

Instructional Unit Title: What Did They Leave Behind?

Colorado's District Sample Curriculum Project

The teacher may bring in artifacts, written records, and images of the Maya, Inca, and Aztec so that students can distinguish between the work of an archaeologist and the work of an historian.

The teacher may bring in primary sources that represent material culture (e.g., vinyl records, iPods, cooking utensils, childhood memorabilia, images of shelters, farming activities, art) so that students can work like historians to discover how artifacts reflect the material cultural legacy of the time.

The teacher may bring in primary and secondary sources from the Maya, Aztec, Inca, and Inuit (e.g., irrigation, terracing, clothing, shelter, architecture) so that students can examine the importance of human modification of and adaptation to the environment to meet the needs of the culture.

The teacher may bring in artifacts (e.g., murals, hieroglyphs, stela, Mayan calendar, art) so that students can begin to identify the historical context and gain insight into the lives of the Mayan people through material cultural artifacts.

The teacher may bring in artifacts, stories, cultural practices, beliefs that represent the culture of the Mayan people (e.g., burial practices, role of men and women, writing, social structure) so that students can examine various aspects of the culture to gain insight into the Mayan beliefs, customs, and traditions.

The teacher may bring in primary and secondary sources (e.g., images of shelter, hunting tools, clothing, carvings) so that students can begin to analyze how clothing, tools, shelter of the Inuit culture reflect a way of life and adaptation to the physical environment.

The teacher may bring in images of Aztec and Mexican culture (e.g., ceramics as art, instruments, images of Tenochtitlan - past and present) so that students can examine Mexican material culture to identify the legacies of the Aztec.

The teacher may bring in artifacts exemplifying the stories, cultural practices, and beliefs that represent the culture of the Aztec peoples (e.g., burial practices, Aztec sacrifice, art) so that students can examine various aspects of the culture to gain insight into Aztec beliefs, customs, and traditions.

The teacher may bring in artifacts illustrating the stories, cultural practices, and beliefs that represent the culture of the Incan people (e.g., burial practices, creation myths, writing, social structure) so that students can examine various aspects of the culture to gain insight into Incan beliefs, customs, and traditions.

The teacher may bring in artifacts reflecting Incan culture (e.g., images of Incan and modern day Peruvian ceramics, textiles, clothing, architecture) so that students can begin to decipher Incan artifacts and identify Incan influences on modern civilizations (e.g., western South America).

The teacher may provide primary and secondary sources illustrating various aspects of Inuit culture (e.g., language, food, religion, male and female roles, social structure) so that students can convey how Inuit beliefs and traditions have endured across time.

The teacher may provide examples of cultural legacies (e.g., place names, modern day festivals, science/math still used today, Mayan Calendar, architecture, languages) so that students can examine material culture in order to identify the cultural beliefs and traditions that are the legacy of peoples of the past.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT: An archaeologist studies past cultures through artifacts. They work at historical sites to “uncover” the stories of the past through the discovery and analysis of the artifacts they discover. You are an adventure archaeologist who is working on the *Codex Archaeology Project* and you have to prepare a report for your investors on the progress of historical sites that are part of this project. You will work with your colleagues to create a website that describes the stories behind the artifacts you've discovered on the sites and their connection to the people of the past. Your investors want to know about the archaeological site you've excavated, and about the artifacts and beliefs of the ancient cultures that you've studied.

This unit was authored by a team of Colorado educators. The unit is intended to support teachers, schools, and districts as they make their own local decisions around the best instructional plans and practices for all students. To see the entire instructional unit sample with possible learning experiences, resources, differentiation, and assessments visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunitsamples>.