

Important Concepts . . .

Preview Review



Social Studies Grade 8

W2 - Lesson 1: The People of the Sun

Important Concepts of Grade 8 Social Studies

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Materials Required

Textbook Required
*Worldviews: Contact
and Change*

Social Studies Grade 8
Version 5
Preview/Review W2 - Lesson 1

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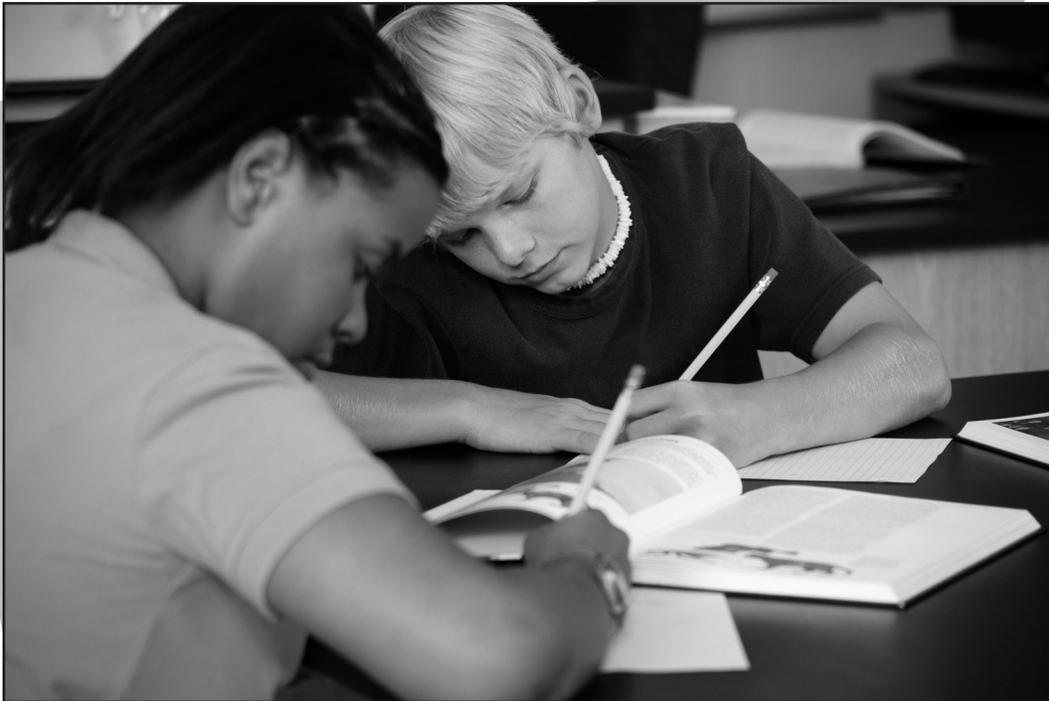
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Preview/Review Concepts for Grade Eight Social Studies



W2 - Lesson 1:

The People of the Sun

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, you should

- know the key elements of the worldview of the Aztec civilization prior to the contact with the Spanish
- understand how the Aztec civilization's worldview influenced its choices, decisions, and customs

GLOSSARY

aqueduct – a man-made channel constructed to convey water from one location to another

Aztecs – Native Americans who occupied the territory in central Mexico at the time of arrival of the Spanish

calmecac – a school for the children of Aztec nobility focused on leadership roles in religion, education, law, and the military

calpolli – a subdivision of an Aztec city-state composed mostly of extended kinship groups

chinampa – floating islands used by the Aztecs for agriculture

codices – a code or a body of laws

compulsory – when something is not optional

glyphs – an element of writing in which graphic symbols convey information

Huitzilopochtli – the most important god of the Aztecs

Lake Texcoco – a swampy lake once located on the present site of Mexico City

ocelot – a nocturnal wildcat found in Central America

omens – signs that something is about to happen to change the future

quetzal – a brightly coloured bird with a long feathered tail; found in Central America

sacrifice – the act of killing to honour a deity

telpochcalli – a school for commoners focused on military and the trades

Tenochtitlan – the capital city of the Aztecs

tribute – a payment for protection by one nation or society to another

GLOSSARY continued...

warrior society – a society centred on warfare that insists each male receive basic military training from an early age

W2 - Lesson 1: The People of the Sun

Reading 1: The Physical Landscape

At the time of the European Crusades, the Aztecs of North America faced droughts and wars with their neighbours. One day, an Aztec priest reported having a vision from **Huitzilopochtli**, one of the Aztec gods. In the vision, Huitzilopochtli told the priest that the Aztecs had to go south until they saw an eagle sitting on a cactus with a snake held in its talons. For many years, the Aztecs wandered south looking for the image from the vision.

During the time the Black Death was raging throughout Europe, the Aztecs had wandered into central Mexico. There they met new enemies and were driven into the surrounding swamps. On an island in the middle of the largest swamp, they saw an eagle perched on a cactus. As the eagle opened its wings, the Aztecs saw a snake grasped in its talons. The Aztecs immediately knew that this was the place of their new home. Within a few years, the Aztecs had built a city they called **Tenochtitlan**.

By the time Christopher Columbus landed on the islands of the Caribbean, the Aztecs had become the most powerful civilization in Central America.

To learn more about how geography and the Aztec religion helped shape the development of Tenochtitlan, read pages 152 to 155 in your textbook, ***Worldviews: Contact and Change***. Then complete Activity 1.



Activity 1: The Physical Landscape

To complete Activity 1, use the provided list of words. Choose the best word(s) to complete each statement. Write the correct word(s) on the lines provided. The words will only be used once, and not all the words will be used. If you are working in a classroom, you may discuss this activity. If you are working individually, complete the activity and check your work with your learning facilitator or teacher.

Aztecs	chinampa	Lake Chalco	physical	sacred
aqueduct	determination	Lake Texcoco	productive	temples
causeways	flood	mountains	religions	food

1. For the Aztecs, the world consisted of two landscapes, the _____ and the _____.
2. The _____ the Aztecs built to worship their gods were pyramids in the shape of _____.
3. The _____ believed that their god, Huitzilopochtli, led them to the place they lived.
4. To ensure that the Aztecs had plenty of clean drinking water, they built an _____ for times of drought.
5. The Aztecs built three _____ to link the city to the mainland.
6. The Aztecs produced more than enough _____ to support their population and army.
7. The Aztecs made many changes to their physical geography because of their _____ to live in Tenochtitlan.
8. They were able to enlarge the original island by building the _____.
9. Tenochtitlan was built on _____, which was part of a series of five lakes.

Reading 2: The Sacred Landscape

To understand the Aztec culture, you need to know the important role that religion played in their lives. Aztec religion taught that everything had a spirit or a god. Some gods were more powerful than others.

The Aztecs developed two calendars. One was a solar calendar and the other was a sacred calendar. For many people, one of the more disturbing aspects of Aztec religion was the belief in human **sacrifice**.

To learn more about the role religion played in Aztec society and how the city of Tenochtitlan became the centre of the universe, read pages 158 to 161 and page 163 in your textbook, *Worldviews: Contact and Change*. Then complete Activity 2.



Activity 2: The Sacred Landscape

This activity is in two parts. The first part requires you to complete a chart on the Aztec gods. The second part is a set of true and false statements. If you are working in a classroom, you may discuss this activity. If you are working individually, complete the activity and check your work with your learning facilitator or teacher.

Part A: Complete the chart below by either identifying the god or the role the god played in the Aztec religion. Use the information on page 159 in your textbook, *Worldviews: Contact and Change*, to help you with this chart.

Aztec God's Name	Role of the God
Huitzilopochtli	
	As the god of rain, he could unleash floods or withhold rains for years. He was feared because he could control their survival.
Tezcatlipoca	
	He was the god of wind whose name means "feathered serpent". He left Mexico after a fight with Tezcatlipoca and sailed east. It was said he would return from the east and bring destruction to the Aztec empire.

Part B: Read each of the following statements carefully. If the statement is true, write **T** on the line provided. However, if the statement is false, write **F** on the line provided. **Then correctly rewrite the statement to make the statement true.**

_____ 1. The Aztecs believed that the gods controlled every aspect of their world, and they looked to the gods for signs about how to live.

_____ 2. The Aztecs believed that all the gods were equal in importance.

_____ 3. The Aztecs developed two calendars: one was a solar calendar and the other was used for agriculture.

_____ 4. The Aztec calendars took 75 years to catch up with each other.

_____ 5. The Aztecs considered human sacrifice as the strongest expression of their devotion to their gods.

_____ 6. The Aztecs built the Great Temple on the west side of the Tenochtitlan to honour the gods.

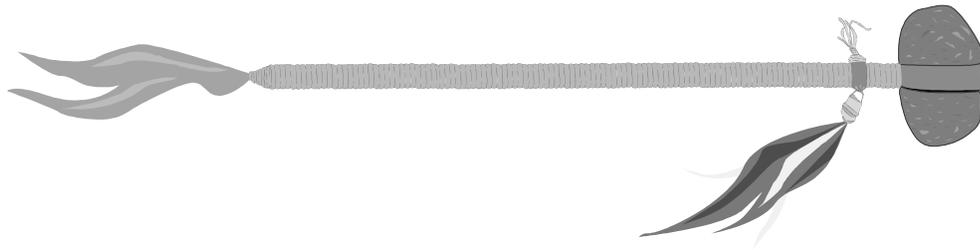
Reading 3: Expanding the Empire

As the Aztecs searched for their new home, they became a very disciplined, resourceful, and independent people. As the Aztec society grew and prospered, they began to look beyond their borders.

The Aztec society made military service **compulsory**. The need for human sacrifices for their gods resulted first in raids and then in wars with the surrounding societies. As the Aztecs became more powerful, they began to collect **tribute** from the conquered neighbouring peoples.

The Aztecs used their surplus farm goods to establish trading relations with societies that were considered, at first, too far away to conquer. By the time the Spanish had landed on the east coast of Mexico, the Aztec Empire had grown to become the largest empire in North America.

To understand how the Aztecs established and expanded their empire, read pages 165 to 168 in your textbook, *Worldviews: Contact and Change*. Then complete Activity 3.



Activity 3: Expanding the Empire

To finish Activity 3, you must complete each statement by writing the correct word(s) on the line provided. If you are working in a classroom, you may discuss this activity. If you are working individually, complete the activity and check your work with your learning facilitator or teacher.

1. The Aztecs traded for _____ and brightly _____
_____.
2. Aztec trade merchants often acted as _____ for the army.
3. The Aztecs were motivated to create a great empire by an ancient _____
from _____.
4. To the Aztecs, the _____ was more important than any _____ who
lived within it.
5. It was _____ for an Aztec boy to serve in the military.
6. As the Aztecs conquered their neighbours, they would then collect _____
from their conquered foes.
7. The Aztecs used _____ as a form of currency.

Reading 4: The Aztec Social Hierarchy

The Aztec emperor was at the top of the social hierarchy, but unlike most of the European societies, a council of noblemen elected the Aztec emperor. Once elected, the emperor was treated as if he were a god. He was provided with a great palace, carried through the streets by servants, dressed in **ocelot** skins, and obeyed by all members of the society. However, with great privileges came great responsibilities.

Within the Aztec society, there were units called **calpolli**. These units divided Aztec society into a number of neighbourhoods based on a combination of family members and the work people did.

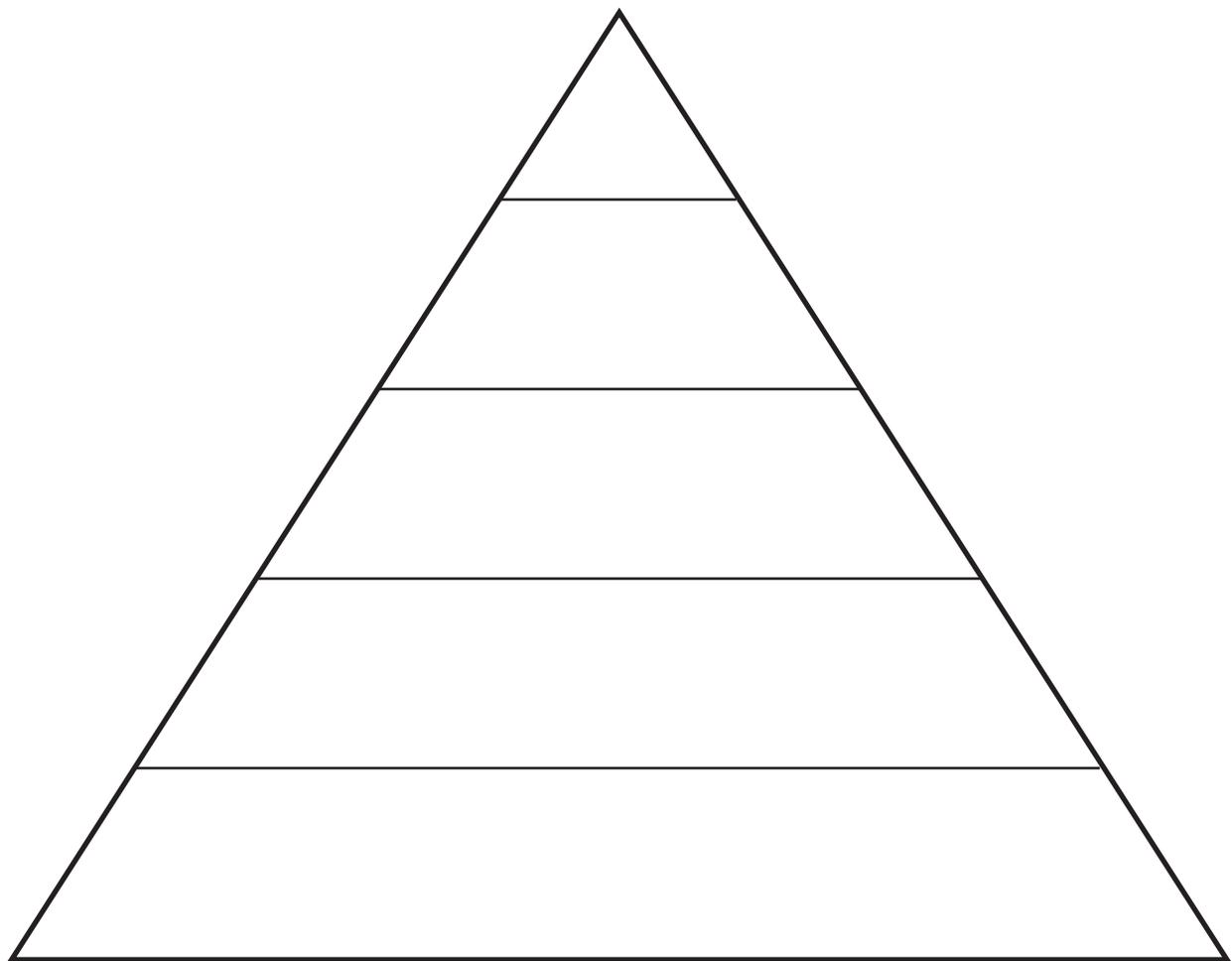
To learn the responsibilities of the emperor and the role family clans played in Aztec society, read pages 171 to 175 and pages 178 and 179 in your textbook, **Worldviews: Contact and Change**. Then complete Activity 4.



Activity 4: The Aztec Social Hierarchy

This activity is in two parts. The first part requires you to complete a chart of the Aztec hierarchy. The second part is a set of multiple-choice questions. If you are working in a classroom, you may discuss this activity. If you are working individually, complete the activity and check your work with your learning facilitator or teacher.

Part A: Use Figure 8-2 on page 172 of your textbook, *Worldviews: Contact and Change*, to complete the following chart.



Aztec Social Hierarchy

Part B: Be sure to read each question carefully. Write the letter of the **best** answer on the line in front of each question.

- _____ 1. The Aztec emperor, as commander-in-chief, needs to be
- A. a wealthy nobleman
 - B. an influential priest
 - C. a skilled warrior
 - D. a successful merchant
- _____ 2. Merchants were the richest _____ in Tenochtitlan.
- A. calpolli
 - B. individuals
 - C. class
 - D. rulers
- _____ 3. One of the most important responsibilities of being an Aztec citizen was the ability to
- A. donate a certain number of hours to work on projects for the state
 - B. serve in the military
 - C. pay taxes
 - D. sell the products they produced
- _____ 4. What bird's feathers were the most valued by Aztec artisans?
- A. Feathers from parrots
 - B. Feathers from quetzal birds
 - C. Feathers from parakeets
 - D. Feathers from minor birds
- _____ 5. Which of the following is **not** one of the ways the Aztecs indicated their position in society?
- A. By their clothing
 - B. By their amount of land
 - C. By their jewellery
 - D. By the size and location of their houses

- _____ 6. The main way an individual moved up in Aztec society was by
- A. wearing fancy clothes
 - B. making money from trading
 - C. marrying into a wealthy family
 - D. achieving success on the battlefield
- _____ 7. For the Aztecs, killing an enemy was not as important as
- A. expanding their empire
 - B. capturing prisoners for human sacrifice
 - C. getting tribute from their neighbours
 - D. establishing new trade agreements

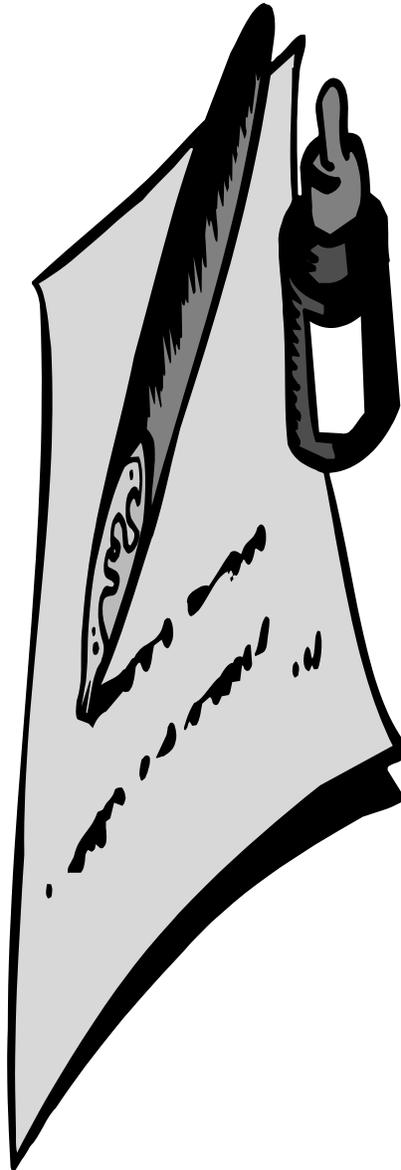


Reading 5: Aztec Education

Education was very important to the Aztecs. Until the age of 3, Aztec children were pampered. From the age of 3 to their early teens, children were required to work hard and to be obedient to their parents.

Then the children were sent to school. All schooling was free and every child was expected to attend. If your family was wealthy, you went to the **calmecac** schools. If your family was from a lower class, you went to the **telpochcalli** schools.

Each school was designed to maintain the Aztec social order. To discover the roles each school played in educating Aztec children, read pages 180 and 182 to 183 in your textbook, *Worldviews: Contact and Change*. Then complete Activity 5.



Activity 5: Aztec Education

To finish Activity 5, you must match each item on the left with its description on the right. Write the letter on the appropriate line to indicate your choice. If you are working in a classroom, you may discuss this activity. If you are working individually, complete the activity and check your work with your learning facilitator or teacher.

- | | | | |
|-------|--------------|----|------------------------------|
| _____ | telpochcalli | A. | had little political power |
| _____ | glyphs | B. | a school for noble children |
| _____ | eagle | C. | based on fingers and toes |
| _____ | calmecac | D. | a prestigious military order |
| _____ | women | E. | a school for commoners |
| _____ | Aztec math | F. | a writing system of pictures |

Reading 6: Aztec Citizenship

The Aztecs believed that the society was more important than the individual. For the Aztecs, the ideal good citizen was an individual who was honest and obedient. The Aztec society focused on producing citizens who would contribute to the community.

The **codices** of Aztec law protected Aztec people's rights and provided them with a system of justice.

Read pages 185 and 187 to 190 in your textbook, *Worldviews: Contact and Change*, to discover how the Aztecs valued citizenship and to learn about the system of law they developed for all members of the Aztec society. Then complete Activity 6.



Activity 6: Aztec Citizenship

Answer the following questions in complete sentences. If you are working in a classroom, you may discuss the questions as a group. If you are working individually, write your answers on the lines provided and check your work with your learning facilitator or teacher.

1. Identify and explain **three** of the virtues the Aztecs believed were part of the makeup of an ideal citizen.

2. What is the role of the legal system in Aztec society? How were nobles treated if they broke the law?

3. How were decisions made in the Aztec court system? What course of action could people take if they were not satisfied with a verdict in court?

- 4. Why did slaves in Aztec society have rights? Identify **one** example of a slave's rights.

- 5. What are the **two** things people should remember about how the Aztec viewed slaves?

W2 - Lesson 1: People of the Sun Review Assignment

Complete pages 17 to 19 as your review assignment for this lesson. If you are working in a classroom, you may be reviewing this together. If you are working individually, complete the assignment and check your work with your learning facilitator or teacher. Use your notes and work from this lesson to help you. This assignment is worth 25 marks.

Section A: Fill-in-the-Blank

Complete each of the following sentences by writing the correct word(s) on the lines provided. This section is worth 15 marks.

1. The mountains around Tenochtitlan gave the Aztecs a sense of _____.
2. The Aztecs did not have _____, so punishment for serious crimes was often death.
3. Aztec society was organized into units called _____.
4. The quality of one's _____ determined his or her position in Aztec society.
5. The Aztec _____ calendar consisted of 260 days.
6. The Aztecs math system was based on the number _____.
7. Instead of letters, the Aztec used a system of pictures called _____.
8. All Aztec schools provided _____ training to assist in the defense of the Aztec state.
9. If slaves escaped and ran to the emperor's palace, they would immediately win their _____.
10. Nobles who beat a slave to death could be _____.
11. Military service was _____ among the male Aztecs.
12. Cocoa beans, the basis of _____, were important to the Aztecs.
13. Most Aztec temples were built in a _____ shape to resemble _____ mountains.
14. The main objective of the Aztec warriors was to take prisoners who could be _____ to honour the gods.

Section B: True or False

Read each of the following statements carefully. If the statement is true, write **T** on the line provided. However, if the statement is false, write **F** on the line provided. **Then correctly rewrite the statement to make the statement true.** (5 marks)

_____ 1. The Aztec emperor’s title, Huey Tlatoani, meant “Great Warrior”.

_____ 2. Tenochtitlan was divided into four sections. Each section symbolized a direction.

_____ 3. By the time the French arrived in 1519, the Aztec empire was at its height and was the largest in North America.

_____ 4. An Aztec warrior could immediately advance his social status by killing four enemy warriors.

_____ 5. Aztec women had little political power.

Section C: Short Answer

Answer the following questions in complete sentences. The value of each question is indicated at the end of the question. This section is worth 5 marks.

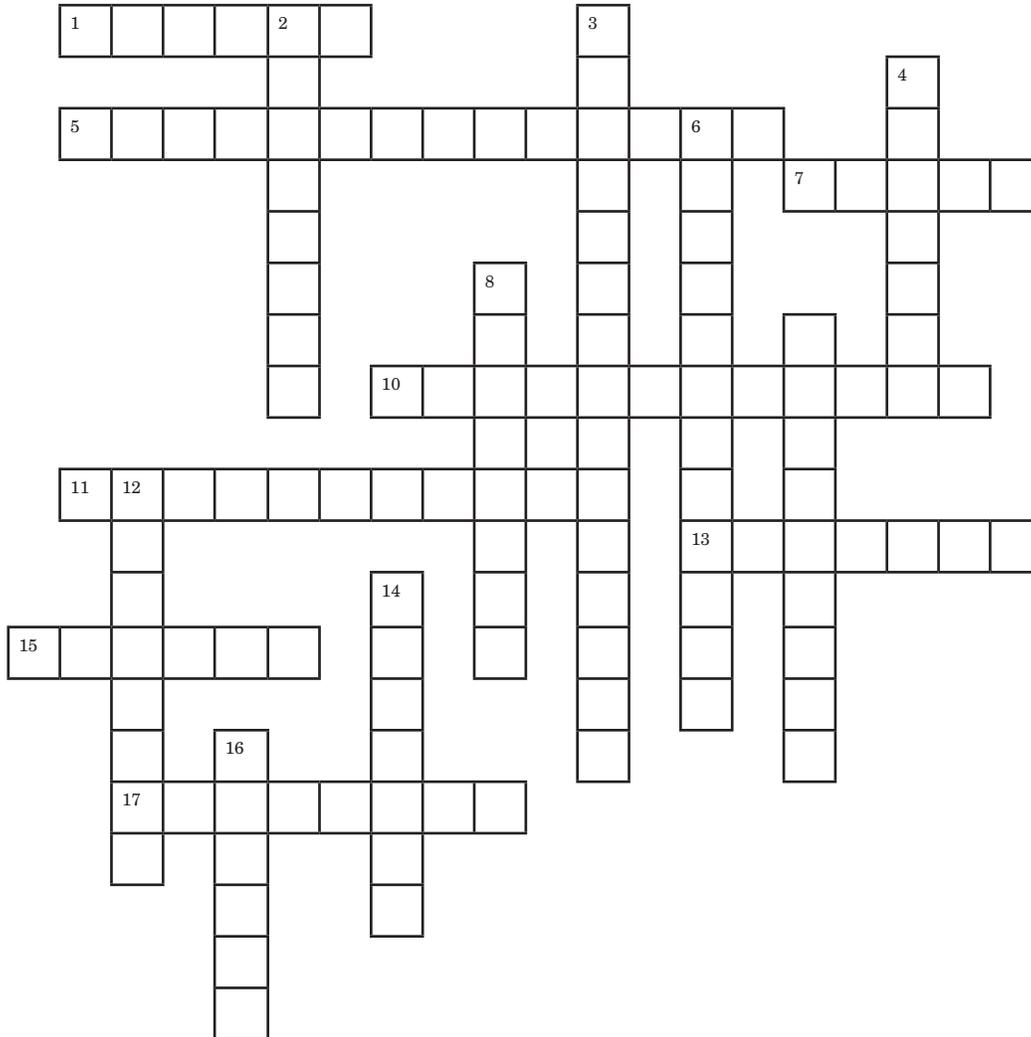
1. The Aztecs realized that slaves were important to perform necessary work. For these reasons, the Aztecs had laws to protect a slave's rights. Identify **two** rights that slaves had. (2 marks)

2. The Aztec society was organized around units. What was the name of these units? How did the units affect the members living within the unit? (3 marks)

Total: _____
25 marks

The People of the Sun Bonus Crossword Puzzle

Use the clues below to identify the word(s) or phrases in the crossword puzzle.



Across

- 1. occupied the territory in central Mexico
- 5. a society in which young boys receive basic military training
- 7. signs that show a change is about to happen
- 10. a school for commoners
- 11. a swampy lake
- 13. payment for protection by one nation to another
- 15. a nocturnal wildcat
- 17. a school for the children of Aztec nobility

Down

- 2. floating islands used for agriculture
- 3. the most important god of the Aztecs
- 4. a brightly-coloured bird
- 6. the capital city of the Aztecs
- 8. a subdivision of an Aztec city-state
- 9. killing to honour a god
- 12. a channel constructed to convey water
- 14. a body of laws
- 16. graphic symbols



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