

## **Studying Mexico City Through Many Layers**

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### **Abstract**

This unit provides students with the opportunity to learn about the ways in which cities are built, shaped, and at times reshaped throughout their history. The unit could be used for a middle school Social Studies or English Language Arts class. It focuses on Mexico City and peels back the layers of the city to its early history as Tenochtitlan, before the Spanish arrived. The unit will begin with discourse over the definition and aspects of a city as students are introduced to the capital of Mexico. The unit will then travel back to early Mexico to the time of the Aztecs where students will explore the complex city-systems of the 1300s. Throughout the remaining sections of the unit students will explore the effects and complex dynamics of colonization and the desire for a national identity, as well as how these factors are reflected in Mexico City today. Students will examine the effects of these various periods on the city by developing a virtual mural and proposal that encapsulates the history of the city.

### **Rationale**

This four-week unit plan is designed for a sixth-grade history class at Francis Scott Key School in Philadelphia. Key is a K-6 elementary school in a diverse neighborhood in South Philadelphia. Over 60% of the students in the school are English Language Learners; therefore, many of the lessons in this unit involve analyzing art as a way of studying the past. Despite almost 40% of the students in my school identifying as Hispanic or Latino, and Latino students making up almost a quarter of the school population in the entire district<sup>i</sup>, the culture of these students is not well represented in the history curriculum put out by the school district.

The History and Social Studies curriculum from kindergarten through eighth grade, includes only a few lessons on Latin America. One second grade lesson is about immigration and another about Indigenous Americans from North and South America. It isn't until seventh grade, after they have left my school, that students receive an entire unit on Latin America. The three sections on Latin America are well planned and researched, but quite broad. The first unit is on Latin American Geography; the second, Latin American History; and the third, Modern Latin

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<sup>i</sup> Fast Facts. (2020, March 10). Retrieved April 2, 2020, from <https://www.philasd.org/fast-facts/>

America. As inclusive as these themes are, they mislead students into viewing Latin America and the countries within it as a monolith. Latin America is comprised of nineteen countries – not even including the Caribbean – and although Spanish and Portuguese are the main two spoken languages in Latin America, there are numerous indigenous languages spoken throughout the region. This diversity is rich and worth diving into, but takes more time than one semester. It would also be unusual for the average American teacher to know enough about the unique histories of each country in Latin America to design lessons with deep and meaningful connections. Therefore, this unit has been designed to focus only on the history of Mexico City, so teachers and students can examine at least one important subject of Latin American History through a more focused lens.

All students deserve to see themselves and their histories in the school curriculum. It is becoming even more important to teach the history of Latin America as populations of Latinx students in the United States continue to grow. In 2017, Latinos made up about 18% of the total U.S. population and are projected to comprise almost 29% of the population by 2060<sup>ii</sup>. The current curriculum that the School District of Philadelphia has created does not represent this large part of our country or even this large group within our own district.

Our shared border, along with the negative rhetoric that has been used to talk about Mexico, influenced me to choose it as my focus for this unit. The United States has a long and complicated history with this country that many citizens don't know much about. This unit could be used to combat stereotypes and assumptions that are made about Mexico, which is often used as a scapegoat for problems within U.S. policies. This is not to imply that Mexico is more worthy than other Latin American countries to study deeply, but it provides relevance to current day politics which could draw in and interest students. Mexico City in particular is an important part of world history because it teaches students about some of the earliest cities and civilizations and provides a clear look at colonization.

### **Content Objectives**

Through this unit, students will explore the soul of modern-day Mexico City, established directly on top of the older city Tenochtitlan – the center of the Aztec Empire – after Cortez and

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<sup>ii</sup> Hispanics in the US Fast Facts. (2020, March 6). Retrieved April 2, 2020, from <https://www.cnn.com/2013/09/20/us/hispanics-in-the-u-s-/index.html>

his men took control of the city and the region for Spain. The Spanish then destroyed the city to rebuild it in their likeness. Through this unit, students will learn about the ancient and modern city and how the destruction and repurposing of a place has been a key tool in establishing colonial power.

The following unit will provide a study of Mexico City in the areas of: race and ethnicity and conflict and progress starting in the 1300s and continuing to modern-day Mexico City. This expansive period will be split into three time periods: Tenochtitlan and the Aztec Empire; the arrival of Cortez and New Spain; and the Mexican Revolution, each in relation to modern day Mexico City. Students will study significant historical events, places, and people in each of these thematic areas to analyze the overlapping patterns.

### *Race and ethnicity*

This theme will explore the role of race and ethnicity and how those themes became important factors with the Spanish conquest and how they have affected life for Mexicans ever since. Students will look first at hierarchies in Aztec society, which were based on jobs and wealth, and compare them with the racial and ethnic hierarchies of today. With the advent of the Spanish, race became a factor in the hierarchical society. Students will examine how both race and ethnicity are often used in asserting power structures and how racial hierarchies were established and maintained in New Spain. <sup>iii</sup> This theme will be relevant for all students who are trying to understand racial hierarchies in our country. In my school, with many students from Nepal, this also offers the opportunity to discuss the caste system in their country and make comparisons, showing the applicability of this unit across cultures.

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<sup>iii</sup> Tarlton Law Library: Exhibit - "Aztec and Maya Law: Aztec Social Structure." (n.d.). Retrieved September 03, 2020, from <https://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/aztec-and-maya-law/aztec-social-structure>

In order to explore this theme students will read about the structures of Aztec society and how territories were ruled throughout the Aztec empire. Students will use online articles that help make this expansive topic more manageable for middle school students. Students will also use the Codex Mendoza, a text that uses both pictograms and the native language of the Aztecs, Nahuatl, to provide a description of daily Aztec life.<sup>iv</sup> This primary source was commissioned by the Spanish in 1542, and students will examine how it compares with other information from the time period. Comparing reliable narratives is a required topic in the middle school Social Studies standards.

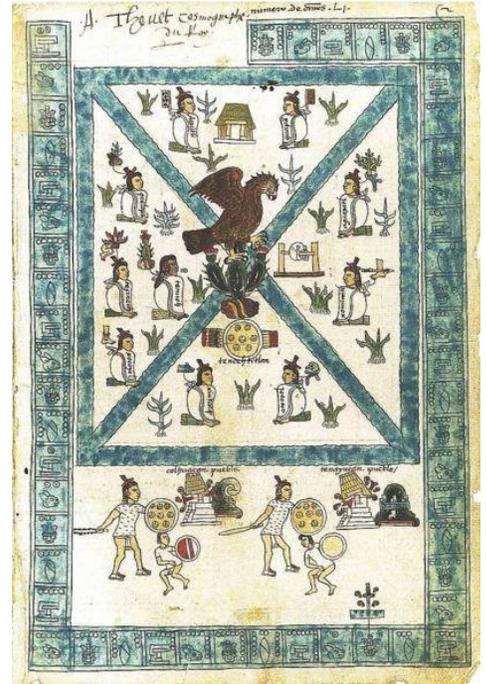


Figure 1 Depiction of the founding of Tenochtitlan and the conquest of Colhuacan, Codex Mendoza. Author unknown. 1542 AD



Figure 2.: Human Races (Las Castas), painting. unknown artist. 18th century

This theme of race and ethnicity will be explored further by studying the Spanish conquest.

Students will examine Casta paintings or “Lineage paintings” which depict the fixed system of racial hierarchy in New Spain<sup>v</sup>. These paintings show possible racial mixes, such as Spanish European and Indigenous, or Indigenous and African, and their position in the hierarchy in society. Students will discuss the lasting effects of these structures on the transmission of intergenerational wealth and how these structures are still relevant in modern day society. Students will watch segments of a new show “Made in Mexico.” a reality show that follows young

<sup>iv</sup> Codex Mendoza (1542). (n.d.). Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <https://publicdomainreview.org/collection/codex-mendoza-1542>

<sup>v</sup> Carrera, M. M. (n.d.). *Imagining Identity in New Spain: Race, Lineage, and the Colonial Body in Portraiture and Casta Paintings*. University of Texas Press 2012.

socialites in Mexico City.<sup>vi</sup> This is an engaging way for students to explore the modern-day racial hierarchies as they observe the stark European features of the cast members. Students can make connections to media representation and wealth in our own country. Students will contrast the difference between the U.S. and Mexico in regards to the racial mixing of European settlers with Indigenous people.



Figure 3 . *The History of Mexico*. Diego Rivera 1929-1935

the Aztec empire through the conquest of the Spanish. The mural is path breaking for its depiction of dark-skinned Mexican people with the positive portrayal of Indigenous history and culture.

### *Conflict and "Progress"*

It is impossible to understand Mexico and Mexico City without teaching about the history of conflict and the destruction of Tenochtitlan by Spanish conquistadors in order to build Mexico City. Students will study this conflict through primary sources such as the letters from Cortez and Diaz de Castillo, a soldier in Cortez's army to the Queen of Spain about their observations and descriptions of this new country<sup>vii</sup>. Students will compare these letters to those written by the

<sup>vi</sup> Bartel, K. (Producer). (2018, September 28). "A Bull at the Baptism." [Television series episode]. In *Made in Mexico*. Los Angeles, California: Love Productions.

<sup>vii</sup> Cortés, H. (n.d.). "Cortes Describes Tenochtitlan": AHA. Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/teaching-and-learning-in-the-digital-age/the-history-of-the-americas/the-conquest-of-mexico/letters-from-hernan-cortes/cortes-describes-tenochtitlan>

Aztecs to illustrate the difference in perspectives on the same topic<sup>viii</sup>. Students will also analyze these different perspectives through art by making observations about the images such as “Who can you identify?”, “How are they dressed?”, “Who or what is at the center of the image?”

The students will then use these observations to ask themselves “What is the story being told in this image?” and “What are the differences between these images?” This activity meets the social studies standards of examining an event through multiple perspectives. Students will

complete this activity with both primary and secondary sources: *Spanish Besiege Tenochtitlan*<sup>ix</sup> and *Moctezuma Meets Cortez*<sup>x</sup> from the *Florentine Codex*, a 16<sup>th</sup>-century ethnographic research study in Mesoamerica by the Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún. Students will compare this to the work of 19<sup>th</sup> century painter and muralist, Diego Rivera from his work *Malinche and Son*<sup>xi</sup> and *Entrance of Cortés La Conquista de Mexico* painted by an unknown artist in the second half of the seventeenth



Figure 4 Painting by unknown artist, *Entrance of Cortés La Conquista de Mexico*. 1700s

<sup>viii</sup> Leon Portilla, M. (1992). *The Broken Spears : The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* (pp. 62-127). Boston, MA: Beacon Press

<sup>ix</sup> De Sahagún, B. (n.d.). “Spaniards Besiege Tenochtitlan”: AHA. Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/teaching-and-learning-in-the-digital-age/the-history-of-the-americas/the-conquest-of-mexico/image-exercises/spaniards-besiege-tenochtitlan>

<sup>x</sup> De Sahagún, B. (n.d.). “Mexica Accounts of Moctezuma Meeting Cortes”: AHA. Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/teaching-and-learning-in-the-digital-age/the-history-of-the-americas/the-conquest-of-mexico/florentine-codex/mexica-accounts-of-moctezuma-meeting-cortes>

<sup>xi</sup> Rivera, D. (n.d.). Diego Rivera, “Malinche and Son”: AHA. Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/teaching-and-learning-in-the-digital-age/the-history-of-the-americas/the-conquest-of-mexico/image-exercises/diego-rivera-malinche-and-son>

century.<sup>xii</sup> Students will also examine the painting *Collective Suicide* painted in 1936 by David Alfaro Siqueiros which shows an apocalyptic vision of the Spanish conquest of Mexico. The work from Siqueiros and Rivera gives students the opportunity to see how artists have tried to change the narrative of European progress to the destruction of culture and civilization. Students will compare both the conflict and progress of Mexico City by examining *Biombo with the Conquest of Mexico and View of Mexico City*. Biombos are large folded screens and are a popular form of art in Asia. This Biombo was painted in Mexico between 1675 and 1700. By this time, the Spanish empire had expanded to Asia, and this artform illustrates the creative crossing of cultures that resulted from that [expansiveness](#). The biombo shows a then-and now view of Mexico City at the time. On one side, the city in the process of conquest in 1521 and the other side, a peaceful 17<sup>th</sup> century view with the Viceregal palace in the center.<sup>xiii</sup>



Figure 5 Biombo, unknown artist. Scene of Mexico City, 1675-1700

Cultural and religious conflicts arose in the colonial period of Mexico. Students will read about the Aztec god of war and sacrifice, Huitzilopochtli, who according to tradition led the Mexica people from Aztlan to Central Mexico. According to the legend, Huitzilopochtli told the Mexica people that they would know they reached their promised land when they saw an eagle perched

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<sup>xii</sup> *Entrance of Cortés La Conquista de Mexico* [Painting found in Jay I. Kislak Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC]. (1700s). Retrieved September 7, 2020, from <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/exploring-the-early-americas/conquest-of-mexico-paintings.html>

<sup>xiii</sup> Dana Leibsohn and Barbara E. Mundy. *Vistas: Visual Culture in Spanish America, 1520-1820*. <http://www.fordham.edu/vistas>, 2015.

on a cactus with a snake in its mouth, the image that is still reflected on the flag of Mexico. Huitzilopochtli was honored at the Templo Mayor, the temple at the center of Tenochtitlan, typically with human sacrifice.<sup>xiv</sup> For this reason, the Mexicas became known as the Aztecs.



Figure 6 The conversion of the Tlaxcalans to Christianity from the Lienzo de Tlaxcala

With the introduction of Spanish conquistadors came the Mexican Inquisition, an extension of the Spanish Inquisition where the Indigenous populations were forced to convert to Catholicism.<sup>xv</sup> Students will analyze images and ask themselves questions about the images such as “What story is being told in this image?” Students will look at *The Conversion of the Tlaxcalans to Christianity* from the Lienzo de Tlaxcala which was designed to win sympathy for the Tlaxcalans from the Spanish because of their early faith in the Church<sup>xvi</sup>. Students will also analyze the image

*Burning of “idols.”* which was featured in *Description of the City and Province of Tlaxcala* written between 1529 and 1599 by Diego Muñoz Camargo—a native of Tlaxcala, the son of a Spanish conquistador and a loyal Catholic. The image shows the Indigenous people, with the help of a Franciscan friar, setting Aztec deities on fire. Among the objects being burned are two masks representing the god Quezalcoatl. Both images give students the opportunity to examine the art’s intent and to understand how certain narratives can be pushed forward through history. By looking at these two images, one might believe that all Indigenous people in Mexico happily converted to Christianity. This also allows students to make connections to what they learned

<sup>xiv</sup> Maestri, N. (2019, October 10). "The Legend of Huitzilopochtli, the Founding Deity of the Aztecs" Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <https://www.thoughtco.com/huitzilopochtli-aztec-god-of-the-sun-171229>

<sup>xv</sup> Greenleaf, R. (1978). "The Mexican Inquisition and the Indians: Sources for the Ethnohistorian." *The Americas*, 34(3), 315-344. doi:10.2307/981310

<sup>xvi</sup> "Spaniards Convert Tlaxcalan Women": AHA. (n.d.). Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/teaching-and-learning-in-the-digital-age/the-history-of-the-americas/the-conquest-of-mexico/image-exercises/spaniards-convert-tlaxcalan-women>

earlier about the importance of the Aztec gods and think if they believe that most people would easily give up such beliefs. This mixture of culture and religion, and the act of keeping old and new faith alive, can be seen through traditions such as El Dia de los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead. [This holiday, which is celebrated between October 31<sup>st</sup> and November 2<sup>nd</sup>, uses indigenous traditions of honoring the deceased and images of the afterlife combined with the Catholic holiday All Saints Day which takes place on November 1<sup>st</sup>. This blend of both cultures' has produced an honored Mexican tradition that is recognized all over the world.](#)

Mexico City Metropolitan Cathedral was the first church built in the center of the capital of New Spain. Construction started in 1573 and took over 250 years; in fact, it is still active today. The Cathedral shows the shift to a European style by using a mixture of architectural styles including Renaissance, Baroque, and Neoclassical. Students will explore the cathedral which lies in the center of city in the Zócalo– the central plaza– through their virtual tours of Mexico City<sup>xvii</sup>.

The unit will briefly touch on the Mexican War for Independence (1810-1821) in order to give context to the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). The Revolution started as a middle-class protest against the dictator Porfirio Diaz, who opened Mexico up to foreign investors and policies that benefited the rich, allowing them to buy up Indigenous communal lands and force villagers to farm cash crops. To protest this, in 1910, Francisco Madero launched the Anti-Re-electionist Party, calling for revolution in the name of land reform and political freedom. Madero had support from Mexicans of all socioeconomic backgrounds and was able to push Diaz out of power, resulting [in Madero's](#) being elected president. To continue this progress, Mexican revolutionaries fought for more social reform such as returning land to Indigenous villages. By 1917, the Mexican Constitution enshrined economic rights and social justice by calling for land reform, nationalization of resources, and workers' rights. Although there was some progress,

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<sup>xvii</sup> Metropolitan Cathedral. (n.d.). Retrieved September 07, 2020, from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Metropolitan-Cathedral-Mexico-City-Mexico>

many of these promises were ignored. Despite the promise for land reform, underprivileged and Indigenous communities continued to experience poverty.<sup>xviii</sup>

Students will focus on the social principles of the Mexican Revolution and the conflict between the working class and social elites. Students will examine the Revolution through the lens of the



Figure 7 History of Mexico. Diego Rivera, *The History of Mexico/ 1929-1935*

resulting murals. Diego Rivera's *History of Mexico (1929-1935)* is an expansive mural in the National Palace in Mexico City illustrating the time from the Aztec Empire until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The mural will allow students to reflect on how Rivera continued to push for social revolution through his art by examining the images and figures in the mural. The mural includes

revolutionary figures like Francisco Madero Emiliano Zapata –the leader of the peasant revolution. On a separate panel of the mural, Karl Marx is painted at the top center looking over the whole scene, and in the bottom corner Frida Kahlo is shown teaching the socialist doctrine of Marx<sup>xix</sup>. Students will use this mural as an example as they create their own mural about the history of Mexico City.

## Teaching Strategies

This unit is designed to embed support for English Language Learners by planning lessons and activities that provide visual supports, planned speaking activities, and peer collaboration. Many of the teaching strategies are drawn from the work of Aida Walqui and Leo van Lier and the

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<sup>xviii</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2020, May 13). "Mexican Revolution." Retrieved September 07, 2020, from <https://www.britannica.com/event/Mexican-Revolution>

<sup>xix</sup> Art and the Mexican Revolution. (n.d.). Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/art-and-the-mexican-revolution/content-section-4>

QTEL (Quality Teacher for English Learners) developed by West Ed<sup>xx</sup> . The QTEL principles were designed to rethink the way that teachers present content knowledge and examine the ways that they could make these concepts more accessible to language learners and place a greater emphasis on meaningful and high-quality communication in the classroom. QTEL lessons aim to sustain academic rigor and engage students in generative disciplinary concepts and skills, which identify concepts or topics that are worth understanding and interesting to students. The teacher then frames the goals of the unit to focus on the most important aspects of the topic while engaging students in challenging learning experiences that help build and demonstrate their understanding. Teachers are expected to hold high expectations for all students by developing a quality curriculum that engages students in quality interactions that promotes disciplinary language use while providing scaffolds that maintain a high challenge/high support model of teaching.

In order to develop this unit to meet these principles, I have included the following teaching strategies that will be used in the lessons to meet this goal:

### *Student Expertise*

The unit was designed to represent an under-represented group; therefore, the unit will provide opportunities for students with family origins from Latin America to utilize background knowledge and share it with other students. Since many English Learners are from Latin American countries, they will be able bring information that will help them to understand this complex topic. Additionally, the unit will also be designed to elevate the voices of bilingual and emerging bilingual students. Spanish speaking students will be able to access reading in their original language and videos produced in Mexico for a Spanish-speaking audience. The Spanish-speaking students can translate their information to their classmates which encourages biliteracy and celebrates multilingualism.

### *Differentiated Instruction*

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<sup>xx</sup> Walqui, A., & Lier, L. V. (2010). *Scaffolding the academic success of adolescent English language learners: A pedagogy of promise*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

This unit covers dense material over a long period of history; therefore, it is paramount to provide differentiation within the lessons to reach all learners. The lessons will be planned to provide multiple entry points for students by covering the topic with videos, art, photography, literature, and primary sources. Since primary sources can be arduous, the length of reading will be determined to fit the needs of individual students.

Students will present their final project – creating a mural and writing a proposal to the city government about what is in their mural and why it deserves to be painted. The unit will encourage students to connect the information from the entire unit and apply it to their project while promoting language learning through a meaningful context.

### *Cooperative Learning*

When studying history, there are always many sides to the story and lenses in which to examine it. Cooperative learning is a way for students to work together to analyze these different angles. In cooperative learning, students work together, where each is responsible for one part of the task. This type of learning requires students to not only problem-solve and use critical thinking skills, but also to convey these ideas to the rest of their group and negotiate how these parts fit together. This challenges students to read and work like historians, who often rely on the accounts and information of fellow historians. Additionally, this technique is highly effective for ELs, since it allows the teacher to differentiate the amount of work that student is given, but maintains high expectations for the students to contribute to the group.

### *Effective Questioning*

This unit asks students to connect many complex topics through an expansive period of time. In addition to reading articles, watching videos, and analyzing art, teachers should use effective questioning to help guide student learning. Effective questions help students reach conclusions and provide information by using a range of question types. Some of these question types include:

- **Open questions** to gather information and facts
- **Probing questions** to gain additional detail
- **Hypothetical questions** to suggest an approach or introduce new ideas.

- **Reflective questions** to check understanding
- **Leading questions** to help a person reach a conclusion or have an ‘idea’ that you feel will be beneficial; a few well-planned questions can very often lead the person towards the idea and instead of responding to your request, they have their idea of how to help you be more successful. (*Active Listening & Effective Questioning*)

### *Technology*

In the unit students will be traveling to a country and city that they may have never seen. The utilization of technology was always paramount in the planning of the unit. Students will use YouTube to watch videos about the life of the Aztecs and take tours of the streets of Mexico City using Google World. Through technology, students can feel part of a city over 1,000 miles away.

During the creation of this unit, Covid-19 hit and our entire learning went online. This further led me to analyze how this unit could be used with an online classroom. This led to the further creation of web pages where students could use technology to further understand the topic through an inquiry-based instruction.

### **Classroom Activities**

#### *Common Core Standards*

Common Core Reading Standards for Literacy in History and Social Studies: 6-8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CC.8.5.6-8.A Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.</li> <li>• CC.8.5.6-8.B Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.</li> <li>• <i>CC.8.5.6-8.D Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.</i></li> <li>• CC.8.5.6-8.F Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).</li> <li>• CC.8.5.6-8.G Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.</li> <li>• CC.8.5.6-8.H Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.</li> <li>• CC.8.5.6-8.I Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.</li> </ul>
Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/ Social Studies: 6-8

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2.B  
Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.6  
Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently.

*Objectives:*

- Students will define key terminology which relates to cities and urbanization.
- Students will apply theories which relate to cities to the ancient city of Tenochtitlan
- Students will identify commonalities between the modern and ancient cities.
- Students will investigate the factors leading to the colonialization of Tenochtitlan
- Students will identify structural and societal changes to the city during colonialization
- Students will classify the factors leading up to the defeat Spanish imperialism
- Students will analyze the role of labor as a pull factor for urban migration
- Students will critique the physical and sociological effects of urban migration
- Students will discuss the identity of a city and extrapolate how it is formed.

*Outcomes:*

- Students will write analytical responses about the effects of colonialization.
- Students will create an online presentation based on a historical figure and how they contributed to the history of Mexico City
- Students will design a mural proposal reflecting on the long history of Mexico City.

*Unit Learning Plan Overview*

**Lesson 1:** Students will characterize the physical, cultural, and economic elements of a city in order to answer the question “What is a City?”

**Lesson 2:** Students will apply vocabulary related to urbanization to Mexico City by completing a virtual walking tour and identifying key parts of the city.

**Lesson 3-6:** Students will identify urban features of both modern-day Mexico City and ancient Tenochtitlan: Students will discuss the history and legends around origin and development of Tenochtitlan. Students will then identify Aztec influences in modern-day Mexican culture

**Lessons 7-8:** Students will investigate the historical retellings of Spanish colonialization through primary and secondary sources.

**Lesson 9:** Students will identify structural and societal changes to the city during colonialization.

**Lesson 10-13:** Students will describe the pull factors to Mexico City and the murals that represent both the city and national identity.

**Lesson 14-15:** Students will develop a proposal for a Mural illustrating the history of Mexico City.

**Lesson 1:**

<b>Topic:</b>	Cities
<b>Objectives:</b>	Students will characterize the physical, cultural, and economics elements of a city in order to answer the question “What is a City?”
<b>Introduction</b>	Students participate in a “ <a href="#">Novel Ideas Only</a> ” activity Where they come up with as many words that they can related to a city.
<b>Instruction</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define key terms about urbanization</li> <li>2. Predict what makes a city livable</li> <li>3. <a href="#">Watch TED Talk: What makes a city livable?</a> By Martha Thorne</li> <li>4. Think-Pair-Share about consistency in answers</li> </ol>
<b>Independent Practice</b>	Deep reading of an image- students will analyze four pictures of four different cities to compare and contrast their features
<b>Assessment:</b>	<p>Students will choose one word that they feel most defines a city. Students submit this answer anonymously to <a href="#">create a class word cloud</a> with the most common responses.</p> <p>Students will then write a short blog post explaining why they chose their particular word. Both the word cloud and blog post will be published on an online blog.</p>

**Lesson 2:**

<b>Topic:</b>	Mexico City
<b>Objectives:</b>	Students will be able to apply vocabulary relating to urbanization IOT identify urban features of Mexico City
<b>Introduction</b>	Students will <a href="#">watch a video</a> of a drone tour over Mexico City to build interest.
<b>Instruction</b>	<p>Students will read <a href="#">Kids Britannica: Introduction to Mexico City</a> while using a <a href="#">clarifying bookmark</a> to comment and ask questions with their partner.</p> <p>Students will do <a href="#">a Jigsaw</a> with the second reading. Students will either get the article <a href="#">1) Mexico City: Cityscape</a> <a href="#">2) Mexico City: Economy</a> <a href="#">3) Mexico City People and Culture</a></p>
<b>Independent Practice</b>	Students will complete a <a href="#">concept map</a> about the information they learned from the articles and the vocabulary on urbanization.

<b>Assessment:</b>	Students will write another blog post based on a feature of Mexico City.
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### Lessons 3-6

<b>Topic:</b>	Mexico City & Tenochtitlan
<b>Objectives:</b>	<p>Students will identify urban features of both modern-day Mexico City and ancient Tenochtitlan</p> <p>Students will discuss the history and legends around the origin and development of Tenochtitlan.</p> <p>Students will then identify Aztec influences in modern-day Mexican culture</p>
<b>Introduction</b>	<p><a href="#">Time period envelope</a>- students will work in groups to look at various images, inventions, buildings, and maps related to the Aztec period. Students will take notes and make conclusions about the Aztecs.</p> <p>Throughout the week, students will continue to get different envelopes and add to their notes.</p>
<b>Instruction</b>	<p>Students will use a <a href="#">clarifying bookmark</a> to read <a href="#">Ancient History Encyclopedia: Tenochtitlan</a> and Thought Co.'s <a href="#">Huitzilopochtli The Aztec God of the Sun, War, and Sacrifice</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will annotate which part of the text indicates a true history and which is a legend.</li> </ul> <p>Students will <a href="#">watch an animated tour</a> of Tenochtitlan and identify city features they see. Students can do their own <a href="#">guided 3D tour</a> using their computer.</p> <p>Students will watch <a href="#">What Everyday Life Was Like for The Aztecs</a> Students will take notes on similarities and differences between Aztec society and modern-day Mexico City.</p> <p>Students will complete a Jigsaw using the article: <a href="#">The Aztec Civilization: What was it like?</a>, <a href="#">Traditional Mexican Food</a>, or <a href="#">Aztec Inventions</a></p> <p>Students will view images from <a href="#">the Codex Mendoza</a> to view a primary source of the life of the Aztecs. Students can also view <a href="#">Codex Mendoza, Foundation of Tenochtitlan</a> to look for a familiar Mexican image.</p>
<b>Independent Practice</b>	Students will continue their concept map with information about Tenochtitlan, students should try to connect the information between the two cities.

	Students can look through a digital version of <a href="#">The Codex Mendoza</a> . Students should be paired with someone who can read in Spanish to help them with descriptions.
<b>Assessment:</b>	Students will write blog post about aspects of life in Tenochtitlan that would be the same as modern-day Mexico and what you would no longer find.

## Lessons 7-8

<b>Topic:</b>	The Aztecs and Colonial Invasion
<b>Objectives:</b>	Students will investigate the historical retellings of Spanish colonialization through primary and secondary sources.
<b>Introduction</b>	Students will complete a deep reading of an image for the painting <a href="#">“The Capture of Tenochtitlan”</a> by an unknown artist.
<b>Instruction</b>	<p>Students will read about <a href="#">Moctezuma II</a>, the last empire of the Aztec Empire. Students will look at several images of Moctezuma and complete a notice and wonder about these pictures. <i>Ex: I notice that he is portrayed in elaborate clothing. I wonder who painted this. I wonder how this person knew what he looked like?</i></p> <p>Students will then read about <a href="#">Herman Cortes</a> the Spanish Conquistador. Students will look at images of Cortez and do a notice and wonder.</p> <p>Students will <a href="#">read the letter from Cortes about meeting Moctezuma</a> and then compare that to the <a href="#">account from Bernardino de Sahagun</a></p> <p>Students will <a href="#">read the letter from Cortes</a> to about Tenochtitlan and <a href="#">view the map sent by Cortes</a>. Students will annotate the description.</p> <p>Students will read <a href="#">Cortes’s letter</a> about the death of Moctezuma and then compare that to the <a href="#">account from Diaz del Castillo</a>.</p> <p>In order to use primary sources from indigenous people, students will view images from Lienzo de Tlaxcala and the Codex Mendoza (a 2x5 meter long visual history)  <a href="#">Cortes greets Xicotencatl</a></p>
<b>Independent Practice</b>	<p>Students will complete several deep reading an image about in the invasion of Tenochtitlan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Spanish Besiege Tenochtitlan</a></li> </ol>

	<p>2. <a href="#">Malinche and Son</a></p> <p>3. <a href="#">Moctezuma Meets Cortez</a></p>
<b>Assessment:</b>	Students will write a blog post about one image depicting the invasion of Tenochtitlan analyzing who created the image and how this may influence it.

### Lesson 9:

<b>Topic:</b>	New Spain and Colonialization (1535-1821)
<b>Objectives:</b>	Students will identify structural and societal changes to the city during colonialization.
<b>Introduction</b>	<p>Deep Reading of an Image of the <a href="#">Siege of Belgrade</a> * <i>Make sure to download the image to see it up close.</i></p> <p>Students will then <a href="#">listen to a description</a> of the piece of art and new Spain.</p>
<b>Instruction</b>	<p>Students will <a href="#">watch a video</a> about the emergence of Mexico City and take notes on the changes. <i>Point out the immediate change in social status based on ethnic &amp; racial identity. (watch until 00:49)</i></p> <p>Students will read the <a href="#">Introduction to the Spanish Viceroyalties in the Americas</a></p> <p>Students will <a href="#">listen about Casta paintings</a> and their way of constructing racial identities and look at <a href="#">several original images</a></p> <p>*<a href="#">Additional image with description</a></p> <p>Students will read further about the social status of these individuals based on racial identity.</p> <p>Students will <a href="#">watch a video</a> about the Mexican Independence</p> <p>Students can also use <a href="#">this map</a> to look at the territory controlled by Mexico right after Independence</p>
<b>Independent Practice</b>	<p><a href="#">Spanish Convert Tlaxcalan Women</a></p> <p><a href="#">Description of the City and Province of Tlaxcala, Burning of "idols"</a></p> <p>Students will look at the collection of Casta paintings and discuss questions about</p>
<b>Assessment:</b>	<p>Students will look at the collection of Casta paintings and discuss questions about both race and gender within the New Spain society</p> <p>Students will reflect on the advancements that the Aztec society made by the 1500s. Students will imagine the city of Tenochtitlan in 2020 if the Spanish conquistadors did not destroy the city. Students will create</p>

**Lessons 10-13:**

<b>Topic:</b>	The Mexican Revolution and Mexican Muralist
<b>Objectives:</b>	Students will describe the pull factors to Mexico City and the murals that represent both the city and national identity.
<b>Introduction</b>	Students will do a close reading of an image using <a href="#"><i>Diego Rivera's History of Mexico</i></a>
<b>Instruction</b>	<p>Students will watch a video about <a href="#">Los Tres Grandes</a></p> <p>Students will read an <a href="#">article about the Mexican Revolution</a></p> <p>Read about the <a href="#">Mexican Revolution</a>.</p> <p>Students will <a href="#">read an article and watch the video</a> about the revolution and the connection to muralist</p> <p>Analyze the <a href="#">piece "Collective Suicide" by David Alfaro Siqueiros</a> and compare it to the artwork from previous classes and discuss the difference in the depiction of Spanish conquistadors.</p> <p>Students will watch the video from <a href="#">Kahn academy</a> talking about a painting by Diego Rivera in the Philadelphia art museum.</p> <p>Students will also explore the cultivated themes of these artists as put together by the <a href="#">Whitney Museum</a>. This also allows students the opportunity to connect the ideas of the Mexican revolution to the labor struggles of the U.S. as explained in this exhibit.</p>
<b>Independent Practice</b>	Students will do a close read of two other <a href="#">Diego Rivera murals with labels</a> showing some significant symbols and people.
<b>Assessment:</b>	Students will choose one of the Murals from the Diego Rivera, research the people and symbols and then create an interactive slide that viewers can click on to learn more.

**Lesson 14-15:**

<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Murals</b>
<b>Objectives:</b>	Students will develop a proposal for a Mural illustrating the history of Mexico City.
<b>Introduction</b>	Students will watch a video about some of Philadelphia's murals. Students will discuss how they are the same and different.
<b>Instruction</b>	<p>Students will read mural proposals as a model for their project.</p> <p><a href="#">Example</a></p> <p><a href="#">Example</a></p> <p>Students will answer questions about this mural as proposed by <a href="#">Mural Arts</a></p>

<b>Independent Practice</b>	Students will work on their mural and mural proposals with their group.
<b>Assessment:</b>	Students will write their mural proposal and create an interactive mural on google slides.

## Resources

*For teachers*

"Active Listening & Effective Questioning." (n.d.). Retrieved September 1, 2020, from [https://www.mosaicprojects.com.au/WhitePapers/WP1012\\_Active\\_Listening.pdf](https://www.mosaicprojects.com.au/WhitePapers/WP1012_Active_Listening.pdf)

Bransford, J. D. (2004). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*. Washington, DC: National Acad. Press.

This resource discusses teachers as content teachers and asks teachers to look at the relationship between teachers and students as one of experts and novices. This resource informed my decision about focusing on one country rather than all of Latin American so teachers could closer reach the expert status in this area.

Carrera, M. M. (n.d.). *Imagining Identity in New Spain: Race, Lineage, and the Colonial Body in Portraiture and Casta Paintings*. University of Texas Press 2012.

This book provides information about the racial categorization in New Spain. The book provides art, religious, and political documents about the racial structures of New Spain.

Castillo, B. D., & Cohen, J. M. (1974). *The conquest of New Spain*. London: Folio Society.

This book is a first-person account of the Spanish conquest of Mexico in the 1500s from the perspective of Bernal Diaz del Castillo, a soldier under Cortes.

Cortés, H., & Morris, J. B. (1991). *Five letters, 1519-1526*. New York: W. W. Norton.

This book is an important primary source of the accounts of Cortes from this own perspective. This is an important resource to use in conjunction with indigenous narratives as a way of understanding historical narratives.

Fast Facts. (2020, March 10). Retrieved April 2, 2020, from <https://www.philasd.org/fast-facts/>

The website gives figures and statistics on the Philadelphia school district. Some information being the racial demographics of students and the number of languages spoken. This information was use to show the makeup of the district to show the importance of a curriculum around Latin America.

Haskell, B., & Castro, M. A. (2020). *Vida Americana: Mexican Muralists Remake American Art, 1925-1945*. Bloomsbury, London: Yale University Press.

This catalogue goes along with the exhibit of Mexican Artists at the Whitney Museum of American Art and offers an in-depth look at the the influence of Mexican muralists on U.S. artists.

Hispanics in the US Fast Facts. (2020, March 6). Retrieved April 2, 2020, from <https://www.cnn.com/2013/09/20/us/hispanics-in-the-u-s-/index.html>

This website uses information from the U.S. census to illustrate the changing demographics of the country. The source shows an upward trend of Hispanics in the U.S. over the next decade. This resource was used to further illustrate the need for more education about countries in Latin America.

Issitt, M. (2014). "Aztec Religion." In C. Main (Ed.), *Hidden Religion: The Greatest Mysteries and Symbols of the World's Religious Beliefs* (pp. 367-380). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

This book discusses the use of human sacrifice as a way of worship for the Aztecs. Including special temples and symbols.

Kenning, T. (2018, August 06). *The Birth of Huitzilopochtli and the Mexica World – A Comic Book Lesson*. Retrieved May 08, 2020, from <https://openendedsocialstudies.org/2018/08/05/the-birth-of-huitzilopochtli-and-the-mexica-world/>

This comic novel uses storytelling to explain the origins of Mexica people also known as the Aztecs. Since much the history around the Aztecs and Tenochtitlan is embedded with folklore, it is important to understand these stories to better understand the history. This text did not fit the intended purpose of my unit, but would be important information for educators looking to teach about the Aztecs.

Leon Portilla, M. (1992). *The Broken Spears : The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* (pp. 62-127). Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

This book aims to include indigenous voices in the retelling of a history that has tried to explicitly exclude them. The author collected primary sources about the accounts of the Spanish written at that time by indigenous people. The author does explain that many of the written accounts may have been written down about 20 years after the invasion of Cortes, but they are still able to paint a fuller picture of the history and provide alternative perspectives.

"Teaching for Understanding." (n.d.). Retrieved September 01, 2020, from <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/projects/teaching-for-understanding>

This website explains the concept of generative teaching by explaining Project Zero, a project out of Harvard that uses this concept.

Townsend, C. (2019). *Fifth sun: A new history of the Aztecs*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

This book offers first person accounts from indigenous people in 1500s. The book gives a voice to indigenous people by translating their accounts from Nahuatl. This aims to provide a full history for these people rather than only viewing their story from a Eurocentric perspective.

Walqui, A., & Lier, L. V. (2010). *Scaffolding the academic success of adolescent English language learners: A pedagogy of promise*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

This book provides the QTEL principles in which the teaching strategies are based on. This book gives teachers the principles of teaching language through content subjects.

### *For Students*

Alfaro Siqueiros, D. (1936). *Collective Suicide* [Painting found in MoMA, New York, NY]. Retrieved from [https://www.moma.org/collection/works/79146?classifications=9&date\\_begin=Pre-1850&date\\_end=2020&include\\_uncataloged\\_works=1&locale=en&page=1&q=Mexican+Revolution](https://www.moma.org/collection/works/79146?classifications=9&date_begin=Pre-1850&date_end=2020&include_uncataloged_works=1&locale=en&page=1&q=Mexican+Revolution)

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"Aztec Inventions." (n.d.). Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <http://www.aztec-history.com/aztec-inventions.html>

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Cartwright, M. (2020, August 18). "Tenochtitlan. Retrieved." August 22, 2020, from <https://www.ancient.eu/Tenochtitlan/>

*Codex Mendoza* (1542). (n.d.). Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <https://publicdomainreview.org/collection/codex-mendoza-1542>

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Cortés, H. (n.d.). Cortes Describes Tenochtitlan: AHA. Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/teaching-and-learning-in-the-digital-age/the-history-of-the-americas/the-conquest-of-mexico/letters-from-hernan-cortes/cortes-describes-tenochtitlan>

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## Appendix

### **How do you implement the “Novel Ideas Only” Activity in the classroom?**

Students are assigned to groups of four (4). The teacher poses the prompt/question and then asks the students (in each group) to do the following:

1. To number a loose leaf page from 1-8
2. To work collaboratively to brainstorm possible responses/answers to the prompt/question – students are given 5 minutes to do so
3. As a new idea is asserted or stated aloud, another student from the group reiterates the contribution and then all students write it down on their individual sheet of paper
4. After 5 minutes, the teacher directs the students to draw a line under the last item offered by the group
5. All groups are then asked to share their group’s list:
  - a. Each group stands and one “reporter” shares the group’s ideas
  - b. The “reporter” starts the process by restating the prompt/question
  - c. The teacher reminds all other groups that they must listen to the first group very carefully because each ensuing group will only share a group’s idea if it was not shared by any other group before them – this step of the protocol is key for the strategy to work and hold true to its name (“Novel Ideas Only”)
  - d. As the groups share their “Novel Ideas Only”, the rest of the groups are writing the new contributions from each group to each of their individual lists. To facilitate this process, the teacher can also generate a separate running list on chart paper, so that students that have difficulty writing and listening (simultaneously) can copy the list after they have listened attentively to the contributions of all the groups
  - e. The end product of this activity allows for a class to generate a compilation of “Novel Ideas Only” as responses to the given prompt/question.

### 6 Clarifying Bookmarks

What I can do	What I can say
I am going to think about what the selected text may mean.	I'm not sure what this is about, but I think it may mean...
	This part is tricky, but I think it means...
	After rereading this part, I think it may mean...
I am going to summarize my understanding so far.	What I understand about this reading so far is...
	I can summarize this part by saying...
	The main points of this section are...

### 12 Clarifying Bookmarks



What I can do	What I can say
I am going to think about what the selected text may mean.	I'm not sure what this is about, but I think it may mean...
	This part is tricky, but I think it means...
	After rereading this part, I think it may mean...
I am going to summarize my understanding so far.	What I understand about this reading so far is...
	I can summarize this part by saying...
	The main points of this section are...
I am going to use my prior knowledge to help me understand.	I know something about this from...
	I have read or heard about this when...
	I don't understand the section, but I do recognize...
I am going to apply related concepts and/or readings.	One reading/idea I have encountered before that relates to this <u>is...</u>
	We learned about this idea/concept when we studied...
	This concept/idea is related to...
I am going to use my prior knowledge to help me understand.	I know something about this from...
	I have read or heard about this when...
	I don't understand the section, but I do recognize...
I am going to apply related concepts and/or readings.	One reading/idea I have encountered before that relates to this <u>is...</u>
	We learned about this idea/concept when we studied...
	This concept/idea is related to...

## Jigsaw

### How to Use

#### 1. Prepare

Divide the reading selection into four segments, or prepare four separate reading selections on the content you are teaching. Put students into groups of four. These groups will be the "home groups" of the jigsaw. Prepare a direction sheet to help students to answer questions and gather information on each segment or selection .

#### 2. Introduce to Home Groups

Divide the class into their home groups. Explain the strategy and the topic of study. Tell students that they are going to be responsible for teaching one segment or selection to the group they are sitting with now.

#### 3. Break into Expert Groups

Now students will leave their home group to sit with a group of students assigned to the same reading segment or selection, their "expert group." Ask students to begin reading to themselves, or have them take turns reading aloud. When students are finished reading, the group should discuss their segment, fill out their direction sheet, and decide what and how they should present to their home groups.

#### 4. Regroup with "Home Groups"

Students regroup with their home groups. Each student is responsible for teaching their reading segment or selection to their home group. All students are responsible for learning all material. Determine how you'd like students to organize and summarize all the information they've learned. For example, you can provide a graphic organizer or ask them to make a poster to share with the class.

### Constructing a Concept Map

**Brainstorming Phase:** From your memory, (which you can jog by going through your notes and related course material) identify facts, terms, and ideas that you think are in anyway associated with the topic. Make a list of these items and print them neatly on small Post-It® notes, one per note, in very brief form, i. e. a single word or short phrase. This is a brainstorming process, so write down everything that anybody in your group thinks is important and avoid discussing how important the item is. Don't worry about redundancy, relative importance, or relationships at this point. Your objective here is to generate the largest possible list you can. Before your group completes this step, you may have more than 50 items.

**Organizing Phase:** Spread out your concepts (Post-It® notes) on a flat surface so that all can be read easily and, together, create groups and sub-groups of related items. Try to group items to emphasize hierarchies. Identify terms that represent those higher categories and add them. Feel free to rearrange items and introduce new items that you omitted initially. Note that some concepts will fall into multiple groupings. This will become important later.

**Layout Phase:** On a large sheet of paper, try to come up with an arrangement (layout) that best represents your collective understanding of the interrelationships and connections among groupings. Feel free to rearrange things at any time during this phase. Use a consistent hierarchy in which the most important concepts are in the center or at the top. Within sub-grouping, place closely related items near to each other. Think in terms of connecting the items in a simple sentence that shows the relationship between them. Do not expect your layout to be like that of other groups. It may be advisable to meet outside of class to work on this assignment and plan for its completion.

**Linking Phase:** Use lines with arrows to connect and show the relationship between connected items. Write a word or short phrase by each arrow to specify the relationship. Many arrows can originate or terminate on particularly important concepts.

**Finalizing the Concept Map:** After your group has agreed on an arrangement of items that conveys your understanding, you need to convert the concept map into a permanent form that others can view and discuss. Be creative in a constructive way through the use of colors, fonts, shapes, border thickness, etc. to communicate your group's understanding. Give your concept map a title. If you want to construct your final concept map on a computer, try using PowerPoint. In reviewing your concept map, consider the following attributes:

- **Accuracy and Thoroughness.** Are the concepts and relationships correct? Are important concepts missing? Are any misconceptions apparent?
- **Organization.** Was the concept map laid out in a way that higher order relationships are apparent and easy to follow? Does it have a title?
- **Appearance.** Was the assignment done with care showing attention to details such as spelling and penmanship? Is it neat and orderly or is it chaotic and messy?
- **Creativity.** Are there unusual elements that aid communication or stimulate interest without being distracting?

Time period envelope

