

# “The Aztec Empire: Excavating the Past”

~ A Returning Developer ~



For further information contact...

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## 2008 - 2009 IDEA CATALOG OF EXCELLENCE

### ■ PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Students will dive into the past to learn about the Aztec Nation. Students will first learn how to conduct a research paper. This will be completed through a study of reference materials. This study will include a presentation by a local librarian. The objective for this lesson is to learn research skills, as well as presentation skills. Students are required to use various methods and sources to understand history and know the difference between primary and secondary sources.

Students will not only research the Aztec nation, but they will also be dividing into groups of 4 or 5 students. These groups will be given a topic to research. They will then be instructed to create a presentation to explain their findings. Students will create a visual aid (such as a calendar, mask, pyramid...) to enhance their presentation. Students will be taught how to present information in a clear and precise manner.

This program will take 4-6 weeks to complete. Any time a teacher allows students to take lead in making discoveries and allows students to get more actively involved in a lesson, growth occurs more rapidly and concretely. This program affords students that opportunity.

### ■ OVERALL VALUE

Reading is essential to all learners; however, we have a huge amount of struggling readers. These lessons will “hook” not only the struggling readers, but encourage all readers to get involved in learning more about the Aztec Nation. Through cooperative learning communities, students will gain a plethora of knowledge in a short amount of time and in an innovative and effective manner. Researching has never been this fun!

### ■ LESSON PLAN TITLES

- 1 Aztec Intro
- 2 Meet the Aztec
- 3 Aztec Legacy/Culture-Web quest
- 4 The Downfall of the Aztec



### ■ MATERIALS

The materials needed include brown paper bags, black permanent markers, Colored Aluminum Foil Rolls, Metallic Acrylic Paints - Aztec Gold & Black, glass beads, and Paint brushes. Overall materials budget including pricing and vendors follows the lesson plans.

### ■ ABOUT THE DEVELOPER

Sharonda M. Dunlap has a B.S. degree in Elementary Education from Florida A & M University and a Master in Education with a specialization in elementary reading and literacy from Walden University. She previously taught fourth grade and she is currently a fifth grade teacher at Pinewood Elementary in Eagle Lake.

She enjoys spending time with family and traveling. Sharonda also received a Developer Grant in 2002.

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## Lesson Plan No 1: Aztec Intro



### ■ **SUBJECTS COVERED**

Social Studies, Language Art, Writing, Art, Reading

### ■ **GRADES**

Four - Six

### ■ **OBJECTIVES**

- ✓ The students will be introduced and read about one aspect of the Aztec culture and report it to the rest of the class.

### ■ **SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS**

SS.A.2.2.3

understands various aspects of family life, structures, and roles in different cultures and in many eras

SS.A.2.2.2

understands developments in transportation and communication in various societies (e.g., the development of extensive road systems in various cultures, the difficulties of travel and communication encountered by people of various cultures, the origins and changes in writing and how these changes made communication between people more effective).

LA.B.2.2.1

writes notes, comments, and observations that reflect comprehension of content and experiences from a variety of media.

### ■ **MATERIALS**

- Paper
- Pencils
- Colored pencils
- United Streaming Video- *Exploring the World: The Conquistadors and the Aztecs*

### ■ **DIRECTIONS**

1. Students will predict the answers to the following questions:
  - Who were the Aztecs?
  - Where and when did they live?
  - What was their culture like?
  - What was their capital city like?
  - What happened to them?
2. Students will view the video - *Exploring the World: The Conquistadors and the Aztecs*.
3. After viewing, students will work in groups to create a concept map around *the Aztec Nation*.

### ■ **EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT**

See attached Rubric for Evaluation and Assessment.



# “The Aztec Empire: Excavating the Past” Sharonda Dunlap



## Lesson Plan No 2: Meet the Aztec



### ■ **SUBJECTS COVERED**

Social Studies, Language Art, Writing, Art, Reading

### ■ **GRADES**

Four - Six

### ■ **OBJECTIVES**

The students will:

- ✓ Locate the ancient Aztec Empire and its capital on a map.
- ✓ Identify the years of the Aztec empire.
- ✓ Identify the Aztecs as the builders of a great city and rich civilization in what is now Mexico

### ■ **SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS**

SS.A.2.2.3

understands various aspects of family life, structures, and roles in different cultures and in many eras

SS.A.2.2.2

understands developments in transportation and communication in various societies (e.g., the development of extensive road systems in various cultures, the difficulties of travel and communication encountered by people of various cultures, the origins and changes in writing and how these changes made communication between people more effective).

LA.B.2.2.1

writes notes, comments, and observations that reflect comprehension of content and experiences from a variety of media.

### ■ **MATERIALS**

- Paper
- Pencils
- Colored pencils
- United Streaming Video - *Exploring the World: The Conquistadors and the Aztecs*

### ■ **DIRECTIONS**

The librarian will explain the following topics:

- a) The reference materials available in the library
- b) How to conduct research
- c) How to correctly cite work/text
- d) How to determine the validity of text/sources.
  1. Go to [www.nationalgeographic.com/xpedition/atlas](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpedition/atlas).
  2. On the world map, click on North America, then click on “Mexico”.
  3. Click off state borders.
  4. Download and print a map of Mexico.
  5. Using colored pencils or markers, mark the site of Tenochtitlan and then designate the general area of the Aztec Empire.

### ■ **EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT**

See attached Rubric for Evaluation and Assessment.



# “The Aztec Empire: Excavating the Past” Sharonda Dunlap

## Lesson Plan No 3: Aztec Legacy / Culture-Web quest



### ■ **SUBJECTS COVERED**

Social Studies, Language Art, Writing, Art, Reading

### ■ **GRADES**

Four - Six

### ■ **PURPOSE**

Students conduct research and present a brief report about the Aztec culture in Mexico.

### ■ **OBJECTIVES**

The students will:

- ✓ Listen and respond to the facts presented by the other groups.
- ✓ Identify the cultural, economic and social advancements of the Aztec culture.
- ✓ Identify the years of the Aztec empire.
- ✓ Describe several aspects of Aztec culture
- ✓ Use electronic technology to create, revise, retrieve, and verify information.
- ✓ Tell the legend of the founding of the capital city of Tenochtitlan and describe the way the city looked at its peak

### ■ **SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS**

SS.A.2.2. 3

understands various aspects of family life, structures, and roles in different cultures and in many eras

SS.A.2.2 2

understands developments in transportation and communication in various societies (e.g., the development of extensive road systems in various cultures, the difficulties of travel and communication encountered by people of various cultures, the origins and changes in writing and how these changes made communication between people more effective).

LA.B.2.2.1

writes notes, comments, and observations that reflect comprehension of content and experiences from a variety of media.

LA.B.2.2.4

uses electronic technology, including wordprocessing software and electronic encyclopedias, to create, revise, retrieve, and verify information.

### ■ **MATERIALS**

- Paper
- Pencils
- 3 x 5 cards
- Computer with Internet access

### ■ **DIRECTIONS**

1. Students will work in cooperative learning groups to conduct research on one of the following topics, related to the Aztec Nation.
  - Calendar
  - Artifacts and Ruins
  - Evidence of Civilization (Government, Education, and Art)
  - Symbols
  - Spanish Conquest
2. Students will write a report on their topic by including 5-8 of the questions from the Research Handout.
3. Students will create a visual aid that represents the essence of their topic
4. Students will present their report and visual aid to the class.

### ■ **EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT**

Assess students' understanding of the culture of the Aztecs by observing their reports and contributions to the discussion.





### *Additional Information*

### Research Checklist Handout

1. What civilization did the unearthed artifacts/clues come from?
  2. How can you prove the identity of the artifacts?
  3. What is each of the 5 artifacts that you found?
  4. What use/purpose did each of the artifacts serve?
  5. What have you found out about the Government of the civilization?
  6. What have you found out about the Social Structure of the civilization?
  7. What have you found out about the Written Language of the civilization?
  8. What have you found out about the Economy of the civilization?
  9. What visual aids (a minimum of 1 is required other than the artifacts and the mask) will you use to help your oral presentation of the above information to the class?
  10. What will you use as an introduction for your presentation?
  11. What will you use as a conclusion for your presentation?
- 

Mark X when completed

1.	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
10	11	12

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## Lesson Plan No 3: Aztec Legacy / Culture-Web quest



### *Additional Information*

### Rubric for Oral Presentations

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
Clear, concise message delivered	5	4	3	2
Complete, appropriate text	5	4	3	2
Presentation Addresses Religion	5	4	3	2
Presentation Addresses Government	5	4	3	2
Presentation Addresses Social Structure	5	4	3	2
Presentation Addresses Written Language	5	4	3	2
Presentation Addresses Economy	5	4	3	2
Shows Creativity	5	4	3	2
Volume of voice in presentation	5	4	3	2
Total Points				

### Point Breakdown

50 - 41= A

40 - 31 = B

30 - 21= C

20 - 11= D

10 - 0= U

TOTAL POINTS EARNED: \_\_\_\_\_

# “The Aztec Empire: Excavating the Past” Sharonda Dunlap

## Lesson Plan No 4: Aztec Downfall



### ■ SUBJECTS COVERED

Social Studies, Language Art, Writing, Art, Reading

### ■ GRADES

Four - Six

### ■ PURPOSE

Students conduct research and present a brief report about the Aztec culture in Mexico.

### ■ OBJECTIVES

- ✓ The students will create replicas of Aztec artifacts: (e.g. calendar, Mask, Pyramid, and hieroglyphs).

### ■ SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS

SS.A.2.2. 3

understands various aspects of family life, structures, and roles in different cultures and in many eras

SS.A.2.2 2

understands developments in transportation and communication in various societies (e.g., the development of extensive road systems in various cultures, the difficulties of travel and communication encountered by people of various cultures, the origins and changes in writing and how these changes made communication between people more effective).

### ■ MATERIALS

- Leather
- Acrylic paint (gold and black)
- Paint brushes
- Colored aluminum foil
- Glass beads
- Brown Paper Bags
- Pyramid Kit

### ■ DIRECTIONS

#### *Extension Exercises:*

1. **Students will make the Aztec calendar.**

They will use leather and paint. Students should include symbols for months and days.

Using a double-bubble map, students will then compare the Aztec calendar to the calendar used in America today.

2. **Students will make an Aztec mask.**

Students will research why the Aztecs wore mask? When did they wear the mask? What do the symbols and colors on the mask represent?

3. **Students will practice drawing hieroglyphs on brown paper bags.**

Students will learn to write their name using hieroglyphs. They will write to persuade the President of the United States to change the writing system to hieroglyphics.

4. **Students will make their own Aztec pyramids.**

Students will identify the geometric shapes of a pyramid. They will tell what kinds of angles the walls form? Students will then infer why it is difficult to build a pyramid.

### ■ EVALUATION/ ASSESSMENT

<i>Checklist for artifact</i>	
if completed	
✓	
	Student selected one of the five areas to research
	Research completed in writing for the specific area
	Clear picture of the artifact
	Artifact completed
	Artifact resembles the picture

### ■ ADDL INFORMATION

- Hieroglyphics Handout
- Field Trip - Polk Museum of Art





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## Lesson Plan No 4: Aztec Downfall



### *Additional Information*

#### **Bibliographical References:**

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- Macdonald, Fiona. *You Wouldn't Want to be an Aztec Sacrifice!* Danbury, CT: Franklin Watts, 2003. ISBN: 0531146022
- Tanaka, Shelley. *Lost Temple of the Aztecs*. Hyperion Books for Children, 2000. ISBN: 0786815426
- Mexico-Tenochtitlan: Ancient City [http://www.mexicocity.com.mx/anc\\_city.html](http://www.mexicocity.com.mx/anc_city.html)> 22 March 2004
- Aztec: Images of Tenochtitlan: [http://www.taisei.co.jp/cg\\_e/ancient\\_world/azteca/aazteca.html](http://www.taisei.co.jp/cg_e/ancient_world/azteca/aazteca.html)> 22 March 2004
- Great Tenochtitlan <http://www.elbalero.gob.mx/kids/history/html/conquista/tenochtitlan.html>> 22 March 2004
- *The Aztec Calendar*: Image to Explore: <http://www.ai.mit.edu/people/montalvo/Hotlist/aztec.html>
- National Geographic's Xpeditions  
[<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/>]
  - Map of Mexico  
[<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas/index.html>]



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## Rubric



Evaluating Student Presentations	1	2	3	4	Total Points
Organization	Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information.	Audience has difficulty following presentation because students jump around.	Students present information in logical sequence which audience can follow.	Students present information in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow.	
Subject Knowledge	Students do not have grasp of information; students cannot answer questions about subject.	Students are uncomfortable with information and are able to answer only rudimentary questions.	Students are at ease with expected answers to all questions, but fail to elaborate.	Students demonstrate full knowledge (more than required) by answering all class questions with explanations and elaboration.	
Graphics	Students use superfluous graphics or no graphics	Students occasionally use graphics that rarely support text and presentation.	Students' graphics relate to text and presentation.	Students' graphics explain and reinforce screen text and presentation.	
Mechanics	Students' presentation has four or more spelling errors and/or grammatical errors.	Presentation has three misspellings and/or grammatical errors.	Presentation has no more than two misspellings and/or grammatical errors.	Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	
Eye Contact	Students read all of report with no eye contact.	Students occasionally use eye contact, but they still read most of report.	Students maintain eye contact most of the time but frequently return to notes.	Students maintain eye contact with audience, seldom returning to notes.	
Elocution	Students mumble, incorrectly pronounce terms, and speak too quietly for students in the back of class to hear.	Students' voices are low. Students incorrectly pronounce terms. Audience members have difficulty hearing presentation.	Students' voices are clear. Students pronounce most words correctly. Most audience members can hear presentation.	Students use clear voices and correct, precise pronunciation of terms so that all audience members can hear presentation.	

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Additional Information — Worksheet



<p><i>Nombres Mayas</i></p>	<p>Your Name with Hieroglyphics (Su Nombre con Jeroglíficos)</p>				
	 A	 F	 L	 R	 Y
 V	 G	 M	 S	 Z	
 C	 H	 N	 T	 U	
 CH	 I	 O	 U	 U	
 D	 J	 P	 W	 W	
 E	 K	 Q	 X	 X	



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## Additional Information — Worksheet



From a statue found near the Pyramid of the Moon, Teotihuacan. Classic, Teotihuacan III, A.D. 350-650. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City.



**CHALCHIUTLICUE, LADY OF THE JADE SKIRT,  
THE WATER GODDESS OF TEOTIHUACAN**

Teotihuacan was a vast city in the Valley of Mexico dedicated solely to the gods. The huge pyramids of the Sun and the Moon may still be seen there. Teotihuacan greatly influenced the Maya cities to the south.

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## Additional Information — Worksheet



from an Aztec shield covered with feathers;  
Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna.  
c. 1486-1503.



A COYOTE, THE SYMBOL OF THE CRUEL AZTEC EMPEROR, AHUITZOTL

