

South American Civilisations: The Aztecs

Sticky Learning

New History Knowledge

Know that The Aztecs were a nomadic tribe who settled in Mexico(link to Y4 Geography) around AD 1300

Know that they settled in Tenochtitlán as this had a good supply of water and food with easy access to nearby towns for trade – but they had a myth about the choice of location

Know once they settled in Tenochtitlán, the Aztec empire began to grow. It covered 80,000 square miles and included millions of people who were all ruled by an emperor

Know key facts about daily life including:

Most Aztecs lived in huts made from mud and straw. Rich people could afford palaces or homes made of stone and they bathed in steam rooms and saunas.

- The men were either craftsmen, farmers or warriors who defended the empire.
- The women stayed at home to cook and weave clothes.
- Children had to go to school to learn important skills like hunting or cooking.
- The Aztecs were excellent hunters and farmers and were skilled at fishing.
- They made intricate masks, pottery and jewellery.

Know that the Aztec culture was famous for a range of things some of which are still with us today

- writing in pictograms and hieroglyphics

Know that the Aztecs believed in many gods (including the names of some e.g. Tlaloc, Quetzalcoatl) like other civilizations studied and would sacrifice human life to keep their gods happy.

Know that they built towers and temples for their gods

Know that the arrival of Europeans in South America was a contributing factor in the decline of the Aztec Empire

New History Skills

- Be able to create a timeline using an appropriate scale and plot events in chronological order
- Use dates and the names of time periods accurately in their historical enquires
- Be able to explain the positive and negative aspects of a piece of evidence they have located e.g. it is a first-hand account, but the person was biased
- Evaluate the contribution of different types of approach to historical enquiry e.g. archaeologist and historian
- Be able to identify trends in changes that have occurred over time
- Be able to explain the significance of an event, a change or a person's contribution
- Organise information from an historical enquiry to be able to present their conclusion or point of view
- Summarise their findings about a period, person, theme or event

What will I learn by the end?

- Where did they originate from?
- How did they build their city?
- How is their society built up?
- What do they believe?
- What did they do in daily life?
- The fall of the Aztec empire?

Concepts:

Understand concepts such as:

- Democracy, tyranny, oligarchy
- Exploration and encounters
- Old World/ New World
- Industrialisation, revolution
- Wealth, poverty
- Parliament, executive and legislature
- Tribe, sacrifice, reign
- State



The word Aztec means 'someone who comes from Aztlán' - an unknown location in northern Mexico.

Significant Figures and Images



Key Dates

Key Events

| | |
|--------------|--|
| AD 1100 | The Aztecs are nomads , moving from place to place. |
| AD 1200-1300 | The Aztecs arrive in Mexico . |
| AD 1325 | The city of Tenochtitlán is built as their capital city. |
| AD 1428 | As the Aztecs form an alliance with other tribes , their empire begins to grow. |
| AD 1521 | The Aztec empire is invaded and destroyed by Spain. |
| AD 1522 | Tenochtitlán is rebuilt as Mexico City - the capital of Mexico. |

Who Were the Aztecs?

The Aztecs were a **nomadic tribe** who settled in **Mexico** around AD 1300.



They settled in Tenochtitlán as this had a good supply of water and food with easy access to nearby towns for **trade**.

Vocabulary

Key Vocabulary

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| alliance | When two or more groups of people or countries agree to work together and help each other. |
| empire | A group of people ruled by an emperor. |
| hieroglyphics | A writing system that uses pictures and symbols instead of letters and words. |
| Mexico | A country in North America. |
| nomads | A group of people who move from place to place rather than living in one location. |
| sacrifice | An offering of something as a religious act. |
| trade | Buying and selling goods and services. |
| tribe | A group of people including many families. |

Who Did the Aztecs Worship?

The Aztecs believed in many gods and would **sacrifice** human life to keep their gods happy. They would build towers and temples for their gods.

Tlaloc
god of rain



Xochipilli
god of creativity, happiness and beauty



Tonatiuh
god of the sun, **sacrifice** and warriors



Xiuhtecuhtli
god of time and fire



Quetzalcóatl
god of death and the underworld



