

# AZTECS

# WHO WERE THE AZTECS?

Q&A

WHERE DID THE AZTECS LIVE?

FILL IN THE BLANKS

WORDSEARCH

TRUE OR FALSE

MODERN-DAY  
MEXICO

TEOTIHUACAN

PRIMARY

TOPIC

SHOP

# WHO WERE THE AZTECS?



## The Mexica

Aztecs weren't called Aztecs until the nineteenth century. They were known as the Mexica (**may-she-ka**) or Tenochca. The name Aztec was used to describe the people of Mesoamerica by a German explorer in 1810, based on the word Aztlan, the mythical homeland of the Mexica.

## Who were the Aztecs?

The Aztecs were the **dominant** culture in fifteenth and sixteenth-century Mesoamerica before the Spanish **conquistadors** invaded.

## What was the Aztec Empire?

The Aztec Empire was an **alliance** of three city-states in Mesoamerica, Mexico-Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, and Tlacopan.

## What language did they speak?

Aztecs, or Mexica, spoke Nahuatl (**na-wat**). Over one and a half million people in Mexico speak Nahuatl today.

## Did you know?

The word chocolate comes from the Nahuatl word xocolatl (**sho-coh-la-til**)

## How many Aztecs were there?

The capital city of the Aztec Empire, Tenochtitlan, had a population of about 200,000 and about 5 million people lived under the rule of the Aztecs.

## When did the Aztecs rule?

Tenochtitlan was founded in the 13th century and rapidly expanded until the empire covered much of what is now central and southern Mexico. They ruled until their defeat against the Spanish **conquistador** Hernán Cortés in 1521.

## What did Aztecs eat?

Aztec grew maize (corn), beans and squash, tomatoes, potatoes and chili peppers. Fruit harvests included guavas, papayas and apples. They also kept bees for honey and hunted for wild game. Meals included porridge and tortillas with beans. They made a chocolate drink by grinding roasted cacao pods into a powder and mixing it with hot water. Most Aztecs had a meal in the morning and their main meal mid-afternoon.

# WHERE DID THE AZTECS LIVE?



## where is Mesoamerica?

Mesoamerica is a geographical region stretching from central Mexico to parts of Central America where **indigenous** people lived for thousands of years before European explorers arrived.

Aztecs lived in northern Mesoamerica. The Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan was located in what is now Mexico City. The Aztec Empire ruled 400 to 500 small city-states in what is now central and southern Mexico.

**Alliance:** a group of people who have agreed to work together, a union

**Conquistador:** a military leader in the Spanish conquest of America

**Dominant:** controlling over all others, more important, strong, or noticeable than others

**Indigenous:** native to, or belonging to a place

## FILL IN THE BLANKS

1

What is the name of the geographical region stretching from central Mexico to parts of Central America where indigenous people lived for thousands of years until the Europeans arrived?

— — — — —

2

What is the Aztec city of Tenochtitlan known as today? (2 words)

— — — — — / — — — — —

3

What is name of the language the Aztecs spoke?

— — — — —

4

What word comes from the Nahuatl word xocolatl?

— — — — —

5

What was the name of the Aztec capital city?

— — — — —

6

What was the name of the mythical homeland of the Aztecs?

— — — — —

7

Aztecs were known as the — — — — — or Tenochca.

8

What is the word for a leader in the Spanish conquest of America?

— — — — —

# CRYPTIC WORDSEARCH

Find the answers from the Fill In The Blanks activity in the wordsearch below:

C	I	M	T	E	N	O	C	H	T	I	T	L	A	N
H	O	N	E	Y	L	S	O	N	U	T	Z	Y	Z	L
Z	T	R	L	G	M	E	X	I	C	O	C	I	T	Y
K	G	S	N	X	U	N	Y	S	Z	S	Y	S	L	U
M	A	I	Z	E	W	R	X	Q	W	C	O	X	A	L
N	E	N	O	L	T	U	O	U	Z	B	E	A	N	S
Y	S	S	P	G	P	A	P	A	Y	A	N	P	F	A
C	T	C	O	N	Q	U	I	S	T	A	D	O	R	L
N	O	F	T	A	U	R	S	H	Q	K	O	R	N	L
A	M	N	A	A	M	E	X	I	C	A	F	R	S	I
H	A	U	T	I	P	E	O	X	N	G	G	I	P	T
U	T	Y	O	L	T	P	R	F	Y	U	Z	D	U	R
A	O	Z	E	I	C	R	L	I	F	A	F	G	T	O
T	E	O	S	H	O	C	S	E	C	V	P	E	L	T
L	S	Z	R	C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E	P	L

## BONUS

How many words can you find for foods the Aztecs ate? Write them below as you find them.  
(Hint: Look for words written forwards AND backwards)

# TRUE OR FALSE

1

Aztecs didn't call themselves Aztecs.

T

F

2

The Aztecs were the dominant culture in Mesoamerica in the 18th century.

T

F

3

The Aztec Empire was an alliance of four city-states.

T

F

4

The language of the Aztecs was Nahuatl.

T

F

5

About 200,000 people lived under the rule of the Aztec Empire.

T

F

6

Tenochtitlan was founded in the 13th century B.C.

T

F

7

The Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan was located in what is now Mexico City.

T

F

8

The Aztec Empire ruled 400 to 500 small city-states in what is now Mexico.

T

F

9

Most Aztecs ate a morning meal and a main meal mid-afternoon.

T

F

# FILL IN THE BLANKS

1

What is the name of the geographical region stretching from central Mexico to parts of Central America where indigenous people lived for thousands of years until the Europeans arrived?

M E S O A M E R I C A

2

What is the Aztec city of Tenochtitlan known as today? (2 words)

M E X I C O / C I T Y

3

What is name of the language the Aztecs spoke?

N A H U A T L

4

What word comes from the Nahuatl word xocolatl?

C H O C O L A T E

5

What was the name of the Aztec capital city?

T E N O C H T I T L A N

6

What was the name of the mythical homeland of the Aztecs?

A Z T L A N

7

Aztecs were known as the M E X I C A or Tenochca.

8

What is the word for a leader in the Spanish conquest of America?

C O N Q U I S T A D O R

# CRYPTIC WORDSEARCH

		T	E	N	O	C	H	T	I	T	L	A	N
												Z	
				M	E	X	I	C	O	C	I	T	Y
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M												A	
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T									C				
L				C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E	

C			T	E	N	O	C	H	T	I	T	L	A	N
H	O	N	E	Y									Z	
		R			M	E	X	I	C	O	C	I	T	Y
			N					S					L	
M	A	I	Z	E				Q					A	
	E							U	B	E	A	N	S	
		S	P		P	A	P	A	Y	A		P		A
	T	C	O	N	Q	U	I	S	T	A	D	O	R	L
N	O		T	A				H				R		L
A	M		A	A	M	E	X	I	C	A		R		I
H	A		T	I	P	E				G		I		T
U	T		O	L		P	R			U		D		R
A	O		E	I			L	I		A		G		O
T	E		S	H				E	C	V		E		T
L	S			C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E		



# TRUE OR FALSE

1

Aztecs didn't call themselves Aztecs.

**T**

F

2

The Aztecs were the dominant culture in Mesoamerica in the 18th century.

T

**F**

3

The Aztec Empire was an alliance of four city-states.

T

**F**

4

The language of the Aztecs was Nahuatl.

**T**

F

5

Less than 200,000 people lived under the rule of the Aztec Empire.

T

**F**

6

Tenochtitlan was founded in the 13th century B.C.

T

**F**

7

The Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan was located in what is now Mexico City.

**T**

F

8

The Aztec Empire ruled 400 to 500 small city-states in what is now Mexico.

**T**

F

9

Most Aztecs ate a morning meal and a main meal mid-afternoon.

**T**

F

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