

Unit Title: Ancient Civilizations of Mexico: Cultural Heritage from Past to Present.

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Subject Area: Situated in ESL (intermediate and advanced) and social studies.

Time Frame: 3–4 weeks of instructional time

Summary of the Unit: This unit will explore Mexico's deep heritage through pre-Columbian civilizations including the Olmecs, Zapotecs, Mixtecs, Aztecs, and Maya. Students will explore archeological sites and artifacts left behind by these civilizations. Through this unit of study students will gain a deeper understanding of Mexico's rich contribution to world history and how these ancient civilizations have influenced present-day Mexico. During this unit, students will focus primarily on non-fiction writing and reading linked to Common Core Standards.

Reading Common Core Standards:

ELA- RI.6.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

ELA- RI.6.1: Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

ELA- RI.6.2: Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

ELA- RI.6.3: Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

ELA- RI.6.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

Writing Common Core Standards:

ELA- W.6.1b: Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

ELA- W.6.2a: Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

Essential Questions:

- What are the major ways that civilizations influence each other?
- What features do ancient civilizations have in common?

- What are the major similarities and differences between ancient civilizations in Mexico?
- What is the relationship between the conquered and the conquerors?
- Why are artifacts important and what can objects tell us about the past? How is this connected to our present?

Performance Tasks and Other Evidence of Learning:

1. As a summative assessment, students will write a comparison/contrast and cause/effect essay about two cultures from ancient Mexico.
2. As a summative assessment, students will create a PowerPoint, iMovie, or Comic Life presentation to illustrate their understanding of one civilization's important features and relevance to the past and present.
3. Formative assessments will be linked to daily classwork. A daily exit slip will be administered to measure each day's progress.

Learning Activities: The length of the lessons may be extended as needed.

Lessons One and Two, Baseline Measurements Taken

Students take a pre-assessment writing task used to measure progress. This is given without instruction, under testing conditions, and is timed. Students are given a non-fiction article on ancient civilizations in Mexico and prompted to write a comparison/contrast essay (day one) and cause/effect essay (day two). This is used as a measure of growth against the final writing tasks administered at the end of the unit.

Materials Needed: Article from the San Francisco Examiner (<http://www.sfgate.com/mexico/mexicomix/article/Olmecs-to-Toltecs-Great-ancient-civilizations-of-2387656.php>) which is an overview of the ancient civilizations of Mexico

Lesson Three

Teacher Modeling: Teacher will model how to complete the graphic organizer used during the independent activity.

Independent Work: Students will be groups of 4–5. Teacher will give out pictures of artifacts from the civilizations such as the Olmec heads, Monte Alban, and Temple Mayor. In targeted groups, students will sort through the pictures classifying them according to their features (e.g., a temple, a tool, a ceremonial artifact, a tomb artifact). Students will write who they think used the object, how it was used and what it tells us about this civilization. Teacher will provide sentence starters with targeted language.

Students will complete an exit slip that is shared with the class at the end of the session.

Materials Needed: Photos of ancient archaeological sites and archaeological objects and a graphic organizer to classify photos.

Vocabulary: classify, ancient, artifact, civilization, Meso-America, temple, tomb, tool, tribe, ceremony, religion, evidence

Lesson Four

Teacher Modeling: Teacher will review the groups' findings. The second lesson will review the importance of artifacts, emphasizing how they are an essential connection to our cultural heritage. The teacher will conduct a guided non-fiction reading on the Olmec civilization, modeling a note-taking/ paraphrasing skill.

Independent Work: Students will be given a similar reading on the Olmec civilization. They will read in pairs and practice the same note-taking/ paraphrasing skill demonstrated by the teacher.

Selected exemplars of student work will be shown at the end of the class on the document camera.

Materials Needed: Reading for the activity from <http://www.aztec-history.com/olmec-civilization.html>

Vocabulary: influence, culture, history, civilization, developed, ritual, society, archaeologists

Lesson Five

Teacher Modeling: The teacher will present a general overview of Mexico in ancient times with a focus on the major civilizations, geography, and rough time line. This will help orient students to the geography of Latin America and situate the cultures in context. The teacher will model how to create a timeline approximately 8000 BCE to 1521 AD. The Metropolitan Museum *Heilbrunn Timeline* will be used to model the important events and artifacts from ancient Mexico (<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/>).

Independent Work: Using the Metropolitan Museum of Art's website, students will create a timeline of ancient Mexico.

Materials Needed: Computers and Internet access

Vocabulary: north, south, east, west, fertile, irrigation, first, next, then, last, chronologically, in sequence, BCE, CE, ceremony, polytheism, monotheism, warriors.

Lesson Six

Teacher Modeling: Students will watch a short film on ancient Mexico. A series of films are available at no charge, on the topic of ancient Mexico from the History Channel (<http://www.history.com/topics/mexico-timeline>) or Discovery Streaming (<http://streaming.discoveryeducation.com/>).

The teacher will model how to determine the main idea and supporting details of the film using a fishbone graphic organizer.

Independent Work: Students watch a short, teacher-selected video, and create a graphic organizer, which demonstrates their knowledge of main idea and supporting details. Students will also create an illustration of an ancient artifact from Mexico that will accompany the graphic organizer.

Materials Needed: short videos, computers with Internet access

Vocabulary: culture, syncretism, other relevant vocabulary will be selected from the film

Lesson Seven

Teacher Modeling: Teacher will demonstrate how to write a thesis statement and supporting evidence using an article about the importance of the Olmecs as a mother or founding culture.

Independent Work: Students will read the article “Mystery of the Olmec” from *Time Magazine*. Students will create an evidence-based essay analyzing the importance of the Olmecs.

Materials Needed: Olmec article from *Time* (<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,984782,00.html>), computers with Internet access.

Vocabulary: thesis, topic, and other relevant vocabulary selected from the reading

Lesson Eight

Teacher Modeling: Teacher will model how to create a comparison/ contrast essay examining the similarities and differences between two ancient civilizations.

Independent Work: Students will be given an article. They will use their note-taking skill and ability to analyze the text learned from the previous lessons to write a four paragraph comparison / contrast essay.

Vocabulary: transition words for comparison/contrast essay such as: in contrast to, similarly, difference. These will be provided on a reference sheet for student notebooks.

Materials Needed: Article from the San Francisco Examiner (<http://www.sfgate.com/mexico/mexicomix/article/Olmecs-to-Toltecs-Great-ancient-civilizations-of-2387656.php>) which is the overview of the ancient civilizations of Mexico used in lessons one and two. By using the same article more than once students and teachers will easily be able to gauge progress.

Lesson Nine

Teacher Modeling:

The teacher will demonstrate how to create a cause/ effect essay by examining the relationship between two cultures.

Independent Work: The students will be given two articles. They will analyze the text and to produce a cause/ effect essay which examines the impact of one culture on another. The teacher will facilitate students' work in small groups.

Materials Needed: Two articles (Olmec: <http://www.crystalinks.com/olmec.html>; Maya: <http://www.crystalinks.com/mayanhistory.html>), student reference chart with transition words (attached)

Vocabulary: transition words for the essay.

Lessons Ten and Eleven

Teacher Modeling: The teacher will model how to create a PowerPoint presentation analyzing the defining features of an ancient civilization. The teacher will model storyboarding and give a brief overview of best practices for research using the Internet.

The teacher will model how to use the storyboard to create an informational presentation using PowerPoint, Comic Life (<http://comicliffe.com/>), or iMovie. The teacher will explain the major technical aspects and how to access the software.

Independent Practice: The students will explore the technology resources and choose a tech. resource and topic. Students will work in small groups to create a short iMovie (2–3 minutes), PowerPoint (10–12 slides), or Comic (8–10 pages), which illustrates their understanding of a civilization from ancient Mexico.

Materials Needed: Technology, iPads, MacBook laptops, and software applications

Lesson Twelve, Presentations

Teacher Modeling: The teacher will model best practices in presentations including how to comment meaningfully on each other's work. The teacher will lead a focused discussion on how the student presentations/gallery walk should proceed.

Independent Practice: Students will participate in a "gallery walk" where they leave their presentations open on the computer at a desk with a comment sheet next to their work. They will silently rotate to each station, view and listen to each other's work, and leave a round of comments for the author.

Lesson Thirteen, Publishing Party

Teacher modeling: The teacher will model how to incorporate students' suggestions into the presentation.

Independent Practice: The students will incorporate comments into their work.

Student projects will be hosted on <https://posterous.com/> or www.mrartnyc.com

TRANSITIONAL WORDS AND PHRASES

SHOWING RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN AND BETWEEN SENTENCES

Transitional words and phrases connect and relate ideas, sentences, and paragraphs. They assist in the logical flow of ideas as they signal the relationship between sentences and paragraphs. In prose, the material is supported and conditioned not only by the ordering of the material (its position) but by connectives which signal order, relationship and movement.

Some of the more commonly used connectives are listed below. Note especially how these connections function to develop, relate, connect and move ideas.

1. To signal <u>addition</u> of ideas	and, also, besides, further, furthermore, too, moreover, in addition, then, of equal importance, equally important, another
2. To signal <u>time</u>	next, afterward, finally, later, last, lastly, at last, now, subsequently, then, when, soon, thereafter, after a short time, the next week (m onth, day, etc.), a minute later, in the meantime, meanwhile, on the following day, at length, ultimately, presently
3. To signal <u>order</u> or <u>sequence</u>	first, second, (etc.), finally, hence, next, then, from here on, to begin with, last of all, after, before, as soon as, in the end, gradually
4. To signify <u>space</u> and <u>place</u>	above, behind, below, beyond, here, there, to the right (left), nearby, opposite, on the other side, in the background, directly ahead, along the wall, as you turn right, at the tip, across the hall, at this point, adjacent to
5. To signal an <u>example</u>	for example, to illustrate, for instance, to be specific, such as, moreover, furthermore, just as important, similarly, in the same way
6. To show <u>results</u>	as a result, hence, so, accordingly, as a consequence, consequently, thus, since, therefore, for this reason, because of this
7. To signal <u>purpose</u>	to this end, for this purpose, with this in mind, for this reason, for these reasons
8. To signal <u>comparisons</u>	like, in the same (like) manner or way, similarly
9. To indicate <u>contrast</u>	but, in contrast, conversely, however, still, nevertheless, nonetheless, yet, and yet, on the other hand, of course, on the contrary, or, in spite of this, actually, a year ago, now, notwithstanding, for all that, strangely enough, ironically
10. To signal <u>alternatives</u> , <u>exceptions</u> , and <u>objections</u>	although, though, while, despite, to be sure, it is true, true, I grant, granted, I admit, admittedly, doubtless, I concede, regardless
11. To <u>dispute</u>	it isn't true that, people are wrong who say that, deny that, be that as it may, by the same token, no doubt, we often hear it said, many people claim, many people suppose, it used to be thought, in any case
12. To <u>intensify</u>	above all, first and foremost, importantly, again, to be sure, indeed, in fact, as a matter of fact, as I have said, as has been noted
13. To <u>summarize</u> or <u>repeat</u>	in summary, to sum up, to repeat, briefly, in short, finally, on the whole, therefore, as I have said, in conclusion, as you can see

Additionally, pronouns act as connectives when they are used to refer to a noun in the preceding sentences. Repetition of key words and phrases and the use of synonyms which echo important words both serve to establish connections with previous sentences.