



Unit 1: Cortes and the Aztecs: Different Views of the World

INTRODUCTION:

Six Interdisciplinary Lesson Plans dealing with the expedition of Hernan Cortes and the Conquest of the Aztecs are included here for use during the first week of the Conquistadors Online Learning Adventure. In addition, there follow “Online Adventure Teaching Ticklers”— a variety of ideas for activities and discussion questions to use to extend student understanding about some of the important topics related to the Adventures. They are listed in the same order as the Online Learning Adventure unfolds.

We invite you and your students to create web resources for the Online Learning Adventure. Please forward them to us, so that we can evaluate them and share them with others using a direct link off of our site. Please also feel free to send us your feedback about how you used the lessons and the Online Learning Adventure in your classroom. Thanks in advance!

Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan 1: Make Your Own Aztec Codex

Grade Level: 4-10

Overview:

The students will make an Aztec codex to use to record the story of Cortes' conquest of the Aztecs.

Objectives:

The students will:

- Design an Aztec codex/folding book.
- Record the events in the Spanish Conquest of the Aztecs.

Related National Standards:

History:

- Identifies methods the Spanish used to conquer the Aztec and Inca settlements.
- Understands aspects of the Spanish exploration, conquest, and immigration to the Americas in the centuries following Columbus, (e.g., Spanish interactions with the Aztecs).
- Understands the significance of beliefs held by both Native Americans and Europeans.
- Compares political, social, economic, and religious systems of Africans, Europeans and Native Americans who converged in the western hemisphere after 1492.
- Knows the features of the major European explorations that took place between the 15th and 17th centuries.

Geography:

- Understands that culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

Art:

- Understands similarities and differences among the characteristics of artworks from various eras and cultures (e.g., materials; visual, spatial, and temporal structures).
- Understands how factors of time and place (e.g., climate, resources, ideas, technology)

influence visual, spatial, or temporal characteristics that give meaning or function to a work of art.

- Knows a variety of historical and cultural contexts regarding characteristics and purposes of works of art.

Materials:

1 - 4 x 24 inch strip of paper or several pieces of paper glued together to make one long, narrow strip
Colored markers: red, blue, green, and yellow
Pencil
2 pieces of poster board for covers
Glue

Procedure:

- 1) Show students examples or illustrations of an Aztec codex. Discuss the main characteristics of this style of art and how it was used to record information about the Aztec culture and the historical events of the Conquest.
- 2) To make a codex, cut or glue pieces of paper together to make a long, narrow strip. (Suggested dimensions: 4 x 24 inches, but it can always be made longer.)
- 3) Fold this strip back and forth, accordion-style, every 4 inches or so to make 6 “pages”.
- 4) Cut 2 pieces of poster board a little bit larger than the page size and glue these on each end of the strip to serve as covers for your codex.
- 5) Discuss the main points of the story of Cortes’ conquest of the Aztecs. Using pencil, draw picture glyphs to tell the main points of this story. The Aztecs wrote from left to right and top to bottom on each page, like we do. The Aztecs had rules for drawing people. The head and feet were shown from the side, while the body was shown from the front. Feel free to design your own glyphs or use some from the Aztec pictographs.
- 6) Color the glyphs with colored markers.
- 7) Share your codices with other students.

Assessment Recommendations:

Teachers may set criteria in advance for how the students’ codices will be assessed. For example, determine with the students how many events in Cortes’ story the codex will show, how many pictures per page, whether the students drew their pictures in the standard codex form, the neatness of their work, etc. The teacher can evaluate the accuracy, organization, completeness, and creativity of the codices.

Extension and/or Adaptation Ideas:

Teachers may assign groups of students to develop common glyphs to represent important individuals, locations, and activities (for example, Cortes, Malinche, Montezuma, war, Tenochtitlan, etc.) These can be “borrowed” by all the students and copied into their codices.

Recommended Online Resources:

<http://www.rjames.com/toltec/borgia/index.htm>

<http://pages.prodigy.com/GBonline/awaztec.html#European.Paper.Manuscripts>

<http://www.hist.umn.edu/~fish/TAarea/Perry/fc.htm>

<http://www.tam.itesm.mx/~jdorante/art/tenoch/ftenoc09.htm>

Lesson Plan 2: Make Your Own Conquistador Compass

Grade Level: 4-8

Overview:

To better understand the technology that the conquistadors used during the Spanish Conquest, students will make and use a very simple magnetic compass.

Objectives:

The students will:

- Make a simple magnetic compass.
- Use and explain how the conquistadors in their early expeditions used a magnetic compass.

Related National Standards:

Science:

- Knows that the Earth's gravity pulls any object toward it without touching it
- Understands general concepts related to gravitational force (e.g., every object exerts gravitational force on every other object; this force depends on the mass of the objects and their distance from one another; gravitational force is hard to detect unless at least one of the objects, such as the Earth, has a lot of mass).

Technology:

- Knows the relationships between science, technology, society, and the individual.
- Knows areas in which technology has improved human lives (e.g., transportation, communication, nutrition, sanitation, health care and entertainment).

Geography:

Understands the characteristics and uses of maps, globes, and other geographic tools and technologies.

Materials:

large needle
magnet
wine or bottle cork
shallow dish of water
knife

Procedure:

- 1) Begin the lesson by asking students how they would go about trying to get to a place they

have never been before. As they mention different tools they might use (map, telephone to ask directions, landmarks, Global Positioning System, compass, etc.) list these on the chalkboard.

- 2) Ask students which of these were available to the conquistadors in the 1500s and erase those that were not available from the list. Help students to understand that the magnetic compass was one of the only tools the conquistadors were able to rely on during their early expeditions.
- 3) Discuss how the earth's gravitational force is used to find directions. Explain that the students will be making magnetic compasses to see how the conquistadors would have used them.
- 4) Distribute materials to the students and help them make their compasses by following these directions:
 - Holding the needle with the eye at the top, stroke a magnet from top to bottom of the needle about 10 times to magnetize it.
 - Slice a piece about 1/4 inch from the end of a bottle cork.
 - Insert the needle sideways through this piece of cork.
 - On the cork, draw an arrow toward the point of the needle. Label this N for north.
 - Label the other directions, S for south, E for east, and W for west.
 - Float the cork and needle in the shallow dish of water. The needle will swing around to point to the north. Test students by asking them which direction they are facing.
- 5) Discuss how a conquistador would use a compass like this during an expedition in the 1500s.
- 6) In groups, ask the students to plan a "Compass Quest" for each other to test their ability to use their compasses. For example, have a group hide an object (piece of chalk, pencil, or "gold doubloon") someplace on the school grounds. Then ask them to use the compass to retrace their way back to the classroom, recording this information as clues. Back in the classroom, ask them to challenge another group of students to find their hidden object using their own compass and clues. Were they successful conquistadors or not? Why?

Assessment Recommendations:

Determine how well the students are able to follow directions to produce a working compass and how well they are able to use them to both design and follow a "compass quest". Teachers may time the students in completing the compass quests to determine their ability to use their compasses— and whether they are likely to become lost in the jungle!

Extension and/or Adaptation Ideas:

Teachers may design their own “compass quests” for the students to complete and hide special objects for the students to find using their compasses. Also, teachers may choose to use real compasses, and not have the students make their own.

Lesson Plan 3: AZTEC NEWS TONIGHT!

Grade Level: 6-10

Overview:

Students will research and prepare a news broadcast about the events of the Conquest of the Aztecs from 1519 to 1521. They will videotape a mock television news program reporting on these events from the point of view of Aztec reporters in the field, warriors, government officials, various eyewitnesses, military strategists, captured Spanish or Tlaxcalan prisoners, and other experts.

Objectives:

The students will:

- Participate in teams to write and produce a television news broadcast about a famous historical event.
- Interpret an historical event from the point of view of a variety of Aztec or Spanish participants.

Related National Standards:

History:

- Understands aspects of the Spanish exploration, conquest, and immigration to the Americas in the centuries following Columbus (e.g., Spanish interactions with the Aztecs.)
- Identifies methods the Spanish used to conquer the Aztec and Inca settlements.

Geography:

- Understands that culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

Language Arts:

- Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the writing process.
- Gathers and uses information for research purposes.
- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools for learning.

Theatre Arts:

- Improvises, writes, and refines scripts based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history.

- Designs and produces informal and formal productions.
- Understands how informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions create and communicate meaning.

Materials:

Videotape camera, microphone, and videotape. *
 Posters and art materials to make maps and other visuals
 Materials to make costumes and props to add visual interest

** If this is not available, the students can produce a play for the same purpose*

Procedure:

- 1) Watch a short excerpt from a television news program. Note how the coverage tries to answer the journalistic 5Ws and 1H questions: Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How. Ask students to describe the features and techniques that television reporters use to broadcast news events, including live video reports, interviews with people in the field, commentaries by experts in the studio, use of maps, etc.
- 2) “Hire” the students to work as an Aztec television film crew to report on the Conquest of 1519-1521. Discuss what the Aztec point of view might have been and do preliminary research about what life in the Aztec Empire was like in the 1500s.
- 3) Review the events of the Conquest and select the events that your program will include.
- 4) Brainstorm the kind of television reporting that would be most effective to show these events to a television audience. Make a list of the people to role-play to show the progression of events. They might include Montezuma II, a high priest, an eagle warrior, a peasant woman who observed a battle, a medical expert concerned about the spread of smallpox, etc.
- 5) Divide the students into teams to “report on” each event that the videotape will cover. Assign roles: camera crew, director, reporter, people to be interviewed, props developer, etc.
- 6) Conduct research, write scripts of live events or interview questions, prepare visuals and props, practice, and role-play/videotape each news story.
- 7) Add titles, introduction, music, and possibly a web page for more information about the news stories.
- 8) Play the news program videotape and enjoy the show! Discuss the following questions: How well do you think your program shows the Aztec point of view of the events of the Conquest?

- Compare this point of view with Spanish histories of the Conquest.
- As a result of looking at both points of view, what would you like to tell Cortes and Montezuma about your feelings about the Conquest?
- Do you think that history could have been different? Why or why not?

9) If the students develop web resources to accompany their news broadcast, please send them to us, so we can link them to this site. Thanks!

Assessment Recommendations:

Show the student-produced news program to another class and ask the students to assign scores (from 1-5) for each of the news segments using the following criteria: ideas and content, organization of news segment, interesting methods (interviews, role-plays, and other features), and use of interesting visuals and props. These students may also be asked to nominate their favorite news segments for “Academy Awards.” Teachers may assess the scripts of the news segments for writing elements: ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions.

Extension and/or Adaptation Ideas:

Teachers may ask students to produce a play instead of a television news program, or only write a script for a play.

Lesson Plan 4: Using Art to Interpret History

Grade Level: 6-10

Overview:

The students will examine examples from painting and poetry that express artists' feelings about the Conquest of the Aztecs. The students will then produce an example of art related to the history of the Spanish Conquest.

Objectives:

The students will:

- Interpret various works of art related to the Spanish Conquest of the Aztecs.
- Create a work of art to express personal feelings about the Spanish Conquest.

Related National Standards:

The Arts:

- Understands the relationship between music and history and culture.
- Understands the visual arts in relation to history and culture.
- Knows how the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes can be used to enhance communication of experiences and ideas

Language Arts:

- Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies for reading a variety of literary texts.
- Understands historical and cultural influences on literary works.

Materials:

Posters or slides of the art of Diego Rivera: "The Conquest of Mexico" mural, "The History of Mexico" mural, "Disembarkation of the Spanish at Veracruz", "The Great City of Tenochtitlan" and "Triumph of the Revolution".

The poem "Conquistador" by Archibald MacLeish or short excerpt below.

One of the Aztec codices.

Procedure:

- 1) After the study of the Spanish Conquest of the Aztecs, introduce students to the life and art-works of Diego Rivera. Born in Guanajuato, Mexico, in 1886, he was famous for painting dra-

matic murals of the life and history of the Mexican people. Many of his murals point out the injustices of the Spanish Conquest. Considered a leader of the “Mexican Renaissance”, his art serves to inspire the Mexican people to take pride in their ancient heritage. Go to <http://www.diegorivera.com/murals/mural2.html> to view some of his famous murals related to the Spanish Conquest.

- 2) Distribute Handout 1 and ask the students to read the excerpt from the poem “Conquistador” by Archibald MacLeish (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1932). This poet used the account of the Conquest, “True History of the Conquest of New Spain”, by Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who accompanied Cortes, to write an epic poem.
- 3) Ask students to select words or phrases from “Conquistador” and discuss the images that come to their minds as they read them. Why do you think MacLeish titled this poem, “The Argument”? Analyze the form of the poem and the intent of the poet.
- 4) Examine art used in the Aztec codices. Discuss the artistic conventions used by the Aztec artists to record their history and culture.
- 5) Ask students to select a style of art and create a poem, play, painting, codex, film, song, dance, etc., to represent their own feelings about the Spanish Conquest.
- 6) Arrange to have the students present their art to each other or to a community group like the PTA. Enjoy!

Assessment Recommendations:

Ask the students to write 3 paragraphs comparing and contrasting the art of Diego Rivera, the poetry of Archibald MacLeish, and the art in the Aztec codex.

Ask the students to write a short paragraph or explain verbally the process they used to develop their personal artwork and the technical, organizational and aesthetic elements they used. Ask them to share the ideas, moods and feelings they were trying to express through the art form they selected, and how well they feel they were able to communicate this in their artwork.

Extension and/or Adaptation Ideas:

Focus on the art of Diego Rivera and study the technical, organizational, and aesthetic elements of murals. Develop a class mural to represent Cortes and the Aztecs in the same style. Invite parents to visit the class and ask the students to act as art museum “docents” to explain the mural to their guests.

Recommended Online Resources:

Art of Diego Rivera:

<http://www.diegorivera.com/murals/mural2.html>

Aztec Codices:

<http://www.rjames.com/toltec/borgia/index.htm>

<http://pages.prodigy.com/GBonline/awaztec.html#European.Paper.Manuscripts>

<http://www.hist.umn.edu/~fish/TAarea/Perry/fc.htm>

<http://www.tam.itesm.mx/~jdorante/art/tenoch/ftenoc09.htm>

Handout 1: “Conquistador”

By Archibald MacLeish

“The Argument”

Of that world's conquest and the fortunate wars:
Of the great report and expectation of honor:
How in their youth they stretched sail: how fared they

Westward under the wind: by wave wandered:
Shoaled ship at the last at the ends of ocean:
How they were marching in the lands beyond:

Of the difficult ways there were and the winter's snow:
Of the city they found in the good lands: how they lay in it:
How there was always the leaves and the days going:

Of the fear they had in their hearts for their lives' sake:
How there was neither the night nor the day sure: and the
Gage they took for their guard: and how evil came of it:

How they were dead and driven and endured:
How they returned with arms in the wet month:
How they destroyed that city: and the gourds were

Bitter with blood: and they made their roofs with the gun stocks:

Of that world's conquest and the fortunate wars....

Lesson Plan 5: Letter from Marcos - Chiapas Today

Grade Level: 9-12

Overview:

The legacy of the Conquest can be seen in the current events of Mexico today. The students will research the current situation in Chiapas, Mexico, a state in southern Mexico which has been the location of violent uprisings in the 1990s by Mexican Indians who are upset with Mexico's social and economic inequalities.

Objectives:

The students will:

- Research and explain the problems caused by social and economic inequalities in Chiapas, Mexico.

Related National Standards:

History:

- Understands aspects of the Spanish exploration, conquest, and immigration to the Americas in the centuries following Columbus.
- Understands the search for community, stability and peace in an interdependent world.
- Understands influences on economic development around the world.
- Understands instances of political conflict and terrorism in modern society.
- Understands the impact of population pressure, poverty and environmental degradation on the breakdown of state authority in various countries in the 1980s and 1990s.
- Understands causes of economic imbalances and social inequalities among the world's peoples and efforts to close these gaps.

Materials:

Research materials or internet access

“Letter from Marcos” 3-17-95

Procedure:

- 1) Begin by reading the poem written by poet Rosario Castellanos, once quite wealthy, who has lived among the poor Mexican Indians of Chiapas:

“I remember, let us all remember, until justice takes its place among us.”

- 2) Ask the students what they think Castellanos means by the word “justice.” Is “justice” the same for all people? Why or why not? Make a list on the chalkboard of what people might “see and feel” when they are trying to determine whether “justice” has been achieved in a society. Introduce the topic of Chiapas and the EZLN (Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional or Zapatista National Liberation Army) to the class. Explain that on New Year’s Eve, 1993, the Mexican state of Chiapas was thrust upon the international scene as the Zapatista guerrilla army seized control of the colonial city of San Cristobal de las Casas and 5 towns in the surrounding Chiapas highlands. Ask students: how does this conflict affect you? How might it relate to the legacy of the Spanish Conquest?
- 3) Locate Chiapas on a map of Mexico... pointing out its Mayan roots and its neighbor, Guatemala. Once the breadbasket of the indigenous civilizations, when the Spanish arrived the indigenous peoples were progressively pushed off the Chiapas lands by the expansion of plantations owned by Spanish-speaking Ladinos (people of mixed Spanish and Indian descent). By 1900, the fertile lands of the region were occupied by cattle ranches and sugar, coffee and cotton plantations. The indigenous people of Chiapas were forced to farm the thin, rocky soils found on the steep slopes of the highlands. They lost their lands and have been victims of centuries of fierce racism and discrimination on the part of the dominant Ladino society, which continues to this day.

In the 1950s the shrinking plots of land in the highlands could no longer support the Indian population and the poorest began to move toward the last frontier, the Lacandon jungle area to the East. These colonists cleared tracts of rainforest land and exposed red clay soils that lose their fertility within one to three crop cycles. Spanish-speaking peasants fleeing poverty in many other areas of Mexico soon joined them. Oil booms and economic improvements have occurred in other parts of Mexico, but the situation in Chiapas remains dire. Thus, the beginning of the EZLN and the “Letter from Marcos”, its spokesperson.

- 4) Ask students to examine the following poverty statistics and research more recent statistics about Chiapas. Compare these statistics about Chiapas with other states in Mexico.

Chiapas Poverty Statistics

	<u>Mexico</u>	<u>Chiapas</u>
Percent urban	71%	40%
Percent rural	29%	60%
Literacy rate	87%	69%
Households with running water	79%	58%
Households with access to electricity	88%	67%

- 5) Research the EZLN and its demands. Distribute Handout 1: “Letter from Marcos” and discuss

the demands that this anonymous spokesperson for the EZLN has written to the world.

- 6) Research the most recent national election in Mexico. What effect do you think the recent 2000 election will have on the EZLN and the situation in Chiapas specifically? How do you think Marcos and the EZLN are viewing the 2000 election outcome?
- 7) Closure: What do you think the policy of the Mexican government should be toward the EZLN and Chiapas? Do you think that the United Nations or the United States should intervene in this area? Why or why not? In conclusion, how do you think this case study in Chiapas relates to the legacy of the Spanish Conquest?

Assessment Recommendations:

Assess the students' understanding of the current problems facing Chiapas today and how they might relate to the Spanish Conquest by asking them to write a short summary explanation.

Extension and/or Adaptation Ideas:

Ask the students to write a letter to their Senator or Congressman explaining what they think the United States or United Nations should do, if anything, about the current situation in Chiapas.

Recommended Online Resources:

<http://encarta.msn.com/find/Concise.asp?ti=0ABF4000>

<http://www.ecosur.mx/altos/>

<http://www.chiapas2000.org/index1.html>

<http://www.eco.utexas.edu/Homepages/faculty/Cleaver/chiapas95.html>

Handout 1:

“Letter from Marcos”

3/17/1995

There exists on this planet called “Earth” and in the continent called “America” a country whose shape appears to have had a big bite taken out of its east side, and which threw out an arm deep into the Pacific Ocean so that the hurricanes don’t blow it from its history. This country is known to both natives and foreigners by the name of Mexico. Its history is a long battle between its desire to be itself and the foreign desires to have it exist under another flag. This country is ours. We, our blood in the voices of our oldest grandparents, we walked this land when it was not yet known by this name.

We were born between blood and gunpowder, between blood and gunpowder we were raised. Every so often the powerful from other lands came to rob us of tomorrow... With flags and different languages the foreigner came to conquer us. He came and went. We continued being Mexicans because we weren’t happy with any other name or with walking under any other flag that does not have the eagle devouring a snake, on a white background between red and green.

We, the first inhabitants of these lands, the indigenous, we were left forgotten in a corner, and the rest began to grow and become stronger... Later this part of the country [Chiapas] became a joke because a single country, the country of money, put itself in the middle of all of the flags. And they said, “Globalization,” and then we knew that this was what this absurd order was to be called—an order in which money is the only country that is served and borders are erased, not out of brotherhood, but because of the impoverishment that fattens the powerful without nationality...

And we talked and we told them what we wanted and they did not understand very well, and we repeated that we wanted democracy, liberty, and justice, and they made a face like they didn’t understand, and they reviewed the points of their macroeconomic plans and... they could not find the words anywhere...

Lesson Plan 6: Cortes Quincentennial Resolution

Grade Level: 6-10

Overview:

The students will evaluate a fictional resolution for a United Nations Resolution to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Cortes' expedition to the New World.

Objectives:

The students will:

- Evaluate and debate the pros and cons of a proposed worldwide commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the expedition of Hernan Cortes.
- Propose appropriate ways to commemorate the events of the Spanish Conquest of the Americas.

Related National Standards:

History:

- Understands aspects of the Spanish exploration, conquest, and immigration to the Americas in the centuries following Columbus (e.g., Spanish interactions with the Aztecs.)
- Understands characteristics of the Spanish and Portuguese exploration and conquest of the Americas.
- Identifies methods the Spanish used to conquer the Aztec and Inca settlements.
- Understands the economic, political, and cultural interrelations among peoples of Africa, Europe, and the Americas between 1500 and 1750.
- Understands the consequences of European interaction with indigenous populations of the Americas

World History:

- Understands long-term changes and recurring patterns in world history

Life Skills:

- Applies decision-making techniques.

Materials:

Handout 1: Cortes Quincentennial Resolution

Research materials and background information about Cortes and the Aztec Empire

Procedure:

- 1) After studying the Aztecs, the expedition of Hernan Cortes, and the Conquest, write Karl Marx' famous quote on the chalkboard: The Spanish Conquest "was the greatest event in the history of the world." Ask students to discuss what Karl Marx might have meant by this statement and list on board.
- 2) Distribute copies of Handout 1: Cortes Quincentennial Resolution to the students.
- 3) Divide the students into groups of 5-6 to read and discuss the resolution. In groups, ask them to decide if they agree with the resolution or not and list their reasons.
- 4) Ask the students to amend or rewrite the resolution if they wish, and list reasons for these changes.
- 5) Have each student group present its support or rejection of the resolution to the entire class. Debate the merits of any amendments or counter-resolutions that the students offer.
- 6) Draft a final resolution for how the class believes the Quincentennial of Cortes' expedition should be remembered.
- 7) Develop a list of activities that the students think should take place during the commemoration.
- 8) Closure: Was Karl Marx right? Was the Spanish Conquest "the greatest event in the history of the world?" Why or why not?

Assessment Recommendations:

Ask the students to compare their student-developed amendments or new resolutions and select the one that they feel has the best quality of ideas and content, organization, word choice, sentence fluency and writing conventions. Ask them to give examples to explain their choice.

Extension and/or Adaptation Ideas:

Select another topic in the Spanish Conquest and ask students to propose other resolutions to debate.

Handout 1: Cortes Quincentennial Resolution

The 500th anniversary of Hernan Cortes' expedition and conquest of the Aztec Empire will take place in the year 2019. As with any worldwide event involving many nations, advance planning is necessary to ensure the most effective way to remember the event which Karl Marx called "the greatest event in the history of the world."

Spain, Mexico, the United States and the other nations of the "Americas" are involved in planning the commemoration. To begin this planning, they are developing a resolution to present to the United Nations General Assembly. With passage of the resolution, they hope that festivities will be planned, including a trip to Mars by solar-powered space caravel, the sale of commemorative coins, the construction of statues of Cortes and Montezuma, the reenactment of Cortes' expedition, and a scholarship program.

Below is the proposed resolution of the Cortes Quincentennial Commission. Discuss the resolution and decide if you agree or disagree with it. Feel free to amend it if you wish or write a new resolution on how you think the 500th anniversary of Cortes' expedition should be remembered. List the reasons why you believe the United Nations should or should not pass it:

Whereas: Hernan Cortes helped to open the door to a New World, and set an example of how courage, faith, and hard work could accomplish many important achievements, and

Whereas: Hernan Cortes changed the course of the world forever, continuing to the present day and into the next millennium, and

Whereas: There are no statues honoring the legacy of Hernan Cortes or Montezuma II in the New World, and

Whereas: Hernan Cortes helped bring important ideas and benefits to the peoples of the Americas, and

Whereas: The spirit of the Conquest continues in the significant explorations of outer space, and

Whereas: Students of the world should be given the opportunity to celebrate this milestone in history, and discover the important lessons of "the greatest event in the history of the world";

Therefore, be it resolved: That the United Nations sponsor an international commemoration in the years 2019-2021 to honor the achievements of Hernan Cortes and encourage young people who embody his spirit and accomplishments to carry forward his legacy into the next century.

Online Adventure Teaching Ticklers:

Adventure 1: Montezuma and the Aztecs

A. Aztec Life and Times

1) Who Were the Aztecs?

- On a large piece of butcher paper, have students make a classroom map of the Aztec Empire, showing the mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes, and other landforms as well as the location of the major cities and cultural groups.
- Find pictures and descriptions of Tenochtitlan. Develop a model or draw a large visual to show the main buildings, farming areas, pyramids, houses, canals, etc.

2) Religion and Human Sacrifice

- Research the many Aztec gods and goddesses and the myths associated with them. Discuss the legend of Quetzalcoatl. What effect might this legend have on the eventual conquest of the Aztecs by Cortes?
- If possible, invite a guest speaker from Mexico into the classroom to share information about and celebrate the “Day of the Dead” fiesta celebrated in Mexico on November 1st and 2nd. In this fiesta, Mexicans make skull-shaped candies and sugar skeletons to remember and celebrate their loved ones who have died. They bake sweet “dead bread” or “pan de muerto” in the shape of corpses in coffins with the arms crossed over the chest. They also return to their hometowns for special family meals and to visit the graves of loved ones, where they scrub the elaborately carved headstones, paint the letters black, and decorate them with marigold flowers. Festival dances are held, where dancers dress up in costumes as devils (wearing bells), spirits of the dead (with wizard caps and tiny mirrors on their robes), death himself (black-robed and carrying a scythe), and old people who are close to death. In homes, families prepare shrines in memory of loved ones who have died. The shrine can be a photo of the loved one, flowers, skull and skeleton figurines, and food, which is believed to “feed” the dead person for one year.
- Discuss the following quote from Bernal Diaz’s book, The Conquest of New Spain, written in the 1560s. “They strike out the wretched Indian’s chest with flint knives, and hastily tear out the palpitating heart, which, with the blood, they present to the idols.” Discuss: From this quote, what do you think the author’s feeling about this Aztec ritual was? How does his choice of words help communicate this point of view?

3) Life in the Aztec World

- Discuss the Aztec “dress code” that was used to distinguish the various social classes. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of having a “dress code” today to tell what level of society you lived in?
- Ask students how they would have liked growing up in an Aztec family? Have them write imaginative stories about “A Day in the Life Of” someone in Aztec society- a noble, warrior, farmer, child, parent, etc.

4) Aztec Calendar: Roadmap of Destiny

- Compare and contrast different calendars used by different civilizations.

5) Aztec Writing

- See Lesson Plan for instructions on how to make an Aztec codex.

6) Aztec Counting

- Ask the students to use the Aztec system for counting and develop story problems for each other to decipher.

7) Let’s Play Patolli!

- The Mystery of Patolli: Since the exact rules of the ancient Aztec game, patolli, are unknown, ask the students to use what they know about the game, and develop their own rules. Print the game board from the web site, make up rules, and try it out. Send us the rules you develop and we’ll post them online for others to try out.

B. Montezuma and the Empire

1) Growth of the Aztec Empire

- Ask students to design outline maps to show the growth of the Aztec Empire over time.
- Role-play the rules of Aztec warfare and discuss the good and bad points of having such a structured method of warfare:
 - a) Aztec rulers had many reasons for warfare. Sometimes a local leader had insulted them, tribute had not been paid, or Aztec traders had been attacked.
 - b) The Aztecs did not use surprise attacks. First they sent nobles from Tenochtitlan to the city they planned to attack.
 - c) These nobles would ask the city leaders to join the Triple Alliance by paying tribute, trading with the Aztecs, and putting up a statue of their god Huitzilopochtli in their temple. They had 20 days to decide.
 - d) Then nobles from Texcoco would come to threaten and warn the city leaders. Again, they had 20 days to decide.

- e) Thirdly, nobles from Tlacopan would arrive with gifts of weapons, more threats, and warnings. If the city would not agree within 20 days, then the Aztec ruler would send messengers with gifts of clubs, shields, or feathers. This meant that war had been declared.
- f) Through all of these negotiations, the Aztecs had time to gain information and plan how to best attack the city.
- g) Warriors from all three cities of the Triple Alliance were then brought together.
- h) Priests decided on a lucky day to start the battle.
- i) The battles began. Usually the Aztecs won quickly. They took as many prisoners as possible for sacrifice. They destroyed the local temples and decided on the tribute to be paid. They made the local people worship Huitzilopochtli and respect the Aztec emperor. Tribute was paid regularly, or else another battle would occur!

2. The Wonders of Tenochtitlan

- Ask students to develop a model, blueprint, or mural showing the wonders of Tenochtitlan.

3. Montezuma II

- Discuss: How would you have liked to be Montezuma II at the height of his glory? Ask students to write a story with illustrations about your life as an emperor.

4. Omens of Doom

- Discuss the omens of doom that were reported after the Spanish Conquest of the Aztecs. How would students explain these omens? Since all of the omens described in the Aztec Conquest were reported only after the Conquest was over, do the students think that the Aztecs were trying to use omens to make it easier to accept their defeat? Or do the students think that the Spanish made up the omens to try to justify their conquest of the Aztecs?

Adventure 2: The Expedition of Hernan Cortes

A. The Promise of the New World

1. Who Were the Conquistadors?

- Conquistadors v. Astronauts: Ask students to imagine what it would have been like to be a conquistador in the 16th century. What thoughts would have gone through your head as you set sail into an unmapped world, knowing that you might come face to face with wild beasts, dangerous cannibals, or worse? What would you have been hoping to gain as a result of your travels and hardships? How do you think you would have felt when your life as a conquistador was over? Compare this with the possibility of being an astronaut in the 21st century setting off on an expedition to another planet. How would this be

similar to and different from being a conquistador? Would you take the challenge or not? Why?

2. Goals of Conquest

- **Want Ads, We Want You!** Ask students to pretend that they are job recruiters or “head-hunters” for the King and Queen of Spain in the 16th century. Write a Job Description for recruiting people to be a conquistador. Include information about the duties of the job, physical requirements (picky eaters, scaredy-cats, and people likely to get seasick or homesick need not apply!), compensation and benefits package, job security, and opportunities for advancement. Then, write a letter to the King of Spain telling why you are interested in applying for the job or not.
- **Conquistadors v. Pioneers:** Recall the reasons why the pioneers came to North America in the early days of the United States, or crossed the continent on the Oregon Trail. Discuss how these reasons compare with the goals and reasons of the Spanish Conquistadors.

3. How Did They Get There?

- Make a quadrant. For instructions on how to make and use a quadrant for navigation, go to <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/teachers/ideas/sammons/packet.html>.

4. Voyage to the Unknown

- **Examining Maps:** Look at the series of maps to see how the conquistadors’ mental maps and actual maps changed over time. Ask students to use different maps to answer the following questions and compare the results:

- a) How many landmasses are there on earth?
- b) How big is the Atlantic Ocean?
- c) Is the New World Japan or another island?
- d) Is North America really Asia and South America a New World?
- e) Is there only a single landmass, with Asia and America connected by a huge land bridge?
- f) Are North and South America connected or separate from each other?
- g) Is the Pacific Ocean narrow or really big? Is anything in it?
- h) Is there a sea passage through to the Pacific Ocean?
- i) Is Japan the same as Yucatan, just next door to Mexico?
- j) Does America have a west coast?

5) Famous Firsts: Expeditions into the New World

- Ask students to select an expedition from the timeline of Famous Firsts: Expeditions into the New World. Learn more about the expedition and make a poster showing: the map of the world the conquistador was using on his voyage, the map of his route, the new geographical information he gained, and what else he discovered or contributed to knowledge about the New World. Write and tape-record a first-person radio report about what this

conquistador experienced during his expedition. Would you have wanted to participate in this expedition? Why or why not? Did the actual conquistador really matter — for example, if Cortes had not set off on his expedition in 1519, do you think another person would have done it?

B. Cortes the Conquistador

1. Meet Hernan Cortes

- Assign students to write short biographies of Hernan Cortes and Montezuma II. Compare and contrast the personal characteristics, experience, and mind-sets of the two leaders and of the civilizations they represent. When they eventually meet in February 1519, what do you predict will occur and why? Do you think it was inevitable that Cortes would defeat Montezuma?
- What about the Maya? Ask students to research the Maya Civilization and prepare reports about the geography, culture, religion, politics, family life, etc. to present to the class. Compare and contrast the Mayas with the Aztecs.

2. La Malinche

- Divide the class in two to analyze the two faces of Dona Marina, or La Malinche. Debate the questions: Why was La Malinche willing to help Cortes in his mission to conquer the Aztecs? Should La Malinche be honored as the “Mother of Modern Mexico” or should she be criticized as the “Mexican Eve: Betrayer of Ancient Mexico”?
- Today, in Mexico, “Malinchistas” are considered to be betrayers, who turn away from their own culture and sell out to foreigners, especially to American global culture. Discuss: What are features of American global culture? What is good and bad about it? What might be some examples of “Malinchistas”?
- Develop a mock trial of La Malinche. For what crimes could she be accused? What might be her defense? After presenting evidence on both sides, poll the classroom “jury”. Is she guilty or not?

Adventure 3: The Legacy of the Conquest

A. Two Worlds Meet

1. The Conquest of the Aztecs

- Make a map to show Cortes’ route to get to Tenochtitlan. Analyze other possible routes he might have taken. Discuss: What if Cortes had chosen a different route to get to

Tenochtitlan and had not gained the Tlascalans as allies? How would history be different?

- Alien Encounter! Since this was one of the first times that two different civilizations met who had previously not known anything about each other, we can compare it to what it might be like if we were to meet powerful aliens from another planet. Ask students to imagine what the people of Tenochtitlan were feeling as they saw Cortes' forces enter their city. What do they imagine the Spanish were thinking and feeling as they entered this New World? Write journal entries from either or both of these two points of view to add a personal dimension to the main events in Cortes' meeting and conquest of the Aztecs.
- Mindset: Write imaginative diary entries from the point of view of Montezuma. Consider the following questions: What might Montezuma have been thinking when he met the Spanish? Did he remember the omens of the past few years? Was this the returning god Quetzalcoatl or a potential enemy? What could the reports about the unbelievable Spanish firepower and their battles against his subjects and their partnership with his traditional enemies mean? Should he destroy them immediately or treat them as friends? What would you have done?
- Mindset: Write imaginative diary entries from the point of view of Cortes. Consider: What might Cortes have been thinking when he entered Tenochtitlan? Were they prisoners or guests of Montezuma? Should Cortes be on guard against an attack, the non-delivery of food, the raising of bridges isolating him in the city? Does Cortes need to be ruthless in order to survive or can he trust the Aztecs? What would you have done in his place?
- Prepare a model and use it to reenact and analyze the strategy of Cortes' retreat during "The Night of Tears" and his later return into Tenochtitlan.

2. Aztec and Spanish Weapons and Tactics

- Compare and contrast the kinds of weapons used by the Spanish and Aztecs during the 1500's. What advantages and disadvantages do you see for each? If you were choosing to arm an expedition or defend your homeland at that time, which weapons would you choose to bring with you and why?

3. Why do YOU Think the Spanish Won?

- Survey the members of your class to find out which reason they think was most important for the Spanish victory over the Aztecs.
 1. Cortes' knowledge and skills
 2. Montezuma's slow response to the Spanish
 3. Spanish weapons and battle strategy
 4. Power of Christianity over Aztec religion
 5. Montezuma's belief in omens

6. Ability of Cortes to gain allies
7. Role of Dona Marina in selling out the Aztecs
8. Effects of disease
9. Other... please explain

B. The Legacy of the Conquest Today

1. Destruction of a Culture

- Ask students to predict the effects of the Spanish Conquest on the people and lifestyle of the Aztec Empire. Draw political cartoons to express your views.
- Debate the following statement: The Spanish Conquest of the Aztecs was: a holocaust or necessity. Discuss: Did the Aztec culture have to be destroyed after the conquest or could the city of Tenochtitlan, its agricultural patterns and family life, etc. have been preserved? How would the world be different today if the Spanish had only destroyed the Aztec religion and its emphasis on human sacrifice, but allowed the Aztec Empire and Tenochtitlan to remain as they were before 1519?

2. Effects of Disease

- Invite a county health department representative, medical doctor or nurse into the classroom to explain how smallpox, measles, and other diseases are contracted, spread and affect indigenous peoples. What are the short-term and long-term effects of epidemics? How are world health organizations working today to prevent epidemics?
- Analyze the maps showing the routes of the smallpox epidemic in the New World. Compare these routes with the dates of the Spanish voyages of exploration and conquest. Ask students to make generalizations about the relationship of the Spanish Conquest and the spread of disease.

3. Spanish Colonialism and its Effects in Mexico Today

- Invite a speaker from Mexico or a history professor into the classroom to discuss the features of Spanish colonialism, mercantilism, the encomienda system, the repartimiento system, and the role of the Church in the history of Mexico up to the present day. What role has the United States played in Mexican history? How does the Zapatista guerrilla movement relate to the legacy of the Spanish Conquest?

4. The Columbian Exchange

- Examine the lists of products involved in the Columbian Exchange. Ask the students to select one product from each of the lists and research how it is grown, used, and its history and impact on the world. How would your life today be different without these products?
- Genetic engineering of food products has been criticized as a new “conquest” with both

good and bad effects. Research and debate the proposal that: All genetic engineering of foods and animals should be stopped immediately.

5. The Greatest Event in the History of the World?

- Discuss: Do you agree or disagree with Karl Marx's statement that the Spanish Conquest was "the greatest event in the history of the world?" What effects has it had on YOUR life?

6. Dia de la Raza

- Write a proposal about how October 12, Columbus Day in the United States, or Dia de la Raza in Mexico, should be commemorated to both remember the past, but also move forward, together, into the future.