

Chapter 19 study guide

1. Many Maya pyramids were topped by temples.
2. The Aztecs built aqueducts to carry fresh water across Lake Texcoco.
3. Maya astronomers built observatories to follow the paths of objects in the sky.
4. The first Mesoamerica civilizations began right after people crossed the Bering Land Bridge.
5. At its peak, the Aztec empire extended from Central Mexico to Guatemala.
6. The Council of Four, Chief Minister ran the everyday operations of the Aztec government.
7. The Olmec civilization of Mesoamerica developed where? lowlands of the rainforest.
8. How did Aztecs increase land available for farming? they built artificial islands called chinampas
9. Many feats of Aztec engineering were made necessary by Tenochtitlan's location which was where? on an island in the middle of Lake Texcoco
10. How did the Aztecs take control of the basin known as the Valley of Mexico?
by conquering their neighbors
11. A major breakthrough (discovery) of the Maya was the concept of zero.
12. According to their religion, the Maya believed that kings and priests could communicate with the gods
13. Aztec kings ruled as a(n) absolute monarchy with total power over their people.
14. The Olmecs used slash and burn agriculture to farm the rain forest.
15. The Maya developed an advanced writing system based on symbols called glyphs.
16. How were the religion and the government of the Maya connected?
The majority of kings served as priests before taking office. Common people believed that priests and kings could communicate with the gods; this gave the king and nobility power.
17. Why have Maya ruins been so important in learning about their culture?
Maya cities reveal that the Maya had a well-organized society. The temples provide information about Maya religion, their observatories help us understand their science and astronomy.
18. What role did warfare play in Aztec society and history?
The Aztecs used military conquest to build their empire. Following their conquest, they used their frequent small wars to intimidate rivals into offering tribute and to collect prisoners for the human sacrifices that were part of the Aztec religion.
19. How did the first civilizations of Mesoamerica influence the Maya?
The Olmecs developed slash and burn agriculture and built cities out of stone, a method the Maya adopted. The Zapotecs developed what may have been the first writing system in the Americas which might have inspired the Maya hieroglyphics.

20. How did the Aztecs apply their engineering skills to the challenges of living on an island?

The Aztecs used their engineering talents to control the flow of water, first by building a dike to hold back Lake Texcoco and then by creating an aqueduct to bring fresh water to the city of Tenochtitlan. They also built the artificial islands known as chinampas to create more farmland to help feed the huge city. And, they built causeways to connect the city to the mainland.

How did the Aztecs build the great wealth of their empire?

The Aztecs used a combination of tribute and trade to collect wealth. All the city-states ruled by the Triple Alliance had to send regular payments to the Aztec king. In addition, Aztec traders traveled through the empire, exchanging goods made in Aztec towns for precious items.

5-7 Sentence answer – full complete sentences; topic sentence, supporting (evidence, details, examples) sentences and concluding sentence.

21. How were the Aztec and Maya civilizations shaped by their geography?

The Aztecs lived on limited land area surrounded by brackish water. They had to build chinampas to overcome the lack of soil and use dikes and aqueducts to get fresh water. The Maya lived in a hot region with poor soils and few rivers. They had to practice slash-and-burn agriculture to nourish the soil and use sinkholes or cisterns to get water. They believed their gods controlled the weather that they relied upon for rain. Once each civilization solved its agricultural problems, they had enough food and water to build large cities of stone, surrounded by many smaller farms. Both civilizations were made up of such city-states and both fought often to secure new land that they could expand into.

22. How were the Aztec and Maya religions more similar to each other or more different? Explain.

Religion played a key role in each society. Each civilization built massive stone temples in its cities. In addition, each religion had many gods and sometimes required human sacrifices to appease these gods. In each religion, such sacrifices were needed to ensure that the world remained as it was. Differences were that the two civilizations worshipped different gods. Based on the information in the chapter, the Maya nobles had stronger ties to the priesthood than did Aztec nobles, and that the Aztecs practiced human sacrifice on a larger scale than the Maya