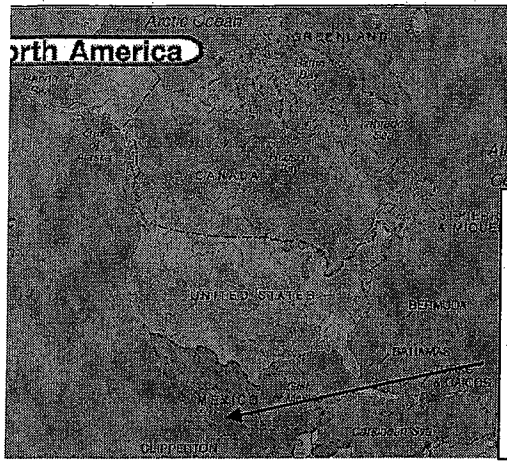


AZTECS & CONQUISTADORS ASSIGNMENT

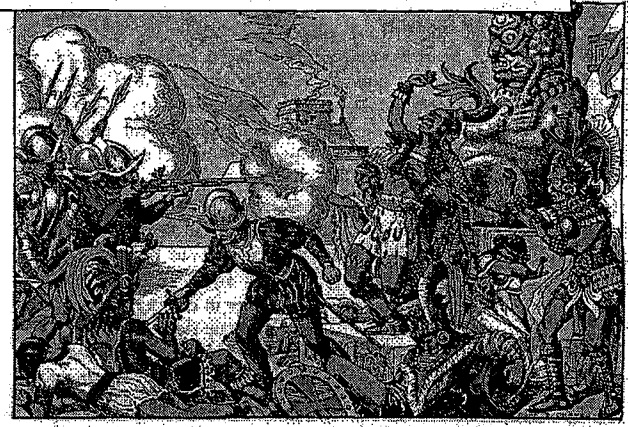
Part A: Directions: Use the Hernan Cortes and the Aztecs reading to answer the questions on the next page.

Hernan Cortes and the Aztecs



The Aztec capital Tenochtitlan is known as Mexico City.

This drawing shows the Spanish fighting with superior weapons over the Aztecs.



Christopher Columbus and others from Spain came to the Americas for different reasons. Some came for wealth, some to expand the Spanish Empire, and others to spread the Christian religion. They did not expect, however, to find great civilizations in central Mexico and South America.

By 1500, the Aztecs were an advanced civilization. With an estimated population of more than 1,000,000 people, the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlan, was larger than any European capital at that time. It was also a city of great wealth.

In 1519, a Spanish explorer named Hernan Cortes led a fleet of ships from Cuba to the east coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Rumors of gold had led him there. When the Aztec emperor Montezuma II learned of Cortes' arrival, he sent gifts to him and his men. Montezuma's lavish gifts aroused Cortes' interest, so he found a translator and led his men to Tenochtitlan. There, he was welcomed by Montezuma and provided with fine food and lodging. However, Cortes wished only to take the wealth of Tenochtitlan, so he took the emperor prisoner. Fierce fighting broke out between the Aztecs and the Spaniards.

The Aztecs drove the Spaniards from the city, but Montezuma was killed during the battle. Cortes attacked the capital for nearly three months. Although the Spaniards were few in number, they were too powerful for the Aztecs to resist.

The Spaniards had several advantages over the Aztecs. First, they had stronger weapons, such as cannons, guns, and swords. The Aztecs had only bows and arrows, spears, and horses. Fighters on horseback could easily overpower fighters on foot. Also they received help from local people who did not like living under the harsh Aztec rule. In addition, many Aztecs died of smallpox- a disease brought by the Spaniards.

By 1521, the Aztec Empire had fallen. An Aztec account from that year records this defeat: "Broken spears lie in the roads; We have torn our hair in grief. The houses are roofless now, and their walls are red with blood."

The Spaniards quickly began building a new city on the ruins of Tenochtitlan, which they called Mexico City. Mexico City would become the capital of the colony called New Spain. Soon after the conquest of the Aztecs, thousands of Spaniards arrived in New Spain, or what would later become known as Mexico.

Questions: Make sure to answer in complete sentences.

1. What are three reasons Spanish explorers came to North America?

2. What was the estimated population of the Aztec empire in 1500?

3. Which ocean did Cortes cross to get from Spain to Mexico?

4. What was the name of the ruler of the Aztecs?

5. Describe how Montezuma treated Cortes when he first came to Tenochtitlan.

6. Explain what Cortes wanted from the Aztecs.

7. What four advantages did the Spanish have over the Aztecs?

8. Tenochtitlan became what capital city?

9. What happened to the Aztec Empire after the Aztecs were beaten?

10. What is your opinion of the story? How do you feel about Cortes and the Spanish? Justify your opinion with evidence from the reading.

Part B: Directions: Use the map of the Aztec, Maya and Incas to answer the questions. Make sure to answer in complete sentences.



1. Where was the Aztec empire located?

2. Where was the Inca empire located?

3. Which empires are bordered by the Gulf of Mexico?

4. What cities are shown on the map?

Part C: Directions: Use the following chart to answer questions on the next page.
Some Early Portuguese and Spanish Explorations 1488-1522

Explorer	Country Represented	Year	Goal	Accomplishment
Bartolomeu Dias	Portugal	1487-1488	Find Southern tip of Africa	Sailed around Southern Africa into Indian Ocean
Christopher Columbus	Spain	1492-1504 (4 voyages)	Find Western route to Asia	Explored West Indies and Central and South America
Vasco de Gama	Portugal	1497-1498	Sail around Africa to Eastern Asia	Reached India
Vasco Nunez de Balboa	Spain	1513	Find gold	Crossed Isthmus of Panama and saw Pacific Ocean
Ferdinand Magellan	Spain	1519-1522	Find Western route to Asia	First expedition to sail around the world

Questions on Explores Chart: Make sure to answer in complete sentences.

1. Which explorer sailed around Africa and reached India?

2. Which two explores sailed for Portugal?

3. Which explorer made 4 voyages over 12 years?

4. Which two explorers were at sea in 1497?

5. What was the goal of Vasco Nunez de Balboa in 1513?

6. What was the accomplishment of Ferdinand Magellan?

Part D: Directions: Read the small passage about the Conquistadors and answer the questions below.

The Conquistadors

Spaniards who helped seize goods and territory in the New World were called conquistadores, which means those who conquer. The desire for gold and land led these men to plunder both the Inca and the Aztec civilizations in South America. The conquistadors conquered areas that latter became known as Florida, Texas, and the Southwestern United States.

What made these “conquerors” so successful? South America was hot and the people who lived there dressed in light clothing. The conquistadors, on the other hand, came to the land heavily protected by the finest armor the world ever knew at that time. Almost every inch of them was covered with some form of protection. Jointed metal covered their legs, and they wore steel helmets and breastplates or chain metal, a light type of armor. Even their boots were worn high on their legs for protection.

The conquistadors also had better weapons than the Indians. The Indians fought with arrows, hatchets, and spears made from wood and chipped stone, while the Spaniards used steel tipped lances and sharp swords. The conquistadors also drew crossbows and fired guns and cannons. The Incas and Aztecs fought hard to save their cultures, but were unsuccessful. The gold and precious stones of the areas proved too great a lure for the Spanish conquistadors.

1. Why was “conquistador” a good name for the men who seized parts of North & South America?

2. What advantages did the conquistadors have in battles against the South American Indians?

3. Describe what the conquistador wore?

Historical Stick Figure Assignment

Person: HERNAN CORTES

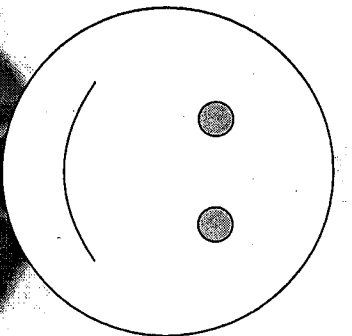
"Brain" – ideas and philosophies
What did they think about people or about the world?

"Mouth" – a famous quotation by or about the person
What did they say?

"Right Hand" – Actions
What did they do or accomplish?

"Achilles Heel" – weaknesses, setbacks, mistakes, hardships
What did they overcome or deal with? What mistakes were made?

"Foundation" – background, influences, origins, family
*Where did they grow up? Who/what taught or influenced them?
What was the family like? Did something major happen?*



your name: _____

"Eyes" – visions, goals & hopes
What kind of future did they want for themselves or others?

"Shoulder" – strengths & positive attributes
What are they good at?

"Left Hand" – contributions to History
Why is this person remembered?

"Heart" – objects or people that they values
What/who did the person love or value?

"The Road" – List 5 important events from the person's life

Event ↓	Date ↓
1 <i>Born on</i>
2
3
4
5 <i>Died on</i>

