

Topic: B: Middle America
 Subject(s): Social Studies

Days: 40
 Grade(s): 6th

Key Learning: Middle America's geography, history, and mix of diverse cultures continue to influence the world today.

Unit Essential Question(s):

What is unique about Middle America's geography, history, and culture?

Concept:
Physical Geography of Middle America
 7.1.6.B

Concept:
History of Middle America
 8.4.6.A, 8.4.6.B, 8.4.6.C, 8.1.6.A, 8.1.6.B, 8.1.6.C, 8.1.6.D

Concept:
Culture of Middle America
 7.3.6.B, 7.3.6.C

Lesson Essential Question(s):
 What are the main physical geographical features of Middle America? (A)
 How has geography influenced lifestyles of the people living in Middle America? (A)
 How do the natural resources of the region affect their economy? (A)

Lesson Essential Question(s):
 What was life like during the Mayan civilization? (A)
 How did the Mayan civilization influence our society in past and present? (A)
 What was life like during the Aztec empire? (A)
 How did the Aztec Empire influence society in past and present? (A)
 Why were European rulers interested in Middle America? (A)
 How did European conquistadors and explorers impact life in Middle America? (A)
 How did Mexico achieve independence? (A)
 How did the construction of the Panama Canal impact the region and the world? (A)

Lesson Essential Question(s):
 How do the languages and religions of Middle America reflect the region's history? (A)
 How does life for people differ in rural and urban areas of Middle America? (A)
 How do subsistence and cash crop farming differ? What is the impact of each on culture? (A)
 What can we learn about Middle America from the arts? (A)

Vocabulary:
 Middle America, Plateau, Isthmus, Tributary, Natural Resources, Renewable Resources, Nonrenewable Resources

Vocabulary:
 Indigenous People, Mestizo, Campesino, Hieroglyphics, Maze, Aztec, Mayan, Conquistador, Hacienda, Revolution, Criollo, Caudillo

Vocabulary:
 Subsistence Farming, Cash Crop Farming, One-Resource Economy, Diversify

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Concept

Current Issues in Middle America

Lesson Essential Question(s):

How has ownership and responsibility of the Panama Canal changed? (A)

Why are more rural residents moving to urban areas in Middle America? (A)

Why are more Middle Americans immigrating to the U.S.? (A)

What is the impact of immigration on Middle America and the United States? (A)

What factors cause pollution in the cities of Middle America and what is the impact (i.e., Mexico City)? (A)

Vocabulary:

Dictator, Export, Import, Foreign Debt, Regime, Emigrate, Migrant Worker, Land Reform, Political Movement, Strike, Lock, Ecotourism

Additional Information:

Text - Chapter 11, Chapter 12 (except 12.2), Chapter 13.1, Chapter 14

www.theweek.com - Current events

Mayan ball game- <http://www.ballgame.org/main.asp>

Collapse of Mayas- <http://www.learner.org/interactives/collapse/mayans.html>

USA Today article on Mayas- http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/2010-08-25-maya-pompeii_N.htm

<http://home.freeuk.net/elloughton13/mexico.htm> - Life & culture of the Aztecs

<http://www.eyewitnesshistory.com/eyindx.htm> - Primary Sources

<http://worldhistorymatters.org/> - Primary Sources for World History

Attached Document(s):

Analyzing Perspectives

Analyzing Primary Sources -
Graphic Organizer

Compare Contrast Summary

Vocabulary Guide Sheet - Student
Edition

Analysis Tool for Political Cartoons

Middle American Vocabulary warm-
Up Sheet

Western Hemisphere Vocabulary Warm Up Latin America



Week 1

Concept: Physical Geography of Middle America (Chapter 11)

Middle America (n) – Mexico and Central America

plateau (n) – a large raised area of mostly level land

isthmus (n) – strip of land with water on both sides that joins two bodies of land

tributary (n) – a river or stream that flows into another river

countryside ; rural :: city : urban
(synonym)

Week 2

Natural Resources (n) – things found in nature that people can use to meet their needs

renewable resources (n) – a natural resource that can be replace

nonrenewable resources (n) – a resource that cannot be replaced

*review examples of renewable & non-renewable resources

Central Mexico ; plateau :: Central America : isthmus
(characteristic)

Week 3

Concept: Culture of Middle America

subsistence farming (v) – growing enough food to meet the needs of the farmer's family

cash crop farming (v) – a crop grown mostly for sale rather than for the needs of the farmer's family

one-resource economy (n) – a country's economy based largely on one resource or crop

diversify (v) – to add variety

renewable : trees :: nonrenewable : various
(classification)

Week 4

Concept: History of Middle America

hieroglyphics (n) – a system of writing using signs and symbols

maize (n) – corn

Aztec (n) – a civilization of native people who arrived in the valley of Mexico in the 1100's and built an empire in Middle America in the 1400's

Maya (n) – a civilization of native people who lived in Central America and Southern Mexico in 250-900 AD

Subsistence: family :: cash crop: public
(object function)

Week 5

Tenochtitlan (n) – the Aztec capital that stood on a floating island on the site of present-day Mexico City

Moctezuma (n) – a ruler of the Aztec empire at the time the Spanish arrived

conquistador (n) – one of the conquerors who claimed and ruled land in the Americas for the Spanish government in the 1500's

Hernan Cortes (n) – a conquistador who conquered the Aztec empire

Maize : corn :: writing : hieroglyphics
(synonym)

Week 6

mestizo (n) – in Latin America a person of mixed Spanish and Native American ancestry

hacienda (n) – a large farm or plantation

revolution – (n) (Chapter 12: 4) overthrow of a government, with another taking its place

criollo – a person with Spanish parents who was born in Latin America

Cortes: conquistador : : Moctezuma: ruler
(person/known for)

Week 7

caudillo (n) – a military officer who rules a country very strictly

dictator (n) – a ruler with complete power

export (v) – to send products from one country to be sold in another

import (v) – to bring products into one country from another

mestizo: mixed Spanish & native ancestry : : criollo : Spanish ancestry
(characteristic/definition)

Week 8

foreign debt (n) - money owed by one country to other countries

regime (n) – a particular administration or government

indigenous people (n) – descendants of the people who first lived in a region

campesino – a poor Latin American farmer or farm worker

export: import : : dictator : elected official
(antonym)

Week 9

emigrate (v) – to leave one country to settle in another

Francisco Pizarro – a Spanish conquistador who conquered the Incas

Chapter 14

migrant worker (n) – a laborer who travels from one area to another, picking crops that are in season

plaza – a public square at the center of a village, a town, or a city

indigenous : native : : immigrant : foreigner
(synonym)

Week 10

squatter (n) – a person who settles on someone else's land without permission

land reform (n) – the effort to distribute land more equally and fairly

political movement (n.) – a large group of people who work together for political change

strike (n) – a refusal to work until certain demands of workers are met

Pizarro : Inca : : Cortes : Aztec
(person/known for)

Week 11

lock (n) – a section of waterway in which ships are raised or lowered by adjusting the water level

Canal Zone (n) – a 10-mile strip of land along the Panama Canal, once governed by the United States

ecotourism (n) – travel to unspoiled areas in order to learn about the environment
