

### Follow-up Discussion Questions

- Describe the importance of the city of Cuzco to the Inca Empire. Compare and contrast Cuzco with other historic and modern world cities.
- Analyze the planning that went into developing Machu Picchu. How did the organization of Machu Picchu reflect Inca class distinctions?
- Explain the legend surrounding the Aztec god Quetzalcóatl and the Spanish *conquistador* Hernando Cortés. Speculate about the veracity of this tale.
- What was the economic significance of the Oaxaca valley in ancient Mesoamerica? Why did tribal chiefs choose to build their cultic shrines here?

### Follow-up Activities

- In 1521, Hernando Cortés conquered the Aztecs—a conquest that inspired Francisco Pizarro to invade the Incas in 1531. Ask students to research and summarize the history related to the Spanish conquest of “New Spain,” involving the defeats of Montezuma in Mexico and Atahualpa in Peru. As a follow-up, students may develop Venn diagrams that compare and contrast the reasons why Spanish, English, French and Dutch explorers came to the New World.
- In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, explorer Hiram Bingham planned to retrace the steps of South American hero Simon Bolívar and follow the old Spanish trade route from Argentina to Peru. Bingham heard about Vilcabamba, the “last resting place of the Incas,” over the course of his travels in Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Incas. Share excerpts of Bingham’s *Lost City of the Incas* with students and ask your class to write travel journal entries reflecting their knowledge of Bingham’s accidental discovery of Machu Picchu. Excerpts from Bingham’s book may be found at the following web site:  
[www.labyrinthina.com/bingham.htm](http://www.labyrinthina.com/bingham.htm)
- Break students into small groups and ask them to read Hernando Cortés’ second letter to Emperor Charles V of Spain, in which he describes the historic Aztec city of Tenochtitlán in great detail. Ask each group to summarize Cortés’ description of the physical, economic and cultural facets of this ancient civilization. Cortés’ letter may be found at the following web site:  
[www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1520cortes.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1520cortes.html)

### Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at [www.LibraryVideo.com](http://www.LibraryVideo.com)

- [www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/alban/hd\\_alban.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/alban/hd_alban.htm)  
The Metropolitan Museum offers detailed information and a photo gallery related to Monte Albán, the ancient capital of the Zapotecs.
- [www.acs.ucalgary.ca/applied\\_history/tutor/eurvoya/inca.html](http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/eurvoya/inca.html)  
The University of Calgary provides a historical overview of Francisco Pizarro’s conquest of the Inca Empire in its “The European Voyages of Exploration.”
- [www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1984/3/84.03.03.x.html](http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1984/3/84.03.03.x.html)  
The Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute offers teachers extensive background information and lessons related to pre-Columbian mythology.

### Suggested Print Resources

- Ackroyd, Peter. *Cities of Blood*. DK Publishing, New York, NY; 2004.
- Calvert, Patricia. *The Ancient Inca*. Franklin Watts, New York, NY; 2004.
- Coe, Michael. *Mexico: From the Olmecs to the Aztecs*. Thames & Hudson, New York, NY; 2002.
- Young-Sanchez, Margaret. *Tiwanaku: Ancestors of the Inca*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NE; 2004.

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

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# Wonders of the ANCIENT WORLD™

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### Grades 7 & up

**W**onders of the Ancient World transports viewers to ancient civilizations of the Americas, Asia, Africa and Europe and provides a firsthand look at the magnificent achievements and contributions of a wide range of cultures. Through the study of ancient peoples, students will understand the diversity of the human experience—the contrasts between settled and nomadic lifestyles, the characteristics of different religions and belief systems and the development of large cities and powerful empires—which provides a solid basis for the understanding of civilization today.



## Program Overview

Ancient Mexico and Central and South America were home to some of the earliest and most advanced civilizations in the Western Hemisphere, which emerged around 2500 BCE. After the Olmec, some of the “first” people of Mexico were the Aztec and Zapotec, who developed large city-states that flourished as centers of Mesoamerican culture. The Inca Empire, founded in 1438 CE, stretched over 2,000 miles along the length of the Andes Mountains and at the height of its power it rivaled that of the Roman Empire. After centuries of developing advanced agricultural techniques as well as architecture, mathematics and astronomy, these pre-Columbian civilizations fell to Spanish conquerors.

### Episode 1: Cuzco

Cuzco, a Peruvian city and former capital of the Inca Empire in South America, dates from the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century and is one of the oldest continuously-inhabited cities in the Western Hemisphere. The city is situated high in the Andes Mountains and contains many ruins associated with early Inca architecture, featuring skillfully engineered stonewalls. At its peak, approximately twelve million people lived within the vast Inca Empire, with as many as 200,000 living in Cuzco. After the arrival of Spanish conquistadors, the city declined. The capital was moved to Lima, Inca art treasures were shipped to Spain and Inca temples were converted to Christian churches by Spanish forces. Today, the mainly Indian and Mestizo population of Cuzco annually celebrates Inti Raymi in commemoration of ancient Inca religious beliefs.

#### Vocabulary

**Andes** — An extensive mountain range in South America running over 4,500 miles along the entire length of the continent’s Pacific coast.

**Inca Empire** — A vast empire developed by Native American people in South America in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, centered in Peru.

**conquistadors** — Spanish for “conqueror.” These Spanish explorers were responsible for the European conquest of the New World, especially Mexico and Peru in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

**Pachamama** — Means “Mother Earth” in the Quechua language of Native Americans in the Peruvian Andes.

**Quechua** — A member of a culture of Native Americans in Peru who were part of the Inca ruling class. Also, a language spoken by the Inca.

**Atahualpa** — The last independent Inca emperor who was executed by the Spanish in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

**Francisco Pizarro** — The Spanish *conquistador* who defeated the Inca Empire in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

**Tupac Amaru** — The last Inca emperor, who organized a rebellion and was executed by the Spanish at Cuzco in 1572.

### Episode 2: Machu Picchu

Machu Picchu (“manly peak”) is the legendary site of ancient Inca ruins, discovered high in the Andes Mountains in 1911 near the ancient city of Cuzco. Spanish *conquistadors* never found the Machu Picchu settlement, and it is one of the few remarkably intact major pre-Columbian stone ruins. Archaeologists speculate that Machu Picchu was either a palace complex, religious retreat or a fortress built in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries and had a population of about 1,200 people. The site was abandoned for unknown reasons, but scientists believe that disease, lack of potable water and political instability played major roles. Machu Picchu is the most important tourist attraction in Peru, and attracts visitors from all over the world.

#### Vocabulary

**Hiram Bingham** — An American archaeologist who discovered Machu Picchu in the Andes in 1911.

**Intihuatana** — A Quechua term meaning “hitching post of the sun.” A stone altar important to Inca sun worship that enabled Inca astronomers to predict seasonal changes.

### Episode 3: Mexico City

Mexico City is the capital of Mexico and is the country’s economic, cultural and educational center. Previously known as the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán, and later Mexitli in honor of the Aztec god of war, it is the oldest city in North America and is now one of the largest cities in the world. Originally built on a series of islands in an enormous shallow lake, Tenochtitlán grew in stature as its military became more powerful. As its culture evolved, elaborate stone structures along with dozens of temples and palaces replaced crude 15<sup>th</sup>-century dwellings. In 1521, Tenochtitlán was attacked and destroyed at the height of its power by Spanish *conquistadors*. Spanish technical superiority along with disease devastated the Aztec population. Over the centuries the Spanish destroyed and built on top of Tenochtitlán and today the ruins of the ancient city are located under the present-day capital.

#### Vocabulary

**Popocatepetl** — A large, active volcano located southeast of Mexico City.

**Aztec** — The last great ancient civilization of Mexico. This advanced society was conquered by Spain in 1519.

**mariachi** — A style of Mexican traditional music involving traveling bands.

**Montezuma** — The ruler of the great Aztec Empire and city of Tenochtitlán until Spanish *conquistadors* defeated him in 1519.

**Hernando Cortés** — Famous *conquistador* best known for conquering and ending the Aztec Empire in 1519.

**Quetzalcóatl** — The Aztec god of wind, life and the morning, as well as the creator of mankind.

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**Nahua** — Native American peoples such as the Aztec and the language spoken in central Mexico.

**Emiliano Zapata** — Renowned revolutionary leader during the Mexican Revolution of 1910 and foremost champion of peasant land reform.

**Huitzilopochtli** — The Aztec god of the sun and war.

**Cauhtemoc** — The last emperor of the Aztecs.

**Tenochtitlán** — The capital city of the Aztec civilization that flourished in what is now Mexico until the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.

### Episode 4: Oaxaca

Oaxaca is a city in southern Mexico that was founded in 1486 as an Aztec fortress and is noted for its 16<sup>th</sup>-century art and architecture, especially the Zapotec ruins of Monte Albán and the Mixtec ruins of Mitla. Before Spain conquered Mexico in 1521, large populations of Native Americans developed societies based on agriculture, including the Zapotecs and Mixtecs, who also built elaborate urban centers which functioned as economic, religious and political centers. By 1100 CE, the Zapotecs controlled the Oaxaca Valley and parts of the Southern Highlands. The cities they built were taken over by the Mixtecs prior to the arrival of the *conquistadors*. The Zapotec never exerted much cultural or other pressure on peoples beyond their lands, but did control an area from the Tehuacán Valley in Puebla as far south as the Pacific coast of Oaxaca. Modern Oaxaca has played an important role in Mexican history, as it is the home of Benito Juárez and Porfirio Díaz, two of Mexico’s most famous presidents.

#### Vocabulary

**shaman** — A person who acts as a medium between the visible world and the spirit world in certain tribal societies and is thought to have magical healing and prophetic powers.

**Zapotec** — A member of a Native American group centered at Monte Albán in southern Mexico that thrived from 300-900 CE.

**Toltec** — A member of a Native American people of central and southern Mexico whose ancient empire was destroyed by the Chitimecs and other groups in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

**Copan** — An important city located in modern Honduras that was a thriving center of Maya civilization.

**Tikal** — An important city-state and center for trade in the Maya world, located in the jungles of what is today Guatemala.

**Palenque** — An ancient Maya city located in what is today southeastern Mexico.