

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

“This great city contains a large number of temples, or houses, for their idols, very handsome edifices, which are situated in the different districts and the suburbs.” – Cortés referring to the Aztec capital

## Aztec & Incan Empires – DBQ Essay

### Learning Targets:

- I can describe and appreciate the cultural and technological development of the Aztec and Incan Empires
- I can evaluate several different documents and use my analysis to set up the outline of a DBQ

**T**his question is based on the following documents (1-8). The task is designed to assess your ability to work with historical documents, take into account both the context of each article and point of view that may be presented in them.



*Machu Picchu, an Incan City designed to be a retreat for the Emperor Pachacuti*

### Historical Context

The civilizations of Mesoamerica were advanced in many ways. In fact, the accomplishments of the Maya, Aztec, and Inca Empires rivaled the advances of their European counterparts. Their achievements in math, science, government, and record-keeping left a mark on their world. Historians, archeologists, and anthropologists studying these civilizations have taught us even more about these cultures by analyzing the clues left by these peoples. However, there are many things still left to discover.

Using the information from the documents and your knowledge of social studies, answer the questions that follow the documents. Your answers to the question could help you set up an essay to do the following:

### Task:

Using at least five out of the eight documents, assess the level of cultural and technological development of the Aztec and Incan Empires.



*A maquahuitl, an Aztec sword, which was said to be able to decapitate a man*



Part A: Answer the short answer questions in complete sentences for *full* credit.

Document I: Hernando Cortés: Second Letter to Charles V, 1520

When he arrived in 1519, the Spanish conquistador, Cortés, described the magnificent Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan with these words to his king:

“The city has many squares where markets are held and trading is carried on. There is one square . . . where there are more than 60,000 souls, buying and selling . . . all kinds of merchandise . . . including food products, jewels of gold and silver, lead, brass, copper, zinc, bones, shells, and feathers. . . . Every kind of merchandise is sold in a particular street or quarter assigned to it exclusively, and thus the best order is preserved. They sell everything by number or measure. . . . There is a building in the great square that is used as an audience house, where ten or twelve persons, who are magistrates, sit and decide all controversies that arise in the market, and order delinquents to be punished. In the same square there are other persons who go constantly about among the people observing what is sold, and the measures used in selling.”

Source: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1520cortes.asp>, 2014

1. What are 2 activities which Cortes describes in this passage?
2. Explain why Cortés was so impressed when he arrived in Tenochtitlan.
3. Imagine that you are a young man or woman in Spain who aspires (wants) to be a conquistador. How could you use this letter to persuade the king to allow you to attack a different section of the Aztec Empire?



*King Charles V*

Document II: Farming in the Incan Empire, 1539

This description of farming in the Incan Empire was provided by Garciasco de la Vega, a son of an Incan princess and a Spanish explorer.

“As soon as the Incan ruler had conquered any kingdom and set up his government, he ordered that the farmland used to grow corn be extended. For this purpose, he ordered irrigation channels to be constructed. The engineers showed great cleverness and skill in supplying water for the crops, since only scattered sections of the land could grow corn. For this reason, they endeavored to increase its fertility as much as possible.”

Source: <http://tinyurl.com/mww7ea5>, 2014

4. What is irrigation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Explain why irrigation is a significant achievement.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Do you think an Incan would have described this achievement as “clever”? Explain.

### Document III: Terrace Farming in the Incan Empire



*The Inca lived in the Andes Mountains, which stretch down the west coast of South America. Flat areas for people to farm were very hard to find. Instead the Inca dug terraces on mountain sides to grow crops. 2,471,053 acres of farmland covered much of the Incan Empire. (This figure includes both terraced and flat farms.) Interesting, the stones used to support terrace farming would gather heat throughout the day and during the night would distribute the heat to the plants. . . . [These stones also meant that] erosion was virtually impossible.*

Source: <http://incakjew.weebly.com/terrace-farming.html>, 2014

7. What does the implementation of terrace farming tell you about the geography of the Incan Empire?
8. What are the pros and cons that terrace farming offers to the Incan people?

#### Document IV: Human Sacrifice in the Aztec Empire

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*Spanish descriptions of Aztec society contain extensive discussions of human sacrifice, and the practice is well represented in the codices. The Spanish sources, however, are heavily biased. The need to put an end to this custom was one of the prime rationalizations (reasons) for the conquest of the Aztecs, and for this reason the Spanish writers almost certainly overstated the extent of sacrifice. Archaeological finds demonstrates (shows) beyond a doubt that the Aztecs, like most ancient Mesoamerican cultures, did indeed sacrifice people. This practice was ancient and widespread in central Mexico.*

*Rites of human sacrifice were part of a complex tapestry of myths and beliefs that have been extensively analyzed and debated. . . . Key concepts include the sacredness of human blood [and] the idea that people owe a debt to the gods [which] . . . must be repaid with blood and human lives.*

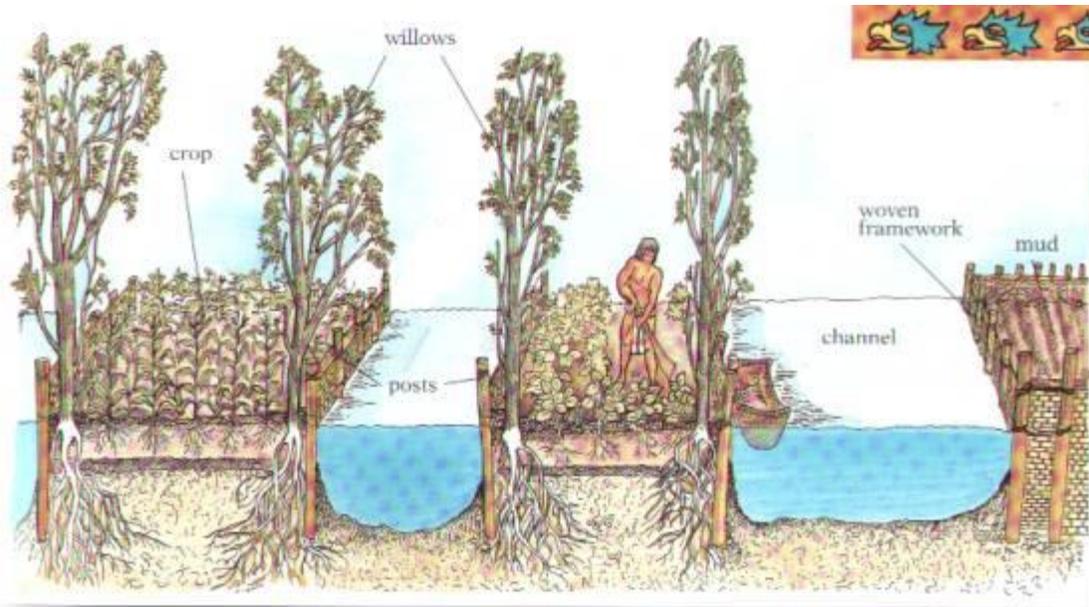


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Source: <http://www.public.asu.edu/~mesmith9/1-CompleteSet/MES-11-AztecRitual.pdf>,

9. Why did the Aztecs and other Mesoamerican civilization participated in human sacrifice?
10. What is ironic about the Spanish using human sacrifice as a reason for conquering the Aztecs?

## Document V: Chinampas Farming in the Aztec Empire



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To complete the questions below read the secondary source on this link

<http://www.aztec-history.com/aztec-farming.html>

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Source: <http://www.history.com/videos/aztec-ingenuity#aztec-ingenuity>, 2014

11. What is Chinampas Farming?

12. How were Chinampas constructed?

13. Explain whether you think that this sort of farming could be enacted on a large scale in the Incan Empire, which was on the Andes Mountains.

## Document VI: Incan Roads

### Incan Roads: A Technological Marvel Traversing the Andes Mountains

For the Incans, the Incan Road was a way to administer their empire. It was there to help them transport goods, communicate, and served as a way to divide the empire into four different divisions.

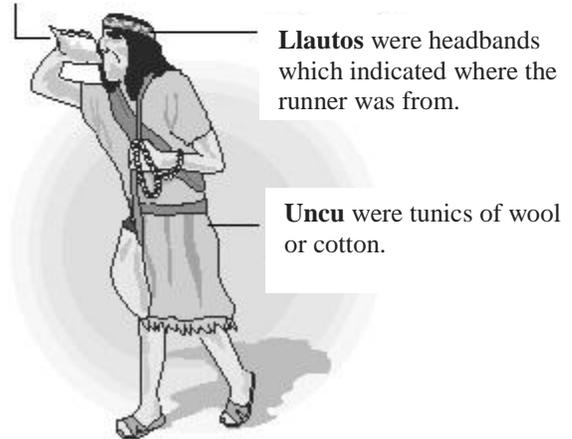


A major road came out of the capital, Cusco

- 1 Chinchaysuyo – which covered Ecuador and Northern Peru
- 2 Antisuyo – which extended east to the mountains
- 3 Contisuyo – which went west to the coast
- 4 Collasuyo – which covered S. Peru, part of Chile and a part of Argentina

### The Chasquis or Incan Runners

They were typically men between 18 and 25 years old, who traveled the Incan roads to deliver messages. They stayed in huts located 2 km away from each other. Each runner received the mail or message and ran to the next hut where he was replaced by another chasqui. Chasquis' shifts changed every 15 days



**L्लाutos** were headbands which indicated where the runner was from.

**Uncu** were tunics of wool or cotton.

Source: <http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/incas/inca-road.jpg>, 2014

Translated by Yours Truly and Google Translate

14. What modern countries do the road systems run through?

15. Why were the roads such a vital part of the Empire? Explain.

16. Imagine that you are a member of Pizarro’s expedition to the Incan homeland. Explain whether you would want to destroy the Incan road once you conquer the people.

Document VII: Pedro de Cieza de León – Chronicles of the Incas, 1540

“As this kingdom was so vast, in each of the many provinces there were many storehouses filled with supplies and other needful things; thus, in times of war, wherever the armies went they drew upon the contents of these storehouses, without ever touching the supplies of their confederates or laying a finger on what they had in their settlements. . . . Then the storehouses were filled up once more with the tributes [or taxes] paid the Inca. If there came a lean year, the storehouses were opened and the provinces were lent what they needed in the way of supplies; then, in a year of abundance, they paid back all they had received. No one who was lazy or tried to live by the work of others was tolerated; everyone had to work. Thus on certain days each lord went to his lands and took the plow in hand and cultivated the earth, and did other things.”

Source: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1540cieza.asp>, 2014

17. Why do you think that the Incans collected tribute? Explain.



*Incan Grain Storehouses*

18. Imagine that you are a peasant farmer during a famine. How does this system of tribute protect you?

19. Why are taxes important for an advance civilization.

## Document VIII: Mummified Inca Child Sacrifices



Source: <http://tinyurl.com/mjxsqk7>, 2014

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This mummy, a seven year old boy, was one of three children found to have been sacrificed during a special Incan ceremony. The children had walked or been brought to the top of Mt. Lullailco, in northern Argentina, elevation 22,000 feet (6706 meters), a volcano near the Chilean border today. According to archaeologists and cultural historians, the children were victims of a sacrificial ritual called *capacocha*. The children were chosen for their beauty and possibly nobility, honored by their selection, and well-fed and cared for before their ritual deaths. According to Inca beliefs, such children were to serve as guardians over their villages from the heights of the mountains, joining the ancestors and honored in death.

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20. Is the mummy an example of a primary or secondary source? Explain.

21. If you were an archaeologist, what sorts of things could you deduce or infer about Incans or children from the mummy and the text from above?

## Planning Section

*Task:*

Using at least five out of the eight documents, assess the level of cultural and technological development of the Aztec and Incan Empires.

*This section can be done in bullet-form, with the **exception** of the thesis.*

*Pre-thinking:*

1. List all of the things that make the Aztec and Incan Civilizations culturally and technologically advanced in the space below by organizing them on the arrow line from least to most advanced.



*Introduction:*

2. Set up the topics that will be addressed in the body of the essay. Provide background information and explain the historical context.

3. Develop a **thesis** (argument) **statement**:

*(Example – David Beckham is professional soccer’s most recognizable star, even in retirement, due to his skill on the soccer field, his marriage to Posh Spice, his many advertisements, and his level of fitness)*



*Body:*

Body Paragraphs	Focus <i>In the section below, write down the focus of each body paragraph</i>	Evidence from the Documents <i>In the section below, write down which documents fit in your paragraph and make a quick note of how it does. In your essay, you will have to site the information you get from the document.</i>	Outside Information <i>Use your notes, textbook, or approved websites to add information that you will add to your paragraphs</i>
<p>1<sup>st</sup> Body Paragraph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>A:</b> Topic Sentence</li><li>▪ <b>B:</b> Supporting evidence from documents and supporting evidence from outside information</li><li>▪ <b>C:</b> Closing/Transition Sentence</li></ul>	<p>What's the strongest argument supporting your thesis?</p>		

Body Paragraphs	Focus <i>In the section below, write down the focus of each body paragraph</i>	Evidence from the Documents <i>In the section below, write down which documents fit in your paragraph and make a quick note of how it does. In your essay, you will have to site the information you get from the document.</i>	Outside Information <i>Use your notes, textbook, or approved websites to add information that you will add to your paragraphs</i>
<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Body Paragraph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>A:</b> Topic Sentence</li><li>▪ <b>B:</b> Supporting evidence from documents and supporting evidence from outside information</li><li>▪ <b>C:</b> Closing/Transition Sentence</li></ul>	<p>What's the second strongest argument supporting your thesis?</p>		

<p>3<sup>rd</sup> Body Paragraph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>A:</b> Topic Sentence</li> <li>▪ <b>B:</b> Supporting evidence from documents and supporting evidence from outside information</li> <li>▪ <b>C:</b> Closing/Transition Sentence</li> </ul>	<p>What's the third strongest argument that supports your thesis?</p>		
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*Conclusion:*

Restate your (argument) thesis and summarize the main ideas presented in your essay in 3-4 sentences.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Restatement of thesis -</li> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>
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Rubric for DBQ Essay:

<i>Task</i>	<i>Worth</i>	<i>What to Do for Full Credit</i>	<i>Comments</i>
DBQ Questions	20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Answer all of the questions in complete sentences.</li> <li>2. Answer all of the questions neatly.</li> <li>3. Answer all of the questions completely.</li> </ol>	
DBQ Planning Section	36	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete pre-thinking section (4)</li> <li>2. Complete thesis section in a complete sentence (4)</li> <li>3. Complete body section (12)</li> <li>4. Complete outside information (12)</li> <li>5. Complete conclusion section (4)</li> </ol>	
DBQ Essay*	50	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Introduction:</b> Topic sentence, introduction has background information, from the historical context, and thesis (10)</li> <li>2. <b>1<sup>st</sup> Body Paragraph:</b> Topic sentence, analysis which includes documents (with proper citing), analysis which includes outside information, and closing sentence (10)</li> <li>3. <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Body Paragraph:</b> Topic sentence, analysis which includes documents (with proper citing), analysis which includes outside information, and closing sentence (10)</li> <li>4. <b>Closing:</b> Restates thesis, summarize main points, and is 3-4 sentences (10)</li> <li>5. Neatness and proper grammar (10)</li> </ol>	
Total	56	/56	

\*This time around we are not writing out the essay

Nogo's Tips:

1. Basics first; keep it simple – “You don’t play Beethoven on the first day of piano lessons!”
2. Be a good lawyer – What is your strongest evidence?
3. Each sentence should be a bridge.