** How did alliances with other city-states help the Aztec build an empire?

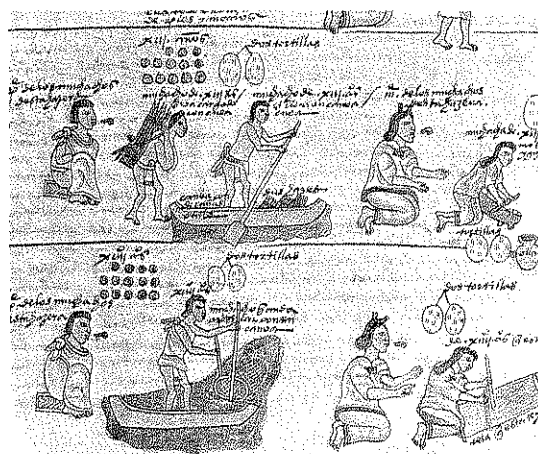
Exploring the Essential Questions

- 9 **SYNTHESIZING** Write an essay about the Maya, Aztec, or Inca highlighting what made the civilization complex and describing how the civilization adapted to and used its surroundings. Include primary or secondary sources to illustrate your main points. These sources can be text excerpts, photos, drawings, and maps.

DBQ Analyzing Historical Documents

Use the document to answer the following questions.

The following illustration from an Aztec book shows parents teaching their children. From sources such as this, historians know that boys learned basic tasks from their fathers, went to school to study, and learned to be warriors. Girls learned from their mothers how to take care of the home and children.



- 10 **ANALYZING VISUALS** Knowing that the blue dots represent one year, at what age would Aztec boys learn how to fish?
- 11 **SYNTHESIZING** How does the different educational focus of Aztec boys and girls reflect the different roles of Aztec men and women?

Extended-Response Question

- 12 **INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY** Trace the rise and decline of the early South American civilizations in chronological order. Give some detail as to their geographical location and name the Inca ruler who expanded the kingdom.

Need Extra Help?

If You've Missed Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Go to page	275	279	281	283	282	284	276	279	276	286	286	281