



The Aztecs

I can create a graphic organizer or concept map explaining how and where each empire arose (how the Aztec and Incan empires were eventually defeated by the Spanish in the 16th century).

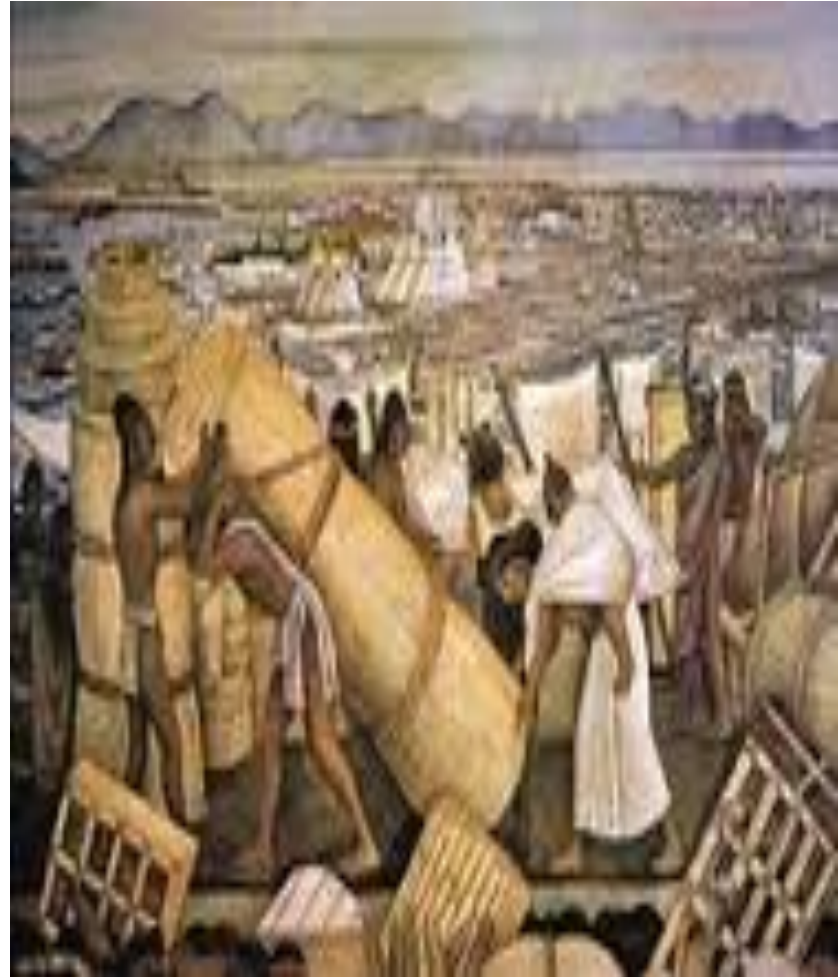
Bell Work

- If YOU were there ...

You live in a village in southeast Mexico that is ruled by the powerful Aztec Empire. Each year your village must send the emperor many baskets of corn. You have to dig gold for him too. One day some pale, bearded strangers arrive by sea. They want to overthrow the emperor, and they ask for your help.

Should you HELP the strangers?

Write a paragraph explanation describing why you should or shouldn't help! You must cite text evidence from the book.



Video Response

- <https://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/worldhistory/azteccivilization/>



- Write down one thing that you learned about the Aztec that relates to the standard.

Read and Take Notes!

Draw the graphic organizer in you journal.

As you read and take notes, record the rise, height, and fall of the Aztec Empire onto the graphic organizer.

Rise	Height	Fall

Main Idea 1

- The Aztecs built a rich and powerful empire in central Mexico.
- The first Aztecs were farmers, but when they arrived in Central America, all the good farmland was taken.
- They settled on a swampy island in the middle of Lake Texcoco, built a capital, and started to conquer nearby towns.



The Aztecs' Rise to Power

- War was the key factor in the Aztecs' rise to power.
- The Aztecs built alliances, or partnerships, to build their empire.
- The Aztecs made the people they conquered pay tribute, or give them cotton, gold, or food.
- The Aztecs controlled a huge trade network. Markets drew buyers and sellers from all over the Aztec Empire.
- By the early 1500s the Aztecs had the most powerful state in Mesoamerica.

History Close-up

Tenochtitlán

The Aztecs turned a swampy, uninhabited island into one of the largest and grandest cities in the world. The first Europeans to visit Tenochtitlán were amazed. At the time, the Aztec capital was about five times bigger than London.

The Great Temple stood at the heart of the city. On top of the temple were two shrines—a blue shrine for the rain god and a red shrine for the sun god.

Gold, silver, cloaks, and precious stones were among the many items sold at the market.

A network of canals linked different parts of the city.

Aztec farmers grew crops on "floating gardens" called *chinampas*.

ANALYSIS SKILL ANALYZING VISUALS

What is the most important building in this picture? How can you tell?

How did the Aztecs build a city in the center of a lake?

"These great towns and pyramids and buildings rising from the water, all made of stone, seemed like an enchanted vision . . . It was all so wonderful that I do not know how to describe this first glimpse of things never heard of, seen, or dreamed of before."

—Bernal Díaz del Castillo, from *The Conquest of New Spain*

Tenochtitlán

- Tenochtitlán was the capital of the Aztec Empire. It was built on an island in the middle of a lake.
- The Aztecs **built causeways, or raised roads across water or wet ground, so people could access the city.**
 - The water was undrinkable. As a result, the Aztecs built a stone aqueduct, or channel, to bring fresh water to the city.
- The Aztecs **built stone canals to bring water to the city and floating gardens to raise food and flowers.**
 - made the gardens by putting soil on rafts anchored to trees in the water.



The Aztec Empire



The Aztecs' magnificent capital, Tenochtitlán, was built on an island in Lake Texcoco.



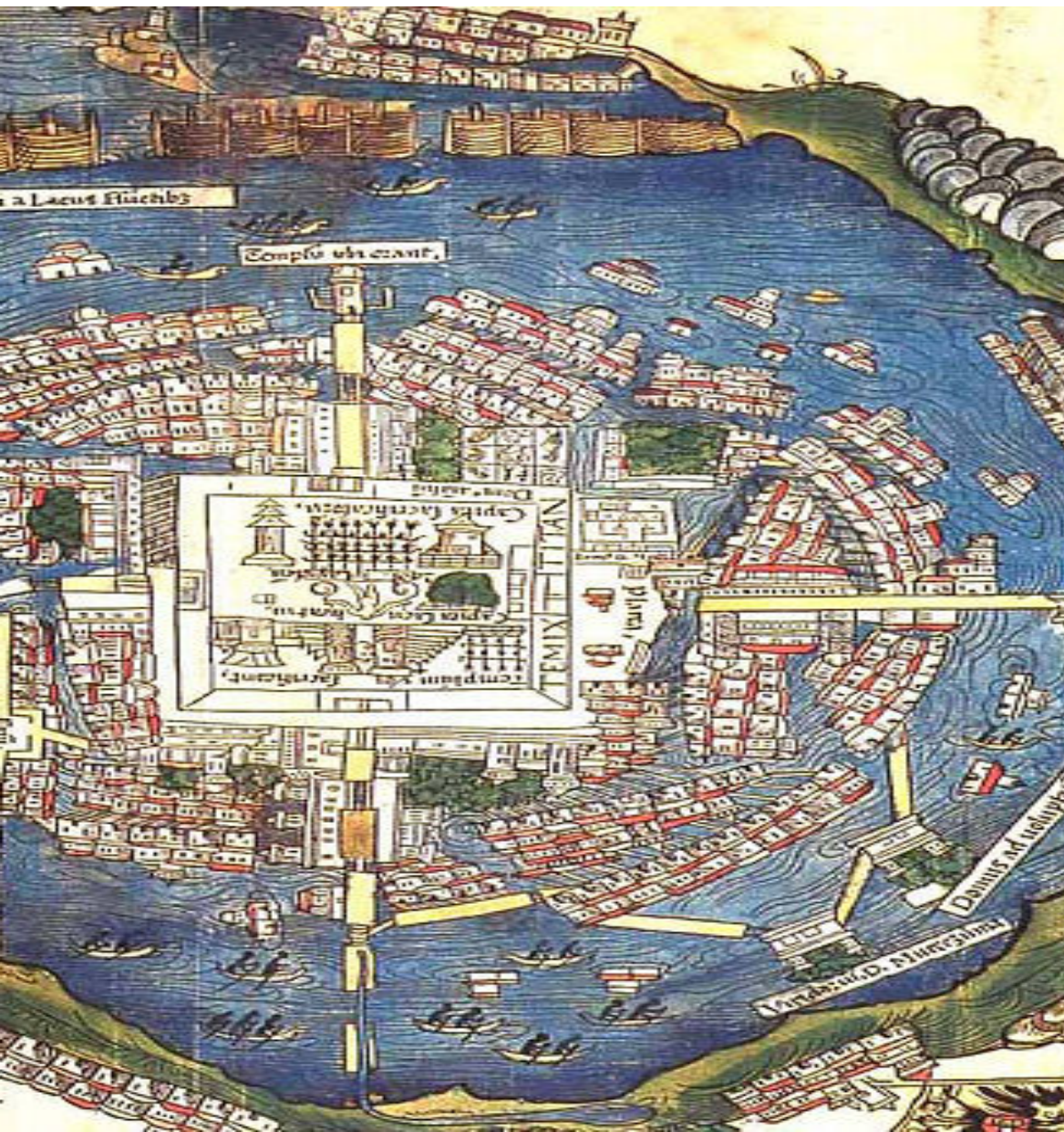
GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

INTERPRETING MAPS

1. **Place** What bodies of water bordered the Aztec Empire?
2. **Location** Which cities were located on Lake Texcoco?

- Let's Recap
 - Examine the map on page 475.
- What is the name of the lake found in the Aztec Empire?
- What geological challenges did the first Aztec face?
- How did they overcome these challenges?

Today, Tenochtitlan is **Mexico City**.



Quiz Time

- Using the materials given, choose the correct answer for the Brainpop questions given.
- <https://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/worldhistory/azteccivilization/quiz/>

Main Idea 2:

Life in the Empire

- Life in the empire was shaped by social structure, religion, and warfare.
- The Aztecs had a complex social structure, a demanding religion, and a rich culture.
- The Aztecs worshipped many gods and regularly made human sacrifices to please the gods.
 - Sacrifices were often battle captives. Aztec warriors waged frequent battles with neighboring people to supply enough victims.
- Aztecs valued art and architecture.
- They studied astronomy and devised a calendar like the Maya did.

Class Society



King or High Priest (ahaw)

Council (Priesthood) - often part of the Royal Family



Nobles



Merchants & Artisans



Commoners - Farmers (and Slaves)



Aztec Empire

- The king was the most powerful person in Aztec society.
- The king was in charge of law, trade and tribute, and warfare.
- The king had nobles to help him manage the kingdom.
- The nobles were tax collectors and judges and performed other jobs as well. They passed their titles down from father to son.

