

Montezuma II

Montezuma was the leader of the Aztecs, and he ruled from 1502 until 1520. He was born in 1480, and was trained to become a priest. He was born in Tenochtitlán, the capital of the Aztec Empire, which is today called Mexico City.

In this period, the Aztecs controlled Mexico and Central America. During Montezuma's reign, a period of history called *The Spanish Conquest of the Aztec Empire* began. Most scholars agree that it is difficult to say exactly what sort of a leader Montezuma truly was, because most of the texts were written by his Spanish invaders. Indeed, very little is known for sure about Montezuma's actions, ruling style, and general life. During his reign, the Aztec Empire grew to its maximum size.



It is believed that he was very superstitious, and so many of his actions which might make little sense to today's scholars, were done because of deeply entrenched beliefs and fears. Because his country was overtaken by the Spanish, Montezuma is remembered as being a weak leader. His actions lead to many wars as he increased taxes, acted on instinct rather than political motivation, and looked for sacrificial victims.

In fact, it is believed that when the Spanish first came into the area, Montezuma believed they were the descendants of gods, and allowed them to enter unopposed. He was very fearful, and tried to send them gifts to appease them. However, the leader of the Spaniards, Cortés, had allied himself with the Tlaxcalan Indians, a people who had remained independent from the Aztecs, and together they marched into Tenochtitlán.

The people of Aztec saw the Spanish rule as a way to escape their Aztec ruler. The Spanish invaders took Montezuma captive, and convinced him to address his people and tell them to obey the Spaniards. When Montezuma delivered his speech, he was greeted by flying stones, which ended up killing him. He died three days later.

Name _____ Date _____

Montezuma: Graphic Organizer

Location:

Time Period

Leader Of:

Best Known For:

How He Helped Shape History



Greatest Challenges

Name _____

Date _____

Montezuma Multiple Choice Questions

Circle the Correct Answer

1. Montezuma ruled during the following period:
 - a. 1502 -1520
 - b. 1520 - 1544
 - c. 1504 - 1512
2. During this time, the Aztecs controlled:
 - a. Most of Africa
 - b. Spain
 - c. Mexico and Central America
3. Montezuma was originally trained as a:
 - a. Priest
 - b. Teacher
 - c. Blacksmith
4. Which phrase best describes Montezuma. He was very:
 - a. Intelligent and well-studied.
 - b. Wealthy, strong, and tall
 - c. Superstitious
5. During his rule, his empire was:
 - a. At its smallest size ever
 - b. At its largest size ever
 - c. At the same size it had always been.
6. Who had the Spaniards allied themselves with?
 - a. The Tlaxcalan Indians
 - b. The Aztecs
 - c. The Americans
7. During his rule, what did Montezuma do to taxes?
 - a. He increased them.
 - b. He decreased them.
 - c. He eliminated them altogether.

Name _____ Date _____

Montezuma Short Answer Questions

1. Which modern city is where Tenochtitlán once was?
2. Who overtook the Aztecs?
3. Why did Montezuma allow the Spanish to enter his empire unopposed?
4. Why is it difficult to know the exact history of Monezuma?
5. What did the Spanish want Montezuma to tell his people?
6. How did Montezuma die?
7. What does superstitious mean?
8. What did Montezuma do to try to appease the Spaniards?
9. Have you ever done something superstitious? If not, speak to someone (a family member or friend) who has, and write a few sentences about it.

Montezuma Answer Key

Multiple Choice Questions

1. A
2. C
3. A
4. C
5. B
6. A
7. A

Short Answer Questions

1. Mexico City.
2. Spanish
3. He believed they were the descendants of gods.
4. Most of the historical accounts of him are written by the Spanish.
5. They wanted him to say to obey the Spaniards.
6. His people threw stones at him.
7. A superstition is an irrational belief that an object or action not logically related to a course of events will influence its outcome.
8. He gave them gifts.
9. Individual Response.