

Grade 5 Reading & Writing

Unit 2: Early American Civilizations

16 lessons (the last is the Pausing Point review) and a words quiz. Use this pack with the unit's **Teacher Guide** and **Activity Book** and **Reader** (download them once from the course) to teach the whole unit without the internet.

What is in this pack

- A plan for each lesson: the Teacher Guide pages to follow, words to know, what to read, questions to talk over and the Activity Book pages to print.
- The words quiz, ready to print.
- Answers for the teacher at the back: every discussion question and the quiz key.

This course is based on an original work of the Core Knowledge® Foundation (www.coreknowledge.org) made available through licensing under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. This does not in any way imply that the Core Knowledge Foundation endorses this work. PGAMO added the lesson pages, study packs and quizzes layout, and shares them under the same license. License: CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>).

Lesson schedule

One lesson a school day, about 60–90 minutes; split long lessons over two days. Tick each one off as you go.

	Lesson	Reader pages	Activity Book
☐	Lesson 1: Chapter 1, “The Rise of Early American Civilizations”	PDF pages 8–13	AP 1.1, AP 1.2, AP 1.3, AP 1.4, AP 1.5
☐	Lesson 2: Chapter 2, “Golden Age of the Maya”	PDF pages 14–21	AP 2.1, AP 2.2, AP 2.3, AP 2.4, AP 2.5
☐	Lesson 3: Chapter 2, “Golden Age of the Maya”	PDF pages 14–21	AP 3.1
☐	Lesson 4: Chapter 3, “Hidden Secrets in the Rainforest”	PDF pages 22–29	AP 4.1, AP 4.2, AP 4.3, AP 4.4, AP 4.5
☐	Lesson 5: Chapters 4–5: “Myths of the Maya” and “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”	PDF pages 30–45	AP 5.1, AP 5.2, AP 5.3
☐	Lesson 6: Chapter 4, “Myths of the Maya”	PDF pages 30–37	AP 6.1, AP 6.2, AP 6.3, AP 6.4, AP 6.5
☐	Lesson 7: Chapter 5, “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”	PDF pages 38–45	AP 7.1, AP 7.2
☐	Lesson 8: Chapter 5, “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”	PDF pages 38–45	AP 8.1
☐	Lesson 9: Chapter 6, “Emperors, Gods, and Foreign Invaders”	PDF pages 46–51	AP 9.1, AP 9.2, AP 9.3, AP 9.4, AP 9.5, AP 9.6
☐	Lesson 10: Chapter 7, “Birth of the Inca Empire”	PDF pages 52–61	AP 10.1, AP 10.2, AP 10.3, AP 10.4
☐	Lesson 11: Chapter 7, “Birth of the Inca Empire”	PDF pages 52–61	AP 11.1, AP 11.2, AP 11.3, AP 11.4
☐	Lesson 12: Chapter 8, “All Roads Lead to Cuzco”	PDF pages 62–69	AP 12.1, AP 12.2, AP 12.3
☐	Lesson 13: Chapter 9, “Myths of the Aztec and the Inca”	PDF pages 70–84	AP 13.1, AP 13.2

	Lesson	Reader pages	Activity Book
☐	Lesson 14: Chapter 9, “Myths of the Aztec and the Inca”	PDF pages 70–84	AP 14.1, AP 14.2, AP 14.3, AP 14.4
☐	Lesson 15: Reading, Grammar and Spelling	—	AP 15.1, AP 15.2
☐	Pausing Point: Review, extra practice and answer keys	—	PP 1, PP 2, PP 3, PP 4, PP 5, PP 6, PP 7, PP 8
☐	Words quiz	—	—

Page numbers are the PDF page numbers of the Student Reader file, so they match what your PDF reader shows.

Lesson 1: Chapter 1, “The Rise of Early American Civilizations”

THE BIG QUESTION

Inca civilizations developed?

Words to know

- **diverse** — made up of different people or things
- **domesticate** — to raise and train animals to live around humans
- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **irrigate** — to supply water using pipes or channels
- **isthmus** — a narrow piece of land that connects two larger pieces of land
- **lush** — healthy and full

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 15–33: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 1, “The Rise of Early American Civilizations”: PDF pages 8–13. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What are the geographical features in the area where the Inca civilization began?
2. What does the author mean by “Flaked stone, ceramic shards, bones, and textiles all tell a story.”?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 1.1: Early American Civilizations Timeline — Activity Book, PDF pages 7–8
- Activity Page 1.2: Vocabulary for “The Rise of Early American Civilizations” — Activity Book, PDF pages 9–10
- Activity Page 1.3: Early American Civilizations Map — Activity Book, PDF pages 11–12
- Activity Page 1.4: Gu ine — Activity Book, PDF pages 13–16
- Activity Page 1.5: Glossary for Maya, Aztec, and Inca — Activity Book, PDF pages 17–20

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: Inca civilizations developed?

- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 2: Chapter 2, “Golden Age of the Maya”

THE BIG QUESTION

How did Maya society adapt and thrive in such a large and diverse region?

Words to know

- **arid** — dry and having little rain
- **city-state** — a city, and the area surrounding it, that governs itself
- **commerce** — the buying and selling of goods and services
- **culture** — the beliefs, traditions, and way of life shared by a group of people
- **diverse** — made up of different people or things
- **game** — 1. animals that are hunted; 2. an activity done for pleasure or sport
- **incessant** — continuing without stopping
- **indigenous** — produced, living, or existing naturally in a particular area
- **penetrate** — to go through or into something
- **temple** — a building devoted to religious worship

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 34–57: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 2, “Golden Age of the Maya”: PDF pages 14–21. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. The author states that only the rich and powerful wore fancy clothes and jewels. Based on the text, what aspects of the nobles’ dress could be described as fancy?
2. What were some ways the Maya worked with the diverse and sometimes difficult features of the land to meet their needs?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 2.1: Vocabulary for “Golden Age of the Maya” — Activity Book, PDF pages 21–22
- Activity Page 2.2: Golden Age of the Maya — Activity Book, PDF pages 23–24
- Activity Page 2.3: Subject and Predicate — Activity Book, PDF pages 25–26
- Activity Page 2.4: il- and ir-: Prefixes Meaning “not” — Activity Book, PDF pages 27–28

■ Activity Page 2.5: Paraphrase from a Text — Activity Book, PDF pages 29–30

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How did Maya society adapt and thrive in such a large and diverse region?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 3: Chapter 2, “Golden Age of the Maya”

THE BIG QUESTION

How did Maya society adapt and thrive in such a large and diverse region?

Words to know

- **arid** — dry and having little rain
- **city-state** — a city, and the area surrounding it, that governs itself
- **commerce** — the buying and selling of goods and services
- **culture** — the beliefs, traditions, and way of life shared by a group of people
- **diverse** — made up of different people or things
- **game** — 1. animals that are hunted; 2. an activity done for pleasure or sport
- **incessant** — continuing without stopping
- **indigenous** — produced, living, or existing naturally in a particular area
- **penetrate** — to go through or into something
- **temple** — a building devoted to religious worship

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 58–72: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 2, “Golden Age of the Maya”: PDF pages 14–21. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 3.1: Excerpt from “Golden Age of the Maya” — Activity Book, PDF pages 31–34

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How did Maya society adapt and thrive in such a large and diverse region?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 4: Chapter 3, “Hidden Secrets in the Rainforest”

Words to know

- **culture** — the beliefs, traditions, and way of life shared by a group of people
- **descendant** — a relative of someone who lived in the past
- **distinct** — different in a noticeable way
- **epidemic** — a sudden, widespread illness
- **interpret** — to explain or determine the meaning of something
- **mortar** — a wet substance that hardens as it dries to hold bricks or stones together
- **stucco** — a type of plaster used as decoration or to cover walls
- **temple** — a building devoted to religious worship

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 73–91: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 3, “Hidden Secrets in the Rainforest”: PDF pages 22–29. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What are several reasons why the Temple of Inscriptions in Palenque is famous?
2. The topic sentence of the first paragraph is Priests served as astronomers and charted the skies. Based on the supporting sentences in the paragraphs on this page, how would you summarize the role of astronomers?
3. Drought refers to a shortage of rain in an area that usually expects and depends on it. How could a lack of rainfall lead to serious conditions?
4. In what ways did the use of a writing system contribute to the development of the Maya civilization?
5. In what ways did the use of a number system contribute to the development of the Maya civilization?
6. Why does this label refer to a range of dates rather than a single date?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 4.1: Vocabulary for “Hidden Secrets in the Rainforest” — Activity Book, PDF pages 35–36
- Activity Page 4.2: Excerpt from “Hidden Secrets in the Rainforest” — Activity Book, PDF pages 37–40

- Activity Page 4.3: Sentences — Activity Book, PDF pages 41–42
- Activity Page 4.4: Practice Prefixes il- and ir- — Activity Book, PDF pages 43–44
- Activity Page 4.5: Selecting a Topic for the Codex Project — Activity Book, PDF pages 45–46

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 5: Chapters 4-5: “Myths of the Maya” and “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”

THE BIG QUESTION

How does this sacred Maya myth explain the creation of the earth and its people?

Words to know

- **artificially** — in a way that does not exist in nature
- **bustling** — busy with activity
- **creation** — the act of making something new
- **emperor** — a ruler who has total control of a region
- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **game** — 1. animals that are hunted; 2. an activity done for pleasure or sport
- **generation** — a group of people born and living at the same time
- **habitable** — fit to live in
- **might** — power or force
- **nourishment** — food and other things that are needed to live and be healthy

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 92–106: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapters 4–5: “Myths of the Maya” and “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”: PDF pages 30–45. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Why is the Popol Vuh also called the Sacred Book of the Maya?
2. What does it mean that the animals’ screeching and roaring broke the silence?
3. Why do you think the author may have chosen to use the idiom broke the silence instead of simply saying the animals screeched and roared?
4. Why did the gods refer to the animals and say, “Of what use are they?”
5. Why was it important that Tepew and Q’uk’umatz put their heads together, or shared their ideas, to come up with a solution?
6. What words does the narrator use to suggest that the gods were pleased with their third attempt at creating people?

7. According to the Maya myth, in the beginning there was only sea and sky. How was the earth created?
8. How were people created?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 5.1: Vocabulary for “Myths of the Maya” — Activity Book, PDF pages 47–48
- Activity Page 5.2: Excerpt from “Myths of the Maya” — Activity Book, PDF pages 49–52
- Activity Page 5.3: Take Notes — Activity Book, PDF pages 53–54

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How does this sacred Maya myth explain the creation of the earth and its people?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 6: Chapter 4, “Myths of the Maya”

THE BIG QUESTION

How does this sacred Maya myth explain the creation of the earth and its people?

Words to know

- **creation** — the act of making something new
- **generation** — a group of people born and living at the same time
- **nurture** — to care for something or someone so that it/he flourishes
- **rigid** — stiff and inflexible
- **sacred** — holy or deserving respect
- **vast** — large or great in size, amount, or extent
- **warp** — to bend or twist out of shape

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 107–118: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 4, “Myths of the Maya”: PDF pages 30–37. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 6.1: Myths of the Maya — Activity Book, PDF pages 55–56
- Activity Page 6.2: Words and Phrases That Compare or Contrast — Activity Book, PDF pages 57–60
- Activity Page 6.3: Prefix inter- — Activity Book, PDF pages 61–64
- Activity Page 6.4: Spelling Words — Activity Book, PDF pages 65–66
- Activity Page 6.5: Practice Spelling Words — Activity Book, PDF pages 67–68

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How does this sacred Maya myth explain the creation of the earth and its people?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 7: Chapter 5, “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”

THE BIG QUESTION

What factors led to the success of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán?

Words to know

- **artificially** — in a way that does not exist in nature
- **bustling** — busy with activity
- **emperor** — a ruler who has total control of a region
- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **game** — 1. animals that are hunted; 2. an activity done for pleasure or sport
- **habitable** — fit to live in
- **might** — power or force
- **nourishment** — food and other things that are needed to live and be healthy
- **peaked** — pointed
- **sacred** — holy or deserving respect

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 119–135: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 5, “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”: PDF pages 38–45. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What were some geographical features of the area where the Aztec settled?
2. Based on the text, why was Tenochtitlán an important place?
3. How were the religious and ceremonial centers in Tenochtitlán different from the Maya centers?
4. Tenochtitlán was built on a lake and surrounded by water. Why was it necessary to have aqueducts?
5. Why did they need fresh water for drinking?
6. What is one example of the Aztec belief that the gods, humans, and nature worked together?

7. What forces of nature do you think rattle the earth and release hot lava from the mountains refer to?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 7.1: Vocabulary for “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge” — Activity Book, PDF pages 69–70
- Activity Page 7.2: Aztec City on the Water’s Edge — Activity Book, PDF pages 71–72

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What factors led to the success of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 8: Chapter 5, “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”

THE BIG QUESTION

What factors led to the success of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán?

Words to know

- **artificially** — in a way that does not exist in nature
- **bustling** — busy with activity
- **emperor** — a ruler who has total control of a region
- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **game** — 1. animals that are hunted; 2. an activity done for pleasure or sport
- **habitable** — fit to live in
- **might** — power or force
- **nourishment** — food and other things that are needed to live and be healthy
- **peaked** — pointed
- **sacred** — holy or deserving respect

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 136–155: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 5, “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”: PDF pages 38–45. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What factors led to the success of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlán?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 8.1: Excerpt from “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge” — Activity Book, PDF pages 73–82

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What factors led to the success of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 9: Chapter 6, “Emperors, Gods, and Foreign Invaders”

THE BIG QUESTION

What led to the rapid fall of the powerful Aztec Empire?

Words to know

- **appointed** — established or chosen in an official way
- **contagious** — able to be passed between people or animals
- **dominance** — the state of being more important, successful, or powerful than most or all others
- **elite** — most successful, powerful, or wealthy
- **emperor** — a ruler who has total control of a region
- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **fragile** — easily broken
- **might** — power or force
- **procession** — a group of people or vehicles moving together as part of a ceremony
- **resentment** — a feeling of displeasure or anger about something unfair

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 156–165: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 6, “Emperors, Gods, and Foreign Invaders”: PDF pages 46–51. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What led to the rise of the Aztec Empire?
2. What led to the rapid fall of the powerful Aztec Empire?
3. Who or what do you think was ultimately responsible for the Aztec Empire coming to an end?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 9.1: Vocabulary for “Emperors, Gods, and Foreign Invaders” — Activity Book, PDF pages 83–84
- Activity Page 9.2: Emperors, Gods, and Foreign Invaders — Activity Book, PDF pages 85–86

- Activity Page 9.3: Excerpt from “Emperors, Gods, and Foreign Invaders” — Activity Book, PDF pages 87–90
- Activity Page 9.4: Practice Words and Phrases That Compare and Contrast — Activity Book, PDF pages 91–94
- Activity Page 9.5: Prefix inter- — Activity Book, PDF pages 95–96
- Activity Page 9.6: Practice Spelling Words — Activity Book, PDF pages 97–98

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What led to the rapid fall of the powerful Aztec Empire?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 10: Chapter 7, “Birth of the Inca Empire”

Words to know

- **emperor** — a ruler who has total control of a region
- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **indigenous** — produced, living, or existing naturally in a particular area
- **interpret** — to explain or determine the meaning of something
- **litter** — 1. a covered bed with long poles at the bottom for carrying someone of high importance; 2. trash lying on the ground; 3. a group of baby animals born at the same time
- **lush** — healthy and full
- **primitive** — simple and basic
- **quinoa** — a plant that grows in the Andes Mountains with seeds used as food or ground into flour
- **swift-footed** — quick

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 166–190: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 7, “Birth of the Inca Empire”: PDF pages 52–61. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. The Inca did several things to create a superior network of roads. What were some of the specific things they did?
2. What factors contributed to the Inca Empire becoming the largest pre-Columbian empire?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 10.1: Spelling Assessment — Activity Book, PDF pages 99–100
- Activity Page 10.2: Vocabulary for “Birth of the Inca Empire” — Activity Book, PDF pages 101–102
- Activity Page 10.3: continued — Activity Book, PDF pages 103–104
- Activity Page 10.4: Excerpt from “Birth of the Inca Empire” — Activity Book, PDF pages 105–116

Check for understanding

- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 11: Chapter 7, “Birth of the Inca Empire”

Words to know

- **emperor** — a ruler who has total control of a region
- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **indigenous** — produced, living, or existing naturally in a particular area
- **interpret** — to explain or determine the meaning of something
- **litter** — 1. a covered bed with long poles at the bottom for carrying someone of high importance; 2. trash lying on the ground; 3. a group of baby animals born at the same time
- **lush** — healthy and full
- **primitive** — simple and basic
- **quinoa** — a plant that grows in the Andes Mountains with seeds used as food or ground into flour
- **swift-footed** — quick

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 191–207: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 7, “Birth of the Inca Empire”: PDF pages 52–61. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 11.1: Action Verbs and Linking Verbs — Activity Book, PDF pages 117–118
- Activity Page 11.2: Practice Root tract — Activity Book, PDF pages 119–120
- Activity Page 11.3: Spelling List — Activity Book, PDF pages 121–122
- Activity Page 11.4: Practice Spelling Words — Activity Book, PDF pages 123–124

Check for understanding

- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 12: Chapter 8, “All Roads Lead to Cuzco”

THE BIG QUESTION

What were the key causes of the decline of the powerful Inca Empire?

Words to know

- **emperor** — a ruler who has total control of a region
- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **fleece** — the woolly coat of a sheep or related animal
- **mortar** — a wet substance that hardens as it dries to hold bricks or stones together
- **navel** — belly button
- **quarrel** — an argument or disagreement
- **sacred** — holy or deserving respect
- **temple** — a building devoted to religious worship
- **transport** — to carry from one place to another

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 208–225: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 8, “All Roads Lead to Cuzco”: PDF pages 62–69. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Why is it so amazing that Sascahuaman was constructed without the use of wheels?
2. What was the quarrel between the two royal brothers?
3. What were the key causes of the decline of the powerful Inca Empire?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 12.1: Vocabulary for “All Roads Lead to Cuzco” — Activity Book, PDF pages 125–126
- Activity Page 12.2: All Roads Lead to Cuzco — Activity Book, PDF pages 127–128
- Activity Page 12.3: Excerpt from “All Roads Lead to Cuzco” — Activity Book, PDF pages 129–132

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What were the key causes of the decline of the powerful Inca Empire?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 13: Chapter 9, “Myths of the Aztec and the Inca”

THE BIG QUESTION

How did the Aztec and Inca explain the creation of their land and people?

Words to know

- **apparent** — easy to see or understand
- **creation** — the act of making something new
- **emperor** — a ruler who has total control of a region
- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **generation** — a group of people born and living at the same time
- **grueling** — very difficult and tiring
- **lavish** — much more than is needed, especially to show
- **navigable** — deep and wide enough for ships to pass through
- **orderly** — arranged in a neat, tidy way
- **pierce** — to make a hole in something

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 226–241: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 9, “Myths of the Aztec and the Inca”: PDF pages 70–84. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What word could replace suns in the title of the myth “The Five Suns”?
2. Based on the text, how do we know that Viracocha cared about the well-being of the people he had created?
3. “The Five Suns” is an Aztec creation myth. What aspects of the Aztec world does it explain?
4. “Viracocha, Creator of All Things” is an Inca creation myth. What aspects of the Inca world does it explain?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 13.1: Vocabulary for “Myths of the Aztec and the Inca” — Activity Book, PDF pages 133–134
- Activity Page 13.2: Excerpt from “Myths of the Aztec and the Inca” — Activity Book, PDF pages 135–138

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How did the Aztec and Inca explain the creation of their land and people?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 14: Chapter 9, “Myths of the Aztec and the Inca”

THE BIG QUESTION

How did the Aztec and Inca explain the creation of their land and people?

Words to know

- **apparent** — easy to see or understand
- **creation** — the act of making something new
- **emperor** — a ruler who has total control of a region
- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **generation** — a group of people born and living at the same time
- **grueling** — very difficult and tiring
- **lavish** — much more than is needed, especially to show
- **navigable** — deep and wide enough for ships to pass through
- **orderly** — arranged in a neat, tidy way
- **pierce** — to make a hole in something

Teacher’s lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 242–251: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Read

Read Chapter 9, “Myths of the Aztec and the Inca”: PDF pages 70–84. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. How did the Aztec and Inca explain the creation of their land and people?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 14.1: Myths of the Aztec and Inca — Activity Book, PDF pages 139–140
- Activity Page 14.2: Action Verbs and Linking Verbs — Activity Book, PDF pages 141–142
- Activity Page 14.3: Practice Root tract — Activity Book, PDF pages 143–144
- Activity Page 14.4: Practice Spelling Words — Activity Book, PDF pages 145–146

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How did the Aztec and Inca explain the creation of their land and people?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Lesson 15: Reading, Grammar and Spelling

Words to know

- **empire** — a large territory or group of people under the total control of one ruler or government
- **game** — 1. animals that are hunted; 2. an activity done for pleasure or sport
- **interpret** — to explain or determine the meaning of something
- **might** — power or force

Teacher's lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 252–265: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Talk it over

1. What surrounded the Aztec capital city?
2. What are two things people sold in the Aztec market?
3. Why were bridges important to the Aztec capital city?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Activity Book pages

- Activity Page 15.1: Spelling Assessment — Activity Book, PDF pages 147–148
- Activity Page 15.2: Unit Assessment for Early American Civilizations — Activity Book, PDF pages 149–158

Check for understanding

- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Pausing Point: Review, extra practice and answer keys

Teacher's lesson plan

Follow the Teacher Guide, PDF pages 266–269: the steps, materials and timing for this lesson.

Activity Book pages

- Pausing Point page 1: Early American Civilizations Mid-Unit Content Assessment — Activity Book, PDF pages 159–162
- Pausing Point page 2: Early American Civilizations End-of-Unit Content Assessment — Activity Book, PDF pages 163–168
- Pausing Point page 3: Subjects and Predicates — Activity Book, PDF pages 169–170
- Pausing Point page 4: Words and Phrases That Compare and Contrast — Activity Book, PDF pages 171–174
- Pausing Point page 5: Action Verbs and Linking Verbs — Activity Book, PDF pages 175–176
- Pausing Point page 6: Prefixes il- and ir- — Activity Book, PDF pages 177–178
- Pausing Point page 7: Prefix inter- — Activity Book, PDF pages 179–180
- Pausing Point page 8: Root tract — Activity Book, PDF pages 181–212

For the teacher

- Teacher Resources (answer keys and extra materials) — Teacher Guide, PDF pages 270–316

Check for understanding

WORDS QUIZ

Early American Civilizations

Name: _____ Date: _____

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. Which word means “a pole or rod used as a sign of authority or as support when walking”?

- a) cenote
- b) marsh
- c) staff
- d) navel

2. Which word means “pointed”?

- a) orderly
- b) might
- c) fleece
- d) peaked

3. Which word means “to spread apart in different directions”?

- a) disperse
- b) habitable
- c) cenote
- d) condemn

4. Which word means “soft, wet land overgrown with grasses”?

- a) pierce
- b) marsh
- c) sacred
- d) incessant

5. Which word means “different in a noticeable way”?

- a) conservatory
- b) distinct
- c) magistrate
- d) cenote

6. Which word means “a crossing hung from cables attached to towers”?

- a) vast
- b) ambassador
- c) dominance
- d) suspension bridge

7. Which word means “fit to live in”?

- a) engulf
- b) habitable
- c) staff
- d) peaked

8. Which word means “easily broken”?

- a) quinoa
- b) transport
- c) fragile
- d) artificially

9. Which word means “a local government official similar to a judge”?

- a) apparent
- b) magistrate
- c) domesticate
- d) indigenous

10. Which word means “healthy and full”?

- a) staff
- b) lush
- c) dominance
- d) elite

11. Which word means “a simple machine made of a wheel or set of wheels used with a rope or chain to raise and lower objects”?

- a) pulley
- b) lush
- c) sacred
- d) game

12. Which word means “to move back”?

- a) recede
- b) orderly
- c) diverse
- d) cenote

Answers

Lesson 1: Chapter 1, “The Rise of Early American Civilizations”

1. **What are the geographical features in the area where the Inca civilization began?**

It was high in the Andes Mountains of South America; it contained deserts, warm valleys, and frigid snow-capped peaks.

2. **What does the author mean by “Flaked stone, ceramic shards, bones, and textiles all tell a story.”?**

These objects were left behind; they provide evidence, or give proof, that tells a story about past human activity because ceramics and textiles were items that were made by people. Flaked stone and bones are evidence of activities in which people engaged.

Lesson 2: Chapter 2, “Golden Age of the Maya”

1. **The author states that only the rich and powerful wore fancy clothes and jewels. Based on the text, what aspects of the nobles’ dress could be described as fancy?**

Answers may vary, but could include: beads, pendants, and earrings; feathered headdresses; and the inclusion of precious jade and quetzal plumes.

2. **What were some ways the Maya worked with the diverse and sometimes difficult features of the land to meet their needs?**

Answers may vary, but could include: they used a method called slash and burn to clear forested land to create farmland and add nutrients to the soil; they built raised-earth platforms in lowland areas to create land for growing crops and canals for fish; they cut terraces into mountain slopes to create farmland; they practiced multicropping to plant and harvest the land multiple times; they gathered plants from the jungle for food and medicine; they hunted animals in the jungle for food; and they used products they gathered from the land to trade.

Lesson 4: Chapter 3, “Hidden Secrets in the Rainforest”

1. **What are several reasons why the Temple of Inscriptions in Palenque is famous?**

Answers may vary, but should include reference to the long walls of hieroglyphics detailing the history of Palenque; the fact that the temple was built to honor one of Palenque’s kings, King Pakal; and that it contained King Pakal’s coffin with a magnificent death mask and other jewelry.

2. **The topic sentence of the first paragraph is Priests served as astronomers and charted the skies. Based on the supporting sentences in the paragraphs on this page, how would you summarize the role of astronomers?**

Based on observations and the use of mathematics, they recorded the movements of the stars, planets, sun, and moon. They used these observations to create calendars that were consulted by the Maya.

3. **Drought refers to a shortage of rain in an area that usually expects and depends on it. How could a lack of rainfall lead to serious conditions?**

A lack of rainfall for a long enough period of time would cause people, animals, and plants to not have enough water for drinking and growing food crops; there may have been fewer game animals; and plants may have been less plentiful for gathering and using as a food source.

4. **In what ways did the use of a writing system contribute to the development of the Maya civilization?**

Answers may vary, but could include: Their hieroglyphic writing system enabled the Maya to record important dates and events; this probably added to their ability to share information about current events and their history.

5. **In what ways did the use of a number system contribute to the development of the Maya civilization?**

Answers may vary, but could include: The number system contributed to the Maya in business and in trade, architecture, farming, and astronomy. This may have increased their ability to be more accurate in these activities. Perhaps the use of mathematics added knowledge and understanding that strengthened their success in these areas. For example, astronomers were able to create calendars which enabled them to more accurately predict patterns and events in nature.

6. **Why does this label refer to a range of dates rather than a single date?**

Answers may vary, but could include: the decline of the Maya civilization does not seem to have been caused by a single event that took place all at once. The author tells us that populations decreased and farmers dispersed; people moved. Conditions like drought, destroying the ecological balance of the region, changing trade routes, war, or an epidemic could have had an effect over many years.

Lesson 5: Chapters 4-5: “Myths of the Maya” and “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”

1. **Why is the Popol Vuh also called the Sacred Book of the Maya?**

It is holy or respected because it includes ancient Maya stories that have been retold for generations, including explanations of the creation of the earth and people.

2. **What does it mean that the animals’ screeching and roaring broke the silence?**

The silence of the jungle was suddenly interrupted by the animals’ sounds.

3. **Why do you think the author may have chosen to use the idiom broke the silence instead of simply saying the animals screeched and roared?**

Answers may vary, but could include: the phrase emphasizes the silence that existed before they screeched and roared, and the sudden interrupting, or breaking, of the silence when the animals’ noises began; it enriches the description.

4. **Why did the gods refer to the animals and say, “Of what use are they?”**

The animals could only squawk, chatter, and howl; the gods wanted creatures that could respect, honor, praise, and make sacrifices to them.

5. **Why was it important that Tepew and Q'uk'umatz put their heads together, or shared their ideas, to come up with a solution?**

Their attempts at making people of clay and wood hadn't worked out as they had hoped, and it was important to get people right on their third attempt.

6. **What words does the narrator use to suggest that the gods were pleased with their third attempt at creating people?**

On their third try, they had succeeded. They had created a world of thinking people who were grateful for their lives. The god of the heavens was pleased, too. Now, millions of creatures respected and honored the gods, praising them and making sacrifices to them.

7. **According to the Maya myth, in the beginning there was only sea and sky. How was the earth created?**

Tepew and Q'uk'umatz shouted the word earth and part of the sea dried up and became land. There were rivers and mountains with trees and plants.

8. **How were people created?**

First Tepew and Q'uk'umatz made clay people, then they made wooden people. They were unhappy with these types of people and destroyed them. Finally, Tepew and Q'uk'umatz made corn people, and were satisfied with their creation.

Lesson 7: Chapter 5, "Aztec City on the Water's Edge"

1. **What were some geographical features of the area where the Aztec settled?**

The valley was fertile. Swampy islands existed in the middle of Lake Texcoco. They settled where Mexico City is today, in the Valley of Mexico in the country of Mexico.

2. **Based on the text, why was Tenochtitlán an important place?**

Tenochtitlán was the capital of the Aztec Empire in the 1300s and 1400s.

3. **How were the religious and ceremonial centers in Tenochtitlán different from the Maya centers?**

Tenochtitlán's pyramid-temple complex was much larger than the pyramid-temple complexes of the Maya.

4. **Tenochtitlán was built on a lake and surrounded by water. Why was it necessary to have aqueducts?**

Even though the city was surrounded by a lake, and its canals were filled with water, it was salt water. They needed the aqueducts to bring fresh water from the springs on the mainland.

5. **Why did they need fresh water for drinking?**

Salt water, which filled the lake, is not suitable for drinking.

6. **What is one example of the Aztec belief that the gods, humans, and nature worked together?**

They believed that if the people angered the gods, they might rattle the earth or release hot lava from the mountains.

7. **What forces of nature do you think rattle the earth and release hot lava from the mountains refer to?**

earthquakes and volcanoes

Lesson 8: Chapter 5, “Aztec City on the Water’s Edge”

1. What factors led to the success of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlán?

Answers may vary, but could include: the Aztec built gardens called chinampas from the lakebed where a variety of crops could be grown; creating habitable land allowed the city to grow in size; Tenochtitlán was a well-planned city laid out in a grid with a large and elaborate pyramid temple complex called the Sacred Precinct; the Aztec built advanced causeways connecting Tenochtitlán to the mainland; the causeways had aqueducts that transported fresh water; and Tenochtitlán had bustling marketplaces where goods were traded with people from other cities and regions.

Lesson 9: Chapter 6, “Emperors, Gods, and Foreign Invaders”

1. What led to the rise of the Aztec Empire?

Answers may vary, but should include multiple factors: the Aztec constantly waged war against neighboring city-states, which resulted in population growth and expansion of power; the Aztec emperor collected taxes from the people in the empire, which contributed to its great wealth.

2. What led to the rapid fall of the powerful Aztec Empire?

Answers may vary, but should include multiple factors: in waging war against other city-states, the emperor created resentment amongst those who were conquered; Hernán Cortés arrived with the intent to claim the empire for the Spanish; the resentful city-states supported Cortés’s mission; European diseases killed thousands of people.

3. Who or what do you think was ultimately responsible for the Aztec Empire coming to an end?

Answers may vary, but should include that, although many factors were at play in the Aztec Empire coming to an end, Hernán Cortés is generally accepted as the person who defeated the Aztec Empire. Additional possibilities include: Hernán Cortés was responsible because he brought people to help him take down the empire; the Spaniards were responsible for bringing disease, which led to the death of thousands of people; the emperor led fiercely, which turned city-states against him, ultimately helping Cortés.

Lesson 10: Chapter 7, “Birth of the Inca Empire”

1. The Inca did several things to create a superior network of roads. What were some of the specific things they did?

The Inca created a network across different types of land; they used stone and primitive tools; they followed the land’s natural terrain; they chiseled stone out of mountainsides; they built tunnels to connect cities from one end of the empire to the other; they laid steps up rocky cliffs; they stacked stones and floating reeds to form causeways over marshlands; they built rope bridges; they built low stone walls; they edged the roads with stone gutters to prevent flooding; they built tambos for

travelers.

2. **What factors contributed to the Inca Empire becoming the largest pre-Columbian empire?**

Answers may vary, but should include the following factors: the Sapa Inca conquered other groups, making the empire larger and more powerful; commoners cultivated crops, the government had a tribute system, and the empire had an advanced road system, all contributing to the wealth and success of the empire.

Lesson 12: Chapter 8, “All Roads Lead to Cuzco”

1. **Why is it so amazing that Sascahuaman was constructed without the use of wheels?**

The stones Sascahuaman is made from are extremely large and heavy. Using wheels as tools to help move very large, heavy objects would make moving those objects easier. For example, putting an object on a platform with wheels on the sides would make it easier to move the object. Without wheels, though, the Inca had to use other ways to get these stones in place. It is amazing that the Inca figured out some way to get these stones into place without wheels to help move them.

2. **What was the quarrel between the two royal brothers?**

The two brothers were fighting for control of the empire. They both wanted to rule the entire kingdom after their father’s death, not just their separate parts.

3. **What were the key causes of the decline of the powerful Inca Empire?**

The Inca Empire came to an end as a result of several factors. Fighting between royal brothers Atahualpa and Huascar and civil war had weakened the Inca Empire. Then Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro and his men arrived, bringing with them European diseases. The diseases spread, killing 40 percent of the Inca population.

Lesson 13: Chapter 9, “Myths of the Aztec and the Inca”

1. **What word could replace suns in the title of the myth “The Five Suns”?**
worlds

2. **Based on the text, how do we know that Viracocha cared about the well-being of the people he had created?**

Answers may vary, but could include: Viracocha continued to teach the people; he performed miracles to help people with their troubled lives.

3. **“The Five Suns” is an Aztec creation myth. What aspects of the Aztec world does it explain?**

This myth explains that there were five suns or worlds; each world was destroyed by a natural disaster or something the people may have feared and then was replaced by a new world; each time a world was destroyed, it was the explanation for how people died and how something else came to be on the earth, such as fish, monkeys, or birds.

4. **“Viracocha, Creator of All Things” is an Inca creation myth. What aspects of the Inca world does it explain?**

This myth includes an explanation for how some things on earth were created, including land and sky; the sun, moon and stars; thunder and lightning; time; birds

and animals; and people who were taught how to live near the caves, streams, rivers, and waterfalls of their homelands. The Inca creation myth gives a lot of detail about how the Inca people were created over time.

Lesson 14: Chapter 9, “Myths of the Aztec and the Inca”

1. How did the Aztec and Inca explain the creation of their land and people?

The Aztec and Inca explained the creation of their land and people through myths.

Myths are traditional stories passed down from one generation to the next. According to the myths, gods created people. They also chose the locations where the civilizations would begin and guided people to find those locations.

Lesson 15: Reading, Grammar and Spelling

1. What surrounded the Aztec capital city?

water; a salt lake

2. What are two things people sold in the Aztec market?

Answers may vary, but could include food, precious stones, shells, feathers, medicines, wood, coal, sleeping mats, clothing, or pottery

3. Why were bridges important to the Aztec capital city?

The capital city was surrounded by a lake; bridges served as the four entrances to the capital city; people and horses used the bridges to come and go.

Unit quiz key

1. c 2. d 3. a 4. b 5. b 6. d 7. b 8. c 9. b 10. b 11. a 12. a