

What started as a simple lesson on perspectives of the Aztec and Spanish in regard to each other's culture and their encounter quickly took off and morphed into what could easily become a multiday mini-unit. Due to my 30 min. time frame I will be taking a small sample of documents to work with a smaller aspect of this lesson- How did the Aztec and Spanish see each other? This is in the second packet I gave you.

I left more of the details in this plan so you could see how this could be expanded and left a sample of learning activities that would utilize the documents. I completed the first couple of documents as if we had done them in class. This topic falls towards the end of the school year, in a typical setting my students would already be familiar with my lesson styles and have already completed similar work. This fact would allow us to move much faster through the given documents as less time would be needed to explain how to complete the tasks.

Adapted From — Wiggins & McTighe, *Understanding by Design*

Stage 1: Identify Desired Results	
Established Goals Perspectives and The Encounter” The Aztecs and Spanish	
Objective: to explore viewpoints of the conquered and the conquerors.	
Enduring Understandings (Key Understandings) <i>Students will understand that...</i> The Columbian Exchange had various impacts on the Old and New Worlds. Perspective of the Aztec and Spanish shifted over time in regards to each other. Contact between cultures can have various outcomes.	Essential Questions (Focus on Higher levels of Webb's DOK) How did the Aztec and Spanish see each other? What happens when cultures collide? How did the respective cultures of the Aztec and Spanish influence the decisions of Montezuma and Cortés?
Students will be able to... (SE's In your own words) Explain how the Aztec and Spanish saw each other and how these views shifted over time. Read a series of text and identify key people, events, and outcomes. Define key terms within context (accommodations given to students who require it). Compare and evaluate various perspectives within the historical context.	
Stage 2: Determine Evidence for Assessing Learning	
Performance Tasks: Performance Indicators: Projects, Unit Tests, Academic Prompts etc.. Guided readings Writing tasks Discussions	Other Evidence: Formative Assessment Exit Ticket Final summary assignments Final writing assignment
Stage 3: Build Learning Plan	
Learning Activities: 1. What do we know? Aztecs, Conquistadors, “The Encounter”, Motives behind Exploration. (4 mins- Students will be given a post it and asked to write about one of the topics) 2. Introduction to our topic (2 min-direct instruction) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNzERlekfPE&index=2&list=PLvJXnmv6bdOWBlo0KgLnWPrLqYtGtfqm1 3. Whole group reading of a lesson document (10 min.- guided practice) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> students will review highlighted key people, events, and major details. students will review highlight key words. Class will share and discuss responses. 4. Small group reading of lesson documents. (10 min.- independent practice) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> students will highlight key people, events, and major details. students will highlight unknown words. Class will share and discuss responses. 5. Closing: Exit ticket: using evidence from today's documents explain how the Aztec and Inca saw each other. (4 mins.- assessment)	

Some of the documents and activities were modified from <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/etext/llilas/outreach/mexico11/curry/curry.pdf>
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Common Core: History/Social Studies » Grade 9-10 Key Ideas and Detail

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

Craft and Structure

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.8 Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.10 By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

The Encounter: Perspectives of the Aztec and Spanish

Below are a series of documents aimed at helping you better understand the various perspectives of the encounter between the Aztec and Spanish. We will work together and in small groups to read selected documents to help us better understand how the Aztec and Spanish saw each other. In a typical class setting these activities would not be new to us and we would address all of the documents through class and home work.

Aztecs

Where: Mexico, 1325- 1520

Government: monarchy

Accomplishment

Tenochtitlan- advanced capital city of the Aztec Empire.

Pyramid- site of worship

Writing system- history, medical books, astronomy and math

Chinampas- floating gardens for agriculture

Advanced science and math

Conquerors- conquered neighbors and made them pay tribute

Hernan Cortez is one of the most well-known Spanish conquistadors, he and his men landed in Mexico in 1519 and by 1520 they had conquered the Aztec.

TASK: As we read **highlight** any important events, people, and/or details. Highlight any unknown terms or **key words**. Pay special attention to defined vocabulary. Use this information to complete the questions/tasks that follow each document.

Document # 1: Omens of Doom

Beginning in about the year 1502, rumors were heard in the Aztec Empire about the appearance of bearded white men with strange behavior. Because Montezuma II was a very superstitious leader, he consulted his advisors, but then punished them for their lack of knowledge. For years before the arrival of the Spanish, he became more and more concerned about omens of doom concerning his reign and the continuation of the Aztec Empire. Since the omens were not reported until after the Conquest, there are questions about whether they were true events, or only justifications for the Aztec defeat.

OMEN 1: According to legend, the Aztecs believed that the god Quetzalcoatl ([ket-sahl-koh-aht-l) **had sailed east to join the sun god, warning that he would return** on Quetzalcoatl's name day to reclaim his kingdom. This would be the end of the Aztec Emperor. The Aztecs believed that this would occur **in the year One Reed (which happened to be 1519)** and that **the god could take many forms, including that of a pale-skinned, bearded man.**

Aztec god identified with the wind and air and represented by a feathered serpent

OMEN 2: A comet streaked unexpectedly across the night, "like a spear plunged into the very heart of the heavens." The next morning, the sun destroyed this fire, but it reoccurred again at night for the better part of a year. The people worried that maybe the sun would not be able to destroy this fire forever...and the source of all life would not rise in the morning.

OMEN 3: The lake surrounding Tenochtitlan swirled and suddenly boiled up on a calm day and flooded many houses built next to the water.

OMEN 6: The temple of the god of fire was destroyed by a noiseless thunderbolt.

OMEN 7: **Aztec fishermen brought an ashen bird like a crane with a crest on its head like a mirror to Montezuma. When the king looked in the mirror, he saw the heavens and stars and warriors riding on deer [horses]*.** When Montezuma asked his advisors to examine the bird, it disappeared.

capital city of the Aztec Empire from the middle of the 1300s to the early 1500s. Mexico City was built upon some of the ruins of Tenochtitlan.

of the pale gray color of ash

Source: PBS Conquistadors,
<http://www.pbs.org/opb/conquistadors/mexico/adventure1/pop-omens.htm>.

*Horses did not exist in the New World before the Spanish, deers refers to the horses the Spanish rode.

1. How might these omens, whether or not they were actual events or gossip, affect the Aztec view of the Spanish?

The omens could have led the Aztecs to believe that the Spanish leader (Cortez) was the god Quetzalcoatl in the form of a white skinned, bearded man; and the Spanish Army are those the kind saw in the mirror as they rode horses.

2. Since these omens did not come to light until after the conquest of the Aztecs, are these a valid source of information? Explain.

These omens could have been fabricated to help justify the fall of the Aztec at the hands of the Spanish. Since these omens were not heard of before the Spanish its more likely they created them to explain why they fell, rather than the omens actually predicted the arrival of the Spanish.

Document #2: Aztec Initial View of Conquistadors

Messengers sent to scout out the Spanish return with new for their king.

The messengers went to the House of the Serpent, and Motecuhzoma (Moctezuma) arrived. The two captives [ordered by Motecuhzoma to be brought from the prison] were then sacrificed before his eyes: their breasts were torn open, and the messengers were sprinkled with their blood. This was done because the messengers had completed a difficult mission: they had seen the gods (the Spanish), their eyes had looked on their faces. They had even conversed with the gods! When the sacrifice was finished, the messengers reported to the king. They told him how they had made the journey, and what they had seen, and what food the strangers ate. Motecuhzoma was astonished and terrified by their report, and the description of the strangers' food astonished him above all else. He was also terrified to learn how the cannon roared, how its noise **resounded** [echoed], how it caused one to faint and grow deaf. The messengers told him: "A thing like a ball of stone comes out of its entrails: it comes out shooting sparks and raining fire...If the cannon is aimed against a mountain, the mountain splits and cracks open. If it is aimed against a tree, it shatters the tree into splinters. This is a most unnatural sight, as if the tree had exploded from within."

The messengers also said: "Their **trappings** [decorations] and **arms** [weapons] are all made of iron. They dress in iron...Their swords are iron; their bows are iron; their shields are iron; their spears are iron. Their deer [*horses*] carry them on their backs wherever they wish to go. These deer, our lord, are as tall as the roof of a house. "The strangers' bodies are completely covered, so that only their faces can be seen. Their skin is white, as if it were made of lime..."

When Motecuhzoma heard this report, he was filled with terror. It was as if his heart had fainted, as if it had shriveled. It was as if he were conquered by despair....

—Account of Aztec view of Conquistadors

Adapted from the *Cronica Mexicana*, accounts compiled by Fernando Alvarado Tezozomoc, the grandson of

Motecuhzoma, ca. 1578. Source: National Humanities Center.

1. How does this document indicate (show) the Aztecs' lack of technology compared to the Spanish?

The Aztec were shocked and terrified by the noise of the canons and their ability to destroy mountains and trees. They also were shocked that all the Spanish weapons and armor were made of iron. These are items/technology the Aztecs had not possessed yet.

2. What is the tone (the general attitude) of the article? Explain.

Seems frightful- The description of the weapons creates a sense of free, "When Motecuhzoma heard this report, he was filled with terror. It was as if his heart had fainted, as if it had shriveled. It was as if he were conquered by despair"

3. Do you think the Aztecs would have viewed the Spanish in the same way if they had not heard the omens of doom? Explain.

If the Omens of doom came after than it has no impact. The Aztec do try to make sense of their world by what they know and understand-their religion and culture. So their belief that their god would return and could be a white bearded man would make sense that this would frighten them, especially with the advance weapons. Even if there isn't an omen about the god or a legend, the strangeness of their food, dress, weapons, and horses might have still created fear as it's was all new.

Document #3: MOCTEZUMA'S GREETING TO HERNAN CORTES

Close to the city there is a wooden bridge... After we had crossed this bridge, Moctezuma came to greet us and with him some two hundred lords, all barefoot and dressed in a different costume, but also very rich in their way and more so than the others...

Moctezuma came down the middle of this street with two chiefs, one on his right hand and the other on his left. When we met I dismounted and stepped forward to embrace him, but the two lords who were with him stopped me with their hands so that I should not touch him; and they likewise all performed the ceremony of kissing the earth. When at last I came to speak to Moctezuma himself I took off a necklace of pearls and cut glass that I was wearing and placed it round his neck;.. a servant of his came with two necklaces, wrapped in a cloth, made from red snails' shells, which they hold in great **esteem** [admire]; and from each necklace hung eight shrimps of refined gold almost a span in length. And after he had given me these things he sat on another throne which they placed there next to the one on which I was sitting, and **addressed** me in the following way:

"For a long time we have known from the writings of our ancestors that neither I [Moctezuma], nor any of those who dwell in this land, are natives of it, but foreigners who came from very distant parts; and likewise we know that a chieftain [ruler], of whom they were all **vassals** [subjects], brought our people to this region. And he returned to his native land...And we have always held that those who descended from him would come and conquer this land and take us as their vassals. So because of the place from which you claim to come, namely, from where the sun rises, and the things you tell us of the great lord or king who sent you here, we believe and are certain that he is our natural lord...So be assured that we shall obey you and hold you as our lord in place of that great sovereign of whom you speak; and in this there shall be no offense or **betrayal** whatsoever. "

Cortés replied in his strange and savage tongue... "Tell Moctezuma that we are his friends. There is nothing to fear. We have wanted to see him for a long time, and now we have seen his face and heard his words. Tell him that we love him well and that our hearts are contented."

Then he said to Moctezuma: "We have come to your house in Mexico as friends. There is nothing to fear."

Source: Hernan Cortes, *Letters from Mexico* , trans. Anthony Pagden (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

<http://web.archive.org/web/20000304002237/http://www.humanities.ccnycuny.edu/history/reader/cortez.htm>

to speak to

breaking
of trust

How does King Moctezuma react to the arrival of the Europeans? Does he show fear?

How does he seem to explain the appearance of these strangers?

Document #4: The Requisition [Requerimiento]: This is a letter written to the native peoples of America from the Spanish.

Written by Palacios Rubios of the Council of Castille. The Requisition [Requerimiento] was intended to be read to indigenous groups encountered in the ongoing conquest of the Americas.

On the part of the King, Don Fernando, and of Doña Juana, his daughter, Queen of Castille and León, subduers of the barbarous nations, we their servants make known to you, as best we can, that the Lord our God, created the Heaven and the Earth, and one man and one woman, of whom you and we, were and are descendants, and all those who came after us... we ask and require that you consider what we have said to you, and that you acknowledge the Church as the Ruler of the whole world, and the high priest called Pope, and in his name the King our lords, as superiors and lords and kings of these islands... and that you consent and give place that these religious fathers should preach to you...If you do so, you will do well,..and we in their name shall receive you in all love and charity, and shall leave you, your wives, and your children, and your lands, free without servitude, that you may do with them and with yourselves freely that which you like and think best, and they shall not compel you to turn Christians, unless you yourselves, when informed of the truth, should wish to be converted to our Holy Catholic Faith, as almost all the inhabitants of the rest of the islands have done.

But, if you do not do this, and maliciously make delay in it, I certify to you that, with the help of God, we... shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of their Highnesses; we shall take you and your wives and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their Highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods...and we protest that the deaths and losses which shall accrue from this are your fault, and not that of their Highnesses, or ours, nor of these cavaliers who come with us. And that we have said this to you and made this Requisition, we request the notary here present to give us his testimony in writing, and we ask the rest who are present that they should be witnesses of this Requisition. —Requerimiento (1510).

Source: Samuel M. Wilson, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Texas–Austin, National Humanities Center
<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/amerbegin/contact/text7/text7read.htm>.

1. What is the intent of the Spanish? Explain and give evidence from the text.

2. What assumptions are made by the Spanish in their views of the native peoples? In other words, do they view them as subordinate, wild, lacking good manners, etc.?

Document #5: Hernan Cortes: Letter from Mexico
Written to King Charles V from Cortes in regard to the Aztec.

Three halls are in this grand temple, which contain the principal **idols**; these are of wonderful extent and height, and admirable [praiseworthy] workmanship, adorned with figures sculptured in stone and wood; leading from the halls are chapels with very small doors, to which the light is not admitted, nor are any persons except the priests, and not all of them. In these chapels are the images of idols, the principal [main] ones, in which the people have greatest faith and confidence, I cast [threw] them down the steps of the temple, **purifying** the chapels in which they had stood, as they were all polluted with human blood.... In the place of these I put images of Our Lady and the Saints, which excited not a little feeling in Moctezuma and the inhabitants, who at first remonstrated [protested], declaring that if my proceedings [actions] were known throughout the country, the people would rise against me; for they believed that their idols bestowed [gave] on them all **temporal [mundane]** good, and if they permitted them to be ill-treated, they would be angry... and by this means the people would...perish with famine [food shortage]. I answered, through the interpreters, that they were deceived [misled] in expecting any favors from idols...and that they must learn there was but one God, the universal Lord of all, who had created the heavens and earth, and all things else... they were bound to adore and believe Him, and no other creature or thing.

—Hernan Cortés, excerpt from Second Letter to Charles V, 1520

Source: Internet Modern History Sourcebook, Paul Halsell, Fordham University,
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook.asp>

an image or representation of a god used as an object of worship.

make ceremonially clean

of this earthly world rather than a heavenly or spiritual one

1. What did Cortes do that angered the Aztec people in the temple?

2. How does The Requisition [Requerimiento] justify Cortes's actions? See document # 4

Document #6: Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico: Massacre in the Main Temple

The people asked Moctezuma how they should celebrate their god's fiesta. He said: "Dress him in all his finery, in all his sacred ornaments."...

When this had been done, the celebrants began to sing their songs. That is how they celebrated the first day of the fiesta. On the second day they began to sing again, but without warning they were all put to death. The dancers and singers were completely unarmed.

The Spaniards attacked the musicians first, slashing at their hands and faces until they had killed all of them. The singers-and even the spectators- were also killed. This slaughter in the Sacred Patio went on for three hours. Then the Spaniards burst into the rooms of the temple to kill the others: those who were carrying water, or bringing fodder for the horses, or grinding meal, or sweeping, or standing watch over this work.

The king Moctezuma, protested: "Our lords, that is enough! What are you doing? These people are not carrying shields or macanas. Our lords, they are completely unarmed!"

From Miguel Leon-Portilla, ed., *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962), pp. 64-66, 129-131.

Claim: Cortes was justified in his actions because the Aztecs went against The Requisition [Requerimiento]. (Document 4)

Prove or disprove this claim using evident from the document. One piece of evidence should be provided for each line.

Prove

Disprove
(circle one)

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Document #7: Bartolomé de las Casas, “A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies,” 1542

“God has made the Indians without **malice** or **duplicity**. They are humble, patient, peaceful, and calm, without hate and the desire for revenge.

They are likewise the most delicate people. Less than any other can they bear fatigue [exhaustion], and they very easily die of illness. Not even the sons of our princes and nobles, brought up in royal and gentle life, are more delicate than they.

Among these gentle sheep, the Spaniards entered like wolves, tigers and lions which had been starving for many days. And for forty years the Spaniards have done nothing else than destroy them with new and diverse kinds of cruelty. Whereas there were more than three million souls on the island of Hispaniola, there are today not two hundred of the native population left.

We give as a real reckoning [estimate], that in the said forty years, more than twelve million persons have perished [died] unjustly.

The reason why the Christians have killed and destroyed such infinite numbers of souls is solely because they have made gold their ultimate aim, seeking to load themselves with riches in the shortest time. They have treated the Indians much worse than animals.”

the intention or
desire to do evil

double-dealing

CLAIM: The Spanish decimated [killed] the native population of Hispaniola for their own gain.

Prove or disprove this claim using evidence from the document. One piece of evidence should be provided for each line.

Prove

Disprove
(circle one)

•

•

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Summarizing Activities:

Using your responses from the previous documents complete the following tasks.

Summarize how each side (Aztecs and Spanish) treated each other in their initial meetings.

Do they act superior to the other, or do they address them as equals, or do they subordinate [lower in rank] their selves to them.

Aztec treatment of the Spanish at first:**Spanish treatment of the Aztecs at first:****How each side viewed the other, such as descriptions of the civilization or military force.****Aztec view of the Spanish:****Spanish view of the Aztecs:****What was the motive for each side (what did each group want from the other)?****Aztec motives:****Spanish motives:**

