

Brunswick School Department
Social Studies
Grade 6 Mesoamerican Civilizations

Unit Overview

Students investigate how physical geography influences the rise and fall of societies, focusing on the Maya, Inca, and Aztec civilizations. Social structure, religion, technology, and daily life all shaped these empires. Leaders such as Pachacuti, Hernan Cortes, and Moctezuma II, will be studied along with various locations such as Peru, Andes Mountains, Honduras, Yucatan Peninsula, Lake Texcoco and Machu Picchu in Mesoamerica. Students will compare and contrast the three civilizations in terms of locations, accomplishments and histories.

Essential Understandings

- Geography dictates human settlement patterns.
- Ancient civilizations laid the foundation for future societies.
- Characteristics of civilizations are common across time and place.
- The relationship between humans and environment is reciprocal; humans are both impacted and impact their environments in significant ways.

Priority Standards and Performance Indicators

(as based on the Maine Learning Results)

P.S. SS -1 Conduct and present original research that utilizes primary and secondary sources in order to analyze, interpret and explain historical (and/or) contemporary social studies topics.

- a. Locate relevant information that includes multiple perspectives from varied sources.
- b. Demonstrate facility with notetaking, organizing information, and creating bibliographies.
- d. Use information ethically and legally.

P.S. SS-4 Utilize concepts and processes from geography to understand issues involving people, places, and environments in the United States and the world.

- a. Identify the major regions of the Earth and major physical features and political boundaries using a variety of geographic tools.
- b. Describe the impact of change on physical and cultural environments.
- d. Describe the dynamic relationship between geographic features and various cultures, including the cultures of Maine Native Americans, various historical groups in the United States, and other cultures in the world.

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P.S.SS-5 Draw on concepts and processes from history to develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and world.

- a. Explain that history is the study of the written record of the past, based on available evidence from a variety of sources.

Examples of Formative / Summative Assessments

- M.I.A. Archaeology newsletter (with language arts)
- Identify various gods and goddesses in Mesoamerican religion
- Map the locations of each Mesoamerican civilization, major land and water features and capital cities.
- List factors that contributed to the decline of each civilization
- M.I.A. artifact project and museum card
- Vocabulary quizzes
- Chapter 2 test - Prentice Hall - Latin America textbook

Sample Texts and Materials/Resources

- Publications:
 - Prentice Hall - Latin America textbook
 - Holt - World History Ancient Civilizations
 - Maya - Kids Discover magazine
 - Civilizations Past to Present - Mexico, National Geographic
 - Ladders - The Maya, National Geographic
 - The Maya - Benchmark Education
 - The Aztec - Kids Discover magazine
 - Ladders - The Aztec, National Geographic
 - The Aztec - Benchmark Education
 - Moctezuma, Aztec Ruler, Primary Source Readers
 - The Inca - Kids Discover magazine
 - Ladders - The Inca, National Geographic
 - The Inca - Benchmark Education
 - Ancient Cultures of South America, Prime Social Studies
 - Inca, Lawrence Kovacs

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- Videos:
 - *Road to Machu Picchu*, Discovery Channel
 - *Inca Mummies: Secrets of the Lost World*, History Channel
 - *Inca: Secrets of the Ancestors*, Time-Life Video
 - *Lost Kingdom of the Maya*, National Geographic
 - *Indians of North America*, Schlessinger Media
 - *Conquistadors*, PBS Home Video
 - *Mexico, The Royal Tour*, PBS Home Video
 - Horrible Histories
- Websites:
 - Teacher Portaportals and homepage
 - Mr. Donn's
 - Ducksters
 - History.com
 - National Geographic for Kids
 - Britannica.com
 - Flocabulary - "Mesoamerica"
 - <http://www.bigmyth.com/>creation myths of the cultures
 - Brain Pop